

Heartland

Can you believe this?

Kunri Gang Rape Suspects Deyf Law Inside Police Station

Money

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa To Introduce New Road Tax

NATIONAL

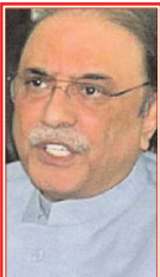
Maryam Emphasizes Dedication And Hard Work For Punjab's Development

SPORTS

Super 8: England seal dominating victory over US to qualify for semi-finals



Kourtney Kardashian claps back at body-shaming trolls with empowering message



Zardari To Lead Crucial Sindh Law And Order Meeting Today

Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari Criticizes Budget, Urges Unity And Relief For Masses

ISLAMABAD: Aseefa Bhutto-Zardari, daughter of President Asif Ali Zardari and sister of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, has criticised the current economic situation in Pakistan, highlighting record-high inflation and unemployment.

Speaking in the National Assembly on Sunday, the PPP member said the new budget does not represent the public and should have provided relief for farmers and ordinary citizens.

"Do the people of Pakistan deserve this anti-people budget?" she asked. "We need to move forward to provide relief for the common man and strengthen our farmers. The people of Pakistan deserve better, and we should work together to achieve improvement."

Aseefa emphasised the importance of unity during times of ideological division and conflict. "At a time when people are divided by their ideological beliefs, when disagreements are weaponised, and dissent is met with violence, it is crucial for us as elected members of this



house to rise and discuss these issues," she said.

She urged for tolerance to extend beyond speeches and words, calling for action and the rejection of divisive politics. "We must unite for the people's sake and find ways to provide them with relief," she added. "We need to use our human resources for development and find methods to give direct relief to the poor. I hope we will witness a new era in politics."

Addressing the need for national unity, Aseefa pointed out the challenges faced by Sindh, such as pro-

longed power outages.

"When the President talks about unity, it is the need of the hour. Blame games are not the solution to any problem. In this scorching heat, Sindh is suffering from power cuts of 15 to 20 hours. This is unbearable."

She concluded by expressing hope for a new political culture that rejects divisive politics and addresses critical issues like wheat import, provincial chief secretaries, and other senior civilian, military, and law enforcement officials also attended.

Khawaja Asif Accuses PTI Of 'Siding' with Terrorists Following Opposition To 'Azm-e-Istehkam' Operation

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister and senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Khawaja Asif on Sunday accused Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of siding with terrorists against the military.

The development comes a day after the Apex Committee of National Action Plan, chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, approved "Operation Azm-e-Istehkam" to eliminate terrorism and extremism across the country.

The meeting, held in Islamabad on Saturday, included key federal cabinet members such as the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Defence Minister, Interior Minister, Finance Minister, Law Minister, and Information Minister.

Chief ministers from all provinces and Gilgit-Baltistan, services chiefs, provincial chief secretaries, and other senior civilian, military, and law enforcement officials also attended.



areas where implementation was lacking. Emphasis was placed on addressing these shortcomings as a priority.

During a National Assembly session chaired by Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Sunday, Asif was given the floor to speak on the budget.

The forum conducted a comprehensive review of the ongoing anti-terrorism campaign and internal security situation. It examined the progress of the National Action Plan's multi-domain principles and highlighted

his remarks prompted protests from the PTI-backed Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), who chanted slogans against the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) operation and the killing of Pashtuns.

"PTI is standing with terrorists against the army," Asif stated.

He added, "The voice of minorities in Pakistan is being silenced. There are killings in Swat, Sargodha, and Faisalabad. Bloodshed in the name of religion cannot be allowed."

He explained that the decision for Operation Azm-e-Istehkam was made in an Apex Committee meeting, which included PTI members and the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P).

across the country yesterday. Asif noted, "We will discuss Operation Azm-e-Istehkam in this house. If PTI has objections, they can raise them today. They are demonstrating in support of terrorists and against the army."

Confirming the launch of Operation Istikham-e-Pakistan, Asif mentioned that the Apex Committee had approved the continuation of previously incomplete operations, and this decision will be brought to the cabinet and then to the parliament.

During the NA session today, PTI and SIC walked out of the parliament in protest after being denied the opportunity to speak on the floor.

During a media talk following the walkout, PTI asserted that the military must seek confidence through parliament before initiating operations.—RT/Agency

Surge in Terrorism Justifies 'Azm-e-Istehkam' Operation: Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Information Minister Attaullah Tarar has stated that the ongoing wave of terrorism necessitated the "Azm-e-Istehkam" operation and criticised the opposition for their lack of preparation and response to the budget.

Speaking at the budget session in National Assembly on Sunday, Tarar emphasised the need for the operation due to the recent surge in terrorist activities. "This wave of terrorism has made the Azm-e-Istehkam operation necessary," he said.

Tarar targeted the opposition, accusing them of engaging in baseless criticism without proper analysis of the budget. "The opposition has no preparation for the budget. They are only interested in criticism for the sake of criticism. They do not discuss the budget, they are more focused on slogans," he stated.

He argued that there should have been consultations on which segments of



society should receive relief in the budget. "The opposition should have formed a shadow cabinet and presented a shadow budget. They criticised the budget without even reading it," he added. The minister also condemned the opposition's role in the past, referring to their dealings with the Taliban.

"These are the people who brought the Taliban back. Who defined 'good' and 'bad Taliban'? When a soldier is shot, the bullet does not specify if it is from a 'good' or 'bad Taliban,'" he remarked.

Tarar stressed the need to stop street justice and highlighted the government's commitment to both the protection of minorities and the finality of the Prophethood (PBUH). "We are the custodians of the finality of the Prophethood (PBUH) and the rights of minorities. Today, the opposition should stand with us to protect minorities," he concluded.—RT/Agency

PPP's Shazia Marri Calls For Relief Measures For Masses In Budget



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) MNA Shazia Marri demanded relief for the masses in the budget.

"Don't facilitate the PPP but give some relief to the people," Marri said, while speaking in National Assembly on Sunday during the ongoing budget session.

She said there were earlier hopes that the people would be provided relief in the budget.

"We were not taken on-board in the budget-making process," she said.

The provinces were doing good and they should be allowed to discharge their duties, she added, saying issues would never be resolved if

everyone would be saying that all was good.

She said that the opposition was silent on the tragic incidents of Sargodha and Swat which was worrisome.

Marri stated the PPP had reservations on budget, especially on developmental projects.

The MNA stated that the finance minister should be corrected as this budget wasn't made with the input of Bilawal Bhutto. "The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) should go after the non-taxpayers. Increasing petroleum levy is tantamount to increase burden on the masses," Marri concluded.—RT/Agency

Shehbaz Emphasizes Citizen Protection And Security As Top Priority

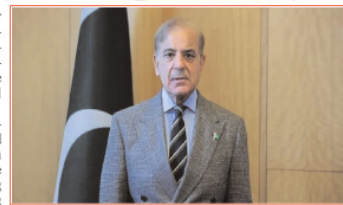
LAHORE: Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif affirmed the protection of citizens and foreigners in Pakistan as a paramount state priority during a high-level meeting on Sunday.

The session, which reviewed ongoing security and law-enforcement projects in Islamabad, underscored the government's unwavering commitment to maintaining law and order.

The prime minister emphasised that any negligence in safeguarding citizens and upholding the law and order would not be tolerated.

He ordered an inquiry into the delays affecting completion of the Islamabad Model Jail and directed that the project be expedited to meet modern standards. Additionally, he mandated the establishment of a professional training institute and hospital within the jail premises.

In his directives, the prime minister called for



consultations with Chinese experts to form the Special Protection Unit in the capital. He also stressed the need for a state-of-the-art forensic lab as part of the Islamabad Safe City initiative.

PM Shehbaz also highlighted the importance of merit-based recruitment and the adoption of advanced technologies across all security projects in Islamabad to align with international standards.

The meeting featured comprehensive briefings on various aspects of Islamabad's security infrastruc-

ture, including the Islamabad Model Jail, Islamabad Safe City, the Federal Counter Terrorism Department, and the Special Protection Unit. Updates were also provided on the Islamabad National Facilitation Centres and the K-9 Unit, aimed at enhancing detection of narcotics and explosives. Attendees included Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Deputy Chairman of Planning Jehanzeb Khan, federal secretaries, and senior officials from the relevant institutions.—RT/Agency

Supreme Court To Hear SIC Reserved Seats Case Today

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court is set to conduct a hearing on Monday (today) regarding the case of reserved seats for the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC).

The full court, led by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, will commence the session at 9:30 am.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has already submitted a written response to the apex court, stating that the SIC is no longer entitled to the reserved seats. It reiterated that the SIC's eligibility was compromised on several grounds.

ECP told the Supreme Court that the SIC's constitution is violative of Articles 17, 20 & 25 of the Constitution and the party is not entitled to any reserved seats for women and in particular for non-Muslims.

"Article 3, Chapter 1, of the Constitution of the SIC restricts membership of the SIC to only adult Muslims, and places further three other conditions of a like nature to membership.



"The conditions in said Article 3 of SIC's Constitution are violative of Articles 17, 20 and 25 of the Constitution, in view thereof, SIC clearly is not entitled to any reserved seats for women and in particular for non-Muslims," the ECP said in a concise statement submitted to the court.

The ECP on December 22, 2023 stripped the PTI of its election symbol in view of irregularities in its intra-party polls. The Supreme Court on January 13 upheld the ECP order, forcing the PTI candidates to contest the February 8 general elections as independents.

The independent candidates joined the SIC after the announcement of official election results. The SIC later sought reserved seats in the parliament and provincial assemblies in proportion to its general seats.

However, the ECP on March 1 refused to allot these reserved seats to the SIC. The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on March 25 also upheld the ECP order, prompting the SIC to approach the apex court.

The SC is scheduled to complete hearings on two other cases on June 24 and 25.—RT/Agency

Naqvi Approves Deployment Of Frontier Corps In Azad Kashmir



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday approved deployment of Frontier Constabulary (FC) in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), as he promised extending full cooperation to ensure maintaining law and order in the state. The move comes after AJK Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarud Haq met Naqvi at the Ministry of Interior and requested him to send the paramilitary force for assisting the state administration. During the meeting, they discussed a range of issues concerning security situ-

ation and law and order in AJK as well as political matters and upcoming budget for the fiscal year 2024-25. Speaking on the occasion, Naqvi said the federal government was working on fulfilling the promises made with the Kashmiri people and would improve security situation in the region. The Centre is standing by the AJK government and the people, he said, promising to provide the resources and take measures for prosperity and development of the state.—RT/Agency

PML-N's Javed Latif Criticizes Early Termination Of PTI-led Government's Tenure

ISLAMABAD: More than two years after toppling former premier Imran Khan-led government via a no-trust vote, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) stalwart Javed Latif revealed that his party was not in favour of bringing a no-confidence motion, saying the former ruling party should have been allowed to complete its five-year tenure.

"This government was established under an 'arrangement' and all parties entered an alliance under the same 'arrangement,'" the PML-N leader said while speaking on Geo News programme 'Naya Pakistan' on Sunday.

Pointing towards the rifts between the ruling PML-N and its key ally — the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), the politico claimed that there was no reason left for the ruling coalition partners to step back from approving the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

He also touched on the behind-the-scenes developments that led to the ouster of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led government in the country in April 2022.



"The environment was created under the arrangement and a no-trust motion was tabled," he said without elaborating further.

He added that the PTI founder had held meetings with the then army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa after the no-confidence motion.

The PML-N senior leader also alleged: "I was defeated [in the 2024 general polls] by those who arranged everything and I've already presented the evidence."

In a historic first for Pakistan, Imran Khan was ousted as the prime minister of Pakistan from office through a no-confidence motion in the National Assembly in April 2022.

The PTI founder had alleged that his ouster was a result of a conspiracy hatched by the US by colluding with his political rivals — the claim denied by both the US and Khan's rivals.

Following Khan's ouster, the parties under the flag of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) got a chance to transfer the leadership to the then-largest opposition party — PML-N — and elected Shehbaz Sharif as the new premier for the remaining 1.5 years of the rule.—RT/Agency

THE HEARTLAND



HYDERABAD: Majlis-e-Ulema Maktab-e-Ahlel-bait (A.S) Sindh Central General Secretary, Mautana Muhammad Asghar Askari is addressing the Ghadeer-o-Ashura Conference, at Qadam Gah Mola Ali (A.S)-RT

-Can you believe this?

Kunri Gang Rape Suspects Defy Law with TikTok Video Inside Police Station

By Mian Muhammad Faisal

KUNRI. In a shocking turn of events, suspects involved in the gang rape of a young man have defied the law by creating a TikTok video inside the Samaru police station. The video, featuring the accused in police custody, has gone viral on social media, raising serious questions about the police administration's oversight.



The suspects had brutally assaulted and gang-raped Shaukat Kosu last month. During the assault, they also cut off his mustache and eyebrows with sticks. Despite 11 individuals being named in the case, only two have been arrested, according to statements from the victim's family.

The victim's family has expressed their frustration over the slow pace of arrests and the apparent leniency shown towards the suspects. They have called for stricter measures to ensure all perpetrators are brought to justice.

The viral TikTok video, recorded within the police lock-up, shows the suspects with mobile phones, highlighting a significant lapse in jail security. This incident has sparked outrage and concern about the efficacy of the jail administration in preventing such breaches.

The investigating officer and the Station House Officer (SHO) are currently responsible for the custody of the accused. However, the unauthorized use of mobile phones and the subsequent viral video have put their roles under scrutiny, emphasizing the need for a thorough review of jail protocols and security measures.

Violent Clash In Tando Allahyar: Police Arrests Suspect After Exchange Of Fire



HYDERABAD: Resident of Jamshoro, Saima Khatoon is addressing a press conference at the Hyderabad press club against her local police officials.-RT



By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: In a tense confrontation on By-Pass Road, Tando Allahyar's AC Section, police engaged in a shootout with armed suspects, resulting in one suspect, identified as Nang Sindhro Alias Shahmeer, sustaining gunshot wounds and subsequently being apprehended. Three other suspects managed to flee the scene. The incident escalated after police received intelligence about the presence of armed individuals in the area.

According to Deputy Superintendent of Police Usman Laghari and SHO Mehndi Memon, police encountered fierce resistance from the suspects, leading to an exchange of fire. During the operation, Nang Sindhro Alias Shahmeer was injured and arrested. Efforts are underway to capture the three fleeing suspects. The police seized one pistol, two motorcycles believed to have been used by the suspects, and initiated a thorough investigation into the incident. A case has been registered against those apprehended for causing injuries and fleeing the scene. Further investigations are ongoing, and the police have intensified efforts to apprehend the remaining suspects who escaped, possibly linked to a local criminal fraternity.



HYDERABAD: Resident of Jamshoro, Saima Khatoon is addressing a press conference at the Hyderabad press club against her local police officials.-RT

Sindh Forms Water Emergency Cell After Sukkur Barrage Gate Collapse

HYDERABAD: In response to the sudden collapse of two gates at the Sukkur Barrage, the Sindh Agriculture Department has established a water emergency cell to assist local growers. This decision comes after a significant disruption in water supply from the barrage, raising concerns about potential adverse effects on crops in the region.



The interruption in water flow to the barrage's canals is anticipated to negatively impact agricultural yields. To address this, the Agriculture Department has announced the appointment of focal persons who will provide essential guidance to farmers. These designated officials will also submit regular reports on crop damage due to the water shortage, according to a department spokesperson.

The irrigation authorities are facing considerable challenges following the damage to two gates of the Sukkur Barrage on the Indus River, which occurred early last Friday. Chinese engineers commenced repair efforts on Saturday and successfully managed to lift one of the fallen gates, gate number 44. Similar efforts will be undertaken for gate number 47 once the water level drops sufficiently.

The drop in water supply has affected all the canals drawing water from the barrage, leading to shortages of both irrigation and drinking water. Sindh Irrigation Minister Jam Khan Shoro informed the media in Sukkur that due to the ongoing repair works, the right and left bank canals of the barrage will temporarily be without water. It is noteworthy that, with financial support from the World Bank, six gates of the barrage (numbers 31, 33, 34, 35, 39, and 40) were replaced in February 2023. The recent incident saw gate number 44 severely damaged, while gate number 47 collapsed and fell into deep water. The Sukkur Barrage, comprising 66 gates, has been a critical infrastructure since its inauguration in 1923 by British Viceroy of India, Lord Wellington. The foundation stone was laid in October 1923 by Bombay's Governor, George Lloyd. The barrage features seven off-taking canals: three on the right bank (Dadu Canal, Rice Canal, and Northwestern Canal/Kirthar) and four on the left bank (Khairpur Feeder West, Rohri Canal, Khairpur Feeder East, and Nara Canal). This emergency response aims to mitigate the impact of the water shortage on agriculture and ensure timely repairs to restore normal water flow.-RT

Farmers Protest in Hingorja Against Dysfunctional Pumping Station and Unmaintained Drain

By Sajjad Chang

HINGORJA: Farmers and locals from village Rakrani Sehta organized a protest against the dysfunctional Bachal Bhambhro pumping station and the lack of maintenance of the drainage system. The protest took place on the Deparja-Hingorja link road, where participants staged a sit-in under the scorching sun, declaring their intention to launch a movement if their demands are not met.



The protest leaders, including Gulam Hussain Sehto, Ifthikhar Sehto, Faheem Sehto, Waheed Sehto, Ghulam Akbar, Mir Muhammad Rumi, and Qasim Burdi, highlighted the severe issues caused by the malfunctioning pumping station. Established with millions of rupees by the Sindh government to combat salinity from the Rohri Canal, the Bachal Bhambhro pumping station has been out of order for a long time. Additionally, the drainage system has not been maintained, resulting in it being clogged with garbage and silt.

Due to the lack of proper drainage, large sections of the drain have collapsed, rendering hundreds of acres of agricultural land useless because of waterlogging and salinity. The protesters accused the SCARP (Salinity Control and Reclamation Program) department of negligence, stating that the dysfunctional pumping station and the unmaintained drain are direct results of their incompetence. Despite multiple complaints to the SCARP office in Khairpur, no action has been taken to address these issues. The protesters warned that if the drain is not cleared and the pumping station is not repaired, they will intensify their protests. This situation underscores the urgent need for immediate intervention to restore the drainage system and ensure the functionality of the pumping station, which are crucial for the agricultural livelihood of the region.

TMK Journalists Protest Against Police Harassment Of Senior Journalist Jameel Memon And His Family



By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: Journalists from Tando Muhammad Khan staged a boisterous protest against the brazen police harassment of senior journalist Jameel Memon and his family by Sujawal police officers. The incident involved the police stopping and harassing Memon's car on the road. The protesting journalists vowed to continue their demonstrations until justice is served, emphasizing the need for accountability and the protection of press freedom.

The protest, organized by the Tando Muhammad Khan Press Club, saw participation from various journalists, including the Press Club President Muzaffar Rand, senior journalist Ramzan Shoro, Ghulam Nabi Kerio, Rao Ghulam Hussain, Muhammad Ansar, Abdul Hafeez Memon, Ghulam Qadir Shoro, Sahil Ayaz, and Abdul Sattar. They demanded the immediate suspension of the police officers involved and called for a thorough investigation into the incident.

Hyderabad's Tortured Donkey Dies in Karachi



HYDERABAD/KARACHI: A donkey, subjected to severe torture by its owner in Hyderabad, has died in a shelter home in Karachi. The donkey had been transported to Karachi for treatment after sustaining broken legs due to the abuse. The unfortunate news of the donkey's death was shared by a local NGO on social media. The animal had suffered severe injuries after its owner, in a fit of anger, brutally tortured it, resulting in two broken legs. In a related incident, another donkey in Hyderabad, the second-largest city of Sindh, was also brutalized. The owner of this donkey cut off its leg during a dispute with another donkey cart driver. According to police reports, the incident occurred in Seri village, where the accused, Mir Rind, attacked the donkey following an argument. Rind has been arrested and jailed on a court order.

These acts of animal cruelty have sparked outrage. Just yesterday, in the Sanghar area of Sindh, influential individuals were reported to have cut off the leg of a camel. Initially, the police registered a case against unidentified persons rather than the influential individuals. However, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah took notice of the matter, prompting the police to register a case and detain five individuals allegedly involved in the crime. These incidents highlight the need for stricter enforcement of animal cruelty laws and greater awareness about animal rights.-RT

Community Meetings Held In Thari Mirwah To Address Local Civic Concerns

THARI MIRWAH: On June 22, 2024, the Insan Dost Social Organization (IDSO) and Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Center collaborated to host a series of community meetings across Village Wado Tarko, Union Council Mandan, and Taluka Thari Mirwah. These meetings aimed to understand residents' concerns, basic rights, and the fundamental challenges they face, as well as to explore potential solutions and address the essential facilities lacking in the local community. The collaborative effort saw active participation from community members, who voiced their concerns about various issues affecting their daily lives. Key topics discussed included access to clean water, education, healthcare, and infrastructure. The meetings highlighted several critical areas needing immediate attention, such as improving access to basic amenities, enhancing educational opportunities, and ensuring adequate healthcare services. The participants also discussed ways to strengthen community solidarity and advocacy efforts to bring about positive change. This initiative marks a significant step towards empowering the local community by providing a platform for their voices to be heard and fostering collaboration between residents and social organizations. The insights gained from these meetings will guide future efforts to improve living conditions and ensure that the residents of Thari Mirwah have access to the essential facilities they deserve.-RT

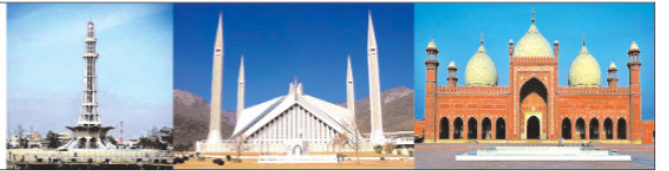


HYDERABAD: Activists and leaders of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) are holding a protest demonstration against excessive electricity load shedding and inflated electricity bills.-RT



LARKANA: Activists and leaders of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) are holding a protest demonstration at Jinnah Bagh against excessive electricity load shedding in the city.-RT

NATIONAL



Maryam Emphasizes Dedication And Hard Work For Punjab's Development

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz asserted that the vision of Punjab's development couldn't be complete without dedication and hard work.



She shared her message on United Nation Public Service Day, stating it's a day for the government to improve public service.

She commended government servants serving public with dedication, honesty and hardwork. She hailed those who serve their lives for others.

Punjab CM affirmed that the government was committed to serve and

facilitate the public. She highlighted that Punjab government was fulfilling its responsibilities of public service with dedication. Punjab government pledged for public service with transparency, accountability and excellent performance.

Amir Muqam Vows Continued Representation Of His Constituents Across All Levels



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Engineer Amir Muqam has said that he had always represented FATA, PATA/Malakand Division at the Center in 2016, 2018, 2023 and would continue to do so in the future. He said that he would continue to represent his people at all levels regardless of the results, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

In a meeting with the delegation of Malakand Traders Federation and Swat Chamber of Commerce, Amir Muqam reiterated that he would continue to raise awareness about the sacrifices of the people of FATA and

Punjab Government To Launch 'Digital School-on-Wheels' Project With Google's Support

LAHORE: The Punjab government has officially proposed to launch a digital school on-wheel project across the province.



Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz has called on a delegation of IT companies, where it was decided to launch the education project.

Under this project, free-of-cost digital courses will be taught to one thousand teachers in government schools. Meanwhile, Google for Education will support free certification courses for 15 thousand university students. University students will be trained in artificial intelligence (AI) and anti-virus courses.

Two pilot projects of the school on-wheel will be launched within two weeks. Chromebooks would be supported.

Punjab CM stated that her government was committed to remove problems in the education system and improve it. He asserted that development was impossible with restructuring in the education system and that first autism school project.

17 Arrested Following Swat Mob Lynching Incident

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar police with the help of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and Special Branch arrested another 17 individuals linked to the killing incident of a man accused of blasphemy in Swat.



Following today's arrest, the number of detainees has reached 23. The action against the suspects was taken in different tehsils of Swat.

Authorities have already begun an investigation to identify and arrest members of the mob that beat a man to death on Thursday night after accusing him of burning pages of the Holy Qur'an.

The mob had also set the police station in the area ablaze and injured eight policemen, Malakand division's regional police chief Mohammad Ali Gandapur told Reuters.

Graphic videos of the latest incident showed a frenzied mob dragging a naked and bloodied body through the streets, and then setting it on fire. The footage went viral on social media and sparked outcry amongst Pakistani users.

The 10-member JIT, comprising officials from the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD), Special Branch, and senior police officers, monitored by Malakand Division Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police was formed to probe the incident.

The case involves approximately 2,000 individuals, and their identification will be aided by cellular data and the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA).

Zartaj Gul Designated As SIC's Parliamentary Leader In National Assembly



ISLAMABAD: Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Zartaj Gul has been appointed as Parliamentary Leader of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) in the National Assembly (NA).

The NA Secretariat has issued an official notification confirming her appointment on Sunday. The SIC had submitted the nomination papers of Zartaj Gul to the Speaker on June 21.—RT/Agency

PTI MNA Takes Matters Into Own Hands, Implements Personal 'Load Shedding Schedule'

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf lawmakers continue to make trouble for the electricity supply companies under the centre's authority in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as another PTI MNA on Sunday night barged into a South Waziristan grid station and forcibly restored electricity supply to different areas.



A rift is going on between the province and federal government as KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has allowed lawmakers to use force to restore electricity supply to feeders suffering from more than 12 hours of loadshedding.

Gandapur Friday warned the Shehbaz Sharif-led federal government that things could get out of hand if it does not reduce loadshedding to a maximum of 12 hours in his province.

Except for K-Electric, which was privatised in 2005, all the power distribution companies are owned by the Government of Pakistan, as the federal government deals with the power supply matter.

Following the footsteps of his party's lawmakers, the KP CM himself restored the electricity supply on the third day of Eid ul Adha.

Tribal Areas Electricity Supply Company (TESCO) is responsible for supplying electricity in tribal areas, in-

cluding North and South Waziristan, whereas Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) supplies power to the rest of the province.

Passengers Face Hardship as Gecco Cuts Power To Narrow Railway Station



NAROWAL: Passengers are facing great inconvenience and unavailability of drinking water after Gecco suspended electricity supply to Narowal Railway Station over failure to pay Rs700,000 electricity bill.

With the suspension of power supply, the railway station plunged into darkness, leaving the passengers bereft of drinking water in hot and muggy weather.

Indian Sikh Pilgrims Reach Pakistan To Commemorate Ranjit Singh's Death Anniversary

LAHORE: As many as 447 Indian Sikh pilgrims have arrived at the Gurdwara Punja Sahib in Hassanabad to participate in rituals in connection with the 185th death anniversary of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.



Upon arrival, the pilgrims were welcomed by officials of the Evacuee Trust Property Board and the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.

"We are feeling happy and comfortable here and we thank the government and the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) for making the best arrangements," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, deputy Jatha leader of the people and government of Pakistan had always welcomed and had taken good care of the Sikh holy sites which was why the country and its people

She said the death anniversary of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was an important event in the Sikh religious calendar as he was the first ruler of the Sikh Empire. Ms. Kaur said Sikh pilgrims came to Pakistan with the message of love, peace, friendship and harmony.

Last Two Victims Of Laptop Battery Explosion Incident In Faisalabad Succumb To Injuries

FAISALABAD: Two of nine people burnt in laptop battery explosion incident in Sharifpura of Faisalabad also couldn't sustain burn injuries and succumbed to death.



According to sources, the deceased included 5-year-old Imaan Fatima and 45-year-old Rabaat who were under treatment for burn injuries at Allied Hospital in Faisalabad.

Three of the nine family members lost their lives on the spot in the fire incident. While, other six were shifted to the hospital but they also couldn't sustain injuries and succumbed to death. All of the nine family members died in the fire incident occurred due to laptop battery explosion.—RT/Agency

Father Sets Himself On Fire In Pursuit Of Justice For Daughter

MULTAN: A tragic incident unfolded as a father set himself on fire in Multan after his daughter failed to get justice, media reported on Sunday.



The man, Muhammad Sajjad, was transferred to the Burns Unit in Multan with over 40 percent of his body suffering from burns.

A year ago, Sajjad's daughter was allegedly raped, and despite registering an FIR, the family claims that the police failed to take any action against the accused.



LAHORE: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is exchanging views with Rana Mashhood Ahmed, Chairman PM's Youth Programme.—RT

EDITORIAL

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

Monday, June 24, 2024



A politically toxic budget that no one wants to be tethered to

In the fraught landscape of Pakistani politics, the recent maneuvers surrounding the IMF-sponsored Budget 2024 have been nothing short of revealing. PPP MNA Aseefa Bhutto Zardari's vehement criticism of the budget during her maiden National Assembly speech highlights a stark reality: neither the PPP nor the PML-N wants to be tethered to this politically toxic fiscal plan. Her condemnation of the tax-heavy, anti-people budget, which exacerbates record-high inflation and unemployment, resonated deeply with the public's frustrations. Bibi Aseefa rightly pointed out the budget's failure to provide relief to farmers and ordinary citizens, underscoring the need for tangible support and national unity.

On the other hand, former Prime Minister Nawaz

Sharif's calculated absence from the budget session reeks of political cowardice. By avoiding direct association with the budget, he attempts to sidestep



the inevitable backlash while his party, the PML-N, continues to enjoy the trappings of power. This strategy, aimed at preserving political capital, is transparently hypocritical. The public is not so naive as to overlook this charade; they recognize the ploy of feigning empathy for the masses' suffering while relishing the perks of governance.

The hypocrisy exhibited by both parties is a stark

reminder of their willingness to prioritize political survival over genuine public service. Bibi Aseefa Bhutto's calls for collective action and support for vulnerable groups are commendable, yet they ring hollow against the backdrop of her party's broader strategic avoidance of responsibility. Similarly, Nawaz Sharif's refusal to engage with the budget process further underscores the PML-N's disingenuous approach to leadership.

It is imperative for the public to see through this pseudo empathy. Genuine leadership requires facing challenges head-on, not shirking responsibilities for political expedience. The people of Pakistan deserve better than leaders who play politics with their livelihoods. It's time for a new era of accountability and integrity in Pakistani politics.

GLOBAL WATCH

Hezbollah targets Israeli barracks after commander's death

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group said Sunday it had targeted a military position in northern Israel with an armed drone in response to the killing of a commander.

Israel and the powerful Iran-backed group, a Hamas ally, have exchanged near-daily cross-border fire since the Gaza war erupted on October 7.

Hezbollah's announcement came hours after it published a video excerpt to show locations in Israel along with their coordinates, amid heightening fears of an all-out conflict between the two foes.

On Saturday, the Jamaa Islamiya group announced the death of one of its commanders, Ayman Ghotmeh, saying he was killed "in a treacherous Zionist raid" in Khiara in Lebanon's eastern Bekaa area.

Israel later confirmed it had carried out the strike, alleging Ghotmeh was responsible for supplying the Fajr Forces, Jamaa Islamiya's armed wing, and Hamas with weapons in the area.

Hezbollah on Sunday said its fighters launched a strike "with an attack drone" on a military lead-



ership position in the Beit Hillel barracks "in response to the assassination carried out by the Israeli enemy in the town of Khiara".

The Israeli military meanwhile said in a statement that a drone had "crossed from Lebanon and fell in the area of Beit Hillel", adding that "no injuries were reported".

Cross-border tensions have surged over the past days, with Israel's military announcing on Tuesday that a plan for an offensive in Lebanon had been "approved and validated".

Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah responded with threats that no part of Israel would be spared in the event of an all-out war.

The Lebanese armed group on Saturday evening published a video showing Israeli positions

and coordinates, along with an excerpt of Nasrallah's speech in which he says "if war is imposed on Lebanon, the resistance will fight without restrictions or rules".

Days earlier, it had circulated a nine-minute video showing aerial footage taken by the movement over northern Israel, including what it said were sensitive military, defence and energy facilities and infrastructure in the city and port of Haifa.

The cross-border violence has killed at least 480 people in Lebanon, most of them fighters but also 93 civilians, according to an AFP tally.

Israeli authorities say at least 15 soldiers and 11 civilians have been killed in the country's north.—Agency

THE HEARTLAND

Prolonged Power Outage Plagues Shadi Palli Residents Amid Extreme Heat



By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: Residents of Shadi Palli have been enduring severe hardships due to an ongoing power outage lasting three days. The continuous load shedding has left the community in a dire state, exacerbated by the scorching heat.

Dr. Muhammad Bachal highlighted the severe impact of the power outage on the residents, noting that the lack of electricity has made drinking water scarce. The incompetence of WAPDA has led to extended load shedding, causing immense distress to the people of Shadi Palli who are struggling to access drinking water.

The residents expressed their frustration, stating that the government has failed to provide any arrangements for drinking water during this intense heat. They urged the Deputy Commissioner of Umerkot to take immediate action and supply water tankers to every household to alleviate the suffering caused by the prolonged power outage and extreme weather conditions.

The situation in Shadi Palli underscores the urgent need for reliable electricity and adequate water supply, especially during peak summer months, to ensure the well-being of the community.

Al-Quds Convention And Eid Milan Party Organized By Jamiat-e-Talaba Arabia In Badin

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: The Al-Quds Convention and Eid Milan Party were successfully organized under the auspices of Jamiat-e-Talaba Arabia, bringing together prominent figures including the administrator of Badin, Abdul Qadeer Biliidi, and other eminent scholars. The event aimed to highlight the plight of Palestinian Muslims and foster unity and intellectual growth among madrasa students.

Addressing the convention, the Deputy General Secretary of Jamaat-e-Islami Sindh, Abdul Qadoos Ahmadani, emphasized the ongoing oppression faced by Palestinian Muslims at the hands of Zionist Jews. He noted that this issue deeply affects conscious and sensitive Muslims worldwide. Ahmadani stressed that the Palestinian problem transcends land disputes, centering on the significance of Bait-ul-Maqdis. He urged the community to play a proactive role in supporting the Palestinian cause.

Syed Ali Mardan Shah Geelani, the Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami District Badin, echoed this sentiment, describing the invitation by Jamiat Talaba Arabia as a call for love and brotherhood. He highlighted the organization's role in intellectually guiding



and training madrasa youth, fostering awareness among students about their responsibilities. Geelani underscored that madrasa students will play a crucial role in the country's future, and Jamiat Talaba Arabia aims to spread the message of religion through its platform.

The event also featured speeches from several distinguished scholars and officials, including Maulana Ali Gul Mansoori (Vice Qeem district), Maulana Abdul Kareem Baladi (Former Amin Jamiat Talaba Arabia Pakistan), Maulana Nazir

Ahmed, Principal of Jamia Danul Uloom Kausar, Ibadullah Thebo, Principal of Jamia Madrasah Al-Binat Talhar, and Qari Talib Biliidi. They reiterated the importance of solidarity with the Palestinian cause and the need for religious and intellectual education among madrasa students. The convention concluded with a strong message of unity, intellectual growth, and religious commitment, reinforcing the significance of supporting oppressed communities and fostering a knowledgeable and united Muslim youth.

Marcos says Philippines won't be intimidated amid China row

President Ferdinand Marcos said on Sunday the Philippines "will not be intimidated" by anyone after a violent clash between the Filipino navy and the Chinese coast guard in the South China Sea.

The confrontation took place on Monday off Second Thomas Shoal as Chinese sailors foiled an attempt by Philippine forces to resupply marines stationed on a derelict warship that was deliberately grounded atop the disputed shoal in 1999 to assert Manila's territorial claims.

It was the latest and most serious incident in a series of escalating confrontations between Chinese and Philippine ships in recent months as Beijing steps up efforts to push its claims to nearly all of the strategically located waterway.

"We will never be intimidated or oppressed by anyone," Marcos said in a speech during a visit to the headquarters of the Philippines' South China Sea forces on Palawan island, the closest major landmass to the shoal.

Marcos awarded medals to 80 sailors who took part in the resupply mission, urging them to "continue to fulfil your duty of defending the nation" even as the situation



has become "dangerous". Second Thomas Shoal lies about 200 kilometres from Palawan and more than 1,000 kilometres from China's nearest major landmass, Hainan island.

A Filipino sailor lost a thumb in the clash with Manila also accusing the Chinese coast guard sailors of wielding knives, sticks and an axe and stealing or damaging their equipment, including guns and inflatable boats.

Beijing insisted its coast guard behaved in a "professional and restrained" way and blamed Manila for the clash. In previous confrontations, Chinese forces have used water cannons and military-grade lasers and collided with Filipino resupply vessels and their escorts.

"We have never, never in the history of the Philippines, yielded to any foreign power," Marcos said to applause, while pledging to "continue to exercise our freedoms and rights in support of our national interest, in accordance with international law". "Our calm and peaceful disposition should not be mistaken for acquiescence." The confrontation is fuelling growing concern that the dispute could drag in the United States, which has a mutual defence pact with Manila. The Philippine government said this week that it does not consider Monday's clash as an "armed attack" that would trigger a provision in the treaty for Washington to come to Manila's aid. However, Manila says it was also concerned Chinese forces would launch a similar attempt to dislodge a small Filipino military garrison on Second Thomas Shoal.—Agency

Kotri Hosts Cultural Music Festival In Memory Of Sindhi Folk Artist Faqir Roshan Jalal

By Shaikh Sindhi

KOTRI: In a heartfelt tribute to the legendary Sindhi folk artist Faqir Roshan Jalal, the Sindhi Adabi Sangat of Jamshoro District, in collaboration with the Sindhi Adabi Sangat Bolhari branch, organized a grand musical festival at the Kotri Garho Ghoth Public Ground. The event witnessed the participation of thousands of people, including writers, poets, authors, and artists.

Renowned columnist and writer Muhammad Khan Abro addressed the gathering, highlighting that Faqir Roshan Jalal was a vibrant artist of folk culture. He remarked that the loss of Faqir Roshan Jalal is a significant blow to Sindhi's cultural heritage. However, the vibrant musical festival held in his memory demonstrated that figures like Faqir Roshan Jalal never truly die.

The Sindhi Adabi Sangat congratulated the organization and Faqir Roshan Jalal's family for hosting such a magnificent tribute.

The district coordinator of Sindhi Adabi Sangat Jamshoro, poet and writer Deedar Sham, spoke about transforming the grief of Faqir Roshan Jalal's loss into a celebration of music. He mentioned that Faqir Roshan Jalal devoted his life to the string of the ektara, and through this festival, they aimed to bring peace to his soul with the sounds and melodies of ektara. He announced that this tradition will be repeated annually on his death anniversary. The festival, infused with the love for Sindhi music, paid homage to the lasting legacy of Faqir Roshan Jalal, ensuring that his contributions to folk music and culture continue to be celebrated for years to come.

Allama Muhammad Baqir Chandio Highlights The Significance Of Ghadeer Day

By Dildar Ali Samo

TANDO ADAM: Renowned religious scholar Allama Muhammad Baqir Chandio of Jaffria Masjid Aza Khana e Zahra Tando Adam emphasized the immense importance of Ghadeer Day in the history of Islam during a recent media address. He highlighted that Ghadeer Day marks the beginning of Wilayat and Imamah, signifying the establishment of a system that ensures the protection, interpretation, promotion, and implementation of Islam after the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Allama Chandio stated that the day is meant to draw humanity's attention to recognizing Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) as the authority and center for safeguarding and advancing Islamic principles. He stressed the importance of obey-



ing Hazrat Ali and following his exemplary practices to purify society.

In his address, he called for the renewal of the pledge to uphold and promote Deen Haq during the blessed hours of Ghadeer Day. He urged the faithful to adapt the life and character of Hazrat Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) as a model in their individual and collective

lives, emphasizing that supporting these actions is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the Islamic faith. Allama Chandio's message resonated with the community, underscoring the enduring significance of Ghadeer Day in the Islamic tradition and its role in guiding the faithful towards a life of righteousness and devotion.

SPORTS



Azhar Mahmood announces taking legal action over 'false allegations'



LAHORE: Pakistan team's Assistant Coach Azhar Mahmood has announced that he will be taking legal action over false allegations targeting him and his family on various media and social media platforms.

Super 8: England seal dominating victory over US to qualify for semi-finals

BRIDGETOWN: England grabbed a flawless 10-wicket victory against the United States by easily chasing a 116-run target during the T20 World Cup 2024's Super Eight match being played at Kensington Oval, Bridgetown, on Sunday.



Super 8 but became the first side to make their way to the tournament's semi-final. Earlier in the first innings, English bowlers once again dominated their opponents and sent the entire USA team back to the pavilion for just 115 runs in 18.5 overs.

off 24), Corey Anderson (29 off 28) and Harmeet Singh (21 off 17) scored some crucial runs for the batting side while their skipper Aaron Jones could only post 10 runs after facing 16 balls.

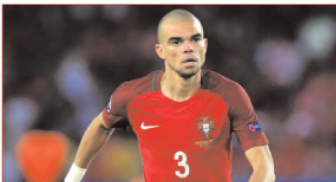
Lando Norris beats Verstappen in thrilling Spanish Grand Prix race



McLaren driver Lando Norris secured second pole position in the Spanish Grand Prix qualifying race, defeating Max Verstappen in a spell-binding lap.

Martinez hails Pepe's 'love for the game' as Portugal veteran stars at Euro 2024

DORTMUND: Portugal veteran Pepe is the oldest player ever to appear at the European Championship but that did not stop him being one of the best performers in Saturday's win over Turkey as coach Roberto Martinez described the 41-year-old as a "wonderful example".



Not only that, he was outstanding as he marshalled the back line alongside Ruben Dias in Dortmund, helping Martinez's team to a victory which allowed them to clinch their place in the knockout stages.

The rest of the time they live life normally and expect one day to retire. "Pepe doesn't do that. He uses 24 hours to get himself recovered. When he is not recovering he makes sure he has the right sleep pattern."

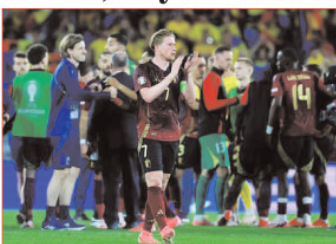
Mitchell Marsh hopeful for a turnaround in "must-win" India game



SAINT VINCENT: Australia's T20I captain Mitchell Marsh expressed his confidence in his team's ability to force a turnaround in the must-win ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 Super Eight fixture against India.

Belgium have 'extreme potential' at Euros, says Tedesco

GERMANY: Domenico Tedesco claimed Belgium have "extreme potential" at Euro 2024 after kick-starting their campaign with a crucial 2-0 win against Romania.



Tedesco's side would have been on the brink of elimination if they had lost in Cologne, but Yuri Tielemans settled their nerves with a goal after just 73 seconds.

see, the last game will be difficult," he said. "We are very relieved we won. It was very important to get the three points. For the rest of the tournament, we are released (from the pressure) and happy."

Cristiano Ronaldo clinches another record at Euro 2024



In Portugal's second game of the 2024 European Championship, they defeated Turkey 3-0, thanks to a great performance by captain Cristiano Ronaldo, who has bagged another record of the mega soccer event.

lot of belief in our group. We are a very good cricket team. Yes, tonight we had an off night but I guess there's also a positive in the fact that in 36 hours we go again. It's a big game, it will be against India obviously and it's a must-win game," stated Marsh during the post-match press conference.

REGIONAL TIMES ENTERTAINMENT



Face of the Day



Name: Kastoore Chand Veermani Gujar Location: Karachi About me: Strike a pose if you love modeling like me!

America's sweetheart Taylor Swift makes shady speech before debuting Kim Kardashian diss track



Taylor Swift takes a jab at her haters before starting to sing a diss track which is believed to be about Kim Kardashian. Taylor added, "You clearly thought this was a good idea [and] you wanted this to happen. Blows me away. I'll spend forever trying to thank you for that."

Kourtney Kardashian claps back at body-shaming trolls with empowering message



Kourtney Kardashian recently slammed cruel body-shaming trolls about her weight gain after giving birth to her fourth child Rocky Thirteen Barker.

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

NATIONAL

Governor Punjab Foresees New Era Of Development And Prosperity For Attock District

ATTOCK: Attock district would embark on a new era of development and prosperity as the work on a number of development projects, including the establishment of sub campuses of universities and health facilities would be initiated during the current fiscal year.

This was disclosed by Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider while addressing two different public gatherings in Khunda and Jand areas of Attock on Saturday evening. He announced that besides the establishment of a dialysis center in Fatehjang, a state of the art facility would also be established in Pindigheb with the help of local donors.

He claimed that work on the sub campus of the University of Engineering and Technology Taxila at Jand would be initiated in September this year. He said that all resources would be utilized for the welfare of the people of Attock district.

Sardar Saleem Haider said he is a proud political worker, who has risen to the



current position through PPP leadership trust. He said that the Pakistan Peoples Party believed in the politics of public welfare and betterment of the public, adding that people were the real masters of the country and that was why the party had the agenda based on public welfare. "Economic prosperity can be achieved by financially empowering farmers, labourers and the underprivileged," he added. Meanwhile, the Governor paid rich tributes to the martyred Benazir Bhutto on the occasion of her 71st birth anniversary during a function held at the District Council Hall Attock on Sunday.

The Attock chapter of Pakistan Peoples Party has arranged the ceremony to celebrate her life and legacy as well as to pay tributes to her services for the country. He said that Benazir Bhutto was the first woman Prime Minister of the Muslim world and a courageous leader. The Governor hailed Benazir Bhutto's courageous struggle for the Party and the nation after the martyrdom of her father.—RT/Agency

Security Forces Seize Over 1037 Metric Tons Of Drugs

ISLAMABAD: Security forces have seized 1037 metric tons of drugs in the country-wide operation against narcotics since September last, media reported.

During the ongoing operation, 1538 drug dealers have also been arrested. According to details, 4,847 kg of drugs were recovered from Balochistan, 83 kg from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 161 kg from Gilgit-Baltistan, 56 kg from Punjab and 38 kg from Sindh during this month.

All relevant institutions are determined to continue their operations till complete elimination of the menace of drugs from the country.

Earlier, the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) seized a consignment full of drugs in Pishi hidden for smuggling abroad.

The ANF officials con-



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

The operation was carried out keeping in mind the activities of a group involved in drug trafficking. Raids are being conducted to arrest the

ring leaders of the drug trafficking group namely Liaqat Baloch and Wahid Baloch. Members of the group are involved in drug smuggling abroad by sea. On receiving the intelligence information, the ANF team conducted a raid in the area and recovered the drugs which were stored in a secret location, he informed.—RT/Agency

Three Terrorists Linked To ANF Officer's Murder Arrested In Jehlum

JEHLUM: The police officials on Saturday managed to arrest the three terrorists allegedly involved in the recent attack that resulted in the martyrdom of Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) officers, media reported.

The suspects, identified as Bilal, Syed Abid, and Ghufuran, who hail from the Gujarat district were apprehended while attempting to flee from Gwadar to Iran.

The police are actively searching for two additional terrorists who were allegedly involved in the shooting



incident. The operation comes ten days after three ANF officers were martyred by gunfire in the Dornel Mir area of Jehlum.—RT/Agency

Body Of 11-Year-Old Domestic Worker Found In Faisalabad Bungalow

FAISALABAD: In another distressing incident, an 11-year-old domestic worker's body has been recovered from the school owner's house in Scheme 212 area of Faisalabad, ARY News reported on Sunday.

The 11-year-old son of Ali Sher — a resident of Bhawana who used to work at Usman Shahid's house — was found deceased under suspicious circumstances.

According to reports, the body of the 11-year-old domestic worker was discovered on Sunday morning with a rope around his neck, hanging from an iron grill at Shahid's house.

The family was informed on Sunday morning that Usman was unwell, but upon reaching Shahid's house, they discovered his lifeless body.

The father of the victim, Ali Sher, expressed disbelief over the claim that Usman had committed suicide, asserting that his son may have been murdered by the family as Usman had swelling on his arms and



hands. The Forensic Science Agency collected the evidence from the spot after which the child's body was shifted to the Allied Hospital mortuary for post-mortem examination, while the SSP Operations Hasan Javed disclosed that Usman's body exhibited signs of torture, including a rope mark on his neck and a broken neck bone. However, further development in the case can be emerged after the post mortem report of the deceased domestic worker.—RT/Agency

GLOBAL WATCH



Merchant ship damaged by drone attack in Red Sea



DUBAI: A merchant ship was damaged by a drone attack in the Red Sea near Yemen early Sunday morning, though no injuries were reported, according to the British maritime security agency UKMTO.

"The Master of a merchant vessel reports being hit by uncrewed aerial system (UAS), resulting in damage to the vessel. All crew members are reported safe, and the vessel is proceeding to its next port of call," said a bulletin from UKMTO, which is run by the British navy.

On Saturday, the US Central Command, which has carried out retaliatory strikes against the Houthis over their attacks on shipping, said it had destroyed three nautical drones belonging to the group over the past 24 hours. It also said the group had

Pet donkey enjoys 'best life' with mate Elk after escaping owner



A pet donkey was found enjoying his "best life" with mate Elk after escaping from his owner five years ago.

The donkey named Diesel was recorded by a hiker earlier in June. The owner couple came across the video and were shocked to see that their pet, who had escaped five years ago, was living with a herd of elk, BBC reported.

Terrie and Dave Drewry said they were relieved seeing the video that the animal was safe. They have decided to let him wander free.

Talking to a CBS reporter, Terrie said that they had given up the hopes of ever finding him. Diesel had escaped during a hiking trip near Clear Lake in California. Even

Betting scandal hits UK's Conservative Party, dealing fresh blow to Rishi Sunak



LONDON: The Conservative Party of the United Kingdom (UK) has been hit by several allegations that top members placed bets on the general election date, scheduled for July 4, dealing a fresh blow to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who is struggling to regain the trust of the public.

Nick Mason, the Tory Party's chief data officer, has taken a leave of absence while being investigated by the Gambling Commission for allegedly betting on the timing of the election with inside information before the date was announced, UK media reported on Sunday.

Several other Conservative figures have already been involved in the scandal. Tony Lee, the party's director of campaigns, and his wife Laura Saunders are under investigation, along with Craig Williams, Sunak's parliamentary private secretary. A police officer in Sunak's close protection team is also being looked into over allegations. A spokesman for the Gambling Commission said

Power cut causes flight chaos at UK's Manchester airport

LONDON: Manchester Airport, the third-busiest in Britain, cancelled over 100 flights affecting thousands of passengers Sunday following a major power cut.

At least 20% of all outgoing and incoming flights were cancelled, a Manchester Airport spokesperson said, adding that it expected further disruption.

Earlier aviation analytics firm Cirium said 66 departures and 59 inbound flights had been cancelled with easyJet experiencing the largest number of cancellations.

Manchester Airports Group, which also operates London Stansted and the East Midlands airports, said the airport had been "affected by a major power cut in the area earlier this morning" and passengers at two of the three



terminals were told to stay away. The power cut led to problems with airport security and baggage systems, according to Chris Woodroffe, the airport managing director. Flights resumed in the afternoon.

Woodroffe said on social media he expected flights to be "back to normal operations" on Monday. The airline Jet2 said that

as well as cancelling dozens of flights, it was unable to load bags onto planes as the baggage system remained "inoperable". EasyJet warned of "very long queues" for security and said passengers could only board flights with cabin bags. Some arriving flights were diverted to other airports including London Heathrow and Birmingham.—Agency

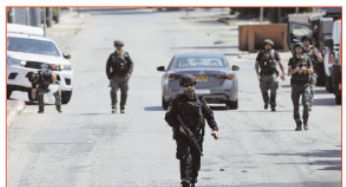
Israeli Forces Tie Wounded Palestinian To Jeep In West Bank Raid

ISRAELI FORCES TIED A WOUNDED PALESTINIAN TO A MILITARY VEHICLE DURING A RAID IN THE OCCUPIED WEST BANK CITY OF JENIN, THE ARMY SAID SUNDAY, ADMITTING THAT SOLDIERS HAD VIOLATED OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES.

Footage of the incident, which occurred on Saturday, has gone viral and shows a man strapped horizontally to the bonnet of a military jeep as it passes through a narrow alley.

Medics identified the Palestinian as Mujahid Raed Abbadi, 24, who told AFP he lives in the Jenin refugee camp.

The military said a Palestinian man was wounded during a "counterterrorism operation" to arrest wanted suspects in the area of Wadi Burjina, between the town of Burjina and Jenin.



During an exchange of fire between troops and militants in Burjina's Jabriyat neighbourhood, a Palestinian was wounded and apprehended, the military said in a statement.

The statement referred to him as a "suspect", but did not specify any accusations against Abbadi, who medics told AFP was being treated at Jenin's Ibn Sina hospital, and not in Israeli custody.

The military said: "In violation of orders and standard operating procedures, the suspect was taken by the forces while tied on top of a vehicle." He was later transferred to the Palestinian Red Crescent for treatment, it said. "The conduct of the forces in the video of the incident does not conform to the values of the IDF (military)," the statement said.—Agency

3 Wolves Brutally Attack 37-Year-Old Woman In Zoo Outside Paris

PARIS: Three wolves in a zoo outside Paris attacked a 37-year-old woman leaving her fighting for her life, a source familiar with the case and local prosecutors said.

The woman was bitten "on the neck, the calf and the back" at the Thoiry zoo around 40 kilometres (25 miles) west of the French capital, the source familiar with the case told AFP.

Maryvonne Caillibotte, chief prosecutor in Versailles, said the woman's life was in danger.

The woman is believed to have gone out alone for a jog after spending the night with her family in a marked". First responders got to the scene "very quickly",

on its website at between 220 and 760 euros (\$235-810) per night.

Lodges in the wolf zone promise "silence, rest and disconnection", according to the zoo's adverts. They offer "a one-of-a-kind, very intimate experience with the arctic wolves you'll be able to see from the living room".

The woman "ended up in the safari zone, which is supposed to be restricted to cars. That's a local chateau that has been in his family since the 16th Century.

He recalled to regional newspaper L'Independant in April how he initially stocked the zoo with a ship loaded with 120 animals brought from Kenya.—Agency

REGIONAL TIMES MONEY

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa To Introduce New Road Tax

PESHAWAR: While the imposition of a new tax policy might be just another fiscal decision made by legislators sitting comfortably in an air-conditioned office, its jolts are felt worst by those low-income citizens, who were barely an inch away from sinking into inescapable poverty.

Recently, in an apparent attempt to boost revenue generation, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) government announced its plans to impose the "Road User Tax", which will allegedly be levied against all new vehicles operating on roads in the province holding registration numbers from Punjab, Sindh, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) and Balochistan.

Opposing this new policy were locals like Shahid Khan, a fruit dealer, who felt that this would only add to the financial woes of the common household. "We are already overburdened by electricity, gas, water bills and property taxes on our houses. During the past three



years, bills and inflation have crushed citizens, leaving them in a miserable state. Now, the government is expecting us to pay a new tax just for driving on the roads. This move will force people to leave the province," protested Shahid. Likewise, Khalida Begum, a lecturer at a university in Peshawar also highlighted the struggles of the salaried class to run a household. "This new tax will be the last straw on the camel's back. Instead of giving relief to people in such an economic situation, the government has decided to levy more taxes," regretted Khalida. "The province is already burdened with taxes due to which factories are closing down and industry is at a standstill. In these circumstances, such steps need to be taken very thoughtfully. A comprehensive plan should be made with the federation, which takes the people's convenience into consideration. Taxation is successful only when the common people are getting some relief," opined Shahid Khan, former Vice-President of the K-P Chamber of Commerce and Industry.—RT/Agency

METRO KARACHI



Karachi Hosts Donkey Cart Race To Revitalize Traditional Sports

KARACHI: Part of the Commissioner Karachi Sports Festival, the port city revived ancient culture and heritage by hosting a donkey cart race on Sunday with most participants from the impoverished Lyari neighbourhood.

The unique race inaugurated by Additional Commissioner Syed Ghulam Mehdi began from ICI bridge and concluded at the Commissioner's Office, Club Road, attended by Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab as chief guest.

Abdul Khalid secured first position, Muhammad Javed second, and Shahjehan alias Durga third position. The position holders received their prizes from Mayor Wahab who started the donkey cart racing a part of



Karachi's ancient and heritage. He appreciated the love of the people of Lyari for sports and their efforts to preserve their cultural heritage. The mayor expressed his commitment to providing opportunities for youth to engage in positive activities through sports. He further hailed the donkey cart race as a cherished aspect of Karachi's cultural heritage, praising the people of Lyari for keeping this tradition alive despite economic challenges. He acknowledged their love for sports and dedication to preserving their cultural identity, which is deeply rooted in the port city's history.

Addressing the occasion, Commissioner Karachi Syed Hassan Naqvi emphasised the need to promote sports activities in the City of Lights, which will help provide positive opportunities for the youth of the metropolis. Alongside the donkey cart race, the sports festival features cycle race, hockey tournament and other events, aiming to promote positive activities for the city's youth.

According to a commissioner's spokesperson, the event was fully funded by a private organisation. The sports festival has several other tournaments including tennis, squash, cricket and basketball. He announced the schedule for the Commissioner Karachi Sports Festival, which includes: Hockey tournament on June 25 at the Islahuddin Landi Kotal Ground in North Nazimabad, followed by prize distribution; Girls' basketball tournament on June 26; Shooting ball tournament on June 29 at the Korangi Number 5 Shooting Ball Court; Cycle race on June 30, starting at 7:30 am at the Mazar-e-Quaid, prize distribution at 9:00 AM at the Commissioner Karachi Office; Boys' basketball tournament will be held on June 30 at 9:00 PM at the Aram Bagh.—RT/Agency



KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Chief, Munam Zafar is addressing a protest demonstration against prolonged electricity load shedding and inflated electricity bills, at the Mehmoodabad area of the city.—RT

Sindh Government Cracks Down On Fake Number Plates

KARACHI: The Sindh government has announced a comprehensive 'mega operation' targeting the production and use of counterfeit official number plates on vehicles across the province, according to media reports on Sunday.

Speaking at a press conference, provincial Information and Broadcasting Minister Sharjeel Memon issued a stern warning to those involved in the illicit business of manufacturing fake number plates, emphasizing that stringent actions would be taken against offenders.

Memon revealed that multiple FIRs have already been filed against individuals and business owners responsible for producing and installing counterfeit government number plates on vehicles across the province, according to media reports on Sunday.

He emphasized that possession of a fake number plate could lead to imprisonment, and vowed that shops engaged in this illegal activity would face legal consequences. In addition to the crackdown, Memon announced forthcoming amendments to the Excise and Taxation laws aimed at enhancing vehicle registration compliance. Under the proposed changes, vehicle purchases would only be allowed upon proper registration. Violators of this regulation could face substantial fines, potentially up to Rs 1 million.



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Zardari To Lead Crucial Sindh Law And Order Meeting Today

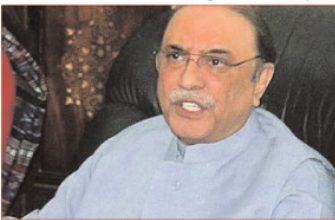
KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari will chair a meeting over law-and-order situation in Sindh on Monday (tomorrow), media reported.

IG Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon has left for Sukkur to attend the meeting.

Sindh's chief minister, home minister and D.G. Rangers Sindh will attend the session along with DIG Sukkur, Larkana and federal and provincial ministers.

The meeting will be briefed over the ongoing operation in katcha area by the police and rangers.

The session will consider the problems in katcha area, weapons and other related issues.



The session chaired by President Zardari is expected to take key decisions to tackle the law and order matters related to it. President Asif Zardari in a meeting on Sindh law and order in May had directed Sindh authorities to launch a large-scale operation against street criminals in Karachi, dacoits in the katcha area, and drug traffickers throughout the province in coordination with other provinces.—RT

Karachi Erupts In Protest Over Sky-High Bills And Severe Load Shedding



KARACHI: Protests against loadshedding and overbilling erupted at 22 locations across the city, with the central protest taking place near the Kalapull following a call by Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), media reported on Sunday.

Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Karachi, Munim Zafar Khan, addressed the main protest rally, highlighting the ongoing issues faced by Karachi's residents due to K-Electric's operations. He pointed out that while the number of consumers has increased, K-Electric's production has decreased.

He highlighted that the citizens of Karachi are lack of electricity, gas, and water and questioned the Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) recent stance against K-Electric, asking why they were silent before. JI Amir demanded an end to K-Electric's oppression of the people and announced further protests, including one on Shariah Faisal on June 26 and another during the KMC budget session tomorrow.—RT/Agency

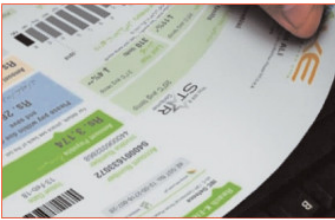
Karachi Residents To Settle Municipal Utility Charges And Taxes Via KE Bills

KARACHI: The already burdened citizens of Karachi struck with another challenge as the residents have to pay municipal utility charges and taxes in the monthly K-Electric bills, media reported on Sunday.

In a recent city council meeting, Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab announced the passing of a resolution concerning the collection of municipal utility charges and taxes.

The resolution aims to address the fair collection and utilization of funds for the welfare and development of Karachi. "Consumers using 100 units of electricity will be exempted from this tax," Mayor Karachi said, while ensuring transparency in revenue allocation and expenditure.

Mayor Murtaza Wahab emphasized his personal oversight over all financial matters re-



lated to the resolution, pledging to monitor income and expenses diligently. Additionally, he mentioned a constructive dialogue between the city administration and K-Electric to establish a framework beneficial to both parties.—RT/Agency

Tragedy Strikes: Woman Dead, 16 Injured As Wedding Party Bus Overturns In Karachi



KARACHI: A woman was killed and several others sustained injuries as a wedding party bus overturned at Shahrah-e-Faisal in Karachi, media reported.

Rescue sources said that the bus carrying guests of the party wedding overturned near the at Shahrah-e-Faisal, resulting in the death of one woman and injuring 16 others.

The bus was reportedly traveling from Drig Road to Mehmoodabad. According to an eye witness, the bus suffered the accident in a bid to save a car trying to overtake it. The injured were rushed to Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) for treatment.—RT/Agency

Karachi Police Dramatically Rescue Malir Girl From Alleged Family Abuse

KARACHI: Police have rescued a young girl from her home near Malir after she alleged abuse by her mother, and brother.

According to SSP Malir, the girl has accused her family members of physical abuse. She has refused to return to her family.

SSP Malir stated that the girl had also shared images of her injuries on social media. Her brother was not at home at the time of the rescue. The police are currently questioning the girl's family.



A video statement from the girl has also emerged, in which she claims that she has been living in Qatar for the past 10 years and has been subjected to abuse by her brother and mother. She alleges that her father and another brother were aware of the abuse but did not intervene. The girl further stated that her mother attempted to kill her a week ago. She expressed her gratitude to SSP Malir and his team for rescuing her and stated that she wants to return to Qatar to complete her education.—RT/Agency

10 Dead in Karachi In 9 Hours: Drug Links Suspected

KARACHI: Karachi witnessed a series of tragic deaths as 10 individuals were discovered deceased within a span of just 9 hours, according to media reports on Sunday.

Rescue officials and local authorities suspect that all the deceased individuals were involved in drug addiction. The bodies were found at various locations including KMC ground Lyari, Golimar, Jahangir Road, Landhi, Godam Chowrang, Defense Phase 7, Orangi Town Sector 15, and Khamsa Goth. After retrieval by rescue teams, the bodies were taken to respective police stations and later transferred to mortuaries for further examination and identification. Authorities have launched an urgent investigation to ascertain the cause of death and determine any possible links between these incidents. The identification process is currently ongoing, with rescue teams actively notifying families and gathering necessary information.—RT/Agency

Salt Manufacturers Furious Over Proposal To Scrap Fixed Tax Regime For Exporters

KARACHI: The Salt Manufacturers Association of Pakistan (SMAP) has strongly criticized the Federal Budget 2024's plan to replace the 1% turnover-based Fixed Tax Regime (FTR) with a 20% tax on taxable profits. SMAP warned that this shift could severely harm Pakistan's export sector, describing it as potentially "disastrous".

Chairman Qasim Yaqoob Paracha expressed solidarity with Pakistan's export industries, emphasizing the detrimental impact of removing exports from the FTR. SMAP categorically rejected



authorities. Paracha urged the government to reconsider these changes, highlighting the potential threat to business survival. SMAP vowed to explore all options alongside other export sectors if the proposal moves forward.

The association reaffirmed its commitment to advocating for policies supporting sustainable growth in Pakistan's export-driven business, urging policymakers to prioritize stakeholder dialogue in future tax reforms.—RT

Sindh Government Launches Dramatic Inquiry Into Sukkur Barrage Damage

KARACHI: The Sindh government has initiated an inquiry into the damage sustained by gates at the Sukkur Barrage, and appointed focal persons to promptly inform farmers about potential water shortages and crop losses, according to reports on Sunday.

Irrigation Minister Jam Khan Shoro announced the formation of a five-member committee composed of senior officials from the Irrigation Department. The committee's mandate includes investigating the



causes behind the collapse of gates at the Sukkur Barrage, identifying those responsible, and determining any lapses by officials. A report is expected within five days. The Sukkur Barrage, a



KARACHI: Senior Sindh Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit, Excise Taxation and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon is addressing a press conference about the Sindh government's initiatives.—RT

cornerstone of Pakistan's irrigation infrastructure constructed over 90 years ago on the Indus River, supports irrigation for 70% of Sindh's arable land through its 66 gates and seven off-take canals.—RT/Agency

"Accept responsibility for your life. Know that it is you who will get you where you want to go, no one else."

—Les Brown

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MONDAY JUNE 24 2024

National Assembly Passes Resolution Demanding Action Against Violence Against Minorities

ISLAMABAD: As the country reels under frequent incidents of violence and lynchings over blasphemy allegations, the National Assembly on Sunday passed a resolution on the protection of minorities in the country in the ruckus-marred session.

The lower house session on Budget 2024-25 faced turbulence as the government and opposition remained divided over a new military operation, Azm-e-Istehkam, announced on Saturday to root out militancy from the country.

Besides the altercation between the opposition and treasury benches, the NA saw the passage of a resolution aimed at protecting the minorities with an overwhelming majority.

The resolution presented by Law Minister Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar stated that the federal and provincial governments should en-



sure the complete safety of members of minor communities in the country.

It also called for action against the individuals involved in violence against minorities.

The resolution comes days after another tragic incident of a man's lynching over allegations of desecration of the Holy Quran in Swat.

A violent mob had beaten the suspect of blasphemy, who was a local tourist, to death on Thursday night, and later set his body as well as

the police station ablaze, where he was kept after allegations.

While speaking during the session, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif expressed deep concern over the rising incidents of violence against minorities and said that the country is facing embarrassment at the international level due to such cases.

"Pakistan is not the country of a single person but every Pakistani who lives here is an equal citizen. All Hindus, Christians and Sikhs are equal citizens," he added. The minister called for sending a clear message from the NA that the country's parliament is committed to protecting the rights of minority communities in the country.

Giving a policy statement in the House, he said the National Assembly needed to adopt a unanimous stance against the misuse of religion.

The minister said that the message should be clear that the people are united to safeguard the rights of minorities, including Christians, Sikhs and Parsis.

"Our Constitution does not allow violence and the killing of innocents in the name of religion. People are exploiting religious sentiments for personal disputes," Asif said.

Referring to the resolution, the minister further stated that such a move was essential to improve the

Tarar Supports Asif with 'Headphone Law' Amid Opposition's Sloganeering

ISLAMABAD: As the National Assembly on Sunday saw a ruckus-marred session on federal budget 2024-25, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar came to Defence Minister Khawaja Asif's rescue amid sloganeering by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-backed Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) members.

The lower house session went off track to exchange views over a new military operation to root out militancy, saw turbulence ensued from the opposition benches.

While Asif spoke on the assembly's floor, the opposition MNAs loudly chanted slogans such as "End the operation", and "We want peace" against the newly-approved 'Azm-e-Istehkam' operation aimed at eliminating terrorism from the country, causing disturbance during the minister's speech.

Asif said that the opposition was "standing with the terrorists", not the country as the PTI vehemently opposed the operation.

The defence minister said he was speaking about the country's security, but the PTI's only goal was to protest and not



to hear him out. "They are neither with the country nor with the Constitution."

During all the commotion, Tarar stood up and told Asif to put on the headphones to avoid disturbance as the latter was unable to speak due to noise. A video of the moment was captured on national TV where the law minister was heard telling the newly-approved 'Azm-e-Istehkam' operation

aimed at eliminating terrorism from the country, causing disturbance during the minister's speech. Asif said that the opposition was "standing with the terrorists", not the country as the PTI vehemently opposed the operation.

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JUI-F And PTI Agree That "Military Operation Not A Solution To The Problem"

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) have said that military operation is not the solution to the problems after the government approved the operation "Azm-e-Istehkam".

The development came during a meeting between PTI's Asad Qaiser JUI-F Emir Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Saturday in Islamabad, a statement released on Sunday said, with both expressing concern over the deteriorating security, law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Both politicians stressed the role of political parties in achieving peace and stability in the province.

The two sides also agreed on fulfilling the role of opposition in the National Assembly as well as on the constitution of a political committee to address various issues between them and formulate a political strategy.

They also agreed on establishing brotherly relations with Afghanistan and also called for the establishment of an economic corridor with the neighbouring country at border crossing points.

The two parties' statement regarding military operation comes a day after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif gave the go-ahead to "Azm-e-Istehkam", a national counter-terrorism drive to turn up the heat on militants targeting the state of Pakistan.

Separately, speaking out-



side the Parliament House today, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan said that the legislature must be taken into confidence before any operation is launched.

"We do not support any operation," said Qaiser, adding that any decision or agreement reached must be brought before the parliament.

The government's decision to launch a new operation was taken during a meeting of the Central Apex Committee on National Action Plan (NAP), which was approved with the consensus of all stakeholders including provinces, Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), a statement from the PM's Office said.

The renewed and full-blown kinetic efforts of the armed forces would be augmented by full support from all law enforcement agencies.

The move comes as the country has witnessed a significant surge in terrorist attacks in recent months resulting in scores of both civilian and security forces' casualties.

Pakistan Plans New Diplomatic Push Against TTP Sanctuaries In Afghanistan Amid 'Azm-e-Istehkam'



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will mount fresh diplomatic efforts to persuade the interim Afghan Taliban government to dismantle terrorist sanctuaries as part of the new plan approved by the country's civil and military leadership, people familiar with development revealed here on Sunday.

The Central Apex Committee of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Saturday gave a go ahead to launch a new military campaign named Operation Azm-e-Istehkam to eradicate terrorism and extremism.

Sources said the new campaign has two prongs: one addresses the internal security situation, while the other focuses on external threats emanating from Afghanistan.

While kinetic operation and intelligence based campaign against terrorist outfits will be intensified under the

renewed anti-terror drive, a fresh diplomatic effort will be launched to neutralise the threat coming from the neighbouring country.

Since the return of Taliban in Kabul in August 2021, the number of terrorist attacks has only gone up, much to the dismay of Islamabad.

The first five months of this year saw 83 per cent increase in terrorist attacks, forcing authorities to launch a fresh campaign against militant groups. Sources said under the new plan, Pakistan will once again approach the Kabul regime, giving it a chance to come good on its promises in eradicating terrorist sanctuaries. Sources added that Pakistan will also seek China's help in persuading the Afghan Taliban to review their strategy regarding the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).—RT/Agency

Israel's defence minister heads to Washington amid Gaza conflict, Hezbollah tensions

JERUSALEM: Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant headed to Washington on Sunday to discuss the next phase of the Gaza war and escalating hostilities on the border with Lebanon, where exchanges of fire with Hezbollah have stoked fears of wider conflict.

Iran-backed Hezbollah began attacking Israel shortly after Hamas' October 7 assault sparked the war in Gaza, and the sides have been trading blows in the months since then. Hezbollah has said it will not stop until there is a ceasefire in Gaza.

"We are prepared for any action that may be required in Gaza, Lebanon, and in more areas," Gallant said in a statement before setting off to Washington, where he said he would meet his counterpart Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Earlier in June, Hezbollah targeted Israeli towns and military sites with the largest volleys of rockets and



US envoy Amos Hochstein visited Israel and Lebanon last week in an attempt to cool tensions, amid an uptick in cross-border fire and an escalation in rhetoric on both sides. An Israeli soldier was severely wounded on Sunday by a drone strike, the military said.

Some Israeli officials have linked the ongoing Israeli push into Rafah - the southern area of Gaza - where it says it is targeting the last battalions of Hamas - to a potential focus on Lebanon.

Gallant appeared to make the same link in his statement. "The transition to Phase C in Gaza is of great importance. I will discuss this transition with US officials, how it may enable additional things and I know that we will achieve close cooperation with the US on this issue as well," Gallant said.

Scaling back Gaza operations would free up forces to take on Hezbollah, if Israel were to launch a ground offensive or step up its aerial bombardments.—RT/Agency

Government Accepts All Of PPP's Demands Ahead Of Budget

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led government has accepted all demands of its major ally, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), sources told media on Sunday.

The development came in the third round of talks between the negotiating committees of the PML-N and PPP, after the latter expressed concern for not taking it to confidence regarding the federal budget.

"The government will prefer the PPP for development funds and appointments on administrative posts in Punjab," the sources said.

Raja Pervez Ashraf, Ali Haider Gillani, Nadeem Afzal Chan and Hassan Murtaza from the PPP participated in the forum. Whereas, PML-N was represented by Punjab Assembly Speaker Ahmed Khan, Rana Sanaulah and Khawaja Saad Rafique among others.

The sources said the PML-N has accepted PPP's demands regarding district administrations, appointment of law officers, representation in various boards and au-



thorities, early holding of local bodies election, distribution of development funds equal to PML-N lawmakers.

The PPP has demanded appointment of an additional secretary in the chief minister secretariat whose job would be to resolve the issues faced by the party only, they said.

The Punjab government would appoint district deputy commissioners, district police officers and revenue officers in consultation with the PPP in the areas where the political party has a significant support, the sources said.

Sources said 12 such districts were pointed out including Multan, Muzaffargarh, Rahim Yar Khan,

PTI Rejects Suspension Of MNA Mastikhel's Membership



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has rejected National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq's decision to suspend the membership of PTI MNA Sanaulah Mastikhel.

The PTI has called its parliamentary meeting before the National Assembly session on Sunday (today).

PTI Barrister Gauhar said, "We strongly condemn the speaker's decision. We will protest inside and outside the House against the Speaker's decision."

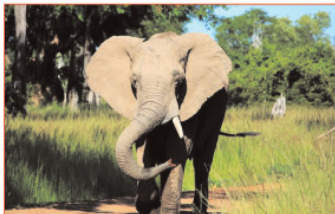
"We will decide our plan of action for the rest of the budget session in the parliamentary party meeting." The PTI chairman said Sanaulah Mastikhel's words was a slip of the tongue,

Elephant In Zambia Pulls US Tourist Out Of Safari Vehicle, Tramples Her To Death

In a terrifying incident, a US tourist from New Mexico was killed by an elephant in Zambia after it attacked her vehicle during a safari drive on Wednesday. Officials reported that the elephant pulled Juliana Gle Tourneau, 64, out of the vehicle and trampled her, Metro reported. The incident occurred near the Maramba Cultural Bridge in Livingstone when the group had stopped due to traffic caused by an elephant herd.

She was taken to a clinic in Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, where she was declared dead on arrival. According to a police statement, her injuries included deep wounds on the left shoulder blade and forehead, a fractured left ankle, and a slightly depressed chest.

Ms Tourneau died around 5.50 pm "after being knocked from a parked vehicle which had stopped due to traffic



caused by elephants around the Maramba Cultural Bridge". Southern Province Police Commissioner Auxensio Daka told Zambian station ZNBC on Friday.

Officials did not say whether anyone else was injured or what led to the elephant's aggression.

This tragic event marks the second fatal elephant attack on a US tourist in Zambia this year. In Botswana, which have also reported increasing elephant populations and deadly attacks in recent years.—RT/Agency