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Sleepy Joe Quits US Presidential Race

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden ended his reelection campaign on Sunday after fellow Democrats lost faith in his mental acuity and ability to beat Donald Trump, leaving the presidential race in uncharted territory. Biden, in a post on X, said he will remain in his role as president and commander-in-chief until his term ends in January 2025 and will address the nation this week. "It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve as your President. And while it has been my intention to seek reelection, I believe it is in the best interest of my party and the country for me to stand down and to focus solely on fulfilling my duties as President for the remainder of my term," Biden wrote. By dropping



his reelection bid, he clears the way for Vice President Kamala Harris to run at the top of the ticket, the first Black woman to do so in the country's history. Biden, 81, did not mention her when he announced his move. It was unclear whether other senior Democrats would challenge Harris for the party's nomination, who was widely seen as the pick for many party officials, or whether the party itself would choose to open the field for nominations. Biden's announcement follows a wave of public and private pressure from Democratic lawmakers and party officials to quit the race after his shockingly poor performance in a televised debate last month against Republican rival Donald Trump.—RT/Agency

Information Minister Claims Imran's Adiala 'Presidential Suite' Surpasses Middle-Class Homes

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar slammed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan for claiming that he was imprisoned in a death cell when, in actuality, he was in a "presidential suite", which is better than a middle-class family's house. "You are telling the West that you're facing troubles, and you're imprisoned in a death cell. This death cell is a 'presidential suite' in Adiala jail, which is better than a middle-class house," Tarar said during a press conference in Islamabad. Imran, in an interview with the Sunday Times through his lawyers, claimed that he was imprisoned in a death cell, where "terrorists" are kept to ensure "they have no contact with anyone". The 71-year-old cricket-turned-politician has been in prison for almost a year now in three cases — the Toshakhana case, cipher case, and the un-Islamic marriage case. His wife, Bushra Bibi, is also behind bars. However, a court suspended his sentence in the Toshakhana case, while other courts overturned his convictions in the cipher and iddat cases, respectively. While there were hopes for his and Bushra's release in July, they were dashed when the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) arrested them on fresh charges related to the sale of state gifts.



As Imran remains behind bars, he has kept claiming that he's not being provided several facilities, but to set the record straight, the government submitted documentary evidence of facilities being provided to the PTI founder in Adiala jail, rebutting his claims that he was being kept in solitary confinement. The pictures shared with the court showed that the PTI founder was provided with several facilities that a common prisoner cannot imagine — since he's a former prime minister. Imran has an exercise bike and stretching belt for physical fitness, books, a separate kitchen, a special menu, an exclusive gallery for a walk, LED, a room cooler, and a study table. In his presser, while referring to the interview, he reminded the people of how a "dictator" Imran would treat his political opponents — regardless of their gender. "[They knew] Shehbaz Sharif had a pain in his back. Despite that, he was brought

in an armored car and pushed, and it is visible in the footage. Maryam Nawaz was in a 7x8 cell, where she could not even spread the prayer mat properly, she was not even allowed to walk." Recalling how former prime minister Nawaz Sharif was treated, Tarar said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz president's wife died while he was in prison. He claimed that a fire was lit using wood outside Rana Samaulah's jail cell in extremely hot weather. "These are his words, I will take off the AC and TV and not give you food. I will not allow them medicines or visits," Tarar said, reminding the people about what Imran would say about his plans for imprisoned PML-N leaders. In response to a question, Tarar said his government did not want to victimise its political opponents and that the authorities also follow through on Imran's requests for "desi murghi". In response to a question about disruption in the internet, Tarar claimed that the in-

ternet services were disrupted across several countries and flights were also affected in the US. "The government has nothing to do with it, it's an overall problem," he said, noting that the IT Ministry and the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) would inform about cyber security. He added that if the government were to install a firewall, it would be for data and cyber security, not to gag freedom of expression. "This is as per my knowledge." He said that on social media, there are several issues — some people deserve to be killed, women harassment, and child pornography. "You can see what kind of content is being uploaded on Twitter (now X)." The info minister noted that the interim government had placed a ban on the social media platform as its policies did not meet with the nation's compliance rate. "There is some content that terrorists and anti-state elements use [to their benefit]. The interior minister has taken this matter up in court," he added. According to the information minister, "Some armed people from political parties, including the PTI," attended the Aman (peace) March organised by Bannu traders and created chaos by resorting to firing near Bannu Cantt's wall on Friday where eight troops were martyred last week. One person was killed and 22 sustained injuries due to stampede after the firing incident during Friday's rally in Bannu, Tarar confirmed, adding that the victim was dead one kilometre away from Bannu Cantonment's wall. He questioned why "armed groups of some political parties" attended the traders' event and what were their motives behind opening fire at the sensitive site of Bannu Cantonment's wall. He blamed the Imran-founded party for being "a sympathiser for the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)" and wanted the "politics of bodies" in the country. The minister directly blamed the PTI workers for their alleged involvement in the Bannu Aman March's firing incident and termed it a "conspiracy" of the former ruling party to create chaos in the country. He also rejected the armed forces' involvement in the firing incident during the Bannu rally, saying some people tried to blame the Pakistan Army for the incident for their ulterior motives. He also rejected the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government's statement on the incident, as well as its announcement to hold an inquiry into the incident as the ruling party's associates were behind the attack.—RT/Agency

Islamabad Condemns Attack By 'Extremist Group' On Consulate In Germany

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Sunday strongly condemned an attack by a gang of extremists on its consulate in Germany's Frankfurt and the failure of the German authorities to protect the sanctity and security of the premises of its consular mission. The Foreign Office's statement comes a day after a group of Afghan nationals vandalised and attacked the Pakistani consulate, pelting stones at the building and removing the country's flag. The statement said that the responsibility to protect the premises and ensure the security of diplomats falls under the host government under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963. "We are conveying our strong protest to the German government and urge to take immediate measures to fulfil its responsibilities under the Vienna Conventions," the



Foreign Office said. Pakistan also sought the German authorities to take immediate measures to arrest and prosecute those involved in yesterday's incident and hold to account those responsible for the lapses in security. The video of the incident went viral on the internet in which the Afghan nationals could be seen storming the Pakistani consulate. There are reports that they also tried burning the Pakistani flag. According to media reports, the situation has drawn significant attention among the international communities, raising concerns about the diplomatic security of the installations. However, the officials have been assured of a thorough investigation by the German authorities in Frankfurt. They have also arrested several people who are being investigated after the video went viral.—RT/Agency

Government Committed To Providing 100% Free Medical Care To Eligible Patients: PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that the government is determined to provide state-of-the-art free healthcare services to deserving patients from across the country at the Jinnah Medical Complex in Islamabad, which he said would be one of the best medical facilities in the region. Addressing the groundbreaking ceremony of the complex, the prime minister said that the facility will offer 100% free medical services. "This is the gift of the coalition government not only for the residents of Rawalpindi and Islamabad but for the people from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan as well," he said. Premier said that once completed, the medical complex would offer the world's best healthcare facilities with various sections of diseases related to heart, kidneys, lungs, cancer, and others. He said that a modern first aid emergency section would also be established at the hospital with an air ambulance service for patients in hard-to-reach areas. PM Shehbaz pledged that the nursing schools



and laboratories would also be established in the hospital and the deserving patients would avail 100% free lab tests facility. The prime minister emphasised that this was the same model envisioned by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif to provide free medical facilities to the poor and on-payment facilities to the well-off people at the same place. He specifically thanked Habib Bank Limited (HBL) Chairman Sultan Ali Allana and Prince Rahim Agha Khan for providing technical consultation support free of cost for the project. He paid tribute to the decades-long services of the Agha Khan Foundation for the country. PM Shehbaz directed the authorities concerned to complete the project in one year. "Although one year is a challenging deadline for the huge project but with determination and hard work, it was quite possible," he said, while issuing directives to continue work on the project round the clock to meet the deadline. He assured that there would be no funding problems from the government side. PM Shehbaz Sharif also expressed his gratitude to Islamabad Chief Commissioner Ali Randhawa for providing land for the project, as well as the finance minister, finance secretary and planning minister for their support for the project. As regards compensation to the land affected people, the prime minister directed to provide one-window facility to the affected people to resolve their problems without any delay.—RT/Agency

Gohar Ejaz Claims Corrupt Contracts Behind High Electricity Costs

ISLAMABAD: Former caretaker commerce minister Gohar Ejaz has disclosed data on payments to Independent Power Producers (IPPs), revealing significant financial burdens on consumers. Ejaz shared on Sunday that over the past year, IPPs received payments amounting to Rs1.95 trillion. He criticised corrupt contracts and mismanagement that result in electricity being sold at Rs60 per unit, calling for public action against these deals. He highlighted that the government purchased electricity from one power plant at a record Rs750 per unit, and from coal power plants at an average of Rs200 per unit, while wind and solar plants sold electricity at over Rs50 per unit. Ejaz pointed out that despite operating below 20% capacity, IPPs were paid substantial sums, including Rs140 billion to one plant operating at a 15% load factor and Rs120 billion to another at 17%. These agreements, according to him, allow IPPs to invest heavily without generating equivalent power, stressing the need for "no capacity payment" agreements. He urged the government to only purchase from the cheapest electricity providers and treat all IPPs as merchant plants.—RT/Agency



ISLAMABAD: Shafqat Mahmood, a once prominent leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Sunday announced quitting politics but stressed that the decision was not due to coercion. "34 years back, I resigned from a government job and entered politics. But after deliberations, I have now decided to retire from politics," Mahmood, a former federal minister, said in a post on X, previously known as Twitter. A plethora of politicians left the former ruling party or quit politics altogether following the May 9 attacks on state installations, with the former saying that they were forced to quit the Imran Khan-founded party. The leaders who deserted the now embattled PTI include Fawad Chaudhry, Asad Umar, Shireen Mazari, Fayazul Hassan Chohan, Maleeka Bokhari, Ali Zaidi, and Musarrat Jamshed Cheema. While some leaders have tried joining the party ranks once again, the PTI leadership — which consists of several new faces — has decided that deserters would not be brought back to the fold. "There's no pressure on me [to quit PTI] and neither

PTI's Shafqat Mahmood Resigns From Politics, Denies Pressure To Do So

do I plan on joining any other political party," Mahmood said, explaining that he took the decision due to "time" and his "age". Reflecting on his political decades-long career, the former federal minister said he saw several ups and downs. "I have served as a member of the Senate and the National Assembly." Not only that, he said that he was also appointed as a federal as well as provincial minister. Mahmood, on a lighter note, said he also "visited" jail during his political career. The now-former PTI leader said that as the federal education minister, he rolled out the Single National Curriculum for the first time in history and also oversaw education-related affairs during the pressing period of COVID-19.



When he was the education minister during the coronavirus period, the students were in awe of him as he not only introduced several relaxations but also passed students without exams. He thanked Khan and PTI for giving him to opportunity to "serve". Mahmood also extended his gratitude towards the voters of his constituency, who elected him to parliament twice. "I am satisfied that I have always performed all my responsibilities honestly and performed at every position as a duty. No one, thank God, has levelled any allegation against me." Revealing his future plans, Mahmood said that he wanted to spend the rest of his life teaching and writing. "I agree with those who say that the youth should participate in politics."—RT/Agency

Islamabad Lodges Strong Protest With German Government Over Consulate Attack

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Sunday said that Pakistan had lodged a strong protest with the German Government in the wake of yesterday's attack by a gang of extremists on Pakistan Consulate in Frankfurt. The DPMM, foreign minister, in a post on X account, said that yesterday a gang of extremists breached the premises of Pakistan's consulate in Frankfurt, Germany endangering the lives of



its consular staff. Dar said the German government was urged to fulfil its responsibilities under the Vienna Conventions and ensure the security of the diplomatic missions and staff of Pakistan.—RT/Agency

PTI Prepares To File Reference Against CEC And ECP Members

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has given a task to Barrister Ali Zafar to draft a reference against the chief election commissioner and all the members of the Election Commission of Pakistan. The reference against Sikandar Sultan Raja and all the members of the election commission would be moved in the judicial commission. The PTI had accused the chief election commissioner of stealing its mandate during the general elections held on



Feb 8. The ECP is under severe criticism since the Supreme Court gave its verdict on reserved seats. Earlier, a complaint was filed against the chief election commissioner in the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC). The complaint against

Sikandar Sultan Raja was filed on the pretext of failing to fulfill his constitutional duties, stealing the mandate of PTI and not complying with court verdicts. The complaint also cited former Rawalpindi commissioner Liaquat Chathra's news conference in which he levelled allegations against the CEC of supervising rigging in the Rawalpindi district by giving 70,000 votes of PTI candidates to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz candidates.—RT/Agency

THE HEARTLAND



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

Soyem Of Karbala Martyrs Observed With Religious Fervor In Tando Allahyar

By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR. The third day of Muharram was marked with a solemn and reverent procession starting from Haider Shah Kazmi Imambargah. Organized by Anjuman Pegham-e-Ahli-e-Bayt and led by Syed Abid Hussain Shah Kazmi, the procession followed its traditional route through the city, passing notable locations such as Mai Hajra, Sakhi Moj Darya, MCB Chowk, Patoli Muhalla, Sheedi Muhalla, and Patasha Faqir Imambargah, before concluding in Chaki Muhalla.



A large number of both Shia and Sunni participants joined in the mourning procession, showcasing a powerful display of religious unity. Along the procession route, Niyaz (free food) was generously distributed to all attendees, fostering a sense of community and solidarity.

Renowned local associations performed Noha Khwani (mourning recitations) and Matam (chest beating), adding to the emotional and spiritual atmosphere of the event. Security for the procession was meticulously managed by the Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen in coordination with the local police, ensuring the safety and order of the participants.

The recitations of Noha and Matam are integral to the mourning rituals, allowing participants to express their grief and sorrow for the martyrs. These practices are deeply rooted in the cultural and religious traditions of the region, and they play a crucial role in the collective remembrance and veneration of the martyrs.

The participation of both Shia and Sunni Muslims in the procession highlights the inclusive and unifying nature of the event. It sends a powerful message of religious harmony and mutual respect, reinforcing the bonds of brotherhood and solidarity within the Muslim community. This unity is particularly important in the current context, where sectarian divisions and conflicts often dominate the narrative. The role of security and organizational efforts is crucial in ensuring the smooth and safe conduct of the procession. The collaboration between Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen and the local police is a testament to the importance of coordinated efforts in managing large public events. Their meticulous planning and execution ensure that the participants can observe the rituals in a safe and orderly manner. The media coverage of the Soyem of the Martyrs of Karbala plays a vital role in raising awareness about the event and its significance. It provides a platform for the voices of the organizers and participants, highlighting their perspectives and experiences. This coverage helps to educate the broader public about the religious and cultural significance of the Soyem of the Martyrs of Karbala. Participants from all walks of life come together to honor the memory of the martyrs and to reaffirm their commitment to the values they stood for. The event serves as a powerful reminder of the enduring legacy of Imam Hussain and the universal principles of justice and humanity.

Genco Company Continues Cleanliness Campaign In Larkana



By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: The Genco Company has persistently continued its cleanliness operations across various areas of Larkana. Yesterday, their efforts spanned a wide range of locations, including Bandar Road, Bank Square, Girls College Road, VIP Road, SSP Chowk, Chandka Bridge, Sachal Colony, Shahbaz Colony, Qaim Shah Bukhari Road, Jinnah Bagh Chowk, Lahori Muhalla, Pakistani Chowk, Sabzi Mandi, Yar Muhammad Colony, Bhains Colony, Nazar, Rahmatpur, Sheikh Zayed Colony, Old Bus Stand, Bakrani Road, Murad Wahan, Ali Goharabad, Naundero Chowk, Gajampur, Allahabad, Khaliq Colony, Dodai Road, Aqil Road, Professor Colony, and other areas.

The company's staff diligently collected garbage from residents' doors and swept the roads, streets, and alleys throughout the city. Residents, including Ghulam Qadir Chandio, Nawab Bhangar, Aziz Shaikh, Hamid Tunio, Rafiq Jamal, Zahid Jalbani, Ghulam Nabi Brohi, and Waqas Kalhor, have praised Genco's efforts. They remarked that the regular collection of garbage not only keeps the areas clean but also saves them significant time and effort.

Ghulam Qadir Chandio expressed his appreciation, saying, "The Genco Company is doing an excellent job in Larkana city. Their daily garbage collection service ensures our neighborhood remains tidy and hygienic." Similarly, other residents have echoed this sentiment, highlighting the positive impact of the company's work on their daily lives.

On the administrative side, Project Director Hamid Khan, Operations Manager Ifthikhar Narejo, Assistant Operations Manager Sadaqat Hussain Junejo, and other officials have emphasized the importance of cooperation with the residents. They instructed the staff to maintain a high level of service and to work closely with the community to address any concerns related to cleanliness.

The ongoing campaign by Genco Company reflects a strong commitment to improving the living conditions in Larkana, demonstrating the significant role of effective waste management in enhancing urban life.

The cleanliness campaign is part of a broader initiative by the Genco Company to enhance the environmental health of the city. By ensuring that garbage is regularly collected and disposed of properly, the company is helping to reduce the risk of disease and improve the overall quality of life for residents.

The campaign has also had a positive impact on the local economy. Cleaner streets and public spaces make the city more attractive to visitors and investors, boosting local businesses and creating new opportunities for economic growth. The improved hygiene and sanitation conditions also contribute to better public health, reducing the burden on healthcare services and allowing people to lead healthier, more productive lives.



HYDERABAD: Dr. Sultan Mughal, renowned dental specialist, with DSP Syed Anwar Shah of Markit Area, City Hyderabad.—RT

14-Year-Old Hingorja Boy Disappears Under Mysterious Circumstances

By Sajjad Chang

HINGORJA: In a distressing turn of events, 14-year-old Siraj Ahmed Solangi, the nephew of journalist Muhammad Siddique Solangi, has gone missing under mysterious circumstances. Siraj, the son of Inayat Hussain Solangi, disappeared on his way home from Mirak Madrasa.



The family suspects that Siraj has been kidnapped. Inayat Hussain and journalist Muhammad Siddique Solangi reported the incident at the Hingorja Press Club. They explained that Siraj, a diligent student at Mirak Madrasa, failed to return home, prompting immediate concern and suspicion of foul play.

The family has lodged reports at both Hingorja and Sobhodoro police stations, urging authorities to expedite their search efforts. They have also reached out to human rights organizations, appealing for assistance in locating the missing boy.

The disappearance of Siraj Ahmed Solangi has sent shockwaves through the community, with neighbors and friends joining the family in their desperate search for any clues. The authorities are under increasing pressure to solve the case and bring the boy safely back home.

Inayat Hussain Solangi described his son as a bright and obedient child, well-liked by his peers and teachers. He expressed deep concern over the lack of progress in the investigation and appealed to the public for any information that could help locate Siraj.

The family's anguish is palpable, and their frustration with the authorities' response is growing by the day. Journalist Muhammad Siddique Solangi has used his platform to raise awareness about the case, calling for more resources to be allocated to the search efforts.

He has criticized the police for what he perceives as a lack of urgency and thoroughness in their investigation. This high-profile involvement has brought additional media attention to the case, increasing public scrutiny and pressure on the authorities. Community leaders and activists have organized vigils and rallies to show solidarity with the Solangi family and to keep the issue in the public eye. These events have seen significant participation, reflecting the deep concern and support for the family within the community. The sense of unity and collective action is a testament to the strong social fabric of Hingorja.

Despite these efforts, the whereabouts of Siraj Ahmed Solangi remain unknown. The case has highlighted broader issues of child safety and law enforcement efficacy in the region. Many are calling for systemic changes to ensure better protection for children and more efficient responses to such emergencies.

Human rights organizations have stepped in to provide support to the family and to advocate for a more vigorous investigation. They have emphasized the need for specialized training for police officers in handling cases of missing children and for better coordination between various agencies involved in such investigations.

As the days pass, the anxiety and fear among the community grow. Parents are becoming more vigilant, and schools are implementing additional safety measures to protect students. The case of Siraj Ahmed Solangi has become a catalyst for broader discussions on child safety and community responsibility.

The Solangi family's hope for Siraj's safe return remains unbroken, but the emotional toll of the ordeal is evident. They continue to appeal to anyone with information to come forward and help bring Siraj back home. The community, in turn, stands with them, ready to support in any way possible.

The resolution of this case is critical not just for the Solangi family, but for the entire community of Hingorja. It will set a precedent for how such incidents are handled in the future and will determine the level of trust and confidence the public has in their law enforcement agencies. As the investigation continues, the collective hope is that Siraj Ahmed Solangi will be found safe and sound, and that justice will be served. Until then, the community remains united in their prayers and efforts to bring him back home.

Car-Rickshaw Collision Near Dargah Misri Shah Results In One Death, Two Injuries

By Mian Muhammad Faisal

KUNRI: A tragic accident occurred near Dargah Misri Shah on Kanji road when a car overtaking a rickshaw lost control and collided with the rickshaw. The incident resulted in the death of one person and left two others injured.



The collision led to severe injuries for the rickshaw driver, Riyaz Gishkuri, 9-year-old Shahzeb Gishkuri, and another youth named Riyaz Gishkuri. All three were rushed to the Taluka Hospital for emergency treatment. Tragically, the young boy, Shahzeb Gishkuri, succumbed to his injuries and was pronounced dead at the hospital. The other injured individuals are currently receiving medical care.

The community is in shock over the sudden and tragic loss, and authorities are investigating the incident to determine the cause and any potential negligence involved. The injured continue to be treated in the hospital, and their condition is being closely monitored. The accident near Dargah Misri Shah has sparked a broader discussion about road safety in the area. Residents are calling for better road infrastructure, including the installation of speed bumps and traffic signs, to prevent such accidents in the future. There is also a demand for stricter enforcement of traffic laws and better training for drivers. The local government has been urged to take immediate action to improve road safety and to ensure that such tragedies do not occur again. This incident is a stark reminder of the importance of road safety and the need for constant vigilance to protect lives on the road. The community's response to the accident highlights the deep sense of loss and the collective desire for safer roads. As they mourn the loss of Shahzeb Gishkuri, they are also coming together to advocate for changes that will protect others from similar fates. The hope is that through these efforts, the roads can become safer for everyone.

NATIONAL



Maryam Endorses New Skill Development Courses And Training Programs Through TEVTA

LAHORE: Punjab CM chaired a session where suggestions on the mapping plan of Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) were considered.

It was decided to teach the latest courses according to market demands as well as introduction of language courses including Arabic, Korean, Japanese, Chinese in TEVTA centres was approved.

Establishment of Punjab Overseas Employment Promoting Authority for skilled jobs in international market was agreed upon.

Outsourcing of heavy machinery driving and operator course with the collaboration of large scale construction developers was approved.

Punjab CM approved the building of 45 welding workshops in nine cities of Punjab.

Establishment of the latest lab for welding and construction course in Gujranwala, Sahiwal, Bahawalpur, Multan, Attock, Taxila, Layyah, and Mianwali also granted approval.

The recruitment of one thousand employees to reduce the lack of human re-



source in TEVTA was also suggested. During the meeting, it was proposed to increase the budget for purchase of training material for practical training.

The funds of two thousand per student monthly for training material was suggested. It was directed to ensure bio-metric attendance of teachers in the session.

In new TEVTA courses, building, textile, garments, tourism and hospitality, ICT, automobile assembling, and repairing are included.

Professional training of food processing, renewable energy, light engineering, bio-medical technology and surgical instruments will be provided.



and help promote sustainable and environmental-friendly mountaineering, remarked the PM's aide. Romina Khurshid said that the picturesque Gilgit-Baltistan has long been celebrated for its scenic towering peaks, including K2, the second highest mountain in the world. The region is rich in natural beauty and cultural heritage, attracting adventurers and explorers from around the globe. However, the region holds a great untapped potential for promoting mountaineering and climbing despite through arrangement of mountaineering skill development trainings and facilities, she added.—RT/Agency

"A plan is being implemented in close coordination and support with the Gilgit-Baltistan government to set up first government-run mountaineering school of the world-class standard in Skardu. It also aims to open new vistas of employment opportunities for the local mountain communities

NA Speaker Refuses To Provide New Vehicles To Standing Committee Chairmen



ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq has turned down a request from chairmen of Standing Committees for new vehicles, citing budgetary constraints and government policy.

According to sources within the National Assembly, the committee chairs had requested new vehicles despite already having vehicles in good condition. Sadiq refused the demand, explaining that current fiscal limitations and a government directive against purchasing new vehicles, to prevent economic strain, made it impossible to fulfill their request.

Sources revealed that several committee chairs had voiced dissatisfaction with the condition and efficiency of their assigned vehicles.

In response, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq pointed out that the vehicles in question were from 2017 and 2019 models, emphasizing that even his own vehicle was a 2015 model.

The Finance Ministry reportedly declined to allocate funds for new vehicles, reinforcing the Speaker's decision.



It is noteworthy that chairmen of Standing Committees receive new vehicles, offices, petrol allowances, in addition to their salary, allowances, and other benefits as Members of the National Assembly (MNAs).—RT/Agency

Instead, Sadiq instructed that existing vehicles be repaired and reassigned to the committee chairs, as vehicles from the National Assembly secretary are deemed serviceable.

According to police sources, the victim identified the suspect. Her initial medical report from a government hospital also showed signs of attempted sexual assault.

The police said that further investigations were under way.—RT/Agency

Consumers In AJK Receive Rs 3 Per Unit Power Bills Following Successful Protests

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Kashmir government has issued electricity bills according to the new tariff, charging consumers Rs3 per unit, media reported.

As per details, the development came after violent protests and an agreement was signed between the government and the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC).

The Azad Kashmir government has fulfilled its promise to provide affordable electricity to the public by issuing bills at the new rate, with no surcharge. The outstanding amounts will be collected in 12 installments.

As per the agreement signed in May, the electricity rate was fixed at Rs3 per unit. The Azad Kashmir government issued a notification implementing the new tariff, with rates of Rs3 per unit for up to 100 units, Rs5 per unit for 100-300 units, and Rs6 per unit for above 300 units.



Azad Kashmir witnessed violent clashes between the police and activists of a rights movement amid a wheel-jam and shutter-down strike across the territory, which left at least one police official dead and several others injured.

Sub-inspector Adnan Qureshi succumbed to a gunshot wound in the chest in the town of Islamgarh, where he was deployed to stop a rally for Muzaffarabad under the banner of the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC).

The JAAC had sought the provision of electricity as per hydropower generation cost in AJK, subsidised wheat flour and an end to the privileges of the elite class. The violent protesters damaged multiple vehicles, including a magistrate's car at the Poonch-Kotli road. Moreover, markets, trade centres, offices and schools and restaurants remained closed across the region.—RT/Agency

PM Pledges To Advance Environmentally Sustainable Mountaineering

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change & Environmental

Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam on Sunday emphasised efforts have been launched on the PM's directives to set up mountaineering school in Gilgit-Baltistan having structured training and educational facilities specifically tailored to mountaineering, sherpa training and sustainable tourism practices in Pakistan's north to promote world-class environmental-friendly mountaineering, climbing and mountain tourism.

While chairing a second review meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee to Establish Mountaineering School in Gilgit-Baltistan held here in the climate change and environmental coordination ministry, Romina Khurshid Alam said, "Prime Minister Sheikh Sharif is very much instrumental for setting up the mountaineering school in Gilgit-Baltistan and other mountain regions of the country."

Establishing such facilities that would help equip aspirant mountaineers and



mountain climbers with the knowledge and confidence to enjoy the mountains safely while respecting the local environment, values and cultures of mountain communities and fellow climbers would prove an important initiative for promoting sustainable and environmental-friendly mountaineering and climbing in the country, the PM's climate aide said.

"A plan is being implemented in close coordination and support with the Gilgit-Baltistan government to set up first government-run mountaineering school of the world-class standard in Skardu. It also aims to open new vistas of employment opportunities for the local mountain communities

Man Arrested For Assaulting 11-Year-Old Niece In Mandi Bahauddin



MANDI BHAUDDIN: A man was arrested for allegedly attempting to rape his 11-year-old niece in Punjab's Mandi Bahauddin district, police said on Sunday.

According to the first information report (FIR) of the incident, filed on behalf of the victim's aunt and a copy of which is available with media, the suspect attempted to rape the victim in a room. When her aunt sent someone to look for the child, they heard her screams.

"The suspect was found attempting to sexually assault the child but fled as soon as he saw someone coming," the FIR added.

Upon receiving information about the incident, District Police Officer (DPO) Ahmad Mohiuddin took no-

Four Agents Arrested For Trafficking Beggars To Saudi Arabia

MULTAN: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has arrested four agents involved in sending citizens for begging in Saudi Arabia, media reported on Sunday.

"The accused have been arrested from various localities of Multan," a spokesperson of the FIA has stated.

Four accused namely Sadiq Hussain, Mohammad Ijaz, Ghulam Nazki and Ghulam Yaseen were arrested by the investigation agency.

FIA said that the suspects were arrested after already detained accused divulged information about them.

"These agents were recruiting citizens for begging in Saudi Arabia, and they used to receive their share from the money begged in the holy land," FIA said.

FIA spokesperson said that nine passengers destined to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, were arrested yesterday.

The FIA recently offloaded eight passengers at Multan Airport from a Saudi Arabia bound flight.

The passengers, who were natives of Bahawalnagar. The officials recovered 200 Saudi Riyal from each woman," FIA stated.

The women were transferred to the FIA's anti-human trafficking circle Multan for further legal action.

The FIA last year in December offloaded nine alleged beggars traveling to Saudi Arabia, disguised as Umrah pilgrims from Multan.

FIA spokesperson said strict monitoring is underway of the passengers to bust begging gangs.—RT/Agency



Pakistan's First Air Ambulance Successfully Transfers Patient

LAHORE: A rescue air ambulance, an initiative undertaken by the Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, successfully transferred a patient for the first time in Pakistan, media reported on Sunday.

The patient, identified as Halima Bibi - a 40-year-old woman from Mianwali, suffered paralysis after falling from a roof two days ago.

She was initially treated at Mianwali's District Headquarters Hospital, where surgeons referred her to Rawalpindi for further treatment.

Following CM Maryam Nawaz's directive, Halima Bibi was shifted from Mianwali to Rawalpindi within the critical "golden hour" in an air ambulance.

The patient's family expressed gratitude to Maryam Nawaz, calling her an "angel" for facilitating the project. Punjab Chief Minister emphasised that quality and timely medical treatment is the right of every citizen and will be ensured. She also announced the commencement of Pakistan's first air ambulance operations while appealing to the nation to pray for Bibi's recovery. First female Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had made an announcement of launch of the air ambulance service within weeks in her maiden address at the Punjab Assem-



blly Earlier in March, the Punjab cabinet approved the project, marking a significant step forward in emergency medical services. Under this initiative, there is a plan to initially get two aircraft on lease. These ambulances will be equipped to transport doctors, paramedics, and essential medical equipment, along with life-saving medicines. The air machines are designed to operate from short runways. They will also have the capability to land and take off from national highways and motorways.—RT/Agency

Motorway Police Recover Lost Bag Containing Rs 200,000



ISLAMABAD: In a heartwarming display of dedication and service, the Motorway Police successfully recovered a lost bag containing Rs 2 lakh in cash and some clothes behind.

Upon remembering the forgotten bag, the driver promptly sought assistance from the Motorway Police patrolling team, who immediately sprang into action. The team formed the nearest patrolling team, who launched a thorough search operation. After an extensive search, the bag was finally recovered and returned to its owner.—RT/Agency

SOUTHERN PUNJAB

DC Muhammad Naem Sindhu Launches New Tree Plantation Campaign



By Abid Mehmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: Under the special directive of Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the plantation campaign in Toba Tek Singh district is progressing rapidly.

Under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naem Sindhu, five hundred thousand new trees will be planted across the district. Trees are being planted along all major roads, in various housing societies, and on government land. Chief Officer of the District Council, Mahar Anwar Baig, urged citizens to support the administration in making this campaign a success and to take care of the planted trees so that they can grow into mature trees and contribute to a pleasant environment. He further stated that the district council staff are planting new trees according to the targets set by the Punjab government. Alongside government institutions, civil society organizations and various NGOs are also actively participating in the tree plantation campaign. He emphasized that proper care of the trees after planting is the real responsibility. Citizens should plant a tree in their name and take part in the care of the planted trees, demonstrating their responsibility as citizens.

Female Sub-Inspector's Vehicle Attacked Near Nowshera

NOSHERA: A female sub-inspector of the Motorway Police narrowly escaped an attack when unidentified gunmen opened fire on her vehicle near Nowshera on Sunday.

According to media, the incident occurred on the Nowshera-Mardan Road near Barah Banda.



The sub-inspector, identified as Javeria Shah, was en route to her duty station when two motorcycle-borne assailants fired at her car. Fortunately, she remained unharmed.

Upon receiving the report, a heavy contingent of police from the Raisalpur police station in Nowshera district arrived at the scene.

According to the police, a case has been registered and further investigation is underway while raids have been launched to apprehend the unknown attackers.—RT/Agency

EDITORIAL

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

Monday, July 22, 2024

Germany should feel ashamed over brazen diplomatic breach at Pakistani Consulate in Frankfurt

The brazen attack on the Pakistani Consulate in Frankfurt represents a disturbing violation of international diplomatic norms and a significant security failure by the German authorities. Under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963, it is the explicit duty of the host country to ensure the security and sanctity of consular premises. Germany's inability to safeguard the Pakistani consulate and its staff from this egregious act endangers not only diplomatic relations but also the rule of law that is supposed to prevail in a civilized nation.

The protest, reportedly carried out by Afghan nationals, quickly devolved into violence as stones were thrown and the Pakistani flag was torn down. Such actions are not only unlawful but also deeply disrespectful, especially considering Pakistan's historical support

for Afghanistan through decades of conflict and turmoil. The attackers' disregard for diplomatic protocol and international law reflects poorly on their cause and only serves to exacerbate tensions between the two neighboring Muslim countries.

Germany must take this incident seriously and address the evident security lapses. Immediate measures should be taken to arrest and prosecute those responsible, ensuring that such breaches are not repeated. The German government needs to reinforce its commitment to protecting diplomatic missions, thereby upholding the principles of international law and diplomacy.

For Pakistan, the attack on its consulate is a stark reminder of the challenges it faces in its diplomatic endeavors. Despite its longstanding support for Afghanistan, it must now contend with the fallout from actions taken by a violent few. The Pakistani government has rightly lodged a strong protest and must continue to press for justice and accountability.

Thus, Germany must not only rectify this security breach but also reaffirm its dedication to upholding international conventions. The Afghan community in Germany should reflect on the consequences of such unlawful actions and seek more constructive avenues for expressing their grievances. Diplomacy and dialogue must prevail over violence and disorder if we are to maintain a semblance of peace and mutual respect in international relations.

THE HEARTLAND



DC Dharmoon Bhawani Takes Notice Of Gastro Outbreak In TMK

By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: Deputy Commissioner Dharmoon Bhawani has confirmed an outbreak of gastroenteritis in Moya town and its surrounding areas within Taluka Tando Ghulam Hyder. Responding swiftly, DC Bhawani has directed the District Health Officer, PPHI, and the in-charge of the local medical hospital to station themselves in Tando Ghulam Hyder to manage the crisis.

He has issued strict instructions to health department officials and other health sector institutions to promptly complete all necessary arrangements to control the epidemic and provide comprehensive treatment and care to the affected patients. Emphasizing that any negligence will not be tolerated, DC Bhawani stressed the importance of a coordinated and effective response.

Teams of doctors have been dispatched to Moya town to treat patients and investigate the causes of the disease's spread. PPHI officials have also been directed to reach Moya town to support these efforts. Additionally, on July 22, 2024, at 7 AM, a mobile medical hospital staffed with doctors, lady doctors, and support personnel will visit Moya city. This mobile unit will check and treat existing patients and the local population for various diseases, ensuring that those affected receive the necessary medical attention.

The community is being urged to remain vigilant and cooperate with the health teams to prevent further spread of the disease. The swift action and thorough measures implemented by DC Bhawani aim to mitigate the outbreak and restore health and safety to the affected areas.

Gastroenteritis outbreaks are not uncommon in the region, often exacerbated by poor sanitation and lack of clean drinking water. The authorities have been criticized in the past for their slow response to such health crises, but the proactive measures taken by DC Bhawani are a positive sign of change.

The affected areas have seen an influx of medical professionals and health workers, all working tirelessly to contain the outbreak. They are conducting door-to-door visits to identify new cases, provide treatment, and educate residents on preventive



measures. This grassroots approach is essential in ensuring that the disease does not spread further. The District Health Officer has emphasized the importance of maintaining hygiene and using safe drinking water. They have distributed chlorine tablets and oral rehydration salts (ORS) to affected households, and public health messages are being broadcasted through local media to raise awareness.

Community leaders and local NGOs have also stepped in to support the efforts. They are providing additional resources, such as clean water supplies and sanitation facilities, to the most affected areas. Their involvement is crucial in addressing the immediate needs of the population and preventing future outbreaks.

The response to the gastroenteritis outbreak is a collaborative effort, with various stakeholders working together to manage the crisis. The health department, local government, NGOs, and community members are all playing their part in ensuring the well-being of the residents of Tando Ghulam Hyder. The swift and coordinated action by DC Bhawani and his team has been widely praised. It serves as a model for how to effectively respond to public health emergencies. The hope is that these efforts will not only address the current outbreak but also lead to long-term improvements in public health infrastructure and services. As the situation stabilizes, the focus will shift to preventing future outbreaks. This includes investing in better sanitation facilities, improving access to clean drinking water, and enhancing public health education. These measures are essential in building resili-

Youth Killed In Fatal Umerkot Road Mishap

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: A tragic road accident near Umerkot claimed the life of a young motorcyclist. The incident occurred within the jurisdiction of Khokhrapar police station, where a severe collision between a dumper and a motorcycle resulted in the death of Jetho, son of Manko Malhi.

The accident happened on Friday afternoon, and Jetho was declared dead on the spot due to the impact. Upon receiving the information, Khokhrapar police swiftly arrived at the scene and transferred the deceased's body to a nearby hospital. The police also took immediate action by taking the dumper into custody and detaining the driver involved in the collision.

After completing the necessary legal procedures, the police handed over Jetho's body to his grieving relatives. The atmosphere at the handover was filled with mourning and sorrow as family members and friends gathered to pay their respects.

According to the police, the dumper and its driver are currently in custody, and a formal case will be registered once the relatives have arrived and provided their statements. The community is now awaiting justice for the young victim of this preventable tragedy.

Road accidents have become an alarming issue in Umerkot and the surrounding areas. The lack of proper road infrastructure, combined with reckless driving and inadequate enforcement of traffic laws, has resulted in numerous fatalities and injuries. The death of Jetho is yet another reminder of the urgent need for comprehensive measures to improve road safety.

Local residents have long complained about the dangerous conditions on the roads, particularly the heavy traffic of large vehicles like dumpers and trucks. These vehicles often travel at high speeds, posing a significant risk to smaller vehicles and pedestrians. Despite repeated calls for action, there has been little improvement in the situation.

The family of Jetho is not only mourning their loss but also calling for stricter regulations and better enforcement of existing laws to prevent similar incidents in the future. They have joined forces with other affected families to form a coalition advocating for road safety reforms. This coalition is pushing for better road maintenance, stricter penalties for traffic violations, and increased public awareness campaigns on road safety.

The local government has been urged to take immediate steps to address these con-



cerns. There are calls for the installation of speed cameras, more frequent traffic patrols, and the construction of pedestrian bridges and crosswalks in high-traffic areas. These measures are seen as essential to reducing the number of accidents and saving lives.

The police have also been criticized for their handling of traffic violations. Many residents feel that fines and penalties are not being enforced consistently, leading to a culture of impunity among drivers. There is a demand for better training for traffic officers and a more transparent system of accountability within the police force.

Jetho's death has also highlighted the need for better emergency response services. In many cases, victims of road accidents do not receive timely medical attention due to a lack of adequate emergency services and infrastructure. Improving these services is crucial to ensuring that those injured in accidents have the best possible chance of survival.

As the community grieves, they are also mobilizing for change. Vigils and protests are being organized to put pressure on the authorities to take meaningful action. The hope is that Jetho's tragic death will not be in vain and that it will lead to lasting improvements in road safety.

The local media has played a significant role in bringing attention to these issues. Journalists and reporters have been actively covering the story, providing a platform for the voices of those affected and holding authorities accountable. This media coverage has been instrumental in keeping the issue in the public eye and maintaining momentum for change.

In the wake of this tragedy, there is a sense of urgency and determination within the community. They are committed to ensuring that no more lives are lost due to preventable road accidents. While the road ahead is challenging, the collective resolve of the residents of Umerkot offers hope for a safer future.

Ex-Chairman Talhar Town Committee Complains Of Torture And Mistreatment In Jail

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: Mir Shahid Talpur, the former Chairman of Talhar Town Committee currently imprisoned in District Jail Badin, has raised serious allegations of torture and inhuman treatment during his recent court appearance. Talpur complained about the lack of proper medical care and denial of meeting facilities, stating that he is being subjected to physical and mental harassment.

Talpur, who suffers from blood pressure issues, expressed his dismay at the treatment he has received, which he claims violates jail rules.

His lawyer mentioned that the court has scheduled a hearing for the case on July 23, where both parties are expected to present their arguments. Mir Shahid Talpur's brother, Mir Noor Ahmed Talpur, a former member of the District Council Badin, spoke to journalists and accused PPP Member Provincial Assembly Mirullah Bakhsh Talpur of orchestrating a campaign of political revenge. Noor Ahmed asserted that his brother's "crime" was providing legal and moral support to the heirs of a poor working woman who was killed in Talhar.

He alleged that their family has since faced continuous harassment, including police raids, arrests, and false accusations. During these raids, he claimed, the sanctity of their home was violated, with doors, cupboards, furniture, electronic equipment, and other valuables being damaged or stolen, including jewelry worth crores of rupees.

Mir Noor Ahmed Talpur called for justice from the judiciary, expressing hope that the legal system would address the grievances and ensure fair treatment for his brother.

The hearing on July 23 is highly anticipated, as it will shed light on the serious allegations and potentially uncover the motives behind the alleged mistreatment of Mir Shahid Talpur.

Allegations of Torture and Mistreatment Mir Shahid Talpur's

allegations have sent shockwaves through the local community, with many expressing concern over the reported conditions in the District Jail Badin. During his court appearance, Talpur detailed the various forms of mistreatment he has allegedly endured.

These include physical beatings, verbal abuse, and psychological torment aimed at breaking his spirit. Talpur's lawyer has argued that such treatment is a gross violation of human rights and jail regulations. He emphasized that all prisoners, regardless of their charges, are entitled to basic human dignity and medical care.

The lack of proper medical attention, especially considering Talpur's blood pressure issues, poses a significant risk to his health and well-being.

Political Motivations The accusations of political revenge add another layer of complexity to the case. Mir Noor Ahmed Talpur's statements suggest a deep-seated rivalry between his family and PPP Member Provincial Assembly Mirullah Bakhsh Talpur.

This feud, according to Noor Ahmed, has led to a sustained campaign of harassment and intimidation against their family. Noor Ahmed's claims about police raids and the destruction of property paint a picture of systematic targeting.

He described incidents where police forces allegedly broke into their home without warrants, causing extensive damage and stealing valuable items.

The psychological impact of these raids has been profound, leaving the family in a state of constant fear and anxiety.

Community Response The local community has rallied around the Talpur family, with many residents expressing solidarity and demanding justice. Social media platforms have been flooded with messages of support, and local advocacy groups have organized rallies to raise awareness about the case.

The support reflects a broader concern about the misuse of power and the need for accountability within the political and judicial systems. Legal Proceedings The upcoming court hearing on July 23 is crucial. Both sides will present their arguments, and the court's decision could have significant implications for Mir Shahid Talpur's case. His lawyer is preparing a robust defense, aiming to highlight the alleged violations of Talpur's rights and the broader context of political rivalry. Legal experts have weighed in on the case, suggesting that it could set a precedent for how allegations of mistreatment and political harassment are handled in the judicial system. The hearing is expected to attract significant media attention, potentially influencing public opinion and the political landscape. Family's Plea for Justice Mir Noor Ahmed Talpur's public plea for justice underscores the family's desperation and hope for a fair resolution. He has called on the judiciary to uphold the principles of justice and impartiality, ensuring that his brother receives fair treatment. Noor Ahmed also appealed to human rights organizations to take notice of their plight and intervene. The Talpur family remains hopeful that the court will recognize the gravity of the allegations and take appropriate action. They believe that a fair trial and an impartial investigation are essential to uncovering the truth and holding those responsible accountable. The case of Mir Shahid Talpur highlights the challenges faced by individuals who become entangled in political rivalries. The allegations of torture, mistreatment, and political harassment raise serious questions about the integrity of the justice system and the protection of human rights. As the court hearing approaches, the local community and broader public will be watching closely, hoping for a resolution that upholds justice and accountability.

SPORTS



Rafael Nadal defeated in first tour final in two years



PARIS: Rafael Nadal lost his first final in two years on Sunday as the Spaniard went down 6-3, 6-2 to Portugal's Nuno Borges at the clay-court Bastad Open.

The Spanish tennis great had shown signs of a return to form in Scandinavia as he made an impressive run to the final, just one week before tennis at the Olympic Games gets underway on the clay in Paris.

But Nadal, rather than celebrating his 64th title on the surface and first since Roland Garros 2022, was dominated by Borges as he struggled to find fluency with his serve and groundstrokes.

"I don't know what to say. I think I was wishing for this moment for a while already," said Borges in his post-match interview.

"It's crazy, in tennis it doesn't happen when you expect it sometimes. I know we all wanted Rafa to win, a part of me wished that too, but something even bigger inside of me really pushed through today... I'm just really happy overall. I really don't know what to say, I'm very emotional."

Borges was the first to make headway in the match when he broke the Spaniard's serve to go 3-1 up, with Nadal saving break points before overcooking a forehand down the line.

But the 14-time French Open winner struck back immediately on the Borges serve, earning two break-back points before the Portuguese dumped a forehand into the net from inside the service box.

But neither player could quite grab the ascendancy in the first set as Borges quickly ran up a 0-40 lead in the next service game, converting his second break point with a perfectly executed drop shot.

Rafael Nadal was struggling to find his first serve but managed to hold just his second service game of the opening set to force Borges to serve one more time. The world number 51 kept his nerve to do just that.

The 38-year-old showed signs of his old self serving at deuce in the first game of the second set with a booming forehand winner down the line before he eventually held but that was one of the few highlights for Nadal on the day.—Agency

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On a roll: Nasir Iqbal clinches Tasmanian Open Squash Championship

KARACHI: Squash player Nasir Iqbal upheld his winning streak by claiming the Tasmanian Open Squash Championship in Australia on Sunday.

The Pakistani sportsman beat Switzerland's David Barnett by 3-1 with the scores of 11-8, 12-10, 6-11 and 11-5 in the final.

Iqbal is on a roll these days as this is his third title in Australia this year, he earlier bagged titles at the Bendigo International and Shepparton



Open as well as reached the semi-final of the Victorian Open.

In the Tasmanian Championship semi-final, the squash star ousted France's Melvil Ciani-Menko 3-0 with an impressive score of 4-11, 5-11, and 5-11.

These accomplishments have been achieved after his another noteworthy performance in the CNS Squash Championship final, which took place in Karachi earlier this year.—Agency

Lionel Messi sought reunion with Pep Guardiola at Manchester City



MANCHESTER: In a revelation from the biography "God Save Pep" by Marti Perarnau, it has been disclosed that Lionel Messi reached out to his former coach Pep Guardiola in 2020, exploring the possibility of a reunion at Manchester City.

The moment highlighted Messi's desire to reconnect with Guardiola, under whose guidance he had flourished at Barcelona.

According to the biography, Messi, at the age of 33, reportedly visited Guardiola's home in Barcelona to discuss the potential move. During this meeting, Guardiola expressed concerns about the challenges Messi might face joining Manchester City at this late stage in his career.

However, Messi was adamant, dismissing Guardiola's reservations about his ability to adapt and succeed in the Premier League. Despite Messi's enthusiasm and determination, Manchester City did not proceed with the move, ultimately allowing Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) to secure the Argentine superstar's signature.

The transfer to PSG marked the end of Messi's long and illustrious tenure with Barcelona, surprising many who had speculated about a potential reunion with Guardiola.

The biography by Perarnau provides a unique insight into the dynamics between Messi and Guardiola. It underscores the mutual respect and admiration that exists between the two football icons. Guardiola's coaching tenure at Barcelona from 2008 to 2012 is often regarded as one of the most successful periods in the club's history, with Messi playing a pivotal role in their numerous triumphs.

Had Messi joined Manchester City, it would have reunited him with not only Guardiola but also several other superstars, creating a formidable lineup.—Agency

Jake Paul dominates Mike Perry with sixth-round TKO victory

Jake Paul delivered a dominant performance, defeating BKFC star Mike Perry at Amalie Arena. The former YouTube and Disney Channel star secured a sixth-round TKO after a series of powerful blows sent Perry stumbling into the corner.

"He's tough as nails," Paul remarked in the ring following his victory. "I'm sorry it took so long... I just hit too hard, but he took a lot of damage. That's a W, baby. I'm so excited."

Paul set the tone early, nearly fulfilling his promise of an early knockout. Within the first minute of the match, he landed a huge blow to Perry's head, sending him to the ground.

Although Perry quickly got back up, the knockdown gave Paul a significant early advantage.

Paul continued his assault in the second round, delivering another knock-



down and opening a cut over Perry's eye. Despite Perry's attempts to defend himself, he struggled to protect his face and even threw Paul to the mat out of frustration.

By the fourth round, Paul had Perry cornered multiple times with little resistance. Perry managed to survive the round but was clearly exhausted.

When Paul unleashed a flurry of punches in the sixth round, the referee had no choice but to stop the fight.

The lead-up to the fight was marked by theatrics, with Perry "attacking" a mascot and Paul mocking Perry's private school education.

Paul entered the ring dressed as a gladiator, riding in a chariot carried by his entourage, including his older brother.

Perry, a former MMA fighter with a 14-8 record and a perfect 5-0 in the

BKFC, was considered one of Paul's toughest opponents on paper. However, Paul's performance demonstrated his growing skills as a boxer.

The defeat did not sit well with Conor McGregor, a part-owner of the BKFC, who claimed to have fired Perry from the league on social media, though it remains unclear if he has the authority to do so.

Paul, who entered the night with a 9-1 record and six KOs, has faced criticism for fighting non-boxers and other YouTubers. However, his recent victories, including back-to-back KO wins, have begun to silence his critics.

Paul was originally scheduled to fight boxing legend Mike Tyson, but the bout was postponed until November due to Tyson's health issues.

Despite Tyson's age and inactivity, Paul insisted the fight will happen.—Agency

ENG vs WI: Harry Brook ahead of Boom Boom Afridi, Virender Sehwag in elite Test list

NOTTINGHAM: England's young batting prodigy Harry Brook registered his fifth Test century on Day 4 of the second Test against the West Indies in Nottingham.

This was the 25-year-old's first Test at home and it was particularly notable as it came after a string of five half-centuries and a highest score of 85, showcasing his ability to convert starts into substantial knocks.

Brook was initially cautious but found his rhythm with a boundary against Alzarri Joseph. His innings became more fluent as he

effectively rotated the strike with Joe Root and played a crucial role in stabilising England's innings.

Brook's performance on Day 4 demonstrated his maturity and composure. After



ending Day 3 at 71* (78), he resumed with confidence, scoring a boundary off the first over of the day bowled by Jayden Seales.

Brook eventually reached the milestone in just 118 balls with a single off Joseph in the 62nd over. His performance was a crucial factor in England's strong position in the match.

Seales ended Brook's innings, with the batter being caught behind by wicket-keeper Joshua Da Silva for a brilliant 109.

Brook has played 23 innings where he has scored 1376 runs at an average of 62.54 and a strike rate of 90.70.

The 25-year-old has the highest strike rate for any batter with 1000+ Test runs. The second man behind him is former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi who batted with a strike rate of 86.97.—Agency

Barcelona look to renew De Jong's contract to reduce salary

BARCELONA: FC Barcelona have decided to renew the contract of their player, Frenkie de Jong, where they would try to reduce his salary while increasing his stay with the club, reported SPORT on Sunday.

De Jong, 26, joined the Catalan club in 2019 from Ajax and has been one of their key players since then. He is also considered an important figure inside the dressing room as alongside

Ter Stegen and others. Other than his importance on the field, De Jong is also the highest earner in the team and La Liga, and Barcelona are desperate to renew his contract where they would ask him to reduce his salary.

The club tried to do this in the past but they failed. However, the club will not give up and will try to open talks with the Dutchman in the coming weeks where they would not just ask him to reduce his salary, but also extend his stay in Barcelona.

De Jong's current deal ends in 2026 meaning if he does not renew now, the club



may have to sell him next year for a lesser amount or lose him for free to two teams, which they do not want.

Barcelona are also trying to sign Athletic Bilbao's Nico Williams, and their goal so far now is to reduce the wage bill so they can sign some players in the summer transfer window.

Sells of some players will also help in registering new signings as the situation of Barcelona's financial matters is no secret to anyone but agreeing the big earners to take a wage cut is also in the club's mind.

It is worth mentioning that De Jong earns €31.6 million annually while his teammate Robert Lewandowski is on a reported €28.2 million a year.—Agency

REGIONAL TIMES ENTERTAINMENT

Madonna gives 'Deadpool & Wolverine' tips with song rights to Ryan Reynolds



Ryan Reynolds had to go extra mile to feature Madonna's classic hit Like a Prayer in his upcoming film Deadpool & Wolverine.

In an interview on SiriusXM Town Hall, Reynolds revealed meeting Madonna in person to get her permission.

Reynolds along with director Shawn Levy met with the Queen of Pop in person to seek her approval for the use of the 1989 track, which Madonna rarely licenses.

"Madonna doesn't just license the song, and particularly that song has not been licensed," Reynolds said.

He added, "So it was a big deal to ask for it and certainly a bigger deal to use it. We went over and met with her and showed her how it was being used and where

Kylie Jenner sparks 'romance' rumors with close friend



Kylie Jenner is in the limelight for her rumored new love interest, despite dating Timothée Chalamet.

Jenner was clicked walking through the city streets Rome, Italy, along with her kids.

However, her bizarre snaps with a friend on Instagram caught attention of social media users, raising dating speculations.

The mother of two, took to Instagram and shared a heartwarming video of herself and her best friend,

they were going to kiss." However, others defended their bond and labelled it: 'wholesome friendship'.

The two have been best friends for years. Moreover, the 26-year-old model is also said to be dating the Dune actor.

Stassie, on other hand, was romantically involved with singer Jaden Hossler, but they split earlier in the year.

Jenner has been keeping a fairly low profile over the last few weeks. She was most recently spotted out with her boyfriend.

Last month, the Khy founder and the 28-year-old actor were seen wearing casual outfits while heading to a movie date in California.

Face of the Day



Name: Ateeq Taimour
Location: Karachi
About me: Do you also like taking selfies like me?

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

REGIONAL TIMES

THE HEARTLAND

Kashmore Youth Electrocuted While Repairing A Transformer

By Aftab Bhatti

KASHMIRE: The incompetence of SEPCO staff has tragically claimed another life. In Solangi Muhalla, Rafique Ahmed Channa, a young man in his early twenties, was electrocuted while attempting to repair a faulty transformer on a private line.

The incident occurred on Thursday afternoon when locals, frustrated by SEPCO's lack of response, called upon Channa for assistance.

According to eyewitnesses, despite the power being turned off, a back current unexpectedly surged through the transformer, causing the fatal accident.

Channa, who had some experience with electrical repairs, was working alone when the tragedy struck.

The deceased's body was taken home, where it was met with an outpouring of grief from family members and neighbors.

The tragic incident has reignited a longstanding debate over the reliability and safety of SEPCO's services.

stances of prolonged outages, faulty equipment, and delayed responses from SEPCO. They argue that these systemic issues have created an environment where such accidents are not just possible, but inevitable.

SEPCO's track record has been less than stellar, with frequent complaints about the lack of proper maintenance and timely repairs.

Rafique Ahmed Channa's death is a stark reminder of the dangers posed by neglectful utility companies.

As the community mourns, they are also mobilizing for change. Petitions are being circulated, and plans for protests and legal action against SEPCO are underway.

In the face of such adversity, the resilience and soli-

darity of the community shine through. Neighbors and friends have rallied around Channa's family, offering support and assistance in any way they can.

The local government has also been called upon to take immediate action. There are demands for stricter regulations and oversight of utility companies to prevent such incidents in the future.

In the aftermath of this tragedy, it is clear that there is a need for a comprehensive review of SEPCO's practices. This should include a thorough investigation into their operational protocols, maintenance schedules, and response times.

While nothing can bring back Rafique Ahmed Channa, his death could be the catalyst for much-needed reform. It is up to the community, the local government, and regulatory bodies to work together to prevent such avoidable tragedies in the future.

the people of Solangi Muhalla remain resolute in their pursuit of justice and safety.

GLOBAL

India Has Historic Relationship With Russia, Not Going To Cut It Off: US



Washington: There is no tangible evidence of India deepening its military and technology relationship with Russia, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan has said, asserting that Moscow, which has become a "junior partner" to China, is not necessarily going to be a "great and reliable friend" to India in a future contingency.

Mr Sullivan made remarks at the Aspen Security Forum in Colorado while responding to questions about the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Russia for bilateral talks with President Vladimir Putin.

did not see tangible evidence out of that visit that it was deepening. I didn't see deliverables in that space," Mr Sullivan said. "How concerned were you when Prime Minister Modi met President Putin, essentially at the same time that President Joe Biden was hosting the NATO leaders in Washington?" he was asked. "Don't you think the bear hug was significant then?" he was asked. "Well, Modi has a certain way, of course, of greeting world leaders. I've seen it up close and personal, actually," Mr Sullivan said. The Biden administration, he said, never wants to see countries that the US cares about, who are its partners and friends, show up in Moscow and hug Putin.—Agency

Bangladesh top court scraps majority of job quotas that caused violent protests



DHAKA: Bangladesh's Supreme Court on Sunday scrapped most of the quotas on government jobs that have sparked student-led protests in which at least 114 people have been killed in the South Asian country, local media reported.

The court's Appellate Division dismissed a lower court order that had reinstated the quotas, directing that 93% of government jobs will be open to candidates on merit, without quotas, the reports said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government had scrapped the quota system in 2018, but the lower court reinstated it last month, sparking the protests and an ensuing government crackdown.

It was not immediately clear how the protesters would react to the decision. Streets near the Supreme Court were quiet immediately after the decision and army teams were deployed throughout the capital Dhaka, a Reuters witness said.

Local media had reported scattered clashes earlier in the day between protesters and security forces. The government had extended a curfew as authorities braced for the Supreme Court hearing on the job quotas. Soldiers were on patrol on the streets of capital Dhaka, the centre of the demonstrations that spiralled into clashes between protesters and security forces.

Internet and text message services in Bangladesh have been suspended since Thursday, cutting the nation off as police cracked down on protesters who defied a ban on public gatherings.—Agency

Bangladesh students refuse to call off protests despite scrapping of job quotas

DHAKA: A Bangladeshi student group whose demonstrations against civil service hiring rules precipitated serious nationwide unrest said Sunday it would not abandon protests despite a Supreme Court ruling partially meeting their demands.

"We won't call off our protests until the government issues an order reflecting our demands," a spokesman for Students Against Discrimination told AFP on condition of anonymity. Bangladesh's top court earlier in the day scrapped most of the quotas on government jobs that have sparked student-led protests in which at least 114 people have been killed in the South Asian country, local media reported.

REGIONAL TIMES

NATIONAL

Lahore Woman Delivers Twins In Rickshaw

LAHORE: In an unexpected turn of events, a woman gave birth to twin girls in a rickshaw outside the emergency department of Lahore General Hospital, media reported.



As per details, the security supervisor of the hospital noticed the woman's distress and immediately informed the doctors, who rushed to the scene.

The medical team, including doctors and nurses, provided timely assistance, ensuring the safe delivery of the twins.

According to the Director of Emergency at Lahore General Hospital, both the mother and the twin girls are in good health.

Earlier, a woman gave birth to quadruplets at a private medical facility in Sargodha, Punjab.

According to details, the wife of a labourer named Irfan, gave birth to quadruplets after six years of marriage. The health of the newborn babies (two boys and two girls) were in intensive care.—RT/Agency

Kundi Expresses Alarm Over KP's Worsening Law And Order Situation

MANSEHRA: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday raised serious concerns about the deteriorating law and order situation in the province, criticising the provincial government for failing to meet its constitutional responsibilities.



Addressing a press conference in Mansehra, Governor Kundi emphasised that despite the ongoing severe lawlessness, the federal government respects the mandate given by the public to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to govern the province, and rejects any notion of imposing a governor's rule.

He highlighted that since the 18th Amendment was approved in 2011, maintaining law and order has been the responsibility of the provincial government. Kundi lamented that even after the

Kundi advised Gandapur to first address the issue of corruption in job appointments and transfers, accusing him of setting rates for these transactions and making appointments based on bribes. Addressing the possibility of an alliance between PTI and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) against the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led federal government, Governor Kundi expressed skepticism. He argued that such an alliance was almost impossible as Maulana Fazlur Rehman was seeking retribution, having labeled Imran Khan's party as foreign agents.

In a separate address at a Pakistan People's Party (PPP) workers' convention, Governor Kundi announced the reorganisation of his party in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.—RT/Agency

Nooriabad Accident: One More Death Raises Toll To 7

By Afaq Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: Another resident of Tando Allahyar, who was injured in the recent Nooriabad accident, has succumbed to his injuries, raising the death toll from the tragic incident to seven. The latest victim has been identified as 27-year-old Jai Mil Kolhi, a resident of the village Karo Patel in the Town Committee Sultanabad area.

The fatal accident occurred a few days ago near Karachi Highway Nooriabad, involving a collision between a Mazda truck and a trailer. Initially, six people died, and seven others were injured in the crash. With Jai Mil Kolhi's death, the community is now mourning the loss of seven of its members.

The return of Jai Mil Kolhi's body to his home was met with shock and grief from family and friends. The tragic incident has deeply affected the residents of Tando Allahyar, who are now grappling with the devastating impact of this accident.

Community in Mourning The residents of Karo Patel and surrounding areas have been deeply affected by the tragic Nooriabad accident. The loss of seven community members has left a significant emotional scar, with many families in mourning. Vigils and memorial services have been held to honor the victims, providing a space for collective grieving and support.

Friends and family of Jai Mil Kolhi gathered to pay their final respects, sharing stories of his life and the impact he had on those around him. The sense of loss is palpable, as community members struggle to come to terms with the sudden and tragic death.

Investigation and Remediation Authorities are continuing their investigation into the cause of the collision, seeking to determine whether it was due to driver error, mechanical failure, or other factors. Preliminary reports suggest that the collision occurred in the early hours of the morning, when visibility may have been low, and the drivers may have been fatigued.

organizations and community members have come together to provide financial assistance, emotional support, and other forms of aid. Fundraising efforts have been launched to help cover medical expenses for the injured and funeral costs for the deceased.

Government officials have also visited the families to offer their condolences and pledge support. They have promised to expedite the investigation and provide compensation to the victims' families. This support is crucial for helping the families navigate the aftermath of the tragedy and begin the process of healing.

Call for Justice The families of the victims are seeking justice for their loved ones. They have called on the authorities to conduct a transparent and thorough investigation, ensuring that those responsible are held accountable. They are also demanding long-term changes to improve road safety and prevent similar accidents in the future.

The tragic loss of life has united the community in their quest for justice and safer roads. They are determined to honor the memory of those who died by advocating for changes that will protect others from suffering the same fate.

The Nooriabad accident has had a profound impact on the residents of Tando Allahyar, highlighting the urgent need for improved road safety measures. As the investigation continues, the community remains united in their grief and their determination to seek justice for the victims. The hope is that this tragedy will serve as a catalyst for change, leading to safer roads and preventing future accidents.

Support for Affected Families In the wake of the accident, there has been an outpouring of support for the affected families. Local advocacy groups have taken this opportunity to push for reforms, highlighting the need for better driver education, regular vehicle maintenance checks, and more stringent penalties for traffic violations. They argue that such measures are essential to prevent future tragedies and ensure the safety of all road users.

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getted northern Israel's Dafna area with Katyusha rockets "in response to the Israeli enemy's attacks that targeted civilians in the town of Adloun, injuring several of them". This comes after an Israeli military said its air force "struck two Hezbollah weapons storage facilities in southern Lebanon, containing rockets and additional weaponry". Late on Saturday, Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said "the Israeli enemy launched a raid"

on the town of Adloun, about 30 kilometres (19 miles) from the border with Israel, later saying the target was "an ammunition depot". "Six civilians sustained moderate injuries," the NNA said on Sunday, revising the figure up from three the night before. Rockets were still exploding about an hour after the strike was first reported, the NNA said, with videos circulating online showing several large explosions in Adloun.—Agency

REGIONAL TIMES

MONEY

Pakistan Exported Seafood Worth \$410.2 Million In FY2024

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan earned \$410.268 million by exporting 200,709 metric tonnes of fish and fish preparations during the fiscal year 2023-24, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.



As compared to the exports of \$496.565 million during fiscal year 2022-23, the fish exports during the FY2023-24 witnessed a decline of 17.38 percent, according to PBS data.

In terms of quantity, the exports of fish and fish preparations decreased by 6.45 percent during the year when compared to exports of 214,542 metric tonnes during the last fiscal year.

On a year-on-year basis, the seafood exports decreased by 22.19 percent to \$31,044 million in June 2024 as compared to the exports of \$39,896 million in June 2023.

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Exports witnessed a 16.99 percent decrease by going down from 18,901 metric tonnes last year to 15,689 metric tonnes during FY 2024.

On a month-on-month basis, the seafood exports declined by 16.26 percent when compared to the exports of \$37,970 million in May, according to the PBS data.

In terms of quantity, fish exports decreased by 16.45 percent in June compared to the exports of 17,778 metric tonnes in May 2024.

The overall food group exports from Pakistan increased by 46.77 percent during the year as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

Food exports during July-June (2023-24) were recorded at \$7,369,917 million as compared to the exports of \$5,021,290 million in July-June (2022-23), according to the latest PBS data.—RT/Agency

Special Savings Scheme Profits Adjusted Due To New Taxes

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan has recently revised the profit rates for Special Savings Certificates in response to the introduction of new taxes.



These changes target small and medium investors by offering unique investment opportunities with a two-year return on investment.

The National Savings scheme offers these certificates with a tenure of up to 3 years for individuals, providing dividend distribution every 6 months.

Earlier this year, the government updated the interest rates for various cent withholding tax on products, including special profits. In contrast, non-filers will be subject to a higher withholding tax rate of 30 percent under the same conditions.—RT/Agency

METRO KARACHI



KARACHI: Chief Editor of Daily Pahanji Akhbar and Chairman of Time TV channel, Ali Kazi is condoling with former MNA and Chairman of the Ibrat Group Kazi Afzal Abid at the latter's residence, on the sad demise of his elder brother, Kazi Afzal Abid, and sister, Mrs. Feroza Sattar Abbasi who both recently passed away.—RT

JI Karachi Criticizes City Government Over Memon Goth Incident

KARACHI: Jamaat Islami Karachi's Ameer Munaam Zafar has said that Memon Goth, where five children fell in main hole, has been city's deputy mayor Salman Abdul-lah Murad's constituency.

JI leader was talking with media over recent incident in Memon Goth.

JI leader said that the People's Party has devastated Karachi. A child yesterday drowned in North Nazimabad but there was no arrangement to retrieve him. "It is the responsibility of the KMC," he said.

"These incidents could not take place if sewerage drains were cleaned," he said.

Commenting on power supply, he said 300 feeders were tripped during light rainfall.

He announced to stage JI sit-in on Hub River Road on July 23.

The incident in Memon Goth Wednesday claimed



lives of two children, while three other boys were rescued alive and shifted to hospital for medical attention. "It is fourth incident of similar nature in the deputy mayor's constituency," Munaam Zafar said.

"The families had no means to retrieve children from the main hole," JI leader said.

The locality has no proper sewerage system, while there is a rain forecast for today, he further said.

RK Sports Management Congratulates Spain, Argentina And Carlos Alcaraz On Recent Triumphs



KARACHI: Atif Iqbal, Chairman, and Rais Khan, President of RK Sports Management, have extended their heartfelt congratulations to Spain and Argentina for their recent victories in the Euro and Copa Football Cups 2024. The triumphs of these teams reflect their dedication and hard work.

In their statement, Atif Iqbal and Rais Khan also commended Spain and England for their stellar performances in the Euro Cup final. They praised the remarkable skills of Argentine and Colombian players, acknowledging that football, being the most widely played sport globally, unites fans from all corners of the world.

Additionally, Atif Iqbal and Rais Khan congratulated Carlos Alcaraz of Spain for his impressive performance in the Wimbledon Tennis Cup. Alcaraz's achievements have not only brought pride to Spain but have also inspired many in the sports community.

They further honored Pakistan's Shaheer Afridi for his outstanding victory in the professional boxing middleweight category, crowning him as the Asian Champion. This significant achievement underscores the rising prominence of Pakistani athletes on the international stage.

Atif Iqbal and Rais Khan reiterated their commitment to supporting and promoting sports and congratulated all the winners for their exceptional accomplishments.—RT



KARACHI: Members and leaders of the National Democratic Movement are holding a protest demonstration against the recent Bannu incident.—Agency

Individualland Pakistan Hosts Conference On Empowering Women Journalists

By Sajid Ali Janyaro

KARACHI: Individualland Pakistan, a research-based consulting firm based in Islamabad, successfully organized the Conference on Digital Media Businesses by Women Journalists from Balochistan and Sindh at the Beach Luxury Hotel in Karachi. The event was a significant milestone in empowering women journalists and highlighting their contributions to the digital media landscape. The conference commenced with the registration of participants, followed by an introduction and context setting by Mr. Mushouf Ali. He introduced the event and the project, setting the stage for an inspiring series of presentations by women journalists. Michael Chadwick, Public Diplomacy Chief at the US Consulate in

Karachi, delivered the opening remarks, lauding the efforts of women journalists from Balochistan and Sindh and underscoring the significance of digital media in modern journalism. The next session featured presentations by the women journalists, where finalists showcased their digital products, which were well-received by the attendees. The event included a dynamic panel discussion on the role of women in media, with a special focus on their contributions to the digital sphere. Panelists included Director of Media Studies at BUITEMS Tariq Mehmood, Mr. Talha Ahmad from The Centrum Media; Mr. Syed Ali Shah from Quetta Voice, a digital media outlet in Quetta; Mr. Riaz-So-hail from BBC Urdu; and Ms. Myra Inman, a prominent woman journalist from Islamabad and mentor to the participating women journalists. The panelists engaged in a lively discussion, sharing insights and experiences, and addressing the challenges faced by women in the media industry. They highlighted the critical need for continued support and opportunities for women journalists in the digital media landscape. In the closing remarks, Ahmad Younis, Executive Director of Individualland, provided a comprehensive overview of the role of women journalists in the media, the various challenges they encounter, and the way forward. He emphasized the need for collective efforts to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for women in journalism.

APCAA Chairman And Vice Chairman Praise Ministry Of Maritime Affairs and KPT For Enhanced Trade Logistics

KARACHI: Mr. Maqbool Ahmad Malik, Chairman of the All Pakistan Customs Agents Association (APCAA), and Sheikh Tariq, Vice Chairman of APCAA, have extended their sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Chairman of Karachi Port Trust (KPT) for their exceptional dedication and hard work in addressing a long-standing issue.



Both leaders acknowledged that the Ministry's actions reflect a profound understanding of the challenges faced by the trade community and a genuine commitment to fostering an environment conducive to economic growth and development.

This development marks a pivotal moment in enhancing trade logistics and operational efficiency. By ensuring that shipping line offices remain open on Saturdays, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and KPT have taken a decisive step toward reducing bottlenecks and expediting the delivery process. This change is expected to lead to

smoother and more efficient trade operations, benefiting all stakeholders involved.

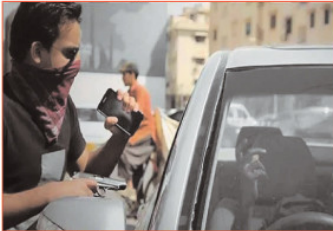
The trade community, including customs agents, importers, exporters, and other key players, has welcomed this initiative with optimism. They anticipate that the extended operational hours will significantly reduce delays, thereby improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery order issuance process. This, in turn, is expected to enhance the competitiveness of Pakistan's trade sector on a global scale.

Mr. Maqbool Ahmad Malik and Sheikh Tariq emphasized the positive impact

this decision will have on port users. They highlighted that this initiative will greatly assist in streamlining operations, reducing turnaround times, and fostering a more efficient trade environment.

In conclusion, the resolution of this issue underscores the government's commitment to addressing the needs of the trade community and promoting a robust and efficient trade infrastructure. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Karachi Port Trust have demonstrated exemplary leadership, and their efforts are poised to yield long-term benefits for Pakistan's trade and economic landscape.—RT

8-Year-Old Girl And Woman Shot While Resisting Robbery In Karachi



KARACHI: A woman and a young girl were shot at and injured after the former put up resistance during a robbery in Karachi's Mauripur area on Sunday.

Police said the suspects snatched a phone and purse from the family and fled away. The victim's family had come to Hawkes Bay for a picnic and their vehicle had broken down on the way, said police.

While they were waiting for the car to be fixed, the robbers came and snatched their belongings, and upon resistance, injured them. The law enforcers said the injured 35-year-old woman and eight-year-old girl were shifted to the Civil Hospital Karachi for medical assistance. Meanwhile, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) South Asad Raza has set

up a committee to investigate the incident as well as demanding an explanation from the deputy superintendent of Mauripur police over the incident.

The DIG also warned the station house officer (SHO) Mauripur of repercussions if suspects involved in the Hawksbay robbery incident were not caught within a week. "Action will be taken against the SHO if the suspects are not arrested," he said.

It should be noted that at least 82 people have lost their lives in the robbery resistance incidents in Karachi this year. Whereas, as per the Citizen Police Liaison Committee (CPLC), 10,323 mobile phones have been snatched in Karachi just six months - from January to June - this year, including 1,433 last month.—RT/Agency

Khyber Mail Narrowly Avoids Accident In Karachi

KARACHI: The Khyber Mail, arriving from Peshawar, narrowly escaped an accident in Karachi, media reported on Sunday.



As per details, the Khyber Mail escaped an accident near Kala Pul. The incident occurred when a sand and gravel truck got stuck in the ground close to the railway track.

The train driver of the Khyber Mail applied emergency brakes, successfully bringing the train to a halt just in time to avoid a major collision. However, during the process of extracting the stuck truck, it slightly collided with the stationary train, causing minor damage to the engine.

After an hour of effort, the truck driver managed to separate the truck from the engine. The swift actions of the train driver and the subsequent efforts to resolve the situation prevented what could have been a severe accident. The railway police issued a warning to the truck driver and released

him, emphasizing the need for caution and adherence to safety protocols to prevent such incidents in the future. The quick response by the train driver and the coordinated efforts by the authorities ensured the safety of all passengers and minimal disruption to the train's schedule.—RT/Agency

Karachi Police Officer Arrested For Robbing Bank Customers

KARACHI: Sindh police on Sunday arrested two suspected members - including a serving police officer - of a notorious gang involved in looting banks visitors in Karachi, media reported.

The Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Defense, Faiza Sodhar, in a press conference, stated that the two gang members, identified as Subhan Ali and

Nazir Ahmed, were involved in the gang robberies in Karachi.

Shocking, one of the arrested suspects is a serving officer in the Sindh Police, who was allegedly collaborating with the dacot gang.

The police recovered a significant amount, Rs 100,000 in cash, including arms, and four mobile phones from the possession

of the arrested suspects. DSP Sudhar disclosed that the group had recently stolen Rs 600,000, mobile phones, and other valuables from a citizen before fleeing the scene.

DSP Faiza Sodhar assured that the efforts are underway to apprehend the remaining accomplices of the notorious gang involved in robberies.—RT/Agency



KARACHI: President of PTI Sindh Haleem Adil Sheikh along with Advocate Intezar Hussain Panjota, Focal Person for PTI Founding Chairman Imran Khan are addressing a press conference, at Insaf House.—RT

SFA Vigilance Team Uncovers Severe Violations At Suaad Bakery

KARACHI: The SFA Vigilance team recently conducted an inspection at Suaad Bakery's large manufacturing unit located in Memon Goth, Malir. The inspection revealed numerous critical violations, including: Unhygienic conditions throughout the facility; High levels of cross-contamination in the freezer; Use of expired food colors and flavors; Personal hygiene issues among staff; Missing Manufacturing Records (MRD) on food products; Uncovered food products; Dirty floors and utensils; Extremely poor sanitary conditions; Substandard product quality; Unpleasant smells emanating from cakes; Uncovered dustbins; Lack of pest management.

In response, the SFA team conducted a thorough counseling session with the bakery management. A fine of 600,000 PKR was imposed, and a 7-day period was granted for the implementation of necessary improvements. The SFA has warned that failure to comply with their Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will result in stringent actions. DG SFA Muzamil Husain Halepoto emphasized that ensuring food safety remains the top priority. He urged all stakeholders to work together to uphold high standards and safeguard public health.—RT

FO Summons German Ambassador Over Vandalism At Pakistan Consulate In Frankfurt

ISLAMABAD: In a rare move, the Foreign Office on Sunday summoned the German ambassador in Islamabad to demand an apology for the vandalism of Pakistan's diplomatic mission in Frankfurt by Afghans.

The incident happened on Saturday when Afghan nationals protested outside the Pakistani Consulate in Frankfurt. Some of the protesters, as visible in social media videos, scaled the walls of the mission, removed the Pakistani flag and attempted to burn it.

According to reports, some eight to 10 Afghan nationals were involved in storming the Pakistani consulate and fled after taking down the Pakistani flag. The German police have not made any arrests so far. Sources said that the German ambassador was summoned to the Foreign Office over the incident. An official statement issued by the Foreign Office confirmed that the protest had been lodged with the German Embassy but didn't say if its envoy was called to the ministry.

The handout urged the German government to take immediate measures to fulfill its responsibilities under the Vienna Conventions and ensure the security of the diplomatic missions and staff of Pakistan in Germany. "We also urge the German authorities to take immediate measures to arrest and prosecute those involved in yesterday's incident and hold to account those responsible for the lapses in security," it demanded. The Pakistani Embassy in Berlin condemned the "reprehensible vandalizing act." In a statement, the embassy said it was in contact with the local authorities that such a situation did not recur and that those responsible for the vandalism were brought to justice.—RT/Agency

A man can be happy with any woman as long as he does not love her.

—Oscar Wilde

READERS

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MONDAY JULY 22 2024

Supreme Court Judges Divided On Reviewing Reserved Seats Verdict

ISLAMABAD: The top three judges of the Supreme Court are at odds over fixing review petitions, against the apex court's verdict on reserved seats in the national and provincial assemblies, for hearing.



Media reported on Sunday that Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa was at loggerheads with Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Munib Akhtar over fixing the review petitions for hearing as the former wants it to be immediately fixed, while the latter wanted it to be heard after summer vacations, when the detailed ruling is released.

Justices Munsif Akhtar and Justice Munsif Akhtar over fixing the review petitions for hearing as the former wants it to be immediately fixed, while the latter wanted it to be heard after summer vacations, when the detailed ruling is released.

CJP Isa said that it would be an injustice if the pleas were not fixed for hearing now. While, Justice Mansoor and Justice Munib believed that it could be fixed only after detailed verdict on the July 12 ruling was released by the 13-member bench.

Justice Munib participated in the meeting through a video link, as he is on vacation.

Chief Justice Isa, nevertheless, urged that the right of review had been provided under the Constitution and such right had to be preferred over the judges' convenience.

“Also, as the judges had taken oath to abide by the Constitution, it would be unjust and unfair if the review petitions were not fixed urgently,” the chief justice told the committee, emphasising that the order under review required reopening of the court even if it required cancellation of vacations.

In response, Justice Munib commented that summer vacations were provided under Order II of the Rules. Rule 3 of the said Order which provides that the judicial year of the Court shall commence on the second Monday in September each year and continue until the commencement of the vacation in the year next following.

The committee secretary pointed out that in two urgent applications that were filed with the review petitions, the petitioners said that the order under review had set a deadline of 15 days, and if that order was executed, the petitions would already become redundant.

Under order XXVI, Rule 8 of the Supreme Court Rules 1980, Justices Mansoor and Munib made the following observations that the review petitions could only be scheduled before the bench that heard the case initially and given that the court is in the midst of its summer vacation and that the majority of its judges are either abroad or on vacation, hence, it would be suitable if the matter was fixed after the vacations.

“Additionally, it was also pointed out that the review petitions are not fixed until detailed judgement is released by the bench and in

this case the detailed judgement is still awaited,” read the minutes of the meeting.

Chief Justice Isa, nevertheless, urged that the right of review had been provided under the Constitution and such right had to be preferred over the judges' convenience.

“Also, as the judges had taken oath to abide by the Constitution, it would be unjust and unfair if the review petitions were not fixed urgently,” the chief justice told the committee, emphasising that the order under review required reopening of the court even if it required cancellation of vacations.

Justice Munib said that Rule 4 provides that summer

vacation of the Court shall commence on June 15 or on such date as may be fixed in each year by the CJ and notified in the gazette.

The judge pointed out that the chief justice through a notification dated June 4, 2024, extended the date of commencement of summer vacations as July 15, 2024, however, there is no provision in the said order for cancellation of the summer vacations once the same have been announced unless the matter is put up before the full court and the rules are amended accordingly.

“Hence, cancellation of vacation cannot be resorted to by the committee or the chief justice,” the judge further told the body. Meanwhile, the committee considered and approved the court rosters during summer vacations from July 29 to September 6. Meanwhile, CJP Isa said that the minutes of the meeting have been written by his colleagues with whom in respect of agenda items 1 and 3, he cannot agree and has written his separate note.—RT/Agency

Chinese IPPs Urged To Use Local Coal In Effort To Lower Power Prices

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has decided to press Chinese independent power producers (IPPs), which rely on imported coal, to switch to locally sourced solid fossil fuel to cut generation costs and provide relief to consumers tormented by bloated utility bills.



“Pakistan this month will ask Chinese power plants operating in the country to shift to using coal from Thar region rather than imported coal,” Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Awais Leghari told Reuters on Sunday.

He added that the transition could save Pakistan more than \$200 billion a year in imports, translating to a decrease of as much as Rs2.5 per unit in the price of electricity.

“Islamabad may also begin talks on re-profiling Pakistan's energy sector debt during the visit to Beijing.”

Such a transition would benefit the Chinese-owned plants in Pakistan by reducing pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserves, he said, making it easier to repatriate dividends and offering a better return in dollar terms.

The power czar will be part of the delegation to discuss structural reforms to the power sector suggested by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which last week agreed on a \$7 billion bailout for the heavily indebted South Asian nation.

Neighbouring China has set up over \$20 billion worth of energy projects in Pakistan. “One of the key purposes of going along is the conversion of our imported coal

units to the local coal. That would have a huge impact on the cost of energy, of power in the near future. So that is one of the biggest (items on the) agenda,” Leghari said in an interview.

In April a subsidiary of conglomerate Engro agreed to sell all of its thermal assets, including Pakistan's leading coal producer, Sindh Engro Coal Mining to Liberty Power.

Liberty said the decision stemmed from Pakistan's foreign exchange crunch and its indigenous coal reserve potential.

The minister declined to elaborate on the possible talks with China over re-profiling energy debt.

Pakistan's power sector has been plagued by high rates of power theft and distribution losses, resulting in accumulating debt across the production chain — a concern raised by the IMF.

The government is implementing structural reforms to reduce circular debt — public liabilities that build up in the power sector due to subsidies and unpaid bills — by Rs100 billion a year, Leghari said. “One of the key purposes of going along is the conversion of our imported coal

affected by a previous IMF bailout reached last year, which included raising power tariffs as part of the funding programme that ended in April.

Annual power use in Pakistan is expected to fall consecutively for the first time in 16 years as higher tariffs curb household consumption, despite summer temperatures surging to near records, which typically boosts air conditioning and fan use.

“We have seen a shrinking demand trend in the past year or year and a half, and we are expecting this to continue unless we rationalise the price of power,” Leghari said, adding that the government's major challenge was getting demand to stop shrinking.

He said that since the per-unit tariff for power is more expensive, both urban and rural households are moving towards alternatives such as solar. “Right now we have close to 1,000 megawatts that are on the grid itself in the form of net metering systems and others. It's a very conservative estimate that (solar) could be five to six times more than that on the grid right now,” Leghari said.—RT/Agency

Kirmani Criticizes PML-N As 'Non-Serious And Incompetent' After Leaving Party

LAHORE: Dr Syed Asif Kirmani, the former political secretary of ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif, voicing strong opinion about the current state of the party, has said that members of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) have infiltrated the ranks of the N-League, adding that these individuals “do not represent the true face of the PML-N”.



Kirmani, in a surprise statement on Saturday, announced quitting the PML-N, criticising the top leadership of the ruling party. He said he had already distanced himself from the political affairs of the Nawaz-led party for a long time.

The former N-League veteran quit the party over differences with the top party leadership's decision to form a government following the February 8 general election despite rigging allegations.

Sharing his insights in an interview with media on Sunday, he expressed concerns about the calibre of current party members holding key positions, also describing them as “non-serious and incompetent”.

“It seems Nawaz Sharif has been rendered helpless,” the former politico claimed. “This is not the same Nawaz Sharif I once knew.”

Despite his departure, the PML-N's deserter stressed he still maintains his respect for Nawaz, saying: “I respected Nawaz Sharif in the past, and

I respect him now as well.”

The former PML-N leader said he gave almost 19 to 20 years to the party and remained a close associate of Nawaz, adding that they have left a “loyal companion behind”.

Reflecting on his decision to part ways with the party, he admitted: “It was painful leaving my home.” He also called on the PML-N supremo to engage with the general public to have an idea of what they are going through. “Mian Sahib, everything is not alright. Come out, [mingle with people] and see for yourself!”

Responding to a query about his future political plans, Dr Kirmani insisted that he was not joining any political party, adding he was a “born PML-N supporter” and wished to die as a member of the PML-N family.”

Kirmani was appointed by then-prime minister Nawaz as his political secretary during his rule in

2013. Being a close aide of the three-time PM, he played an active role during the PML-N's election campaign before the party rose to power in 2013.

Moreover, Abbas Khan Afridi also called it quits last month, claiming that the party's president Nawaz was “no longer relevant in the country's politics”.

Similarly, senior PML-N leader and former Sindh governor Muhammad Zubair, ex-prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and former finance minister Mifath Ismail had left the ruling party in recent months.

Abbasi and Ismail had launched a new political party, Awaam Pakistan, earlier this month which was joined by several former PML-N leaders including Sardar Mehtab Ahmed Khan Abbasi, Javed Abbasi, Syed Zaeem Hussain Qadri, Rana Zahid Tauseef, Zahid Binnouri, and Sardar Anwar Soomro.—RT/Agency

Ban On PTI Is Solely PML-N's Decision: Governor Punjab



WAZIRABAD: Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan stated that the decision to ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was made solely by the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leadership without consulting the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), media reported on Sunday.

Speaking to the media, Sardar Salim expressed that the PPP will address this issue in its party meeting and Central Executive Committee (CEC).

He added that, in his opinion, PTI should be considered in two parts: those involved in the May 9 incidents should be punished, but action against those patriotic to the country is inappropriate.

It is pertinent to mention here that the federal information minister Ata Tarar has announced that the government has decided to ban PTI.

Addressing an explosive presser, Ata Tarar said Article 17 of the constitution empowers the federal government to ban a political party. He said there is credible

Imran Reveals Harrowing Prison Experience In Rare Interview, Describes 'Death Cell For Terrorists'

ISLAMABAD: In a rare interview from prison, former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan denounced his harsh confinement conditions, likening them to those of a terrorist.

Khan described it as solitary confinement with minimal space and constant surveillance, highlighting the denial of basic rights, including visitation.

“I am confined in a 7ft by 8ft death cell, typically reserved for terrorists to ensure they have no contact with anyone,” he told The Sunday Times. “It is solitary confinement with barely any space to move. I am under constant surveillance by the agencies, being recorded 24/7, and I am denied basic prisoner and human rights such as visitation,” he said.

Khan, 71, has been imprisoned for nearly a year on various charges, including corruption, treason, and an illegal marriage. His third wife, Bushra, is also incarcerated. The interview was conducted through his lawyers due to restrictions on his access to writing materials.

Recently, a UN working group declared Khan's de-



ment as arbitrary and in violation of international law, calling for his immediate release. Despite recent court rulings overturning some of his convictions, Khan remains in jail as bail was denied on allegations of inciting riots last year.

The government is contemplating a ban on Imran Khan's party, PTI, which won the most seats in the February elections. Khan argues that the elections were marred by unprecedented pre-poll rigging, including his imprisonment and the banning of his party's symbol.

He urged the international community to review the findings and address the issues impacting Pakistan's democracy and its people.—RT/Agency

2018 Elections Were Not Rigged But Managed: Fawad

ISLAMABAD: Former Federal Minister Fawad Chaudhry has claimed that 2018 elections, wherein Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) emerged victorious, were not rigged but managed, media reported on Sunday.



In an interview, the former federal minister also castigated Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Raja Sultan and alleged that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) “installed” the latter through former director-general (DG) Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Faiz Hamid.

Fawad Chaudhry also claimed that former Chief of Army Staff (CAJS) Qamar Javed Bajwa sought an extension from PTI and wanted to get another extension from PML-N. He said 2018 elections were not rigged but “managed”.

realised that “work” had started on the other side.

He emphasised that the solution to all problems lies in a “Grand Dialogue” and that PML-N and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) are realities that need to be engaged with.

Earlier on July 3, Fawad Chaudhry expressed surprise at PTI's willingness to engage in talks with establishment, saying that this decision was tantamount to “deal-seeking”.

Speaking to an international media outlet, the former minister said that

negotiating with the establishment is equivalent to seeking a deal, and that talks will only be successful if held on an equal footing.

Chaudhry suggested that the PTI should only be talking to opposition parties at this stage, and that negotiations with the government should come later. He also criticised PTI's approach to negotiations, saying that seeking a deal with the establishment would be no different from what Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would do.—RT/Agency

NAB Investigates Imran And Bushra Bibi In New Toshakhana Reference

RAWALPINDI: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) team, headed by Deputy Director Mustansar Imam Shah probed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi in the new Toshakhana reference at Adiala Jail.

According to jail sources, today marks the seventh day of the NAB team's investigation at Adiala Jail and the NAB team will present a progress report on the investigation in court tomorrow.

The NAB team is keeping to gather information and evidence related to the case.

Sources revealed that the court has ordered the reappearance of the PTI founder and Bushra Bibi on July 22. It is pertinent to note that Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi are on eight-day judicial remand in new Toshakhana reference.

Khawaja Asif: Shafqat Mehmood's Columns Against Imran Khan Were Well-Written In English

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said when Shafqat Mehmood was with Shahbaz Sharif, he used to write columns against Imran Khan in very good English.



Asif said Mehmood's politics started with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and, all the way through Musharraf and Shahbaz Sharif, ended with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

“I know Mehmood since 1964. I had a misunderstanding of a close friendship with him for 50 to 55 years. During that period,

they both conducted good and bad deeds together, on him, Mehmood conducted a very smoky press conference against him upon his residence and salary Cabinet imposed Article 6 broad.—RT/Agency