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Petrol Hiked By Rs7.45 Per Litre

ISLAMABAD: ISLAMABAD: The federal government has jacked up the petrol price in the country by Rs7.45 per litre from Rs258.16 to Rs265.61 for the next fortnight in line with an "increasing trend in the international market".

The Finance Division officially notified the latest prices, which it said had been worked out by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra), based on the price variations in the international market.

As per the notification, the price of high-speed diesel (HSD) has also been increased by Rs9.56 to Rs277.45 per litre. The new fuel prices will come into effect from July 1.

"The prices of Petroleum products have seen an increasing trend in the international market during the last fortnight," the official notification read.



The changes in fuel prices come for the first time since the announcement of federal budget for fiscal year 2024-25 earlier this month on June 12. The Finance Division stated that there will be no change in the applicable taxes and duties, which will remain at the existing level, as had been notified by the government in the Budget FY25.

The government had increased the petroleum development levy (PDL) by Rs10 per litre — from Rs60 to Rs70 — in the

Aurangzeb 'Very Optimistic' About Unlocking IMF Deal After Screwing The Nation With Heavy Taxes

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said Sunday he was "very optimistic" about Pakistan securing a new International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout after President Asif Ali Zardari approved the tax-heavy budget for the next fiscal year beginning on July 1.

"The IMF programme is our assurance in terms of macro stability. We are taking it forward; it is inevitable. I'm very optimistic that we'll be able to take it through the finish line for an Extended Fund Programme which is going to be larger and longer in nature," the minister told reporters in Islamabad.

The cash-strapped federal government adopted a Rs18.9 trillion budget laced with tax-raising measures as it had sought to secure a new bailout from the IMF after almost defaulting last year.

In the budget, the government has increased the taxes on the already burdened salaried class, bought exporters into the normal tax regime, increased the petro-



leum levy to Rs70, and imposed new taxes on the real estate sectors, among others, to increase the tax collection.

Experts have said that while the financial blueprint is expected to help the struggling nation unlock a Fund deal, but also cautioned that it could lead to further inflation, which would draw public anger.

The finance minister, talking about the burden on the inflation-struck masses, said: "I completely understand the stress that people from different sectors feel about additional taxes; I completely empathise and sympathise, but we need to

work for it."

The finance minister said he was clear-headed and would ensure that the government works to lessen the burden on the common people and businesses in the coming days by curbing leakages and improving the management system.

In the budget, the government has increased the petroleum development levy (PDL) by Rs10 per litre — from Rs60 to Rs70 — worrying the public as the petrol prices are already high.

But the finance minister stressed that this was not the case and that the levy was not being imposed immedi-

ately, meaning that when petrol prices are revised tonight, the levy would remain the same.

"There are talks about the PDL. I want to be very clear the Rs70 limit that we've set, we're not going to impose it [right now]," Aurangzeb, a former banker, assured the journalists.

"This is a ceiling. In my first budget speech, I had set it at Rs80, which was later revised to Rs70 and it will not be imposed; it'll be kept as a headroom," the finance minister added.

Rs70 levy has also been approved for diesel, Rs50 per litre levy would also be imposed on light diesel oil and kerosene oil, while Rs70 per litre levy would be applicable on high-octane.

In a nation of over 240 million people and where most jobs are in the informal sector, only 5.2 million filed income tax returns in 2022.

To boost tax collection, the government among other measures, blocked mobile phone SIM cards and will now also restrict non-filers

from travelling abroad. While the budget has been criticised for not bringing in new sectors into the tax net, the finance minister defended the financial blueprint and said that new sectors would be taxed.

"I'm repeating myself. When Miftah [Islam] sb proposed taxing retailers in 2022, it should have been implemented. We cannot have any segment that is not contributing to society and the exchequer."

He also thanked 42,000 new retailers for registering themselves as of yesterday and they will be taxed from July. "There should be no confusion that we aren't roping in new sectors. The same goes for the real estate sector, previously, the demand side was taxed [..] and now the supply side's income will also be taxed."

He added that non-filers should not exist. "In this particular budget, we have taken it to the punitive level so as to make the non-filers realise that they [have to file their taxes]."—RT/Agency

Fawad Rules Out Imran Khan's Release Under Current PTI Leadership

ISLAMABAD: Amid reports of internal rifts within the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry has said there is "no chance" of the incarcerated party founder Imran Khan's release in the presence of the current PTI leadership.

"[Due to] lack of political strategy of current PTI leadership, all of us are suffering," said the former senior vice-president of the party, who parted with Khan following May 9 violent protests that saw attacks on public and military installations.

He also responded to the PTI leader's criticism that those who parted ways with Khan in the aftermath of the May 9 mayhem have now started speaking in his favour as the "tough time" for the embattled party has now come to an end.

"Tough time has not ended for the jailed former premier and other PTI leaders. Yasmin Rashid, Ejaz



Chaudhry and others are still behind bars and going through a difficult time," he said.

The former federal minister said: "Some people start their journey from Peshawar and return after staging a rally in Lahore." Continuing with his criticism of the PTI leadership, the former federal minister said Barister Gohar Ali Khan-led party's leaders only doing commentary on verdicts of different cases against jailed party leaders.

He was of the view that "eligible" politicians like Shah Mahmood Qureshi,

Pervaiz Elahi, and Asad Qaiser should lead the party. Fawad, who is also a lawyer, urged the top PTI leaders to stop "foolish talks" expecting the early release of the PTI founder as a result of the court battles. Interestingly, his statement came at a time when cracks emerged in the embattled PTI as 21 of its lawmakers, who are now part of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), reportedly hinted at forming a forward bloc over top leadership's inability to secure the release of party founder Imran Khan from jail.—RT/Agency

PTI Report Holds Marwat 'Responsible for Altercation' with Omar Ayub

ISLAMABAD: A recent report by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has blamed party leader Sher Afzal Marwat for the scuffle between Leader of the Opposition Omar Ayub and other workers, media reported Sunday.

The fight took place outside the judicial complex in Islamabad on Thursday when a district and sessions court turned down PTI founder Imran Khan and his spouse's pleas seeking suspension in their sentences in iddat case.

According to the sources, the report — which will be presented to the PTI founder on July 2 — has held Marwat responsible for the scuffle with Omar.

The report said that Marwat had desired to lead the party's protest rally in Khan's support, however, this led to an unpleasant situation, forcing Omar to leave the place in a hurry in utter disbelief.

Marwat has remained the centre of attention for the past few months due to his blunt remarks and differences with the party workers. Due to his outspoken comments, he was re-



ported to have been involved in an altercation with Omar Ayub.

The politician from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa responded to the show-cause notice and the political committee or the core committee has shown no indication of any further action against him.

Earlier this week, after Omar's resignation as PTI's secretary general, Marwat demanded Senator Shibli Faraz's resignation, saying the party will be freed from the qabza mafia.

In a bid to build a strong case, Marwat's statements against party leaders, issued on different occasions, have

Sheikh Rashid Receives High Gas Bill After Electric Shock



RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League chief and former federal minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed has been bothered by high utility bills.

He has now received gas bill worth Rs100,000. Earlier, he was sent Rs168,000 electricity bill. He showed both utility bills to the media.

Sheikh Rashid had a couple of days ago told media that he has no family; he did not use air-conditioner but the utility company sent him Rs168,000 in electricity bill. Due to high electricity bills, his tenants have vacated shops, he added.

Meanwhile, in his video message, Sheikh Rashid said he used to eat breakfast at a food cart, lunch is not cooked at home. The stove is lit for cooking dinner, this is the practice since I was taken

by my Islamic friend, he added.

He said families living in his vicinity got Rs6,000 to Rs8,000 gas bill while his bill was Rs100,000.

The former minister warned the leadership that revolution is being brewing in the country. Inflation has made life unbearable. The economy is in a shambles. They must realise that the time is ticking away.

Sheikh Rashid said time favours none. The robbers returned to get their [criminal] cases quashed. They have deprived the poor of their livelihood.

Now, the fight is not for form 45 or form 47; it has become a fight for survival. "I warn those at the helm of affairs to [open their eyes and] save the poor from dying," he concluded.—RT/Agency

President Zardari Signs Tax-Heavy Finance Bill Into Law

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday gave assent to the government's tax-heavy Finance Bill 2024 for the new fiscal year.

The government had presented the budget two weeks ago, drawing sharp criticism from opposition parties, especially the PTI, as well as coalition ally PPP.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb had moved the finance bill in parliament, which had been opened to seek amendments and debate by the ruling alliance led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and its opposition.

Opposition parties, mainly parliamentarians backed by currently incarcerated former premier Imran Khan, had rejected the budget, saying it would be highly inflationary.

Earlier this week, the PPP — which had initially boycotted the debate over the budget — decided that it would vote for the finance bill despite certain reservations.

On Friday, the National Assembly passed the budget with some amendments. The motion was preceded by fiery speeches from the opposition, who described the budget as unrealistic, anti-people, anti-industry, and anti-agriculture.



Today, President Zardari gave assent to the bill in accordance with Article 75 of the Constitution, the media wing of the President House said, adding that the bill would be applicable from July 1 (tomorrow).

Under Article 75 (1), the president has no power to reject or object to the finance bill, which is considered to be a money bill as per the Constitution.

The article reads "When a Bill is presented to the President for assent, the President shall, within [ten] days,—(a) assent to the Bill; or (b) in the case of a Bill other than a Money Bill, return the Bill to the Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) with a message requesting that the Bill or any specified provision thereof, be reconsidered and that, an amendment specified in the

message be considered". On Friday, the government had extended exemptions in specific sectors while announcing new tax measures in several areas to generate additional revenue in the coming fiscal year to meet the International Monetary Fund's criteria.

During the NA session, opposition lawmakers, particularly from the PTI, criticised the budget, asserting that it was now an open secret that the document was dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Leader of the Opposition Omar Ayub Khan had denounced the budget as "economic terrorism against the people." Pakistan is in talks with the IMF for a loan of \$6 billion to \$8bn.—RT/Agency

Shahid Khaqan Calls For Strengthening Democracy And Empowering Parliament

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that we couldn't accept the parliamentary system and democracy unfortunately He was addressing a seminar on Sunday. The former prime minister said that the institutions and constitution are not responsible for the failure of parliament but the individuals are responsible for it.

"We do legislation in the parliament without any debate or discussion," said Abbasi while adding that bills are bulldozed through parliament. The former prime minister was of the view that the right to speak has been snatched from the parliamentarians. A ministry is run by a bureaucrat but the minister is



held responsible in case of any failure, he added.

"We need to resolve all these issues in order to run democracy efficiently," said the former prime minister. Abbasi added that the provinces get share in the government through parliamentary democracy. It merits mention here that Abbasi is

all set to launch a new political party named 'Awam Pakistan' on July 6. Abbasi had been a confidant of PML-N President Nawaz Sharif and served as prime minister after he was disqualified by the Supreme Court over corruption charges from August 2017 to May 2018.—RT/Agency

Election Scheduled for 2029 Upon Completion Of Government's Tenure, Says Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Sunday said that the general election would only be held in 2029 upon completion of the constitutional tenure of the incumbent government.

While reacting to Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) chief Maulana Fazlur-Rahman's presser, he said the Parliament was an appropriate forum to do politics in the current circumstances. "Solution to all the problems in politics lies in negotiations and dialogue," the minister



added. Tarar termed Maulana a "seasoned" and "respected" politician, urging him to appreciate the government's economic policies that drove an increase in the foreign exchange reserves, and took the stock exchange to historic highest level. He lauded the government for strengthening the rupee and reducing trade deficit significantly.—RT/Agency

THE HEARTLAND



HYDERABAD: Prominent political and social leader of Sindh, Muhammad Mohsin Abbasi organized a lovely grand dinner which was nothing short of a culinary nirvana at Magis House in honor of dignitaries. The event was attended by a number of distinguished guests including Tariq Bajari, Haji Nisar Memon, prominent columnist and Advocate of the Sindh High Court Abdul Wahab Munshi, Sardar Faisal Kacheho, Raheel Rahi, Mir Ashan Talpur, Khizar Hayat Mangrio, Ross Mahtani and others.—RT

Shaheed Hosh Muhammad Sheedi Is A National Hero: Syed Zulfikar Ali Shah

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: Shaheed Hosh Muhammad Sheedi, a revered figure in Sindh's history, was celebrated as a national hero who will never be forgotten. This declaration was made by Syed Zulfikar Ali Shah, Minister of Culture Sindh, during a commemorative event attended by numerous dignitaries and community members.



"Shaheed Hosh Muhammad Sheedi is a national hero and he cannot be forgotten." He further assured the audience that the remaining development work on the martyr's shrine will be completed soon, reinforcing the government's commitment to preserving his memory. MPA Tanzeela Qambrani also spoke at the event, emphasizing the profound impact of Hosh Muhammad Sheedi's legacy on the identity of the Sheedi community. "Our identity is Shaheed Hosh Muhammad Sheedi," she declared, highlighting the deep-rooted significance of the martyr in the cultural and historical fabric of Sindh.

Mubarak Ali Sheedi, Chairman of the Hoshu Action Committee, along with other committee members, also addressed the audience, reiterating their dedication to honoring and preserving the legacy of Hosh Muhammad Sheedi. The event was a poignant reminder of the heroism and sacrifice of Shaheed Hosh Muhammad Sheedi, and the collective resolve to ensure his story continues to inspire future generations. The ceremony concluded with a renewed commitment to complete the development of the martyr's shrine, ensuring that his contributions remain a source of pride and inspiration for all.

Four Cops Laid To Rest In Kandhkot

By Aftab Bhatti

KANDHKOT: The somber atmosphere at the SSP office was palpable as funeral prayers were offered for four martyred police officers. The ceremony was attended by a large number of people, including the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Rangers officers, journalists, and citizens, all gathered to pay their respects to the fallen heroes.

The martyred officers, Ghulam Hussain Otho, Muhammad Hussain Gabol, Ata-ur-Rehman Lashari, and Talib Hussain Soomro, were honored with a salute by an alert squad, highlighting their dedication and service to the community.

The tragedy that claimed the lives of these officers occurred when the SSP squad met with an accident due to the breaking of a tire rod of the police patrol mobile. The untimely and devastating incident has left the police force and the community mourning the loss of

their brave officers. The heartfelt tribute at the funeral underscored the officers' commitment and bravery in their line of duty. The large turnout of mourners reflected the deep respect and gratitude felt by the community for the sacrifices made by these officers.

As the families and colleagues of the deceased grieve their loss, the incident also serves as a stark reminder of the risks faced by law enforcement officers in their efforts to maintain peace and order. The community's collective sorrow is accompanied by a call for improved safety measures to prevent such tragic accidents in the future. The four martyred officers were laid to rest with full honors, their legacy of courage and dedication etched in the hearts of those they served and protected. The Kandhkot community stands united in their memory, vowing to support the families left behind and to honor the sacrifice of these brave souls.

Sindh Minister Ali Hassan Zardari Orders Timely Completion Of Development Works

By Samad Ayaz

NAWABSHAH: Provincial Minister for Works, Services, and Prisons, Ali Hassan Zardari, chaired a crucial meeting at the DC office in Shaheed Benazirabad to review and expedite ongoing developmental projects across Sindh. Emphasizing the Pakistan People's Party's commitment to enhancing public infrastructure and welfare, Minister Zardari underscored the importance of completing projects on time to deliver essential services and facilities to the people.



During the meeting, Minister Ali Hassan Zardari directed officials from Works, Services, and the Sindh Endowment Fund Services to prioritize projects based on merit and ensure their timely execution. He stressed the government's stance on maintaining high standards of quality in all development initiatives, warning of stringent actions against any officials found negligent in their duties. He reiterated that funds allocated for these projects must be used judiciously, with no room for misappropriation. "Every developmental scheme must adhere to strict quality control measures," Minister Zardari emphasized, highlighting the need for effective oversight in the construction and maintenance of government buildings and public infrastructure.

President Of Anjuman Safina-e-Ahle Bait Reflects On Martyrdom Anniversary Of Hazrat Meesam Tamar

By Dildar Ali Samo

TANDO ADAM: On the occasion of the martyrdom anniversary of Hazrat Meesam Tamar, a devoted follower of Ameerul Momineen Hazrat Ali Ibn Abi Talib (A.S), President of Anjuman Safina-e-Ahle Bait expressed profound sentiments. Meesam Tamar, known for his unwavering loyalty and companionship, exemplifies the steadfast resolve of those who have faced adversity in the pursuit of truth and justice within the Islamic tradition.



where he would eventually meet his martyrdom.

"Meesam Tamar, also known as Abu Salim, was a rare gem freed from slavery by Ameerul Momineen, who prophesied his imminent martyrdom as a testament to his steadfast support for truth," President Anjuman Safina-e-Ahle Bait remarked. "He accepted his fate with courage, demonstrating profound sacrifice and obedience. The reflections on Meesam Tamar's life serve as a poignant reminder of the resilience and dedication shown by early Islamic figures in upholding principles of justice and righteousness. His legacy continues to inspire reverence and admiration among believers, underscoring the enduring values of sincerity and loyalty within the community of Hazrat Ali's followers.

Recalling Meesam Tamar's prophetic insight into his own fate, President Anjuman Safina-e-Ahle Bait recounted how Hazrat Ali (A.S) had foretold his future arrest and martyrdom. Despite knowing his fate, Meesam Tamar embraced his destiny with unwavering faith and devotion, often found praying at the palm tree and guidance under the patronage of Hazrat Ali (A.S), actively participating in his gatherings to seek knowledge and wisdom.

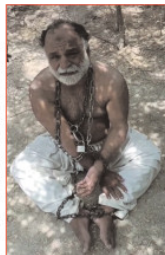
President Anjuman Safina-e-Ahle Bait highlighted the historical significance of individuals like Meesam Tamar, who stood against oppression and tyranny, ultimately sacrificing their lives for noble causes. Meesam Tamar, originally a date seller outside the Kufa Mosque, found spiritual enlightenment

-Two Rado watches and an iPhone also demanded as part of the ransom

Kidnappers Send Video Of Abducted Khoso Community Notable To His Family

By Khair Muhammad Golo

THUL: The distressing saga of a kidnapped Khoso community notable continues as the abductors have sent a video of the victim being tortured to his family, along with a list of ransom demands. Landlord Behram Khoso, who was abducted 20 days ago from the village of Pyaro Khoso, within the jurisdiction of RD-52 Police Station near Thul, has yet to be recovered.



tured by the kidnapers. They are demanding one crore rupees, two Rado watches, and an iPhone," Ayub Khoso said. The family is urgently appealing for help in recovering Behram Khoso and ensuring his safe return.

Despite the family's distress and the severity of the situation, the police have not yet been able to secure Khoso's release. The lack of progress has intensified the family's despair, as they anxiously await any development in the efforts to bring him home safely.

This incident has sparked widespread concern and calls for increased action from law enforcement authorities to combat kidnapping and ensure the safety and security of citizens. The Khoso family, along with the broader community, hopes for a swift and peaceful resolution to this traumatic ordeal.

The video, which has caused great anguish to Behram Khoso's family, shows him chained and subjected to torture by the kidnapers. In the footage, Khoso pleads with his family to meet the captors' demands to secure his release. The kidnapers are demanding a ransom of one crore rupees, two Rado watches, and an iPhone. They have also issued threats of severe consequences if their demands are not fulfilled.

FIR Registered In Murder Of GDA Leader Haji Khuda Bakhsh And His Guard

SANGHAR: Media reports on Sunday confirmed that six suspects have been nominated in the murder case of Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) leader Haji Khuda Bakhsh and his security guard. The incident occurred within the jurisdiction of Khai police station.

Bakhsh, along with his security guard, was tragically murdered yesterday. The names of the accused nominated in the FIR include Ali Hassan Mari, Faiz Mohammad, Gul Mohammad, Sobhat Mari, Sheroo Mari, and Kando Mari. Authorities informed that two of the accused were apprehended yesterday, with efforts underway

to locate the remaining four suspects.

The GDA leader and his guard were attacked while walking on his land, resulting in their untimely demise. A significant number of GDA and Hurr Jamaat supporters gathered at Khipro Civil Hospital upon the arrival of the bodies for medico-legal formalities.—RT

PPP Ladies Wing's Dr. Samina Solangi Lauds Services Of MNA Dr. Nafisa Shah

By Naz Solangi

KUMB: The central leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Dr. Nafisa Shah Jilani, has been praised for her dedication and honesty in political service. Dr. Samina Solangi, leader of the PPP Ladies Wing, expressed high regard for Dr. Nafisa Shah at a recent conference, highlighting her capability and commitment to all responsibilities assigned to her by the party.



Dr. Samina Solangi emphasized the nation's need for exceptional leaders like Dr. Nafisa Shah Jilani, who has consistently demonstrated her dedication, particularly during crises. "Whenever there is a flood in Sindh, she reaches the homes of the people during the ongoing rains and provides relief to them," Solangi stated, applauding Shah's hands-on approach in disaster relief efforts.

The PPP Ladies Wing leader advocated for Dr. Nafisa Shah to be entrusted with more significant responsibilities within the party, believing that her effective leadership and compassion would greatly benefit the people. "We demand that she be given important responsibilities so that she can serve the people," Solangi declared, underscoring the call for Dr. Nafisa Shah's increased role in the party's endeavors.

Dr. Nafisa Shah Jilani's proactive involvement and service during natural disasters have left a lasting impact on the communities she has helped, reinforcing her reputation as a committed and empathetic leader. The call for her to take on more prominent responsibilities reflects the trust and admiration she has earned within the party and among the people.

Tando Jam Residents Protest Against Prolonged Power Outages

By Ifran Khushk

TANDO JAM: Frustration boiled over in Tando Jam city and its surrounding areas as residents took to the streets to protest against severe and prolonged load shedding. The demonstrators blocked the road at Khisana Mori, voicing their anger and dissatisfaction with the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) for its failure to provide a stable power supply.

Angry residents accused WAPDA officials of incompetence and neglect, stating that their lives have been made miserable by the ongoing power crisis. "WAPDA officials have turned our lives into a nightmare. We appeal to the authorities and our elected representatives to take immediate notice and action," another protester urged.

The protest at Khisana Mori brought traffic to a standstill, as residents demanded a swift resolution to the power issues that have plagued them for far too long. The community's unified stand reflects their desperation and determination to see tangible improvements in their electricity supply.

This incident underscores the broader issues of infrastructure and governance in the region, prompting calls for urgent intervention and long-term solutions to prevent such crises in the future. The residents of Tando Jam and its surrounding areas hope their voices will be heard and that effective measures will be taken to restore normalcy and ensure a reliable power supply.

The severe power outages have disrupted daily life, making it nearly impossible for residents to perform basic tasks and meet essential needs. The lack of electricity has also affected local businesses, exacerbating the economic hardships

-Can you believe this?

16-Year-Old Boy Electrocuted By High Tension Electric Wire, Body Left Hanging For 20 Hours

By Mumtaz Ali

TANDO ADAM: In a heart-wrenching incident within the jurisdiction of Tando Adam's City police station, a young boy, Sultan, son of Ali Gul Shaikh, lost his life after being electrocuted by high tension electric wires in the village of Colonel Hanif. The tragic event occurred when the 16-year-old became entangled in the 11,000-volt wires that run above a mango orchard, leading to his immediate death.

Sultan's body has been hanging from the mango tree for over 20 hours, causing immense distress and anguish for his family and the local community. Despite being promptly informed, neither the police nor the Hyderabad Electric Supply

Company (HESCO) officials have taken action to retrieve the boy's body. Ali Gul Shaikh, the grieving father, spoke to the media amidst tears and profound sorrow. "My son went to offer Friday prayers and never came back. We informed the police and the respectable men of the village, but no one has helped us. For 20 hours, my son's body has been hanging in that tree, and no one has come to help us retrieve him," he lamented, his voice breaking with emotion.

The delay in response has sparked outrage among the villagers, who have gathered at the scene demanding immediate intervention. Community members have expressed their solidarity with the Shaikh family, condemning the authorities for their apparent negligence and lack of urgency. This incident has heightened severe safety concerns regarding high tension wires running through residential and agricultural areas. Villagers are calling for an immediate review and action to prevent such tragic accidents in the future.

As of the latest reports, Sultan's body remains suspended in the tree, with the community anxiously awaiting the authorities to fulfill their responsibilities. The prolonged ordeal has deepened the family's grief, leaving a scar on the village of Colonel Hanif and raising serious questions about the efficiency and empathy of the local authorities.

Preparations For Monsoon Rains Intensify In Matiari District

By Sajjad Ali Abbasi

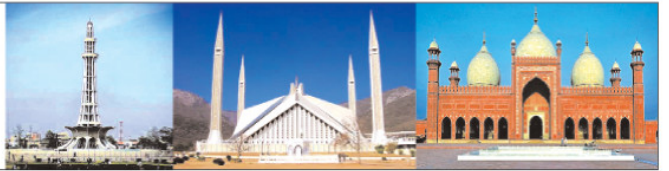
MATIARI: With the monsoon season looming, the Public Health Engineering Department and Local Government institutions in Matiari district have ramped up efforts to ensure readiness. Activities such as desilting, dewatering, cleanliness, and machinery repairs are being accelerated across the district to mitigate potential flooding and sanitation issues.

cently conducted an inspection of drainage disposals and dewatering stations in Talua Matiari. Shaikh stressed the critical need for thorough preparations in anticipation of heavy monsoon rainfall, emphasizing zero tolerance for any lapses in readiness.

Commending the ongoing progress, Shaikh highlighted the importance of ensuring the safety of sanitation workers involved in these hazardous tasks. He underscored the provision of safety kits to protect them from health risks associated with exposure to contaminated water. Executive Engineer Waheed Arbab reported significant advancements

in desilting, dewatering, and cleanliness efforts, noting that these critical tasks are nearing completion well ahead of the peak monsoon period. Skilled labor has been mobilized to efficiently clean and desilt drainage systems at various disposal sites across the district. The proactive measures taken by authorities aim to safeguard communities from potential flooding and health hazards during the monsoon season. With preparations progressing swiftly, Matiari district is gearing up to face the challenges posed by the upcoming weather conditions, ensuring resilience and safety for its residents.

NATIONAL



CTD Eliminates 124 Terrorists, Arrests 322 In KP During First Six Months

PESHAWAR: A total of 124 terrorists have been killed and 322 have been arrested in the first six months of the year 2024 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, media reported on Sunday.

The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) has released the details of operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province this year according to which a total of 1,433 operations were conducted and thwarted 55 terrorist attacks, 124 terrorists were killed while 322 were arrested.

The CTD report stated that Peshawar was saved



from a major attack by arresting two suicide bombers.

The commanders and associates of terrorists groups, identified as Mohsin Qadir, Betni Padakye, Tipu Gul, Zarar Group, Sunta, TTP Gandapur Group were killed during the operations.

Apart from this, 14 suspects involved in the smuggling of explosives were also arrested.

According to the CTD officials, the authorities also fixed bounty on the heads of 18 most wanted terrorists out of which eight of them were killed while 10 were arrested.—RT/Agency

Passenger Bus Catches Fire Near Toba Tek Singh

TOBA TEK SINGH: In a distressing event, a Vehari-bound passenger bus caught fire near Toba Tek Singh, media reported on Sunday.

According to details, Vehari-bound passenger bus from Islamabad caught fire near Toba Tek Singh, which the Motorway Police quickly extinguished.

46 passengers were safely evacuated from the fire-affected passenger bus.

Earlier this year, a passenger bus fell into gorge near Lasbela.

The ill-fated passenger coach was coming to Karachi from Quetta when it lost control due to over-speeding and fell into a gorge and caught fire.

Assistant commissioner Lasbela confirmed that 40 bodies were retrieved from the gorge. The bodies were moved to Lasbela Civil Hospital, while two injured have been shifted to Karachi.—RT/Agency

Maryam Emphasizes Robust Parliament As Essential For Safeguarding Human Rights

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has stated that parliament serves as the cornerstone of democracy, safeguarding the principles of justice and equality within society.

In her message marking the International Day of Parliamentarism, the chief minister paid tribute to the members of the national and provincial assemblies, underscoring the significance of renewing their commitment to uphold democratic principles.

The CM highlighted that the parliamentary system ensured transparency, accountability and effective representation of the people in governance.

She stressed the importance of every individual and organisation



playing their part in strengthening parliamentary institutions.

The CM highlighted that the parliamentary system ensured transparency, accountability and effective representation of the people in governance.

She stressed the importance of every individual and organisation

strength of democracy lied in the vitality of parliamentary institutions.

Maryam also announced the establishment of a parliamentary development unit in the Punjab Assembly, aimed at supporting assembly members in accordance with democratic principles.—RT/Agency

METRO KARACHI

Newport University Students Illuminate The Globe, Declares Minister Nasir Shah

KARACHI: Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, Provincial Minister for Energy, Development, and Planning Sindh, lauded the achievements of Newport University students who have been excelling both domestically and internationally, bringing pride to their country and nation.

Minister Nasir Shah attributed this success not only to the university and its teachers but also to the relentless efforts of parents who have supported and nurtured their children to become successful individuals.



have diligently pursued their studies under the guidance of their parents and teachers. He emphasized that the day was a culmination of students' and parents' dreams, underscoring the Sindh government's commitment to enhancing educational standards.

Minister Nasir Shah noted the positive development of having five universities in Sukkur and encouraged students to showcase their talents in their respective fields, thereby enhancing not only the reputation of their university but also bringing honor to their parents, teachers, and the nation.

He congratulated the award recipients and personally distributed certificates to the successful students at the event.—RT/Agency

Lahore Airport to Close For Three Hours Daily During Monsoon Rains For Safety



LAHORE: The Allama Iqbal International Airport will be closed daily for three hours during the monsoon season, from 5:00 am to 8:00 am for safety reasons, effective from July 10 to September 10. The CAA has notified domestic and international airlines about this precautionary measure to ensure the safety of passengers.—RT/Agency

Punjab Plans To Recruit 30,000 School Teachers

LAHORE: The Punjab government has decided to recruit 30,000 new school teachers, as students were facing shortage of teachers, media reported.

The Punjab Education Department official sources told APP on Sunday that in order to improve the quality of education and overcome shortage of teachers, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has recently given task to the Punjab education minister to recruit new teachers.

The recruitment process is being carried out after seven years, the sources said. The recruitment process will be carried out through the Punjab Public Service Commission (PPSC) in phases. Sources said the recruitment process was likely to be completed during the summer vacation 2024.—RT/Agency

20 Inmates Escape From Rawalakot Jail After Holding Cops Hostage

RAWALAKOT: Over 20 inmates escaped from Rawalakot District Jail after taking the police personnel hostage, media reported.

As per details, the police officials stated the prisoners opened fire on cops, injuring one inmate who was arrested later.

The escaped prisoners include dangerous criminals, according to police. A shootout exchange occurred between police and prisoners on the outskirts of the city, killing one inmate.

Most of the escaped prisoners were serving life sentences or facing death penalties. The police are working to track down the fugitives and restore order in the area.

The police have released a list of the escaped prisoners and a heavy contingent has been deployed in the area. A search operation is underway to recapture the fleeing inmates, SSP



Rawalakot said.

According to police, the deceased prisoner was arrested in a drug trafficking case. The district jail staff has been taken into custody, and an investigation is underway.

In a separate incident, several inmates escaped the prison in Balochistan's Chaman after overpowering guards when they were allowed out of cells for Friday prayers.

The incident unfolded as the inmates of barrack No. 4 were being led out for prayers. Seizing a moment of opportunity, the prisoners launched a sudden and coordinated attack on the prison guards, overpowering them and taking control of the situation.

Sources within the prison reported that many of the prisoners involved in serious criminal cases, including murder and other heinous crimes, had been housed in barrack No. 4.

The prison authorities revealed that one inmate was killed in the ensuing retaliatory gunfire by the police. Two others sustained injuries during the clash and are currently receiving medical treatment.—RT/Agency

Additional IG Police Launches State-Of-The-Art ANPR CCTV Command Centre In Korangi

KARACHI: Mr. Imran Yaqoob Minhas, Additional IG Police, lauded the Community Policing Karachi (CPK) for its pivotal role as a communication and service conduit between law enforcement agencies and civil society. He made these remarks during the inauguration of the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Cameras Command & Control Centre at the Korangi Industrial Area Police Station.



The ceremony, jointly inaugurated by Murad Ali Soni, Chief CPK, Aamir Chottani, Deputy Chief, Zeeshan Habib, Chief DHA, and the CPK team overseeing the ANPR installation, marked a significant step towards enhancing surveillance capabilities in the area. Additional IG Minhas underscored the importance of such technological advancements in combating illegal activities and apprehending criminals.

Guests of honor included CAPT (R) Ghulam Asfar Mehasar, DIG East, Touheed Rehman Memon, SSP Korangi, Zahid Hameed, Chief CPK Korangi, and other dignitaries from CPK Korangi, who were present at the event.

Additional IG Minhas presented mementos to Murad Ali Soni in recognition of CPK's efforts.

The ANPR CCTV Command Centre is expected to bolster security measures in Korangi Industrial Area, aligning with efforts to ensure public safety and maintain law and order in Karachi.—RT/Agency

Sardar Manzoor Ahmed Khan Kakar Strongly Condemns Police Raids At Bhootani House

KARACHI: President of All Kakar Tribes' Federation and Secretary General of Balochistan Youth Front, Sardar Manzoor Ahmed Khan Kakar while talking to the media has condemned the police raids in the Bhootani House. He added that Sardar Saleh Bhootani and Aslam Bhootani are very respectable citizens and they have always played role for maintenance of peace and provision of rights to the people. He added that the all Kakar tribes stand with Sardar Saleh Bhootani and Aslam Bhootani.—RT/Agency



Pakistani Researchers Win Prestigious UK Award For Outstanding Team Impact

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani researchers have been honored with a prestigious UK Award for their exceptional team impact. The international project, supported by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) through the MRC and spearheaded by Durham University, UK, has united leading scientists from the UK, Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina, and Pakistan in combating protozoan Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) such as leishmaniasis and Chagas disease.

The award recognizes the team's significant contributions but also brings pride to Pakistan's academic and scientific communities.



play leadership of Prof. Iqbal Choudhary. This achievement not only acknowledges the team's significant contributions but also brings pride to Pakistan's academic and scientific communities.

The academic fraternity of Pakistan has extended hearty congratulations to Prof. Dr. Iqbal Choudhary and his team for this prestigious accolade, affirming their pivotal role in global medical research.—RT/Agency

ANF Stops Major Drug Smuggling Attempt In Karachi

KARACHI: The Anti Narcotic Force (ANF) on Sunday conducted an operation and thwarted an international drugs smuggling attempt from Karachi to Qatar, media reported.



As per the ANF spokesperson, a container of potatoes bound for Ras Al Khair, Qatar was intercepted on a tip-off while carrying on an operation at the Karachi Gateway Terminal by the Port Control Unit (PCU).

Over the inspection of the container, the PCU officials found a huge amount of ICE [methamphetamine] drugs cleverly concealed inside the potatoes.

As per the initial investigation the cargo container was loaded from a warehouse in Dipalpur city of Punjab, meanwhile, the authorities have started an investigation into the matter to identify and arrest those responsible in the drug smuggling.—RT/Agency

Two TTP Facilitators Arrested In Dramatic Karachi Raid



KARACHI: Two facilitators of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) were arrested in Sohrah Goth area of Karachi.

According to the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), the arrested suspects, identified as Hasan Gul Mehsud and Bashir Ahmed, had been listed in the fourth schedule by the Sindh government for aiding terrorists.

A significant amount of money intended for supporting terrorist activities was recovered from the suspects. Two 9mm pistols were also seized during the operation.

The CTD spokesperson said that the suspects were operating an illegal truck stand in Gulzar Hijri area, adding that profits from this operation were used by the TTP to financially support its operatives within Pakistan.

Cases related to terror-funding and possession of illegal arms had been filed against the suspects at the CTD police station.—RT/Agency

First Early Childhood Education Centre Ready For Inauguration

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training on Sunday announced that the first Early Childhood Education Centre is complete and ready for inauguration by the Education Minister on Tuesday.

The spokesman of the Ministry said that this milestone marked a significant step forward in the Ministry's efforts to revolutionize early childhood education in Pakistan.

The Centre, designed to provide a nurturing and stimulating environment for young children, sets a



new standard for early schools would be ready by childhood education in the August 1st, as part of its comprehensive plan to expand early childhood education in Pakistan.

The spokesman added that it was pleased to announce that 100 more

EDITORIAL

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

Monday, July 01, 2024



Free and fair elections are the only way forward

Maulana Fazlur Rehman's call for new general elections in Pakistan is emerging as a crucial proposition in addressing the multifaceted challenges plaguing the nation. The current government, born from the contentious February 8 elections, remains mired in controversy and doubt. The credibility of these elections has been questioned domestically and internationally, as highlighted by the recent U.S. House of Representatives resolution urging Pakistan to uphold democratic institutions and human rights.

The economic instability gripping Pakistan is a direct consequence of the ongoing political turmoil. Investors, both local and international, are hesitant to commit resources in an environment of uncertainty. Maulana Fazlur Rehman's insistence on transparent

elections is a pragmatic step towards restoring faith in Pakistan's governance. Political stability, achieved through legitimate and interference-free elections, is



indispensable for economic recovery. A government with a clear mandate can make decisive policy changes, attract foreign investment, and implement reforms needed to stabilize the economy. Furthermore, the legitimacy of the February 8 elections is further undermined by the growing internal dissent within the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the lack of a unified front. The inability of the PTI to form a ne-

gotiating team underscores the paralysis affecting the current leadership. Maulana Fazlur Rehman's stance, supported by the JUI-F and echoed by significant segments of the population, reflects a broader demand for genuine representation and accountability.

The call for new elections is not merely a political maneuver but a necessary step towards restoring democratic integrity and fostering national unity. By addressing the electoral grievances and ensuring a transparent voting process, Pakistan can pave the way for a stable government capable of tackling economic challenges, restoring investor confidence, and ultimately, securing a prosperous future for its citizens. The urgency for free and fair elections cannot be overstated; it is the foundation upon which Pakistan's stability and progress hinge.

GLOBAL WATCH

-Can you believe this?

Special Education Teacher In US Charged With Sexually Assaulting Minor Student

NEW JERSEY: A special education teacher at an intermediate school in New Jersey was arrested for an alleged sexual relationship with a student, according to authorities. 43-year-old Allison Havemann-Niedrach at Freehold Intermediate School was charged with first-degree aggravated sexual assault and endangering the welfare of a child, Monmouth County Prosecutor Raymond S. Santiago announced.



According to the New York Post, she was arrested earlier this week after an investigation revealed that she allegedly began sexually abusing her student earlier this year. However, authorities did not say how the conduct came to light or how many times she had assaulted the student. The age of the alleged victim has also not been revealed, but grades six through eight attend Freehold Intermediate School. She is currently being held at the Monmouth County jail in Freehold Township, pending a first appearance and detention hearing. A hearing will be conducted to determine whether she will continue to be detained while awaiting trial.

public to provide more information about her activities. "Anyone with information about Havemann-Niedrach's activities is being urged to contact MCPO Detective Dawn Correia at 800-533-7443," the release read.

As per her LinkedIn profile, Havemann-Niedrach has been a special education teacher at Freehold Intermediate School since March 2022. She has been a teacher or a substitute teacher at several schools dating back to 2008, according to her profile.

The teacher describes herself as: "Passionate, results-driven, and sincere educator. Poised and competent and thrives in performance-driven environments. Demonstrated history of a 'do what it takes' work ethic and truly differentiated in-

40th convention of SANA held in Canada



WASHINGTON DC: 40th three-day annual convention of the Sindh Association of North America (SANA) concluded in Canada on Sunday. The convention had begun on the 28th June under the supervision of the organizing committee members Zahid Malik, Noman Shaikh and Atta Mallah. General Secretary of SANA, Mushtaq Rajpar said that different sessions were held during the three-day convention in which the speakers from Sindh Pakistan, US and Canada addressed the gatherings. On the occasion, Imam Shaikh, Prof Nadeem Jamali, Hamid Mir, Jami Chandio, Prof Subhash Bijlani, SANA President Dr Maqbool Halepoto addressed the sessions.

-Everyone knows Sleepy Joe is toast in November after his senior moment in the debate

Democrats Rally Behind Biden After Shaky Debate Performance With Trump



Washington: Democratic leaders rallied Sunday behind US President Joe Biden following his poor debate performance last week, as the White House denied a report he was meeting with family to assess his candidacy.

No major party figures have broken ranks to call for Biden to step down, with prominent Democrats including past presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton voicing full-throated support amid a torrent of doubts from everyday Americans -- and even a call from the New York Times editorial board to move aside.

The wave of party backing follows the 81-year-old's stumbling performance Thursday in the debate against Republican candidate Donald Trump, in which Biden often hesitated, tripped over words and lost his train of thought, highlighting concerns about his age.

"It's not about performance in terms of a debate, it's about performance in a presidency," Representative Nancy Pelosi, the former House speaker, told CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday.

THE HEARTLAND

Kidnappers Kill One Boy, Demand Rs 1 Crore For Other's Release In Thul

By Khair Muhammad Golo



THUL: In a chilling turn of events, two young boys abducted from Fateh Muhammad Banglani village, within the jurisdiction of B-Section police station, have faced a grim fate. The kidnappers have claimed to have killed one of the boys and are demanding a ransom of one crore rupees for the release of the other.

Two weeks ago, Qadir and Nadir Banglani went missing while returning to their village from Thul. The families of the boys have since been living in a state of anguish and uncertainty. Recently, the kidnappers contacted the families, delivering the harrowing news that one of the boys had been killed. They demanded a ransom of one crore rupees for the safe return of the other boy.

The families of the abducted boys confirmed receiving the devastating phone call. "We have been

informed that one of our boys has been murdered, and the kidnappers are demanding a ransom of one crore rupees for the release of the other," a family member stated, overwhelmed with grief and fear.

The brutal nature of this crime has sent shockwaves through the community, raising urgent calls for action from law enforcement to apprehend the culprits and rescue the surviving boy. The local police are under increasing pressure to swiftly respond and ensure the safety of the remaining captive while bringing the perpetrators to justice. This tragic incident underscores the dire security situation in the region, prompting appeals for enhanced measures to protect citizens from such heinous acts. The families of Qadir and Nadir Banglani, along with the entire community, are left in a state of mourning and desperation, hoping for a resolution to this traumatic ordeal.

2 Killed, 2 Injured In Fatal Pir Jo Goth Road Mishap

By Abdul Qudoos Khilji

PIR JO GOTH: A tragic accident near Pir Jo Goth resulted in the deaths of two individuals and left two others seriously injured. The collision occurred between a tractor trolley and a motorcycle near the Gul Hassan Shah police post. The victims of this devastating mishap include 55-year-old Ghulam Shabbir Khakhrani and a 5-year-old child, Soobedar Khakhrani, both of whom died on the spot. The accident also left Sanwal Khakhrani and

Naseer Khakhrani critically injured. Upon receiving the distressing news, the Pir Jo Goth police, along with the family members, promptly arrived at the scene. The deceased and the injured were immediately transferred to Pir Jo Goth Hospital. Due to the severity of their injuries, Sanwal and Naseer Khakhrani were subsequently moved to Khairpur Hospital, where they remain in critical condition.

The incident has caused significant distress and uproar within the victims' home. Reports indicate that the Khakhrani family had been visiting relatives in Shahpur and were on their way back to their village when the fatal accident occurred. The tragic collision has underscored the urgent need for improved road safety measures in the area to prevent such heart-wrenching incidents in the future. The community mourns the loss of Ghulam Shabbir and young Soobedar, while anxiously hoping for the recovery of the injured family members.

Tragic Accident Claims Four Policemen's Lives In Sindh

KANDHKOT: A tragic incident unfolded in Kandhkot city of Sindh as four policemen lost their lives and three sustained injuries when their police mobile patrolling vehicle overturned, according to media reports on Sunday. Reports indicate that

the police mobile overturned on the Indus Highway near Kandhkot after its tire broke during patrol duty. Rescue officials swiftly responded to the accident, confirming the unfortunate deaths of four policemen while three others sustained injuries. The bodies of the deceased were transported to the Civil Hospital Kandhkot by rescue teams. SSP Kashmir more stated in a press release that after funeral prayers, the bodies of the policemen were respectfully sent to their respective native villages -- RT

"Hostile State Actors": UK Warns Of Russian Interference In General Election

London: Britain's deputy prime minister warned Sunday that the country's upcoming general election faces threats from hostile actors such as Russia seeking to influence the UK's democratic process. The country will go to the polls on Thursday, in an election expected to oust the governing right-wing Conservatives and put the opposition Labour party in

power. His comments came after the Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported that it had uncovered five Facebook pages spreading the same pro-Kremlin talking points. Some of them encouraged support for the hard-right Reform UK party led by Brexitite Nigel Farage -- a big challenger to the ruling Conservatives in Thursday's vote. "There is a threat in all elections, and indeed we see it in this election from hostile state actors seeking to influence the outcome of the election campaign," Oliver Dowden told Sky News. "Russia is a prime example of this, and this is a classic example from the Russian playbook," he added, noting however that the examples were "relatively typical, low-level stuff" -- Agency

String of Nigeria suicide attacks kill at least 18

At least 18 people were killed and 19 seriously wounded in suicide attacks targeting a wedding, a hospital and a funeral in northeastern Nigeria on Saturday, authorities said.



The region has been scarred by more than a decade of violence by the militant group Boko Haram, which did not immediately claim responsibility for the string of attacks.

In one of three blasts on Saturday in the town of Gwoza, a woman with a baby strapped to her back detonated explosives in the middle of a wedding ceremony, according to a state police spokesman.

"At about 3:45pm (2:45pm GMT) a woman carrying a baby on her back detonated an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) she had on her at a crowded motor park," Borno State police spokesman Nahum Kenneth Daso said.

Women suicide bombers also targeted a hospital in the same town, which lies across

the border from Cameroon. Another attack was later carried out at the funeral for victims of the wedding blast, authorities said.

At least 18 people were killed and 42 others injured in the spate of attacks, according to the Borno State Emergency Management Agency (Sema).

"So far, 18 deaths comprising children, men, females and pregnant women" have been reported, agency head Barkindo Saidu said in a report seen by AFP.

Nineteen "seriously injured" people were taken to the regional capital Maiduguri, while

23 others were awaiting evacuation, Saidu said in the report.

A member of a militia assisting the military in Gwoza said two colleagues and a soldier were also killed in a separate attack on a security post, though authorities did not immediately confirm this toll.

Although Boko Haram has lost ground in recent years, militants continue to attack rural communities in Nigeria on a regular basis. Over the course of the insurgency, Boko Haram has repeatedly deployed young women and girls to carry out suicide attacks. -- Agency

SPORTS



Ronaldo's ex-teammate defends his controversial reaction to substitution



Cristiano Ronaldo's ex-Manchester United teammate Wes Brown came to his defence after he gave a controversial reaction to his substitution in the 66th minute of Portugal's Euro 2024 qualifier against Georgia.

Suryakumar's match-winning catch stirs controversy after T20 World Cup victory

BARBADOS: After India were crowned champions at the T20 World Cup 2024 with a seven-run victory over South Africa, the last-over catch by their player Suryakumar Yadav sparked a controversy.



The 33-year-old cricketer helped his side seal the victory at the Kensington Oval, Barbados, on Saturday night as he took a stunning catch in the final over, dismissing David Miller, when the Proteas needed 16 runs to win.

took the match-winning catch. As per the ICC's playing conditions, the cushion is considered the boundary and not the white line which can be seen in the pictures. Section 19.3 states: 'If a solid object used to mark the boundary is disturbed for any reason, then the boundary shall be considered to be in its original position.'

James Anderson included as England name 14-man squad for first Two tests against West Indies



England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) announced a 14-man squad for the first two Tests against West Indies with the first Test starting on July 10 at Lord's Cricket Ground.

Pakistan name squad for ACC Women's T20 Asia Cup



KARACHI: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Sunday announced a 14-member squad under the leadership of Nida Dar for the ACC Women's T20 Asia Cup, which will be held in Dambulla, Sri Lanka, from 19 to 28 July.

After Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, Ravindra Jadeja also quits T20I

BARBADOS: Indian all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja joined star batters Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in stepping down from the T20 Internationals a day after Men in Blue defeated South Africa to win coveted title in the shortest format.



player had featured in any T20Is following India's semi-final defeat in the 2022 T20 World Cup, and they only resumed playing T20Is in January this year, with their focus on the 2024 T20 World Cup.

Mohammad Ali added to Pakistan Shaheens squad for Darwin tour

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Sunday added Test fast bowler Mohammad Ali to the Pakistan Shaheens' squad for the upcoming tour to Darwin under the supervision of red-ball coach Jason Gillespie.



Bangladesh 'A', which finishes on 29 July, to assume responsibilities as the national side's head coach and commence preparations for the two-Test series against Bangladesh.

Germany beats Denmark 2-0 to secure Euro 2024 quarterfinal spot



DORTMUND: The UEFA EURO 2024 Round of 16 match between Germany and Denmark resumed after a suspension due to heavy rain at Signal Iduna Park in Dortmund.

ENTERTAINMENT



America's sweetheart Taylor Swift shares surprising story behind hit album 'Folklore'

Taylor Swift delighted fans during her Eras Tour stop in Dublin on Saturday. During the second night of her Dublin shows, Swift revealed the inspiration behind 2020 album Folklore.

Jennifer Lopez fumes over villain label amid pending divorce

Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez's marriage is reportedly at its end, and they are both equally devastated, while the latter is said to be frustrated over being called a 'difficult one' in the union.

Face of the Day section featuring a photo of a young man and text: Name: Zayan, Location: Karachi, About me: Strike a pose if you love modeling like me!

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

REGIONAL TIMES

NATIONAL

Six Dead, 25 Injured As Heavy Rains Pummel Balochistan

QUETTA: The death toll due to heavy rains which have been battering Balochistan for the last five days has risen to six leaving 25 others wounded in various incidents across the province, Geo News reported on Sunday.



The N-70 highway which connects the province to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been closed off for traffic, said the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA).

dispatched for rescue and relief operations regarding the stranded travellers.

The PDMA further revealed that a large number of vehicles are stranded at Dhana Sar due to landsliding due to heavy rains in eastern Balochistan's Koh-e-Suleiman mountain range.

The downpour comes as several areas across the country namely Islamabad, Murree, Guliat, Gujranwala, Narowal, Sialkot, Balakot, Manshehra, Abbottabad and Swat are likely to witness rains today as per the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD).

Traffic from Peshawar, Swat, Islamabad and Pindi have been instructed to stop at Dera Ismail Khan the PMD said, adding that the Zhoj-DI Khan Road has been blocked at Dhana Sar due to rains in Zhoj and Sherani.

Moreover, several areas of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, KP along with Balochistan's Khuzdar, Awaran and Lasbela are likely to witness downpour as well.

Meanwhile, the administration at Zhoj and Qilla Saifullah headquarters have been directed to stop the flow of traffic.

Earlier this week, the Met Office had said that moist currents from the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal are penetrating southern and eastern parts of the country with thundershowers with gusty winds are making their way in parts of Sindh and other provinces.

Furthermore, the PDMA has said that teams have been

This is not the first time in 2024 that Balochistan has reported heavy rains resulting in loss of life and landsliding as April earlier this year, a rain and flood emergency was declared by the provincial government due to continuous heavy rains which battered different districts of Balochistan, killing and injuring several people.

Prior to that, the province's port city Gwadar was battered by torrential rains in March prompting Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to announce a relief package during his visit to the inundated city where more than 40 people were killed in various incidents due to heavy rains.—RT/Agency

REGIONAL TIMES

GLOBAL WATCH



Japan to unveil new banknotes with advanced holographic features



ANKARA: Japan will start issuing new banknotes with the first-ever use of cutting-edge holographic technology.

Holographic portraits of historical figures appear to rotate in 3D on the bills, serving as an anti-counterfeit measure, Tokyo-based Kyodo News reported on Sunday.

In the first design change in 20 years, the 10,000-yen, 5,000-yen, and 1,000-yen bills will have larger face value numbers printed on them than the current versions for greater visibility.

Tactile marks for the visually impaired will also make them recognizable to touch.

Eiichi Shibusawa

Hamas leader, Turkey's intelligence chief discuss Gaza truce talks

ISTANBUL: The head of the Turkish Intelligence Organization Ibrahim Kalin on Sunday met with Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the Hamas Political Bureau, the state-run TRT broadcaster reported.



people, according to the report.

They discussed the latest status of the ceasefire negotiations, the necessary measures to secure a lasting ceasefire, hostage exchange, and the delivery of humanitarian aid, the broadcaster reported.

Israel has been carrying out a massive offensive in the Gaza Strip in retaliation for a Hamas rampage on Oct. 7, 2023, during which about 1,200 people were killed and about 250 were taken hostage.

Kalin expressed his condolences for the deaths of Haniyeh's sister, who was killed in a recent Israeli attack, and the Palestinian people killed in the ongoing offensive, saying that

Turkiye will continue to stand by the Palestinian

The Israeli assault caused a severe humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian enclave and killed more than 37,700 people, according to the health authorities in Gaza.—Agency

1 Dead, Baby Among 9 Injured In Ukraine Post Office Bombing

Kharkiv: One person was killed and nine others including a baby were injured Sunday in a strike on a post office in Ukraine's second city Kharkiv, local authorities said.



The head of Kharkiv's regional administration, Oleg Syneubov, said an eight-month-old baby was among those injured.

On Saturday, seven people were also killed and nearly 40 injured in a Russian strike on Vilniusk, close to the regional hub of Zaporizhzhia.—Agency

"A man, a post office employee, was killed," he said on Telegram.

The city of Kharkiv has been regularly targeted by Russian troops, who launched a major ground offensive in the region on May 10.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said the

offensive in Ukraine's northeast was intended to create a "buffer zone" to protect Russia's border from Belgorod region from shelling.

5 Sri Lankan Fishermen Consume Contents Found In Bottle Floating In Sea, Die

Colombo: Five Sri Lankan fishermen who had consumed the contents in a bottle floating in the sea on Saturday had died by Sunday afternoon, Navy Spokesman Captain Gayan Wickramasuriya said.

The navy spokesman said the victims are a part of a six-man crew that sailed from the Tangalle Fisheries Harbour, reported Xinhua news agency.

They found the bottle around 320 nautical miles off the coast and had consumed its contents believed to be alcohol, he said.

Wickramasuriya said one survivor is in critical condition and currently receiving emergency treatment.—Agency

Pakistan Seeks Qatar's Permission To Resell Excess LNG

ISLAMABAD: The government will approach Qatar seeking the Gulf state's permission to resell the liquefied natural gas (LNG) imported from Doha in the spot market in case there's low domestic demand, a senior official from the Ministry of Energy told media.



The revelation comes in light of the long-term LNG supply contract signed between Islamabad and Doha back in 2016. The price revision under the contract is due in February 2026.

Under the agreement, Pakistan State Oil (PSO) is obligated to take supplies regardless of domestic demand, causing pipeline issues for Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited (SNGPL) when the utility fails to consume the gas.

Officials have said that Pakistan is preparing to approach Qatar through diplomatic channels, seeking either to cancel shipments or sell them on the spot market

if domestic demand for LNG falls short.

The disclosure was made during a public hearing held on Friday by the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) regarding a petition by power distribution companies seeking permission to collect an additional Rs3.41 per unit from consumers due to fuel adjustments for May 2024.

During the hearing, power distribution companies noted that the actual

fuel rate was Rs9.12 per unit, compared to a reference price of Rs5.7 per unit, resulting in an increase of Rs3.41 per unit. They also reported a 5% drop in electricity consumption due to weather conditions, with total demand in May 2024 being only 17,000 megawatts. More electricity was produced using LNG rather than coal, with the cost of LNG-based electricity standing at Rs24.7 per unit.—RT/Agency

"Swarm" Of Ukrainian Drones Attack Russian Steel Mill In Overnight Raid



Moscow: A "swarm" of Ukrainian drones targeted Russian steelmaker Novolipetsk Steel's facility in a raid in the early hours of Sunday, but it sustained no serious damage, a company spokesperson said.

The attack achieved no results other than causing extra welding work, the spokesperson said. Igor Artamonov, the governor of the Lipetsk region in western Russia where the steel mill is located, said in a separate statement that nine drones had been downed over the steel mill.

Kyiv does not officially confirm or deny such attacks, but says the facilities being hit are supporting Russia's war in Ukraine and are thus legitimate military targets.

REGIONAL TIMES

MONEY

Pakistan Railways Smashes Revenue Records In FY 2023-24

LAHORE: Pakistan Railways has reached a record high in revenue, with the organization reporting earnings of Rs 88 billion at the end of the financial year 2023-24, media reported on Sunday.



During the last year, the revenue of Pakistan Railways increased to more than Rs 88 billion, up from the previous Rs 63 billion, marking a 40 percent increase in revenue compared to the last financial year.

The department earned Rs 47 billion from passenger trains, Rs 28 billion from goods vehicles, and more than Rs 13 billion from land and other sources.

Such revenue has never been recorded in the history of Pakistan Railways. Initially, the government set a revenue target of

CEO Railways Aamir Baloch credited this achievement to the tireless work of the employees and expressed determination to increase the income to Rs 1 trillion next financial year.—RT/Agency

SOUTHERN PUNJAB

Mithal Saen Bukhari Calls For Construction Of 25 Dams By 2035 To Safeguard Pakistan From Drought

By M Siddique



BAHAWALPUR: By building Kalabagh and other dams, Pakistan can not only be saved from becoming barren but also help in preventing water worth over 25 billion rupees from flowing into the sea. If at least 25 dams are not constructed for water storage in the coming times, the country will face a severe water crisis by 2035, and the responsibility will lie on the anti-dam rulers. The nation needs clean drinking water. These thoughts were expressed by

water issues. Our neighboring country is violating the Indus Water Treaty by building dam after dam. Syed Faiz Mustafa Bukhari said that the elected government should play its role and immediately construct Kalabagh Dam and other dams to counter Indian water aggression and formulate a strategy to save Pakistan from becoming barren in the future. This would also protect the country from floods, which cause billions of rupees in losses and take many precious lives every year.

Implementing innovative teaching techniques, such as real-world problem scenarios, can foster a collaborative learning environment. These approaches help students grasp the nuances of complex issues through diverse group discussions, ultimately improving their problem-solving abilities and advancing their learning through active engagement.



By Nisar Banbhan

Schools are the bedrock of our society, playing a crucial role in shaping the lives of students and fostering their educational development. To create a more positive and effective learning environment for students and their parents, it is essential to focus on several key areas: promoting active learning, building trust, encouraging open communication, fostering respect, and creating a supportive atmosphere. One of the most fundamental ways to improve schools is by promoting active learning practices. Keeping students engaged is vital for their success. Encouraging interaction, active participation in various activities, and project-based learning not only deepens students' understanding of subjects but also enhances their critical thinking and problem-solving

skills. Implementing innovative teaching techniques, such as real-world problem scenarios, can foster a collaborative learning environment. These approaches help students grasp the nuances of complex issues through diverse group discussions, ultimately improving their problem-solving abilities and advancing their learning through active engagement. Creating a supportive school environment that nurtures students' self-confidence and self-esteem is vital to their overall development. Recognizing students' achievements and talents in academics, sports, arts, and extracurricular activities through organized programs can motivate and encourage them. Presenting certificates in front of their parents can have a significant positive impact on students' personalities. Additionally, encouraging student participation in public and cultural events and various debates will help build confidence, develop expressive skills, and create a sense of achievement. Effective communication is the foundation of a positive and friendly school environment. Schools should prioritize open and free channels of communication between teachers, students, and par-

ents. Often, school administrations either fail to address important issues clearly with parents or do so in a manner that undermines parents' confidence, negatively impacting students' interest and performance in school. Facilitating dialogue through regular parent-teacher meetings, correspondence, and online platforms allows parents to stay informed about their child's academic progress, challenges, and opportunities. Furthermore, schools can promote a sense of responsibility, duty, and inclusion among students by encouraging them to express their opinions, concerns, and sug-

gestions to the administration through student councils or forums. The school environment significantly affects the learning experience. Schools should strive to create a welcoming and stimulating environment that facilitates learning and creativity. This can be achieved by providing spacious, bright, and airy rooms with flexible furniture, access to useful books in the library, and resources catering to different learning styles. Additionally, attention to cleanliness, safety, and maintaining comfort, such as providing clean drinking water and necessary sports equipment, is crucial for students' overall well-being. Parental involvement in school activities and decision-making processes can significantly benefit students. Schools can organize workshops, parent training programs, and volunteer opportunities to actively involve parents in their children's education. These initiatives foster a sense of partnership between parents and teachers, ultimately benefiting students. According to research, parental participation in school activities has a very positive effect on students' academic performance and personality development. In conclusion, schools play an indispensable role in shaping the future of our society. By focusing on active learning, fostering a supportive environment, promoting effective communication, and encouraging parental involvement, we can create a more positive and enriching experience for students. These efforts will not only enhance their academic performance but also contribute to their overall personal development, preparing them for a successful future.

Transforming the School Experience: Paving the Way to a Brighter Future for Students

METRO KARACHI



KARACHI: President PTI Sindh Haleem Adil Shaikh is addressing a press conference at Insaaf House.—RT

PPDA Exposes Truth Behind Hasan Shah And Associates



KARACHI: The Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) has categorically dissociated itself from Hasan Shah and four other individuals, namely Khawaja Atif, Zaheer Paracha, Humayun Khan, and Nauman Butt. PPDA Chairman Abdul Sami Khan addressed concerns during a meeting, clarifying that Hasan Shah falsely claims affiliation as a focal person for the association, a role he does not hold. Several newspapers have erroneously published statements attrib-

uted to him in this capacity. Abdul Sami Khan emphasized that neither Hasan Shah nor his associates have any official connection with the PPDA, nor are they authorized representatives or members of the association. He stated unequivocally that their actions and statements do not reflect the PPDA's official stance. Present at the meeting were Malik Khuda Bakhs, Tariq Hasan, Anwar Kamal, and other members. Chairman Abdul Sami Khan reaffirmed that only individuals

authorized by him should be recognized as legitimate representatives of the PPDA. He cautioned the public against engaging with Hasan Shah and his associates in any dealings purportedly involving the PPDA, warning that such actions carry inherent risks and liabilities. The PPDA, under Abdul Sami Khan's leadership, remains committed to upholding its integrity and ensuring that only duly authorized individuals represent the association in any official capacity.—RT

PIA Slashes Fares For Umrah Pilgrims In Unprecedented Move



KARACHI: Pakistanis willing to perform Umrah in the coming month can now get the tickets at discounted prices till July 15 as the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) slashed the fares for the lesser pilgrimage. A PIA spokesperson said Sunday that Umrah pilgrims going to Madina from Pakistan would benefit from discounted fares.

As per the slashed fares, the two-way ticket from Lahore, Islamabad to Madina would cost Rs86,000, while the two-way ticket from Karachi to Madina would be cost Rs76,000. The said rates are exclusive of taxes. Earlier, the Umrah ticket was available for Rs120,000. The spokesperson revealed that the discounted fares have been applied immediately, and will remain in effect till July 15, the spokesperson added. The Umrah pilgrimage is undertaken year-round in the Grand Mosque of Makkah. The new Umrah season started earlier this month, right after 1.8 million Muslims from all over the world undertook the annual Hajj pilgrimage. It may be noted that Saudi Arabia is reportedly seeking to increase the number of Muslims performing Umrah to reach 30 million a year. "Every year, there is an increase in numbers," Gulf News quoted Abdulrahman bin Fahd, an assistant undersecretary for Umrah Affairs. The Saudi official told a local TV channel Al Ekhbariya about the plan aiming to target more than 10 million Umrah pilgrims this year.—RT/Agency

Tragic Road Accident Claims Seven Lives, Leaves 30 Injured During Karachi Picnic

KARACHI: At least seven people, including women and children, were killed and 30 others injured when an "over-speeding" bus turned over near Mauripur area of Karachi on Sunday.



According to the rescue officials, the bus overturned after colliding with a trailer truck near Mauripur Truck Adda. They said the deceased included four children and three women, while six to seven other people of the injured were in critical condition.

Police said the accident happened as the vehicle's speed was over the limit, when victims of the accident were going to have a picnic. As per the rescue officials, the bodies and the injured were shifted to Civil Hospital Karachi for medico-legal formalities and treatment, respectively. The bodies were later shifted to the Sohrab Goth mortuary, the hospital administration said. The deceased have been identified as Sughra,

A relative of the victims, Mohammad Sakina, 6, Zeenat, 4, Bashir said from 40 to 45 people were traveling on the ill-fated vehicle for picnic. He requested Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah to provide treatment to the injured at a private hospital. "Some of them are critically injured, therefore, the Sindh chief minister should order for their transfer to a private hospital," he said. Bashir also demanded an inquiry into the incident to bring the culprit to justice.—RT/Agency

PPP Sindh President Nisar Khuhro Vows Unwavering Commitment To Democracy And Constitution

KARACHI: People's Party Sindh President Nisar Khuhro reiterated the party's steadfast commitment to upholding democracy, parliamentary supremacy, and constitutional integrity in the country. Speaking at the 20th anniversary celebration at Arts Council Karachi, Khuhro emphasized that while the PPP supports the federal government to maintain democratic continuity, it has firmly rejected any proposal to join the federal government.



Addressing a gathering that included People's Party stalwarts such as former Chairman Mian Raza Rabbani, PPP Sindh General Secretary Waqar Mehdi, Senator Taj Haider, Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, and other dignitaries, Khuhro expressed hope that the federal government would allocate funds to Sindh for development projects.



Khuhro paid tribute to Shaheed Munawwar Suhawardi, highlighting his unwavering loyalty and service to the party. He underscored that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the PPP Chairman, aims to lead the nation as Prime Minister in the future, urging nationwide support for this goal. Reflecting on the party's history, Khuhro recalled the MRD movement for voting rights and stressed the impor-

ance of grassroots activism in achieving the party's objectives nationwide. In his address, former Chairman Raza Rabbani called for dismantling the hybrid system introduced during Shaheed Bhutto's tenure, emphasizing the PPP's ideological commitment to challenging elitism and civil-military bureaucracy. He reiterated the party's stance against privatization and its dedication to labor-friendly policies. General Secretary Waqar Mehdi praised Sha-

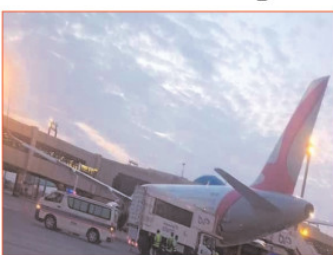
Investigation Launched Into Shocking Deaths Tied To Heatwave And Loadshedding



KARACHI: The authorities in Karachi have initiated the investigation into the mysterious deaths of the residents who died in recent days due to extreme 'heatwave' and 'load shedding', media reported on Sunday. NEPRA has initiated an investigation on the increase in death rate during the recent heat wave in Karachi, in which the aspect is being sought as to how many people have died due to extreme heat, hypothermia, or electricity load shedding in the past few days.

This investigation is being conducted in light of the statement of the head of Edhi Foundation, in which he claimed that according to the heirs of those who died during the heat wave in Karachi, the deaths were due to power outage, heating, and humidity. In this investigation, the authorities are investigating the factor whether there is negligence on the part of KE in the recent deaths or not, NEPRA will also decide the future course of action in light of this investigation.—RT/Agency

Foreign Airline Plane Forced Into Emergency Landing At Karachi Airport



KARACHI: The Middle East and North Africa's (MENA) first and largest Low-Cost Carrier flying, Air Arabia flight bound to Sharjah from Kathmandu made an emergency landing at Karachi Airport after a crew member fell seriously ill. The flight attendant has been identified as Anas from Morocco. The Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) doctors examined the flight attendant after landing. But the flight attendant has been swiftly shifted to a private hospital located at stadium road due to the severity of his condition. According to sources,

Energy Minister Scrambles To Address Load Shedding Crisis At K-Electric's Central Dispatch Center

KARACHI: Sindh Provincial Energy Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah visited the Central Load Dispatch Center (CLD) of K-Electric late at night to assess the ongoing load shedding situation and provide relief to the citizens of Karachi. During his detailed inspection, Minister Shah received a comprehensive briefing from officials regarding the operations of the center.



Officials assured the Minister that measures are being implemented to reduce load shedding across Karachi. Following the Energy Minister's directives, initial improvements have been observed in some areas, with further reductions expected within the next three to four days. Minister Nasir Shah emphasized that the purpose of his

visit was to evaluate K-Electric's preparedness to meet the city's electricity demand, especially amid severe heat conditions exacerbating the public's discomfort. Chairman Bilawal K-Electric and affirmed the Sindh Government's maximum relief efforts for citizens, particularly in terms of water and electricity supply. Minister Nasir Shah underscored that his

Jinnah Hospital Axes 168 Employees In Shocking Purge

KARACHI: In a shocking move, Jinnah Hospital Karachi has sacked 168 employees from their jobs due to a shortage of funds, media reported.



As per details, the affected employees were initially hired on a three-month contract during the COVID-19 pandemic. The list of terminated employees includes 33 sweepers, 36 nurses, 27 ward boys, and 18 security guards. According to the hospital's Executive Director, the decision was made due to financial constraints, and all affected employees will be relieved of their duties from July 1. The employees urged

the administration, that the hospital is already facing staffing shortages and that they should not be sacked.—RT/Agency

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—Monte

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PM Claims Budget Saved Public From Additional Taxes, Aligned With IMF Demands

LAHORE/ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that though it was tough to make a budget as per the direction of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and that the government saved the masses from many more taxes, media reported on Sunday.



"I had long discussions on each point and the matter was settled and no more taxes were imposed on agriculture and fertilisers," PM Shehbaz said revealing that the Fund wanted more taxes on agriculture, fertiliser and other domains including medical equipment — even those for charity hospitals.

It is to be noted that President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday greenlighted the tax-heavy Finance Bill 2024, which will go into effect from July 1, which marks the beginning of the next fiscal year.

The federal government presented the tax-loaded Rs18.877 trillion budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 (FY25) two weeks ago and it was duly passed by the National Assembly on Thursday earlier this week.

The FY25 budget comes in the backdrop of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) led coalition government's efforts to meet the prerequisites for the IMF programme — longer and larger — IMF programme by setting a high tax revenue target taking a shot at lowering the fiscal deficit from 7.4% to 5.9%.

Earlier, media reported that although the Washington-based lender has agreed on abolishing the goods and services tax (GST) on textbooks, restoring rebates for professors, and researchers,

withdrawing Federal Excise Duty (FED) on cement and some other technical changes; it has refused to allow the government to restore export proceeds into a fixed-income tax regime, as the exporters were lobbying hard against going into a normal tax regime.

Meanwhile, the Centre has also introduced reforms in the pension scheme to initiate a gradual reduction in superannuation liabilities. Speaking to media, the prime minister acknowledged that the government was under pressure from the Fund and that had the government accepted all direct

ions of the IMF, there would have been more burden on many sectors, which would have increased difficulties for the government. He revealed that the IMF wanted medical equipment to be taxed — including the one for charity hospitals. "I convinced them in this regard and such taxes were not imposed," he said. Highlighting that the government and the lender agreed on taxes after difficult "long discussions", the PM reiterated his commitment to strengthening the country's economy and highlighted the positive indicators for investment opportunities. "We will fulfil the dream of a strong economy; there are clear and positive messages of investment in Pakistan by the friendly countries," he noted. Furthermore, PM Shehbaz also expressed his optimism that it would be Pakistan's last agreement with the IMF and the budget under it, after which people would get more relief. Referring to the reduction

Fazl Reiterates Call For Fresh Elections To Achieve Political Stability

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman has called for fresh elections in Pakistan, demanding assurances that the military establishment will not interfere in the electoral process.



He made these remarks during a press briefing in Islamabad following a meeting of the Central Majlis Shura on Sunday.

Rejecting the February 8 elections as "rigged and unacceptable," Rehman emphasised his party's ongoing opposition to what he perceives as interference by the establishment in electoral matters.

He underscored the importance of upholding the integrity of the electoral process and urged that the people's right to vote be safeguarded, urging the establishment and intelligence agencies to refrain from meddling in future elections.

Asserting the constitutional roles of all institutions, Rehman reiterated support for the military in matters of national defence, but criticised a recent resolution by the US House of Representatives, labelling it a diplomatic setback for Pakistan and advising the US to refrain from meddling in Pakistan's internal affairs regarding international issues, he condemned the global silence on Gaza and criticised current Muslim leadership, questioning their legacy for future generations.

Touching on national security issues, he highlighted the consequences of Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, noting increased national anxiety and a surge in terrorism since 2001.

He criticised government statements on potential actions inside Afghanistan, likening them to Pakistan's decision to allow US bases as part of a broader political strategy. He further reaffirmed JUI-F's support for Pakistan-China relations while acknowledging the need to rebuild Chinese confidence in investing in Pakistan.—RT/Agency

Audio Leaks Case: IHC Urges PM To Disclose Actors Behind 'Mass Surveillance'

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has declared that 'any form of surveillance' on citizens was illegal and unconstitutional, asking Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif to explain who is 'responsible for the mass surveillance, media reported on Sunday.



IHC Justice Babar Sattar issued a written order on the plea of Bushra Bibi, wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, and Najam Saqib, son of former chief justice Saqib Nisar, against the audio leaks.

In the written order, Justice Sattar said that the federal government was responsible for the surveillance of four million citizens and PM Shehbaz and cabinet members are "collectively and individually" responsible for the mass surveillance.

The IHC also ordered the Prime Minister to submit a report on the legal framework of the surveillance system within six weeks. The report must also clarify whether the surveillance is being carried out in accordance with the law and the constitution.

It also directed the Prime Minister to explain who is responsible for the installation of the surveillance system and mass surveillance and "who is in charge of the system that is affecting the privacy of citizens".

Meanwhile, the IHC also issued contempt of court notice to Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Chairman and its members, directing them to submit reports within six weeks. "The court is of the view that the PTA apparently misinterpreted the surveillance system in the report", it added.

Justice Babar, in its order, directed the telecommunication authority to submit its response on surveillance system in a sealed envelope. "PTA should explain where this surveillance system is installed and who has access to it", it added.

The written order further stated that the telecom companies will have to submit their reports on the Lawful Interception Management System by July 5. "The companies will also have to ensure that the Interception Management System do not have access to their system," it added.

The court has also ordered the federal government to submit a report on the surveillance system within six weeks.

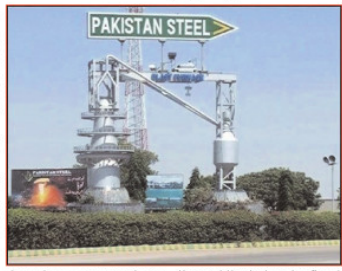
Afghan Taliban Participate In Third Round Of UN Talks In Doha



DOHA: Representatives of Afghanistan's Taliban government began meetings on Sunday with UN officials as they attended talks in Doha with special envoys to the Central Asian country for the first time, a UN spokesperson said. The two-day, UN-hosted meeting in Qatar is the third of its kind in the gas-rich emirate in just over a year but the first to include Taliban authorities who seized power in Afghanistan in 2021. Preparatory discussions have begun with the UN meeting separately with many of the special envoys in attendance and with the Taliban representatives," the UN spokesperson, who asked not to be named, told AFPUN officials and over 20 envoys, including the UN special representative to Afghanistan, were expected to meet with the Taliban government's delegation led by spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid. The talks in Doha were due to discuss increasing engagement with

Pakistan Steel Mills Faces Closure As Government Halts Gas Supply

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Industries and Production has directed the authorities of Pakistan Steel Mills to discontinue the supply of gas to the steel plant, effectively rendering the revival efforts of Pakistan Steel Mills futile. According to a notification issued by the Ministry of Industries and Production, the chief executive officer of Pakistan Steel has been instructed to halt the supply of gas to the Pakistan Steel plant, reported media on Sunday.



They have been informed that following the decision taken in the Economic Coordination Committee's meeting on May 23, the responsibility for gas obligations of Pakistan Steel will not be with the federal government after June 30.

The circular stated that gas supply to important parts of Pakistan Steel's plants, including blast furnaces, was severely restricted since June 2015, with the aim of preventing significant components like blast furnaces from being completely closed.

Gas pressure was reduced for the first time in January 2015, although the factories of Pakistan Steel were operating at 50% production at that time, on March 10, 2015, when the production rate was raised to 65% gas pressure.

It was further reduced on June 10, 2015, due to which billions of rupees in losses were incurred for Pakistan Steel.

Moreover, due to the reduction in gas pressure, it was kept at a venturi meter to maintain the life of machinery and equipment. After the issuance of the circular, it has been removed after nearly nine years.

Pakistan Steel had estimated losses of Rs 22.4 billion as of June 30, 2023, while gas obligations reached Rs 33.5 billion. The assets of Pakistan Steel amount to Rs 83 billion, while during the fiscal year 2023-24, it faced a loss of Rs 6 million per hour due to the constant presence of accounts.

It is worth mentioning that the foundation of Pakistan Steel was laid by former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on December 30, 1973.

The design of the Pakistan Steel Mills, which has the capacity to produce 2.2 million tons of steel, was also given a 12% shareholding in 2009. Pakistan Steel Mills employees have said that its closure and the decision to build an export processing zone in its place have been made without their consultation or consent.—RT/Agency

Iranian Envoy Condemns US Resolution On Pakistan Polls As 'Form Of Extortion'

ISLAMABAD: Iran on Sunday criticised the resolution passed by the United States Congress, seeking an investigation of claims of "interference or irregularities" in February 8 elections.



"We condemn controversial US resolution on Pakistan elections," said Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan Dr Reza Amiri Moghadam.

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 308 against seven votes on Tuesday, which makes 85% of the total American lawmakers in the Legislature.

Through the resolution, the US lawmakers have emphasised the need for the Pakistani public's participation in the country's democratic process months after its general

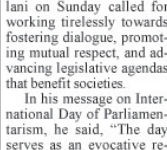
polls were contested as "rigged" and its outcome termed "delayed" by political parties now seated on the opposition benches in the legislature.

Following this, the National Assembly on Friday passed a resolution to condemn the US Congress resolution and termed it "contrary to facts" and "interference" in its internal affairs.

The resolution was tabled by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) lawmaker Shaista Pervaiz Malik, and passed by a majority in the National Assembly amid a noisy protest of the opposition benches. Expressing his discontent, Moghadam said that the US resolution is an "open interference in the domestic affairs of an independent member of the United Nations". The ambassador called it a form of extortion under the guise of supporting democracy. Speaking about the deadly situation in Gaza, the envoy also said that Washington stops a ceasefire resolution through its power to veto. "The US supports the genocide of the people of Gaza by providing lethal weapons to the Zionist regime," said the ambassador.—RT/Agency

Pakistan And US Discuss Afghan Peace Proposals At Doha Conference

ISLAMABAD: Amidst the ongoing Third Afghan Conference organised by the United Nations in Doha, Pakistan and the United States engaged in crucial talks regarding the ongoing Afghan peace process.



The meeting, held on the sidelines of the conference, focused on the evolving situation in Afghanistan and exchanged proposals aimed at fostering lasting peace in the region.

The Pakistani delegation, led by Special Representative Asif Durani and comprising Ambassador to Qatar Dr. Mohammad Ejaz and Head of Mission Ambassador Obaidul Rehman Nizami from Kabul, engaged in multifaceted dialogues during their stay in Doha. Their interactions extended beyond bilateral talks with the US, encompassing meetings with various international counterparts, including Russian Special Representative Zamir Kabulov.

This marked the first participation of the Afghan Taliban government delegation at such a high-profile international gathering. Led by spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid and Sohail Shaheen, the Taliban delegation is slated to present its perspectives at the opening session of the conference.

The Doha conference convenes representatives from across the globe, including prominent figures like US Special Envoy Tom West and Russian Special Envoy Zamir Kabulov, underscoring the international community's collective efforts towards achieving stability and peace in Afghanistan.—RT/Agency

Gilani Urges Tireless Efforts To Foster Dialogue And Promote Mutual Respect

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Sunday called for working tirelessly towards fostering dialogue, promoting mutual respect, and advancing legislative agendas that benefit societies.



In his message on International Day of Parliamentarism, he said, "The day serves as an evocative reminder of the critical role that parliamentary institutions play in shaping democratic governance worldwide."

He said that the occasion also coincides with the anniversary of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), extending warm greetings to all parliaments globally. He said that parliaments stand as the cornerstone of democracy, representing the voices and aspirations of the people they serve.

"They embody the principles of transparency, accountability, and inclusivity, ensuring that decision-making processes are both participatory and representative," Gilani said. He stressed the importance of reaffirming the commitment to upholding the

values of parliamentary democracy. He commended parliamentarians for their dedication and service, and said, "Your unwavering commitment to parliamentary excellence is instrumental in shaping a brighter future for generations to come."

The chairman highlighted the need for a collective approach to tackle common challenges such as climate change, terrorism, extremism, and conflicts. He called for unified action, and said, "Parliament of Pakistan joins for the common good of all peoples.—RT/Agency