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CIRCULATION CERTIFIED BY ABC

At Least 15 Dead, 2 Injured As Passenger Jeep Plunges Into Neelum River In AJK

MUZAFFARABAD: At least 15 people lost their lives and two were injured when a passenger jeep tumbled down from the Leswa Bypass Road near Devlian village onto the bank of the Neelum River on Wednesday while they were travelling from Lawat Bala to Muzaffarabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).



passengers were announced dead when they reached the hospital, as per the rescue officials.

He added, "The road is perfectly smooth and in good condition."

Apart from the police and rescue teams, local people and youth also volunteered and took part in the rescue efforts.

The passengers who lost their lives belonged to two families of Lawat Bala village in the Neelum Valley. The bodies were handed over to their respective kin and their funeral prayers will be offered in the village before they are laid to rest.

As the possible causes behind the accident are still being determined, Muzaffarabad Deputy Commissioner Nadeem Ahmed Janjua told Geo News.

Accidents like this routinely take place in the mountainous areas of AJK. The prime reason behind such occurrences is mostly faulty and worn-out public transport vehicles, but a lack of road safety measures also causes such road mishaps.—RT/Agency

Though police and rescue teams rushed to the accident site, their efforts faced certain difficulties due to the occurrence of rain, according to Rescue 1122. They added that the bodies were sent to the District Headquarters Hospital, whereas, the wounded passengers were taken to the Muzaffarabad Combined Military Hospital.

Additionally, a woman cutting grass and two children were also injured at the scene. They were also admitted to the hospital.

Notably, at least 17 passengers were travelling in the jeep including the driver, out of which six men, four women, and three children could not survive the accident. Additionally, two other

Federal Cabinet Extends Registered Afghan Refugees' Stay By 1 Year

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday decided to grant a one-year extension in the stay of registered Afghan refugees, allaying their fear of being sent back to Afghanistan.

The caretaker government had announced the repatriation of all illegal foreigners citing security concerns in October last year. The decision was alleged to be meant for Afghan refugees, a charge that was denied by officials.

Repatriation of undocumented Afghans began on November 1 and officials now say that up to 500,000 have gone back. Officials had earlier stated there were nearly 1.7m illegal Afghans with most having lived in Pakistan for 40 years.

A statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office today said, "The federal cabinet approved one-year extension of the validity of PoR (Proof of Registration)



cards of 1.45 million Afghan refugees. Their PoR cards have been expired on June 30, 2024. The extension has been granted until June 30, 2025" said a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

According to the UN refugee agency, Pakistan is still home to around 1.3 million registered Afghans.

PoR is a critical identity document held by registered Afghan refugees.

citizenship cards, according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

The federal cabinet approved the extension of the validity of PoR cards for Afghan refugees that expired on June 30.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif presided over the meeting. The cabinet took the decision amid reports that Pakistan had suspended the repatriation of Afghans without legal documents. The UNHCR welcomed

the government's decision. "This is a big relief for refugees who were facing uncertainty and anxiety," UNHCR spokesman Qaisar Khan Afridi told media.

He said the "generous gesture" demonstrated Pakistan's commitment to the global refugee cause and showed "solidarity and compassion towards refugees at a time when displaced people need our support".

Afridi said that 52 per cent of PoR cardholders lived in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while over 315,000 lived in Balochistan, around 1,950,000 in Punjab, 75,000 in Sindh, 40,000 in Islamabad and some in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi confirmed the suspension of the repatriation plan after meeting with Pakistani leaders a day ago at the conclusion of his three-day visit.

Grandi had expressed appreciation that the "Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan" had been suspended and sought assurances that it would remain on hold, according to a UNHCR statement.

"He called for Pakistan's proud tradition of hospitality towards those Afghans with international protection needs to continue."

However, the Foreign Office spokesperson denied the UNHCR chief's claim regarding the repatriation plan's suspension. "This is not true. It may be noted that no such understanding has been given by Pakistan to the UNHCR, including in recent meetings with the High Commissioner for Refugees," Mumtaz Zehra Baloch told media. She said the repatriation plan remained in place and was being implemented in an orderly and phased manner.—RT/Agency

NAB Amendments Case: 'It's About The Country, Not Me,' Says Imran

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has said that the issue of amendments in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) ordinance is not about himself but in fact relates to the whole of the country.



"This was not about personal gain but the greater good of our country and millions of Pakistanis who place their faith in a system that should serve them," Khan said in his written submission to the apex court.

The former premier made the request while referring to a previous apex court order. The PTI founder's submission comes as the SC, last month, reserved its verdict on the federal and provincial governments' pleas challenging the apex court's September 15 majority 2-1 judgement, which was announced by a bench led by former chief justice Umar Ata Bandial.

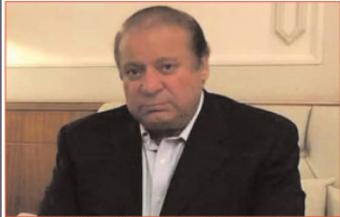
shares a rather contentious history with CJP Isa as it was his government that had filed a presidential reference against the incumbent chief justice in 2019 for allegedly owning properties abroad under his wife and children's names and not mentioning them in his health statement.

Later, Khan admitted that the filing of the presidential reference against CJP Isa was a "mistake".

More over, the incumbent CJP has been part of various cases involving the former premier and his party has voiced concerns in this regard. PTI spokesperson, as per media, has complained of

his party being deprived of justice and that even its petitions weren't being taken up by the courts. "The PTI core committee wants that CJP Isa should not sit on benches in our cases [...] unfortunately, the kind of decisions that are being delivered are seen to be biased, the element of favouritism in case verdicts strengthens our demand," he claimed. In his four-page written submission, the PTI founder further said: "Throughout my political career, I have consistently taken a stand against corruption, even at great personal risk and sacrifice, including my current imprisonment. My life's work and sacrifices have always been dedicated to the fight against corruption and the establishment of justice," Khan said.—RT/Agency

Nawaz Calls For Power Relief Measures For The Middle Class



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme and party president Nawaz Sharif has sought relief for middle class in the electricity bills.

Dar also briefed the PML-N supreme about his recent foreign visits.—RT/Agency

No Decision Yet On Wheat Export: Shehbaz



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday told the National Assembly that the government had made no decision for the export of wheat.

to the opposition leader which was not practiced during the speakership of Asad Qaiser.

"No decision has been made for the export of wheat. I want to bring it on record before the House that there is no such decision for the wheat export," he told the National Assembly responding to a point of order raised by a parliamentarian.

Meanwhile, the House today passed "the State Owned Enterprises (Governance and Operations) Bill, 2024.

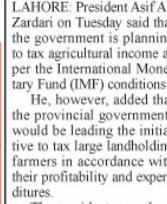
However, referring to the PTI government's sugar and wheat scams, he recalled that it was also on record that in the past wheat and sugar were first exported and later imported and where the billions and trillions of rupees went was part of the history.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the security forces and police conducted a joint intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) Peshawar district, the military's media wing said on Wednesday.

The prime minister also appreciated National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for showing "generosity" to give floor

him", as he remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities, and was also responsible for martyrdom of Captain Hussain Jahangir Shaheed and Havildar Shafiq Ullah Shaheed on 26 May 2024.

Government Plans To Tax Agricultural Income Under IMF's Directive: Zardari



LAHORE: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday said that the government is planning to tax agricultural income as per the International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditions.

He, however, added that the provincial governments would be leading the initiative to tax large landholding farmers in accordance with their profitability and expenditures.

The president gave these remarks while addressing the Professor Waris Mir Memorial Seminar in the provincial capital where he also spoke on issues related to media and democracy.

He cautioned that a strong religious lobby in the world was manipulating and managing perceptions aiming to sow divisions in Muslim societies.

He said different sectors of the economy, especially the agricultural sector, needed to be developed along modern lines.

He said he was a supporter of the freedom of the press and had always tolerated harsh criticism from the media. "Societies need to be careful against agenda-driven information. One has to face trials and tribulations in life,

Four Soldiers Martyred, Three Terrorists Killed In Peshawar Operation

RAWALPINDI: Four Pakistan Army soldiers embraced martyrdom while three terrorists, including a commander, were killed in a joint intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted by the Security Forces and Police in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) Peshawar district, the military's media wing said on Wednesday.



According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the security forces and police conducted a joint intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) Peshawar district, the military's media wing said on Wednesday.

Muhammad Akram (age: 34 years, resident of Mansehra District) of CTD KPK, who having fought gallantly, embraced Shahadat.

During conduct of the operation, three terrorists including high value target, commander Abdul Raheem were killed whereas weapons and ammunition were also recovered from them, the ISPR said.

"Pakistan's Security Forces stand shoulder to shoulder with other law enforcement agencies to ensure peace and stability across of Pakistan and such sacrifices of our brave men further strengthen our resolve," the ISPR said. The operation came amid a surge in terrorist activities in Pakistan, especially in KP and Balochistan, since the outlawed militant group Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) ended its ceasefire with the government in November 2022.—RT/Agency

Fazl Calls On PTI To 'Quit Assemblies

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has advised Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to 'quit assemblies' and hit the street against the incumbent government, media reported on Wednesday, citing sources.



According to inside story of the meetings between Fazlur Rehman and PTI leaders, the JUI-F chief advised Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf to come out of assemblies and join the street movement for solution of problems, the sources said.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), rejecting the advice of Fazlur Rehman said the party already made a mistake by coming out of assemblies in the past.

The JUI-F chief demanded for immediate elections to ensure the integrity of the democratic process.

A decisive meeting on forging alliance between the JUI-F and PTI is likely to be held next week, the sources said. Earlier on May 2,

Addressing a public gathering in Karachi, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that assemblies were "sold" to the people's voice is heard and their mandate is respected.—RT/Agency

he added, "The recent elections were fake, and its results are unacceptable," he added. The JUI-F chief demanded fresh elections to ensure that the people's voice is heard and their mandate is respected.—RT/Agency

THE HEARTLAND



Mirpurkhas: The Divisional Commissioner Faisal Ahmed Uqaili is inaugurating the Technical Vocational and Skills Development Program Centre at the People's School. Photo by Younis Chandio

Sindh government working to significantly enhance healthcare sector: Nisar Khuhro

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: The President of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Sindh and MPA Nisar Ahmed Khuhro stated that the Sindh Government aims to significantly enhance the healthcare sector to ensure that every common person remains healthy. He highlighted that institutions like NICVD (National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases) and SIUT (Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation) have already been established, serving as benchmarks that are unparalleled in other provinces of Pakistan. Khuhro expressed his desire to expand maternal and child health centers in rural areas to the union council level, ensuring that every pregnant woman has access to healthcare facilities for childbirth. During an orientation ceremony for the nursing department at Chandra Institute of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences, Khuhro praised the private sector's efforts in establishing the institution, which provides significant opportunities for youth to acquire medical education. He emphasized the crucial role such institutions play in healthcare, enabling graduates to pursue careers domestically and internationally.



Khuhro acknowledged the shortcomings in managing basic health units and dispensaries in rural Sindh, which were subsequently handed over to PPHI (People's Primary Healthcare Initiative) to address these issues. Other notable attendees included Dr. Abdul Rasheed Shaikh, a member of the institute's advisory committee, Associate Professor Rubina Parveen from People's Medical University Nawabshah, Dr. Dayali Gul, Dr. Sakina Gad and others who welcomed the new students in the nursing field, recognizing its pivotal role in the healthcare system. The institute's chairman, S. Iqbal Babu, announced the initiation of several programs, including Doctor of Physiotherapy, Nursing, and paramedical courses, with plans to introduce a two-year B. Pharmacy program soon. He also declared that students achieving top positions in the university would be awarded free laptops as a token of appreciation. Khuhro distributed appreciation certificates to the faculty members and students who excelled in their monthly tests and viva exams in the Doctor of Physiotherapy program. The event was attended by Deputy Mayor Muhammad Amin Shaikh, Advocate Riaz Soomro, advisory committee members Professor Dr. Abdul Manan Shaikh, Professor Dr. Abdul Rasheed Shaikh, Principal of Public Health School Dr. Pirah Sakina Gad, President of Larkana Press Club Murata Naveed Larik, Nursing College instructor Tahir Ali Bhattu, PPP leader Khair Muhammad Shaikh, and Associate Professor of Nursing Rubina Parveen, among others.

Commissioner Faisal Ahmed Uqaili inaugurates exhibition at People's School Mirpurkhas

By Younis Chandio

MIRPURKHAS: The Divisional Commissioner Mirpurkhas, Faisal Ahmed Uqaili, stated that under the public-private partnership in Sindh, the Sindh Education Foundation and People's School, managed by Sindh Madressatul Islam, have sparked an educational revolution by providing 100% free and quality education. He congratulated the administration and teachers of the primary to secondary school operating in two shifts in Mirpurkhas for their success. During his attendance as the special guest at an exhibition ceremony at People's School Mirpurkhas, organized to encourage the teachers, children, and trainees of the short courses started in two shifts for promoting "Skill Development," "Course of IT Information," and "Early Child



Care Education Teachers Training" to empower women with respectable employment and skills. Commissioner Faisal Ahmed Uqaili expressed his views. On this occasion, focal person of Sindh Madressatul Islam Board Karachi and senior principal of People's School, Ms. Amreen Naz, briefed Commissioner Faisal Ahmed Uqaili in detail about the standards of education and training at the school, stating that 2,300 children are receiving free



HYDERABAD: Residents of Tando Hyder are holding a protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at the Hyderabad press club.-RT

TMK's Joint Action Committee delegation calls on MS of DHQ Hospital Dr Shahla Gul Shah



By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: On Wednesday, a delegation representing the Joint Action Committee convened a significant meeting with Dr Shahla Gul Shah, the Medical Superintendent (MS) of DHQ Hospital Tando Muhammad Khan, at her office. The delegation included esteemed members such as Dr GM Gul, Dr Luif Talpur, Pir Agha Abdul Rehman Jar Sarhandi, Dr Ahmed Noonani, Dr Chaman Kal, Shoukat Ali Brohi, Javed Halepotto, Niaz Wasan, and Azam Bhatti. During the meeting, Dr Shahla Gul Shah attentively listened to the concerns and reservations voiced by the Joint Action Committee members. The discussions encompassed various issues related to hospital management, healthcare delivery, and infrastructure improvements necessary to enhance patient care and services. In response, Dr Shahla Gul Shah provided clarifications and insights into the hospital's current operational challenges and future plans. She emphasized her commitment to addressing the identified issues and assured the delegation of her dedication to improving healthcare standards at DHQ Hospital. The leaders of the Joint Action Committee expressed their appreciation for the open dialogue and Dr Shah's proactive approach in engaging with community concerns. They reaffirmed their pledge to collaborate closely with the hospital administration for the betterment of facilities and the welfare of patients seeking treatment. "The cooperation between the Joint Action Committee and the hospital administration is crucial for achieving our shared goal of providing quality healthcare services," stated one of the committee members. The delegation pledged to continue their support and advocacy efforts to ensure that the hospital meets the healthcare needs of the local population effectively. The meeting concluded on a positive note, with both parties committed to ongoing dialogue and collaborative efforts aimed at achieving sustainable improvements in healthcare delivery and patient satisfaction at DHQ Hospital Tando Muhammad Khan.

-Will someone please take notice of their plight? Two women faint at BISP Centre in Kunri



By MM Faisal

KUNRI: The Government Qazi Sultan High School, housing the BISP Centre in Kunri, witnessed distressing scenes as the number of deserving women seeking assistance continues to surge, exacerbating conditions due to inadequate facilities. Despite efforts, the overcrowding has strained the school's infrastructure, leading to significant challenges for both beneficiaries and administrators alike. Amidst these difficulties, two women collapsed due to the overwhelming crowd at the centre, prompting immediate medical attention. They were swiftly transported to the Taluka Hospital for urgent care, highlighting the severity of the situation exacerbated by the overcrowded conditions. In response to mounting concerns, the school administration has taken proactive steps by formally requesting the Deputy Commissioner (DC) to relocate the BISP Centre to alleviate the strain on the school's resources. This plea underscores the urgent need for improved infrastructure and expanded facilities to accommodate the growing number of beneficiaries accessing essential services. The incident has sparked broader discussions regarding the welfare and support systems for vulnerable populations, emphasizing the critical importance of ensuring adequate resources and facilities to uphold the dignity and well-being of those in need. As stakeholders deliberate on potential solutions, the community remains hopeful for swift action to address these pressing challenges and improve conditions at the BISP Centre in Kunri.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Husri are holding a protest demonstration which was organized by the Human Rights Protection Forum at the Hyderabad Press Club against their area's influential persons.-RT

SSP Umerkot Asif Raza Baloch Forms Quick Response Force for Muharram-ul-Haram

By B Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: In preparation for Muharram-ul-Haram, SSP Umerkot Asif Raza Baloch, acting under the directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh, has instituted a specialized Quick Response Force (QRF) aimed at ensuring security and maintaining law and order throughout the commemorative period. The Quick Response Force in Umerkot has been structured into three distinct sections, strategically deployed to oversee and respond swiftly to any emergent situations that may arise during Muharram-ul-Haram. Each section of the QRF is equipped and trained to handle various scenarios effectively, ranging from crowd management to immediate response to potential security threats. SSP Asif Raza Baloch has issued stringent instructions to police officers under his command to ensure comprehensive security arrangements for mourners participating in religious processions and gatherings. Emphasizing the critical importance of vigilance and proactive policing, SSP Baloch underscored that any lapses in security would not be tolerated. "The safety and security of all citizens, particularly during sensitive religious observances, are our top priorities," stated SSP Asif Raza Baloch. He reiterated the commitment of law enforcement agencies to maintain a robust presence and swift response capabilities throughout Muharram-ul-Haram, aiming to provide reassurance and protection to the community. In addition to deploying the Quick Response Force, SSP Baloch has directed continuous coordination with community leaders, religious scholars, and local authorities to foster a collaborative approach towards ensuring a peaceful and orderly observance of Muharram-ul-Haram. As preparations intensify, residents are urged to cooperate with law enforcement personnel and report any suspicious activities promptly to support efforts aimed at safeguarding public safety and preserving communal harmony during this sacred period.



AC Ghulam Abbas Sadhayo reviews routes for mourning processions in Thul

By Khair Muhammad Golo

THUL: Assistant Commissioner (AC) Thul, Ghulam Abbas Sadhayo, conducted a thorough inspection of the routes designated for mourning processions across the city, overseeing the arrangements made by local authorities ahead of solemn Muharram observances. During his visit, the AC also made a significant stop at the Central Imambarah, where he met with community leaders including Syed Mehboob Ali Shah, Shahnavaz Mangi, and Ghulam Yasin Burro. Emphasizing the importance of ensuring a peaceful and orderly procession, AC Ghulam Abbas Sadhayo directed local officials to provide all necessary facilities and support to the mourners. He commended the efforts of the officials and volunteers involved in the meticulous planning and execution of arrangements, underscoring their crucial role in facilitating a respectful and safe environment for participants. "The smooth conduct of mourning processions is essential to uphold the sanctity of Muharram rituals," stated AC Sadhayo, stressing the need for continuous cooperation and coordination among all stakeholders to maintain harmony and security during this sensitive period. In response to the directives issued by AC Sadhayo, local authorities affirmed their commitment to ensuring adequate provisions and logistical support throughout the mourning period. They pledged to work diligently to address any emerging challenges and to uphold the standards of service expected during such solemn occasions. As preparations continue with meticulous attention to detail, the community of Thul remains united in their reverence and commemoration of the sacrifices of Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions at Karbala.



MIRPURKHAS: Former candidate for NA-211 Mirpurkhas, Syed Imam Ali Shah, distributed food in his village on the third of Muharram, in remembrance of the martyrs of Karbala. The sacrifices of Imam Hussain (A.S.) are matchless.—Photo by Saleem Khaskheli

NATIONAL



Maryam Announces 1,224 Flats For Labourers And Hostels For Women

LAHORE: Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz has announced 1,224 flats for labourers in Taxila and Sundar labour colonies without any cost.

The key decisions were made about labourers' welfare in a session chaired by the chief minister.

During the session, the Labour Department's performance was reviewed and officials briefed the CM on the performance.

The projects related to workers scholarship programme, labour colonies, and health facilities for labourers were reviewed in the session.

The Punjab CM also directed to pay Rs6 billion grants of death and marriage dues for labourers. Building of two hostels for women workers in garment



city was approved on the instructions of Maryam Nawaz.

She also announced a free accommodation facility for 704 women workers in Sheikhpura.

The CM also directed to ensure implementation of labour reforms, occupational safety and health and laws about minimum wages.

CM Maryam Nawaz as-

serted that the minimum wage of Rs37,000 would be enforced by taking all stakeholders on board. She highlighted that every worker's protection was responsibility of the government. She stated the challenges faced by labourers and stressed the need to implement workplace safety protocol and SOPs and provisions of safety gear for sanitary staff.—RT/Agency

PTI's Sanam Javed Cleared Of Charges In Gujranwala Case



LAHORE: The Lahore High Court discharged PTI worker Sanam Javed on Wednesday in a May 9 riots case lodged against her in Gujranwala. A two-judge bench, led by Justice Asjad Javed Ghural, heard Sanam's appeal against her physical remand in the Gujranwala case. The court, while granting the petition, ordered that she be discharged from the case. Sanam Javed had moved the Lahore High Court against the decision of the Gujranwala anti-terrorism court regarding her physical remand in a May 9 riots case.—RT/Agency

Robbers Steal Gold Worth Rs15 Million in Brazen Burewala Heist

BUREWALA: Six dacoits looted cash and gold ornaments worth Rs 15 millions from a house, at Chak No 447/E/B in tehsil Burewala, media reported on Wednesday. According to police sources, six armed persons entered into house of Muhammad Shehzad, the owner of tractor showroom, and made members of the family hostage at gun point. They looted cash Rs 3 million and gold ornaments worth Rs 12 millions. The dacoits kept looting for one hour. City police rushed to the site and started investigation into the incident.—RT/Agency

FFC holds seminar on profitable rice cultivation



TOBA TEK SINGH: Under the auspices of the FFC, a seminar on profitable rice cultivation was organized. The seminar's chief guest was Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Jhang, Dr. Khalid Iqbal. Other notable guests included Director of Pest Warning Faisalabad Muhammad Israr, Assistant Director of Agriculture Extension Dr. Muhammad Younis, Chaudhry Muhammad Akram, Assistant Commissioner Asfandyar Khan, Head of Farm Advisory Center FFC Muhammad Tahir Naem, Head of Agri-Territory Hassan Raza, Senior Scientist Rice Research Institute Kala Shah Kaku, along with the President of the Farmers Board, representatives, and a large number of farmers and landowners.

Deputy Director of Agriculture Dr. Khalid Iqbal stated that the agricultural sector holds great significance in the eyes of the Punjab Government, which is undertaking revolutionary measures for the welfare of farmers and the development of agriculture, yielding long-term benefits. He emphasized the need to increase per-acre yield of rice and other crops to meet the growing food requirements of the country's increasing population. This goal can be achieved through the use of modern agricultural technology, Muhammad Tahir Naem, Head of Farm Advisory Center Sheikhupura, noted that rice is the second largest crop after wheat and that the region is renowned for its Super Basmati. He highlighted the measures provided by FFC for the agriculture sector and the importance of rice cultivation. Hassan Raza, Head of Agri-Territory Toba Tek Singh, informed that FFC has been providing agricultural facilities to farmers for over 40 years, reaching more than 1 million farmers and conducting over 600,000 free soil and water analyses.

He pointed out that in the districts of Toba Tek Singh and Jhang, there is a severe deficiency of phosphorus, potassium, nitrogen, zinc, and boron in the soil. He stressed that only through the balanced use of fertilizers can significant increases in rice production be achieved.

Residents of Kot Pul facing intense hardships due to Jagirani-Solangi clash

By Naz Solangi

KUMB: Tensions escalated dramatically in the vicinity of Kot Pul near Khairpur as armed individuals representing the Jagirani and Solangi communities engaged in a sudden and violent clash. The conflict erupted into indiscriminate gunfire, resulting in substantial damage to local shops and instilling widespread fear among residents, who were compelled to shutter their businesses under threat of violence. Videos capturing the chaotic scenes of public firing by more than two dozen suspects have circulated, depicting scenes of terror as the town grappled with the intensity of the confrontation. The conflict, stemming from an alleged issue of honor between the two groups, has plunged the rural area into a state of turmoil, prompting urgent intervention from law enforcement authorities.

Local police authorities have confined the genesis of the clash and are actively pursuing measures to quell the escalating violence. Efforts are underway to establish peace and prevent further escalation of hostilities, although the situation remains volatile amid ongoing tensions between the feuding factions. "The clash between the Jagirani and Solangi groups has transformed the area into a battlefield, heightening concerns of potential bloodshed," stated a spokesperson from the local police department. Despite concerted efforts by authorities, including engagement with elected representatives and community leaders, there is a palpable apprehension regarding the efficacy of current intervention strategies. Residents of Kot Pul and surrounding areas continue to endure a precarious situation, with apprehensions mounting over the potential for further violence and disruption to daily life. Calls for heightened vigilance and collaborative efforts to restore calm and security in the community are echoing across the region. As authorities strive to restore order and mitigate tensions, community leaders and stakeholders are urged to prioritize dialogue and peaceful resolution to safeguard the well-being and stability of all residents affected by the ongoing conflict.

THE HEARTLAND

Water availability will improve by this coming Sunday: SIDA Chairman Raees Kabool Muhammad Khattian

By Jibran Talpur



BADIN: The Chairman of the Sindh Irrigation and Drainage Authority (SIDA) has expressed optimism about the improvement in water availability by the coming Sunday. According to a statement released by the SIDA spokesperson, Chairman Raees Kabool Muhammad Khattian has stated that the water situation at Sukkur Barrage, which is expected to reach Kotri Barrage by Sunday, approximately 63,800

day. This will improve water availability in the canals supplying water to the districts of Tando Muhammad Khan and Badin, making it possible to provide water to the tail ends. The SIDA Chairman further stated that with the improvement in the water situation at the barrage, there will be an ample water supply in the system for the next two months. This will make it easier to address issues like water shortages and rotation at the tail ends.

Commissioner Sukkur Fayaz Hussain Abbasi, DC Dr. MB Raja Dharejo review arrangements for monsoon rains

By Absar Alvi

SUKKUR: Commissioner Sukkur, Fayaz Hussain Abbasi, has stated that all relevant departments have been activated ahead of the monsoon season. The administration is prepared to handle any potential emergency situations during the monsoon rains. He expressed this while visiting various water pumping stations in the city. Deputy Commissioner Sukkur, Dr. MB Raja Dharejo, accompanied him on this occasion.

Commissioner Sukkur visited pumping stations at Makha Road, Shalimar, Qureshi Road, Doba Road, Jail Road, Miyani Road, Police Line, and Bachal Shah, and reviewed the preparations for the monsoon season. He said the purpose of the visit is to ensure the functionality of pumping stations to address potential flooding and drainage issues during the monsoon. Commissioner Sukkur emphasized the importance of practical measures to mitigate the effects of

heavy rains and directed the relevant authorities to ensure alternative and effective power arrangements at the water pumping stations. He particularly stressed strengthening the communication system between municipal services and the public health department in this regard. He also mentioned that a special contingency plan should be devised for the city's choke points and low-lying areas to prevent any inconvenience to the citizens during the upcoming rains.

BISP beneficiaries facing a myriad of problems in Jamshoro

By Shaikh Sindi

KOTRI: In the four tehsils of Jamshoro district, difficulties are being encountered in disbursing funds from the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) at over seven centers. It has been revealed that limited devices intended for cash withdrawal are being used away from the designated centers. At the Sehwan center, only 6 out of 14 devices are operational and a similar situation is occurring

at three centers in Kotri, where minimal devices are being used, leading to significant problems to the beneficiaries. Due to collusion between the device holders and other staff at the centers, affected women are facing hardships at the Government Primary School Christian Colony Kotri Center. The women have to wait for hours in the scorching heat without receiving any money and they return home disappointed after a whole day of

waiting in the heat. The treatment of these women by the government appears to indicate massive corruption involving millions of rupees. Various means are supposed to be used to distribute money to women, but instead, these women are being humiliated by the device holders. There are no provisions for electricity, water, or even a place to sit and wait while trying to obtain their money, forcing them to endure day-long struggles.

Mourning procession taken out in Tando Allahyar

By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: The solemn observance of Muharram-ul-Haram began in Tando Allahyar city with the initiation of the first mourning procession from Imambarah Hyderi in Rahab-e-Faqeer Muhalla. The procession was led by prominent religious figures including Allama Maulana Imadad Hussain Hyderi and Musaddiq Hussain Hyderi, guiding mourners through the streets of the city.

The procession followed a designated route, winding through various neighborhoods before concluding at its traditional culmination

point. In Chaki Muhalla, local associations fervently performed azadari rituals, while provisions of Niyaz were generously distributed along the procession's path, catering to the spiritual and physical needs of the participants.

A notable feature of the procession was the participation of both Sunni and Shia Muslims in significant numbers, underscoring a message of unity and solidarity among the Muslim community during this period of mourning. The presence of diverse groups peacefully commemorating the sacrifices of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) exemplified the

spirit of harmony and mutual respect.

"All segments of the community have come together to honor the legacy of Imam Hussain (AS) and reflect on the values of justice and righteousness," remarked Maulana Imadad Hussain Hyderi, emphasizing the significance of collective remembrance and spiritual solidarity. As the mourning rituals continue throughout Muharram-ul-Haram, organizers and participants alike express their commitment to upholding the sanctity of the occasion while fostering bonds of empathy and understanding across religious lines.

Man killed, 17 injured in Sehwan's Bhambhro-Solangi clash

By Qaimuddin Memon

SEHWAN SHARIF: A heated dispute over passage rights through a street in Gul Muhammad Shah Muhalla of Sehwan escalated into a violent clash between the Bhambhro and Solangi communities, resulting in tragic consequences. The altercation, which quickly turned violent, involved gunfire that claimed the life of an elderly man identified as Mehar Bhambhro on the spot.

The clash also left a total of 17 individuals injured, hailing from both sides of the conflict. The wounded were promptly evacuated to Syed Abdullah Shah Institute Hospital in Sehwan for urgent medical treatment. Among those injured from the Bhambhro community were

Mian Bux Bhambhro, Sain Bux, Waqar, Allah Bux, Ghulam Mustafa, and Wahid Bakhsh Bhambhro. On the opposing side, the injured included individuals like Shoukat Machhi, Haji Khan, Baghan, Barkat Machhi, and Waheed Umrani, among others.

According to preliminary reports, the clash was rooted in an ongoing dispute over street passage rights, with tensions escalating as each community sought to restrict the other's access. The confrontation quickly spiraled out of control, culminating in the tragic loss of life and multiple injuries.

In response to the escalating violence, Sehwan police swiftly intervened, arresting three suspects allegedly involved in instigating the

clash. An initial report has been filed as part of an ongoing investigation into the incident, with authorities intensifying efforts to restore calm and bring those responsible to justice. The incident has sent shockwaves through the community, prompting calls for renewed efforts towards conflict resolution and communal harmony. Local authorities and community leaders are urged to prioritize dialogue and peaceful reconciliation to prevent further incidents of violence and foster a climate of mutual respect and understanding. As investigations continue, residents of Sehwan Sharif remain on edge, hoping for swift and effective measures to stabilize the situation and prevent any recurrence of such tragic events.

Man kills sister over Karo Kari

By Khuda Bux Brohi

THATTA: Tragedy struck Sanwalpur village in the jurisdiction of Ghorabani police station when Ramzan, accompanied by his cousin Yousef, reportedly brutally murdered his sister, Hajran, daughter of Ahmed Mallah. The incident, which occurred on Wednesday, unfolded amidst allegations that Hajran was involved in an illicit relationship, sparking suspicion for forensic examination, as police authorities commenced a thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding the inci-

dent. The community of Sanwalpur village and surrounding areas has been left in shock and dismay by this tragic event, highlighting the persistent challenges related to honour-based violence in certain parts of the country. Authorities remain committed to ensuring justice for Hajran and are actively pursuing leads to uncover the full details behind this senseless act of violence. Further updates on the investigation will be provided as the police continue their efforts to bring clarity and accountability to this heartbreaking case.

Toba Tek Singh Police Apprehend Advocate Irfan Samra's killers

By Abid Mehmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: On the second day of Eid-ul-Fitr, a few unidentified motorcycle riders shot and killed senior Bar Association leader Irfan Samra Advocate and fled the scene. Taking serious notice of this blind murder, DPO Toba Tek Singh, Ibadat Nisar, formed a special team led by DSP Gojra and consisting of SHO City Hakim

Ali and other personnel, tasking them with solving the murder and arresting the culprits. The police, in collaboration with the CDU branch, used modern technology and information to arrest the suspects, recovering the murder weapon, a 30-bore pistol, bullets, and the motorcycle used in the crime. The arrested suspects, Shamshad Ali, Anif, and Haseeb Alam Shah, confessed during interrogation that they had a propping dispute with the deceased Irfan Samra Advocate, which led them to target him for the killing. A case was registered under FIR No. 24/382, Section 302/109/34 PPC at the City Police Station, Meanwhile, District Police Officer Toba Tek Singh, Ibadat Nisar, issued cash rewards and commendation certificates for the team that solved the blind murder.

Three Terrorists Killed in Peshawar Counterterrorism Operation

PESHAWAR: Police on Wednesday killed three terrorists in an Intelligence Based Operation (IBO) in Hasan Khel Peshawar, media reported.

As per details, the police officials stated that an intelligence-based operation

was carried out in the Hasan Khel area of Peshawar on the information regarding the presence of terrorists. During the operation, two police personnel of CTD embraced martyrdom and one sustained injuries, police officials added. Earlier, security forces gunned down a terrorist commander Irfan Ullah aka Adnan in an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Bajaur District, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR)—RT/Agency

METRO KARACHI

Murad Orders Irrigation Dept to Address Sukkur Barrage Right Bank Water Shortage, Ensure Rabi Crop Protection

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the Irrigation Department to address the water shortage on the Right Bank of Sukkur Barrage to protect Kharif crops. The directive came during a meeting at CM House and other officials.



The Sukkur Barrage Right Bank irrigates 2,094,975 acres, including 185,000 acres in Balochistan. The Right Bank includes the Dadu, Rice, and North West Canals. The Rice Canal operates at 80-89% of its allocated discharge, with water reaching tail-enders. However, Dadu

Canal is only at 50% of its allocated share, severely affecting areas below Dadu City. Shah instructed the Irrigation Department to supplement the Dadu Canal from the Rice Canal and operate pumping stations to alleviate shortages. The North-West Canal also faces a 50% water shortage, affecting Balochistan. Shah emphasized the need for a rotation plan and vigilant monitoring to ensure equitable water distribution and mitigate shortages. He also recommended using hydraulic excavator machines to clear obstacles in the North-West Canal for better water flow.—RT

Raza Tabish Farooqi Appointed Rotary Club Of Karachi's District Secretary

KARACHI: Raza Tabish Farooqi has been appointed as the District Secretary for the Rotary Club of Karachi for the 2024-25 term. Farooqi has been an active member of the Rotary community since 2005, starting as a Rotaractor. His exceptional leadership and dedication led to his election as District Rotaract Representative (DRR) for 2013-14, where he was recognized as the Best DRR in South Asia.



Since joining Rotary in 2015, Farooqi has taken on numerous significant responsibilities within his club and district, consistently demonstrating leadership. His past roles include District Community Service Chair (2023-24), District Secretary (2022-

23), District Rotaract Committee Chair (2020-21), and District RYLA Chair (2021-22), among others. Professionally, Raza is a successful businessman and a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) in England and Wales. He also holds a bachelor's degree from a renowned university in the UK.—RT



Classless domestic violence in Pakistan

The recent revelation of domestic violence against Ayesha Jahanzaib, a well-known TV anchor, has shocked many, shedding light on a pervasive issue that transcends social status in Pakistan.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's swift response, including ordering a report from the Inspector General of Police and ensuring Ayesha receives the

best medical care, is commendable. However, such incidents highlight a systemic problem that requires more than reactive measures.



best medical care, is commendable. However, such incidents highlight a systemic problem that requires more than reactive measures. Society's silence and the government's perennial apathy towards domestic violence merit end.

Domestic violence is deplorable, regardless of the victim's background. It is a violation of human rights and dignity. For too long, Pakistani women have suf-

ferred in silence, with many cases going unreported due to fear, shame, or lack of support. This pervasive culture of silence must be shattered.

The government needs to enforce stricter laws against domestic violence, ensuring that perpetrators are swiftly brought to justice. Public awareness campaigns are crucial to change societal attitudes and encourage victims to speak out.

THE HEARTLAND



HYDERABAD: Residents of Hussainabad are holding a press conference for the acceptance of their demands, at the Hyderabad press club.-RT

Talhar's Rice Mills rally against increase in fixed charges



By Jibran Talpur

BADIN: The Rice Mill Association Talhar held a protest rally against the federal government's increase in fixed charges for electricity. The rally, led by the president of the Rice Mill Association, Tek Chand Dinani, along with leaders Mukhi Bhanu...



HYDERABAD: Residents of Husri are holding a protest demonstration outside the SSP's Office against their local police officials.-RT

Commissioner Faisal Ahmed Uqaili forms committees to restore MPK's natural waterways

By Narain Das

MIRPURKHAS: The Divisional Commissioner of Mirpurkhas, Faisal Ahmed Uqaili, stated that committees will be formed at the district, tehsil, and divisional levels to improve the Dhoro Puran, LBOD, Spinal Drain and natural water passages.



LARKANA: Political Secretary to PPP Chairman, MPA Jameel Ahmed Soomro is listening to the problems of the public at the Awami Markaz Ghalib Nagar.-RT

Tando Allahyar residents protest against four day power outage

By Afaq Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: Residents of Tando Allahyar city took to the streets in protest against a prolonged electricity outage lasting four consecutive days. Led by community leaders Ashraf Samo...

Anjuman Hussaini takes out a mourning procession in Moro

By Akhtar Laghari



MORO: The echoes of grief and solemnity resonated through Moro as Anjuman Hussaini solemnly marked the 3rd Muharram-ul-Haram with a heartfelt mourning procession originating from the Central Imam-bargah Hussaini.

The procession followed its traditional route through Moro, attracting a large gathering of participants who fervently expressed their grief and reverence for the martyrs of Karbala.



LARKANA: President of PPP Sindh and the Sindh Public Accounts Committee Chairman Nisar Ahmed Khuhro is addressing a press conference about the Sindh government's healthcare initiatives.-RT

SPORTS



Major overhaul as PCB sacks managers; Shaheen Afridi found 'misbehaving' with coaches



LAHORE: The repercussions of the Pakistan team's early exit from the T20 World Cup 2024 continue to flow as it has been revealed that star pacer Shaheen Afridi has been found misbehaving with the coaches and management staff, sources told Geo News on Wednesday.

Sources say that a probe is underway over why managers - who are responsible for maintaining team discipline - didn't take any action against the left-arm pacer despite Shaheen's attitude. The revelation comes against the backdrop of on-going measures being taken by the board, the latest of which was the sacking of Wahab Riaz and

'Enough chances for Babar': Boom Boom wants real surgery in team

LAHORE: Shahid Afridi, the former captain of Pakistan national cricket team, has said that he was unable to "comprehend" the recent removal of Wahab Riaz and Abdul Razzaq from Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) selection committee.

The removal of Riaz and Abdul Razzaq comes after a disappointing performance from the national team during the T20 World Cup 2024 as the PCB management had lost confidence in the duo and their opinions had not been taken into account for some time now, according to sources.

While speaking to reporters on Wednesday, Afridi, 47, broke his silence over the recent removal of the former cricketers from the selection body as part of



PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi's much needed "surgery" for the body.

Afridi, who is currently participating in the World Championship of Legends 2024 in England as part of Pakistan Champions, told reporters that he did not understand PCB's latest move when asked about it.

He emphasised that Riaz and Abdul Razzaq are not the only members of the selection committee and there are several other people involved as well. "I just found out that they sidelined Abdul Razzaq and Wahab Riaz," he said. "I don't understand this kind of 'surgery'."

Afridi also said that whatever "surgery" is needed, it must be done once and for all. He added that whoever is brought forward now must be given ample time to improve their captaincy skills.

While discussing the performance of Babar Azam, Pakistan's current T20 cap-

tain, Afridi highlighted that the 29-year-old cricketer has been given many chances to prove his captaincy skills.

"As far as Babar is concerned, no captain has been given such chances (to prove their captaincy)," Afridi told reporters, highlighting that Azam had played in several international tournaments.

However, he did not seem impressed by Azam's captaincy skills despite the "incredible" opportunities he had.

About the removal of Riaz, 39, and Abdul Razzaq, 44, sources stated: "Their influence was significant in the selection of the T20 World Cup squad and they showed more support to players who did not perform well.—Agency

Yamal makes history as Spain sink France to reach Euro 2024 final



MUNICH: Lamine Yamal, 16, became the tournament's youngest ever goalscorer as Spain came back to beat France 2-1 in Munich and reach the Euro 2024 final.

Trailing after Randal Kolo Muani headed in a Kylian Mbappe cross in the ninth minute, Spain turned the match around in a four-minute period, scoring twice against a side who had only conceded once in five previous games in this tournament.

Yamal, who turns 17 a day before Sunday's final against either the Netherlands or England, equalised with a superb strike from outside the box, curling a long-range effort into the top corner and past the fingertips of an airborne Mike Maigman.

Spain took the lead on 25 minutes, Dani Olmo expertly gathering a loose ball and firing a low shot into the net with the aid of a deflection off Jules Kounde.

Masters of midfield game management, Spain shut shop after taking the lead, frequently holding possession rather than attacking on the counter, controlling the match and claiming the win.—Agency

Three-time champions Spain became the first team to win six games at a Euros and are one game away from a record-breaking fourth crown.

"We are one step away from glory," Olmo told ZDF. "We are very, very close. This team is unbelievable. We deserve it."

This weekend in Berlin will be Spain's first appearance in a major tournament final since a much-awaited side thrashed Italy 4-0 in the Euro 2012 showpiece.

Masters of midfield game management, Spain shut shop after taking the lead, frequently holding possession rather than attacking on the counter, controlling the match and claiming the win.—Agency

Retiring James Anderson picks best batter he bowled against



LONDON: Retiring England pacer James Anderson picked India's batting great Sachin Tendulkar as the best batter he bowled in his glittering career.

During a Q&A session with Sky Sports Cricket ahead of his farewell Test at the Home of Cricket Lords, Anderson picked legendary Tendulkar ahead of renowned batters like Virat Kohli, Kane Williamson, David Warner and Steve Smith.

"The best batter I would have to say is Sachin Tendulkar," said Anderson. Notably, James Anderson dismissed Sachin Tendulkar nine times in Test cricket and thrice in ODIs. All in all, he has 149 wickets to his name against India in 39 matches, the most by him against any cricket-playing nation.

When probed about the best bowlers he ever faced, Anderson picked Australia's Glenn McGrath and South Africa's Dale Steyn, terming them world-class.

"The best bowler I faced was probably Glenn McGrath or Dale Steyn. Hard to pick between the two. Slightly different bowlers, but both world-class," Anderson stated.—Agency

Argentina beat Canada to seal spot in Copa America final

NEW JERSEY: Defending champions Argentina booked their place in the Copa America final after goals from Julian Alvarez and Lionel Messi gave them a 2-0 win over Canada in Tuesday's semi-final in New Jersey.

Argentina have won a joint-record 15 Copa titles and reached the final six times in the past eight editions but Canada caused them problems in the opening 20 minutes, Jacob Shafteburg twice shooting wide from promising positions.

After soaking up the early pressure Argentina went ahead when Rodrigo De Paul played through Alvarez, who ghosted in between two defenders to score with a tidy



finish in the 22nd minute. Canada nearly snatched an equaliser against the run of play in first-half stoppage time as Jonathan David sneaked in ahead of his marker to get on the end of a long throw, but his close-range shot was hit straight at goalkeeper Emiliano Mar-

inez. Messi then scored Argentina's second in the 51st minute when he stuck out a boot to divert Enzo Fernandez's shot from the edge of the area past Canada goalkeeper Maxime Crepeau.

The goal moved Messi to joint fifth in the all-time Copa America scoring charts, level with Peru's Paolo Guerrero and Chile's Eduardo Vargas on 14.

The 37-year-old's 109th goal for Argentina also saw him surpass Iran's Ali Daei on the all-time international scoring charts.

Messi is second behind Cristiano Ronaldo, who has scored 130 goals for Portugal.—Agency

India thump Zimbabwe in third T20I to take lead in five-match series

HARARE: Shubman Gill's brisk half-century, followed by Washington Sundar's three-for steered India to a 23-run victory over Zimbabwe in the third T20I of the five-match series here at Harare Sports Club on Wednesday.

The inexperienced India side, who succumbed to a narrow defeat in the series opener, now lead the five-match series 2-1 with two games to spare.

Opting to bat first, India racked up a commendable total of 182/4 on the tricky surface of the Harare Sports Club.

Leading the way was their young skipper Shubman Gill, who scored a magnificent half-century.

Gill gave India a solid start with his 67-run opening



partnership with Yashasvi Jaiswal.

The solid opening stand lasted in the ninth over when Jaiswal fell victim to Sikandar Raza in the ninth over after scoring 36 off 27 deliveries.

Gill was then involved in yet another important partnership for India when he added 72 runs for the third

wicket with Raturaj Gaikwad before finally walking back in the 18th over.

He remained the top-scorer for India with a 49-ball 66 which included 10 boundaries including three sixes.

Gaikwad bolstered India's total at the backend with clean hitting but failed to convert his bril-

liant knock into a well-deserved half-century as Blessing Muzarabani dismissed him in the final over.

Raturaj Gaikwad was the other notable run-getter for India with a quickfire 49 off just 28 balls with the help of four fours and three sixes.

For Zimbabwe, Sikandar Raza and Blessing Muzarabani bagged two wickets each.

In response, Zimbabwe racked up 159/6 in the allotted overs as they failed to recover from the dismal start.

Avesh Khan and Washington Sundar ran through Zimbabwe's top order, reducing the home side to 39/5 in seven

overs.—Agency

PCB confirms sacking Wahab Riaz, Abdul Razzaq



LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board Wednesday confirmed axing former cricketers Wahab Riaz and Abdul Razzaq from the board's selection committee following the team's dismal performance in the T20 World Cup 2024.

"The PCB today confirmed that it has notified Abdul Razzaq and Wahab Riaz that their services will no longer be required in the national selection committee setup," read the board's press release.

The confirmation comes a day after media, citing sources, reported that the board had removed the ex-cricketers from the selection committee after losing confidence in them due to their support for players who failed in the mega-event.

The former cricketers' outer comes as the PCB had reorganised the men's national selection committee, having equal powers in March earlier this year in order to bring more transparency in the process, but the team selected by the panel failed to deliver in all the series since then.

Riaz was a member of the men's selection committee, whereas Razzaq was part of the selection committees for

both men's and women's teams.

However, owing to the men's team's poor performance and early exit in the T20 World Cup, along with the women's team's back-to-back losses in bilateral series against England and West Indies.

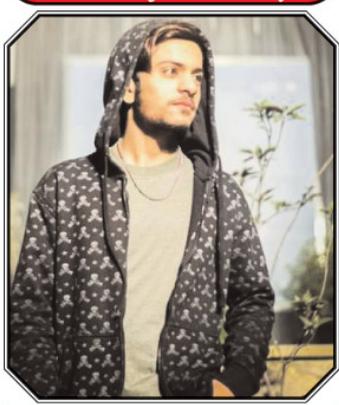
Their influence was significant in the selection of the T20 World Cup squad and they showed more support to players who did not perform well. Their opinions had not been taken into account for some time now as well, the sources added.

However, sources say that the PCB has retained Mohammad Yousof, Asad Shafiq and Bilal Afzal in the seven-member panel which also includes the captain and head coach.

The board has said that it will provide further updates on the selection committee's composition in due course.

With the men's team and the board being subjected to severe criticism by both fans and the cricketing fraternity following the T20 World Cup fiasco, PCB chairman met white-ball coach Gary Kirsten and red-ball coach Jason Gillespie to discuss important matters related to the team.—Agency

Face of the Day



Name: Aman Nadeem
Location: Karachi
About me: I hate the Pakistan Cricket Team!
Please email us your photo for our Model Watch and Kids' Corner section at regionaltimes10@gmail.com

ENTERTAINMENT

Kim Kardashian wants to date a 'billionaire'

Kim Kardashian has dated many high-profile figures but reportedly now she wants to date someone whose net worth runs into a billion.

Sources however say she is on the lookout in the hope of getting settled down and for this, she has tasked her friends to become the matchmakers.

"She wants to settle down, not just play around, so in her view, it makes a lot more sense to go higher up the food chain and pick a man with billionaire status," the insiders told Life & Style.

The SKIMS mogul, who herself is reportedly a billionaire told friends to find her one of her type.

"She's got all her girlfriends helping her with the hunt. She's been hanging with a more high-level crowd and she's really hoping that will put her in the same room with the right kind of man," the tipster tattled.

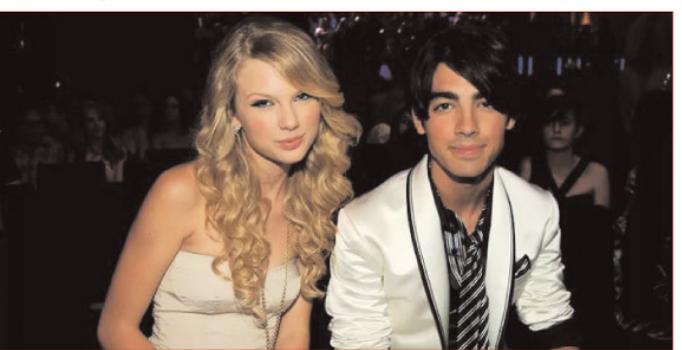
This comes after her breakup with Odell Beckham Jr., sources say. "If you'd ask Kim six months ago who was on her dating wish list, she'd have named off a bunch of sports stars."



They continued, "She was even flying across the world to go to soccer games because she had her heart set on being a WAG."

"But after things went sour with Odell [Beckham Jr.], she changed up her whole game plan and she's now saying it's time for her to date a different kind of man."

America's sweetheart Taylor Swift plays Joe Jonas breakup ballad 'Last Kiss' at 113th Eras Tour show



Taylor Swift included the breakup ballad "Last Kiss" in her 113th Eras Tour show, which is thought to be about Joe Jonas, on Tuesday night in Zurich, Switzerland.

Swift played the "Speak Now" song in a piano mashup with the "Red" breakup anthem "Sad Beautiful Tragic" during the acoustic section of her concert.

It is pertinent to mention that Swift's breakup with Joe Jonas happened a very long time ago but according to Page Six, it's quite likely she chose

to play the tune because it mentions Tuesday's date in the lyrics.

The lyrics said, "I do recall now the smell of the rain, fresh on the pavement, I ran off the plane / That July 9th, the beat of your heart / I jumps through your shirt, I can still feel your arms."

Moreover, Taylor Swift previously played the song last year in Kansas City on July 8, as there wasn't a show on July 9.

In regards to the "Karma" hitmaker and Joe Jonas, they dated back in 2008 for a

handful of months before their relationship soured.

Swift infamously put her ex on blast during a November 2008 interview on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" when she hinted that he broke her heart via a short phone call as she quipped, "Some day, I'm gonna find somebody really, really, really great, who's right for me."

When I found that person that is right for me, he'll be wonderful and when I look at that person, I'm not even gonna be able to remember the boy who broke up with

me over the phone in 25 seconds when I was 18."

It is pertinent to mention that the next year, Joe Jonas released a track, "Much Better" with their album "Lines, Vines and Trying Times."

However when Swift visited "Ellen" again in 2019, she admitted calling out Jonas "too much. We laugh about it now, but that was mouthy... just teenage stuff there."

Furthermore, Swift confirmed that she will officially wrap the record-breaking tour in December.

REGIONAL TIMES

THE HEARTLAND



HESCO's Indiscriminate Operations Against Electricity Thieves And Defaulters Continue Unabated

HYDERABAD: In the HESCO region, with the assistance of Sindh police officers and personnel, indiscriminate operations against electricity thieves and defaulters are currently underway. Recovery magistrates are actively present to enforce immediate legal actions against electricity thieves, including fines, case registrations, and arrests on the spot. These operations are in accordance with the Prime Minister's directive to intensify the anti-theft recovery campaign, aimed at reducing the circular debt in the energy sector and improving electricity services for the public.



Several illegal power connections have been disconnected due to unauthorized usage and non-payment of dues by defaulters. Detailed disconnections include:

Sakrand Sub-Division: 894 illegal and 686 defaulter connections.

Qazi Ahmad Sub-Division: 875 illegal and 402 defaulter connections.

Mirpurkhas Sub-Division: 957 illegal and 394 defaulter connections.

City Mirpurkhas Sub-Division: 714 illegal and 321 defaulter connections.

Heerabad Mirpurkhas Sub-Division: 894 illegal and 402 defaulter connections.

Satellite Town Sub-Division: 946 illegal and 426 defaulter connections.

Mirwah Gorchani Sub-Division: 904 illegal and 407 defaulter connections.

Umarkot Sub-Division: 841 illegal and 378 defaulter connections.

Samaro Sub-Division: 934 illegal and 420 defaulter connections.

Pithoro Sub-Division: 975 illegal and 439 defaulter connections.

According to a spokesperson from HESCO, as of now, 79,851 individuals have been accused of electricity theft, leading to 70,690 filed cases, 215 arrests, and a recovery exceeding PKR 13.7 billion. Under the supervision of HESCO Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Roshan Otho, the ongoing anti-electricity theft campaign has achieved significant progress. In the past 24 hours alone, 283 illegal connections were identified across the region. Among these, 266 FIRs are being processed at various police stations, with 4 FIRs already registered. All identified connections have been disconnected, resulting in a charge of 135,713 units through detection bills, amounting to over PKR 3.51 million. At the directive of CEO Mohammad Roshan Otho, HESCO administration en-

Other Sub-Divisions: 3,402 illegal and 1,531 defaulter connections.

Over 780 letters have been forwarded to police stations for FIR registration against electricity thieves. Additionally, more than PKR 11.978 million has been recovered from defaulters, and over 6,237 connections have been disconnected due to non-payment. Reconnection of these connections is contingent upon full payment of outstanding dues.

HESCO urges the public to eliminate electricity theft and ensure timely payment of dues. The sustainability of HESCO's infrastructure depends on receiving payments for electricity services. Strict legal action will be taken against anyone involved in electricity theft, including HESCO employees. Consumers are strongly advised to settle their outstanding bills promptly to avoid disruptions in electricity supply.

Electricity theft is both a legal offense and a moral violation. Offenders may face FIRs, fines, and detention under the applicable law. HESCO seeks the cooperation of all consumers in this crucial endeavor.—RT

Arrest of Rashid Ali Thaheem's killers demanded

By Mumtaz Ali

TANDO ADAM: Ali Raza Thaheem, a resident of Thaheem Colony in Tando Adam's B-Section Police Station, along with his father Ali Nawaz Thaheem and son Rashid Ali thaheem, held a press conference at the Press Club Tando Adam. He stated that twenty days ago, two brothers, Haroon and Jamshed S/o Ghulam Muhammad Thaheem, who are barbers and belong to the same Thaheem community, attacked his son Rashid Ali with knives and scissors, severely injuring him. They reported the incident to the police at B-Section Police Station, which issued a medical letter and sent Rashid

Ali to the Taluka Hospital for treatment. Due to his critical condition, he was then transferred to Hyderabad. Ali Raza Thaheem mentioned that they informed the police, who arrested one person, Ghulam Muhammad but allegedly released him after taking a bribe. Despite approaching the DSP Tando Adam twice, their case has not been registered. He appealed to the Chief Minister of Sindh, the IG Sindh, the DIG Shaheed Benazirabad, the SSP Sanghar, and other law enforcement agencies to register their case, immediately arrest the accused, and ensure they are given the harshest punishment to deliver justice to their family.

CM Sindh approves construction of MUET's Rana Chandar Singh Sodho Campus in Umerkot



By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: The Chief Minister of Sindh has approved the establishment of the Rana Chandar Singh Sodho Mehran Engineering University Campus in Umerkot, receiving praise from local dignitaries. According to the report, following a request from PPS MPA Rana Hamir Singh Sodho, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah approved the campus through the Universities and Boards Department. After the approval, MPA Rana Hamir Singh Sodho met with the Vice Chancellor and Registrar of Mehran University, following which Mehran University's technical team visited Rana House in Umerkot. There, they met with PPP

MPA Rana Hamir Singh Sodho and Umerkot Deputy Commissioner Naveed Lark to discuss land for the university and the swift commencement of the campus. AC Umerkot Rajib Sathio, MPA Hamir Singh's personal secretary, Kanwal Mohan Lal, the CEO of the social organization Save the Lives Foundation Engineer Kanhaiya Mohan Lal, Municipal Committee member Ramesh Kumar Ratnani, Mukhtiar Umerkot, and others visited the proposed building for the university. The establishment of the Mehran Engineering University named after Rana Chandar Singh Sodho in Umerkot has been highly appreciated by the local community, who have thanked the Sindh Government.

Syed Muharram Ali Shah Lakiari concerned over Hingorja's worsening law and order situation

By Sajjad Chang



HINGORJA: Syed Muharram Ali Shah Lakiari, a prominent leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), has expressed deep concern regarding the escalating law and order challenges gripping Hingorja. Speaking to the media, Lakiari highlighted the alarming increase in criminal activities and the apparent failure of law enforcement agencies to curb these issues, which has left residents feeling vulnerable and unsafe.

In response to the deteriorating situation, Lakiari announced plans to convene a citizens' meeting before the 10th of Muharram. The objective of this meeting will be to establish an action committee aimed at drawing attention from the Senior Superintendent of Police

(SSP) Khairpur and other relevant authorities. The committee will focus on advocating for immediate and concrete steps to improve law enforcement and ensure the safety of residents.

"The formation of this action committee is crucial to mobilize community efforts and hold authorities accountable for the security challenges facing Hingorja," emphasized Lakiari, urging active participation from local residents and stakeholders. As concerns grow over public safety, Lakiari pledged to work closely with community leaders, law enforcement agencies, and governmental bodies to devise effective strategies and restore confidence in the region's security apparatus.

Assurance of women's rights and protection demanded in Dadu

By Javed Laghari



DADU: The Laar Humanitarian and Development Program (LHDP) and the Surmi Women Protection Forum in collaboration with Oxfam Pakistan organized a District Women Assembly for the discussing women's challenges and their protection.

The event was attended by a large number of people, including district administration officials, the Social Welfare Department, leaders from various social organizations, men and women from different villages, and numerous local women.

While addressing the participants, they stated that the District Women Assembly has been convened to provide protection to women in Dadu district. The purpose of this initiative is to spread awareness about the laws established by the Sindh government to both rural and urban women, as well as to inform them about the work of governmental and private organizations working in the district.

On this occasion, Additional Deputy Commissioner Dadu, Samiullah Wagan, Assistant Commissioner Fatima Ghalo, Social Welfare Officer, Waheed Samejo, Advocate Zeba Wighio and representatives of social organizations Azra Memon, Sugra Jamali, Farzana Aiy, Marvi Baloch, Sorath Soomro, Sajida Memon, Abdul Ghaffar Jokhio, Muhammad Bakhs Kori, Roshan Memon, and others addressed the assembly.

They emphasized that providing protection to women in Dadu district is the responsibility of the state. To identify the issues faced by women and to facilitate direct communication between the organizations working for women's rights, the Surmi Women

Protection Forum has been established. This forum will not only identify the problems faced by women but also take appropriate measures to resolve these issues in collaboration with the relevant Sindh government institutions. Adding they highlighted several issues prevalent in Dadu district, including child marriages, forced marriages, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and problems related to health, education, and forced labor. They stressed the importance of organizing such programs to raise awareness among women about their fundamental issues and to ensure the implementation of laws enacted by the Sindh government.

MNA Khalid Ahmed Lund and his two sons appear in court in journalist Shaheed Nasrullah Gadani's murder case —Mother of slain journalist absent from court due to a plethora of threats

By Shad Mahar



GHOTKI: PPP MNA Khalid Ahmed Lund and his two sons, Shahbaz Lund and Noor Muhammad Lund, appeared in the Ghotki Court in connection with the murder case of journalist Shaheed Nasrullah Gadani. The plaintiff, Nasrullah Gadani's mother, Ms. Puthani Gadani, did not appear during the hearing. Following this, the court extended the interim bail of the accused by 20 days, extending their bail until August 1. After the extension of the bail, Khalid Ahmed Lund spoke to the media outside the court, stating that he has faith in the courts. He mentioned that

there is political interference in Nasrullah Gadani's murder case but he will not name those playing this game as it would only elevate them. Khalid Lund also stated that he has no disagreements with Adi Faryal Talpur, who is a senior party leader and like a sister to him. He further mentioned that Shehbaz Lund would soon be reinstated to his position in the Municipal Committee of Mirpur. He added that MPA Nadir Laghari, who is his brother,

accompanied him to the court out of sympathy. On the other hand, Nasrullah Gadani's mother, Ms. Puthani, held a press conference with her son Yaqoob stating that she did not appear in court because Khalid Lund's people are threatening her. She claimed that Lund wants to create an incident by bringing thousands of people to the court. She demanded that the case of Shaheed Nasrullah Gadani be transferred to another division.

HANDS Pakistan holds an orientation session on WASH Program in Badin

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: HANDS Pakistan recently organized a one-day orientation session dedicated to its Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Program. The event, held at the organization's office, also included a certificate distribution ceremony. Chief guest District Information Officer Sarfarz Samo commended HANDS for its exemplary efforts in implementing the WASH program across villages in Badin district. He acknowledged the challenges involved in achieving open defecation-free status and praised HANDS for effectively raising awareness about the hazards of open latrines. Senior Engineer Public Health Muhammad Iqbal Chando, District Executive

Manager Haider Ali Panhwar, Program Manager Abdul Waheed Mallah, HANDS Pakistan representative Ghos Pirzada, District Project Manager Mumtaz Rahu, Assistant Director Local Government Abdul Rahim Khani, and other dignitaries also addressed the gathering.

They highlighted the significant impact of the 18-month WASH project, which aims to provide clean drinking water to thousands of people, construct washrooms in villages, and establish facilities in schools and health centers. The event was well-attended by numerous UC Secretaries and underscored HANDS' commitment to improving sanitation and hygiene standards in rural communities.

PPHI DM Irfan Hyder Phulpoto visits PPHI Hospital in Setharja

By Azhar Kubar



SETHARJA: Irfan Hyder Phulpoto, the dedicated District Manager of PPHI Khairpur, reaffirmed the commitment of the organization to providing essential healthcare services during his visit to the PPHI Hospital in Setharja. Speaking to the media, Phulpoto emphasized that PPHI continues to offer free tests, x-rays, and a range of other medical services at no cost to the residents.

"PPHI plays a pivotal role in delivering fundamental health amenities across Khairpur district," stated Phulpoto, underscoring the organization's mission to ensure accessible healthcare for all. He highlighted that comprehensive facilities for deliveries and

issues and enhance service delivery at each PPHI center. During the visit, Phulpoto directed PPHI staff to maintain a compassionate and professional demeanor towards patients, emphasizing zero tolerance for any lapses in service quality. He reiterated the importance of exemplary patient care and efficient service provision as core principles upheld by PPHI.

Among those present during the occasion were Hussain Bux Kubar, Shahid Kubar, Sajjad Ali Kubar, Athar Sehto, Momin Jamro, and several other journalists, who observed firsthand the dedication and efforts invested by PPHI in advancing healthcare accessibility and quality in Setharja and beyond.

25 Alam Paks hoisted at Shahdadpur's Imambargahs

By Sajjan Jani



SHAHADADPUR: The sacred month of Muharram-ul-Haram has commenced with devout preparations across Shahdadpur, as communities gather to decorate Alam Pak and distribute Sabil and Niyaz in remembrance of the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS). Reports indicate that 25 Alam Pak have been reverently replaced during annual ceremonies held at various Imambargahs throughout the town.

The atmosphere is solemn as Majalis for both men and women are being conducted separately in revered locations such as Imambargah Al-Hussaini, Imambargah Ali Murtaza, and others. Esteemed Shia scholars including Agha Asad Raza Hussaini, Allama Maula Bux Halai, and Zaeher Abbas Qumi are delivering poignant addresses at the Majalis-e-

Aza, recounting the timeless lessons of sacrifice and courage exemplified at Karbala. In anticipation of the upcoming Yaum-e-Ashura, Chairman of Farogh-e-Azadari, Raees Fahan Khud Wassan, accompanied by officials from the Municipal Committee including Vice Chairman Rana Luqman Raji and CMO Liaquat Ali Kalhoro, conducted comprehensive visits to various areas and Imambargahs. Their purpose was to oversee and ensure meticulous arrangements for the solemn day, underbala. In fulfillment of the upcoming Yaum-e-Ashura, Chairman of Farogh-e-Azadari, Raees Fahan Khud Wassan, accompanied by officials from the Municipal Committee including Vice Chairman Rana Luqman Raji and CMO Liaquat Ali Kalhoro, conducted comprehensive visits to various areas and Imambargahs. Their purpose was to oversee and ensure meticulous arrangements for the solemn day, underbala. 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METRO KARACHI



Murad Orders Completion Of Malir Expressway's Phase One and Start Of Hub Canal Project By August 14

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the completion of the first phase of the Malir Expressway and the commencement of work on the Hub Canal project by August 14. At a meeting attended by key officials, Shah emphasized expediting the Malir Expressway's first segment, from Jam Sadiq to Shah Faisal, currently at 77% completion. The second segment from Shah Faisal to Kathore is at 29% progress. Shah also directed the water board to begin the Rehabilitation of the Hub Canal project on August



1, aiming for completion within a year. This project, costing Rs12.73 billion, involves rehabilitating the existing canal and constructing a new 100 MGD canal, which will significantly increase water supply to Karachi's West, Central, and Keamari districts. Shah stressed the importance of timely completion, with work being funded by provincial resources.—RT

NBP Clarifies It Has No Association With Arrested Individual

KARACHI: The National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) has clarified that it has no association with Ghulam Mujtaba Mahar, who was recently arrested on charges of alleged fraudulent activities. NBP stated that Mahar was dismissed from NBP Funds, a subsidiary of NBP, long before the incident occurred. Furthermore, the bank emphasized that the alleged investments were neither affiliated with NBP nor NBP Funds.—RT/Agency

2nd Steering Committee Meeting For IDEAS 2024 Held At Sindh CM House

KARACHI: The 2nd Steering Committee meeting of the International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS) took place at the Chief Minister House Sindh, Karachi. Chaired by Chief Minister Sindh, Murad Ali Shah, the meeting saw the participation of Director General TDAP, Mr. Aasim Tiwana, along with senior representatives from Federal Ministries, various departments of the Government of Sindh, the Armed Forces of Pakistan, and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs).



In his opening remarks, Chief Minister Sindh emphasized that hosting the 12th edition of IDEAS underscores Pakistan's commitment to promoting technological growth and exchange in the region. He highlighted that the event will significantly contribute to fostering and promoting Pakistan's strategic relations with the international community, aiming to achieve shared objectives of global peace, stability, and balance. Mr. Aasim Tiwana also addressed the gathering, providing a comprehensive presentation on the current progress of maintenance and repair work at the Karachi Expo Centre. He shared detailed timelines and assured the committee that TDAP is working in close coordination with DEPO officials. Mr. Tiwana reaffirmed TDAP's commitment to fully supporting the organization of the 12th edition of IDEAS, scheduled for November 2024. The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of collective efforts to ensure the successful execution of IDEAS 2024, aiming to showcase Pakistan's advancements in defense technology and strategic capabilities on a global platform.—RT

Wahab Assures KMC's Preparedness For Upcoming Monsoon Rains



KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has stated that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) is ready to face the upcoming monsoon season at any time. Preparations for the drainage of rainwater have been completed, as rain is anticipated due to the monsoon, causing water drainage issues in several areas. The inauguration of the Malir Expressway's first phase on August 14 has provided improved travel facilities to the public. The construction work on the Malir Expressway is progressing rapidly, marking a significant project for Karachi's development.

By Asif Qureshi
These remarks were made by Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab during his address to the District Press Club, where he emphasized Deputy Mayor Salman Abdullah Murad's efforts to enhance development in various areas of Karachi. The improvement of Karachi's infrastructure is a top priority, and efforts are underway to ensure better drainage in residential and commercial areas, including Gulshan-e-Hadeed and Darsano Chhano with the assistance of the Water Board. Mayor Wahab also highlighted the establishment of a temporary unit at Pakistan Steel Mills Hospital with 100 beds to cater to the healthcare needs of the district's residents. Additionally, construction is underway on a 50-bed hospital in Gulshan-e-Hadeed, which will soon be completed for the convenience of the public. The Water Board is actively coordinating efforts to address supply issues. Mayor Wahab expressed his commitment to continue working with the community to address their concerns effectively, emphasizing the role of the District Press Club in highlighting public issues. The event was attended by various local representatives and community leaders.

Dubai-Returned Street Criminal Apprehended In Karachi



KARACHI: Karachi police arrested three street criminals including a Dubai-returned, Media Science graduate from city's Lyari Expressway. As per details, police arrested three dacoits during a robbery on Lyari Expressway. Among the arrested is a media science graduate who recently returned to Karachi from Dubai. Talking to media, street criminal Anas said he is a graduate of media science and returned to Karachi from Dubai for Eidul Adha holidays. Anas revealed that he had a confirmed turn ticket to Dubai in 15 days. Anas confessed that he started committing robberies after Eid and has been involved in approximately 80 incidents since then. He also mentioned working as a cashier at a restaurant in Dubai, earning a salary of 1200 dirhams. Anas admitted to being a drug addict and disclosed that he graduated in media science from Karachi University.—RT/Agency

Impact of Budget 2024-25: SMEs Facing Closure, NKATI Urges Government Intervention

KARACHI: Faisal Moiz Khan, President of the North Karachi Association of Trade & Industry (NKATI), has called on Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, and Commerce Minister Jam Kamal to urgently address the plight of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) facing potential closure due to the 2024-25 budget. He stressed the need to reduce the tax burden imposed by the budget, warning that without intervention, widespread shutdowns in the SME sector are imminent. Khan expressed disappointment with the budget, noting that the industrial community had expected



enue and employment," Khan emphasized, underlining the vital role of SMEs in the economy. He questioned how tax collection would be feasible if industries were forced to close. Khan appealed for immediate action to reduce taxes and lower electricity and gas tariffs to cut production costs. He warned that without these adjustments, SMEs face inevitable closure, leading to substantial revenue losses and increased unemployment. Khan stressed that revising tax policies is crucial to maintain industrial operations and avert an economic crisis.—RT

UAE Consul General Honors Long-Time Employee Anwar Saeed For 40 Years Of Service



KARACHI: UAE Consul General in Karachi, Dr. Bakheet Ateeq Alreemithi, paid tribute to Anwar Saeed, who has been serving in various UAE-related offices for the past 40 years. To honor his dedicated service, the Consul General invited Anwar Saeed and his son to the Consulate. Dr. Alreemithi highlighted Anwar Saeed's significant contributions to promoting UAE-Pakistan relations, emphasizing that his hard work and dedication make him an invaluable asset. Anwar Saeed has been associated with the UAE since the time of the late Sheikh Zayed and has consistently rendered exemplary services. In recognition of his contributions, the Consul General presented Anwar Saeed with a commemorative shield.—RT

PPP To Organize Large Public Meeting In Karachi After Muharram: Saeed Ghani

KARACHI: Sindh Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani has announced that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Karachi Division will organize a large public meeting in the city after the holy month of Muharram. The announcement was made on Wednesday during an important meeting of the PPP Karachi Division, chaired by Ghani at the People's Secretariat in his capacity as PPP Karachi Division President.



During the meeting, Ghani instructed all newly appointed office-bearers of the party in Karachi's districts to focus on strengthening the party, making it functional, and recruiting new members. He also emphasized the importance of preparing for the upcoming cantonment polls next year and maintaining party discipline. Ghani praised the efforts of former office-bearers in strengthening the party and urged the new office-bearers to conduct daily public contact drives to bolster the party's presence in the city. He acknowledged that differences of opinion are acceptable in running the party's affairs, in line with democratic traditions. Ghani highlighted that the PPP Karachi Division holds meetings more frequently than any other organization in Pakistan, and he urged the new office-bearers to engage with disgruntled PPP workers in the city. The newly appointed office-bearers introduced themselves and expressed gratitude to PPP leaders, including Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, President, Asif Ali Zardari, Faryal Talpur, and Saeed Ghani, for their confidence. The meeting also included prayers for the departed souls of late and martyred PPP leaders and activists, particularly two party workers recently martyred in Karachi. The meeting was attended by PPP Sindh General Secretary Waqar Mehdi, Mirza Maqbool, Zulfiqar Qaimkhan, Asif Khan, Shakeel Chaudhury, and office-bearers of all subsidiary bodies of the PPP.—RT

Terrorist Plotting Attack On Muharram Procession Apprehended

KARACHI: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on Wednesday claimed to have arrested a high-profile terrorist affiliated with the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), who according to the law enforcers was planning to attack a Muharram procession in Karachi, media reported. Addressing a press conference, DIG CTD Asif Ijaz Sheikh said that the arrested terrorist - identified as Muhammad Shuaib - was planning to attack an 8th Muharram in Karachi's Orangi Town

He claimed that the CTD team has arrested Shoaib from Itehad Town and recovered a suicide jacket from the arrested terrorist. "He [the terrorist] had joined the TTP after arriving in Karachi," he added. The arrested terrorist has provided valuable information to the authorities, and a significant process has been made in the case, the DIG CTD added. Sheikh warned that strict action would be taken against those involved in such heinous activities, and the facilitators of terrorists would also be brought to justice. Pakistan has witnessed a surge in terrorist activities across the country, especially in KP and Balochistan, since the outlawed militant group Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan ended its ceasefire with the government in November 2022. It is pertinent to mention here that militants have targeted Muharram processions several times, including a bomb blast that killed more than 40 people attending the main Ashura procession on Karachi's M.A. Jinnah Road in December 2009.—RT/Agency

Pakistan Development Forum To Hold Research Seminar On Freedom Of Expression, Democracy And General Elections 2024

KARACHI: The Pakistan Development Forum (PDF) is set to host a research seminar titled "Freedom of Expression, Democracy, and General Elections 2024" on Friday,

July 12, at 3 PM. The seminar, chaired by renowned researcher Dr. Umair Ansari, will delve into insights on the 2024 general elections from global political and social figures.—RT



KARACHI: CEO of RK Sports Management, Rais Khan is pictured with renowned Sri Lankan singers Mahisha Sandamali and Sonal Prabhashitta.—RT

CTD Apprehends Two Railway Employees Involved In Arms Smuggling

KARACHI: Counter Terrorism Department's intelligence wing arrested two employees of Pakistan Railways under arms smuggling charges, media reported on Wednesday.



CTD In-charge Raja Umar Khatab has stated that the CTD in a raid in Cantt Station arrested railway employees Sanauallah and Gul Islam and recovered a sub-machine gun (SMG) and a pistol from their possession. Two accused smuggled arms from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Karachi. "An arms dealer in KP had handed over arms to them," official said. "Arrested suspect has been affiliated with an inter-provincial arm smuggling gang," Raja Umar Khatab said. "This gang used to supply online arms." "Three arms dealers of KP have sent heavy weapons to Karachi till now," he said. "CTD has arrested two members of the gang earlier," he said. "Mostly retired or terminated FC officials have been involved in the arms smuggling," CTD officer said.—RT/Agency



KARACHI: Dawood Global Foundation President Tara Uzra Dawood called on the Consul General of Thailand, Narut Sontarodom to discuss potential synergies for the empowerment of women and girls.—RT

A man cannot be comfortable without his own approval.

—Mark Twain

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THURSDAY JULY 11 2024

PM Warns Ministers To 'Roll Up Your Sleeves' For Downsizing Agenda Implementation

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday asked the ministries to work hard to make a difference and meet the nation's expectations, warning against any laxity in the implementation of the government's downsizing agenda.

"I will not allow my time to waste and I am sure you will not allow your time to be wasted. The only thing that will make the difference is action and implementation. Roll up your sleeves as this is a matter of country, its resources and resolution of its issues," the prime minister said in his remarks while chairing the meeting of the federal cabinet.

Apprising the members of his visits to Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, he referred to his interactions with world leaders, particularly Russian President Vladimir Putin and said he had formed a committee under Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal for follow-ups.

Similarly, he said he had chaired a meeting a couple of days ago to review the progress on the follow-up of "very productive" discussions with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang during his China visit



and would hold another meeting on July 20.

The prime minister said the government had launched the solarisation of 28,000 tube-wells in Balochistan to save bleeding of annual Rs80 billion. He also appreciated the Balochistan chief minister and other relevant ministries and departments for taking the project to the implementation stage.

He told the meeting that the finance ministry had been tasked to work out a business plan for the solarisation of a million tube-wells in the country which were currently running on imported fuel, putting a burden of \$3.5 billion in the form of foreign exchange.

The prime minister high-

lighted that Pakistan had immense solar energy potential which must be exploited to save energy costs and provide low-cost electricity to the farmers.

"Time is running fast and we are racing against time. You have to accept the challenge and deliver. You will become the nation's heroes and departments for taking the project to the implementation stage."

Coming to the downsizing agenda, the prime minister categorically said that he would not listen against the closure of Public Works Department (PWD) as the government had also found an alternative solution on the pattern of Punjab. He said

the two-week time he had given for PWD's closure, was already over.

"I will not tolerate if any ministry used delaying tactics. Please make no mistake about it. It is okay if there is any valid reason for any subsidiary but protecting any entity for the sake of perks and privileges is a thing of the past, not today. It will not happen and it must not happen," he remarked.

The prime minister also highlighted that Pakistan spends \$5 billion on freight of exports and imports but the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation was running a fleet of just 12 ships while getting Rs5 billion for salaries. This is contrary to around 600 ships being run by Bangladesh and around 1500 ships by India.

"But no one cares. At least they should have flagged the issues to seek their resolution," he said and also referred to the evasion of import duties worth Rs1200 billion on Karachi Port.

He told the meeting that on Tuesday, the government had announced a Rs50 billion relief package to support the power consumers of the protected category for three

months. "During these three months, I want massive fiscal space through enforcement like plugging financial leakages and addressing tax evasion," he added.

He said the government had imposed taxes on the real estate sector to generate Rs100 billion in revenue and to do away with a culture of tax evasion.

"This cannot go for long. We need to bring deep structural reforms and take bitter pills. I pray that this should be the last IMF programme but it needs sacrifices," he commented.

He reiterated his call for the ministers to work hard and sought plans from commerce and IT ministers to boost exports. "I beg of you in the name of Pakistan. Let us stand up and accept the challenge, move forward in unison and create a difference as the nation wants results," he added.

Prime Minister Shehbaz asked the interior minister and interior secretary to ensure coordination with the provinces during the month of Muharram and extend the maximum possible support to provinces as well as Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan.—RT/Agency

Supreme Court Expected to Announce Verdict on PTI-SIC Reserved Seats Case Today

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) is expected to announce a verdict on a case related to reserved seats of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) on Thursday (today), media reported citing sources.

A special session of the apex court's 13-member full bench was held under the chair of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa today, the sources added.

The important consultative session was summoned by the top judge to hold a discussion over the order related to the reserved seats case.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the Supreme Court reserved the verdict on the SIC's appeal yesterday, against the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) verdict that upheld the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision denying them the reserved seats.

The CJP-led full court reserved the verdict after conducting nine hearings on the SIC's appeals to listen to arguments from all parties, including the federal government and the poll organising body.

The bench also comprises Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mando, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Athar



Minallah, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Ayesha Malik, Justice Shahid Waheed, Justice Irfan Saadat Khan and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan.

The reserved seats' issue first emerged after over 80 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 Imran Khan-founded party ECP, citing a setback after the SC, filed 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 apex court seeking to set aside the PHC verdict and the allocation of 67 women and 11 minority seats in the assemblies.

The allocation of reserved seats holds significance as the PTI-backed in-

dependent candidates, who made 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.

It is also to be noted that the PHC verdict allowing the allocation of reserved seats to the ruling coalition comprising the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and others, led to them securing a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly.

The move propelled the PML-N's number in the lower house of parliament to 123, the PPP to 73, whereas the PTI-backed SIC number stood at 82.

A three-member SC bench comprising Justice Mansoor, Justice Minallah and Justice Mazhar, took up and suspended PHC's verdict as well as the ECP's decision on the said issue. Following the SC's decision to suspend the ECP order, the coalition lost its two-thirds majority in the lower house.—RT/Agency

PM Decides To Abolish Five Key Ministries In Government Overhaul

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has decided to abolish five key ministries and departments as part of a major government restructuring effort. The Institutional Reforms Cell, established by the prime minister, has commenced work on "rightsizing." According to sources, recommendations have been sought from five federal ministries within a week. These ministries include Information Technology, Kashmir Affairs, Ministry of Safeguard, Ministry of Industries and Production, and Ministry of Health Services.

PM Shehbaz has directed to form a committee comprising the Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and Member of National Assembly Bilal Azhar Kiani to explain the role of provincial ministries. On the other hand, the federal cabinet has formally approved the abolition of the Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives. Approval for the entire plan related to the Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives has been granted. The prime minister has instructed to immediately provide relief on electricity bills and expedite work on solar tube wells. In the cabinet meeting, ap-



proval was also given to run advertisements for medicines on TV, radio, and print media. Previously, the federal government further reduced the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) by Rs50 billion within 10 days of the start of the new fiscal year 2024-25, the National Assembly Standing Committee on Planning Ministry was informed on June 9. The committee which met here with its chairman Saad Abdul Qadir Gilani in the chair, sought details of the revised PSDP and the ongoing development projects. During the meeting, Planning Secretary Awais Manzoor Sumra gave a briefing on the working of the ministry. Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, who also attended the meeting, gave an overview of the prevailing

economic conditions in the country. He painted a grim economic situation, saying that the country was being run on borrowing. The entire TTP hideouts in Afghanistan, including the salaries, pensions and subsidies. We wasted 75 years moving in circles," he said, adding that the successive governments could not maintain continuity of policies due to political instability. "Now, we have no other option but to manage our revenues and expenses. We have to improve our efficiency, we have to have exports-led growth," he said. "If we do not show efficiency in the next quarter of a century, we will lose justification for the creation of Pakistan as a separate country."—RT/Agency

Pakistan's Strikes On TTP Hideouts in Afghanistan Are A Domestic Matter: Pentagon



WASHINGTON DC: The US Department of Defense "Pentagon," addressed Pakistan's recent announcements of continued airstrikes on TTP hideouts in Afghanistan, categorizing it as a domestic matter.

During a press briefing, Pentagon Spokesperson Maj Gen Patrick S Ryder emphasized that Pakistan retains autonomy in decisions concerning border protection and internal security.

Pakistan's defence minister Khawaja Asif has said few days ago that Pakistan will continue to launch attacks against Afghanistan as part of a new military operation aimed at countering terrorism.

Khawaja Asif said the aerial strikes were targeting groups which Pakistan accuses of targeting security forces and civilians.

"I am not going to delve into Pakistani domestic decisions. There are regional concerns regarding terrorism, but Pakistan's sovereign decisions on border security and internal security are theirs," Gen Ryder remarked.

He highlighted the longstanding counterterrorism partnership between the US and Pakistan. "We have a longstanding relationship with Pakistan focused on counterterrorism efforts. Discussions regarding support are ongoing between the US and Pakistan. We continue to explore avenues for collaboration to combat regional terrorism," he stated.

Responding to inquiries about intelligence sharing between the two nations, the Pentagon Spokesperson declined to comment on future operations or intelligence matters.—RT/Agency

IHC Justice Tariq Jahangiri Receives 'Suspicious' Calls and Messages

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court's (IHC) Justice Tariq Mehmoood Jahangiri has been targeted by suspicious calls and messages, it was revealed on Wednesday.

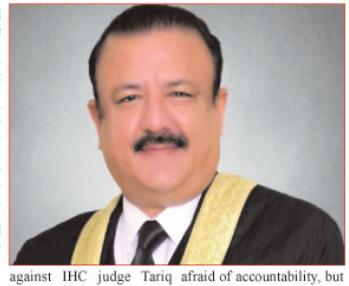
Sources from the judiciary disclosed that the caller purported to be the Director-General of the FIA (Federal Investigation Agency). However, subsequent investigations determined that the FIA DG did not place any such call. The individual behind the suspicious communication attempted to directly contact Justice Jahangiri.

In response, the top jurist has directed the court registrar to promptly inform the FIA, providing them with the mobile number associated with the incident.

According to insiders, the suspicious call was directed to Justice Jahangiri's office at the Islamabad High Court just two days ago. Additionally, messages were sent to the judge's personal mobile number from the same suspicious source.

Previously, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) has decided to confront head-on the alleged government-backed social media campaign targeting its judges, particularly Justice Tariq Mahmood Jahangiri, with a robust institutional response.

IHC on July 8 started contempt proceedings against the people allegedly running a smear campaign



against IHC judge Tariq Mehmoood Jahangiri on social media platforms and issued notices to three journalists—Gharidhi Farooqi, Ammar Solangi and Hasan Ayub.

IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooqi formed a 7-member bench comprising all IHC justices excluding Justice Jahangiri to hear the case.

He said the smear campaign against judges is intolerable and questioned if the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), and the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) were unaware of it. The Islamabad advocate general told the bench that the government would take action based on the judges' response.

"Are judges left to respond to such questions? Should we also hold press conferences? We are not

afraid of accountability, but we will not tolerate campaigns against judges. Whoever is found responsible will not be spared and will spend their summer in Adiala Jail," responded Justice Farooqi.

At the start of the full court hearing, Chief Justice Aamer Farooqi stated that the court had explained many times, but no one learned a lesson, adding that the contempt of court proceedings are an institutional response to the social media campaign.

Since May last year, IHC judges have been facing the heat for resisting the alleged interference by executive agencies in their judicial duties. To address the issue, they met with the then CJP Umar Ata Bandial and the incumbent CJP Qazi Faez Isa to discuss the harassment, especially following the Tyrion case.—RT/Agency

NAB Chief Nazir Ahmed Butt Visits Grave Of Watchdog's Victim

ISLAMABAD: Lieutenant General (ret'd) Nazir Ahmed Butt, the chairman of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), recently visited the grave of brigadier (ret'd) Asad Munir, who had taken his own life several years ago.

Asad, a retired brigadier known for his integrity, had pointed to harassment by NAB as the sole reason for his suicide in his note which he wrote before taking his own life, hoping to prevent others from enduring similar treatment "for the crimes they had not committed".

Three years after his death, an accountability court acquitted Asad. Last month, a representative from the Nazir's office contacted Asad's widow, Saeeda, and sought permission for his superior to visit her. She declined to meet with the NAB chairman but he insisted.

Butt had been intrigued by Asad's suicide note and, while he wanted to express his condolences to Saeeda, he also wanted to know more about his last note. In response, the family agreed to



meet. Nazir told Saeeda and Asad's brother, Khalid, that the NAB was in the process of drafting Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for investigating government officers.

He also wanted to learn what Asad went through, so that it was not repeated. He was also keen to know why NAB went after Asad without a solid reason. The family was not very aware of the motives.

Saeeda, who was initially reluctant to meet him, was appreciative of his gesture. "I found him to be a very nice person," she said. The NAB chairman also wanted to visit several other

"victims" of the accountability organisation with Asad's family being the only one he has visited so far.

Three days later, he visited Asad's grave in a graveyard located in Islamabad's Sector H-8.

A friend of Asad, who visited the grave a few days after Nazir, found a floral wreath at his friend's grave along with note that read: "Lt General (ret'd) Nazir Ahmed Butt, Chairman NAB".

According to a NAB source, Nazir plans to see a former vice chancellor during his next trip to Lahore. He was handuffed by NAB and that picture resonated with people across the divide.—RT/Agency

Bill Presented In National Assembly To Amend Citizenship Act



ISLAMABAD: A bill to amend the Pakistan Citizenship Act 1951 has been brought to the National

Assembly, enabling him to get his or her citizenship of Pakistan.

He said that now a new amendment is being introduced stating that if either parent is a Pakistani citizen, the child can be granted Pakistani citizenship.

The bill has been sent to the concerned standing committee for further deliberation.—RT/Agency

Barrister Gohar Slams Phone Tapping as 'Unconstitutional'

LAHORE: PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar has asserted that the Constitution of Pakistan guaranteed the privacy of all citizens, terming the government's decision to authorise Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to tap phones "unconstitutional," media reported.

Speaking to international media, Barrister Gohar said that such a "blanket notification" violates the constitution, adding that only the people involved in criminal activities could be subjected to such surveillance.

When asked about PTI founder Imran Khan's own support to phone tapping while he was in power, he said: "Whatever it is, it should be according to the constitution."

Meanwhile, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif said he supported



the government's decision to authorise Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to intercept phone calls. He emphasised that it was essential "under the current circumstances" as the country strives to eradicate militant violence. "In matters of national security, this measure becomes necessary and should be supported by everyone," the minister, adding, "At the very least, during the ongoing war against terrorism, this action is essential." He dismissed criticism from the opposition, Act.—RT/Agency

saying the PTI members should recall Khan's statements over the issue who justified phone tapping during his own stint in power. In a notification issued on Monday, the Information and Broadcasting Minister said the government had authorised the ISI to tap phone calls and messages "in the interest of national security." This authorisation was given to the ISI under Section 54 of the Pakistan Telecommunication Act.—RT/Agency