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## Heartland

DC Tando Allahyar Muhammad Ibrahim Almani reviews arrangements for monsoon season



## Money

-Zafar Moti is Happy! PSE 100-index up by 252.61 points to close at 78,528.25



## NATIONAL

Maryam Urges Timely Completion of Development Projects



## SPORTS

T20 World Cup 2024: India overpower England to seal berth in final



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CIRCULATION CERTIFIED BY ABC

## Imran And Bushra Bibi's Pleas For Suspension Of Sentence In Iddat Case Rejected

ISLAMABAD: A district and sessions court in Islamabad Thursday rejected the pleas seeking suspension of the sentences handed down to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi in the iddat case.

The verdict drew strong condemnation from the PTI, which called it "absolutely ridiculous", and its leaders — who were hoping for Imran's release today — staged a protest outside the Adiala jail, where the court had been set up to ensure the security of the ex-prime minister.

Additional Sessions Judge Afzal Majoka announced the verdict today, reserved on Tuesday, with the hearing on the main plea related to the annulment of their conviction set to take place on July 2.

The PTI founder and Bushra were each sentenced to seven years in prison in February earlier this year after a trial court found their nikah to be fraudulent as Khawar Maneka, Bushra's ex-husband, moved the court against the couple's marriage.

In the 10-page order, the court mentioned that there was no reason to suspend the sentence. "[...there is] no ground



for suspension of [the] sentence is available to both the petitioners. Accordingly, both the petitions under section 426 Cr.PC are dismissed," it said.

In response to the verdict issued by the lower court, PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan said: "[We] will challenge the verdict in the high court immediately."

Following the announcement, PTI workers began protesting outside the district and sessions court and also blocked the road. The protesters include women, who chanted slogans in favour of the PTI founder.

Meanwhile, heavy police deployment was also present outside the court.

Khan, the deposed prime minister who was ousted from power via the opposition's no-confidence motion in April 2022, has been facing a slew of

charges ranging from corruption to terrorism since his removal as the premier. He has been behind bars since August last year after he was sentenced in the Toshakhana case and subsequently sentenced in other cases ahead of the February 8 elections.

Despite securing relief in other cases including £190 million reference and Toshakhana, and acquittal in the cipher case earlier this month, the former premier remains behind bars due to his conviction in the iddat case.

Khan has also been granted bail in the May 9 cases registered in Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Faisalabad. On the other hand, the Federal Investigation Agency also twice interrogated him in the jail regarding an anti-state post shared on X, formerly Twitter. There is, however, no new case against the PTI founder.—RT/Agency

## Pakistan To Enforce International Border Laws To Curb Terrorism From Afghanistan: Asif

ISLAMABAD: In a major policy shift, Pakistan has decided to stringently enforce international laws at its borders with Afghanistan, to restrict the inflow of militants and smuggled goods into the country, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said on Thursday.

The government seeks not only to curb economic losses caused by the smuggling of oil, fertilisers, and other goods from Afghanistan into Pakistan, but also to thwart the infiltration of terrorists, avert potential breaches, and implement security checks at the borders.

"All traffic from Afghanistan will only be allowed entry into Pakistan with a valid passport and visa," said Asif talking to



media, hinting at the end of the longstanding practice of Afghans entering Pakistan without proper documentation.

The statement comes as Pakistan has witnessed a significant surge in cross-border attacks on security forces in recent months with the militants using advanced weaponry and equipment.

Islamabad has time again

called on the interim Afghanistan government to prevent its land from being used by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other militant organisations for carrying out attacks against Pakistan.

"We must secure our country, and these crossing points have been compromising our security," the defence minister said in today's

interaction.

He further pointed out that after the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, there had been a spike in terrorism, with most incidents tracing back to Afghan soil. "Currently, all terrorism is emanating from Afghan territory," Asif said that formal borders, where passports were required for crossing, were a standard global practice, noting that despite Pakistan's repeated requests for cooperation, Kabul was yet to respond adequately. "Our borders with China, Iran, and India operate with strict regulations, and it should be the same with Afghanistan," he asserted. Replying to a question, Asif said they were cognisant of the fact that there were families on both sides of the Pakistan-

Afghanistan border. Rationalising the decision to implement visa and passport restrictions, he compared them to the families divided in Kashmir since the partition of the subcontinent. Addressing other divided borders, Asif mentioned that similar issues exist along the Siakot borders — with India — and the working boundary, where families are split. Afghanistan does not recognise the Durand Line, the border between the two countries, arguing it was created by the British to divide ethnic Pashtuns. The 2,640-kilometer (1,640-mile) border was established in 1893 through an agreement between British-ruled India and Abdur Rahman Khan, then ruler of Afghanistan.—RT/Agency

## 'Absolutely Ridiculous': PTI To Challenge Iddat Case Verdict In IHC

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has slammed the district and sessions court's "ridiculous" decision to reject the pleas seeking suspension of the sentence handed down to party founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi in the iddat case.

Speaking outside the court in Islamabad, PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan said that the party will



be challenging the verdict in the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

"We will challenge this verdict in the high court at once," the National Assembly opposition leader said while

lamenting the politicisation and weaponisation of private matters between a husband and a wife.

The party's reaction comes after Additional Sessions Judge Afzal Majoka announced the verdict, reserved on Tuesday, with the hearing on the central plea related to the annulment of their conviction set to take place on July 2.

The PTI founder and

Bushra were each sentenced to seven years in prison in February earlier this year after a trial court found their nikah to be fraudulent as Khawar Maneka, Bushra's ex-husband, moved the court against the couple's marriage.

The couple were indicted in the iddat case on January 16, 2024. After a 14-hour hearing in the Adiala jail, the trial court reserved its verdict on February 2 and handed

out seven years imprisonment each to Khan and Bushra on February 3. In the 10-page order today, the court mentioned that there was no reason to suspend the sentence. "[...there is] no ground for suspension of [the] sentence is available to both the petitioners. Accordingly, both the petitions under section 426 Cr.PC are dismissed," it said.—RT/Agency



## SIGNIFICANT STEPS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

### AGAINST CHILD ABUSE, VIOLENCE AND THEIR EXPLOITATION



The Government of Sindh reaffirms its commitment for protecting children rights, ensuring a secure and nurturing environment for their growth and development. The Sindh Child Protection Authority (SCPA) has achieved significant milestones since 2018.

- Enforcement of Sindh Child Protection Authority (Amendment) Act 2021.
- Child Protection Unit (CPU) functional in 30 districts of Sindh.
- Child Protection Officers (CPOs) at the district level across Sindh.
- District Coordination Committee (DCC) functional at the district level headed by Deputy Commissioners.
- Enforcement of the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act 2013.
- Successful launch of Child Protection Management Information System (CPMIS).
- Strengthening of Child Protection Referral System at public & private level.
- Sindh Child Helpline 1121 is operational 24/7.
- Sindh Child Protection Policy in approval stages.
- Awareness-raising sessions in various schools, colleges, madaras and community level.
- Shelter Home for 200 children in Malir, Karachi.
- Registration of 38 public and private orphanages completed.
- Launch of Orphan Widow Support Program very soon.

**1121 SINDH CHILD HELPLINE 24/7**  
SINDH CHILD PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Sindh Child Protection Authority, Social Welfare Department, Government of Sindh

Address: First Floor, Social Welfare Training Institute, Plot No. ST4, Block 7, Gulshan Iqbal, Karachi

Phone: 021-99333044, 021-99333048

Facebook: facebook.com/scpapakistan | Website: www.scpa.sindh.gov.pk

INF-KRY-2092/2024



# THE HEARTLAND



HYDERABAD: Residents of Sehrish Nagar are holding a press conference at the Hyderabad Press Club for the acceptance of their demands.-RT

## SSP Abid Baloch reviews arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram in TMK

By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: SSP Abid Baloch chaired a crucial meeting with police officers and leaders of religious and political organizations to review the arrangements for the upcoming month of Muharram-ul-Haram. The meeting focused on ensuring peace and security during this significant period.

In his address, SSP Abid Baloch announced the formation of a district-level peace committee dedicated to maintaining peace and fostering interfaith harmony throughout Muharram. "We

are committed to ensuring foolproof security measures for Muharram-ul-Haram," stated SSP Baloch, emphasizing the importance of co-ordinated efforts.

He also called upon civil society to actively participate in maintaining peace and order. "The role of civil society is crucial in supporting our initiatives to ensure a peaceful Muharram," he added.

The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment from all attendees to work collaboratively for the safety and harmony of the community during Muharram-ul-Haram.



HYDERABAD: A view of the site of a deadly traffic accident due to a horrific collision between a trailer, rickshaw and motorbike due to over speeding, in the Latifabad area of the city.-RT

## Mayor Anwar Ali Luhar Chairs Budget Session Of Larkana Municipal Corporation

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: Mayor Anwar Ali Luhar presided over a significant budget session of the Larkana Municipal Corporation (LMC) held on Wednesday. The session, aimed at deliberating on the budget for the fiscal year 2024-25, saw active participation from key officials and council members.

Chairman of the Finance Committee, Muhammad Qasim Baloch, presented the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year, outlining allocations for pensions, salaries, scholarships, and various developmental projects.

The budget received unanimous approval from the members present at the session.

Deputy Mayor Muhammad Amin Shaikh, along with council members Khair Muhammad Shaikh, Munir Ahmed Soomro, Naeem Tunio, Sher Muhammad Laghari, Muhammad Rafique Kirmani, Awais Abbasi, Abdul Jafeez Samtio, Yousif Bhutto, Advocate Aslam Mugheri, and Kashif Umrani, among others, actively participated in the session.

"The approved budget reflects our commitment to enhancing civic amenities

and addressing the needs of Larkana's residents," Mayor Anwar Ali Luhar remarked. He emphasized the importance of prudent financial management and strategic investments in improving infrastructure and public services across the city.

The budget session concluded with a consensus on prioritizing projects that would benefit the community at large, marking a pivotal step towards sustainable development and growth in Larkana under the leadership of Mayor Anwar Ali Luhar and his team.

## Hyderabad business community leader Farooq Shaikhani slams uncalled for crackdown against LPG shops

By GM Chandio

HYDERABAD: Muhammad Farooq Shaikhani, President, Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry, has raised serious concerns over the ongoing crackdown on LPG gas shops in Hyderabad, which has been intensifying over the past month. Shaikhani questioned the timing and rationale behind these actions, noting that such measures are often taken only after a major accident occurs. He demanded clarity on which department issued licenses to these shops and why they were allowed to operate in densely populated areas for years without intervention.

Shaikhani highlighted the severe impact of this crackdown on thousands of domestic consumers, including tea houses, tandoors, eateries, small hotels, restaurants and domestic users, which rely heavily on LPG. He emphasized that with the skyrocketing prices of natural gas by the Sui Southern Gas Company and a ban on new connections for over three years, LPG cylinders had become the only viable option for many consumers. The sudden crackdown has jeopardized the livelihoods of countless individuals in Hyderabad and disrupted daily cooking routines for households.

The Chamber President underscored the global context of LPG production, noting that the annual global production stands at approximately 300 million metric tons, with major producers being the United States, China, Saudi Arabia, and Russia. In contrast, Pakistan's annual LPG consumption is around 1.2 million

metric tons, with domestic production falling short and necessitating imports. He pointed out that the demand for LPG is on the rise both globally and within Pakistan, spanning domestic, commercial, industrial, and agricultural sectors.

Shaikhani stressed the importance of ensuring safe LPG distribution to prevent accidents. He called for the implementation of standard testing and certification processes for cylinders and the restriction of LPG sales to licensed distributors only. To enhance safety, he suggested the use of digital systems to monitor LPG distribution, consumer training on safe usage, the establishment of approved distribution centers in designated areas of Hyderabad, and a ban on LPG shops in densely populated zones. Additionally, he recommended the introduction of online ordering and home delivery systems, regular safety inspections, and the formation of an emergency response team available 24/7.

In his appeal to Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, President Shaikhani urged the swift implementation of comprehensive measures to ensure the safe distribution of LPG. He emphasized that resolving the LPG supply issues is critical for both commercial and domestic consumers in Hyderabad. Shaikhani also called for immediate efforts to discover new gas reserves, noting that the 18th Amendment grants the province from which minerals are extracted the first right to those resources. Therefore, he asserted that the gas produced in Sindh should be prioritized for Sindh's consumers.

## DC Tando Allahyar Muhammad Ibrahim Almani reviews arrangements for monsoon season

By Afaq Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Muhammad Ibrahim Almani of Tando Allahyar district chaired a crucial meeting to assess and finalize preparations for the upcoming monsoon season. The meeting, held recently, included officials from various district departments, as well as representatives from the Pak Army and Rangers, alongside all Assistant Commissioners.

Addressing the gathering, DC Muhammad Ibrahim Almani emphasized the importance of thorough planning and proactive measures to mitigate potential risks during the monsoon season. "We must ensure that all arrangements are in place to effectively deal with any challenges posed by heavy rains and flooding," he stated firmly.

He further instructed all officials to expedite their respective tasks and collaborate closely with relevant stakeholders to enhance preparedness. "There will be zero tolerance for any negligence in our preparedness efforts," DC Al-



man warned, underscoring the need for comprehensive disaster management strategies. The meeting concluded with a commitment from all participants to diligently execute their roles in safeguarding the lives and properties of residents during the monsoon period. The coordinated efforts among district authorities, armed forces, and civil administration aim to ensure a swift and effective response to any emergencies arising from the monsoon rains.

As the monsoon season approaches, the residents of Tando Allahyar district can expect heightened vigilance and proactive measures from the administration under the leadership of DC Muhammad Ibrahim Almani.

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

By Mumtaz Ali

TANDO ADAM: The growers of Tando Adam staged a protest demonstration and observed a hunger strike on Thursday, voicing their frustration over the severe shortage of water in the Sui Kandhar Branch. The protest was led by PPP Councillor Imran Brohi, Ibrahim Hakro, PML-F leader Muhammad Qasim Hingoro, Nazir Pathan, and other local leaders.

Addressing the demonstrators, the protest leaders expressed deep concern over the ongoing water crisis. They highlighted the numerous challenges faced by the growers due to the lack of water, which is essential for their crops and livelihoods. "Our fields are drying up, and our crops are failing. This water shortage is a direct threat

to our survival," stated Imran Brohi.

Ibrahim Hakro emphasized the urgency of the situation, noting that the indifference of government officials and elected representatives has exacerbated the problem. "Despite our repeated pleas for help, there has been no response from those in power. Their negligence is costing us dearly," he said. Muhammad Qasim Hingoro and Nazir Pathan echoed these sentiments, calling for immediate action from higher authorities. They demanded that steps be taken to ensure a sufficient and regular supply of water to the local growers. "If our demands are not met, we will have no choice but to escalate our protests," warned Hingoro.

On the occasion, the protesters also called for

improvements in irrigation infrastructure and fair distribution of water. They stressed that without proper measures, the agricultural sector in Tando Adam could face long-term detrimental effects.

The protesters issued a stern warning to the authorities, announcing plans to broaden their protest if the issue is not resolved promptly. They urged other affected regions to join their cause and stand in solidarity with the growers of Tando Adam. The local community has shown strong support for the growers' demands, recognizing the critical importance of water for sustaining agriculture and the economy. The protesters' resolve remains steadfast as they continue to press for a resolution to the water crisis affecting their livelihoods.

## Pir Jo Goth Police recover two stolen motorcycles

PIR JO GOTH: In a swift response to a robbery, Pir Jo Goth Police, led by SHO Ghulam Muhammad Bozdar and DSP Nazir Soomro, quickly mobilized and chased the looters. The police engaged in an encounter with the culprits, who eventually abandoned the stolen motorcycles and fled the scene. The recovered motorcycles were promptly returned to their rightful owners, Awais and Anis. Upon receiving information about the robbery, Pir Jo Goth Police, led by SHO Ghulam Muhammad Bozdar and DSP Nazir Soomro, quickly mobilized and chased the looters. The police engaged in an encounter with the culprits, who eventually abandoned the stolen motorcycles and fled the scene. The recovered motorcycles were promptly returned to their rightful owners, Awais and Anis.

SHO Bozdar and DSP Soomro announced their commitment to continuing operations against criminal elements in the area, ensuring the safety and security of the community.

The successful recovery of the stolen motorcycles has been praised by local residents, who expressed their gratitude for the prompt and effective action taken by the Pir Jo Goth Police.—RT

## Kolhis demand justice, protection in Badin property dispute

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: Members of the Kolhi community staged a protest demonstration against the alleged land occupation and abuses by influential individuals. Chandra Kumar Kanji, Bhuji Mal, Shrimati Shanti Namon Pancho, and others led the protest in front of the Badin Press Club, highlighting their grievances and demands for justice.

During a press conference, the community leaders expressed concern over the alleged attempts to forcefully seize Survey 336, 151, 146, and 145 of Deh Nangaro, which are recognized as their ancestral lands. They accused influential members of the Chang community, including Kadu, Chang Urs, Chang Mitar, Chang Ali Bakhs, Chang Karu, Chang Hanif Chang, and others, of using intimidation tactics and threats.

"We are facing harassment and threats to vacate our own lands," stated Chandra Kumar Kanji, reflecting the community's frustration and fear of losing their ancestral heritage.

The protesters demanded immediate intervention from higher authorities to address their grievances and ensure protection against further encroachments and abuses.

"We call upon the authorities to take swift action and uphold justice for our community," urged Shrimati Shanti Namon Pancho.

The Kolhi community's protest underscores ongoing tensions over land rights and the need for effective legal protection against illegal occupation and illegal occupation. The community's plea for justice aims to safeguard their rights and preserve their cultural heritage amidst escalating concerns.

## Oxfam holds meeting of Soormi Women Protection Forum in Dadu

By Javed Laghari

DADU: Oxfam facilitated a pivotal meeting of the Soormi Women Protection Forum, organized under the leadership of Farzana Airy, District Project Coordinator of Laar Humanitarian and Development Program. The gathering brought together women from diverse backgrounds, including district-level activists and representatives from local institutions. Members of the Community Protection Committee from 16 villages in Taluka Johi, District Dadu, also participated.

The Soormi Forum aims to unite local institutions working for women's empowerment and protection. Advocate Zubeida, Tahmina Samijo, Sughra Jamali, Ikhtiyar Social Welfare, and Surath from LHDP, alongside Legal Aid providers, were among the attendees. They pledged their commitment and support, emphasizing the establishment of a dedicated WhatsApp group to address women's needs effectively at both district and community levels. Azra Memon was appointed Chief Organizer of the Soormi Forum, tasked with spearheading efforts to advocate for and support women's rights. "I am dedicated to advancing the cause of women and ensuring their voices are heard," affirmed Azra Memon, highlighting her commitment to ongoing initiatives. The meeting underscored Oxfam's commitment to empowering women and fostering community support networks through collaborative efforts. It aimed to strengthen the capacity of local women leaders and organizations in advocating for gender equality and enhancing women's socio-economic status in Dadu district.



-Shazia Marri asked to take notice!

## Marris demand justice in Sanghar land dispute

By Khadim Khakheli

SANGHAR: A large number of the local Marris community people recorded a boisterous protest demonstration against the actions of their area police. While talking to the media, the protest leaders, who included Huma Marris, Hakim Zadi, Ayesha Marri and others, filed against the Metro community which is also currently a court matter. On the occasion, the protesters demanded of the concerned higher authorities to take stern notice of the matter and provide justice to them.



LARKANA: SSP Larkana, Mir Rohail Khan Khoso is presiding over a meeting regarding security for Muharram-ul-Haram.-RT



# NATIONAL



ISLAMABAD: Member of the National Assembly, Sharmila Farooqi and her husband Hasham Riaz of Capital TV, met with PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at his office in Parliament House.—Photo by Faheem Soomro

## Exciting Adventures Await At Fortside Imagination Station Summer Camp!



JHELUM: The Fortside Imagination Station Summer Camp has officially opened its doors at the picturesque Fortside Gardens in Qila Kohat, Jhelum. Owners Anny Awan and Fatima Kiyani welcomed Deputy Commissioner Jhelum Syeda Ramla Ali and enthusiastic camper moms to the inauguration ceremony, marking the start of a summer filled with exploration, learning, and fun for young participants.

Running from June 24th to July 5th, 2024, children in Jhelum can join the camp from 5:30pm to 7:30pm every Monday to Friday. The camp offers a wide array of engaging activities designed to stimulate creativity and foster personal growth. Activities include nature exploration, yoga sessions, physical adventure challenges, academic reinforcement programs, trampolining, mini-golf, art and craft sessions, sharpshooter classes, aqua adventures, fort trips, and funky foodie fiestas.

Anny Awan and Fatima Kiyani, passionate organizers of the Fortside Imagination Station Summer Camp, have curated a program promising to be a hub of excitement and growth. It's a place where children can forge lasting memories and friendships while exploring new adventures.—RT

## Maryam Urges Timely Completion Of Development Projects

LAHORE: Chairing a meeting of the Provincial Planning and Development Board, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz directed officials to accelerate progress on ongoing projects.

During the session, CM Nawaz reviewed the Annual Development Programme (ADP) for the year 2024-25. She instructed the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) to develop a real-time monitoring dashboard for provincial development projects to enhance transparency.

The CM was briefed on the introduction of patrolling ambulances at every motorway interchange and in-

Additionally, construction on Sahiwal to Samundri and Bahawalnagar to Jhangra roads is scheduled to commence from August 13, with projects in Faisalabad, Chiniot, and Sardogha roads starting from July 31.

Maryam Nawaz authorized the immediate release of Rs. 400 million for ongoing projects and directed that 25% of universal health insurance funds be disbursed quarterly to revamp the health sector. Concluding the meeting, she instructed relevant authorities to submit Planning Commission Form-1 (PC-1) for all schemes by July 15.—RT/Agency



## METRO KARACHI

## FPCCI's Central Standing Committee On Horticulture Holds Its Inaugural Meeting

KARACHI: The 1st Meeting of the FPCCI Central Standing Committee on Horticulture took place at the FPCCI Head Office in Karachi and via Zoom, convened by Mr. Muhammad Noman Saigal, Convener of the Committee. The meeting focused on strategies to significantly enhance Pakistan's horticulture industry.



Discussions among the Convener and Committee Members highlighted several key areas for improvement, including:

- Enhancing technical training accessibility and market access for horticultural products.
- Government support crucial for industry growth.
- Stimulus packages to support exporters.
- Development of fumigation facilities for various crops.

Promoting tree and plant conservation from grassroots to educational levels.

The meeting was attended by prominent members and guests, including Khalid Omer, former Minister of Environment, Sindh Government, Rehman Hashmi, former Member of National Assembly and Member of Korean Trade Authority (Kotra), Sabir Hussain, Agriculturalist, Shahid Jawed, business-

## ECP Ready To Hold Local Government Elections In Punjab: CEC

ISLAMABAD: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sultan Akram Raja said that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is prepared to conduct the Local Government (LG) polls in Punjab, media reported.

The ECP, headed by the Chief Election Commissioner, held a high-level meeting in Islamabad to discuss preparations for the upcoming LG elections in Punjab.

Sultan Akram Raja said that the delimitation of constituencies in Punjab has already been completed. He said that the demarcation of UCs and wards in Islamabad



will be finalized by July 23.

The CEC said that the ECP is quite prepared to conduct the local government elections in Punjab; however, some legal complexities are delaying the polls.

Sultan Akram Raja said that the summary of the reserved seats for the Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation has been sent to the Prime Minister's Office.—RT/Agency

## Residents of Gulistan-e-Johar Block 3-A Struggle With Acute Drinking Water Shortage

KARACHI: Residents of Gulistan-e-Johar Block 3-A are facing an acute shortage of drinking water, significantly impacting their daily lives. The lack of accessible water has compelled residents, particularly senior citizens, to endure hardships in procuring water during record-breaking heat.



Social leader Laeeq Ahmed emphasized that Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) has not installed water lines in Block 3-A, forcing residents to rely on expensive water tanker deliveries costing thousands of rupees daily. He urged the Sindh government to allocate funds from the provincial

budget for fiscal year 2024-25 towards installing drinking water lines in their area to alleviate the water scarcity.

Resident Mrs. Qamar Jahan echoed the sentiment, stating that many residents are financially burdened by

## Shehbaz Urges Stronger Trade Ties With Azerbaijan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday instructed the formulation of a comprehensive strategy to strengthen cooperation and trade partnerships with Azerbaijan in the fields of economy and investment.

Chairing a high-level meeting on enhancing relations with Central Asian states, particularly Azerbaijan, the prime minister stated, "Pakistan geographically offers a natural economic corridor to the sea for Central Asian states." He highlighted the enduring fraternal relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan, which have spanned decades. He believed that there were significant opportunities for trade and investment between Azerbaijan and Pakistan.

"Foreign investment in the country is on the rise due to the government's business and investment-friendly policies," the prime minister mentioned.

The prime minister directed the development of a comprehensive action plan to boost trade efficiency and expand current trade between the two countries.

During the meeting, the prime minister was briefed on initiatives aimed at enhancing trade volume, capacity, and trade and investment between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. It was highlighted during the briefing that there was substantial potential for energy cooperation with Azerbaijan, and discussions were ongoing for a preferential trade agreement between both countries. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, along with Minister for Planning and Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rama Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister for Privatization and Investment Abdul Aleem Khan, Federal Minister for Power Sardar Owais Khan Leghari, Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr Musaddik Malik, Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi, and other senior officials attended the meeting.—RT/Agency

## Tribal Jirga Has Rejected Operation Azm-e-Istehkam as 'Destabilizing,' Says Fazl

ISLAMABAD: Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the chief of his own faction of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F), has rejected the government's decision to launch an operation against terrorists and extremists, stating that the tribal jirga also declared the "Azm-e-Istehkam" operation as destabilizing and expressed no confidence in it.

In a media briefing following a tribal jirga in Peshawar on Thursday, Fazl explained that the jirga was convened before the Azm-e-Istehkam operation decision made by the government and that it was not on the agenda.

However, the jirga deemed the operation destabilizing and expressed its lack of confidence in it.

He pointed out that armed groups have spread to several areas, controlling traffic and setting up checkpoints, with police in the southern districts avoiding leaving their



tricts at night. Fazl highlighted the sacrifices made by the people of Swat, who were displaced from their homes. "Youth have become unemployed, and women are begging. Those whose homes were completely destroyed were given token compensation of 400,000 rupees, but they have not received the money yet," he said. He condemned the violations of tribal sanctity and economic destruction, adding that fencing had forced 20,000 to 30,000 people to cross the border and return more powerful.—RT/Agency

## Omar Ayub Resigns As PTI's Secretary-General

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) top leader Omar Ayub Khan has said that he stepped down as secretary-general of the party "to focus on my role as Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly of Pakistan." "I am most grateful to [former] PM Imran Khan sahib for accepting my resignation as Secretary-General PTI to focus on my role as Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly of Pakistan," he wrote on his official X handle on Thursday.

Ayub said he had tendered his resignation on June 22, 2024 via letter addressed to jailed PTI founder Imran Khan and party Chairman



Barrister Gohar Ali Khan sahib. "Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator Shibli Faraz sahib conveyed my message to [former] PM Imran Khan sahib today during their meeting in Adyala Jail," he added. The NA opposition leader further said further changes will be made

in the organisational structure of the PTI in the coming days on the directions of the party founder. "I want to thank all members of the PTI family, Parliamentarians, and Tazameen Office Holders who have worked tirelessly and braved tremendous hardships for [ex] PM Imran Khan sahib and PTI." The surprise development came amid reports of rifts in the ranks of the PTI with Geo News reporting citing sources on Wednesday that PTI-backed 27 Summer Intehad Council (SIC) lawmakers deliberated on the option of resignation from the National Assembly in protest against the party's top leadership.—RT/Agency

## Walled City Cultural Troupe Mesmerizes Audience At NAPA

KARACHI: The cultural troupe of the Walled City of Lahore Authority captivated a packed hall on Thursday with their mesmerizing performances at the National Academy of Performing Arts (NAPA) Zia Mohyeddin Theater. The event, titled 'Renewing Glory,' showcased the rich classical and folk traditions of our culture and began with a bustling Red Carpet attended by many dignitaries and celebrities.



Former senator and member of the NAPA board of directors, Javed Jabbar, kicked off the evening with a welcome address. He emphasized NAPA's commitment to preserving performing arts in all forms, stating, "Bringing the WCLC troupe to Karachi is a testament to our dedication." He also introduced the program that was to follow.

A spellbinding presentation by Kamran Lashari, Director-General of the WCLC, on the restoration efforts of the Walled City of Lahore, was the next highlight. Following this, NAPA chairman Syed Jawaid Iqbal presented Lashari with a NAPA memento.

After a short break, the performances commenced with a riveting kathak piece

by the father-daughter duo, Zikria and Jessica Iqbal. Jessica then presented a solo performance. Next, Raja Mughal and his team delivered a breathtaking bharat natyam piece, followed by a solo performance by Mughal. The evening continued with highly entertaining folk songs, storytelling, and dances by Fazal Jutt and his group. The show's final performance featured the inimicable Saain Abbas with his dhol and shunk players.

The audience's enthusiastic applause throughout the evening demonstrated their enjoyment and pleasure. The event concluded with a dinner for both the audience and the performers.—RT



ISLAMABAD: PPP CEC Member and Former Federal Minister Qamar Zaman Kaira Central Executive called on PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at his office in Parliament House to discuss the political situation in Punjab province.—Photo by Faheem Soomro

## Verdict Reserved on Acquittal Pleas Of Imran And Qureshi In 'Azadi March' Case

ISLAMABAD: The District and Session Court Islamabad reserved its verdict on acquittal pleas in Azadi March cases of former premier Imran Khan, former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Senator Faisal Hayat Khan on Thursday.

Judicial Magistrate Yasir Mehmood conducted hearing on pleas of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders.

PTI counsels Sardar Masroof, Amna Ali and Mirza Asim Baig appeared before the court.

PTI lawyer Sardar Masroof argued before the judge that the First Information Report (FIR) was not submitted by the mandated authority, expecting that sentence would not be awarded in the case of the trial. He pleaded that prosecution had no substantial evidence except the party's flags. Later, the court reserved the verdict on twin cases registered in the Aabpara Police station without giving any date of pronouncement.—RT/Agency





# EDITORIAL



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

Friday, June 28, 2024

## For Pakistan, Polio is only about donor funding, apathy and photo opportunities

Polio continues to be a thorn in Pakistan's side, a stark reminder of the country's struggle with preventable diseases. Despite substantial efforts, including those led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and significant funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the eradication of polio remains elusive. Every few months, new cases emerge, underscoring the inefficacy of current strategies and the persistent gaps in the nation's health infrastructure.

The involvement of global figures like Bill Gates often turns into more of a photo opportunity than a harbinger of real change. Successive Pakistani prime ministers have posed with Gates, pledging to eliminate polio, yet the virus stubbornly persists. These high-profile meetings create headlines and perhaps a temporary boost in funding, but they fail to translate into sustained, on-the-ground improvements. The narrative remains the same: significant donor

funds flow into Pakistan, but the desired outcomes remain frustratingly out of reach.



For the Gates Foundation and other international donors, Pakistan is a challenging partner. The recurring issues and lack of tangible progress make it seem like a perpetual cycle of hope and disappointment. While donors are keen to see Pakistan succeed, the country's inability to deliver consistent results despite decades of support makes it a global headache.

A critical factor behind this enduring struggle is the lack of genuine commitment and proactive measures from the government. The approach to polio eradication often ap-

pears half-hearted, with more focus on securing donor funding and managing the optics rather than addressing the root causes. Vaccine hesitancy, driven by misinformation and mistrust, remains widespread, and efforts to counter this are neither robust nor sustained. Moreover, the safety of polio workers, who face significant risks, is not adequately prioritized.

Without sincere efforts and a shift from superficial commitments to deep, systemic action, polio will remain a grim reality in Pakistan. It's a tragic irony that in an era when most of the world has eradicated this virus, Pakistan still grapples with it. The government must move beyond symbolic gestures and adopt a more determined, comprehensive approach to protect its children from this preventable disease. Only then can Pakistan hope to shed its polio burden and join the global community in declaring victory over this crippling virus.

REGIONAL TIMES

# THE HEARTLAND



## Commissioner Mirpurkhas reviews arrangements for monsoon rains in Jhudo

By Shahid Majeed

JHUDO: Acting upon directives from Commissioner Mirpurkhas Division, Assistant Commissioner Jhudo, Shabir Jan Jiskani, accompanied by officials from the Pakistan Army, conducted a comprehensive inspection to assess preparations for the upcoming monsoon season. The visit focused on monitoring the progress of crucial infrastructure projects, particularly the LBOD (Left Bank Outfall Drain) embankments and bridges, spanning from RD-42 to RD-52 around Jhudo town and its outskirts.



Officials overseeing the LBOD maintenance assured that necessary measures had been implemented in accordance with prescribed standards to safeguard the town and surrounding areas from potential flood risks during the monsoon.

Furthermore, it was announced that the dismantling of Hayat Khaskeli Bridge is scheduled to commence within the week. This decision follows the completion of necessary preparations and the establishment of alternative routes for public convenience across city and town areas.

Ongoing efforts were also noted along Dhoro Puran, where significant encroachments have been cleared, and embankments reinforced to mitigate flood risks. Additional pathways are being developed to enhance the city's resilience against future monsoon challenges. "These proactive measures are essential to protect our community and infrastructure during the monsoon season," stated Assistant Commissioner Shabir Jan Jiskani. He emphasized the commitment of local authorities to ensuring public safety and maintaining essential infrastructure integrity. The visit concluded with a commitment to continue monitoring and enhancing preparedness efforts ahead of the monsoon season, underscoring the importance of proactive planning and collaboration to mitigate potential risks effectively.

## JNA's growers protest against anti-people budget

By Hakim Baloch



JAM NAWAZ ALI: The local growers of Jam Nawaz Ali staged a protest demonstration against the new taxes imposed by the government in the budget for 2024-25. The protest leaders, including Anwar Ali Rajput, Ismail Gaho, Allah Bux Katohar, Seth Pisho Mal, Muhammad Ali Rajput, and others, expressed their concerns over the new budget, describing it as detrimental to the people's interests.

"The new taxes will burden the already struggling agricultural sector," said Anwar Ali Rajput, voicing the collective sentiment of the protesters. Ismail Gaho added that the budget does not consider the plight of the common farmer, who is already grappling with rising costs and decreasing profits.

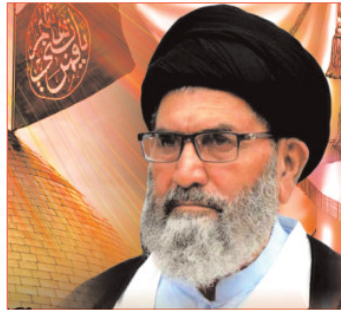
On the occasion, the growers demanded that the government take immediate notice of their grievances and revise the budget to be more pro-people and farmer-friendly.

"If the government does not address our concerns, we will have no choice but to escalate our protest," warned Allah Bux Katohar.

The protest highlighted the growers' dissatisfaction with the budgetary policies and called for a more inclusive approach that supports the agricultural community and ensures their economic stability.

## Ghadeer Day has immense importance in the history of Islam: Allama Sajid Ali Naqvi

By Dilidar Ali Samo



TANDO ADAM: Quaid-e-Milat Jaffaria Pakistan, Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi, emphasized the profound significance of Ghadeer Day in the history of Islam in a statement issued recently. He highlighted that this day marks the announcement of the guardianship and Imamate of Hazrat Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (AS), signifying the beginning of a system that ensures the protection, interpretation, promotion, and implementation of Islam after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWW).

Allama Sajid Naqvi underscored that Ghadeer Day is a pivotal event meant to direct the attention of humanity towards recognizing Hazrat Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (AS) as the central authority in safeguarding and interpreting Islamic teachings. "This day was intended to make the world understand the importance of obeying and following Imam Ali (AS) to maintain a pure and just society," he stated.

He further elaborated that the announcement made on Ghadeer Day set a foundation for a leadership that would uphold the principles of Islam, ensuring its continued relevance and application. The recognition of Imam Ali (AS) as the guardian and interpreter of Islam was meant to provide a clear direction for the Muslim community, promoting unity and adherence to Islamic values.

Allama Naqvi's statement resonates with the beliefs of the Jaffaria community, highlighting the enduring legacy of Ghadeer Day and its crucial role in the history of Islam. He called upon Muslims to reflect on the teachings and significance of this day, urging them to follow the path laid down by Imam Ali (AS) for a harmonious and just society.

## GRASP Sujawal team celebrates International Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day

By Kamran Hidayat

SUJAWAL: The GRASP Sujawal team marked International Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Day with a celebratory event in Sujawal.



The event, held under the auspices of Mr. Habibullah Wagan, ADC-2, featured a distinguished lineup of guest speakers who underscored the importance of MSMEs in driving economic growth and sustainability.

Guest speakers included KB Bahrani, Additional Director of Social Welfare; Syed Babar Shah from WWF; Mr. Ghulam Hyder from FAO; and Hadi Jati from Penny Appeal. They shared insights on the pivotal role of MSMEs in fostering innovation, employment generation, and sustainable development in local communities.

A lively panel discussion ensued, moderated by Ms. Bilquees Khattai. The panelists included Mr. Muhammad Ali Palijo, Manager at ABL; Dr. Muneer Jafrani, Deputy Director of Livestock; and Ms. Shumaila from UNIDO. Representatives from PPAF, Miss Maliha and Ms. Noorulain, actively participated by posing pertinent questions to the panelists.

Discussions centered around the challenges confronting MSMEs in sectors such as livestock, horticulture, and microfinance institutions (MFI). "The resilience and contributions of MSMEs are crucial for sustainable development," emphasized Mr. Habibullah Wagan in his address. He commended GRASP Sujawal for organizing the event to raise awareness and foster dialogue on supporting MSMEs amidst challenges.

The event concluded with a commitment to continue supporting MSMEs through capacity-building initiatives and collaborative efforts aimed at enhancing their resilience and impact in Sujawal and beyond. It highlighted the ongoing efforts to empower local enterprises and promote inclusive economic growth in the region.

## Railways Prem Union protests against PWI Kotri

By Samad Ayaz



By Shaikh Sinधि

KOTRI: The Railway Prem Union Kotri staged a protest demonstration against the Permanent Way Inspector (PWI) Kotri, alleging misconduct and unfair treatment towards employees. Leading the protest were Akbar Abbasi, Rab Nawaz Abro, Khayal Muhammad, and other union leaders who voiced grievances against PWI Jamshed Iqbal.

During the demonstration, union leaders accused PWI Jamshed Iqbal of mistreating employees and compelling them to work beyond their designated hours. They also leveled additional allegations against the PWI Kotri, demanding immediate investigation and action by concerned authorities.

"We demand justice and fair treatment for railway employees," stated Akbar Abbasi, emphasizing the need for accountability and respect in the workplace.

The protesting employees have issued a stern warning, declaring their intent to escalate protests if their grievances are not addressed promptly. They called upon higher authorities to intervene and resolve the issues affecting the workplace environment at Kotri Railway premises. The protest highlights ongoing tensions between the Railway Prem Union and PWI Kotri, underscoring the importance of addressing workplace disputes and ensuring equitable treatment of employees within the railway sector.

## Nawabshah family protests for justice in land dispute

By Samad Ayaz



NAWABSHAH: Tensions escalated in Nawabshah as Allah Dito Cheema led a protest against the alleged occupation of his agricultural lands on Thursday. Cheema accused several influential figures, including Muharam Memon, Allah Jurio Zardari, Saleem, Jabbar, Dadu Arain, and others, of illegally seizing 8 acres of his land.

Despite appeals to authorities, Cheema claimed no action had been taken against the occupiers.

Adding to the turmoil, Cheema reported that his son Razaq and nephew Rafique were arrested by the police and taken to an undisclosed location. Demanding the immediate release of the detained individuals and seeking justice in the land dispute, Cheema warned of escalating his protest if his demands were not met promptly.

The situation remains tense as local authorities navigate the complex land dispute and public outcry for justice.

## First spell of monsoon rains lashes Kunri

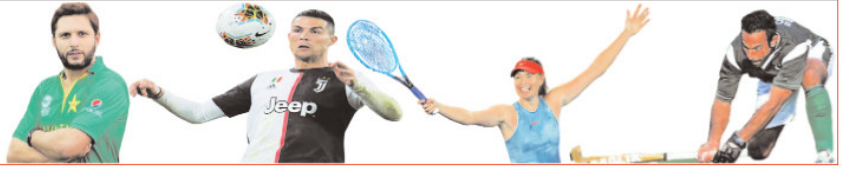
By MM Faisal

KUNRI: Kunri and its surrounding areas experienced the first spell of monsoon rains, bringing much-needed relief to farmers and residents alike. The onset of rain, accompanied by strong winds, significantly reduced the intensity of the prevailing heat wave.

Torrential downpours commenced in Kunri, marking the beginning of this year's monsoon season. Prior to this rainfall, crops had suffered extensive damage from scorching temperatures and water scarcity, particularly affecting cotton and chili crops. "The rain has been a blessing for us," remarked local farmer Abdul Qadir Mallah, as droplets quenched parched fields and revived hopes for a successful agricultural season. Citizens rejoiced at the respite from the stifling heat, which had gripped the region in recent weeks. The cooling effect of the rain provided relief not only to farmers but also to residents who had endured sweltering conditions. "This rainfall has come at a crucial time," noted agricultural expert Dr. Riaz Ahmed, highlighting its potential to revive vegetation and mitigate the impact of prolonged drought-like conditions. As the monsoon season progresses, expectations are high for continued rainfall to replenish groundwater levels and support agricultural recovery across Kunri and neighboring regions. The community remains hopeful that further rains will sustain these initial gains and foster a productive growing season ahead.



SPORTS



Euro 2024: Turkey defeat Czechs to secure Last-16 spot



HAMBURG: Turkey secured a place in the Euro 2024 last-16 with a hard-fought 2-1 victory over a resilient 10-man Czech Republic on Wednesday. Goals from Hakan Calhanoglu and Cenk Tosun ensured Turkey's progression...

T20 World Cup 2024: India overpower England to seal berth in final

GUYANA: India overpowered England by 68 runs in the second semi-final of the T20 World Cup 2024 at the Providence Stadium in Guyana on Thursday.



India's spin department continued to dominate the defending champions as Jos Buttler looked in good touch but was dismissed by Axar Patel on the first ball of the fourth over.

ing tournament as he was bowled by Reece Topley after just scoring nine runs. Following Kohli's dismissal, Rishabh Pant too walked back to the pavilion after scoring just four runs...

Michael Vaughan highlights India's 'unfair advantage' in T20 World Cup

LONDON: Former England cricketer and renowned commentator Michael Vaughan slammed the International Cricket Council (ICC) for allegedly favouring India during the ongoing T20 World Cup 2024.



Vaughan, a notable voice in world cricket, spoke about Afghanistan's tight schedule for their semi-final against South Africa and stressed that India and England should have played the first semi-final.

South Africa demolish Afghanistan's Cinderella run, reach their first T20 World Cup final

TAROUBA: South Africa demolished Afghanistan's T20 World Cup dream in ruthless fashion on Wednesday, thrashing the minnows by nine wickets with more than 11 overs to spare to reach the final of the cricket showpiece for the first time.



tournament-leading 17th wicket. But Reeza Hendricks (29 not out) and captain Aiden Markram (23 not out) saw them to victory at 60 for one off 8.5 overs to advance the Proteas to Saturday's final in Barbados where they will face the winners of Thursday's second semi-final between title-holders England and unbeaten India in Guyana.

they pipped Bangladesh in St. Vincent to reach the final four. Throughout this dream run to their first semi-final of a senior men's world tournament Afghanistan have been reliant on openers Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran to give them a solid platform and at the same time mask the frailties of the rest of the batting line-up.

Rogério Ramos points out differences between Indian and Pakistani football

Rogério Ramos, the Brazilian goalkeeping coach for Pakistan's national football team, has discussed the contrasts in the sport between India and Pakistan.



Ramos, who has previously served as a goalkeeping coach for Odisha FC and Mumbai FC in the Indian Super League, has extensive experience, having worked with various clubs such as EC Santo Andre SP and EC Novo Hamburgo RS in Brazil, Mahindra United and Vasco Sports Club in India, Young In Academy in South Korea, and NEA Salamina in Cyprus.

Ollie Robinson bags unwanted record for second-costliest over in First-Class cricket



England pacer Ollie Robinson secured an unwanted record by conceding the second-highest number of runs in a single over in First-Class cricket during an English County Championship match, that took place between Sussex and Leicestershire on Wednesday.

Afghanistan coach Trott blames pitch after semi-final defeat against South Africa

TAROUBA: Afghanistan head coach Jonathan Trott lambasted on the pitch used for his side's ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 semi-final against South Africa.



Afghanistan batters found themselves in heaps of trouble against a ruthless South African bowling attack on a surface that offered lateral seam and uneven bounce.

with no spin and no seam movement, but you shouldn't have bets, worrying about going forward and the ball flying over your head.

Face of the Day



Name: Syed Asher Ali Location: Karachi About me: I love using social media!

REGIONAL TIMES ENTERTAINMENT

Scarlett Johansson gushes over Zoe Kravitz: 'She's so great!'



Scarlett Johansson recently adored Zoe Kravitz, who is the daughter of Lisa Bonet and Lenny Kravitz. During a confessional with E! News, the celebrities discussed their views of each other's real-life partners.

Jennifer Garner wants Ben Affleck to live with her amid Jennifer Lopez divorce



Jennifer Garner wants her ex-husband Ben Affleck to move back in as his divorce from Jennifer Lopez becomes imminent only two years after marriage.



# THE HEARTLAND



## Hindu newlyweds demand protection in Tando Allahyar

By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: Prem Kolhi and Pooi Kolhi, a newlywed couple, staged a protest demonstration seeking protection from authorities due to threats from Pooi Kolhi's relatives. The couple emphasized that their marriage was a result of their own free will, but they are now facing severe threats from relatives of Pooi Kolhi.



"We fear for our safety and seek protection from the authorities," stated Prem Kolhi during the protest. Pooi Kolhi echoed these concerns, highlighting the intimidation and harassment they have been subjected to since their marriage. The couple appealed to higher authorities to intervene and ensure their safety. "We urge the authorities to take immediate action against those threatening us and provide us with necessary protection," they demanded. The protest drew attention to the challenges faced by couples in asserting their rights to marry freely without fear of reprisal or harm from family members. The couple's plea for protection underscores the importance of safeguarding individual freedoms and rights within communities.

## Missing Kandiaro laborer's mother appeals for her missing son's recovery

By Usama Ayaz Abbasi

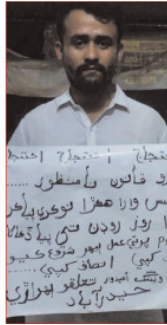
KANDIARO: In a heartfelt plea for justice, the mother of Ashiq Kalhoro, a missing laborer, has lodged a constitutional petition in the Sessions Court seeking the safe return of her son. The petitioner has named ASI Abdul Sattar Metlo, Raham Ali Kalhoro, Naimatullah Kalhoro, Habibullah, Kalimullah, Nasibullah, and Ghulam Mur-taza in her complaint, alleging their involvement in her son's disappearance. According to the petitioner, the police apprehended Ashiq Kalhoro and transferred him to an undisclosed location without formally docu-

menting his arrest. Expressing her anguish, the elderly woman appealed to higher authorities to intervene urgently and ensure the immediate recovery of her son. She warned of escalating her protest and pursuing legal avenues if her demands for justice were not met promptly. The case has stirred local sentiments, prompting calls for transparency and accountability in handling such sensitive matters. As the legal proceedings unfold, the community awaits a swift resolution to reunite Ashiq Kalhoro with his family.

## Tando Jam's IBA test passed candidates demand their offer orders

By Irfan Khushk

TANDO JAM: Candidates who have successfully passed the IBA test with scores above 40 marks are demanding immediate issuance of offer orders, citing delays despite their success from the Sindh High Court. The delay in receiving offer letters has caused significant challenges for the selected candidates.



Many candidates are now urging higher authorities to intervene and expedite the issuance of offer orders, as per the court's instructions. The candidates emphasized the urgency of the situation, highlighting the hardships they face in navigating the uncertainty surrounding their employment status. They called upon the relevant authorities to promptly address the issue and ensure that justice is served to all qualified candidates.

According to sources, the Education Department officials submitted a list of vacancies based on year-old data to higher authorities. However, since then, the number of vacant positions has reportedly increased, complicating the implementation process. "The concerned authorities appear hesitant to comply with the court's directives," expressed a candidate affected by the delay.

As the issue continues to unfold, candidates await a resolution that will enable them to secure their rightful positions based on their academic achievements and performance in the IBA test.

## Umerkot Police arrest three notorious criminals

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: In a determined effort to combat criminal activities and drug trafficking, the Umerkot Police have successfully apprehended three notorious criminals in separate operations. Acting on the directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Mirpurkhas, and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Umerkot, the police have intensified their crackdown on criminal elements in the region. In a recent operation, the Shadi Pali Police, acting on a tip-off, conducted a raid that led to the arrest of a well-known criminal, Adam Nohani. Nohani has been on the police radar for his involvement in various criminal activities, including robbery and drug trafficking. The successful apprehension is seen as a significant step in dismantling the local criminal network.

In a separate raid under the jurisdiction of the Ghulam Nabi Shah Police Station, the police captured another criminal, Muntaq alias Fula. Fula is reputed to be involved in multiple felonious activities and has been evading arrest for several months. The police operation was meticulously planned and executed, ensuring no escape routes for the criminal. Additionally, the Nabisar Police in Umerkot carried out a targeted action resulting in the arrest of Mangho Kolhi. Kolhi has a long history of criminal conduct, including theft and drug dealing, making his arrest a notable achievement for the local law enforcement agencies.

The police's efforts to maintain law and order.

SSP Umerkot, in a statement, commended the police officers involved in these operations for their bravery and dedication. He reiterated the commitment of the Umerkot Police to continue their rigorous actions against criminals and drug dealers, aiming to ensure the safety and security of the citizens. The crackdown on criminal activities in Umerkot is part of a broader initiative to eradicate crime and enhance the quality of life for residents. The police have urged the public to remain vigilant and cooperate with law enforcement by reporting any suspicious activities.

As the Umerkot Police persist with their operations, the recent arrests are expected to have a significant impact on curbing crime in the region, sending a strong message to other criminal elements operating in the area.

## Monsoon rain lashes Umerkot district

By M Ismail Khilji

PITHORO: Monsoon rains have swept across various areas of Umerkot district, bringing relief from the scorching heat but causing waterlogging in low-lying areas and disrupting daily life. The downpour has transformed the weather into a pleasant one across the district.



Following the heavy rains, several roads and low-lying areas in Umerkot have been submerged under rainwater, posing challenges for commuters and residents. The sudden inundation has prompted concerns about the potential for waterborne diseases and accessibility issues. Additionally, power outages were reported in several parts of the district, further adding to the inconvenience faced by the residents. "We urge the concerned authorities to restore power supply immediately," demanded local residents affected by the disruptions. Despite these challenges, the rainfall has been welcomed by farmers and residents alike, as it promises to rejuvenate agricultural lands and provide much-needed relief from the intense summer heat.

Authorities are expected to assess the situation and initiate measures to alleviate the impact of the monsoon rains on infrastructure and public services in Umerkot district.

## Daulatpur Police seize a car loaded with liquor

By Aijaz Johkio

DAULATPUR: Daulatpur Police made a significant discovery when they found a stranded car parked near the National Highway. Upon inspection, police officers recovered 9 cartons containing wine bottles, along with an additional 216 bottles of wine stored inside the vehicle. The discovery led to the immediate impoundment of the car by authorities, who swiftly initiated legal proceedings by registering a case at the Daulatpur Police Station. "This seizure is a result of vigilant policing and our commitment to enforcing the law," stated DSP Zafar Ali Solangi, emphasizing the importance of combating illegal activities that pose a threat to public safety.

The seized alcohol, estimated to have a substantial street value, underscores ongoing efforts by law enforcement agencies to curb illegal trafficking and ensure adherence to regulatory standards. Further investigations are underway to ascertain the origins and intended destination of the seized alcohol, with authorities pledging to pursue all leads to prevent such illicit activities from undermining community safety and well-being.

## 14th death anniversary of poet Ahmed Khan Madhosh observed in Johi

By Roshan Memon

JOHI: The Sindh Adabi Sangat and Madhosh Academy solemnly observed the 14th death anniversary of renowned poet Ahmed Khan Madhosh on Thursday. The event gathered intellectuals, literary figures, and admirers of Madhosh's work to commemorate his literary contributions.

Tabish Bukhari, Khalil Arif Soomro, and other dignitaries paid tribute to Ahmed Khan Madhosh, acknowledging his profound impact on Sindh literature. They praised Madhosh's poetic prowess and his ability to capture the essence of Sindh culture and tradition through his verses. "Ahmed Khan Madhosh's poetry continues to inspire and resonate with readers across generations," remarked Pir Moazam ul Haq during the ceremony. The gathering reflected on Madhosh's enduring legacy and his role in enriching Sindh literature with his poetic expressions. The commemoration of Ahmed Khan Madhosh's death anniversary underscored the significance of preserving and celebrating the cultural heritage and literary achievements of Sindh poets, ensuring their contributions are remembered and cherished.

The praise from JSQM's Liaquat Sarki reflects the recognition of Sardar Khan Mahar's influential role in local politics and community service, underscoring the importance of collaborative efforts across political boundaries for the betterment of the region.

## DC Larkana Sharjeel Noor Channa reviews arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: Dr Sharjeel Noor Channa, Deputy Commissioner of Larkana, presided over a crucial meeting of district officials to ensure comprehensive arrangements for the upcoming month of Muharram-ul-Haram. The meeting focused on preparations to facilitate the solemn processions and gatherings during this sacred month. DC Sharjeel Noor Channa emphasized the importance of cleanliness and the installation of adequate street lighting along the routes designated for Muharram-ul-Haram processions. He underscored the strict im-

plementation of the code of conduct to maintain peace and order throughout the month. Addressing the religious leaders present, he called upon the Ulema to promote messages of peace, unity, and interfaith harmony among the community. The meeting saw participation from various government departments, as well as leaders from religious organizations and organizers of mourning processions and Majalis-e-Aza. As preparations continue, the authorities are committed to ensuring a peaceful and respectful observance of Muharram-ul-Haram in Larkana.

## JSQM's Liaquat Sarki lauds services of Sindh Minister Sardar Khan Mahar

By Khair Muhammad Golo

THUL: Liaquat Sarki, a leader of the Jeay Sindh Quami Mahaz (JSQM), spoke highly of Sardar Khan Mahar, acknowledging his generosity and support towards the community. In a statement to the media, Sarki emphasized that Sardar Khan Mahar's contributions have been instrumental, particularly in the success of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in local bodies' elections.



"Sardar Khan Mahar's kindness and support to everyone, regardless of political affiliations, have been commendable," remarked Liaquat Sarki. He expressed gratitude for Mahar's role in facilitating PPP's achievements at the local level, highlighting his influence and goodwill among the electorate.

Sarki extended his best wishes for Sardar Khan Mahar's continued well-being and longevity, acknowledging his significant impact on community welfare and political dynamics in Thul and beyond. The praise from JSQM's Liaquat Sarki reflects the recognition of Sardar Khan Mahar's influential role in local politics and community service, underscoring the importance of collaborative efforts across political boundaries for the betterment of the region.

## Hingorja's Marwari community demands recovery of stolen motorcycle

By Sajjad Chang

HINGORJA: Members of the Marwari community staged a protest demonstration led by Pappu Mal, Ramesh Mal, Mohan Lal, and others in Hingorja. The protest was sparked by the theft of Pappu Kolhi's motorcycle outside the BISP Centre, with community leaders expressing dissatisfaction over the lack of action by authorities to recover the stolen vehicle. Speaking at the protest, Pappu Mal and other leaders highlighted the negligence of concerned authorities in addressing the theft, despite repeated appeals for intervention. They emphasized that the issue has not only caused financial loss but also reflects poorly on the law enforcement's responsiveness to community concerns.

"We demand immediate action to recover the stolen motorcycle," declared Pappu Mal, urging authorities to prioritize the case and ensure justice for the affected community member. The protesters warned of escalating their demonstration if prompt measures are not taken by the authorities. They called upon concerned officials to heed their demands and facilitate the swift recovery of the stolen motorcycle, restoring faith in law enforcement's ability to protect community property. As tensions mount, community leaders remain steadfast in their resolve to seek justice and hold accountable those responsible for the theft, underscoring the need for proactive measures to address such incidents promptly.

## Management Development Foundation holds a coordination meeting of Dadu's NGOs and development stakeholders

By Ayaz Burro

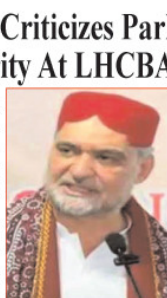
KN SHAH: The Management Development Foundation (MDF) convened a significant one-day coordination meeting at the gymkhana in Dadu, bringing together 28 participants from various international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), government bodies, and the SURHAAN Women Protection Group. The meeting aimed to facilitate collaboration, cooperation, and information exchange among di-

verse stakeholders committed to women's protection and empowerment. Participants, including representatives from NGOs and government entities, shared their experiences and expertise, fostering a spirit of cooperation and mutual learning. The focus was on strengthening collective efforts to address social issues affecting women, particularly in rural areas. During the workshop, renowned feminist and development professional Shaishita Urooj highlighted

MDF's collaboration with Oxfam in empowering girls and women in rural settings. The collaborative efforts between MDF and Oxfam are primarily directed towards enhancing girls' education and promoting behavioral change within communities. The meeting underscored the importance of coordinated efforts among organizations and stakeholders to achieve sustainable progress in women's empowerment and social development in Dadu and beyond.

## Hafiz Naeem Criticizes Parliamentarians' Integrity At LHCBA Event

LAHORE: Jamaat-i-Islami Pakistan emir Hafiz Naeem Rehman criticized the integrity of parliamentarians, stating that those currently in parliament do not uphold Pakistan's democratic values or constitution. Addressing an event organized by the Lahore High Court Bar Association (LHCBA), Hafiz Naeem Rehman emphasized the need to safeguard the electoral process from being manipulated for political gain. "It is ironic that politi-



community uphold democratic principles within their ranks. He criticized Pakistan's involvement in American-led wars on Pakistani soil in the name of counterterrorism, asserting that such actions are unrelated to promoting democracy or upholding the constitution. Expressing hope for Pakistan's progress, he stressed the importance of strengthening the country's justice system to ensure justice and fairness for all.—RT/Agency

## SAU offers admissions in new academic session

By Irfan Ali Khushk

TANDO JAM: Sindh Agriculture University (SAU), Tandojam, has announced the commencement of admissions for postgraduate degree programs across multiple academic years. The admissions are open for the academic sessions of 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023, covering the first, third, fifth, seventh, and ninth fall semesters. Prospective students can apply for MSc, ME, MSIT, MPhil, and PhD

programs during the admission period, which runs from June 26 to July 19, 2024. For those applying late, registration with a late fee will be accepted from July 22 to July 31, 2024. Classes for the new academic session are scheduled to commence on July 29, 2024. Interested candidates are advised to complete their admissions process within the specified dates to avoid any inconvenience. SAU aims to offer quality education and research opportunities in agricultural sciences and related fields, contributing to the development of skilled professionals in the agricultural sector. Aspiring students are encouraged to seize this opportunity to pursue higher education at SAU, Tandojam, and contribute to the advancement of agriculture and allied sciences in the region.



# METRO KARACHI



## Rain Provides Relief To Karachiites After Days Of Scorching Heat

KARACHI: Karachiites experienced a welcome respite on Thursday as rain brought relief following four consecutive days of temperatures soaring above 40 degrees Celsius. Various parts of the metropolis, including Gadap, Bahria Town, and Malir, reported dust storms and heavy rainfall, easing the heatwave conditions.

According to reports, the rain initially began on the city's outskirts before spreading to other areas later in the day. Chief Meteorologist Dr. Sardar Sarfaraz of the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) forecasted that while Friday and Saturday would remain warm, the intensity of the heat would diminish gradually.



Dr. Sarfaraz, speaking to media, anticipated intermittent rain over the next few days, with breaks expected during the afternoon and

evening periods. He attributed the weather pattern to a lingering low pressure system affecting the region.

"The next two days will be warm but noticeably less intense," Dr. Sarfaraz noted. The PMD had earlier issued a press release forecasting "rain, wind/thundershower with isolated heavy falls" across Sindh from Wednesday onwards.

Despite the relief brought by the rain, recent heatwave-related fatalities have been reported in Karachi, with four deaths recorded on Tuesday alone. The Sindh

health department confirmed a total of eight heat-related deaths over the past month, primarily among vulnerable groups such as drug addicts and the homeless.

Karachi Commissioner Hasan Naqvi disclosed that ten individuals succumbed to heatstroke earlier in the week, underscoring ongoing challenges despite the recent weather change. The maximum recorded temperature in Karachi reached 42°C on Monday and 41°C on Sunday, highlighting the severity of the recent heatwave.—RT/Agency



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah is concluding the debate on the budget for 2024-25 during provincial assembly session, at the Sindh Assembly building.—RT

## Women To Drive Pink Buses Soon In Sindh: Murad

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah highlighted key developments and initiatives during a session of the Sindh Assembly on Thursday. He noted that the pre-budget session was postponed due to the Senate elections scheduled for March.

Shah emphasized that the Sindh government has allocated a substantial amount of Rs959 billion for provincial development projects, surpassing allocations made by other provinces. He also mentioned the success of public-private partnerships under the government's administration, which have received acclaim even from political opponents.

Addressing the assembly, Shah compared development expenditures across provinces, stating that while Punjab allocated Rs842 billion, KP allocated Rs416 billion, and Balochistan allo-



ated Rs320 billion, Sindh's allocation remained the highest.

Shah highlighted achievements in Tharparkar, mentioning the establishment of a new airport and initiatives to empower women, including plans for women to soon drive pink buses. He underscored ongoing development efforts in Thar from 2018 to 2023, emphasizing investments in education and infrastructure in the region. The Chief Minister acknowledged challenges faced during the caretaker setup but affirmed the continuity of development schemes under his government's stewardship, contrasting it with interruptions observed in Punjab. The announcements reflect Sindh's commitment to progressive policies and inclusive development, particularly focusing on empowerment and infrastructure enhancements in underserved areas like Tharparkar.—RT

## JI Challenges Ruthless KE In Court Over Karachi's Electricity Load Shedding

KARACHI: Media reports indicate that Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has lodged a petition in the Sindh High Court (SHC) against K-Electric (KE) for extensive load-shedding in Karachi, especially during the ongoing heatwave.

The petition names the Ministry of Energy, NEPRA, and KE as respondents, seeking the court's intervention to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply in Karachi. It criticizes KE's load-shedding schedule, alleging that 71% of feeders are unfairly exempt from power cuts.

Additionally, the petition highlights NEPRA's imposi-

tion of a Rs 50 million fine on KE for subpar performance and demands accountability for technical faults affecting electricity supply.

According to the petition, Karachi residents endure an average of 16 hours of daily load shedding amid temperatures exceeding 40°C, severely impacting daily life and essential services.

The outcome of this legal challenge could potentially influence measures to mitigate power interruptions and enhance service reliability in Karachi.—RT/Agency

## Ali Khurshedi Criticizes Sindh Government's Delay On K-IV Project

KARACHI: Media reports indicate that Ali Khurshedi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Sindh Assembly, has criticized the government for a decade-long delay in implementing the K-IV water project.

During discussions on the budget in the Sindh Assembly, MQM's Ali Khurshedi expressed disappointment that the government has only discussed the K-IV project without taking decisive action. He emphasized the need for progress on projects like K-V and K-VI to address Karachi citizens' pressing needs.

Khurshedi criticized the Sindh government, alleging that it has failed to fulfill promises outlined in the People's Party manifesto. He sharply condemned K-Elec-

tric for widespread load shedding in Karachi during intense heat, likening the utility to an incorrigible entity that requires stern measures to rectify.

Demanding accountability, Khurshedi called for registering FIRs against K-Electric officials and urged the Sindh Chief Minister to engage with the Prime Minister regarding the performance of all three power companies in the province. He emphasized the necessity for these entities to either correct their course or face expulsion from the province.

The statements by the opposition leader underscore growing frustration over delayed infrastructure projects and service delivery issues affecting Karachi's residents.—RT/Agency

## NEPRA Reviews KE's Tariff Petitions For Reliable Power Supply In Karachi

KARACHI: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) conducted a hearing on June 27, 2024, to deliberate on K-Electric's (KE) distribution, transmission, and supply petitions as part of its Multi-Year Tariff for the period spanning from FY 2023-24 to FY 2029-30.

KE's petitions underscore essential components aimed at maintaining and enhancing investments to ensure efficient and reliable power supply across its service territory in Karachi.

The focus of the hearing and subsequent decisions does not affect the electricity pricing structure on customers' monthly bills, which remains governed by a uniform tariff policy ensuring equitable charges nationwide for different customer categories.

These hearings are part of an ongoing Multi-Year Tariff process where NEPRA has already issued decisions on KE's approximately USD 2 billion investment plan for Transmission and Distribution, as well as its Power Acquisition Programme aimed



at increasing the use of renewable and local resource-based energy sources.

The current tariff petitions lay the groundwork for securing Karachi's sustainable energy future. They propose a cost-reflective tariff structure that includes annual and quarterly indexation mechanisms to align tariffs with changes in macroeconomic conditions, ensuring sustainability for KE.

Additionally, mechanisms are proposed to adjust for changes in energy volume dispatched to Karachi (in gigawatt-hours), vital for recovering prudent costs necessary to maintain service quality and support network expansion to meet increasing

energy demands.

As part of its investment plan, KE is expanding its transmission and distribution network, including the introduction of the first 500 kV facility at KKI, to cater to growing customer needs. Simultaneously, the Power Acquisition Programme aims to add 1300 MW of renewable energy projects, promoting sustainability and affordability.

KE is deploying advanced technologies such as Advanced Distribution Management Systems to enhance network governance and reduce line losses and power interruptions, thereby improving network stability.—RT/Agency

## SSP Kashif Aftab Abbasi Reviews Arrangements For Muharram-ul-Haram

KARACHI: SSP Malir Kashif Aftab Abbasi convened a crucial meeting of police officials to assess and enhance security arrangements for the upcoming month of Muharram-ul-Haram. The meeting, aimed at ensuring a safe environment during the mourning process, emphasized the importance of maintaining interfaith harmony and community cooperation.

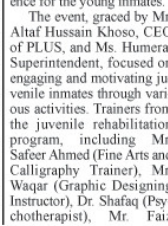
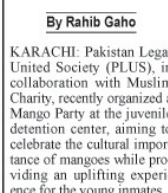
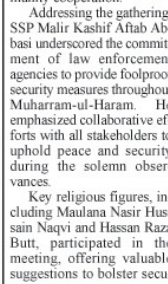
Addressing the gathering, SSP Malir Kashif Aftab Abbasi underscored the commitment of law enforcement agencies to provide foolproof security measures throughout Muharram-ul-Haram. He emphasized collaborative efforts with all stakeholders to uphold peace and security during the solemn observances.

Key religious figures, including Maulana Nasir Hussain Naqvi and Hassan Raza Butt, participated in the meeting, offering valuable suggestions to bolster security protocols and ensure the peaceful conduct of religious gatherings.

DSPs Syed Shakir, Naeem Ahmed Bhatti, Mumtaz Maggi, Mansoor Bozdar, Abid Fazal Mahar, Azam Baloch, Shoukat Malhan, alongside other senior officials, were present to coordinate and implement the outlined security strategies.

"As we prepare for Muharram-ul-Haram, our priority remains the safety and well-being of all participants in the mourning process," stated SSP Kashif Aftab Abbasi. He urged the public to cooperate with law enforcement agencies and report any suspicious activities to ensure a secure environment throughout the month.

The comprehensive review and planning session aimed to mitigate potential risks and uphold peace during this significant religious period, reflecting the commitment of authorities to safeguarding community interests and religious freedoms.—RT



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The Mango Party exemplifies PLUS and Muslim Charity's commitment to reintegrating juvenile inmates into society by imparting valuable skills and knowledge, fostering hope and rehabilitation among the youth.

## Fake Cop Arrested For Robbing Karachi Women

KARACHI: Media reports confirm the arrest of a man posing as a policeman who allegedly snatched handbags from women in Karachi. According to police sources, the accused, identified as Nadir Ali, was apprehended after he stole a purse from a woman in the Buffer Zone area on Wednesday while dressed in a police uniform. Law enforcement officials recovered the stolen purse, along with the fake police uniform and a motorcycle bearing a police number plate, from the accused.

Earlier, CCTV footage from a bakery owned by a popular Pakistani burger chain captured an alleged policeman and an accomplice



engaged in a robbery. The footage showed the suspect wearing police pants and shoes, holding bakery staff at gunpoint and fleeing after looting the cash counter. Subsequently, the suspect was arrested in Lahore, where he was allegedly involved in multiple robberies in Karachi. During interrogation, the suspect identified himself as Shehryar Ghori, confessed to his criminal activities, revealing additional details about his involvement in various incidents in the metropolis.—RT/Agency

## NADRA Partners With Ruthless KE For Consumer Identity Verification

KARACHI: Media reports indicate that the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has entered into an agreement with K Electric (KE) to provide identity verification services for consumers in Karachi. This collaboration aims to enhance operational efficiency and customer service at the electricity distribution company.

Under the agreement, NADRA will assist KE in verifying customer identities, which will streamline services such as new connections and meter name transfers. Customers, par-



ticularly registered filers will also have the option to link their CNIC numbers with their KE accounts.

The identity verification process at KE service centers will now incorporate fingerprint authentication, ensuring a secure and precise verification process. This partnership marks a significant step towards improving service delivery and operational effectiveness at KE, benefiting consumers across Karachi.—RT/Agency

## UAE Consulate Staff Welcomes Returning Pilgrims At Jinnah International



KARACHI: UAE Consulate staff warmly welcomed pilgrims upon their return from their sacred journey, presenting them with bouquets of flowers in a gesture of hospitality. Their support during the pilgrimage, and offered prayers for the late founding president of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. Additionally, they prayed for the continued success of Consul General Bakht Atiq.

The pilgrims expressed heartfelt gratitude to the United Arab Emirates and particularly to Consul General Bakht Atiq for the warm reception. They also extended their thanks to the Sheikh Zayed Foundation for

## Mango Party Celebrates Cultural Significance At Karachi Juvenile Detention Center

By Rahib Gaho

KARACHI: Pakistan Legal United Society (PLUS), in collaboration with Muslim Charity, recently organized a Mango Party at the juvenile detention center, aiming to celebrate the cultural importance of mangoes while providing an uplifting experience for the young inmates.

The event, graced by Mr. Altaf Hussain Khoso, CEO of PLUS, and Ms. Humera, Superintendent, focused on engaging and motivating juvenile inmates through various activities. Trainers from the juvenile rehabilitation program, including Mr. Safer Ahmed (Fine Arts and Calligraphy Trainer), Mr. Waqar (Graphic Designing Instructor), Dr. Shafiq (Psychotherapist), Mr. Faiz



Aslam, and Ms. Surhan (Social Mobilizer), participated actively. They guided inmates in creating decorative objects inspired by mangoes, transforming classrooms into colorful and vibrant spaces. CEO PLUS interacted with the inmates, encouraging them to embrace positivity and envision a future free from crime during the event. Activities such as a

mango-eating competition and a session on identifying different types of mangoes added to the festivities. The Mango Party exemplifies PLUS and Muslim Charity's commitment to reintegrating juvenile inmates into society by imparting valuable skills and knowledge, fostering hope and rehabilitation among the youth.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh, Kamran Tessori is addressing the media after laying a floral wreath and offering Fateha at the shrine of Hazrat Abdullah Shah Ghazi (RA) on the occasion of the revered Saint's 1294th Annual Urs celebrations during his visit at his shrine.—RT



"Do not compare yourself to others. If you do so, you are insulting yourself."

—Adolf Hitler

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FRIDAY JUNE 28 2024

## Reserved Seats Case: SC Judge Asserts ECP Lacks Authority To Exclude Any Party From Polls

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court Justice Athar Minallah said Thursday that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) lacks the authority to kick out any party from the elections.

"Election Commission does not have the authority to exclude any political party from [taking part in] elections," Justice Minallah said in a 13-member full court, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, heard the Sumi Ihtedhad Council (SIC) plea against the Peshawar High Court (PHC) verdict denying them reserved seats.

The bench comprises Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Malik, Justice Athar Minallah, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Shahid Waheed, Justice Irfan Saadat



Khan and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan.

During the hearing today, Justice Muneeb questioned which party SIC Chief Hamid Raza associated himself with, whereas Justice Mandokhail inquired whether a candidate can change his party after withdrawing his nomination papers.

Apprising the court of details regarding Raza's documents and political affiliation, ECP's lawyer Sikander Bashir noted that the document submitted by the SIC

Furthermore, CJP Isa inquired whether it is necessary to attach a certificate of affiliation to the party from which the election is to be contested.

"It is necessary to show the candidate's declaration and affiliation with the party," responded the ECP's lawyer, adding that a candidate is considered independent if the declaration and political affiliation do not match.

However, the chief justice noted that there was no discrepancy in the certificate and the ECP was in fact changing the candidate's status.

"Why shouldn't we consider [candidates] as belonging to the PTI?" CJP Isa said, highlighting that there are issues with the documents submitted by the ECP in the court.

Additionally, Justice Malik questioned why the ECP declared the candidates as independent when they

were in fact declaring their association with a political party.

Moreover, Justice Muneeb, while referring to the apex court's earlier decision wherein it had upheld the ECP's decision to revoke the PTI's "bat" symbol, clarified that the SC had not intended to exclude the PTI from the polls.

"You [ECP] conveniently said the candidates must be declared independent as [PTI] wasn't allocated an election symbol [..] how did you reach such a major decision?" Justice Muneeb said.

"An independent candidate may also be allocated the 'bat' sign," CJP Isa said, adding that the court cannot do anything if someone misinterprets their decision.

The court then directed the electoral body to provide the certificates and declarations of the candidates.—RT/Agency

## 'They Won't Allow Imran To Be Released At This Moment,' Says Sheikh Rashid

ISLAMABAD: Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Thursday claimed that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan is unlikely to come out of imprisonment soon.

"They won't allow PTI founder to be released at this moment," Rashid said while speaking to the media at a district and sessions court in Islamabad.

The former federal minister's remarks come as Khan, who has been serving various sentences and has been behind bars since August last year, might have a chance to be free if a district and sessions court rules in his favour in response to his plea seeking suspension of his sentence in iddat case today.

The former premier — who has previously secured relief in £190 million reference, cipher and Toshakhana cases — was handed down a seven-year sentence along with his wife Bushra Bibi in the said case after a trial court deemed their nikah fraudulent in February this year.

However, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government has said that it will try to keep the PTI founder behind bars.

"Imran Khan's main agenda is to destabilise the country and spread chaos and anarchy in the country that's



why the government will certainly try to keep him behind bars as long as possible," the PM's adviser said while speaking on Geo News programme 'Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Saath' on Tuesday.

"Persistently he [Khan] has only one agenda — spread anarchy and mischief in the country, hence for the betterment of the country he [Imran Khan] should be kept behind bars," the official added.

Meanwhile, the issue of the former PM's release has also become a contentious issue among the PTI ranks as 21 of its lawmakers have hinted at forming a forward bloc over the party's top leadership's failure to secure his release along with other leaders, sources told Geo News on Wednesday.

"More than 27 PTI lawmakers held consultations after Shehryar Afridi's statement about his resignation. Meanwhile, Shandana Gulzar Khan, Sher Afzal

Marwat and several lawmakers also protested over the incompetence of the party's top leadership," the sources added.

Furthermore, expressing his views on the prevailing political landscape, Rashid claimed that PML-N President Nawaz Sharif will also change his narrative by the end of July.

The politico's remarks come as earlier this week, Geo News citing sources, reported that the three-time former prime minister had in fact decided to play an active role in national politics.

Nawaz, the sources added, would hold more meetings with the party's leaders and workers besides playing an active role in strengthening the prevailing political system. Additionally, the AML chief also stressed that a middle ground needs to be carved out by negotiation with the army to send "this corrupt government" packing.—RT/Agency

## Pakistan To Participate In UN-Hosted Doha Talks On Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has decided to participate in the United Nations-hosted talks on Afghanistan in the Qatari capital scheduled for this weekend, diplomatic sources told media on Thursday.

Earlier this month, Taliban authorities also confirmed their participation in the third round of the Doha talks scheduled to start on June 30, a Taliban spokesperson had told AFP after snubbing an invitation to the previous round.

The sources said Pakistan's Special Representative to Afghanistan Asif Durrani and Ahmad Naseem Warraich, assistant secretary for West Asia in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will represent Pakistan in the talks.

It should be noted that Pakistan has times and again requested the Taliban government to stop cross-border terrorism from Afghanistan into Pakistan by preventing its territory from being used by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other terrorist groups.

The diplomatic sources said the Afghan Taliban's interim government had boycotted the second Doha talks of 2024 over the participation of women and civil society



representatives.

It would be the first time that Afghanistan's interim administration will sit face to face with special representatives on Afghanistan from different parts of the world, they maintained.

The sources said prior to the Doha talks, the United Nations held consultations with representatives of the Afghan civil society present inside and outside Afghanistan.

After completion of the talks, representatives of the civil society members and women would hold discussion with the special representatives on Afghanistan on July 2.

"In the third Doha talks, progress on recognising the Afghan Taliban and Afghanistan's interim government is out of the ques-

tion," the diplomatic sources added.

Restrictions on women's rights continue to prevent Afghanistan's "reintegration" into the international community, a senior UN official said on June 21, noting the Taliban's participation in upcoming talks in Doha is not legitimisation of the isolated government.

Since their 2021 return to power, Taliban authorities have not been formally recognised by any nation. Restrictions on women and girls, particularly in education, "deprive the country of vital human capital" and lead to a brain drain that undermines the impoverished country's future, Roza Onunbayeva, head of the UN mission in the country, UNAMA, told the UN Security Council.—RT/Agency

## IMF Raises Concerns Over Pakistan's Pension Burden In Budget For 2024-25



ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has raised concerns regarding the raising pension burden in Pakistan as some retired government employees in the country receiving more than Rs 1.6 million in pension, media reported on Thursday, citing sources.

Sources close to the development disclosed that the IMF is worried about the issue of double pensioners. According to documents, an estimated Rs 1,014 billion will be allocated for pensions in the upcoming budget 2024-25. The documents further reveal that pensions will see a 15 percent increase in the new budget, requiring an additional Rs 122 billion to cover this increment. Notably, the monthly pension for 95 retired officers in Pakistan exceeds Rs 500,000, while

3,081 retired officers receive more than Rs 200,000 per month. Earlier, the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb announced 'significant' relief for government employees, increasing their salaries up to 25 percent. Presenting the budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 on the National Assembly floor, the finance minister said that the government proposed to raise salaries by 25 percent for grade 1-16 employees and a 20 percent increase for grade 17-22 employees.

In the budget, the finance minister also proposed a 15 percent increase in pensions for retired employees. The minimum monthly wage for a worker has been raised from Rs 32,000 to Rs 37,000.—RT/Agency

## LHC Judge Asserts PM Must Take Responsibility For 'Subordinate' Agencies

LAHORE: Lahore High Court's (LHC) Justice Shahid Karim on Thursday remarked that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif should take responsibility for any insubordination by intelligence agencies under him.

The judge's remarks were made in the written order for a case on the alleged threats to a judge of a Sargodha anti-terrorism court (ATC) and his harassment by the intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

On June 13, Justice Malik Shalazad Ahmad Khan, the then chief justice of the high court, had summoned Punjab Inspector General of Police (IGP) Usman Anwar and other officials on the complaint. The LHC registrar's office had received a special report on June 7 from District & Sessions Judge (DSJ) Muhammad Abbas, wherein he said that on May 25 — the first day of his new charge as Sargodha ATC judge — a message was conveyed to him that some authority of the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) wanted to meet him in his chamber.

Upon refusing to meet the said authority, DSJ Abbas al-



leged that ever since then, he had been encountering various incidents, such as firing outside his ATC and questioning from family members, among others.

CJ Ahmad had reserved his verdict in the matter on June 13. The verdict was announced in a June 20 hearing. Following Justice Ahmad's elevation to the Supreme Court, Justice Shahid Karim is presiding over the case. In today's hearing, Justice Karim converted the suo moto notice into a writ petition. He said that he would appoint a prosecutor as well as a judicial assistant in this case. "If we find out who tried to meet the judge, we are ready to investigate him," the counsel for the federal government

said. "The court will issue a directive that the prime minister of Pakistan (Shehbaz Sharif) take responsibility with regards to ISI and IB." Justice Karim said, "If anything happens after that, we will directly ask the prime minister." The prime minister has to take responsibility, ISI and IB are subordinate to the prime minister, Justice Karim said. He said that direction would be issued to Punjab IGP that the decision to block the road be taken after consulting the judge, Justice Karim said, noting that the Punjab IGP should issue directions to all police officers in this regard. Justice Karim further said that all judges of ATC courts should have call recording apps on their phone.—RT/Agency

## Pakistan Considers Tit-for-Tat Response Following US Election Probe Demand

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani government is mulling a tit-for-tat response to the US House of Representatives resolution demanding an investigation into the February 8 elections.

"In response to [US Congress], we will also bring about a resolution. We must show our sovereignty, we must show our unity, we must show that we mean business. This [resolution] makes no sense," Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said while speaking on the floor of the National Assembly.

The US House of Representatives, earlier this week, in an overwhelming majority, voted to demand a "full and independent investigation of claims of interference or irregularities" in the polls.

The resolution HR 901 was passed by a massive 368 against seven votes on Tuesday, which makes 85% of the total American lawmakers in the legislature.

The move triggered a strong response from Islamabad, with the Foreign Office saying it "stems from an incomplete understanding of the political situation and electoral process in Pakistan".

The resolution said it was to express support for democracy and human rights



in Pakistan and requested the government to uphold democratic and electoral institutions, human rights, and the rule of law.

It also condemned "any effort to subvert the political, electoral, or judicial processes of Pakistan".

In his speech today, Dar maintained that the Pakistani parliament could also pass resolutions on matters related to other nations, but the South Asian country refrains from such things.

"I believe that the [US] should reciprocate mutual dignity and respect," Dar said, noting that a draft resolution has been prepared, which would be shared with the parliamentary leaders — from the treasury and opposition benches.

"We should come in unity with a clear resolution against the US resolution," the deputy prime minister said.

## Government Proposes 13 Amendments To Pension Scheme



ISLAMABAD: Thirteen amendments have been proposed by the federal government to the pension scheme to relieve the burden on the national exchequer.

According to sources, the first amendment proposes that government employees will receive a gross pension equal to seventy percent of their salary from two years before retirement.

The second amendment allows employees to retire willingly after twenty-five years of service. The third revision stipulates that those who opt for voluntary retirement at least three years before reaching the age of sixty will face a pension deduction of between five and twenty percent per annum.

The fourth amendment

## Naqvi Updates Chinese Counterpart On Progress Of Dasu Attack Probe

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi Thursday met his Chinese counterpart Qi Yanjun and briefed him about the progress on the investigation of the Dasu terror attack involving Chinese citizens in Pakistan. "Foolproof arrangements have been made for the security of Chinese citizens," said Naqvi, in a meeting with the Chinese minister at the office of China's mission to the United Nations in New York, United States.

The meeting between the two ministers comes days after Islamabad approved Operation Azm-e-Istehkam amid an increase in terror incidents as "a collective multidimensional operation and national vision of the entire state system" Naqvi, in a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zedong earlier this month, had also assured providing foolproof security to Chinese citizens working on different projects in Pakistan, reiterating that no one can create rifts between the two



countries. Following the briefing today, Yanjun expressed satisfaction over the ongoing probe of the case, affirming that Pakistani institutions handled the case in a diligent and professional manner.

On the other hand, the Chinese minister also extended an invitation to Naqvi to participate in the Global Security Forum in September this year, which the interior minister accepted. Minister Naqvi also invited his counterpart to visit Pakistan, reiterating the strong friendship between the two nations. "We are all proud of our country.—RT/Agency