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NATIONAL

Yasmin Rashid Criticizes Nawaz And Maryam For Victimisation

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Disappointing Pakistan out of T20 World Cup after US vs Ireland match called off due to rain

KATI Slams Federal Budget Over Industrial Sector Snub

KARACHI Edition Vol. XV No 178 Regd. No. 114 visit us at www.regionaltimes.com Saturday, June 15, 2024, Zil-Hajj 08, 1445 A.H 8 Pages CIRCULATION CERTIFIED BY ABC

Nation Gets Unprecedented Rs 10 Per Litre Petrol Price Drop

ISLAMABAD: In a major relief, the Pakistan government on Wednesday slashed the prices of petrol and high-speed diesel (HSD) for the next fortnight by Rs10.20 and Rs2.33, respectively.

According to details available with media, the new price of petrol is now Rs258.16 per litre, Rs10.20 down from the previous Rs268.36.

Similarly, high-speed diesel (HSD) will be available for Rs267.89 per litre, Rs2.33 down from the previous rate of Rs270.22 per litre.

A fortnight ago, the Pakistan government reduced the prices of petrol and high-speed diesel by Rs4.74 and Rs3.86 per litre, respectively.

With this latest reduction, the total relief provided to the public in terms of petrol prices has reached Rs35 per litre.

Earlier, it was reported that the government was expected to pass on the impact of lower international prices to consumers with a cut in the rates of petrol and high-speed diesel (HSD).

According to sources, the prices of petrol and HSD had declined in the international market by about $3.75 and $2.7 per barrel, respectively, in the last two weeks.Oil prices eased on Friday as markets evaluated the impact of U.S. interest rates staying higher for longer than anticipated.Brent crude futures were down 42 cents, or 0.5%, at $82.33 a barrel.

West Texas Intermediate (WTI) U.S. crude futures lost 51 cents, or 0.7%, to trade at $78.11 a barrel.—RT/Agency

Sindh Unveils Massive Rs 3.056 Trillion Budget Prioritizing Unparalleled Development and Social Welfare

By Rahib Gaho

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday presented a Rs3.056 trillion budget for the next fiscal year 2024-25, proposing up to 30% massive increase in the salaries of government employees.

Besides the salary hike, the budget also includes a significantly higher development expense of Rs959 billion, which accounts for 31% of the outlay.

The "balanced" budget mainly centres around the rehabilitation of flood-affected people and social protection for the poor. The majority of the total projected revenue for the province comes from the 62% federal transfers, followed by 22% provincial receipts.

As per the budgetary document released by the provincial government, the remaining receipts are through current capital receipts of Rs22 billion, foreign project assistance of Rs334 billion, other federal grants in the form of Public Sector Development Programme's (PSDP) Rs77 billion, foreign grants of Rs6 billion and a carryover cash balance of Rs55 billion.

Provincial receipts of Rs662 billion comprise sales tax on services of Rs350 billion, tax excluding GST of Rs269 billion, and provincial non-tax receipts of Rs42.9 billion.

These funds are strategically allocated; a total of 63% or Rs1.9 trillion goes towards current revenue, 6% or Rs184 billion for current capital, and the remaining 31% or Rs959 billion is dedicated to the development expenditure.

Education receives the largest allocation at Rs519 billion, with R459 billion dedicated to current revenue expenditure.

Healthcare follows closely with a total allocation of Rs334 billion, with Rs302 billion earmarked for current expenses.

Local government rounds out the top three with a proposed budget of Rs329 billion.

Rs58 billion have been allocated for agriculture, Rs77 billion for energy, Rs94 billion for irrigation, Rs86 billion for Works & Services, and Rs30 billion for Planning & Development.

The provincial budget prioritises social and economic well-being, particularly in the wake of recent floods. This comprehensive approach incorporates several key relief measures:

Minimum Wage: Additionally, a minimum wage increases to Rs37,000 has been proposed.

Social Investment: A significant allocation of Rs34.9 billion targets pro-poor initiatives, directly assisting vulnerable populations.

Subsidy Programs: The budget includes Rs116 billion in subsidies to ease the financial burden on citizens.

Housing Focus: A dedicated Rs25 billion will be directed towards housing schemes, promoting access to safe and secure shelter.

This multi-faceted approach reflects the government's commitment to strengthening the province's social safety net and fostering economic recovery.

The provincial budget extends its focus beyond immediate relief measures. Several new initiatives target the long-term development of the province's economy and social well-being:

Hari Card: An allocation of Rs8 billion will provide financial support to 12 million farmers, bolstering the agricultural backbone of Sindh.

Inclusive Enclave: Rs5 billion allocations to build a complex to offer education, rehabilitation, training, accommodation, clinical services, recreation and other facilities within a compound at Korangi along the Malir Expressway.

Fiscal Decentralisation in Police: For the first time 485 police station-specific budget has been allocated to enable them to meet their fuel, repair and maintenance, and day-to-day expenditures to serve communities.

Solarisation Initiative: Another Rs5 billion will be directed towards distributing solar home systems, and promoting clean energy access over five years

Hub Canal Project: A dedicated Rs5 billion will fund the construction of a new canal to provide water to Karachi.

Mazdoor Card: A Rs5 billion welfare program will provide support for labourers in Sindh.

Pro-Poor Initiatives: To ensure social upward mobility, the budget allocates Rs11 billion to agriculture, Rs12 billion for social protection.

Meanwhile, another Rs3.2 billion have been allocated for Universities & Board, Rs2 billion for Housing & Town Planning, and Rs1.5 billion for Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD).

The provincial budget prioritises investment in human capital through significant grants for education and healthcare. Major grants amount to a total of Rs190 billion, with Rs35 billion specifically earmarked for universities across Sindh.

These grants will also support major hospitals and medical institutes like Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation (SIUT), National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD), Indus Hospital, Sindh Institute of Child Health & Neonatology (SICHN) and trauma centres.

This targeted funding aims to strengthen educational institutions and improve access to quality healthcare services for the people of Sindh.

Kashmiri Poet Ahmed Farhad Freed from Prison In Dramatic Bail Decision

MUZAFFARABAD: Kashmiri poet Ahmed Farhad was released from prison hours after the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) High Court granted him bail weeks after his arrest.

The poet left for Islamabad after his release.

The AJK High Court approved Farhad's bail petition against a surety bond worth Rs200,000, earlier in the day.

Earlier this week, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) declared Farhad as a "missing person" until he returned to his home and termed his arrest "illegal".

The court's order read that the poet had been missing since May 15 and couldn't reach home, while a first information report (FIR) regarding his disappearance was registered with the Lohebher Police Station in Islamabad under Section 427 and 365 PPC.

As per the order, the court was told that Farhad Ali was arrested by Police Station Dherkot Kashmir and was also wanted by the Saddar Police Station Muzaffarabad in another case of terrorism.

It added that in the above circumstances, the person couldn't be produced before the bench.

Therefore, the court reached a conclusion that he was forcibly disappeared and the institution concerned failed to recover him.

The court, in its order, mentioned that Farhad was currently in judicial custody, as per the investigation officer, and declared his arrest "illegal".

The court stated that the investigation officer of Lohebher Police Station was bound to record the poet's statement under Section 164 before a judicial magistrate after his return and proceed with the investigation in light of his statement.

Farhad, a defiant poet from Kashmir, remained missing for 15 days last month after which Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan revealed that he was, in fact, arrested and in AJK police's custody.

The AGP's statement came on May 29, in response to IHC's directions to ensure Farhad's recovery.

The poet was arrested and transferred to Muzaffarabad from DhirKot under multiple sections of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA).

His matter came into the spotlight after he allegedly went missing during protests in AJK in May following which his wife, Urooj Zainab, moved the IHC seeking her husband's recovery, requesting the court to identify, investigate, and prosecute those responsible for his disappearance.—RT/Agency

President Zardari Urges Political Parties To Put Country's Progress First

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has emphasised that political parties must prioritise the country's progress and prosperity by fulfilling their democratic and constitutional responsibility.

He was talking to Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who called on him in Islamabad on Friday.

The president said we must only think about Pakistan and put aside personal differences.

He stressed the need to take Pakistan forward and everyone has to play his role in this regard.

Speaking on the occasion, the Interior Minister said any challenge can be tackled through the power of unity and solidarity.

Besides, matters of mutual interest and country's overall situation were discussed in the meeting.—RT/Agency

Imran Says, Negotiating With 'Powerless' Government Is Useless

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan on Friday stated that there is no point in negotiating with a government that lacks authority.

During an informal conversation with the media during the hearing of the £190 million reference at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, he accused the administration of pressuring judges who rule in favour of PTI and criticised the recent budget for burdening salaried individuals.

Khan alleged that a judge from Sargodha informed the Lahore High Court about pressure exerted by intelligence agencies. He claimed that the judge's household gas supply was cut off and that judges sympathetic to PTI face immense pressure. "Journalists speaking in favour of PTI are being targeted; Raoof Hassan was attacked, and Ali Zaman was tortured," Khan asserted, implicating intelligence agencies in these actions.

Khan urged the Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa to uphold the rule of law amidst these interferences. Khan praised a judge from Sargodha, six judges from Islamabad High Court, and three judges from the Supreme Court for their integrity.

Addressing the budget, Khan highlighted that Pakistan needs to generate Rs13 trillion in revenue, with Rs9.8 trillion allocated to debt interest payments.

He predicted a necessity to borrow Rs7.5 trillion to cover the budget deficit, warning that the country is already sinking. "Investment, which hinges on the rule of law, is the only salvation, yet this year saw the lowest investment in 50 years," he stated.

Khan warned that the country's future looks bleak and criticised the additional tax burden on salaried individuals. Refuting claims that PTI avoids negotiations, he recounted past dialogues during Pervez Musharraf's regime but pointed out that negotiations are futile when decisions are made by "higher authorities."

He mentioned an instance when PTI negotiated with PDM on ex-Chief Justice Bandial's request, only to be told that no elections would occur as long as Bandial was in office.

In a stern message to his party, Khan demanded an end to internal groupings, calling it a matter of life and death for Pakistan. "I will take strict action against anyone creating factions within the party," he warned.When asked by a journalist if he wanted the establishment to appoint a representative for negotiations.—RT/Agency

Naqvi Holds Crucial Talks With Fazl

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Affairs and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi on Friday called on Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence in Islamabad, media reported.

During his visit, the interior minister inquired about Maulana Fazlur Rehman's health.

Interior Minister Naqvi expressed his best wishes for Maulana Fazlur Rehman and said, "I am praying for your health and safety."

Mohsin Naqvi mentioned that he had a long-standing relationship of 25 years with Maulana Fazlur Rehman, based on respect and honour.

Earlier, Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif met Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence in Islamabad.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reached a formerally's residence to mend the ties that witnessed a rift after the February 2024 general elections.

During the meeting, PM Sharif lauded the role of Fazlur Rehman for protecting democracy in Pakistan and also appreciated his religious services.

To mend the ties, PM Shehbaz Sharif recommended the formation of a committee.JUI-F Chief Fazlur Rehman had been accusing rigging in elections and demanding fresh mandate.—RT/Agency

Nikah Case Bombshell: Judge Majoka Vows to Resolve Bushra Bibi's Appeal In Just 10 Days

ISLAMABAD: Additional session judge Afzal Majoka has adjourned the hearing of appeals filed by Bushra Bibi, founder of PTI, against their sentence in the 'Iddat Nikkah' case.

Bushra Bibi's legal team, including Khalid Yusuf Chaudhry and Usman Riaz Gul, appeared in court.

PTI lawyers submitted the written order of the Islamabad High Court on Thursday.

Usman Riaz Gul urged the court to keep the hearing for the following day, stating, "We are still available today, listen to us today."

"If I live, I will decide in 10 days. If the other party does not appear, I will hear you and decide," the judge remarked.

Judge Majoka concluded by saying, "I am writing the order. There will be something bigger than the notice; look at the history."—RT/Agency

CJP Isa Exposes Major Problems In Court Reporting

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa said on Friday the culture of mudslinging could not be completely eradicated but it could certainly be reduced.

Speaking at the swearing-in ceremony of the Supreme Court Press Association, CJ Isa said judicial reporting was a very challenging task. The chief justice administered the oath to the new members. Justices Athar Minallah, Jamal Khan Mandokhail, and Naeem Akhtar Afghan also participated in the ceremony. The chief justice said he and his mother, Saeeda Qazi Isa, used to write articles years ago. In those days, writing involved a lot of research, he said. "It has become very easy to say whatever comes to mind now," the top judge lamented. The chief justice said that he compiled media rules and published them in the form of a book. He noted that the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto case had been decided, so now opinions can be formed about it.

The Lahore High Court wrote 627 paragraphs and the Supreme Court wrote 963 paragraphs in judgements in the Bhutto case, he added.—RT/Agency

REGIONAL TIMES

THE HEARTLAND

HYDERABAD: Residents of the SITE area are holding a protest demonstration against at the Hyderabad press club against their area's drug dealers.-RT

DC Sujawal Zahid Hussain Rind orders action against sale of substandard pesticides, seeds

By Kamran Hidayat

SUJAWAL: DC Zahid Hussain Rind has issued orders to the district officials to take stern action against the dealers, who are selling substandard seeds and pesticides. In this regard the Inspector Incharge IBD Imtiaz Ali Chandio, AC Zahid Hussain and Deputy Director Agriculture Badar Ahmed Khatti visited different markets and checked the quality of seeds and pesticides at the shops of the dealers.

The officials seized the godown of a trader after the recovery of the hundreds of bags of substandard pesticides. The officials vowed to continue action against the dealers, who are selling substandard items in Sujawal district.

Woman accuses AC Jhudo of corruption

By Shahid Majeed

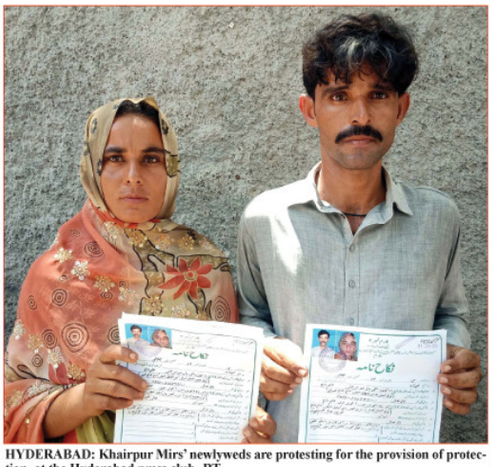
JHUDO: A social activist named Urooj Fatima Kapri staged a protest demonstration against the AC and Mukhtiarkar Jhudo on Friday. While talking to talking to the media, the protesting woman alleged that the AC Jhudo Shabbir Jan Jiskani is demanding bribe of Rs 1.5 million for the documentation of the land of her family. She accused the AC is misusing powers. While talking to the media, AC Shabbir Jan said that the protesting woman is demanding the share from the property in her demand which is attached to the road, while other share holders including Mehboob Kapri and Zubair have objection on this due to which matter is delaying. The complaints against the protesting woman have also been filed by her share holders in the Civil Court due to which this issue can be settled in the court now. She condemned the act of protesting against her by levelling fabricated allegations.

TMK's BISP beneficiaries decry illegal deductions from their stipends

By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: The BISP beneficiaries are facing many hardships as the device holders are continuously deducting stipends of the poor women at the centre which has been set up at the Mono Technical College Tando Muhammad Khan. The women told the media that money ranging from Rs 1500 to Rs 2000 are being deducted for every woman.

The local authorities have turned a blind eye to the matter by providing free hand to the device holders. They demanded of the higher authorities to take notice of the illegal deduction of their stipends, otherwise they have announced to widen their protest.



HYDERABAD: Khairpur Mirs' newlyweds are protesting for the provision of protection, at the Hyderabad press club.-RT

SSP Umerkot Asif Raza Baloch orders for heightened security for Eid-ul-Azha

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: SSP Umerkot, Asif Raza Baloch has directed the district police to beef up security measures for the Eid-ul-Azha. In this regard the additional police pockets have been set up and extra police force has been deployed in the markets and other sensitive areas in the city. The officials have also been directed to remain punctual and regular at the police complaint cell and resolve the registered complaints on a priority basis. It is worth mentioning that the number of patrolling police parties has also been increased to tighten the security in the district.

Bhelar community demands justice in Sobhodero land dispute

By Sajjad Chang

HINGORJA: The residents of Sobhodero recorded a protest demonstration against the occupation of their agricultural lands by a police officer.

The protest leaders, who included Nabi Bux Bhelar, Amjad Ali Bhelar, Ayaz Ali Bhelar and others said that their agricultural lands have been occupied by ASI Chhutal Bhelar and he is also issuing dire threats to them for raising voice against him. They added that when they reached the Hingorja Police Station for the registration of a case then police arrested them without any case. No is ready to take notice of their plight due to which they have resorted to record protest. On the occasion, the protesters demanded of the higher authorities to take notice of the matter and provide justice to them, otherwise they have announced to widen their protest.

SALBMDC delegation visits Dr Sadiq's New Hussain Dental Clinic in JNA

By Hakim Baloch

JAM NAWAZ ALI: A team from the Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai Medical and Dental College (SALBMDC) Mirpurkhas comprising Mushtaq Ali Khan, Dr Mustafa Butt, Principal Dr Atif Mehmood visited the New Hussain Dental Clinic of Dr Sadiq Ali Baloch on Friday. Dr Sadiq welcomed the guests and presented them traditional gifts of Ajrak.

Reception held in Tangwani for office-bearers of Pakistan Paramedical Staff Association

By Raza Noonari

TANGWANI: A reception was hosted by Lady Health Supervisors for the office-bearers of the Pakistan Paramedical Staff RP-2076, District Kashmore-Kandhkot. The reception was attended by Nusrat, Nasrin, Rukhsana, Hajra and others along with the District President of the organization Ali Hassan Qambrani, Provincial Chief Organizer Yar Ali Khan Domki, Aijaz Ahmed Qazi and others. On the occasion, the traditional gifts of Ajrak were presented to the guests.

HYDERABAD: Members and leaders of Sindh Sabha are holding a protest demonstration at the Hyderabad Press Club for Pirya Kumari's recovery.-RT

Construction work of Government Boys Middle School begins in Kumb

By Naz Solangi

KUMB: The Government Boys Primary School in village Palh has been upgraded to the status of the middle school and in this regard a scheme worth 25 million has been approved for the reconstruction of the school building. In this regard the construction work of the school building has been started under the supervision of the Town Chairman and Vice Chairman.

The local people have thanked MNA Dr Nafisa Shah for taking notice of their request and ensuring the upgradation of the school to facilitate the children of the village.

Tribute paid to Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (AS) on his martyrdom day

By Dildar Ali Samo

TANDO ADAM: The Patron in Chief and In-charge of the Anjuman Hussaini Faqir Sangat, Zawar Faqir Dilawar Chakrani has said in a message regarding observing martyrdom day of the fifth Imam Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (AS) that Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (AS) played role for the promotion and publication of the message of Islam. He trained hundreds of disciples therefore the great scholars of other religions of that period also appeared to say that "whatever Hazrat Muhammad Baqir (AS) teaches is right and correct. Imam Muhammad Baqir (AS) was an eyewitness of the incident of Karbala. It is also narrated in traditions that the Holy Prophet said to his companion Hazrat Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari that "You will see my fifth successor who will be named after me."

And he will crack the sciences to say my salutations to him" Similarly, Hazrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (AS) provided proof of being the true heir of his pure ancestor through his morals and character.

Imam Muhammad Baqir's (AS) continuous struggle against deviant groups and his firm and blunt stance on his principles was characteristic of Imam Muhammad Baqir (AS), so he continued to struggle through the message of truth regardless of difficulties and sufferings.

At the end Niaz (free food) was also served to the people.

Kunri man killed after a tractor trolley overturns

By MM Faisal

KUNRI: Tragic accident near Kunri Talhi, the driver was killed when the brakes of a tractor trolley full of bricks failed.

Talhi police and hundreds of villagers reached the spot as soon as they got the information.

Driver Krishan son of Kanji Meghwar was killed when a brick tractor trolley overturned in Noto Qadir Bux Chandio, a village on the outskirts of Talhi. The body of the deceased was handed over to his heirs after completing necessary medico legal formalities from a local area hospital.

HYDERABAD: Residents of Phuleli are holding a protest demonstration at the Hyderabad press club against their area's land grabbers.-RT

REGIONAL TIMES

Cutting Straight Every Day

NATIONAL

TDAP And Balochistan Agriculture Department Host Seminar On Cherry Export Potential

ISLAMABAD: The Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), in collaboration with the Agriculture Department of Balochistan, successfully held a seminar on the "Export Potential and Packaging Issues of Cherries" in Ziarat. The event, attended by 75 growers and stakeholders, focused on enhancing cherry cultivation and export in Pakistan.

Cherries, a high-value crop, have substantial export potential in Middle Eastern markets such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Kuwait. Despite ideal growing conditions in Ziarat, Pakistan's contribution to the global cherry market remains minimal. The seminar addressed strategies to boost production, improve quality, and tap into these lucrative markets.

Key speakers included Zain-Ul-Abideen from TDAP, who emphasized the economic benefits of cherry cultivation and provided insights on regulatory requirements and effective branding. Shah Jahan, Deputy Director of the Agriculture Department, discussed technical challenges and government support mechanisms, while Jahanzeb Khan from the Zimedar Action Committee covered quality standards for local and international markets.

Participants raised concerns about water planning, the need for a cherry association, and training in modern farming techniques. Recommendations included installing large-scale packing plants, upgrading testing labs, providing pruning equipment, and establishing demonstration farms.

The seminar concluded with calls to establish a Cherry Growers Association, enhance government support, develop a unified branding strategy, and address supply chain issues. The collaborative efforts of TDAP, the Agriculture Department, and active participation from growers are crucial for developing a vibrant and sustainable cherry industry in Pakistan.—RT

Maryam Encourages Punjab Youth To Lead Blood Donation Campaign On World Blood Donor Day

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has stated that Punjab's youth should serve as exemplars in the blood donation campaign.

In her message on the occasion of World Blood Donor Day, the chief minister said that this day serves as an opportunity to express gratitude to those who generously donate blood thereby saving the lives of others.

She expressed appreciation to all individuals who contribute to this noble cause by donating blood, especially on World Blood Donor Day.

The chief minister highlighted that every drop of donated blood symbolises a ray of hope for patients fighting for their lives.

Maryam also commended those who willingly donate blood, stating, "By giving blood, you are giving someone in dire need the gift of life."—RT/Agency

Anchorperson Imran Riaz Released Following Discharge By Lahore Court In New Case

LAHORE: The Lahore police on Friday released anchorperson Imran Riaz Khan after a local court discharged him from a fresh case in which he was arrested a day ago.

Riaz was taken into custody at the Allama Iqbal International Airport late on Tuesday night in a case of monetary fraud.

The visuals of the arrest, which showed the journalist clad in an ihram as he was departing for Saudi Arabia for Haj, had gone viral on social media, with the PTI calling for his release.

The police had sought his seven-day physical remand in Wednesday's hearing before the Model Town Court judicial magistrate.

The prosecutor had said that the anchorperson had borrowed Rs0.25 billion from the complainant but never returned the money. After hearing arguments from both sides, Judicial Magistrate Muhammad Kamran Zafar reserved the verdict and granted police Riaz's one-day physical remand.

Announcing the verdict on Thursday, the judge had discharged the anchorperson from the fraud case.

However, Riaz was later arrested outside the court in a separate case concerning interference with the police, which was registered at the Sarwar Road police station and said he had damaged a barrier near the Lahore airport.

Today, the anchorperson was presented before Judicial Magistrate Hafiz Kashif while Advocates Mian Ali Ashfaq and Rana Maroof appeared as his counsels.

The prosecution sought Riaz's physical remand of 10 days "on the ground that remaining accused persons are to be arrested" based on the anchorperson pointing them out. After hearing arguments from both sides and perusing the case record, the judicial magistrate discharged Riaz from the case.—RT/Agency

Sahiwal Hospital Officials Face Action Following Tragic Death Of 11 Infants In Blaze

LAHORE: A horrible blaze at Sahiwal Teaching Hospital, which claimed the lives of at least 11 infants, prompted a high-level probe following the orders of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, who vowed exemplary punishment for those found responsible.

CM Maryam, during her visit to the affected medical facility on Friday, issued directives to include the hospital's principal, medical superintendent (MS), assistant medical superintendent (AMS), and admin officer in the inquiry.

She also ordered the arrest of these officers and the termination of their jobs, while reprimanding health department officials over the deadly incident. The chief minister personally reviewed the inquiry report and CCTV footage of the blaze.

According to the report, fire extinguishing equipment had expired and remained unchanged despite the top management being informed.

Additionally, the hospital staff had not received any training sessions on how to use the equipment or handle any untoward incidents, the report added. Along with vowing penalties for those responsible, CM Maryam praised the rescuers who evacuated other children and announced prizes for them. She expressed dissatisfaction with the probe outcomes, which declared that the infants had died due to suffocation. Maryam was outraged at the hospital's management for failing to provide fire extinguishing equipment even after the fatal incident. The chief minister was accompanied by the provincial chief secretary, the additional inspector general (AIG) of the special branch, the commissioner of the Sahiwal Division, and other senior officers.—RT/Agency

Parvez Elahi Granted Exemption From Appearance In Illegal Recruitments Case

LAHORE: Former Punjab chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi could not be indicted in the illegal recruitments case on Friday.

Duty Judge Arshad Hussain Bhutta of the anti-corruption court, who presided over the hearing, learned that Parvez Elahi could not attend the proceedings due to illness.

His legal representatives submitted a request for his absence from the hearing, citing his health condition. A medical certificate was also presented, indicating that doctors had advised him complete rest due to a rib fracture and underlying cardiovascular issues.

Subsequently, the court, while granting Elahi's request for exemption, postponed further proceedings until June 27.

The court also announced that during the next hearing, charges would be pressed against Chaudhry Parvez Elahi along with other accused persons.—RT/Agency

FIA Intensifies Investigation Into Moonis Elahi In Money Laundering Case

LAHORE: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has tightened its noose around PTI leader Moonis Elahi in money laundering case, declaring him a 'proclaimed offender' and submitting a supplementary challan in Lahore Court, media reported on Friday.

The challan, submitted in the FIA's anti-money laundering court in Lahore, alleged that Farasat Ali Chatha deposited Rs1 billion into Moonis Elahi's company accounts, further implicating him in the money laundering scheme.

The investigation agency had earlier issued a red warrant for Elahi's arrest, which has already been sent to Interpol. Meanwhile, sources told media that the FIA declared six individuals, including Moonis Elahi, 'proclaimed offender' in the money laundering case. The accused include Elahi, Amir Saeed, Wajid Ahmed, Amir Fiaz, Farasat Chatha, and Imtiaz Shah. The agency has submitted a challan in court, alleging that the suspects laundered over Rs12 billion. The agency has registered a case against the suspects under the Anti-Money Laundering Act. Moonis Elahi is also facing allegations of billions of rupees of corruption in development projects. It is pertinent to mention here that the Special Central Court in Lahore ordered to seizure of all assets and bank accounts of former federal minister Elahi in a money laundering case on November 17.—RT/Agency

METRO KARACHI

Karachi Gateway Terminal Limited Sets New Record

KARACHI: Karachi Gateway Terminal Limited (KGTL) has achieved a remarkable milestone by offloading 20,300 Metric Tons of Rock Phosphate within an impressive 24 hours at its multipurpose terminal.

This outstanding achievement highlights the collaborative efforts of KGTL and its esteemed customer, Fatima Fertilizers, one of the largest importers of Rock Phosphate. The efficient and commendable services provided by stevedore Wiltrans Cargo Services were instrumental in reaching this milestone.

"This accomplishment underscores our commitment to operational efficiency and excellence in bulk handling," stated Khurram Khan, CEO of KGTL. "It is a testament to the dedication and seamless coordination among all stakeholders involved, showcasing KGTL's capability to manage large-scale operations swiftly and effectively."

KGTL plays a crucial role in facilitating trade and bolstering economic growth in Pakistan. The terminal remains steadfast in its commitment to delivering superior service quality, reinforcing Karachi Port as the preferred hub for both containerized and bulk cargo operations.

Continuing to enhance its operational capabilities, KGTL aims to further reduce turnaround times, thereby contributing significantly to the advancement and prosperity of Pakistan's maritime sector.—RT

Suspected Female Robber And Accomplice Arrested

KARACHI: An alleged female robber has been arrested red-handed along with her male accomplice in the Korangi area of Karachi on Friday, media reported.

According to police, the female robber named Zehra and her accomplice Meharuddin were 'looting' the citizens in the area. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) said that the lawmakers reached the sport and caught the suspects red-handed.

The SSP said a pistol, a stolen motorcycle, and looted cash have also been recovered from the suspects.

According to the SSP, the suspects were involved in numerous robberies along with their two other accomplices. The police said that a robbery committed by the suspects was captured on CCTV footage, which went viral on social media.

A case has been registered against the suspects at the Korangi police station while the raids are being conducted to arrest the suspects who are still at large.—RT/Agency

Yasmin Rashid Criticizes Nawaz And Maryam For Victimisation

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Dr Yasmin Rashid berats Nawaz Sharif and asks him to stop issuing false statements.

In her letter from jail, she has criticised Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz, stating that they give sermons about no political revenge but on the other hand, the PTI leaders and workers are being political victimised.

She stated that Nawaz Sharif's daughter Maryam Nawaz had set the worst example of injustice in Punjab.

The letter mentioned that PTI women workers Sanam Javed and Aliya Hamza had been arrested again and again and shifted to jails across Punjab.

She hit out at political rivals for exacting political revenge.

Rashid stated that the arrest of Amjad Niazi after release and FIRs against hundreds of political workers of PTI in Sahiwal were a political revenge. She also added that six-time minister, Mian Mahmoodur Rasheed was shifted to jail from hospital without proper treatment.—RT/Agency

CANTONMENT BOARD HYDERABAD

All the residents of Hyderabad Cantonment Board are requested to keep the animal waste on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha at the following designated places in the Cantonment area from where the vehicles and staff of the Cantonment Board can easily collect it on time. Contact the following telephone numbers in case of delay and cleaning arrangements Support the Cantonment Board administration in improving our surroundings.

Area	Specific Location	Incharge	Contact Numbers
President	Open Plot Near Cantt Police Station Haji Shah Chowk	Muhammad Rafiq (Sanitary Supervisor)	0311-7464119 0316-3001191 0317-3104064
Civil Lines Defence Area Tando Jahanian	Liaquat Road Civil Lines on open plot Open Plot Defence Plaza near Tando Jahanian Cemetery Water Supply Pump Defence Phase - 1	Rajesh (Sanitary Supervisor) Muhammad Owais Gulzar	0345-3567098 0313-3033823 0300-3242632
Kacha Qila	Open Plot Near Cantt Dispensary Near Bijli Hotel Chowk Mumtaz Colony Deswali Mohalla Chowk Shah Faisal Colony	Raja (Sanitary Supervisor) Idrees Ghulam Mohiuddin	0310-3203182 0315-4324435 0302-3274834
Latifabad No 12	Cantt Dispensary Near Hayatul Nabi Masjid Chowk	Amar (Sanitary Supervisor) Sulaiman Junaid	0313-3216277 0314-2875185 0310-3141707
Pathan Colony	Near Pakistan Park MMA Johar Road Near Government School Survey No 28 Near Taj Hotel Masoom Shah Colony	Ramal (Sanitary Supervisor) Muhammad Yasir Hammad	0311-3377086 0310-3744606 0312-3212949

Complaint Center Office
Telephone No.: 022-9200105

REGIONAL TIMES

EDITORIAL

Founders: Late Kazi Saeed Akbar, Late Kazi Jawad Akbar, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher: Kazi Sajjad Akbar

Saturday, June 15, 2024

No amount of money can improve Sindh until there is better governance and corruption is curbed

The recently unveiled Sindh budget for 2024-25, with its ambitious Rs3.056 trillion outlay, is a testament to the provincial government's intent to address pressing socio-economic challenges. The budget includes significant hikes in salaries and pensions, substantial allocations for education and healthcare, and a plethora of social welfare initiatives, all aimed at improving the living standards of Sindh's residents. Key initiatives like the Benazir Haari Card, free solar panels for 2.6 million households, and substantial investments in infrastructure projects signal a promising future.

On paper, the budget seems well-crafted to foster development and social upliftment. However, history has shown that grand financial plans often fall short due to systemic issues plaguing governance in Sindh. Chronic corruption and inefficient governance have been persistent obstacles, undermining the effectiveness of past budgets. The allocated funds frequently do not reach the intended beneficiaries due to deep-rooted corrupt practices within the system.

For the promises of the 2024-25 budget to translate into tangible improvements, a drastic overhaul in governance is imperative. Transparency in fund allocation, stringent anti-corruption measures, and accountability at every administrative level are crucial. Without these reforms, the substantial financial allocations risk being siphoned off or mismanaged, leaving the people of Sindh in the same plight.

Furthermore, improving institutional capacities to effectively manage and implement the proposed projects is essential. This includes better training for government employees, robust monitoring mechanisms, and public involvement in oversight processes. Only through genuine governance reforms can the budget's ambitious goals be realized, ensuring that the substantial funds allocated truly benefit the people of Sindh.

In conclusion, while the Sindh budget for 2024-25 is commendable for its comprehensive and people-friendly approach, its success hinges on addressing the endemic corruption and governance issues that have long plagued the province. Only with these changes can Sindh hope to achieve the prosperity and development envisioned in its budget.

REGIONAL TIMES

THE HEARTLAND

LARKANA: Members and leaders of the local Panhwar community are holding a protest demonstrations against the killing of Zuhaib Ali Panhwar and demanding justice for him, at Jinnah Bagh.-RT

Setharja's civil society rallies against Sindh Police

By Azhar Kubar

SETHARJA: The members of the Barristers' Team Sindh took out a protest rally for the recovery of Priya Kumari and arrest of Shaheed Nasrullah Gadani's murderers. The rally was led by Nadeem Shar, Arif Ali, Zulfiqar Sehto, journalists Ghulam Hussain Chang, Ali Gul Kubar, Sajjad Ali Kubar, Ali Abdullah Sehto and others, who marched through different parts of the city. The protest leaders expressed concern over the inept performance of the Sindh Police and demanded justice for Shaheed Nasrullah Gadani and Priya Kumari, otherwise they have announced to continue their protest.

Missing Badin youth's family protests for his recovery

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: The search by the relatives of the young man who went missing for 18 days in a dramatic manner in Badin could not be found and the Badin police filed more than three cases without revealing the arrest. The old mother of the young man named Begum Chandio, Wajid Chandio, along with Mir Muhammad Chandio, held a press conference and said that 18 days ago, my young son Pyar Ali Chandio was invited by Badin's influential Haider Chandio at his house as a guest. After our young Pyar Ali Chandio has gone missing, we repeatedly went to Haider Chandio to ask where is the boy you wanted. Badin police have filed almost three cases against my young son Pyar Ali. The police instead of taking action against Haider Chandio are harassing the family members of the missing youth. They have been contacted to pay Rs 1 million for the release of the youth, while the police officials are playing a role of facilitators in this matter. On the occasion, the protesters demanded of the higher authorities to take notice of the matter and ensure the recovery of their missing youth.

Daulatpur journalists continue their protest for justice for Nasrullah Gadani

By Aijaz Jokhio

DAULATPUR: The local journalists of Daulatpur recorded a protest demonstration for the arrest of Shaheed Nasrullah Gadani's murderers on Friday. While talking to the media, the protest leaders, who included Mehboob Jokhio, Mir Murtaza Jokhio, Muhammad Ali Jokhio, Niaz Unar and others said that the journalists of Sindh are performing their duties under serious conditions as several journalists including Jan Muhammad Mahar, Nasrullah Gadani and others have been killed so far. The Sindh Police have shown no progress in the murder cases of the journalists which is a matter of concern for them. They demanded of the higher authorities to take notice of the murders of the journalists and ensure the arrest of Nasrullah Gadani's murderers, otherwise they have vowed to continue their protest.

AC Ghotki takes action against illegal rice cultivation

By Shad Mahar

GHOTKI: The Assistant Commissioner of Ghotki district on orders of DC Dr Syed Muhammad Ali Shah have launched an operation against the rice cultivated in Ghotki. In this regard it was learnt that cultivation of rice is banned in Ghotki district due to which the AC destroyed the standing crops of the people which had been grown in violation of the government orders.

AC Pithoro Sanjay Kumar reviews arrangements for upcoming monsoon rains

By M Ismail Khilji

PITHORO: The Assistant Commissioner Pithoro, Sanjay Kumar chaired a meeting of the officials to review arrangements for the monsoon season on Friday. The meeting was attended by the officials of the Local Government, Revenue, Livestock and other departments. Addressing on the occasion, the AC Pithoro directed the officials to ensure cleanliness in the city and continue desilting work of the canals and nullahs. He stressed the need of the completion of all the needed arrangements as soon as possible because no negligence in this regard will be tolerated.

Four injured in Pithoro road accident

By M Ismail Khilji

PITHORO: A speeding jeep hit a tractor near Cheema Farm on Umerkot Road and as a result four men including Rashid Domki, Jan Muhammad Rahmon, Sher Muhammad Rahmon and Saleem Soomro sustained severe injuries. The injured were rushed to a local area hospital. The area police reached the spot and impounded both the vehicles.

LARKANA: Activists and leaders of PTI are holding a protest demonstration at Jinnah Bagh for Imran Khan's release.-RT

Tando Adam's growers protest against water shortage in Sui Kandhar Branch

By Mumtaz Ali

TANDO ADAM: The local growers of Tando Adam recorded a protest demonstration against the shortage of water in Sui Kandhar Branch on Friday. While talking to the media, the protest leaders, who included Councilor Imran Brohi, Ibrahim Hakro, Qasim Hingoro and others said that their agricultural lands have been affected due to shortage of irrigation water in Sui Kandhar Branch since past one and half year but the concerned authorities have shown an indifferent approach in this regard despite their several complaints. On the occasion, the protesters demanded of the higher authorities to take steps for the provision of relief to them, otherwise they have announced to widen their protest.

Joint Action Committee continues protest for arrest of Shaheed Nasrullah Gadani's killers

By Khair Muhammad Golo

THUL: The leaders of the Joint Action Committee former by the journalists and civil society leaders staged a protest demonstration for the arrest of the murderers of journalist Shaheed Nasrullah Gadani. The protest leaders, who included Arif Karim Mughal, Jamal Josh Burirо, Majeed Noonari, Muhammad Bux Brohi, Mansoor Kunrani and others said that the journalists are unsafe in the province of Sindh due to which they are being killed after every few months. They expressed concern over the performance of the police and demanded of the higher authorities to take steps for the arrest of the real murderers of Shaheed Nasrullah Gadani, otherwise they have announced to continue their protest.

Two women shot dead over Kari in Ghotki

By Shad Mahar

GHOTKI: A man named Sarwar Chachar killed his wife and his cousin's wife by opening indiscriminate fire on them over the allegations of Kari in village Meeranpur near Feeder Wah. After the incident the murderers managed to flee from the scene. The area police after receiving information reached the spot under leadership of SHO Barkat Ali Bhatti and shifted the bodies of the killed women named Shazia W/o Sarwar Chachar and Manzooran W/o Asghar Ali Chachar were shifted to the local area hospital which were handed over to their heirs after completing necessary medico legal formalities.

REGIONAL TIMES
Uniting People Every Day

SPORTS

Pakistan crush India, qualify for Asian Squash Championship semis

KARACHI: After consecutive triumphs during the Asian Team Squash Championship, Pakistan crushed India Friday 2-1 and qualified for the semi-finals of the tournament in Dalian, China.

Pakistan's Asim Khan secured the lead for the Greens with an impressive 3-0 finish against Rahul Baitha of India.

But India were brought back by Velavan Senthilkumar in the game with a 3-0 win against Nasir Iqbal.

Pakistan's coach Fahim Gul confirmed after the match that Iqbal was suffering from fever due to which he could not perform up to the mark.

With the match level at 1-1, Pakistan's Noor Zaman stepped up for his side and delivered a flawless performance to beat Suraj Kumar Chand 3-0 and help his side move on to the next round.

Pakistan will face Hong Kong, who defeated Iran, in the semi-final tomorrow.

Pakistan coach Gul was elated after the win against India and hoped that the team will do well in the upcoming matches as well.

Earlier, Pakistan remained unbeaten in Pool C of the event where they were alongside South Korea, Chinese Taipei and China.

Pakistan beat Taipei 3-0 and Korea 2-1 on the opening day to make a good start to the tournament. Meanwhile, they beat China yesterday 3-0 to top their pool.

AFG vs PNG: Afghanistan beat PNG, qualify for Super 8 stage

Afghanistan Friday clinched victory by seven wickets against Papua New Guinea in a major upset for New Zealand, which is now out of the T20 World Cup 2024.

The match was played at the Brian Lara Stadium, Tarouba, Trinidad, where Afghanistan smoothly qualify for the Super 8 stage, while the Kiwis lost their chance to move ahead in the mega tournament.

Afghanistan claimed the win in 15.1 overs for the loss of three wickets and chased a modest target of 95 runs.

Openers Rahmanullah Gurbaz (7) and Ibrahim Zadran (0) were dismissed early but Gulbadin Naib scored an unbeaten 49 runs in 36 balls, with the help of four fours and two sixes, to take his side over the line.Earlier, a clinical bowling display helped Afghanistan dismiss PNG for only 95 runs in 19.5 overs.

PNG quickly slipped to 17-4 in the fourth over of the innings which severely dented their chances of posting a competitive total on the board.

Wicketkeeper-batter Kiplin Doriga was the highest scorer for PNG with 27 runs in 32 balls.

Pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi was the pick of the bowlers for Afghanistan once again with impressive figures of 3-16 in four overs.

"I want to congratulate the entire team because we have now officially qualified for the Super 8. I feel proud," Farooqi, who was named Player of the Match, said.

"Before the warm-up match, I was in the IPL. I did not get any chances there unfortunately. I played just one warm-up game. I know how to carry my body and I just tried to keep it simple. I try to get some wickets if there is some movement or swing. If there is nothing, then I try to go to plan B, not go for boundaries and keep it simple. We have to give our 100% and we will try our best to do it in the last match as well," he added.—Agency

Disappointing Pakistan out of T20 World Cup after US vs Ireland match called off due to rain

Pakistan are out of the T20 World Cup 2024 after the United States vs Ireland match was called off due to a wet outfield at the Central Broward Regional Parkin, Lauderhill, Florida, on Friday.The US have earlier played three matches, kicking off history's largest T20 tournament with a win against Canada. The Americans also defeated Pakistan last week. Ireland earlier played two innings of the current tournament. Their first face-off was with India and then with Canada but, they lost in both of the clashes.

The US defeated Canada and Pakistan in their first two matches of the tournament while the Men in Green were defeated by the Americans and India.

The Green Shirts have one more match to play against Ireland but that would be a dead rubber as they are now out of the largest cricket T20 tournament.

In the last two editions, Pakistan made it to the semi-final in 2021 where they lost to Australia while in 2022, despite a poor start, the Green Shirts went all the way to the final but lost to England at Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

Pakistan have played the T20 World Cup semi-final six times - 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2021 and 2022 — the most by any team and this will be their first group-stage exit since 2016 and only third overall.

Squads:

The US: Shayan Jahangir, Steven Taylor, Andries Gous, Aaron Jones, Nitish Kumar, Corey Anderson, Harmeet Singh, Shadley van Schalkwyk, Jasdeep Singh, Saurabh Netravalkar, Ali Khan, Nosthush Kenjige, Monank Patel (c), Nisarg Patel, Milind KumarIreland: Andrew Balbirnie, Paul Stirling (c), Lorcan Tucker, Harry Tector, Curtis Campher, George Dockrell, Gareth Delany, Mark Adair, Barry McCarthy, Joshua Little, Craig Young, Benjamin White, Neil Rock, Graham Hume, Ross Adair.—Agency

Imam-ul Haq defends Form 47 Babar Azam amid Ahmed Shehzad's criticism

Pakistan squad's skipper Babar Azam was defended by cricketer Imam-ul Haq after he got bashed by veteran Ahmed Shehzad for his "unimpressive" performance during the ongoing T20 World Cup 2024.

Imam, who is also one of the panelists in Haarna Mana Hai, a Geo News show, alongside cricket veterans Shehzad and Imran Nazir, put forward the idea that the element of respect should not be ignored while commenting on the performance of the team.

"He's your captain, you don't want to consider him as a captain it's fine. The world has made him the king, you haven't," said Imam.

Imam emphasised that Babar should be respected for his services for the team and the fact that he has played 250 international matches.

Imam maintained that Babar's statistics from the last 20 matches should not overshadow his statistics over the last 250 matches while denying to justify the lack of performance by the Pakistan's captain. Moreover, he stressed on respecting his contribution.

"Is there anyone who have been the number one in Pakistan's ODI ranking as well as in the T20I," said the batter.

He added: "All of us have played for Pakistan and all of us have the right to criticise. None of us are satisfied with the team's performance against India, but remember that the element of respect should not be ignored."

Over the criticism by Ahmed who termed Babar a "fake king", the left-handed batter expressed his opinion, comparing his own statistics with him during the show on Wednesday.

"I feel I could've done better than those stats. But your (Babar's) stats are worse than mine... You've faced 205 balls in powerplays in T20 World Cups, but you haven't managed to hit one six!" said the veteran.Ahmed added while criticising the Pakistan captain: "You destroyed the entire domestic structure. You sacrificed good performers in domestic cricket to adjust your friends in the team."—Agency

'Body shaming is intolerable': Ahmad Shahzad defends Azam Khan

Speaking up on criticism faced by Pakistani wicketkeeper Azam Khan over his dismal performance and lack of physical fitness, former Pakistan opener Ahmad Shahzad said it was everybody's right to speak on performance but one should avoid body shaming others.The development came after son of legendary wicketkeeper-batter Moin Khan has consistently faced criticism over his physical fitness and poor performance in the recent T20 series against England and Ireland and the World Cup match against United States. Over Pakistan's first two losses in the ongoing World Cup, Shahzad said it was not an individual's fault, but the entire team was accountable for that.Pakistan, after featuring him in back to back matches, axed the middle-order batsman from the playing XI in matches against India and Canada of the World Cup.

In Green Shirts' opening match of the mega tournament against the United States, the Azam was routed for naught.Last week, batsman Imam Ul Haq defended Azam amid trolling on social media, saying that it affects a player's performance. Imam said that a cricketer was unable to perform well in the matches because of the trolling on social media, adding that the social media warriors instantly blasted a cricketer's performance.Since his international debut three years ago in July 2018, Azam has struggled to make an impact in T20Is for Pakistan, having scored only 88 runs in at least 14 innings.Both his on-field performance and physical fitness have drawn harsh criticism for the 25-year-old cricket player. —Agency

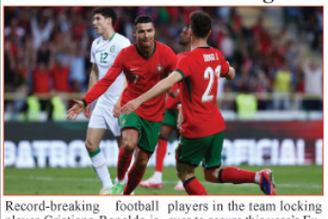
Pat Cummins denies Australia manipulating England's World Cup exit

Pat Cummins ruled out the prospect of Australia underperforming against Scotland in a bid to oust rivals England from the ongoing ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, saying it would be against the "spirit of cricket."

Bowling spearhead Josh Hazlewood caused controversy this week when he said it would be in Australia's interests for reigning champions England to be out of the competition.Australia have already secured their place in the next round, the Super 8s and he suggested they could ease up in their closing Group B game against Scotland this weekend to engineer their bitter rivals' exit.That scenario now appears less likely after England crushed Oman by eight wickets on Thursday to move above Scotland on net run rate with a final game to come against Namibia.

In this case, if England beat Namibia then Scotland will have to overcome Australia to qualify for the Super Eight.England coach Matthew Mott — an Australian — said he hoped Hazlewood was joking and Australia's Test and one-day skipper Cummins assured him that the bowler was."When you go out and play you're trying your best every time. And if you're not, it's probably against the spirit of cricket," Pat Cummins told reporters in St Lucia."I don't think you can (go into a game not trying to win) — ever. You're playing an international game in the middle of a World Cup."You still want to try and have a good game and carry that on into the Super Eights. I've never stepped onto the field without the mindset of being aggressive like the guys have so far."—Agency

Cristiano Ronaldo makes bold statement about Portugal



Record-breaking football player Cristiano Ronaldo is preparing to be in action as the European Championship or Euro 2024 is set to commence Friday in Munich.

The first Group A match of Euro 2024 will be between Germany and Scotland.

According to an ESPN, Ronaldo said that Portugal's current generation of footballers deserves to win the continental tournament.

"We have to go step by step, live in the moment, be calm, work as well as we have until now, believe that it is possible. We know it's a short competition, but the team is ready," the 39-year-old said.

Alongside Ronaldo, Bruno Fernandes of Manchester United, Paris Saint-Germain's (PSG) Vitinha, and Manchester City pair Bernardo Silva and Rúben Dias are among the famous players in the team locking eyes to secure this year's European title.

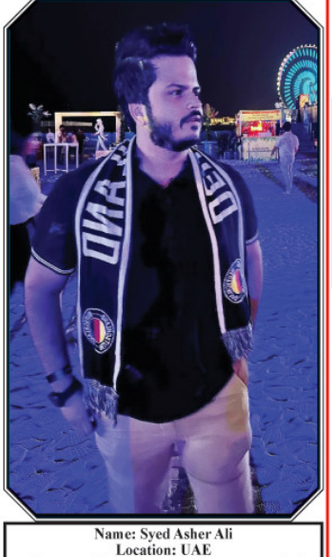
Al Nassr forward Ronaldo further said: "I believe that this generation deserves to win a competition of this magnitude. Semifinals? I hope we can go further."

"We have to go step by step, live in the moment, be calm, work as well as we have until now, believe that it is possible. We know it's a short competition, but the team is ready," the five-time Ballon d'Or winner said.

Cristiano Ronaldo is all set to participate for the record sixth time in the Euro 2024 alongside two others — Pepê and Rui Patrício — who were also in Portugal's Euro 2016 winning squad.

"I enjoy football, records are a consequence, not a goal, they appear naturally," he said.—Agency

Face of the Day



Name: Syed Asher Ali
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About me: I love traveling to new countries!

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

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ENTERTAINMENT

Brittany Mahomes hails Taylor Swift's contribution to football

Taylor Swift has had a positive effect on football, according to Brittany Mahomes.

In conversation with E! News, Brittany, who is married to Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes, claimed that Taylor sparked a whole new crowd's interest in NFL after she started dating tight end Travis Kelce.

"I love that it's getting young girls into football, so that they can watch it with their dads. I feel like most dads out there love it when their daughters are like, 'I wanna watch football!'" Brittany said during a joint interview with her husband at the Chiefs' 2024 Super Bowl ring ceremony.

She added, "It's got a bunch of beautiful little girls out there, and a lot of new fans that we love and adore."

On the other hand, Patrick was also grateful for the singer's support as she had made several appearances to cheer for the team.

"We're all big football fans in the Mahomes household and big Taylor Swift fans as well," he added.

Brittany and Taylor have been inseparable since September 2023 as they attended several matches to cheer on their beaus.

"Brittany is thrilled to be building a genuine friendship with Taylor," an insider told US Weekly at the time.

Kate Middleton addresses the public for the second time on cancer battle

Kate Middleton has finally decided to speak out about her battle against cancer, as part of a first official statement.

The statement includes an update regarding her return to public life and details that she is to be expected at the Trooping of Colour event that is to take place tomorrow.

It is pertinent to mention that this will be the Duchess' first ever appearance since announcing she has cancer.

According to a report by The Daily Mail, the statement reads, "I have been blown away by all the kind messages of support and encouragement over the last couple of months."

"It really has made the world of difference to William and me and has helped us both through some of the harder times."

"I am making good progress, but as anyone going through chemotherapy will know, there are good days and bad days."

"On those bad days you feel weak, tired and you have to give in to your body resting. But on the good days, when you feel stronger, you want to make the most of feeling well."

"My treatment is ongoing and will be for a few more months. On the days I feel well enough, it is a joy to engage with school life, spend personal time on the things that give me energy and positivity, as well as starting to do a little work from home."

"I'm looking forward to attending The King's Birthday Parade this weekend with my family and hope to join a few public engagements over the summer, but equally knowing I am not out of the woods yet."

"I am learning how to be patient, especially with uncertainty. Taking each day as it comes, listening to my body, and allowing myself to take this much needed time to heal."

Before concluding she also added, "Thank you so much for your continued understanding, and to all of you who have so bravely shared your stories with me."

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THE HEARTLAND

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NATIONAL

PHDEC Enhances Pakistan's Banana Exports With Distribution Of Banana Bags

HYDERABAD: The Pakistan Horticulture Development & Export Company (PHDEC) has launched a pilot project aimed at improving Pakistan's banana exports through the distribution of banana bunch bags to progressive growers in the Hyderabad region. This initiative seeks to enhance banana quality and cosmetic appeal, facilitating access to lucrative international markets. PHDEC continues its commitment to advancing Pakistan's horticulture sector by improving product quality to boost exports.

Sindh province, which covers 93% of Pakistan's banana cultivation area and produces 83% of the country's bananas, mainly grows the Cavendish variety. However, climate change effects, such as high temperatures causing physiological disorders like chilling injury and sunburn, have impacted fruit quality and market prices. The banana bagging initiative aims to mitigate these effects and diversify products for niche markets.

Pakistan, a significant banana producer with approximately 33 thousand hectares under cultivation, currently exports bananas to Iran and the Central Asian Republics (CARs). Improving the cosmetic appeal and overall quality of bananas is crucial for accessing higher-value markets, exemplified by Pakistan's $52 million banana export in 2023.

In addition to distributing banana bags, PHDEC collaborated with the Agriculture Research Department in Tandojam to organize a seminar on banana bagging and good agricultural practices. Held at the Agriculture Research Department's auditorium hall, the seminar covered topics from production to post-harvest management and export marketing.

Mr. Athar Hussain Khokhar, CEO of PHDEC, highlighted banana's emergence as a potential export crop and stressed the importance of adopting good agricultural practices amid climate challenges. He cited the success of PHDEC's mango bagging initiative in Multan and Hyderabad regions.

Mr. Niaz Ahmad Nizamani, a progressive banana grower and value chain expert, instructed growers on effective banana bunch bagging techniques during the seminar. He emphasized the types of bags, their benefits, and installation procedures critical for enhancing fruit appearance.

Dr. Abdul Mubeen Lodhi, Professor at the Department of Plant Protection, Sindh Agriculture University, provided insights into current crop conditions, agricultural practices, and challenges. He addressed issues like Panama disease, symptoms, and control measures impacting banana production in Pakistan.

The seminar concluded with a call for growers to adopt modern agricultural practices, including banana bagging, to enhance crop quality and market competitiveness. PHDEC's initiative underscores its commitment to sustainable agriculture and boosting Pakistan's position in global fruit markets.—RT

SAFCO Microfinance Company Partners With Sindh Insurance Company

HYDERABAD: SAFCO Microfinance Company (SMCL) has entered into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Sindh Insurance Company, a government entity, to provide insurance services. This collaboration aims to offer Sindh Insurance Company's benefits to SAFCO's program-affiliated community groups, individual households, and staff members, demonstrating SAFCO's commitment to social responsibility.

Established in 2016, Sindh Insurance Company provides a substantial insurance benefit of Rs. 1 lakh to the next of kin in cases of accidental death in Sindh, without requiring prior registration. The SLA, signed yesterday at the SAFWCO Group head office by Suleman G Abro, Founder of the SAFWCO Group, and Muhammad Faisal Siddiqui, Executive Officer of Sindh Insurance Company, solidifies this partnership.

During the ceremony, Suleman G Abro expressed his dedication to extending this critical service to SAFCO's employees and millions associated with its programs. He emphasized the simplicity and accessibility of the insurance process, ensuring that eligible individuals promptly receive their benefits.

Syed Sajjad Ali Shah, Managing Director of SMCL, highlighted the significance of insurance coverage, while CEO Muhammad Faisal Siddiqui shared insights into the insurance program and discussed plans to potentially increase the insurance payout to Rs. 3 lakh in the future.

This partnership aims to enhance financial security among SAFCO's stakeholders, underscoring the mutual benefit derived from collaborative efforts in social and economic development.—RT

Korkani community men demand justice in Sinjhoro land dispute

By Khadim Khaskheli

SANGHAR: Korkani community men, who were the residents of Sinjhoro's Ward No-6 recorded a protest demonstration against the occupation of their agricultural lands on Friday. While talking to the media, the protest leaders, who included Raees Bakho Khan, Umed Khan, Bahadur, Idrees and others said that their agricultural lands have been occupied by the influential men of their community due to which they are facing many hardships. On the occasion, the protesters demanded of the higher authorities to take notice of the matter and provide justice to them.

Fatmid Foundation holds a blood donation camp at Tando Allahyar Press Club

By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: A blood donation camp was organized by Fatmid Foundation at the Tando Allahyar Press Club on Friday.

The District President of PTI Tando Allahyar, Advocate Aslam Laghari, social activist Sohaib Farooq Qaimkhani, President of Tando Allahyar Press Club Ghulam Rasool Dars, Habibullah Wassan and other journalists and local people donated blood at the camp in a large number.

The donated blood will be provided to Fatmid Foundation for the children, who are suffering from Thalassaemia.

Cop injured in Pir Jo Goth Police shootout

By Abdul Qudoos Khilji

PIR JO GOTH: A gang of criminals attacked the special team of the Pir Jo Goth Police near Bera Bridge and as a result police constable named Sajjad Solangi sustained injuries. After the incident the attackers managed to flee from the scene. The injured cop was rushed to a local area hospital. A case of the incident was lodged in the complaint of ASI Muhammad Saleh Tunio against nine criminals including Rasheed Kalhoro, Barkat Kalhoro, Farhan Shah, Fahim Ghumro, Aqib Ghumro and others.

Mashaikh Hothi Police arrest two drug dealers

By Afaque Khanzada

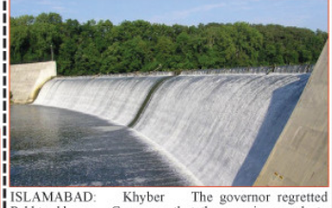
TANDO ALLAHYAR: Mashaikh Hothi Police in Jhando Marri Taluka conducted a raid on a tip-off and managed to arrest two drug dealers named Ghulam Ali Nohri and Javed Ahmed Nohri. The police recovered 20 bags of raw material of manufacturing Gutka from possession of the arrested men and registered a case against them. SHO Mumtaz Ali Chandio vowed to continue operations against the criminals on orders of SSP Abrez Ali Abbasi and DSP Shuhabuddin Umrani.

Annual Urs of Hazrat Shah Awais Qarni (RA) celebrated in NWM

By Yousif Rind

NAWAB WALI MUHAMMAD: The annual Urs of Hazrat Shah Awais Qarni (RA) was observed by the Dargah Faiz Hashmi on Friday. The caretakers of several shrines of the saints in Pakistan attended the annual Urs celebrations along with the devotees in a large number. Sajjadanashin of Dargah Faiz Hashmi, Faqir Ali Nawaz Hashmi, Syed Saleh Shah, Pir Aijaz Hashmi, Pir Aijaz Hashmi, Sahibzada Abdul Sattar Hashmi and others laid a chaddar and floral wreaths on the grave of Hazrat Shah Awais Qarni (RA) near Manjhand. On the occasion, Director of the Minhaj-ul-Quran Karachi, Mufti Aijaz Malik addressed the Urs celebrations. On the occasion, Shahmir Bughio, Shahzado Mahar, Yousif Rind, De Sultan and others were also present.

Kundi Expresses Gratitude To PM For Allocating Rs 19 Billion For Chashma Lift Canal



ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday extended his gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for allocating Rs 19 billion the Federal Budget for completion of the Chashma Lift Canal project that would help boost the wheat crop yield in the province.

Talking to the media outside the Parliament House, Governor Kundi said after the project's completion the province would be able to chip in the country's wheat export along with meeting its local needs.

The Chashma Lift Canal would be inaugurated during the current year, he added.

The governor regretted that the promises made to federally and provincially administered tribal areas (FATA & PATA respectively) had not been fulfilled whereas the issues pertaining to the new taxes for the newly merged districts needed to be resolved.

"Everyone knows about the security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the KP chief minister must call an emergency meeting of the apex committee," Kundi said. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government was bragging about its education reforms whereas 26 universities in the province did not have a vice chancellor, he added.—RT/Agency

Pakistan Sends Ninth Humanitarian Aid Shipment To Palestine

ISTANBUL/ISLAMABAD: Pakistan dispatched its ninth shipment of humanitarian aid to Palestine, the Prime Minister's Office announced Friday.

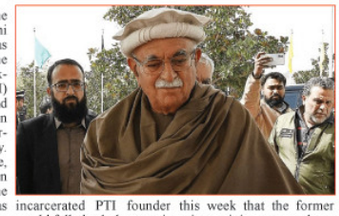
The aid, totalling around 300 tons, comprises medicines, hygiene kits, and food packs, and is destined for Aqba Port in Jordan for further distribution to Gaza.

This shipment follows eight previous consignments sent by Islamabad, including winterised tents, blankets, surgical supplies, medicines, female dignity kits, and food packs.

Israel has killed nearly 37,800 Palestinians, most of them women and children, and injured over 85,100 since Oct. 7, according to local health authorities.

Over eight months into the Israeli war, vast tracts of Gaza lay in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine.—RT/Agency

PTI Greenlights Achakzai To Reach Out To PML-N, PPP, And MQM-P



ISLAMABAD: After the Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) chief was named as negotiator, the Imran Khan-founded Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has now "given the go-ahead to take forward mediation process with the ruling parties", media learnt on Friday.

The opposition alliance, Tehreek-e-Tahafuz Ayeen (TTAP) — formed by the former ruling party — has greenlighted the decision to initiate political talks with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P).

The sources added that the alliance would "formally contact the ruling parties after finalising the terms of references (ToRs)".

Additionally, representatives of each party in the alliance would be included in the delegation. It was also learnt that Achakzai will also take Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) in confidence after the Eid ul Adha festival following holding consultations with the PTI.

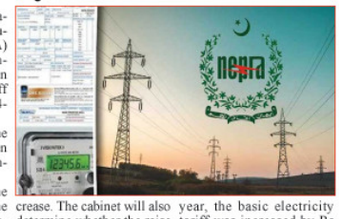
The well-informed insiders also confirmed that the incarcerated PTI founder would fully back the negotiation process led by Achakzai.

Earlier this week, the PTI picked Achakzai to lead the negotiations via the opposition alliance's platform.

The PkMAP chairman enjoys the full authority from the PTI to lead the talks with the government that will centre upon matters about the release of incarcerated leaders and workers, electoral transparency, and the constitutional boundaries of the judiciary, parliament and other state institutions.

The PTI's political leadership will also be part of the negotiations with the government, sources said. PTI chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan told the media persons this week that the former prime minister wanted avenues of dialogue to be opened. He told journalists that Khan was ready to forgive what had happened to him for the sake of reconciliation. "The PTI founder has said many times that 'I am ready to forgive what happened to me'," the PTI chairman said. 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 was PTI's "own decision" to negotiate. "The PTI founder did not write any letter to the SC for negotiation. The PTI will also respond to its negotiation option."—RT/Agency

NEPRA Raises Base Power Tariff By 5.72 Per Unit



ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Friday approved an increase of Rs 5.72 per unit in the basic electricity tariff for the financial year 2024-25.

The decision to raise the electricity tariff has been sent to the federal government for final approval.

Following the Prime Minister's endorsement, the increase in the basic electricity tariff will be implemented from July 1, 2024. The average basic electricity tariff will rise from Rs 29.78 to Rs 35.5 per unit.

Sources indicate that the federal cabinet will decide on the electricity price increase. The cabinet will also determine whether the raise will be applied all at once or gradually.

It is worth noting that in the current financial year, the federal government raised the basic electricity tariff by Rs 7.50 per unit, whereas in the last financial year, the basic electricity tariff was increased by Rs 7.91 per unit.

For the financial year 2023-24, the basic electricity tariff was increased in a single lump sum, while in the financial year 2022-23, the tariff was increased in three phases. —RT/Agency

Federal Minister Emphasizes Future-Ready Education

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has said, "We must provide our youth with an education that will be essential in future."

Talking to the media at the Pakistan Institute of Fashion and Design (PIFD) here on Friday, he mentioned that a significant portion of our population consisted of youth, and they were our future. He stated that the government is aware of its responsibilities and has declared an education emergency to educate the youth, adding that we should provide an education that will be relevant in ten years.

In response to a question about the 18th Amendment, he said that some provinces benefited from the amendment while others did not. He mentioned that the 18th Amendment was introduced for devolution of powers, but it proved otherwise in the past 15-20 years. He noted that the federal government has very limited fiscal space after debt repayments and defence expenditure. He suggested that tax should not be based on areas, industry and agriculture, rather, it should be on income, adding that whoever earns should pay tax.

Replying to a question about differences between the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the government, he said that the PPP was present in the house during the budget session, and their protest was merely symbolic.

Earlier, Prof. Hina Tayyaba Khalil, Vice Chancellor of the PIFD, along with the Registrar, faculty, staff and students, welcomed the federal minister, who attended the closing ceremony of the Thesis Display 2024 as the chief guest.

Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui witnessed the work of students and expressed his admiration for the students' creativity and the remarkable quality of their thesis projects representing all areas of the country. He also commended the state-of-the-art facilities available to students at the PIFD campus, recognising the institution's commitment to fostering innovation and excellence in fashion and design education.

The visit highlighted the significant achievements of the PIFD students and the institution's role in nurturing future leaders in the fashion industry.—RT/Agency

METRO KARACHI

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah is presiding over a pre-budget cabinet meeting at the CM House.—RT

KATI Criticizes Federal Budget For Ignoring Industrial Sector

KARACHI: Johar Qandhari, President of the Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI), has voiced strong criticism of the federal government's recent budget, highlighting a complete lack of facilities and incentives for the industrial sector. Qandhari expressed disappointment, noting that the budget fails to address the development needs of industries and does not provide any strategy to reduce production costs or energy prices.

Qandhari pointed out that the budget includes an unprecedented 40% lump sum tax increase on exports, raising significant concerns within the business community. He emphasized that the burden on existing taxpayers has increased without a corresponding effort to expand the tax net. The lack of measures to promote investment, combined with increased taxes and duties on raw materials, will lead to higher product prices and stifle industrial growth.

"The government has failed to create policies to lower production costs or provide relief in energy prices," said Qandhari. "This oversight discourages both local and foreign investment, pushing investors to consider relocating their industries abroad due to rising operational costs."

He detailed the financial pressures facing industrialists, including high-interest rates, expensive loans, the highest electricity and gas prices, levies on petroleum products, increased transportation costs, and higher employee salaries. Qandhari stressed that industrialists are left to manage these rising costs while also dealing with infrastructure, security, personal expenses, and children's education, all of which threaten the profitability and sustainability of their businesses.

Qandhari also criticized the budget's additional taxes on current taxpayers, driven by the IMF's demands, warning that such measures would only exacerbate inflation and push more people below the poverty line. He highlighted the complete tax exemption for the agricultural sector, which accounts for 26% of the GDP, as a concerning disparity.

"If the government aims to achieve an economic growth target of more than 3%, it must reduce taxes, provide incentives to the export industry, and expand the tax net to relieve the burden on current taxpayers," Qandhari asserted. "Failure to do so will lead to decreased investment and the closure of industries, severely damaging the economy."

Qandhari concluded that the federal government's neglect of industrial development indicates a lack of commitment to promoting industrialization. He called for immediate policy changes to support the industrial sector and ensure sustainable economic growth.—RT

Public Enemy Number One K-Electric Requests Sindh Government To Settle Rs1.7 Billion Dues

KARACHI: K-Electric, city's solder power provider, has warned Sindh government of electricity suspension in case of failure to pay the pending dues.

In a letter to Sindh chief secretary and secretary energy, K-Electric has demanded payment of Rs1.7 bln withheld dues from the Sindh government.

The letter has a list of 64 defaulter departments of the Sindh government. The government has been urged to clear the dues else the electricity supply will be disconnected.

It is to be noted that Sindh government and K-Electric reached an agreement on the clearance of dues and current bills in 2019.

Earlier, in a move to address the power outage issue, K-Electric and the Sindh government decided to form a joint committee in Karachi.

A high-level meeting was held between Sindh Government and KE to discuss power Supply and load shedding in Karachi.

Sindh Government was represented by Energy Minister Nasir Hussain Shah, while K-Electric was represented by their CEO Moonis Alvi along with senior officials and the company's leadership.

During the meeting, it was decided to form a joint committee consisting of representatives of Sindh Government and KE to address load shedding and other issues of the city. The committee will jointly work on addressing public grievances, ensuring timely bill payments, and developing strategies to minimize load shedding and ensure uninterrupted power supply in the city.—RT/Agency

Eid-ul-Adha 2024: Pakistan Railways To Operate Special Trains From Karachi

KARACHI: Pakistan Railway has decided to run three special trains from Karachi to cater to the large number of passengers travelling for Eidul Adha 2024, media reported on Friday.

According to a spokesperson of Pakistan Railways. the first Eid train departed from Karachi for Peshawar today, carrying 1,118 passengers. The train generated revenue of Rs3.3 million for the railway department.

Two more trains will be run from Karachi on June 15. The trains will depart from Karachi for Lahore at 1 pm and 9 pm respectively. Booking for these trains has already been completed.

Pakistan will celebrate Eidul Adha on June 17 after the Zil Hajj moon was sighted on June 7.

Eidul Adha, also known as the Feast of Sacrifice, is one of two Eid festivals celebrated by the Muslim faithful to commemorate Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son to God. Traditionally marked by the slaughter of animals, whose meat is shared with family members and the poor.

The faithful slaughter their sacrificial animals in remembrance of the tradition of Prophet Ibrahimi, which continues for three days of Eid.—RT/Agency

French Consul General Inaugurates Basketball Tournament In Karachi

KARACHI: The French Consul General in Karachi, Alexis Chahtahtinsky, inaugurated a basketball tournament aimed at promoting sports and healthy activities. During his address, Chahtahtinsky highlighted the significance of including positive activities in daily routines for a healthy life.

He mentioned that France will host the Paris Summer Olympics this year from July 26 to August 10, featuring international athletes, including participants from Pakistan. Additionally, the Special Olympics will take place at the end of August.

Chahtahtinsky shared his personal enthusiasm for sports, recalling his participation in basketball, volleyball, tennis, and marathons. He expressed his hope that events like these would inspire more people to engage in sports and lead active lifestyles.—RT

Greenwich University Hosts First-Ever Seminar On Men's Mental Health

KARACHI: Greenwich University held its first-ever seminar on men's mental health, organized by the Corporate Social Responsibility Society. The seminar addressed the stigmas associated with men's mental health, the symptoms men may experience, and various treatment options. The event featured motivational talks from distinguished guest speakers.

Dr. Shahid Iqbal, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, In-Charge of Abdul Haq Campus, and Chairman of the Psychology Department at Federal Urdu University, was a keynote speaker. Ms. Syeda Sababa Fatima, a Clinical and Research Psychologist, also shared her expertise. The seminar concluded with an engaging Q&A session, followed by the presentation of tokens of appreciation to the esteemed guests. The event was organized by Dr. Tahira Tariq, a professor at Greenwich University.—RT

Investigation Reveals Startling Details About Viral Pan Shop Robbery

KARACHI: In a shocking turn of events, the investigation revealed the involvement of Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) of Sindh police in the robbery occurred at a shop in Gulshan-e-Iqbal area of Karachi, media reported on Friday.

The robbery incident occurred at a paan shop Thursday in the Gulshan-e-Iqbal 13D area of Karachi in which two plain-clothed persons arrived in a police mobile looted the paan cabin and fled the scene.

The shopkeeper in a statement claimed to have been robbed of Rs 70,000 in the incident, revealing that the same people robbed his shop on the 2nd of the current month.

It is pertinent to mention here that the local police arrested the DSP and his son after the police vehicle allocated to the police official used in the robbery at a shop in Karachi. The police arrested the DSP, his son who allegedly used the police vehicle to commit a robbery in the Gulshan Iqbal area of Karachi. As per the statement of police officials, the citizen - Abbas - captured in the CCTV footage assisting the robbers was also arrested and later released after taking his statement. The accused robbers also tampered with the number plate of the cob vehicle. "I was just an ordinary citizen of Gulshan-e-Iqbal, the policemen asked me to help them shift the items in the police mobile," Abbas in his statement told police.—RT/Agency

KARACHI: PPP Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is being briefed by video link by Sarfraz Bugti, Balochistan Chief Minister on his government's performance, future plans and other measures regarding solving public problems in the province.—RT

Idrees Chandio Chairs Meeting Of SUP's District Council Malir

By Asif Qureshi

KARACHI: Idrees Chandio presided over a significant meeting of the Sindh United Party's District Council in Malir. The session, held with robust attendance, featured prominent figures including District President Manzoor Abro, Vice President Badaruddin, and several other key members such as Shabbir Dero, Waheed Lohar, Abdul Wahab Dero, Dr. Daud Atho, and Fahim Khokhar.

During the meeting, crucial appointments were confirmed, including those of the District Secretary, Information Secretary, and Vice President. The decisions taken were met with unanimous approval from the council members, reflecting a cohesive stance on organizational matters.

Additionally, the gathering took a moment to honor the contributions of Madame Suraya from the World Sindhi Congress and esteemed journalist Nasrullah Gadani. Their dedication and efforts towards the betterment of Sindh and journalism were acknowledged with heartfelt tributes during the proceedings.

The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment from all attendees to further the goals and initiatives of the Sindh United Party in Malir, emphasizing unity and progress as cornerstones of their collective vision for the district.

Jamaat-e-Islami Rejects Sindh Budget

KARACHI: Following the proposal of budget for the fiscal year 2024-25, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) expressed strong disapproval of the Sindh government's budget 2024-25, media reported on Friday.

Mohammad Farooq, the Parliamentary Leader of Jamaat-e-Islami in the Sindh Assembly, highlighted several key issues and demanded justice for the people of Karachi.

Farooq criticized the budget for providing tax waivers to agriculture, specifically benefiting large landowners. He emphasized that this policy favors the wealthy elite at the expense of broader economic equity.

The JI leader argued that instead of waiving taxes for big landowners, the tax tariffs should be increased for holdings between 100 to 1000 acres. This, he suggested, would ensure a fairer distribution of the tax burden and contribute more effectively to provincial revenues.

A major point of contention for JI is the alleged neglect of Karachi in the budget.

Farooq highlighted that there is "nothing for Karachi" in the financial plan, underscoring the city's critical needs and the absence of adequate funding to address them.—RT/Agency

KARACHI: Pakistan Markazi Muslim League's Sindh President, Faisal Nadeem is addressing the Karachi Stakeholders Conference.—RT

INVITATION FOR BIDS

SERVICES OF A CAR RENTAL FIRM FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE EXHIBITION FOODAG-2024 (AUGUST 09TH-11TH, 2024)

Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (**TDAP**), invites sealed bids to hire the services of Car Rental Firm being registered with Income Tax and Sales Tax Departments for Food and Agriculture Exhibition FoodAg-2024.

1. Bidding documents containing the details can be downloaded from **PPRA EPADS** website **(https://eprocure.gov.pk/)**. In case of downloading bidding document, the bidders, shall be required to submit pay order of amount Rs 10,000/- upon submission of the bids.

2. Single Stage-Two Envelope Procedure would be used for Open Competitive Bidding. Financial proposals should accompany a bid security equivalent to two per cent (2%) of the bid amount in the form of pay order in favor of **TDAP**. Trade Development Authority of Pakistan reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to annul the bidding process at any time, however, reasons for rejection or annulling bid process will be communicated to the concerned bidder (s) in accordance with the Procurement Rules.

3. The bids, prepared in accordance with the instructions in the bidding documents, must reach at the office of the Assistant Manager (Agro and Food), on below mentioned address before **12:00 P.M. on 4th July, 2024**. Bids will be opened on the same day at **12:30 P.M**. This advertisement is also available on **TDAP** website.

PID (K) 3625/23

Naeem Manzoor, (Assistant Manager)
Agro & Food Division
Trade Development Authority of Pakistan
Block- A, 3rd Floor FTC, Shah-re-Faisal, Karachi
Tel: 021-111-444-111 Ext: 408 Fax: 021-99202182:
Email: naeem.manzoor@tdap.gov.pk

KARACHI: Dr. Taha, son of senior journalist Masood Ahmed Siddiqui, got married Dr. Hifza in a valima ceremony. The distinguished guests included Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan, MNA Dr. Ikhtar Baig, Ishtiaq Baig, Malik Khuda Bakhsh, Ahmad Chinoy, Saqib Fayyaz Maggo, Shabbir Mansha Chhra, Syed Nabil Ahmed, Bilal Siddiqui, Mian Zahid Hussain, Ehtisham Mufti, Mohammad Yahya Polani, Misbah ur Rehman, Daniyal Mehdi, Waiz Farooqui, Bilal, Murtaza, Meher Alam, Dr. Farhan Essa, Mohammad Azim, Anjum Wahab, Ahsan Farooqui, Mashhood Ali Khan, Junaid Naqi, Maqsood Yousufi, Arif Lakhani, Farhan Lakhani, Ali Younis, Kashif Munir, Raja Kamran, Kafeel Ahmed, Saleem uz Zaman. Johar Ali Kandahari, Nasir Mehmood, Mohammad Owais and others.—RT

Don't part with your illusions. When they are gone you may still exist, but you have ceased to live.
—Mark Twain

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SATURDAY JUNE 15 2024

LHC CJ Foresees Imminent End to Establishment's Interference in Judiciary

RAWALPINDI: Lahore High Court (LHC) Chief Justice Malik Shehzad Ahmed Khan on Friday said he believes that interference of the establishment in the matters of the judiciary will end soon.

"Interference in the judiciary will have to be fought with faith that it will come to an end," said the LHC chief justice while addressing the opening ceremony of the judicial complex e-courts in Rawalpindi.

Justice Khan said there was an issue of establishment's interference in the judiciary's matters, adding that they receive letters claiming involvement in the judicial affairs.

"The establishment's interference in judiciary will end and my experience [tells me] that it will come to an end," said the judge, assuring that these difficulties will end if there is fear of God.

The LHC chief justice also said that he was happy that the judiciary was "fulfilling its responsibilities without any fear or greed".

The chief justice's comments came after six Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges wrote a letter Supreme Court on March 25, accusing spy agencies of meddling in judicial affairs.

The IHC judges had demanded Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa to convene the judicial convention to consider the matter of alleged interference of intelligence operatives in the judicial functions or "intimidation" of judges in a manner that undermined the independence of the judiciary.

The six IHC judges — Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani, Justice Babar Sattar, Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir, Justice Tariq Mahmood Jehangiri, Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan and Justice Saman Rifat Imtiaz — had written a letter to the chief justice, who is also chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC).

Speaking about the issues in the judiciary, the LHC CJ said delay in verdicts of cases is the biggest problem. "Three generations [of a family] wait for verdicts and it [sometimes] take 30 years," he lamented.

Justice Khan maintained that the cases are delayed because of the unavailability of witnesses, adding that he has consulted with high court judges to solve the issues.

He said that the people living overseas had trouble appearing before the court and their properties in Pakistan are stolen.

The LHC chief justice said legal issues were also reviewed in the context of e-courts, adding that those absconders will not be allowed to appear via video link.

"Pakistanis living abroad will be able to get video link facility by coming to the embassy," he added. The LHC CJ also blamed the lawyers as the main reason for delay in cases.—RT/Agency

PTI Shocks with Sudden Reversal on Talks Offer with 'Three Parties'

ISLAMABAD: After a seeming change of heart in the PTI to reach out to the government to end the political impasse, the party on Friday walked back and said it would not talk with "three parties".

In February, PTI spokesperson Raoof Hasan had said that party founder Imran Khan had given instructions to initiate contact with all other political parties, except the PML-N, PPP and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan.

The three parties are part of the coalition that is heading the government.

In an apparent U-turn from its earlier assertions that the former ruling party would only talk to 'empowered' stakeholders and not the 'toothless ruling' coalition, Imran on Tuesday had ordered the party's top brass to reach out to the government for a dialogue.

The change of heart came in light of remarks by the Sup-reme Court during a hearing of the graft laws amendments case, in which the bench observed that the PTI should initiate talks with the government and resolve its issues in parliament through dialogue.

Speaking to journalists outside Adiala Jail, PTI leader Gohar Ali Khan had said that Imran gave the go-ahead for the talks with the government. He had said the party would initially take its allies into confidence but could also take a solo flight on the issue.

Gohar had said that the talks with the government could be initiated through the platform of the opposition's multi-party coalition alliance or by the PTI on its own, adding that it had concluded that talks were the only option available to the party.

However, while addressing a press conference in Islamabad today with Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Omar Ayub, Hasan said: "Regarding a controversy on the media that the PTI is moving to have negotiations with three political parties that are mandate usurpers, Imran has clearly told us that there is no situation like this."

He said Imran had asked for the three parties to first bring and show their "letter of authorisation from their sponsors and patrons" about whether they actually had any authority to negotiate with the PTI and if they would be able to deliver on any promises to the party.

"Our contention since the first day is that they have nothing and they're only mummies and dummies whose strings are controlled from elsewhere and they dance according to them."

He said Imran had clearly directed in "blunt words that we have no intention to negotiate with these three political parties at any stage".

Hasan said if there was any ambiguity left about the matter then it should be removed now.

Omar added that Imran said that if Tehreek-i-Tahafuz-i-Aain-i-Pakistan president Mahmood Khan Achakzai wanted to hold talks with anyone from the coalition alliance's platform then he was welcome to do so but such negotiations would only be on the movement's behalf.

"The PTI has a demand that they have to fulfil our prerequisites [and] eliminate all cases against Imran, Bushra Bibi and our officers and any talks will be held after that."—RT/Agency

Pakistan's Skyrocketing Debt Poses Dire Threat To Financial Stability

ISLAMABAD: Global rating agency Moody's on Friday said that the country's weak debt affordability drives high debt sustainability risks as it noted that the government spends more than half its revenue on interest payments.

In a comment regarding the newly finance bill for the fiscal year (FY) 2025, it said, "The budget estimated debt servicing payments to have increased by about 18pc for fiscal 2025 compared with a year ago."

"The government spends more than half its revenue on interest payments, indicating very weak debt affordability which drives high debt sustainability risks" it said, adding that "about 55pc of fiscal year 2025 revenue (Rs9.8 trillion) is earmarked for interest payments on the government's debt".

Regarding the increase in expenditure, the rating agency said it reflected "lack of significant cost-containment measures and Pakistan's very high interest payments".

It was quick to note that the subsidies increased by 27pc to Rs1.4 trillion, "mainly driven by large increases in subsidies to the power sector" which reflected litte progress in energy sector reforms.

Overall, the rating agency said that budget reflected "quicker fiscal consolidation, but ability to sustain reforms will be key to easing liquidity risks".

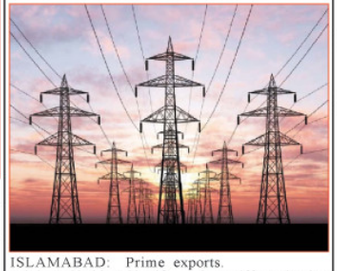
Moreover, the agency echoed the same sentiments as experts as it highlighted that the finance bill "will likely support Pakistan's ongoing negotiations with the IMF for a new Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme that will be crucial for the government to unlock financing from IMF and other bilateral and multilateral partners to meet its external financing needs".

However, it cautioned that the government's ability to "sustain reform implementation" will be key to meeting the budget targets and unlocking external financing, which is necessary for easing of liquidity risks.It highlighted that "a resurgence of social tensions on the back of high cost of living — which may increase because of higher taxes and future adjustments to energy tariffs — could weigh on reform implementation."Moreover, risks that the coalition government may not have a sufficiently strong electoral mandate to continually implement difficult reforms remain," it commented.

In the budget, the government had announced a consolidated budget deficit of 5.9 per cent of the GDP for the fiscal year 2025 — from the previous year's estimated 7.4pc — with the primary balance set at a surplus of 2pc of GDP for the upcoming year, the report recounted.Additionally, the government has projected real GDP growth at 3.6pc and headline inflation at 12pc. It also sought to increase federal government revenue to an ambitious Rs17.8trillion — 46pc higher than previous year's — through a "combination of new taxes and stronger nominal growth".

According to the comment, this showed that "the government seeks to achieve quicker fiscal consolidation mainly through increases in revenue, with little spending-containment measures".—RT/Agency

PM Declares Big Cut In Electricity Prices For Industrial Sector



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a significant reduction in electricity tariffs for the industrial sector on Friday, cutting rates by Rs10.69 per unit.

This move aims to boost exports and industrial production.

Due to the prime minister's special efforts, the new electricity price per unit for the industrial and export sector is set at Rs34.99.

According to a statement from the PM Office, the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) recommended this reduction for industries.

The PM's package is expected to provide over Rs200 billion in relief to industries, enhancing their competitiveness in the global market.

The package aims to align the country's manufacturing costs with international markets, reducing production costs for industrial and agricultural commodities.

This is anticipated to lead to an increase in exports.

The tariff cut is also expected to accelerate industrial growth, create new job opportunities, and stimulate economic activity.

It may be mentioned that NEPRA had proposed a reduction of Rs10.69 per unit in electricity prices for industries.

Prime Minister Shehbaz's special package is set to alleviate over Rs200 billion worth of burden from industries.

Sources indicate that this relief aims to make the cost of goods competitive in the global market.

It is also expected to reduce the production costs of industrial and agricultural products, leading to a significant increase in exports.

Experts believe that the prime minister's announcement will accelerate industrial development and rapidly increase employment. The faster pace of industrial activity and the rise in exports will benefit the national economy.—RT/Agency

Shehbaz Promises Bold Moves to Empower Private Sector for Economic Revival

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured to provide all facilities to private sector for economic recovery.

A delegation of an international consultancy firm headed by former State Bank Governor Raza Baqir held the meeting with PM on Friday.

Delegation proposed suggestions to boost international investment in Pakistan.

PM highlighted that there existed a huge potential for investment in minerals and energy sectors.

He instructed the relevant authorities to hold consultation with the globally reputed consultancy firms to realize the investment agreements with the friendly countries.

PM Shehbaz Sharif also directed for consultation with the reputed firms for reduction in the volume of government's infrastructure and effective governance system. PM added that private sector played crucial role in national economic development.Federal ministers, Ahsan Iqbal, Ahad Khan Cheema, Dr Musaddik Malik, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Awais Ahmed Leghari, ministers of state Ali Pervaiz Malik and Shaza Fatima Khawaja and relevant senior officials attended the meeting.—RT/Agency

Parliamentary Committee Greenlights Judges' Names For Supreme Court Promotion

ISLAMABAD: The Parliamentary Committee on the Appointment of Judges Friday approved the names of judges proposed by the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) for elevation to the Supreme Court.

The development came after a meeting of the parliamentary committee was held in Islamabad today to take a decision on the appointment of apex court judges.

The committee approved all the names proposed by the JCP which included Lahore High Court Chief Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan, Sindh High Court Chief Justice Aqeel Ahmad Abbasi and LHC's Justice Shahid Bilal.

Last week, the JCP sent the names of three high court judges to be considered for elevation to the SC for final approval by the Parliamentary committee.

The names, recommended for appointment to vacant SC seats, were proposed during a meeting of the Judicial Commission held under chairmanship of Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa, said the sources.

CJP Isa had, last month, convened the JCP meeting for deliberations over the appointment of three judges in the SC.

The JCP was constituted under the 18th Constitutional Amendment mandated to appoint judges in the superior judiciary.

It was tasked to consider names of nine judges, including LHC chief justice and SHC chief justice, for filling the three vacant posts in the apex court.

Chaired by the CJP, the meeting was to be attended JCP members —Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahaya Afridi, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice (retd) Manzoor Ahmed Malik, Federal Minister for Law Azam Nazir Tarar, Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan and Pakistan Bar Council representative advocate Akhtar Hussain.

As per the Constitution, the actual strength of judges of the Supreme Court is 17 while at present the apex court only has 14 judges including the CJP.

The three posts are to be filled after the retirement of former chief justice Umar Ata Bandial and resignations of Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Syed Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi.—RT/Agency

Tarar Announces Game-Changing Health Insurance Plan For 5,000 Journalists

ISLAMABAD: Federal Information Minister Atta Tarar announced that health insurance for 5,000 journalists will be ensured in the first phase.

While addressing the media at the press club, Tarar stated that the government is committed to the welfare of journalists. He underlined the need to work together to serve the country. He also asserted the government's belief in freedom of expression while stopping misinformation.

Tarar highlighted that everyone must play a part in ending fake. He mentioned that a long meeting with journalists will be held soon saying that his doors are always open for them.Furthermore, Atta Tarar said that the government will ensure a minimum wage of Rs 37,000.—RT/Agency

ECP Sets Explosive Hearing Date for Contempt Case Against Imran and Fawad

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has rescheduled the hearing of the contempt case against PTI founder Imran Khan and Fawad Chaudhry for June 26, media reported on Friday.

The contempt case, filed against Imran Khan and Fawad Chaudhry for allegedly using derogatory language against the ECP, will be heard by the Election Commission Bench. Evidence will be recorded against the PTI leaders on the scheduled date.

This development comes after a three-month hiatus in the case, which was previously stalled due to various reasons.

It is pertinent to mention that PTI founder Imran Khan and former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry were indicted in the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) contempt case on Jan 3, 2024.

The hearing of the contempt case was held in Adiala Jail – where the court currently holds the founder of PTI.

During the hearing, the accused in the case were formally charged through a read-aloud indictment, after which the hearing was adjourned till January 16.

In August 2022, the ECP issued notices to the founder of PTI and others for allegedly using "intemperate" language against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja and the electoral watchdog.

The political leaders repeatedly lambasted the commission and CEC Sikandar Raja and termed the electoral body a "subsidiary of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz".—RT/Agency

Shehbaz To Chair ECNEC Instead Of Finance Minister

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reconstituted the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) with himself as the chairman, depriving Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb of heading the committee, media reported.

According to practice, the finance minister heads the ECNEC as during the Pakistan Democratic Movement's (PDM) government, first Miftah Ismail and then Ishaq Dar headed the ECNEC.During the caretaker setup, the then Finance Minister Shamshad Akhtar headed the ECNEC, as per the practice.This time around, the premier himself would head the ECNEC, while Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, and Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal will also be the members of the committee.

Punjab Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Sindh Irrigation Minister Jam Khan Shoro, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Advisor on Finance Muzamil Aslam and Balochistan Finance Minister Shoaib Nosherwani are also named in ECNEC.—RT/Agency

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