



America's sweetheart Taylor Swift tackles 'Eras Tour' malfunction like a pro

# The REGIONAL TIMES Of Sindh

Uniting People Every Day



Sindh Energy Minister Nasir Shah Supports All-Party Conference On K-Electric Issues

**Heartland**

Delegation Addresses Critical Issues At HCSTSI Meeting

**Money**

Zafar Moti is Happy!

PSE 100-index up by 379.37 points to close at 78,824.33

**NATIONAL**

Saad Rafique Describes Struggle For Power As Spreading Like Wildfire

**SPORTS**

Look how fast the tables can turn on an inshore person!

Babar Azam to now play under Mohammad Rizwan's captaincy

## UN Urges For Imran's Immediate Release, Denounces His Detention As Arbitrary

WASHINGTON: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's detention is arbitrary and in violation of international law, a UN human rights working group said in an opinion issued on Monday, adding the jailed politician should be released immediately.



He is also fighting dozens of other cases which are continuing. Khan and his party say the charges were politically motivated to thwart his return to power.

The Geneva-based UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention said that the "appropriate remedy would be to release Mr Khan immediately and accord him an enforceable right to compensation and other reparations, in accordance with international law."

The UN working group said Khan's legal woes were part of a "much larger campaign of repression" against him and his PTI party. It said that in the lead up to the 2024 elections, members of Khan's party were arrested and tortured and their rallies were disrupted.

It also alleged "widespread fraud on election day, stealing dozens of parliamentary seats."

The Pakistani embassy in Washington had no immediate comment.

Pakistan's election commission denies that the elections were rigged. Khan has been in jail since last August and was convicted in some cases ahead of a national election in February.

In recent months, Pakistani courts have suspended Khan's jail sentences in two cases about the illegal acquisition and sale of state gifts, and also overturned his conviction on charges of leaking state secrets.

However, he has remained in prison due to a conviction in another case in which a trial court ruled that his 2018 marriage was unlawful. Khan also faces a trial under anti-terrorism charges in connection with violence in May last year.

Khan came to power in 2018 and was ousted in 2022 through a vote of no-confidence. He alleged the US and the military establishment

## Traders Launch Nationwide Protests Against Tax Hikes and Electricity Price Increases

RAWALPINDI/ PESHAWAR/ ISLAMABAD: Traders in all major centres of the country staged protests against the government's decision to increase taxes and electricity prices in the upcoming fiscal year.



In Islamabad, traders, responding to a call by the All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajir, staged a major protest at Aabpara Chowk, blocking the main road. Heavy police presence was deployed to disperse the demonstrators as trader caravans from across the city converged at Aabpara Chowk.

A large police presence was deployed as convoys of traders led by leaders from various markets across Islamabad arrived to protest against the government's tax increases and electricity price hikes.

Chanting slogans against the government, protesters held banners and electricity bills. "This is purely a traders' protest, no political party is allowed to claim it," declared Aabpara Market General Secretary Akhtar Abbasi.

The US, Britain and the European Union expressed concern about reported irregularities in the elections and urged a probe while United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres expressed concern about violence and the suspension of mobile communications services during the elections.—RT/Agency

raised our voices against the exorbitant increase in electricity prices. "Traders nationwide are protesting the significant hike in electricity prices," stated Ajmal Baloch, President of the All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajir. "Soon, the rulers will be held accountable by the people," he warned.

"The prime minister, who says our budget is made by the IMF, should resign immediately," Baloch asserted. "There are twelve-hour power outages in the country. The same companies you

the widespread nature of the protests. "Traders are protesting in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Karachi, Balochistan, and Sindh. There is no district or tehsil in Pakistan without protests right now."

He issued a warning to the government. "If these electricity taxes are not withdrawn, we will initiate a shut-down strike. If the government does not roll back the electricity price hike, we will decide on further actions after consultation."

Baloch criticised the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for labelling traders as thieves, emphasising that 17,000 industrialists and traders pay taxes. He accused parliamentarians of misappropriating funds allocated for infrastructure.

"These rulers are not just thieves; they are robbers," Baloch declared. "Prime Minister, listen carefully, your government is on shaky ground. Withdraw the taxes on electricity, or the next protest will be a siege of the Prime Minister's House," he warned. He noted that 1.5 million Pakistanis have left the country and criticised Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar for ruining the real estate business with excessive taxation.

Baloch concluded with rallying cries for unity and action, urging people to awaken for the country's sake. Women also joined the protest against electricity price hikes, with the demonstration ending peacefully as traders dispersed.

In Rawalpindi, symbolic shut-down strikes failed to materialise across all markets due to factionalism within trader organisations. However, traders took to the streets, chanting slogans against taxes on electricity bills and burning gas bills.

The protest on Bank Road saw participation from traders of Kashmir Road, Haider Road, and other markets. One faction of traders held a symbolic strike by closing businesses at 4pm.

In Peshawar, traders held a protest rally against tax impositions, electricity price hikes, and inflation. Organised by the Tanzeem Tajir, the rally commenced from the Miled Chowk and concluded at Chowk Yadgar, with participants demanding the removal of newly imposed taxes and reduction in electricity prices.—RT/Agency

## Establishment Prepared To Scale Back Its Roles As Pakistan Makes Progress: Rana Sanaulah

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Adviser on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaulah announced that the current establishment is prepared to limit their roles if economic and political progress is ensured.



During an appearance on a private TV programme on Monday, Sanaulah stated, "I say this with utmost belief and complete information that the current establishment has no personal agenda. These people have no personal agenda."

His comments came in response to questions about the establishment's involvement in politics.

Sanaulah acknowledged historical issues, noting that some previous establishment leaders had long-term personal agendas.

"Some people in the establishment had 10-11 year agendas. Some even had agendas for their whole life," he remarked. However, he assured that the current leadership's sole focus is on national stability.

Addressing the media ab-

sence of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif, Sanaulah clarified, "Nothing is holding him back." He emphasised the importance of timing in politics, suggesting that actions must be taken "at the right time."

He dismissed claims that political forces favour Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif over Nawaz, noting that it was Nawaz who nominated his brother for the premiership.

On the issue of who the lawmakers listen to, Sanaulah explained, "As lawmakers, they listen to the PM, and as party leaders, they listen to the PML-N president."

He highlighted that the PML-N has always been open to dialogue, criticising the PTI for avoiding the negotiating table.

Sanaulah also addressed speculation around talks with Maulana Fazlur Rahman, clarifying that all meetings between the PML-N leadership and the JUI-F chief were transparent and focused on mutual concerns.—RT/Agency

## Nine Terrorists Killed In Two KP Operations



RAWALPINDI: Security forces during two intelligence-based operations (IBOs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) gunned down nine terrorists, said Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement Monday.

On the reported presence of terrorists in the Tirah area of KP, the security forces conducted an IBO, killing seven including two wanted terrorists.

The killed wanted terrorists Najeeb alins Abdur Rehman and Ashfaq aka Muavia have been killed, the statement read.

"The killed terrorists remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces. Weapons, ammunition, and explosives were also recovered from killed terrorists," the ISPR added.

In a separate IBO in Lakkhi Marwat, two more terrorists were gunned down.

"Sanitisation of the areas is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area as the Security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country," the ISPR's statement added.

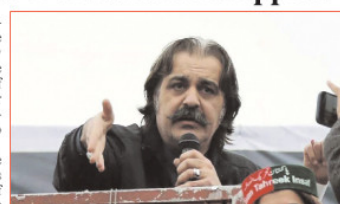
Earlier, the security forces during an IBO in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Khyber district killed five terrorists.

According to the ISPR, the killed terrorists were involved in attacks on security forces and the killing of innocent civilians across the country.

During the operation, the security forces also recovered weapons, bullets and explosives from the possession of the deceased terrorists.—RT/Agency

## ATC Issues Warning to Declare Gandapur And Others As 'Absconders' For Failure To Appear

ISLAMABAD: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in the federal capital on Monday warned that it would declare Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and other suspects as "absconder" over their failure to appear before the court.



The remarks were made by ATC Judge Tahir Abbas Supra during the hearing of two cases lodged against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and other party leaders regarding alleged vandalism and violation of Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) at Sangiani and I-9 police stations in the federal capital.

During the hearing today, PTI leaders Faisal Jawad Khan, Ali Nawaz Awan, Wasiq Qayyum, Aamer Kiani and other suspects appeared before the court whereas exemption pleas were filed by KP CM Gandapur and PTI leader Amir Mughal.

Reacting to the request for exemption from appearance, Judge Supra said that it was not a valid reason to argue that one can't appear before the court because he's

out of the city. "Who's responsible for the failure to appear, the suspects or the court?" the judge questioned adding that no request for exemption of appearance from anyone will be entertained.

"We are issuing non-bailable warrants for all the absent suspects," Judge Supra remarked.

In response, the lawyers acknowledged that the onus for failure to appear before the court falls on the suspects and requested the court one more chance, reassuring that all the suspects would appear before the court in the next hearing.

At this, Judge Supra said that the suspects who fail to appear before the court on July 8 will be declared "abs-

conders", stressing that it is not necessary to wait for 30 days to declare a fugitive of the court an absconder.

The judge also stressed that the cases will only proceed if they have something in them and otherwise will be disposed of.

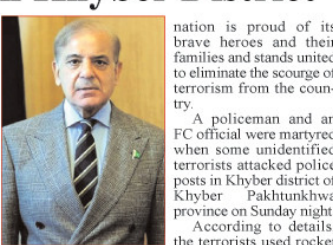
"I have to conclude these cases [and] it will only benefit you [if that happens]," he said.

Additionally, the court also sought a written reply from the Superintendent Adilajal regarding the appearance of the PTI founder via video link.

The court then adjourned both cases till July 8 and announced that the cases would be heard on a daily basis from the next hearing.—RT/Agency

## Shehbaz Praises Police And FC For Preventing Terror Attack In Khyber District

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday praised the Police and Frontier Constabulary personnel for foiling a terror attempt in Takhta Baig, Khyber district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



Prime minister paid tribute to police officer Ijaz and FC officer Shehzad, who sacrificed their lives fighting terrorists for the sake of the country.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif prayed for the martyrs' elevation in Jannah and for patience and strength for their families to bear this irreparable loss.

nation is proud of its brave heroes and their families and stands united to eliminate the scourge of terrorism from the country.

A policeman and an FC official were martyred when some unidentified terrorists attacked police posts in Khyber district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Sunday night.

According to details, the terrorists used rocket launcher and heavy weapons in attack on a joint picket of police and FC in Khyber district due to which a policeman and FC official embraced martyrdom.—RT/Agency

## Bilawal Voices Concern Over Press Freedom In KP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has voiced his grave concern over the diminishing space for independent journalism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).



In a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, he highlighted the alarming rise in violent incidents targeting journalists in the province, deeming it intolerable.

He emphasized that many affected journalists are holding the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister and the ruling provincial party accountable for these brutalities.

He condemned the suppression of journalism through violence, attributing these acts to fascist elements.

"The PTI is fearful of independent journalism and has lost the trust of the people," he said. Reaffirming PPP's unwavering support for the journalist community, he declared, "We believe in press freedom and will not allow anyone to stifle the press."

He called upon relevant institutions and parliament to take decisive action to safeguard journalists and uphold press freedom in KP.—RT/Agency

## Mohsin Naqvi Vows Unity In Eradicating Terrorism

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi pledged to end the scourge of terrorism with unity and co-operation. Interior Minister paid tribute to the FC and police officials for foiling the attack on police check-post in Khyber district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In his statement, he said, "we pay tribute to martyred FC official Shehzad and police official Ijaz for sacrificing their lives for foiling the notorious intentions of terrorists with courage. He added, nation paid salute to young for defending the motherland with bravery and nation would always remember their sacrifices for the state. Mohsin Naqvi stated, "We are proud of the courage of both young and defenders." Interior minister reiterated, "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police and FC



officers were always on the frontline for the fight against terrorism and there was no example of their sacrifice and bravery.

A policeman and an FC official were martyred when some unidentified terrorists attacked police posts in Khyber district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Sunday night, Dunya News reported. According to details, the terrorists used

rocket launcher and heavy weapons in attack on a joint picket of police and FC in Khyber district due to which a policeman and FC official embraced martyrdom.

Police retaliated the attack which forced the terrorists to escape. A heavy contingent of police from the nearby police stations reached the spot after the attack and cordoned off the area.—RT/Agency



# METRO KARACHI

## MQM-P Leader Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui Demands Full Equality For All Races In Pakistan

KARACHI: Muttahida Quami Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) leader Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui asserted that all races residing in Pakistan must be granted equal rights.

During his press conference in Karachi, he claimed that they had been subjected to oppression for 50 years under the worst feudal system ruling across Sindh.

He highlighted that more than 50 thousand jobs had been granted based on racism over the past 50 years, stating that the Pakistani constitution advocated for job opportunities for local people.

He thanked the Sindh High Court (SHC) and the justice system of Pakistan for granting them their rights, stating that they had achieved these rights after



many years of struggle. MQM-P leader revealed that whatever had happened in the last 50 years was planned and a conspiracy.

The events of the Fall of Dhaka on December 16, 1971, and the takeover by Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto on December 23, proved the stance of Pakistan's division and conspiracy against it to be correct. He described

## JI Announces July 12 Rally In Islamabad Against IMF Sponsored Tax-Heavy Budget



LAHORE: Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) emir Hafiz Naemur Rehman on Monday announced a protest in Islamabad for July 12 against "high taxes and exorbitant electricity tariff".

The JI announced its Haq Do Awam Ko (give rights to the masses) movement in a post on social media platform X, adding that Rehman would lead the rally.

President Asif Ali Zardari assented to the government's tax-heavy Finance Bill 2024 for the fiscal year on Sunday. The government had presented the budget two weeks ago, drawing sharp criticism from opposition parties, especially the PML-N.

Addressing a press conference in Lahore today, Rehman spoke at length about the economic challenges faced by the citizens, stating that the JI could not see the people suffer under such a "circus".

He said the government and the ruling classes were not ready to abandon their perks and privileges but had no problems pushing the nation into "a greater difficulty".

Termining the budget "cruel", he said it was insufficient to fulfill the government's "greed" and allowed that it wanted to levy further taxes on the populace.—RT/Agency

## TikTok Informs PHC: PTA Tasked With Reporting Blasphemous Content

PESHAWAR: TikTok has shifted the onus of blasphemous content's removal to the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), saying that it takes down videos after receiving complaints from the regulator.

In a letter written to the Peshawar High Court (PHC), where a petition is filed against the app, TikTok said it has recently not received any escalations with respect to blasphemous content through the special portal.

A bench comprising Justice SM Atiq Shah and Justice Shakeel Ahmed is presiding over the critical hearing of the petition seeking to ban TikTok in Pakistan for its alleged blasphemous and immoral content.

The petition was filed by Advocate Imran Khan requesting the court to direct the respondents - PTA, Federal Investigation Agency



(FIA), and Ministry of Information - to ban TikTok in Pakistan permanently for persistent breach of guidelines and violation of the Constitution. In the previous hearing, the court directed the telecommunication regulator to ensure the removal of any blasphemous and objectionable material TikTok. The video-sharing app, in its letter, said that TikTok has a strict policy with respect to Pakistan of taking the issue of blasphemous content with utmost seriousness. "It is precisely because of this seriousness that TikTok has taken measures and provides special access to a dedicated portal to the PTA to report such content for expedited review by TikTok," said the letter. "It said that the app blocks access to any content which violates Pakistan's blasphemy laws as reported through the portal, adding that it hasn't received any escalations recently.—RT/Agency

## Teenage Girl Killed By Aerial Firing At Wedding Event

LAHORE: In a tragic incident, a teenage girl lost her life after being hit by a bullet at a wedding event in Lahore, media reported.

According to the details, the incident took place within the limits of Manawan police station where

some people were aerial firing, resulting in the death of a 16-year-old girl.

Meanwhile, a case has been registered against unknown suspects on the complaint of the victim's father.

The police launched an investigation into the incident and took the father of the groom into custody.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Cantt said that raids are being conducted to arrest the suspects and efforts are underway to apprehend them soon.—RT/Agency

## Karachi Residents Fume Over Astronomical Electricity Bills

KARACHI: Residents of Karachi are facing severe challenges due to a dramatic increase in electricity bills, with many struggling to pay their dues. The recent surge in electricity costs has left citizens in shock, particularly those using between 300 and 1,000 units per month.

From June 21 to July 1, the city has experienced a significant rise in heatstroke cases, adding to the citizens' woes. In the past 24 hours alone, hospitals have treated 144 people for heatstroke symptoms, with 34 requiring admission. Despite these hardships, Karachiites are now grappling with unprecedented electricity bills.



units, highlighting a significant disparity compared to previous charges. Even a flat that has been vacant for a year received a bill of Rs4,300 for just five units, primarily due to the fuel adjustment charges imposed by K-Electric.

K-Electric's spokesperson explained that the charges are authorized by NEPRA, but residents are finding these taxes incomprehensible. Bills for those using over 200 units now range from Rs10,000 to Rs15,000, far beyond what many can afford.

The situation is particularly dire for the middle and lower-income classes.

Muhammad Adnan, a resident of Korangi, shared that his electricity bill has soared to Rs13,000, in addition to a house rent of Rs16,000, against his monthly salary of Rs35,000.

Akbar Ali from Abul Hassan Ispahani Road expressed similar distress, stating that his Rs50,000 salary is largely consumed by a Rs15,000 electricity bill, leaving little for other essentials. Citizens are calling on the government to provide immediate relief from the exorbitant electricity bills, which now consume more than half of their incomes.—RT/Agency

## Sindh CM Implements Tightened Security Measures For Dawoodi Bohra Jamaat Leader

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has instructed the administration and city police to ensure robust security and necessary arrangements for the visit of Dawoodi Bohra Jamaat Spiritual Leader Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin during Moharram.

Chairing a meeting at CM House to oversee preparations for the Presidential guest, Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, Shah emphasized road repairs, streetlight maintenance, and comprehensive security measures in the areas of his stay.

Minister of Home Zia Lanjar, Chief Secretary Ahsan Nabi Memon, and Da-



woodi Bohra Jamaat representatives were present at the meeting. Shah directed Commissioner Karachi and IG Police to engage with Bohra Community representatives to finalize security arrangements in consultation with them.—RT

## SOUTHERN PUNJAB

### Hakeem Tariq Mehmood Chughtai Honored With Felicitations

By M Siddique

BAHAWALPUR: The Punjab Minister for Minority Affairs, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora and Kartarpur Gurdwara Chief Sardar Gobind Singh Gayani presented bouquets and felici-

tated Hakeem Tariq Mehmood Chughtai in Ahmadpur Sharqia returning after performing Hajj. Former MNA Sardar Malik Amriyar Waran, former MPA Qazi Adnan Farid, former Chairman Malik Usman Rasheed, Qazi Burhanuddin, Muhammad Safdar Bhatti, Muhammad Ajeem, Ihsan Ahmed and others also felicitated Hakeem Tariq Mehmood Chughtai. On the occasion, journalists Shaikh Abdul Rehman and Syed Asif Bukhari were also present.

## Assault on Mentally Challenged Youth Reported In Uch Sharif

By M Siddique

BAHAWALPUR: In Uch Sharif, a mentally challenged young man named Saddam, residing in the Juepura neighborhood, was brutally assaulted by Kamran and Dilbar along with their accomplices. The inci-

dent was recorded and video has since gone viral on social media. The video clearly shows the perpetrators kicking, punching and beating the young man. According to eyewitnesses, Kamran and Dilbar began mocking Saddam by calling him "crazy," to which Saddam responded with curses. This led the perpetrators to catch hold of him and subject him to severe physical abuse while beating the entire incident to eyewitnesses. The injured young man was subsequently taken to the hospital for medical treatment.

## Majyd Aziz Champions Groundbreaking International Vesak Celebration Proposal For Pakistan



KARACHI: Majyd Aziz, former President of the Employers Federation of Pakistan and Founding Chairman of the Pakistan Sri Lanka Business Forum, has proposed a week-long celebration of the Buddhist holiday Vesak in Taxila in May 2025. He suggested collaboration between the Federal Ministry of Tourism of Pakistan, the Sri Lanka Ministry of Tourism, and travel agents from both countries. Speaking at the Sri Lanka Tourism and Networking Evening in Karachi, or-

ganized by the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau and the Sri Lankan Consulate General, Aziz emphasized Pakistan's rich Buddhist heritage and the potential for boosting tourism. He drew parallels to the significant Sikh pilgrimage to Kartarpur in Punjab, highlighting Pakistan's efforts to facilitate religious tourism.

Aziz believes the Vesak event would improve Pakistan's image and enhance its tourism sector. He also encouraged the Sri Lankan private sector to participate in the annual KCCI My Karachi Exhibition and advocated for on-arrival visas for citizens of both countries.

The event featured speeches from Sri Lankan Consul General Jagath Abeysara, CEO of the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau Thirusu Jayasuria, Sri Lankan Airlines Country Manager Saman Ratnayake, and Sindh government representatives. A performance by a Sri Lankan dance troupe captivated the audience.—RT

## Sindh Energy Minister Nasir Shah Supports All-Party Conference On K-Electric Issues



KARACHI: Provincial Energy Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah announced the government's commitment to back the recommendations of an upcoming All-Party Conference focused on legal and technical aspects of electricity. Shah addressed attendees at a conference organized by Afaq Ahmed at a local hotel in Karachi, attended by political, social, media, traders, and industrialists, including Shahi Syed, Irfanullah Khan Marwat, Javed Naguri, and Nihal Hashmi.

Shah expressed gratitude to Afaq Ahmed for organizing the event, emphasizing the right to legal and peaceful protest while condemning damage to public and government property. He highlighted the establishment of a parliamentary

## Corporate Watch

### VIP Extravaganza Marks Kiara Jewellery's Third Branch Grand Opening



Dubai/Karachi: Kiara Jewellery has launched its third branch in just 18 months, solidifying its presence in Bur Dubai's vibrant jewellery scene. The new shop, located in Meena Bazaar on Al Fahidi Street's Cosmos Lane, promises exceptional service and stunning collections.

The grand opening featured Bollywood star Shriya Saran, who performed the ribbon-cutting, alongside special guests Sanam Saeed, Usman Mukhtar, Faran Tahir, and Ali Kazmi, all eagerly anticipated for their upcoming movie.

Kiara Jewellery is known for offering exquisite gold and diamond pieces that cater

## VIS Elevates Entity Ratings of Sindh Bank Limited Amidst Financial Upturn

VIS Credit Rating Company Limited (VIS) has upgraded Sindh Bank Limited's (SNDB) entity ratings to 'AA-/A-1+' (Double A Minus/A-One Plus) from 'A+/A-1' (Single A Plus/A-One). The long-term rating 'AA-' reflects high credit quality; protection factors are modest risk subject to economic conditions, while the short-term 'A-1+' signals the highest likelihood of timely repayments. The Outlook on the assigned ratings remains 'Stable'.

The upgrade considers the Bank's sub-sovereign ownership, robust support, recent capital infusion, and government de-

posits. The Bank's focus on secured financing, cautious lending expansion, NPL recovery, and prudent investments in sovereign issuances contribute to its credit strength.

Sindh Bank investment portfolio leans towards Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIBs) having mostly floating rate instruments thus reducing market risk. Its emphasis on low-cost funding, strong liquidity ratios, and profit growth reinforce its financial resilience.

In 2023, amid a high monetary policy rate, the sharper increase in yields on earning assets relative to funding costs, improved the

## Petroleum Dealers Announce Nationwide Strike Set To Rock Nation From July 5th

KARACHI: The Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) chairman, Abdul Sami Khan, stated that talks are scheduled with the government in Islamabad on Monday, but if they fail, the petrol pumps will be shut down across Pakistan as planned.

Expressing his concern over the advance turnover tax, he said that the strike may be extended beyond a day if necessary.

The chairman urged the government to withdraw the tax immediately as it will make impossible for the petrol dealers to run their businesses. Yesterday, the federal government increased the petrol price in the country by Rs 7.45 per litre for the next fortnight.—RT/Agency

to a budget-friendly clientele without compromising quality. The store ensures a memorable shopping experience with amazing offers and complimentary gifts with every purchase.

With its slogan, "Unleash Your Inner Sparkle," Kiara Jewellery aims to make every customer feel unique and valued. Now with three thriving locations in Bur Dubai, Kiara Jewellery is becoming a go-to for those seeking luxury and affordability in their jewellery shopping.

Join us at any of our Bur Dubai locations and discover why Kiara Jewellery is the preferred choice for discerning customers. This event was organized by Big Bash Squad by Kashif Khan.—RT



## The UN demands justice for Imran!

The recent declaration by the United Nations Human Rights Working Group that the detention of former Prime Minister Imran Khan is arbitrary and in violation of international law has brought global attention to the growing political turmoil in Pakistan. The UN's call for Khan's immediate release underscores the urgent need for the Pakistani government to address the significant concerns raised by the international community.

Imran Khan's arrest and subsequent incarceration are not isolated incidents but part of a broader pattern of political repression aimed at undermining his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party. The working group's findings suggest a systematic campaign to disrupt PTI activities, including the arrest and torture of party members and interference in their rallies. These actions, coupled with allegations of wide-

spread electoral fraud during the last general elections, have further eroded public trust in Pakistan's democratic institutions.

The February elections, marred by accusations of

vote-rigging and manipulation, have only compounded the country's political instability. Despite these irregularities, candidates aligned with Khan managed to secure the highest number of seats, indicating significant popular support for his leadership. However, the subsequent formation of a coalition government by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has deepened the political divide.

It is evident that the current power structure in

Pakistan cannot sustain this trajectory without risking severe consequences. The widening gap between the government's actions and the public's mandate is a recipe for disaster, threatening to further destabilize the nation. The international community's concern, including statements from the US, Britain, and the European Union, underscores the need for a thorough investigation into the electoral irregularities and the immediate release of Imran Khan.

The Pakistani government must reevaluate its approach and heed the calls for justice and transparency. Addressing the legitimate grievances of the public and restoring faith in democratic processes is crucial. Failure to do so will not only exacerbate the political crisis but also undermine Pakistan's standing on the global stage. It is time for pragmatic and fair solutions to ensure a stable and democratic future for Pakistan.

## THE HEARTLAND



HYDERABAD: Residents of Jhando Khoso are holding a protest demonstration at the Hyderabad press club against the influential people of their area.-RT

### District Council Chairman Thatta Abdul Hameed Panhwar to distribute scholarships amongst 200 students

By Khuda Bux Brohi

THATTA: Chairman Abdul Hameed Panhwar of the District Council in Thatta has taken a significant step towards supporting higher education in rural areas by distributing 5 million rupees in scholarships to 200 deserving students. The distribution event, held at the District Council Hall, aimed to alleviate the financial burdens of these students and enable them to pursue university education. Chairman Panhwar emphasized the council's firm commitment to educa-

tion, stating that every student deserves the opportunity to study without financial constraints. He announced plans to double the number of scholarship recipients in the upcoming budget cycle, underscoring education as a fundamental right. Despite these efforts, challenges persist for students seeking enrollment at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro. Delays in the enrollment process for 2023 have jeopardized students' ability to submit their exam forms on time, despite the university extending deadlines for AD Arts, AD

Commerce, and AD Science exams. The university's recent requirement for an additional 1,000 rupees per student has further complicated matters, prompting appeals from students for expedited enrollment procedures. The District Council's broader initiative includes 17 plans to enhance educational support, aiming to foster academic advancement across the district. Despite setbacks, students remain hopeful for a swift resolution that will enable them to continue their studies without disruption.

### 12 booked after Tando Bago cop suffers a fatal heart attack

By Sher Ali Khawaja

TANDO BAGO: A police officer named Mumtaz Ali Gurguz died after suffering a fatal heart attack in village Khu-

daabad near Diyo. After the death of Mumtaz Ali Gurguz a case was registered against four women and 8 men on the complaint of the cousin of the deceased man. The com-

### Daulatpur's Jokhio community men demand justice



By Aijaz Jokhio

DAULATPUR: Jokhio community men including Advocate Mehboob Jokhio and his brother Advocate Aijaz Jokhio recorded a protest demonstration at the Daulatpur Police station against the actions of the police. The protesting men said that SHO Wasim Mirza and DSP Daulatpur have insulted their guests after stopping them in the way to their village. They also accused the officials of cordoning off the area to harass the people. On the occasion, the protesters demanded of the concerned authorities to take notice of the matter and provide justice to them.

### Pir Jo Goth's Dharejo community demands justice



By Abdul Qudoos Khilji

PIR JO GOTH: The residents of the village Khawand Dingo Dharejo near Pir Jo Goth, including Ajeeb Dharejo, Waheed, Idrees, Abdul Latif and Arshad Dharejo, protested against the alleged atrocities of influential individuals. During the protest, the demonstrators claimed that influential person Arshad Dharejo and others attacked their home and falsely accused them of attempting to kidnap a young girl. They further

stated that a few days ago, the influential individuals stole goats from their home and are trying to seize their land. They are being harassed with false accusations to withdraw the case, causing them severe distress. A report has also been filed at the Pir Jo Goth police station. The protesters urged the SSP Khairpur to conduct a transparent investigation and provide justice. They warned that if their demands are not met, they would stage a sit-in outside the DIG Sukkur office.



HYDERABAD: Members and leaders of the Anjuman-e-Dukandaran Resham Bazar are holding a protest demonstration at Kohinoor Chowk against load shedding of electricity and inflated electric bills.-RT

### Shri Hinglaj Mata Welfare and Development Society thanks Balochistan CM Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti

By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: The office-bearers and members of the Shri Kumar Pehuja. They appreciate their efforts in fulfilling the announcements made during the Hinglaj Festival 2024. Based on the proposals of the Shri Hinglaj Mata Welfare and Development Society,

Dhanesh Kumar Paliyani, MPA Sanjay Kumar Punjwani, Parliamentary Secretary, and MPA Ravi Kumar Asthan, Balochistan, for the year 2024-2025. The society hopes that they will continue their services and dedication at the feet of the Mata in the future as well.

### Candidates passing IBA test for posts from grade 5 to 15 stage demo in MPK

By Narain Das

MIRPURKHAS: In Mirpurkhas, candidates who passed the IBA test for the posts from grade 5 to 15 staged a protest demonstration outside the Press Club Mirpurkhas. The protest leaders demanded action from high-ranking officials,

including the Chief Minister of Sindh Murad Ali Shah, the Chief Justice of Pakistan, and Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif. They appealed to the High Court to reconsider its decision. The candidates asserted that they took the test with complete honesty and were selected on merit. They opposed the idea of retaking the test, emphasizing that the previous test was conducted fairly and under the credible supervision of IBA, a reputable institution. They called for any negligence by responsible authorities to be addressed without jeopardizing the candidates' future.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Chang Goth are holding a protest demonstration against their area police.-RT

### Laborer killed in Matli road mishap

By Nooral Khamisani

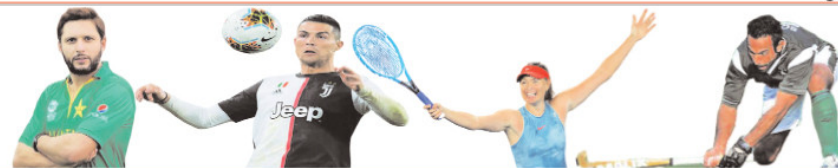
MATLI: A loaded truck overturned into side of road after its brakes failed in Matli. The incident resulted in death of a laborer named Roshan Mallah, resident of

Mulla Katiyar. The laborer was sitting on the top of the truck. The truck driver managed to flee from the scene. The area police reached the spot and shifted the body of the deceased to the local area hospital.



LARKANA: Members and leaders of the Civil Society are holding protest demonstration for the immediate release of missing girl Dua Brohi, at the Larkana press club.-RT

SPORTS



ICC unveils men's 'Team of the Tournament' for T20 World Cup 2024



DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has recently unveiled the Team of the Tournament for the Men's T20 World Cup 2024 and it features six players from the Indian team.

Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are the only players to feature in both the T20 World Cup 2024 and the T20 World Cup 2016. Sharma is the only Indian to be named in the team.

Samina Baig leads group of Pakistani, Italian mountaineers to summit K2



A team of Pakistani and foreigner mountaineers is on an expedition to summit the second highest peak of the world, 8,611 metres high K2.

The group includes four Pakistani and four Italian mountaineers and it is being accompanied by media team.

Face of the Day



Name: Qasim Khan Location: Karachi About me: I hate Form 47 Captain Babar Azam Please email us your photo for our Model Watch and Kids' Corner section at regionaltimes10@gmail.com

Boom Boom lambasts Babar Azam's captaincy in T20 World Cup 2024

KARACHI: Former Pakistan captain and star all-rounder Shahid Afridi criticised national men's team's white-ball skipper Babar Azam for his leadership in the recently ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, co-hosted by the United States of America and the West Indies.

Speaking at a press conference, Afridi highlighted the importance of the leader's mindset in shaping the team's demeanour, while citing the example of India captain Rohit Sharma, who led the nation to their second T20 World Cup title.

"Look, the role of a leader is always very important. The body language of the leader becomes the body language of the team. The leader has to set an example," said Afridi.

"Take Rohit Sharma as an example. Now, look at his game and his style of playing, the lower-order batsmen who come in are all confident because the captain likes to play aggressive and attacking cricket. So, I always believe that the role of the captain is very important," he added.

Shahid Afridi also shared that he is open to serve Pakistan Cricket but only at the grassroots level, which according to him, is the core reason behind the team's struggle at the international level.

"I am always available for Pakistan cricket, but at the grassroots level, there is no need for me with the Pakistan team. Whatever is needed is at the grassroots level," stated Afridi.

The legendary all-rounder also termed the national team's performance in the mega event "unsatisfactory" before going on to express his eagerness regarding the "major changes" expected to be made by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi.

"Overall, if the performance had been good, you wouldn't be asking this question. Let's see what the chairman has said about making major changes to the team. I am also waiting to see what these changes will be, and you are too," stated Shahid Afridi.

"A positive decision needs to be made, and the changes shouldn't just be superficial. The real issue lies at the grassroots level of our cricket, which many cricketers often talk about.—Agency

Babar Azam to now play under Mohammad Rizwan's captaincy

LAHORE: Pakistan team skipper Babar Azam will now play under wicket-keeper batsman Mohammad Rizwan's captaincy.

A Global T20 Canada League franchise, Vancouver Knights, has appointed Rizwan for the skipper's role on Sunday. The GT20 Canada franchise has also given the Pakistani opener title of 'sir' in the social media announcement.

"Hear ye, hear ye! The Vancouver Knights have chosen their captain for GT20 Season 4: Sir Muhammad Rizwan! With his mighty batting skills and sharp wicketkeeping, he's ready to lead our charge to victory. Prepare for battle, Knights!" Vancouver Knights wrote on Facebook announcing Rizwan as their captain.

Pacer Mohammad Amir, Asif Ali, New Zealand's Michael Rippon, South African Dwaine Pretorius, Namibia's Ruben Truempelmann and Guyana's Jeremy Gordon too are part of the Knights GT20 Canada's season 4 will begin on July 25 and its final will be held on August 11 in Canada. Seven Pakistan cricket players - Babar, Asif, Amir, Rizwan, Ifthikhar Ahmed, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Mohammad Nawaz - will feature in the league cricket. Notably, Babar, Rizwan, Amir, Ifthikhar and Shaheen were also part of Pakistan's squad for the T20 World Cup 2024, wherein the team fared miserably and exited early on. The league will see other international cricketers too such as Mohammad Nabi, Sunil Narine, Shakib Al Hasan, Rahmullah Gurbaz, David Wiese, Hazratullah Zazai, David Warner and Carlos Brathwaite.—Agency

Carlos Alcaraz wins Wimbledon opener as Murray wants 'closure'

—Agency Carlos Alcaraz defeated 269th-ranked qualifier Mark Lajal at the start of his Wimbledon title defence on Monday as Andy Murray decided whether or not to call a halt to his All England Club singles career.

As action got underway, Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka was heading home after withdrawing from the tournament with a shoulder injury.

Alcaraz, still only 21, is chasing his fourth Grand Slam title and hopes to become just the sixth man after Rod Laver, Bjorn Borg, Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic to win the French Open and Wimbledon back-to-back.

Opening the Centre Court programme, Carlos Alcaraz recovered from a breakdown in each of the first two sets to see off the deadlocked Lajal 7-6 (7/3), 7-5, 6-2.

"He played a really good match, he obviously surprised me a little bit because I didn't have the chance to see him play a lot," said Carlos Alcaraz.

This time last year, Lajal was losing a first-round match at a second-tier Challenger event in the United States and earning a paltry \$780 - on Monday he banked \$75,000.

Two-time Wimbledon semi-finalist Sabalenka, ranked third in the world, is one of eight players to have pulled out since the draw was made.

T20 World Cup setback prompts PCB to bar Saim Ayub, Azam Khan from CPL

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has reinforced its stance on the No Objection Certificate (NOC) policy following Pakistan's early exit from the T20 World Cup, co-hosted by the USA and West Indies.

This policy restricts centrally and domestically contracted players from participating in more than two overseas leagues annually, aiming to manage player workload and prioritise national commitments.

In light of this policy, PCB officials have withheld NOCs for Azam Khan and Saim Ayub, despite their retention by Caribbean Premier League (CPL) teams. Both players were part of Pakistan's World Cup squad. An official source emphasised that all players, regardless of contract type, must adhere strictly to this regulation. The board also reserves the right to deny NOC requests based on factors such as player workload, fitness concerns, or domestic team obligations.

"The other players have also been given a clear message that the two NOCs rule applies to both centrally and domestically contracted players, and the board also reserves the right to turn down any NOC request from any player. The PCB retains the right to refuse an NOC if it believes a player's workload and fitness may be compromised or if the player is needed for domestic duties," a PCB official stated.

The enforcement of this policy was highlighted recently when leg-spinner Usama Mir was informed that he had exhausted his quota of two leagues for the year despite his eligibility due to a lack of international commitments and domestic events.—Agency

Imam-ul-Haq picks Babar Azam in his all-time Pakistan ODI XI

LAHORE: Pakistan's top-order batter Imam-ul-Haq named current white-ball captain and ace batter Babar Azam in his all-time Pakistan's ODI XI.

Speaking at a private TV show, the left-handed opener shared his opinion on what should be Pakistan's all-time ODI XI which features star all-rounder Shahid Afridi as the 12th man.

He named several legendary players in the lineup and picked Babar to open alongside Saeed Anwar.

"Since it was very difficult for me to set [him] in the middle order. So, I went for Babar Azam as the opener," said Imam-ul-Haq.

Imam opted to go with Kamran Akmal as the specialist wicketkeeper batter, prioritizing the latter over the likes of Moin Khan, Rashid Latif and Sarfaraz Ahmed.

He backed his decision by emphasizing Akmal's several match-winning performances in the format.—Agency

Khloe Kardashian gives glimpses into lavish birthday bash



Khloe Kardashian just celebrated her 40th birthday in a very extravagant style.

On June 29, the now 40-year-old TV personality took to her official Instagram to share the insights of her birthday bash as she reached the milestone earlier this week on June 27, 2024.

At the denim and diamond dress coded lavish party, it featured a Khloe-themed salon-style décor.

America's sweetheart Taylor Swift tackles 'Eras Tour' malfunction like a pro

Taylor Swift just proved once again she and her Eras Tour team are now experts in tackling malfunctions.

According to fan-recorded videos, during her Dublin concert on Saturday, the 34-year-old artist seemed to get stuck on a raised platform at Aviva Stadium.

However, one of her dancers was quick to react and lent the songstress a helping hand.

As Swift performed her The Tortured Poets Department track, The Smallest Man Who Ever Lived, the superstar got stranded mid-air as the platform did not retract according to their preparations.

Instead of disappearing, like the platform across her did, the one that held Swift stayed firmly put in its place.

Jan Ravnik, who is one of Swift's backup dancers and the one who was on the platform across her, rushed to the Lover crooner's aid.

Another clip showed how Ravnik helped Taylor Swift get down effortlessly as she smiled at the dancer.

During the same concert, the Blank Space singer also made an interesting revelation about her album, Folklore.

Swift stated that Ireland had played a huge part in the development of the story behind the fantasy album.

Khloe Kardashian gives glimpses into lavish birthday bash

Khloe Kardashian just celebrated her 40th birthday in a very extravagant style.

On June 29, the now 40-year-old TV personality took to her official Instagram to share the insights of her birthday bash as she reached the milestone earlier this week on June 27, 2024.

At the denim and diamond dress coded lavish party, it featured a Khloe-themed salon-style décor.

The A-list celebrities in attendance included none other than her sisters, Kim Kardashian, Kourtney Kardashian and Kylie Jenner, as well as the likes of Sara Foster and Kimora Lee Simmons.

Additionally, energetic performances from renowned rappers like Snoop Dogg, Warren G and Krupt also took place at the birthday event.

In the behind-the-scenes clips of her party, Khloe showed off her outfit, wearing diamond-encrusted bustier corset and matching denim jeans, accessorized with many diamond necklaces.

As the birthday girl photos, arrived at the venue, she filmed her reaction upon entering the place that had a desert-themed décor which included cacti and a large "Khloe" sign.

"Are we okay? Holy s\*\*\*," she could be heard saying behind the camera while her sister, Kim, sipped on her drink, posing for photos.

ENTERTAINMENT

America's sweetheart Taylor Swift tackles 'Eras Tour' malfunction like a pro



Taylor Swift just proved once again she and her Eras Tour team are now experts in tackling malfunctions.

According to fan-recorded videos, during her Dublin concert on Saturday, the 34-year-old artist seemed to get stuck on a raised platform at Aviva Stadium.

However, one of her dancers was quick to react and lent the songstress a helping hand.

As Swift performed her The Tortured Poets Department track, The Smallest Man Who Ever Lived, the superstar got stranded mid-air as the platform did not retract according to their preparations.

Khloe Kardashian gives glimpses into lavish birthday bash



Khloe Kardashian just celebrated her 40th birthday in a very extravagant style.

On June 29, the now 40-year-old TV personality took to her official Instagram to share the insights of her birthday bash as she reached the milestone earlier this week on June 27, 2024.

At the denim and diamond dress coded lavish party, it featured a Khloe-themed salon-style décor.

# THE HEARTLAND



# NATIONAL

## Delegation Addresses Critical Issues At HCSTSI Meeting

HYDERABAD: A delegation from the Cantonment Bazar and Peace Committee visited the Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry (HCSTSI) for a pivotal meeting. The session was chaired by HCSTSI Senior Vice President, Dr. Muhammad Ismail Farouk Nami.



During the meeting, cantonment traders raised concerns about the persistent HESCO load shedding and the sealing of shops by cantonment board employees. In response, Dr. Nami assured the delegation of HCSTSI's full support in addressing these issues with the relevant authorities.

The delegation included notable figures such as Shahid Aziz, Vice President, elected members Kazi Asghar Abbasi (Ward 4) and Abid Soldier (Ward 2) of the Hyderabad Cantonment Board; Ghazi Salahuddin, Chairman of Cantt Bazar and Cantt Peace Committee; Yasir Qureshi, President of Cantt Bazar; Younus Pathan, Vice President; Qaiser Barni, General Secretary; along with members Mr. Shahid, Mr. Shahbaz, Mr. Iqbal Memon, Abid Bhai of the Peace Committee, and Mr. Syed Muazzam Shah Jahan. —RT

## Umerkot Police arrest four criminals

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: Umerkot Police continued operations against the criminals elements on orders of DIG Mirpurkhas and SSP Umerkot. The arrested men included Chetan Kolhi,

Muhammad Ali Chandio, Ali Akbar Korai and Poonam Kolhi in the jurisdictions of different police stations. The police recovered motorcycles and other valuables from possession of the arrested men, who were booked in cases.

## 4-year-old Kumb boy drowns in watercourse

By Naz Solangi

KUMB: A 4-year-old boy named Awaiz S/o Fateh Muhammad Broi drowned in watercourse after falling in it near village Dalil Khan

Brohi. The body of the drowned boy was fished out by the local people which was handed over to his heirs after completing necessary medico legal formalities.

## People of Badin protest for replacement of faulty transformer

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: The residents of Cantt Road recorded a protest demonstration for the replacement of the burnt transformer on Monday. The protest leaders said that the transformer in their area has gone out of order since

past 12 days but the concerned authorities have shown an indifferent approach in this regard. The protesters demanded of the high-ups to take steps for the replacement of transformer, otherwise they have announced to widen their protest.

## Man dies of a heatstroke in TMK

By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: Near Tando Muhammad Khan, a 19-year-old resident of the village of Muhammad Soomro, named Bilawal S/o Hussain

Soomro, fainted due to heat exhaustion while working on the land. His family rushed him to the hospital, where doctors confirmed his death. Upon the arrival of his body at home, the family was overwhelmed with grief.

## Ismaili community notable Sultan Ali Khawaja passes away in Talhar

TALHAR: Sultan Ali Khawaja, a member of the Ismaili community passed away at the age of 80. The deceased was the uncle of the prominent figure in the Pakistan People's Party in Sindh, a former administrator of the Badin District Council, and a former adviser to the Sindh Chief Minister Nadir Ali Khawaja and Zahid Hussain Khawaja. He was the father of Shakil Ahmed Khawaja, and Shafiq Ahmed Khawaja. The body of the deceased was laid to rest at his family's ancestral graveyard after performing his fu-



neral prayers which were attended by a large number of people belonging to different walks of life. —RT

## Man injured after being attacked with a metal rod in Jhudo

By Shahid Majeed

JHUDO: In a state of intoxication, a person named Sajid Sial attacked landlord Sultan Sial with an iron rod, leaving him severely injured. The incident occurred in Aftab Town, in front of the Jhudo Civil Hospital. Sultan Sial explained to the media that he was resting on his plot when

Sajid Sial suddenly attacked him with an iron rod causing serious injuries. Sajid Sial mentioned that Sajid Sial had been threatening to kill him for some time and had been hurling abuses and stones at him since the morning. The police admitted the injured Sultan Sial to the civil hospital and began their investigation.

## Two men along with their sister cut TMK youth's sensitive part

By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: The residents of village Tharo Bozdar recorded a protest demonstration under the leadership of Shabir Ahmed Bozdar, Abdul Qayoom Bozdar, Ghulam Mustafa Bozdar and others. Addressing on the occasion, the protest leaders said that a man named Muhammad Aslam Bozdar entered their home along with his sister Zafira and brother. They held

their youth Muhammad Bushage at gunpoint and cut the sensitive part of his body. After the incident both brothers managed to flee from the scene along with their sister Zafira. The area police have refused to register a case of the incident, they added. On the occasion, the protesters demanded of the higher authorities to take notice of the matter and provide justice to their youth, otherwise they have announced to widen their protest.

## Dawood Global And OGDCL Distribute 196 Wheelchairs In Balochistan

DERA BUGTI: In a significant humanitarian initiative, Dawood Global Foundation, with a donation from the Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), distributed 196 wheelchairs to individuals with disabilities in Dera Bugti and Jhal Magsi, Balochistan. The events were coordinated by local authorities and organizations, with the support of PPHI and the Social Welfare Department.

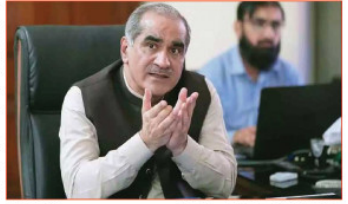


The Dera Bugti ceremony, despite storms and floods, saw 140 recipients receiving their wheelchairs from Chief Guest Mr. Ejaz Sarwar, Deputy Commissioner of Dera Bugti, and Mr. Husain Ahmed, Assistant Commissioner. A similar event in Ghandawa, Jhal Magsi, saw 56 individuals receiving wheelchairs from Chief Guest Mr. Rehmatullah Shah Hashmi, Deputy Commissioner of Jhal Magsi. Tara Uzra Dawood, CEO of Dawood Global Foundation, expressed her commitment to empowering individuals with disabilities through mobility aids, thanking

OGDCL for their support. Local officials, including Mr. Ejaz Sarwar and Mr. Rehmatullah Shah Hashmi, praised the initiative, highlighting the impact on the community. Mr. Muhammad Arshad from OGDCL reaffirmed the company's dedication to social responsibility, while Mr. Muhammad Ali of Dawood Global Foundation spoke of the goal to distribute 10,000 wheelchairs across Pakistan. The collaboration between OGDCL, Dawood Global Foundation, and PPHI was lauded for its effectiveness in enhancing the quality of life for individuals with disabilities in the region. —RT

## Saad Rafique Describes Struggle For Power As Spreading Like Wildfire

LAHORE: Top PML-N leader and former railways minister Khawaja Saad Rafique has stated that the decades-long struggle for power, authority and resources has escalated into a raging wildfire.



In a post on the social networking site X, the former minister remarked, "Hatred, malice, lies and revenge continually fuel this fire, knowing that while parties may destroy each other, they cannot extin-

guish it." Rafique further said that no party was willing to pause, reflect, admit mistakes or step back for mutual progress. —RT/Agency

## Three Killed, Including Woman And Child, In Armed Attack And Bombing In Turbat

TURBAT: Armed assailants launched a deadly attack on a house in Turbat, Balochistan, resulting in the deaths of three individuals, including a woman and a child, and leaving one person injured, according to Leavies officials on Monday.

The attack in the Kech district involved both gunfire and a bomb explosion. "Three people, including a woman and a child, were killed, and one person was injured in the attack," Leavies officials reported. Balochistan's Interior Minister, Mir Ziaullah Langovee, strongly condemned the attack and expressed his sorrow over the loss of the woman and child's lives. He has

called for a report on the incident from the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Turbat. "The targeting of innocent children and women in this act of terrorism is extremely cowardly. We stand with the grieving family in this time of sorrow. The perpetrators who killed innocent and helpless people will soon face justice," Langovee stated. He urged human rights organisations to speak out against the brutal killing of women and children, emphasising that those involved in such acts of terrorism deserve no leniency. Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti expressed deep regret over the deaths in the explo-

sion, stating, "The loss of precious human lives in this tragic incident is heart-wrenching. The hands stained with innocent blood will soon be caught by the law." Meanwhile, the Awami National Party (ANP) condemned the bomb attack and the deaths of women and children, stating that the terrorists aim to spread fear among the public. "Targeting innocent and defenceless citizens is unacceptable in any religion. Those involved in such acts are enemies of humanity," an ANP spokesman said. "The government and relevant agencies must deal with these elements with an iron hand and set an example of them." —RT/Agency

## METRO KARACHI



KARACHI: Former Director General of PSQCA, Mr. Rehmatullah Memon, who is currently the Patron-in-Chief, recently organized the 9th Icon of the Nation Awards at the Beach Luxury Hotel in Karachi. Chief Secretary Sindh, Syed Asif Hyder Shah, was the Chief Guest, while Sindh Information Secretary, Nadeem-ur-Rehman, was the Guest of Honour. The event was also attended by notable figures such as former Secretary Sindh and KCHSU Advisor Shams Jafriani, former MNA and Chairman of the Ibrat Group Kazi Asad Abid, and Senior Journalist Menasha Kumar. —RT

## QUEST conducts computerized entry test for admissions in 2024-25 session

By Samad Ayaz

NAWABSHAH: At the Quad-e-Awam University of Engineering Science and Technology (QUEST) Nawabshah, the computerized entry test for the 2024 batch admissions was supervised by the acting Vice

Chancellor, Professor Dr. Noor Ahmed Memon, in the Computer Systems Department. Professor Dr. Noor Ahmed Memon stated that the computerized entry test is being conducted in five shifts across various university departments, with 200 candidates taking the test in each shift. He mentioned that candidates will receive their results immediately after completing the test on the computer. A total of 2,565 candidates submitted their applications online, out of which 2,097 students are taking the entry test, including 468 female candidates.

## Senior Assistant Radio Pakistan Khairpur Station Iqbal Mirani passes away

By Naz Solangi

KUMB: Iqbal Mirani, the senior assistant at Radio Pakistan Khairpur Station, passed away after prolonged illness. A large number of radio officers and employees, relatives, and neighbors

attended his funeral prayer. Later, he was laid to rest in his ancestral graveyard amidst a sorrowful atmosphere. On his passing, Station Director Radio Pakistan Khairpur Syed Akbar Ali Shah, Program Manager Musarat Ali Mangi, Accounts Officer Zameer Arain, Senior Producer Nazir Gul Mir Malah, Ilyas Lashari, Zahid Mangi, Ayaz Memon, and others expressed their condolences and sympathy to the bereaved family and offered prayers for the deceased.

## Kandiario's civil society decries lack of civic facilities

By Usama Ayaz

KANDIARIO: The leaders of Sindh Adabi Sangat, STP and other organizations, who included Sarmad Syed, Abdul Jabbar Mangrio, Zulfikar Mallah, Rafique Ghangro and oth-

ers recorded a protest demonstration against the budget passed by Kandiario administration. They added that the street lights are out of order in the city and the people have to face many hardships due to non provision of other civic facilities to them. On the occasion, the protesters demanded construction of the new building of the public library and provide other basic facilities to the people, otherwise they have announced to widen their protest.

## Long march against use of unfair means in examinations reaches NWM

By Yousif Rind

NAWAB WALI MUHAMMAD: The long march taken out from Bhitshah against the use of unfair means in the annual SSC and HSC examinations in Sindh after marching through different parts of the

province reached Nawab Wali Muhammad. The leaders, who included Kam Jamali, Zahid Khoso, Badaruddin Gorar, Waqar Soomro, Nayal Mitho Baloch and others urged the Government of Sindh to formulate a policy to control use of unfair means in the examinations and stop influx of the students of other provinces, who are getting admissions in Sindh. A large number of people belonging to different organizations welcomed the participants of the long march.

## DC Muhammad Yousif Shaikh to hold open katcheries in Matiari

Sajjad Ali Abbasi

MATIARI: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Yousif Shaikh will hold an open Katchery at the GBHS New Saeedabad today, in Udero Lal on Thursday 4th July in

Hala on 5th July at Makhdoom Amin Fahim Law College. Hala at 10:00 am respectively. The notification stated that the purpose of the Open Katcheries is to provide a platform for the residents to voice their concerns, suggestions and grievances directly to the relevant authorities. The Deputy Commissioner has directed all department officers to ensure their presence in open Katcheries as per announced schedule.

## IBA test passed teachers demand their offer orders in Mithi

By Ashraf Kunbhar

MITHI: The IBA test passed teachers recorded a protest demonstration outside the DEO office for the issuance of offer orders to them on Monday. While talking to the

media, the protest leaders, who included Karim Dino, Sadam, Fahad Khattai and others said that they had passed the written test conducted by the IBA with more than 40 marks but the concerned authorities have still not issued offer orders to them. On the occasion, the protesters demanded of the higher authorities to take notice of the matter and issue offer orders to them, otherwise they have announced to widen their protest.

## Strengthening of River Indus' embankment demanded in Kingri

By Abdul Qudoos Khilji

PIR JO GOTH: The embankment of the River Indus in Faridabad forest area in Kingri Taluka are facing very dangerous conditions as the em-

bankment is in weak condition near their area. The local people said that their area is 20 feet below the level of the embankment and if any untoward incident occurred then everything will be wiped out. On the occasion, the speakers demanded of the higher authorities to strengthen the embankment of the River Indus to protect them from any untoward incident.

# METRO KARACHI



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a joint meeting with the administration and religious scholars to finalize arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram, held at the CM House.—RT

## Murad Finalizes Major Muharram Plans With Top Religious Scholars

By Rahib Gaho

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presided over a joint meeting with administration and religious scholars to finalize arrangements for Muharram ul Haram majalis and processions. He directed KE, HESCO, and SEPCO to ensure no load shedding from Muharram 1 to 12.

The meeting, held at CM House, was attended by provincial ministers, officials, and religious scholars, including Allama Syed Razi Naqvi and Mola Mohamad Husain. CM Shah emphasized Sindh's tradition of religious harmony and mutual respect.

The IG Police was instructed to coordinate with Shia ulama to develop a



security plan for Muharram events across Sindh. Issues such as road and drainage conditions were addressed, with directives given to the water board and KMC for necessary repairs and water provision to masjid and majalis. CM Shah also directed the Solid Waste Management department to ensure cleanliness of streets and

## "Made in Pakistan" Exhibition Day 3: An Overwhelming Triumph



KARACHI/TASHKENT: The "Made in Pakistan" Exhibition has been hailed as a resounding success by the business communities of both Pakistan and Uzbekistan. Held at the Uz Expo Centre in Tashkent from June 28th to 30th, 2024, the event saw almost 2000 B2B meetings. A significant milestone was achieved with the signing of a USD 40 million MOU between a Pakistani company and the Bukhara Government. Additionally, a pivotal meeting took place between the Head of International Investment & Export of the Textiles Industry Association Uzbekistan (Uzexprom) and the Chief Executive of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, along with exhibitors from Pakistan's textile sector. The discussions centered on potential joint ventures, leveraging the niche expertise of Pakistan in finished textiles. The Pakistani representatives highlighted tariff issues and the need for streamlined banking channels to enhance trade. Both parties agreed to expand the reach of Pakistani textile products across Central Asia. The government-to-government interactions during the event have laid the foundation for stronger trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, as well as with the broader Central Asian region.—RT



KARACHI: Senior Sindh Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit, Excise Taxation and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon is addressing the media against Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui's comments against Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto.—RT

## Sharjeel Demands Governor's Resignation Amid Explosive Controversy

KARACHI: The Sindh government on Monday called for the immediate resignation of Governor Kamran Tessori.

Sindh Senior Minister for Excise, Taxation, Narcotics Control, Transport, and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon and Energy Minister Nasir Hussain Shah made the demand during a press conference, criticising the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) for its divisive politics.

Memon accused the MQM-P of resorting to hatred and a blame game, stating that the party has become irrelevant at the local level. "MQM's politics of hatred and accusations are outdated. They are no longer visible at the Union Council level," he said.

He also criticised MQM-P Convener Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui for his remarks against the former prime minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto.



Both ministers demanded resignation from Governor Tessori to resign, accusing him of failing to address the issues caused by the MQM-P. "It is inappropriate to make baseless accusations against our martyred leaders. Governor Sindh should resign immediately," said Shah. The ministers reiterated their commitment to maintaining decency in politics, despite MQM-P's provocations. "We do not want to respond to rudeness with rudeness or to escalate hateful politics," Memon stated.—RT

## Dr. Baig Joins Key National Assembly Committees On Commerce, Finance, And Economic Affairs

KARACHI: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has appointed Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, MNA from PPP, to the Standing Committees on Finance, Commerce, and Economic Affairs. Dr. Baig, a seasoned economist and Senior Vice President of FPCCI, has been active in proposing tax and energy sector reforms.

The first meeting of the Finance Standing Committee, chaired by MNA Syed Naveed Qamar, is scheduled for 11th July 2024 at the Parliament House. Dr. Baig will engage with trade bod-



ies and chambers to address budget anomalies in the upcoming committee meeting.—RT

## Icon Of The Nation Awards Celebrate True Merit, Defying Civil Awards Controversy



KARACHI: The national series of awards in Pakistan has concluded, with the Civil Award facing criticism for losing its former prestige and becoming recommendation-based. Legendary film star Mustafa Qureshi highlighted this issue during the Icon of the Nation Award distribution ceremony. Qureshi, who has dominated the film industry for forty years, emphasized the importance of unbiased selection of deserving heroes for such awards. He expressed that the Icon Award, given by civil society, holds greater significance and brings more joy than official awards.

Qureshi congratulated the winners recognized for their exceptional achievements across various fields.

The Chief Secretary of Sindh, Syed Asif Hyder Shah, honored the 9th Icon of the Nation Awards as the chief guest and presented the accolades. In his speech, Shah praised the merit-based selection process and the honor of the ninth ICON Awards ceremony. He stressed that the Sindh Government supports these positive activities and encourages recognizing educational, professional, and creative achievements. Shah reiterated the importance of merit-based recognition for deserving individuals, stating that the Icon Award holds greater value.

Founder and Chairman of ICON Awards Rahmatullah Memon and CEO Uzma Sabir expressed their gratitude to the attendees and reiterated their commitment to merit-based awards. They mentioned that the ICON Awards are given purely on performance, rejecting any monetary influence or favoritism. They also announced plans to continue and expand the awards series, emphasizing the need to provide opportunities for youth to utilize their potential.

The event was graced by prominent personalities from various sectors, who were



honored with the Icon Award for their outstanding contributions. Recipients included: Qari Sabihuddin Sabih Rahmani, Dewan Muhammad Yusuf Farooqui (Business), Mian Mumtaz Umar, Aslam Mianoor, Film Star Adnan Jilani, Female Film Star Amar Ahsan Khan, Comedian Naïma Gurj, Ali Gu Malah, Sohrab Soomro, Managing Editor Qazi Asad Abid (Journalism), Mansoor Mugheri, Shan Chaudhary, Maqsood Yousef, Drama Director Qasim Ali Mureed, Sheema Kirmani (Dance), Imran Sonu, Singer Arusa Alig, Shazia Kausar, Shabana Kausar, Ayat Shaikh, Muhammad Ashraf Palari (Engineering), Qasim Rahim (Talent), Waqas Talib Syed (Business HR), Anchor Baakh Pizada, Film Director Neha Laj, National Foods (Quality Standard Food),

Season Canola, Tapal Tea, Electric Motorcycle Dewan Motors, Chief Secretary Syed Asif Haider Shah, Secretary Information Nadeem ur Rehman Memon, Syed Intiaz Ali Shah, Secretary Agriculture Rafiq Ahmad Burro Legend Mustafa Qureshi was given the Icon of the Nation Award for Lifetime Achievement. Notable attendees included PMLN Senator Nihal Hashmi, MPA Halar Wasan, Sana Aqeel, Film Star Aslam Sheikh, General Manager PTV Amjad Shah, Tanveer Abbasi, Nisar Solangi, Shams Jafarani, Umar Hanif, Tariq Mehmood, Salim Sharif, and Shahzob Sultan. Hundreds of people participated in the program, with many artists performing.—RT

## Karachi Reels As Six More Fall To Deadly Heat Stroke



KARACHI: At least six more people died from the heat stroke while one citizen lost his life in Jinnah Hospital. Monday.

The Sindh Health Department said five deaths had been reported in Abbottabad Hospital due to the heat stroke while one citizen lost his life in Jinnah Hospital. It is worth mentioning that heat stroke has claimed 45 lives during June 21 to 30 in the city.—RT/Agency

## Mayor Conducts Sweeping Inspection Of Drain Cleansing Efforts Across Karachi

KARACHI: Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab emphasized ongoing monitoring of drain cleaning efforts throughout the city, ensuring readiness for the upcoming monsoon season. During visits to various locations including Bilawal Chowringhi Nala, Essa Nagri Nala, Songal Nala, and Nursery Nala, he inspected drainage preparations in District Korangi.

Mayor Wahab directed officials to clear daily choking points in drains and accelerate cleaning processes, addressing both major and minor drains to mitigate potential drainage issues. He highlighted the successful removal of encroachments around Gujjar Nala and Mehmoodabad Nala, facilitating improved rainwater drainage, with plans for similar actions in other areas.



Concerning traffic disruptions, Wahab emphasized efforts to optimize drainage at critical locations like Nursery on Shahrah-e-Faisal. He urged citizens to responsibly dispose of waste, emphasizing collective responsibility for maintaining cleanliness. Machinery and pumps are prepared for immediate deployment, ensuring swift response to rain-related challenges.—RT

## KATI Applauds MQM's Acquisition Of Key National Assembly Chairmanships

KARACHI: The Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI) President, Johar Qandhari, congratulated the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) for securing chairmanships of four National Assembly standing committees. Special congratulations were extended to Javed Hanif, Chairman of the Standing Committee for Trade, and Hafeezuddin Advocate, Chairman of the Standing Committee for Industrial Production.

Qandhari highlighted the business community's high expectations for these leaders in fostering economic stability. He addressed the challenges faced by exporters and industrialists due to substantial taxes and changes in the fixed tax regime in the recent budget. He expressed hope that the new chairmen would



take effective steps to alleviate these issues and play a crucial role in reviving Pakistan's economy. "The newly elected chairmen are expected to collaborate with stakeholders to create and implement long-term economic policies that will enhance investment, industrialization, and employment opportunities," said Qandhari. He assured the full cooperation of the Korangi industrial area's business community, emphasizing their significant contribution to the nation's exports.

Qandhari also congratulated MQM leaders Farooq Sattar and Syed Aminul Haq on their appointments, noting that MQM's control of important committees such as Privatization and IT holds direct implications for Pakistan's economic growth. He stressed the need for decisive actions to enhance privatization of loss-making institutions and boost IT exports.

He appealed to MQM's leadership to actively voice the concerns of the business community in the National Assembly and Senate, emphasizing the urgency of addressing the current economic crisis through unified action by all political parties.—RT

## KCCI President Slams Government Over Soaring Petroleum Prices, Urges Immediate Economic Relief

KARACHI: President Iftikhar Ahmed Sheikh of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) has strongly criticized the recent hike in petroleum and diesel prices, calling it deeply disappointing. He emphasized that the increase, amounting to Rs7.45 and Rs9.56 respectively, will significantly raise business costs and exacerbate hardships for all sectors of society, particularly the general public. Sheikh stated that while the price adjustments reflect

global market trends, the government's decision fails to alleviate the economic strain already burdening the nation. He lamented the government's reluctance to share the economic burden, emphasizing that such policies unfairly shift the weight onto industries and the public. Sheikh expressed concerns that these measures, combined with recent heavy taxes and high energy tariffs, are stifling economic growth and increasing prices across essential commodities.

He urged the government to reconsider its approach, advocating for structural reforms, reduced unproductive spending, expanded tax bases, and enhanced public-private partnerships to foster sustainable economic growth. Sheikh emphasized the urgency of lowering industrial input costs, including electricity, gas, and petroleum products, to safeguard businesses and revive the economy from potential collapse.—RT



KARACHI: Majid Aziz, Former President of the Employers Federation of Pakistan, was the Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker on the topic "Importance of Sustainability and Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges" at the Sustainability Innovation Summit 2024 held at the National Aerospace Science and Technology Park, Karachi.—RT

You are only young once, but you can be immature forever.

—Hannah Marks

# The REGIONAL TIMES

Uniting People Every Day

TUESDAY JULY 02 2024

## READERS

If you are having difficulty in getting your copy of REGIONAL TIMES please contact our Karachi newsagent, Syed Rashid Masood Karachi Newsagent Agency at (0300-2749454). For the rest of Sindh please contact Tahir Shah of Sakhi Shah News Agency at (0333-2714034), (0332-2647713), (0302-3028990)

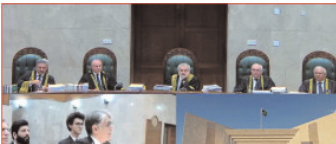
### SC Judge: ECP Holds Authority Over Reserved Seats Formula, Can Declare Candidates Independent

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court Justice Ayesha Malik Monday said that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is in control of the formula for the allocation of reserved seats, giving it the power to declare any candidate as independent.

"The ECP can declare anyone independent as per its will," Justice Malik said as a 13-member full-court SC bench heard the Sunni Itehad Council's (SIC) plea against the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) verdict upholding the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision denying them the reserved seats.

The bench, led by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, comprises Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Athar Minalah, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Shahid Waheed, Justice Irfan Saadat Khan and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan.

During the hearing today, ECP's lawyer Sikander



Bashir apprised the court that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) issued party affiliation certificates along with Form 66, which were signed by Barrister Gohar Khan.

However, the counsel contended that nomination papers filed by the party's candidates weren't valid since it had never held intra-party polls at that time nor had elected a party chairman.

Commenting on the issue of intra-party polls, CJP Isa noted that it is an accepted fact that the PTI failed to hold elections within the party despite being given a year's time.

Furthermore, Justice Ayesha inquired about the electoral body's counsel regarding the KP advocate general's argument wherein he

maintained that the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) was allocated reserved seats despite failure to submit the list of candidates.

"You [ECP] didn't take any action against the BAP," the judge remarked, further asking the electoral body if it had held any meeting on the said issue regarding the aforesaid party.

Meanwhile, Justice Mansoor stressed that the court of intra-party polls was given its due rights.

"The court wants to ensure that no party is given more or less seats than what is due to it," he said.

The court then directed the ECP to submit the details of the reserved seats allocated in 2024 along with the documents regarding the re-

levant formula and adjourned the hearing till 11:30am Tuesday (tomorrow).

The whole reserved seats issue holds significance as the PTI-backed independent candidates, who make up the majority of the opposition benches, lost as many as 77 reserved seats in NA and provincial assemblies due to the PHC's verdict.

The issue first emerged after the PTI-backed independent candidates emerged victorious in the February 8 elections and subsequently joined the SIC in a bid to claim seats reserved for minorities and women.

However, the PTI suffered a setback after the ECP citing the party's failure to submit its list of candidates, denied allocating the reserved seats to the SIC.

The party then approached the PHC which upheld the electoral body's decision on the matter.

Subsequently, the SIC moved the SC seeking to set aside the PHC verdict and the allocation of 67 women and 11 minority seats in the assemblies.

They eventually ended up in the apex court where the

ECP has maintained that the reserved seats cannot be allotted to the SIC as the party did not submit the list of candidates before the January 24 deadline.

Whereas, the federal government, via Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan submitted its written response to the apex court urging it to reject the SIC's appeal seeking the allocation of reserved seats for women and minorities in the National and provincial assemblies.

The 30-page written submission argues that the reserved seats for minorities and women could be given to a political party which contested the polls and won at least one seat besides providing a list of candidates based on the total number of seats it won as per the law.

Additionally, the PTI has also moved the SC seeking to become a party in the said case contending that the PTI and the SIC were deprived of reserved seats despite being eligible. The SIC was ready to provide a list of candidates for the allocations but was denied permission to submit it.—RT/Agency

### PTI Forms Five-Member Team For Talks with JUI-F Following Fazl's Criticism

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has formed a five-member negotiation team for talks with Jamaat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) and has communicated the names to the religious party, sources told media.

The negotiation team, as per the sources, comprises PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar, former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser, party's Central Information Secretary Raouf Hasan, Senator Shibli Faraz, and NA Opposition Leader Omar Ayub Khan.

The development comes as the leadership of both parties, who have been arch-rivals traditionally, have held multiple meetings since the February 8 polls due to their mutual concerns over the alleged interference and manipulation during the general elections. Last month, PTI's Qaiser called on JUI-F Emir Maulana Fazlur Rehman in Islamabad wherein both leaders agreed on fulfilling the role of opposition in the National Assembly as well as on the constitution of a political committee to address various issues between them and formulate a political strategy.

Both parties have also found common ground in their opposition to the recently announced anti-terror drive titled "Operation Azm-e-Istekham" announced by the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led government.



During the said meeting, the PTI and the JUI-F leadership maintained that military operation was not the solution to the problems and stressed the role of political parties in achieving peace and stability in the province.

But speaking to the media in Islamabad a day earlier, Fazl said that the party's Majlis-e-Shura — the top decision-making body — has decided against becoming part of any alliance for now and has expressed "serious reservations" over the PTI in light of the reports that the two parties were on a verge of joining hands against the coalition government led by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

"Our stance and reservations against PTI are very serious," he said, adding that the decision-making body had reviewed JUI-F's meetings with other political parties and declared it nothing more than a "political process."

Speaking about the prospects of dialogue, the politico said that his party welcomed PTI if they wanted to hold talks.

However, he said that the PTI still "lacked consistency," he added.

"Sunni Itehad Council (SIC) chief ruled out an alliance with JUI-F. These are two contradictory opinions which we are finding difficult to establish a stance on," Fazl said while referring to the possible dialogue with PTI and the reluctance of its allied party to enter talks.

The JUI-F chief further stated that different delegations hold consultations on behalf of the jailed PTI founder but the party hadn't yet decided on a team for holding the dialogue.

He said that his party did not have any hesitation in creating a "better political environment" and it stood by the positive approach towards its political rivals.

The politician called on the PTI and SIC to remove the confusion regarding their position on holding a dialogue.—RT/Agency

### Headline Inflation Increases To 12.6% Year-on-Year In June

ISLAMABAD: Picking up the pace at the outset of the new fiscal year, headline inflation came in at 12.6% year-on-year (YoY) in June compared to 11.8% in May, according to data released by the country's federal statistics agency on Monday. This increase aligns with market and government expectations.

According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) based inflation increased by 0.5% on a month-on-month basis in June. The CPI-based inflation in May rose 11.8% from a year earlier, the lowest reading in 30 months and below the finance ministry's projections.

The country has been beset by inflation above 20% since May 2022. Last year in May, inflation jumped as high as 38% as the country navigated reforms as part of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout programme. However, inflation has since slowed down.

Brokerage firm Topline Securities noted that the reading matched their projections, so it did not surprise them.

This CPI reading brings the average inflation for fiscal year 2023-24 to 23.4%, compared to 29.2% in fiscal year 2022-23.

The Ministry of Finance, in its Monthly Economic Update and Outlook report, had forecast a marginally



higher inflation rate for June 2024 compared to the previous month but noted it was still lower than the same period last year.

The ministry attributed the hike to higher prices of perishable items driven by Eid ul Adha and added that the government is working to manage supply and demand to bring about price stability, reduce market volatility, and improve the inflation outlook.

JS Global Research, another brokerage firm, had projected CPI inflation to hover around 12.5% YoY, with the FY24 average at 23.8%, continuing the slow-down that started in May (11.8%). This compares to 17.3% in April and a significant drop from 29.4% in June 2023.

"On a monthly basis, it is likely to ascend by 0.45%, following a slight rebound in vegetable prices due to ongoing festivities during the current month," the AKD report said.

As per the AKD report, with both food and fuel prices slowing down in May, "we anticipate near-term CPI readings to remain highly susceptible to the upcoming inflationary hikes announced in the federal budget."

"Additionally, any further rebounds in essential commodity prices driven by a pullback in crude oil in the wake of global monetary easing, alongside moderate weakness in the domestic currency, if any, may keep disinflationary prospects in check," according to the AKD report.—RT/Agency

### Pakistan And India Exchange Prisoner Lists Through Diplomatic Channels



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India on Monday exchanged lists of prisoners in each other's custody through a diplomatic channel in Islamabad and New Delhi.

These lists are exchanged simultaneously, in pursuance of the Consular Agreement of 2008, every year on January 1 and July 1, a Foreign Office statement said.

As per the statement, Pakistan handed over a list of 254 Indian or believed-to-be Indian civilians and fishermen incarcerated in Pakistani jails, while India shared a list of 452 Pakistani or believed-to-be Pakistani civilian prisoners and fishermen in Indian jails.

Moreover, a list of 38 missing Pakistani defence personnel, believed to be in India's custody since the wars of 1965 and 1971, was also handed over by Pakistan. Islamabad has called for immediate release and repatriation of all Pakistani prisoners who have completed their sentence in India.

A request for special consular access to various believed-to-be Pakistani prisoners, including the physically — and mentally-challenged prisoners, and for expeditious confirmation of their national status has been made, the statement added.

The government also urged India to ensure safety, security, and well-being of all Pakistani or believed-to-be Pakistani prisoners, awaiting their release and repatriation.

"The government is committed to addressing humanitarian matters as a priority. It will continue its endeavours to ensure early return of all Pakistani prisoners in Indian jails," the statement read.

As part of these efforts, repatriation of 62 Pakistani prisoners in 2023, and four others in 2024, has so far been secured.—RT/Agency

### PTI States No Room For Those Who Left During Crisis

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Core Committee on Monday announced that those who distanced themselves from the party during challenging times would not be welcomed back.

In an important meeting, the Core Committee unanimously passed three key resolutions. The committee recommended not accepting the resignation of Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan, praising his commendable services during the party's testing period. They urged him to withdraw his resignation, highlighting the importance of his role for continuity in party policies amid current circumstances.

"Omar Ayub's contributions are crucial for maintaining party policies during these trying times," the resolution stated. "The Core Committee requests lifetime chairman Imran Khan to not accept Omar Ayub Khan's resignation."

The committee strongly condemned individuals who abandoned the party at a critical juncture, stating they have no moral ground to



comment on party matters from the outside. "Those who left the party during tough times will never be accepted back," the resolution read.

The statement further noted that any decision regarding individuals regretting their actions rests solely with lifetime chairman Imran Khan. The party affirmed its commitment to enforcing strict discipline within its ranks and dealing sternly with any violations.

"Party members who violate discipline will face severe consequences, including suspension of basic membership and other disciplinary actions," the resolution warned. Cases of those already served notices for discipline violations will be resolved within seven days.

PTI has seen a wave of resignation pouring in recently after rumours of forward bloc and internal strifes became apparent.

Amid escalating conflicts within PTI, lawmaker Junaid Akbar resigned from the party's core committee on Saturday.

His resignation follows that of Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Omar Ayub, who stepped down as PTI secretary general, indicating further changes in the party's organisational structure.

Sher Afzal Marwat demanded the resignation of PTI Senator Shibli Faraz, accusing him of preventing access to imprisoned PTI founder Imran Khan.—RT/Agency

### Tarar Addresses Shahid Khaqan And Miftah's Criticism Regarding Tax-Heavy Budget

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar on Monday hit back at former PML-N leaders, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and Miftah Ismail, following the latter's criticism of 'tax-laden' Budget 2024-25, media reported.

Addressing a joint press conference, Shahid Khaqan and Miftah Ismail — who recently launched a new political party — castigated the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led government for burdening the inflation-hit citizens by imposing more taxes in the Budget 2024-25.

Abbasi asked the government to reduce its expenditures instead of imposing taxes on the public, demanding review of the federal budget — which took effect from today following an accord by President Asif Ali Zardari. He alleged that the government allocated Rs500 billion for legislators, stating that political favours were being prioritised over the welfare of the people. He



questioned whether the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) was aware of the massive tax evasion in the cigarette industry. The former PM highlighted that Pakistan's largest expenditure was debt servicing, and that no one was willing to tackle the issue of diesel smuggling. He also pointed out that factories in FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) were not benefiting the local population, and that taxes should be levied on them as they were not contributing to the region's development. Meanwhile, Miftah Ismail suggested that taxing diesel and LPG smuggling could generate significant revenue, making other taxes unnecessary.

He also recalled that the IMF had recommended taxing agriculture and real estate, which the government had failed to implement. Responding to the criticism, Information Minister Attallah said Rs500 billion rupees are being distributed among legislators in the name of development schemes Tarar said the total amount of Public Sector Development Programme is Rs1,500 billion and made it clear that the government has no intention to give Rs500 billion to members of the national and the provincial assemblies.—RT/Agency

### PM to Attend Dual SCO Summits In Kazakhstan



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will travel to Kazakhstan for the twin Summits of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Heads of State (CHS) and SCO Plus from 03-04 July 2024 in Astana. He will be accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar and other senior members of the cabinet and senior government officials. Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release on Monday. "At the SCO Council of Heads of Summit Meeting, the Prime Minister will share Pakistan's perspective on important re-

gional and global issues and underline the importance Pakistan accords to regional connectivity and cooperation with SCO member countries," it was added. The prime minister will also address the SCO Plus Summit that brings together SCO member states as well as invited dialogue partners, observer states, guests of the chair and international organizations. He would share Pakistan's perspective on important regional and global issues and underline the importance of strengthening the organization for the benefit of the peoples of the SCO region.—RT/Agency

### -What exactly is this Sugar Daddy smoking? Jahangir Tareen Praises 'People-Friendly' Budget During Meeting With PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with industrialist and a member of the Economic Advisory Council, Jahangir Khan Tareen, at the Prime Minister's Office on Monday.

During the meeting, Jahangir Tareen praised the business and people-friendly budget despite challenging economic conditions. He congratulated PM Shehbaz on steering the economy in a positive direction. Also present at the meeting was former special advisor to the prime minister and a leader of the Itehad-e-Pakistan Party, Awn Chaudhry.

PM Shehbaz mentioned that the budget included specific measures to ensure the development of the export industry, guaranteeing prompt payments to exporters.

He emphasised that growth in the industrial, agricultural, and information technology sectors would strengthen the economy and create new employment opportunities.



Another delegation of business leaders, including Shehzad Saleem, Zaid Bashir, Musaddiq Zulqarnain, and Shehryar Chishti, met with the PM in Islamabad.

The leaders commended PM Shehbaz for steering the national economy towards stability and creating a conducive environment for business and investment. They also informed him of the positive reception of the budget within the business community.

The delegation expressed

optimism that the budget would positively impact business activities in the country. The PM stated that the country is moving in the right economic direction, and the budget includes measures to provide relief to the public.

He highlighted that business-friendly policies have stabilised the national economy and restored foreign investors' confidence. The government is actively working on implementing budget measures, with a primary focus on increasing national exports, he added.—RT/Agency