

# The REGIONAL TIMES Of Sindh

Uniting People Every Day

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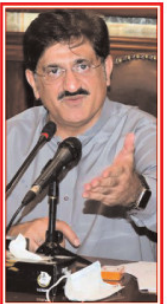


## NATIONAL

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## PPP Files Review Plea On SC's Reserved Seats Verdict, Following PML-N's Lead

ISLAMABAD: After the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), its coalition partner Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has also filed a review petition against the Supreme Court verdict granting reserved seats to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).



On behalf of the PPP, Farooq H Naek filed the plea, seeking to overturn the apex court verdict of July 12 pertaining to reserved seats of women and non-Muslims.

In its appeal, the PPP objected to granting the reserved seats to the PTI, arguing that the former ruling party had not claimed any entitlement to them.

The PML-N had on July 15 filed a review petition in the SC against the same verdict. The review petition had asked a number of questions including whether the SIC should be granted the reserved seats.

The PPP has requested the SC to fix the hearing of the review petition at the earliest as "the order under review has given a strict timeline of 15 days" and if the order is implemented, the plea will become infructuous.

The decision not only paved the way for the PTI's return to the parliament, which was kicked out of the February 8 polls owing to the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) December 2023 ruling but has also increased the pressure on the coalition alliance by changing the composition of the National Assembly.

The PPP plea said the SC judgment contradicted the Constitution as it provided only three days to the returned candidates to decide which party to join, while the ruling has given 15 days that too from the date of the order.—RT/Agency

The 8-5 majority verdict

## Salman Akram Raja: Imran Khan Did Not Admit To Any May 9 Allegations

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) legal counsel for beleaguered party founder Imran Khan, Salman Akram Raja, on Tuesday stated that Khan has not admitted to any wrongdoing regarding the events of May 9.



Raja noted that following the Rangers' action in Zaman Park, it was unanimously decided that protests would occur at designated locations, whether GHQ or any other office.

He relayed the PTI founder's message, stating, "The news about an admission is completely false. The PTI founder has not admitted to anything regarding May 9."

After meeting with the PTI founder at Adiala Jail today, the lawyer spoke to the media, saying, "We are ready to discuss Pakistan's welfare. We want to move forward, ensuring that there is no chaos in the country and that the economy progresses, lifting people out of poverty and inflation."

He maintained that Imran's stance remains that the attacks on March 14 at Zaman Park and on March 18 at the judicial complex involved Rangers, police, and ISI personnel.

He added, "The current environment being created will lead to disaster."

Last night, Senator Faisal Vawda accused PTI supreme Imran Khan of being responsible for Pakistan's current political instability, citing evidence provided by former director general Inter-Services Intelligence Lt Gen (ret'd) Faiz Hameed, linking Khan to the May 9 vandalism incident.

PTI's legal counsel highlighted the importance of public involvement, saying, "You cannot achieve the welfare of the state by distancing it from the people. It is essential to move forward with the people and their elected leadership."

"I cannot champion law and democracy when multiple cases are pending against me in courts. Some time ago, I revealed that Imran Khan's close associate, Faiz Hameed, provided evidence of Khan's involvement in the May 9 vandalism," stated Vawda during an interview with a private TV channel.

## Barrister Gohar: PTI Leaders Don't Need To Prove Their Patriotism

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and barrister Gohar says his party has always condemned the incidents of terrorism without any ifs or buts.



In a statement on Tuesday, the PTI leader said, "Members and leaders of the party do need to prove their patriotism to anybody as they have always worked for the prosperity of the country."

Gohar added that "PTI is the most popular party in the country right now and no ban will be able to curtail its rise."

The PTI chief said that all the cases against the PTI founder have proved nothing but the resilience of the party and its leaders who have stood against heavy odds.—RT/Agency

## PTI Launches Hunger Strike Demanding Release Of Imran Khan And Other Leaders

ISLAMABAD: The embattled Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Tuesday established a hunger strike camp outside the Parliament House in Islamabad to demand release of the party founder Imran Khan and other leaders.



The former ruling party has faced back-to-back setbacks in a few days as its central secretariat in the federal capital was sealed by the authorities earlier today a day after the party's Information Secretary Raof Hasan was nabbed along with the other party workers.

PTI's central office earlier today over "lack of fire and life safety arrangements". In a notice, which was obtained by Geo News, the administration said that the building lacked up-to-date fire extinguishers, emergency evacuation plan, an independent power source for the emergency system, and standard electric wiring.

A day earlier, Islamabad police took Hasan into custody from the party's Central Secretariat for heading a digital media cell and its alleged involvement in running anti-Pakistan propaganda.

The lawyer-cum-politician said that his party raised voice for the PTI lawmakers and their families who were being picked up.

Speaking to journalists outside parliament, the party chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said that the hunger strike will be observed daily till 8pm as a token protest against "injustice" and for the PTI founder's release and the supremacy of the parliament.

"[The] PTI founder and his wife have been imprisoned for no reason. This camp will continue till the release of the PTI founder."

He added that he conveyed his party's reservations to National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq over "illegal and unconstitutional actions".

Gohar strongly condemned the sealing of the party's secretariat in the federal capital.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the Islamabad administration sealed the

High Court (HC). Another PTI senior leader and former NA speaker Asad Qaiser said, "Our first demand is to release the PTI founder, his wife Bushra Bibi and other detainees, including Hasan and party workers."

He held the federal government responsible for the recent wave of lawlessness and inflation across the country.

Qaiser urged the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government to immediately resign over "bad governance and mismanagement of the economy".

PTI's Secretary-General Omar Ayub Khan said that the token hunger strike was being observed for the release of the incarcerated former premier, PTI Vice Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi and other arrested leaders and workers.

The opposition leader in the National Assembly censured the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) for sealing the PTI's central office once again. Instead of

the PTI secretariat, the MCI should seal its own office "where mice running everywhere" he slammed.

"Omara also demanded the 'Form 47' government — a reference to the alleged manipulation in the February 8 election results — to immediately resign and announce fresh elections. He added that the PTI wanted free and fair polls to pull the country out of crisis."

Addressing the participants of the hunger strike camp, Shibli Faraz said that today's event was part of the PTI's political struggle. He also announced that the Imran-founded party will hold a countrywide protest on Friday, July 26, 2024.

Several PTI lawmakers joined the hunger strike camp including Gohar, Qaiser, Omar, Faraz, Latif Khosa, Ali Muhammad Khan, Falak Naz Chitrali, Sheikh Wasim, Senator Humayun Mohmand, Saifullah Abro, Shabbir Ali Qureshi, Sahibzada Sibghatullah, Melhboob Shah, Sajid Mohmand, Dawar Kundli, and others.—RT/Agency

## PM Shehbaz Urges FBR To Facilitate Smooth Refunds For Exporters



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday warned the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) against any delays in refunding exporters, aiming to alleviate concerns about meeting the \$60 billion export target.

While speaking at the National Export Development Board (NEDB), the prime minister directed the commerce ministry and other departments to take "all necessary measures" to achieve the ambitious export target of \$60bn in exports within three years.

The prime minister directed the ministry to resolve the issues raised by exporters and present a report within two weeks. He added that he would personally chair the NEBD meetings every six weeks. The prime minister noted that the country's exports had surpassed the \$30 billion mark during the previous fiscal year, with IT exports contributing over \$3.2 billion, thanks to government policies. He called it a "welcome development."

He lauded the business community and investors for their role in increasing exports despite challenging circumstances. Furthermore, he tasked the ministry of national food security to work with the provinces to improve extension services and enhance agricultural exports.—RT/Agency

## Imran Khan Declines Polygraph Test In May 9 Cases



RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has refused to undergo polygraph and voice matching test as part of investigation launched by Lahore police regarding May 9 cases.

The Lahore police — led by DSP Javed Asif — had visited Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi and completed the first round of its investigation against Imran Khan in the May 9 cases. The PTI founder answered the questions of police for 15 minutes after DSP Javed Asif vowed to dispense justice. Meanwhile, the former premier refused to undergo the above mentioned tests to the Punjab Forensic Science Agency's team. The PTI founder said he was under the investigation of many institutions and he would give time to the police after the completion of his earlier inquiries.—RT/Agency

## Ambassador Durrani: TTP Pakistan's 'Red Line,' Expects Afghan Taliban To Take Action



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Special Envoy for Afghanistan Ambassador Asif Khan Durrani on Tuesday said the banned militant Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) group was the country's "red line" and there were hopes that the interim Afghan government would take effective action against the outfit.

"Terrorism emanating out of Afghanistan is a concern not only for Pakistan but other neighbouring countries like China, Iran, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as well," Ambassador Durrani said at a roundtable discussion on "Pak-Afghan Relations: Challenges and Opportunities" at the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Islamabad.

He urged the Afghan interim administration to take steps against terrorist groups. At the same time, Durrani said, "We have to deal with the Afghan government with patience and perseverance. Pakistan desires peace and stability in Afghanistan."

The comments come a day after the Pakistan army killed three terrorists trying to infiltrate the Pak-Afghan border in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Dir district.

Ambassador Durrani said Pakistan desired socioeconomic and political conditions in Afghanistan that would facilitate the return of over three million Afghan refugees currently residing in the country.

He urged the international community, especially the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), to come up with strategies for the dignified return of Afghan refugees to their homeland.

Ambassador Durrani shared that the Afghan administration's efforts for poppy eradication were acknowledged by stakeholders at the UN Doha meeting that concluded earlier this month.

The special representative called for removing obstacles to trade between the two neighbours and the transit of Pakistan's goods from Afghanistan to Central Asia.

He also called for expediting regional connectivity projects such as the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project and the Casa-1000 power transmission line from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Ambassador Durrani urged the government to continue its crackdown against smuggling from Afghanistan. Speaking on the occasion, Abrar Hussain, Pakistan's former ambassador to Afghanistan, highlighted the

importance of border management in the relations between the two countries.

He appreciated people-to-people as well as diplomatic contacts between Afghanistan and Pakistan at the highest levels.

Hussain urged regional countries to assist the Afghan interim government in addressing its capacity issues regarding dealing with terrorism emanating out of Afghanistan.

In concluding remarks, IRS President Ambassador Jaubhar Saleem, highlighted the multiple commonalities and linkages between Pakistan and Afghanistan, besides the economic interdependence.

He termed terrorism as the major source of friction between the two neighbouring countries and called upon the Afghan interim administration to honour its commitments about not allowing its soil to be used for terrorism against any other country, underscoring that supporting counter-terrorism would be in the interest of Afghanistan itself.—RT/Agency

## Justice Jahangiri: Bench And Bar Must Collaborate To Ensure Justice



ISLAMABAD: Justice Tariq Mehmoob Jahangiri of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) said on Tuesday that if "we don't dispense justice then there is also a court of the Almighty."

During his address a ceremony organised by the Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA), he said that problems face by the bar must be solved as he also belonged to the bar, adding that bench would also have to play its part. Criticising the lawyers for appearing late in hearings, Justice Jahangiri suggested that lawyers should prepare the case very well and come to the court on time. He further reiterated that he "recites the Holy Quran" daily for avoiding any injustice through his verdicts, adding that as much as 80% people expect us to give justice. "I have never gone against the merit, whoever commits travesty of justice is a criminal in the eyes of pleader and the Almighty," he added.—RT/Agency



# THE HEARTLAND



**TALHAR:** Sunil Kumar, leader of the PPP Minority Wing, presents a traditional Ajrak gift to Anand Raj, son of Ratan Kumar, for excelling in the MUET Jamshoro pre-entry test.—RT

## Former Provincial Minister and Senator Sassui Palijo Criticizes Critical Issues in Thatta and Sujawal

By Sajid Ali Janyaro

**KETIBUNDAR:** Sassui Palijo, former provincial minister and senator, has voiced grave concerns over the dire conditions in the Thatta and Sujawal districts, exacerbated by a severe heat wave and prolonged electricity outages. Palijo reported that both businesses and residents are struggling, with some areas experiencing power cuts lasting up to 14 to 20 hours daily. Despite the severity of these issues, WAPDA and other relevant authorities have not taken adequate action.



Palijo, who has been actively visiting various villages to offer condolences and meet with local communities, highlighted the suffering of Sindh's residents, attributing it to governmental neglect. She pointed out that Sindh, being the highest revenue-generating province, particularly in the districts of Thatta and Sujawal, faces severe shortages of water and electricity due to its position at the end of the supply chain. She criticized WAPDA and IRSA for their failure to adequately provide essential services, which has worsened the crisis. Palijo also condemned the recent digital population census, alleging that it was fraudulent and manipulated. She claimed that the census results were rejected by the people of Sindh, accusing the process of criminally and unconstitutionally reallocating seats from Sindh to Karachi. She has called for accountability for what she describes as a grave injustice.

## Deputy AG Sindh and Assistant AG Hold Open Katchery in Shikarpur to Address Pension Issues

By Adeel Alvi

**SHIKARPUR:** In a significant move to address pension-related concerns, Deputy Accountant General Sindh Syed Hina Shah and Assistant Accountant General Adeel Lanjar conducted an open katchery at the District Accounts Office in Shikarpur. The meeting, held under the directives of the Accountant General Sindh, was aimed at resolving pension and related issues promptly.



The session was chaired by Deputy Accountant General Syed Hina Shah and Assistant Accountant General Adeel Lanjar, with District Accounts Officer Arshad Rahim Qureshi, Accountant Mazhar Ali Panhwar, and other officials from the District Accounts Office in attendance. During the meeting, employees from various departments, including Education, Police, Revenue, and Agriculture, presented their pension and other grievances. The officials were informed of the delays and issues faced by the employees in receiving their dues. In response, Deputy Accountant General Syed Hina Shah issued directives for the immediate resolution of the reported issues in accordance with the law. Additionally, retired employees requested an increase in the monthly limits for Leave Preparatory to Retirement (LPR) and comments, citing delays in receiving these payments. Deputy Accountant General Syed Hina Shah assured the attendees that a letter would be forwarded to the Finance Department advocating for an increase in the monthly budget to address these concerns effectively. The open katchery aimed to provide a platform for direct communication between government officials and employees, facilitating quicker resolution of their issues.



**LARKANA:** Students of Chandka Medical College stage a protest demonstration demanding the acceptance of their demands.—RT

## MPA Rana Hamir Singh Sodho and Son Meet Provincial Minister Saeed Ghani to Discuss Development Projects

By Muhammad Bachal

**UMERKOT:** PPP MPA Rana Hamir Singh Sodho and his son, Kanwar Karni Singh Sodho, a member of the Thar Coal Energy Board, held a significant meeting with Provincial Minister for Local Government and Public Health Engineering, Saeed Ghani, at his Karachi office. The meeting was centered on reviewing ongoing development projects and addressing issues in the Umerkot and Tharparkar districts.

During the discussion, Rana Hamir Singh Sodho and Kanwar Karni Singh Sodho highlighted several key development projects and expressed concerns about the progress and effectiveness of ongoing schemes. They emphasized the urgent need to complete developmental works and address pressing issues in Umerkot and Tharparkar to provide better relief and services to the local population.

Kanwal Mohan Lal Ratanani, Personal Secretary to MPA Rana Hamir Singh Sodho, conveyed to reporters that the primary objective of the meeting was to accelerate relief efforts and ensure the timely completion of development projects. Ratanani underscored that significant efforts are being made to address the fundamental issues faced by residents in these districts, aiming to improve their overall quality of life.



**HYDERABAD:** Muhammad Khalid Qadri, Central President of Sunni Tehreek (PST), addresses media during a press conference at Hyderabad Press Club.—RT

## Information Department Holds Condolence Reference for Journalist Dr. Allah Bachayo Paras Kumhar

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

**BADIN:** A heartfelt condolence meeting was organized by the Badin Information Department under the chairmanship of District Information Officer Sarfraz Samo at the Badin District Information Office. The gathering was attended by Information Officer Irfan Ali Junejo, photographer Maqbool Zai, Mubarak Mirani, and other staff members of the office.



of all of us. His contributions to the field were immense, and his legacy will continue to inspire future generations of journalists." Photographer Maqbool Zai and Mubarak Mirani echoed these sentiments, reflecting on their personal experiences with Dr. Kumhar. They emphasized his role as a mentor and guide to many young journalists, always encouraging them to uphold the highest ethical standards in their work.

During the meeting, deep sorrow and regret were expressed over the sudden demise of Kadhan's senior journalist and patron-in-chief of Kadhan Press Club, Dr. Allah Bachayo Paras Kumhar. Attendees highlighted that the void created by his death is not only a loss for Kadhan but also for the entire journalism field in Badin district. The invaluable contributions made by the deceased through his pen and dedication to journalism will always be remembered and cherished.

The condolence meeting concluded with a moment of silence to honor the memory of Dr. Allah Bachayo Paras Kumhar. The participants prayed for the departed soul and extended their heartfelt condolences to his family. Dr. Kumhar's contributions to journalism, particularly in shedding light on critical issues in Kadhan and Badin, have left an enduring legacy. His fearless reporting and unwavering dedication to the truth have set a benchmark for journalistic excellence in the region.

Information Officer Irfan Ali Junejo also shared his thoughts, "Dr. Kumhar's passion for journalism and his relentless pursuit of truth have left an indelible mark on all of us. His contributions to the field were immense, and his legacy will continue to inspire future generations of journalists."

District Information Officer Sarfraz Samo addressed the gathering, stating, "Dr. Allah Bachayo Paras Kumhar was a pillar of strength and integrity in the journalism community. His insightful reporting and commitment to the truth set a high standard for all journalists in the region. His absence leaves a significant void that will be hard to fill."

## Commissioner Faisal Ahmed Uqaili Forms Committees to Oversee LBOD Projects

By Younis Chandio

**MIRPURKHAS:** Divisional Commissioner Faisal Ahmed Uqaili has established tehsil-level committees to oversee ongoing work on the Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD) and address urban flooding issues. The move aims to enhance coordination and ensure the effective management of the LBOD projects across the Mirpurkhas, Umerkot, and Tharparkar districts.



The committees, chaired by the Assistant Commissioner of each tehsil, will include the Sub-Divisional Police Officer, Chairman of the Town Committee, Chairman of the Union Council, and representatives from the Irrigation Department of Nara Canal and the LBOD Department. In Tehsil Hussain Bux Marri and Tehsil Mirpurkhas, the Mayor of Mirpurkhas and the Municipal Commissioner will also be members of the committees.

These committees will play a critical role in coordinating emergency responses during heavy rains and floods. They are tasked with reviewing the progress of the LBOD Dhoro Puran Nullah project every 15 days, forming a WhatsApp group for efficient communication, inspecting weak embankments, and addressing any issues that arise.

Assistant Commissioners have been instructed to provide immediate reports to the Deputy Commissioners to keep them informed about the status and challenges of the LBOD projects. The establishment of these committees is expected to improve oversight and management of the LBOD infrastructure, contributing to better flood control and drainage solutions in the region.

## Excise Police Arrest Two Men, Recover 96 Bottles of Moonshine

By Sajjad Chang

**HINGORIA:** In a successful operation, the Excise Police, led by Inspector Nisar Ahmed Wassan, intercepted a car at the Radoolab check post and recovered 96 bottles of moonshine. Two men, identified as Shoukat Ali Tamrani and Nadir Ali Tamrani, were arrested during the operation.



The Excise Police have registered a case against the arrested individuals, who are now facing charges related to the illegal possession and transportation of alcohol. Inspector Nisar Ahmed Wassan stated, "This operation is part of our ongoing efforts to crack down on illegal alcohol and drug distribution. We are committed to enforcing the law and ensuring the safety of our community."

The Excise Police officials reiterated their dedication to continuing the crackdown against drug dealers and illegal alcohol distribution, following the directives of Sindh Minister for Excise Sharjeel Inam Memon. "We will persist in our efforts to eradicate such illegal activities and uphold the law," emphasized Inspector Wassan.

This arrest marks another step in the ongoing campaign against illegal substances in the region, demonstrating the commitment of the Excise Police to maintaining law and order.

## DC Dr. Syed Muhammad Ali and District Council Chairman Bangal Khan Mahar Review Flood Precautionary Measures



By Shad Mahar

**GHOTKI:** Deputy Commissioner Dr. Syed Muhammad Ali and District Council Chairman Bangal Khan Mahar conducted an on-site inspection of the Qadirpur Shank bund to evaluate flood precautionary measures. The visit included a briefing from the Director of the Sindh Irrigation and Drainage Authority (SIDA) on current flood preparedness and precautionary strategies.

During their visit, Dr. Syed Muhammad Ali and Bangal Khan Mahar issued directives for enhanced vigilance and precautionary measures to mitigate potential flooding risks. They instructed the irrigation department to finalize all necessary safety arrangements in light of anticipated increased river water levels following the monsoon rains. The officials emphasized the importance of having all precautionary measures in place before the expected rise in river levels. As part of their directives, they canceled the irrigation staff's leave and mandated continuous monitoring of the bunds to prevent any unforeseen incidents.

Additionally, Dr. Syed Muhammad Ali and Bangal Khan Mahar directed the SIDA Director to ensure that all heavy machinery is fully operational and to submit a comprehensive report on the current status and readiness. In the briefing, SIDA Director Muhammad Ali Zardari assured the officials that river conditions are being closely monitored. He reported that all safety bunds are in good condition and that ongoing vigilance is being maintained with irrigation staff deployed to various locations to oversee the situation effectively.

## SDA Employees Protest for Issuance of Withheld Salaries

By Munawar Chandio

**JAMSHORO:** Employees of the Sehwan Development Authority (SDA) staged a protest demonstration on Tuesday, demanding the release of their withheld salaries. The protest leaders, including Ghulam Shabbir Bang, Ghulam Murtaza Jamali, Asif Khakheli, and others, spoke to the media about their grievances.



The protesters highlighted that they have not received their salaries for the past five months, leading to significant financial hardships. "We are facing severe difficulties in managing our daily lives without our salaries," said Ghulam Shabbir Bang, one of the protest leaders. Ghulam Murtaza Jamali expressed concern over the performance of the SDA, attributing the delay in salary payments to administrative inefficiencies. "The authorities must address the issue immediately. Our families are suffering due to this negligence," he added.

Asif Khakheli emphasized the urgency of their situation, stating, "We have been patient for months, but now we demand immediate action. If our salaries are not released soon, we will intensify our protest."

The employees called on higher authorities to intervene and provide relief. They warned that if their demands are not met, they will broaden their protest to draw more attention to their plight.

The protest underscored the growing frustration among SDA employees, who are struggling to make ends meet without their due wages. The demonstrators urged the authorities to take prompt action to resolve the issue and ensure the timely payment of salaries.



# METRO KARACHI

## Sindh Government To Launch Decisive Crackdown On Drug Use

KARACHI: The Sindh government has resolved to take decisive action against drug use across the province. Provincial Minister for Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, presided over a key meeting with officers of the Excise Narcotics Control Wing at the Directorate of Excise and Narcotics Control in Karachi. The meeting was attended by Secretary Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control Salim Rajput, Director General of the Narcotics Control Wing Usman Ghani Siddiqui, and other senior officers.



Provincial Minister for Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, presided over a key meeting with officers of the Excise Narcotics Control Wing at the Directorate of Excise and Narcotics Control in Karachi.

gent and effective measures against drugs in every city, regardless of its size. He assured that the police would always be ready to support the excise teams. He reiterated that the Sindh government's policy against drugs is based on zero tolerance, and there would be no leniency for anyone involved in drug trafficking.

The minister also emphasized the need to strengthen the prosecution of cases to ensure that drug peddlers face the full consequences of their actions. He called for tighter checks at inter-provincial border areas to curb the movement of narcotics.—RT

During the meeting, Memon was briefed on the anti-narcotics operations and ongoing initiatives through-

## Sindh Reinstates 15% Service Tax On Card Payments at Restaurants

KARACHI: The Sindh government has reinstated a 15 per cent service tax on debit and credit card payments at restaurants and hotels across the province.



A person using a card payment terminal at a restaurant.

This move marks a reversal from a previous reduction in the tax rate, which had been lowered to 8 per cent earlier in the year.

The Sindh Revenue Board confirmed that 58 establishments in Karachi have been authorised to apply the increased tax rate.

This adjustment aims to address revenue shortfalls and improve tax compliance across the hospitality sector.

The higher tax rate will be applied to card transactions at these venues, affecting both local patrons and visitors.

The reinstatement of the 15 per cent tax follows a period of reduced rates intended to stimulate consumer spending and support the restaurant industry amid economic challenges.

However, the increase is expected to lead to higher costs for diners and may influence spending patterns in the city's vibrant food and hospitality sector.

Officials have stated that the adjustment is part of broader fiscal measures aimed at balancing the provincial budget and addressing revenue gaps.

The tax on card payments is a significant revenue source, and this change underscores the government's efforts to

ensure that the sector contributes adequately to the public finances.

The actual impact of this tax increase on restaurant sales and revenue remains to be seen, as card transactions constitute a substantial portion of many establishments' business.

The Sindh Revenue Board has indicated that further evaluations of tax compliance and revenue outcomes will be conducted in the coming months.—RT/Agency

## Jirga Decides On Couple's Murder Case In Karachi's Manghopir

KARACHI: The decision about killing of a young couple in Manghopir area, was made by a Jirga, citing police sources media reported on Tuesday.

Police sources claimed that the parents of both husband and wife, were agreed over murder. "Initially both parties refused to register the murder case," according to sources.

Deceased Saira's mother and maternal aunt had key role in dual murder, police sources said. "Saira's mother accompanied by her sister entered in the house and talked for long time," sources said.

"Slain woman's mother called killers in home, who entered in the house and opened fire and also used knives in the gruesome dual murder crime," according to sources. "Four 30 bore spent bullets, two coins and other things recovered from the crime scene," police sources added.

The couple who had contracted free-will marriage was found dead inside their home in the Manghopir area on Monday.

According to SSP West Hafeezur Rehman Bugti, the bodies of the couple,

identified as Adil and Sidra, were found inside their house with gunshot wounds.

The police officer said that the preliminary investigations revealed that the couple had married a few months ago and were living in hiding in the locality.

SSP Bugti said that the girl's family discovered their whereabouts, and her brothers allegedly opened fire on the couple, killing both of them. He said that the twin murder was an honor killing, saying that the police are currently investigating into the incident.—RT/Agency

## Dawoodi Bohra Community Leader Visits Governor's House

KARACHI: At the invitation of Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori, the spiritual leader of the Dawoodi Bohra community, Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, visited the Governor House today.

During his visit, he had a one-on-one meeting with the Governor where they discussed the Dawoodi Bohra community's role in the national economy and other matters. Governor Sindh expressed his gratitude for Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin's visit to Pakistan, especially during Muharram ul Haram, which he believes will foster harmony and unity. He expressed his desire for Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin to visit every year during Muharram ul Haram.

Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin announced the donation of 100 laptops for students enrolled in IT courses under the Governor's Initiative at the Governor House. He also offered special prayers for the Governor and praised his welfare efforts, emphasizing that serving humanity is a true form of devotion.

Earlier, upon his arrival at the Governor House, Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin was greeted with a floral welcome by scouts, and bands from the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Police presented a salute. Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori warmly

welcomed Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, who reciprocated with a warm handshake. The Governor presented Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin with a shawl and Tasbeeh.

Following this, Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin met with the Governor alongside a 10-member delegation, discussing the Dawoodi Bohra community's role in the national economy and other matters. Governor Sindh expressed his gratitude for Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin's visit to Pakistan, especially during Muharram ul Haram, which he believes will foster harmony and unity. He expressed his desire for Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin to visit every year during Muharram ul Haram.

Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin shared his happiness about visiting Pakistan and thanked the Governor for Pakistan's prosperity and announced the establishment of an interest-free trust in Pakistan, where funds from the global community will be deposited.—RT/Agency

Speaking to the media, Governor Sindh said it was an honor to have Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin at the Governor House, noting that over 50,000 members of the Dawoodi Bohra community from around the world also visited Pakistan, benefiting the country's economy. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, who previously visited in 2017, has always prayed for Pakistan's economy during his visits.

MQM Pakistan leader Anees Qaimkhani was also present. Governor Sindh highlighted that Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin appreciated the ongoing IT classes under the Governor's Initiative and donated 100 laptops for the students. The Governor conveyed that Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin prayed for Pakistan's prosperity and announced the establishment of an interest-free trust in Pakistan, where funds from the global community will be deposited.—RT/Agency

# REGIONAL TIMES NATIONAL

## FIA Drops Appeal Against Sanam Javed's Acquittal

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Tuesday withdrew its appeal against the acquittal of PTI worker Sanam Javed, leading to the conclusion of the case in the Islamabad District and Sessions Court.

The hearing, presided over by Judge Afzal Majoka, addressed the FIA's appeal to the duty magistrate's decision to discharge Javed from the case. During the court proceedings, FIA prosecutor Sheikh Amir appeared to present the agency's position.

Sanam Javed expressed her gratitude to the judge, stating, "Thank you for your



Sanam Javed expressed her gratitude to the judge, stating, "Thank you for your kindness in this case." In response, Judge Majoka clarified, "I administered justice, not a favour. Lawyers presented their arguments, and I ruled according to the law." The court subsequently dismissed the appeal based on the FIA's withdrawal, closing the matter.—RT/Agency

## Sindh CM And Energy Minister Discuss Solar Energy For Households



KARACHI: Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and energy minister Nasir Shah discussed solar systems project in a meeting, media reported on Tuesday.

Sindh's CM and energy minister discussed to provide solar systems to 5,00,000 households in the province.

Murad Ali Shah said that party chairman Bilawal Bhutto wants an immediate distribution of two lac solar panels in Sindh.

"According to the data five lac homes have been off grid in Sindh," Nasir Hussain

Shah said. Murad Ali Shah said that five billion rupees have been allocated in Sindh's budget this year for solar energy.

"The energy department should forward the solar panels distribution soon for approval," he asked the energy minister.

Sindh CM also directed that ongoing 1812 schemes should be completed this year. Energy minister said that the inspection report of the schemes in progress will be shared with the chief minister.—RT

## Haji Shaista Khan Achakzai Demands Justice After Attack On Nephew



Haji Shaista Khan Achakzai.

KARACHI: In a troubling incident within the jurisdiction of the Site Super Highway Police Station, specifically in the New Sabzi Mandi area, Askar Khan, the nephew of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader and renowned businessman Haji Shaista Khan Achakzai, was attacked by over 20 individuals.

Askar Khan, son of Faiz Muhammad Achakzai, sought refuge inside the New Sabzi Mandi police post during the assault. However, the attackers followed him inside, severely beating him and stealing 2 million rupees he had with him.

The enraged attackers

also assaulted Askar Khan in front of the post-in-charges, causing him serious injuries. Upon receiving the report, Khan was taken to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital.

Haji Shaista Khan Achakzai, a prominent trader and PPP leader from New Sabzi Mandi, confirmed these details to journalists. He added that he and his family have been receiving threats of severe consequences from the attackers.

He demanded that the concerned authorities take notice of the matter and provide protection and justice for him and his family.

## Mastermind Behind May 9 Unrest Admits Guilt: Maryam

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said on Tuesday the masterminds of the May 9 incidents had confessed to their crimes. Without quoting the name of a political party, she said in her statement "it's not a party rather a group of people who aim to undermine the state through chaos."

She claimed that Zaman Park - residence of PTI founder Imran Khan - had been a training centre for unscrupulous elements, where they were taught how to make petrol bombs and launch attacks on state establishments.

She questioned what kind of peaceful protest led to at-



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said on Tuesday the masterminds of the May 9 incidents had confessed to their crimes. Without quoting the name of a political party, she said in her statement "it's not a party rather a group of people who aim to undermine the state through chaos."

## Landlord In Punjab Allegedly Severed Donkey's Legs

JATOI: Another gruesome incident was reported from Jatoi Tehsil (an administrative subdivision), in Muzaffargarh district, Punjab province, where a landlord cut off two legs of the donkey after trespassing on his fields, media reported on Tuesday.

The cruel landlord cut off two legs of the donkey for trespassing on his fields, the police spokesperson stated

that the incident took place in Rampur, after which the accused has been arrested and a case has been registered.

The injured female donkey has been provided medical aid by the Livestock Department.

A similar incident was reported last week, where a landlord brutally killed a female donkey by ripping open its stomach with a sickle as punishment for scavenging in

his field.

According to the details, a cruel landlord named Saqib brutally tortured the female donkey before killing it by ripping open its stomach with a sickle. The incident occurred in the 210 Jb Tarrar, located in the Chiniot district of Punjab province within the jurisdiction of Langrana police station.—RT/Agency

# SOUTHERN PUNJAB

## Divisional Public School Toba Tek Singh holds prize distribution ceremony



By Abid Mehmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: Divisional Public School Toba Tek Singh achieved outstanding results and notable student positions in the annual matriculation exam. In honor of the top-performing students, a prestigious ceremony was held at the District Council Hall by the Divisional Public School Toba Tek Singh. The Deputy Commissioner/Chairman Board of Governors DPS, Muhammad Naem Sindhu, and District Police Officer Ibadat Nisar were the chief guests.

Additional Deputy Commissioner General Zeeshan Labha Maseeh, DPS Principal Rao Muhammad Siddiq, Boys Wing Headmaster Tariq Mahmood, Girls Wing Head-

mistress Miss Maimoona, Agricultural University Principal Dr. Zia-ur-Rehman, Chief Officer District Council Mahar Anwar Baig Sial, District Information Officer, and a large number of teachers also attended the event.

The parents of the position-holding students were also present. During the ceremony, Principal Rao Muhammad Siddiq briefed about the institution's performance in the 2024 annual exams, highlighting that for the first time in the school's 42-year history, Divisional Public School Toba Tek Singh secured three positions in the Faisalabad Board. Ali Ahmed and Furqan-ul-Haq got positions in the examinations. The school achieved a 100% re-

sult in the matriculation board exams, with 304 students participating. Among them, 28 students scored above 1150 marks, 67 students scored above 1100 marks and 155 students scored exactly 1100 marks.

The parents of the position-holding students were also present. During the ceremony, certificates of appreciation and shields were distributed among the top-performing students of the 2024 annual exams. Additionally, the Deputy Commissioner distributed shields, cash prizes, and certificates of appreciation to Principal Rao Muhammad Siddiq and the teachers.

## Two Bodies Found In Dumpster In Karachi

KARACHI: Two bodies of a woman and baby girl were found early morning from a garbage dump near Korangi Causeway in Karachi, media reported on Tuesday, citing rescue sources.

As per the details, the bodies of a woman and a child were found in a garbage dump. The bodies were moved to the hospital for legal formalities by the police and the rescue teams.

Police in its initial statement stated that the victims were killed in torture.

The identities of the two bodies have not yet been established, according to rescue sources.

Prior to this incident, two premature infant bodies were found from a private hospital's washroom in Karachi.

The authorities stated that the hospital's personnel stumbled upon the premature babies' bodies within a wastebasket inside the restroom.



FoodAg Manufacturing represents food and beverage manufacturing industry. It offers a decisive destination for those seeking to accelerate the adoption of technology in the agro sector, and improve efficiencies and productivity to meet new challenges. The three days exhibition offers a comprehensive showcase of solutions for industry professionals seeking to stay at the forefront of the industry and presents a prime opportunity to network, form new global partnerships, announce new innovative products, deals, collaborations and Joint Venture. Global Agro Manufacturers are welcome addition of the 1st FoodAg Manufacturing exhibition scheduled at Lahore.

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## EDITORIAL

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

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

## PTI Will Not Go Down Without a Fight

The recent three-hour symbolic hunger strike by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) outside Parliament House underscores a critical moment in the ongoing discourse about political fairness and justice in Pakistan. PTI leaders, including Asad Qaiser, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, and Ali Muhammad Khan, gathered to demand intervention from the National Assembly speaker regarding the actions taken against the party and its leaders.

This protest follows a series of contentious incidents that have raised questions about the treatment of PTI members. The recent raid on PTI's Central Office by police and the Federal Investigation Agency, which led to the arrest of the party's information secretary, Raoof Hasan, on suspicions of "anti-state digital campaigns," has sparked significant

debate. The party alleges that its lawmakers are facing undue pressure, with offers of bribes or threats of legal action aimed at swaying their loyal-



ties.

The hunger strike reflects PTI's frustration and its call for justice. Speaking to the media, Asad Qaiser emphasized the party's desire to avoid creating any unfavorable law and order situation but expressed the need to protest against the ongoing campaign and pressure against PTI members. Barrister Gohar Ali Khan asserted the party's right to protest within the Parliament, highlighting the alleged injustices

and unconstitutional actions they face.

This situation underscores the delicate balance between maintaining law and order and ensuring fair treatment of political entities. While it is crucial to address any legitimate concerns about anti-state activities, it is equally important to uphold principles of justice and fairness. The PTI's symbolic hunger strike serves as a call for transparency and due process, urging the government to handle political matters with impartiality.

As PTI continues its protests, it is vital for all stakeholders to engage in constructive dialogue and seek solutions that reinforce the rule of law while respecting the rights of all political parties. Ensuring a fair and just political environment is essential for the stability and integrity of the nation's democratic processes. If the party has been wrongfully persecuted, it is entitled to seek and receive justice.

## THE HEARTLAND



## Commissioner Bilal Ahmed Memon Assures Monsoon Preparedness and Highlights Development Initiatives

By Khuda Bux Brohi

THATTA: Divisional Commissioner Hyderabad, Bilal Ahmed Memon, has affirmed that the situation following the recent rains remains under control with no significant weather systems expected. Despite this, the Sindh government, PDMA, and district administration are fully prepared for the upcoming monsoon season.

During a high-level meeting held at Makli's Darbar Hall, Commissioner Memon highlighted several key initiatives. He announced that 50,000 acres of land near the Darawat Dam are available for distribution, with 25,000 acres ready for the first phase. He noted that a request has been made to the Sindh government to schedule open courts to expedite this process and clarify policy details.

Addressing the issue of electricity theft, Commissioner Memon reported that stringent measures are being implemented in collaboration with the Sindh Government. Load shedding policies will target areas with higher theft rates and lower billing, and he urged the public to cooperate in reducing electricity theft to minimize load shedding.



The Commissioner emphasized the need for proactive efforts from all officers to improve departmental performance and infrastructure. He urged them to prioritize institutional interests over personal gains. Commissioner Memon instructed the Deputy Commissioner to maintain close coordination with officers to enhance performance for public benefit. Additionally, he directed Assistant Commissioners and relevant officers to address hoarding and profiteering of agricultural fertilizers and essential items, with a particular focus on agricultural income tax.

He stressed the importance of completing ongoing development projects on time and with high quality. The meeting included briefings on various topics such as the K-IV project, wind power initia-

tives, minerals, livestock, fisheries, agriculture, Darawat Dam, electricity theft, health centers, educational institutions, construction and repair of buildings, pending court cases, annual development programs, social development schemes, RO plants, and campaigns for polio and measles. Commissioner Memon assured all officers of his full support in addressing their concerns. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Munawar Abbas Soomro, SSP Dr. Muhammad Imran Khan, and officers from various departments, including Revenue, Health, Education, Public Health Engineering, Irrigation, Education Works, Buildings, Highways, Drainage, Local Government, HESCO, PPHI, MURF, and others.

## PPP Senior Leader Syed Saleem Shah Bukhari Passes Away

By Younis Chandio



MIRPURKHAS: Syed Saleem Shah Bukhari, a senior leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), has passed away at the age of 74. His funeral prayers were held at Tando Thoro Mirza Muhalla, Hyderabad, where a large number of political, social, and media personalities gathered to pay their respects.

## Aiwan-e-Sahafat Mirpurkhas Opens Account at Bank Muqarama Limited

By Younis Chandio



MIRPURKHAS: Aiwan-e-Sahafat Mirpurkhas has recently opened an account at Bank Muqarama Limited. To mark this occasion, a delegation from Aiwan-e-Sahafat, led by President Fazal Shar, visited the bank to express their gratitude. The delegation included General Secretary Azhar Chaddhar, Treasurer Babu Sharafuddin Laghari, Information Secretary Anwar Brohi, MIMC members Mehboob Alam Solangi, Yasir Baloch, Nareesh Kumar, and Badal Sindh.

The team met with Bank Muqarama Limited's manager, Karan Kumar, and the bank staff to appreciate their efforts in establishing the bank's presence in Mirpurkhas and for their excellent customer service. As a token of appreciation, the delegation presented traditional Sindh gifts, including Sindh Topis, Ajraks, and sweets. The bank staff were also adorned with garlands of flowers in recognition of their support and service.

## Dadu Journalists Stage Sit-In Protesting Police Actions

By Javed Laghari



DADU: In a significant demonstration of dissent, journalists in Dadu staged a protest sit-in at SP Chowk, led by Ghaus Ali Jhatial, General Secretary of the Dadu Press Club, and supported by journalists from across the district. The protest, which lasted for 10 hours, caused major traffic disruptions on roads leading to and from Dadu city.

During the sit-in, several police officials, including DSP City Asif Ali Arain, Inspector Abdul Sattar Miran, PRO SSP Dadu Abdul Raziq Qamrani, and in-charge 15 Abdullah Joyo, arrived at the site to engage with the protest leaders. Following discussions, SSP Dadu Dr. Samiullah Soomro ordered the formation of a committee consisting of five police officers to address the journalists' grievances.

Additionally, a five-member committee, led by Ghaus Ali Jhatial, was scheduled to meet at the SSP office to review and address the journal-

ists' complaints and demands. The sit-in saw widespread participation from journalists throughout the district, as well as support from civil society members, including writers, poets, traders, and social workers. Notable figures included Haji Gul Hasan Panhwar, President of Anjuman Tajran Pakistan District Dadu, Zahid Lund and Jabbar Ansari from the Tailor Union, and women activists Habib Khatoon Dahri and Sara Dahri.

Several journalists' organizations were represented, including Dadu Press Club, President Shabir Ali Bhand, Ali Jhatial, Wali Chandio, Fattah Shaikh, and Danish Khushk. Other attendees included Sarwar Jalal Solangi from the Fourth Pillar Vigilant Media Watchdog, Wali Chandio from JWC, Sindh Journalists Council District Dadu, President Rizwan Ghani Mangi, Kamran Khan Korai, and Wajid Ali Mallah.

The protesters voiced strong slogans against police brutality and demanded the removal of SHO's from Dadu A Section, Khudabad, Kakar, and Rukkan police stations due to allegations of false cases and instances of police high-handedness over the past six months. They called on the Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court and higher police authorities to take immediate action to address these injustices.

## Dilapidated Bridges in Kachho Pose Serious Threats to Residents

By Roshan Memon

JOHI: The deteriorating condition of three key bridges in Kachho, Sindh, is posing serious risks to residents and tourists. These bridges, which connect hundreds of villages in Kachho and lead to the popular Gorakh Hill Station, are in a state of disrepair. Despite the frequent accidents and the critical nature of these bridges, the administration has shown indifference and failed to address the issue.

Located near Johi city on the Johi Branch, the three bridges are crucial for accessing Gorakh Hill Station, often compared to Murree for

its scenic beauty. The bridges have developed large potholes, causing frequent accidents, especially for tourists unfamiliar with the route. Recently, two young men from KN Shah tragically lost their lives in an accident while returning from the Gaji Shah festival.

The bridges play an essential role in connecting Kachho villages, particularly during the heavy flow of the Nai Gaj River. Their poor condition has left local residents deeply concerned about their safety. Despite these pressing issues, the administration has not taken any significant action to repair or maintain the bridges.

In response, political, social, and religious leaders from Johi, including Ghulam Qadir Laghari of SUP, Jaman Babar, Sawan Khan Babar, Ghulam Mustafa Lashari, along with other local residents, have called for urgent action. They have demanded that the administration take immediate steps to reinforce both sides of the three dilapidated bridges to prevent further tragedies.

The community is urging for swift intervention to ensure the safety of residents and tourists and to prevent any more loss of life due to the poor condition of these vital infrastructure links.

## Three Injured After Police Vehicle Collides with Motorcycle in Nawabshah

By Samad Ayaz

NAWABSHAH: In a troubling incident in the village of Sukhio Khan Shar, located in the Jam Sahib area, a police vehicle collided with a motorcycle, injuring three members of a family. The

collision, which occurred near the 59-Mori area, involved the rider, Muhammad Hayat Shar, his wife, and their young granddaughter.

Following the accident, Muhammad Hayat Shar organized a protest demonstration, accusing the police

officers of causing the collision and issuing threats to them. Shar demanded that the SSP of Shahed Benazirabad take immediate action to ensure justice and hold the responsible officers accountable for their actions.

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: MNA Mir Ghulam Ali Talpur chaired an important meeting with the district officers of all departments at the committee room, highlighting the concerns of the people of Badin regarding the inept performance of district officials. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Badin Yasir Bhatti, SSP Badin Sheeraz Nazir, MNA Haji Rasool Bux Chandio, MPA Muhammad I-mail Rahu, MPA Haji Taj Muhammad Mallah, MPA Mir Allah Bux Talpur, MPA Haji Muhammad Halipotia, MPA Bibi Yasmin Shah, MPA Tanzeela Ume Habiba, District President of Pakistan People's Party Haji Muhammad Ramzan Chandio, General Secretary Haji Sain Bux Jamali, and other officials.

MNA Ghulam Ali Talpur and other representatives voiced their frustration, stating that the incompetence of departments such as Irrigation and Indus Hospital has led to increased criticism of elected representatives in the media. The officers from Build-



ings, Education Works, Revenue, and other departments were instructed to prioritize resolving all legitimate issues faced by the people. MNA Talpur warned that any officer failing to address complaints promptly would be expelled from the district.

The elected representatives also took serious notice of the water shortage in Badin. Executive Engineer Irrigation Sanel Channa and other concerned officials were given a directive to ensure water supply to

Badin district within three days. The representatives emphasized their commitment to joining the public in protest if their demands are not met.

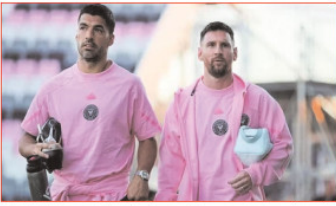
The Chief Monitoring Officer reported that 144 teachers in Badin district



# SPORTS



## Messi and Suarez to miss MLS All-Star Game due to injuries



MIAMI: Inter Miami's Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez will not play in the MLS All-Star game scheduled for tomorrow due to injuries, the league and Inter Miami said in a statement.

A new MLS roster dedicated to the game against the Mexican Football All Stars in Columbus, Ohio excluded Messi and Suarez among others.

Messi is still recovering from a knock that saw him out of two MLS matches last week due to a right ankle injury sustained during the Copa America final against Colombia. While Suarez, who just rejoined the team after more than 40 days of national team duty, will also not play in the All-Star game because of knee pain, the team said.

It was supposed to be Messi's debut MLS All-Star game since the ace joined Inter Miami in July last year. A record eighth-time Ballon d'Or winner, who played the Argentine international in the 2022 World Cup, guided Miami to the recent celebration of the Leagues Cup last year, a competition created for MLS and Mexican league squads.

Miami also pointed out that Messi and Suarez are listed as doubtful for the Saturday home game against Mexico's Puebla to begin their Leagues Cup title defence. Whether or not these players will be available for the match will depend on their recovery process on that day, the team stated.—Agency

## Afghanistan search options for tri-series with Pakistan, UAE

KABUL: The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) has floated a plan to play a tri-series with Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), as well as a team tour to Bangladesh and Zimbabwe.

The ACB Chairman, Mirwais Ashraf, and CEO, Naseeb Khan were in Colombo to attend the International Cricket Council (ICC) annual Board Meeting where they also met with Cricket South Africa, Cricket West Indies to discuss the possibility of a white-ball series before the Champions Trophy 2025.

"Afghanistan Cricket Board's Chairman, Mirwais Ashraf, and CEO, Mr



Naseeb Khan, attended the ICC Board Meeting which was held this week in Sri Lanka and was attended by representatives from other member countries," the ACB said in a press release. "During the meeting, ACB's leadership presented recent achievements, activities, and future plans for the Afghanistan Cricket Board. They also held discussions

venues to be confirmed.

"The ICC leadership and meeting participants praised ACB and AfghanAtalan's recent accomplishments in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 and highlighted the team's remarkable performance and their significant contribution to entertaining fans around the world and the development of cricket in Afghanistan." The Afghanistan cricket team, under the leadership of Rashid Khan, recently surprised the cricket world in the T20 World Cup 2024. They defeated the likes of Australia, New Zealand and made their way to the semi-final, their first-ever last-four qualification in an ICC event.—Agency

## LeBron James helps US win exhibition series with 5-0 record



LONDON: LeBron James led Team USA to a thrilling 92-88 win over Germany at the O2 Arena in London on Monday, wrapping up their final tune-up game before the Paris 2024 Olympics.

The 39-year-old star scored 20 points, shooting 8-11 from the field, and was instrumental in the final moments, netting the last 11 points for the team. Joel Embiid contributed 15 points, while Stephen Curry and Anthony Edwards added 13 and 11 points, respectively.

James' dominance in the closing moments sealed the victory, outscoring Germany 11-6 in the final 3:57. Despite holding a lead for the final minutes, Germany couldn't withstand the pressure from James and Team USA. Germany's top scorers included Franz Wagner with 18 points, Andreas

Obst with 14, Dennis Schroder with 13 points and 10 assists, Daniel Theis with 13, and Moritz Wagner with 12.

As per results, Team USA finished their exhibition series with a 5-0 record, having faced significant challenges from several teams. Canada, Australia, and South Sudan provided stiff competition, with Germany holding a lead over the US until the final four minutes.

Earlier, James was named the male flagbearer for the US at the opening ceremony along the River Seine. Reflecting on the game, he said, "It was a good test for us. I'm glad we were able to keep our composure and persevere like we did the other day versus South Sudan. It was a good win for us.—Agency

## England all-rounder disappointed over Naseem's unavailability for The Hundred

LAHORE: England all-rounder Moeen Ali expressed his disappointment over Naseem Shah's unavailability for The Hundred 2024, scheduled to run from July 23 to August 24.

Moeen Ali, who was named Birmingham Phoenix captain last week, claimed that Naseem Shah was their first-choice pacer and was anticipated to deliver notable performances to the side.

He further revealed that the Pakistan pacer's absence has damaged the team's balance and speculations made the decision in a bid to prevent Naseem from potential injuries and to ensure his workload management as he is Pakistan's first-choice pacer in all three formats.

For the unversed, Naseem Shah, who was signed by the Phoenix in the £125,000 category, was denied the No Objection Certificate (NOC) by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).



According to the details, the cricketing body made the decision in a bid to prevent Naseem from potential injuries and to ensure his workload management as he is Pakistan's first-choice pacer in all three formats.

Considering Pakistan's upcoming busy season which includes World Test Championship (WTC) matches against Bangladesh, England and

West Indies while also playing an ODI tri-series against New Zealand and South Africa ahead of the Champions Trophy 2025, the PCB is unwilling to take any risks regarding Naseem Shah's fitness.

For the unversed, Naseem also missed the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 in India due to a shoulder injury. The right-arm pacer suffered the injury during the

ACC Men's Asia Cup 2023 fixture against India which resulted in him ruling out of the tournament remainder. The incident occurred in the 46th over of India's innings when he walked off the field favouring his bowling shoulder on the reserve day allocated for the blockbuster clash between two Asian giants. Briefly, after Pakistan's 228-run defeat against arch-rivals India, the PCB called up Zaman Khan and Shahnaaz Dahani as backup pacers for the rest of the tournament, as a precautionary measure to provide a cover for injured Naseem and Harris Rauf. Later, the PCB confirmed that Naseem Shah was ruled out of the Asia Cup 2023 and Zaman was added to the Pakistan squad.—Agency

## Women's Asia Cup: Pakistan create history by posting 10-wicket win



DUBAI: Pakistan women's cricket team has created history by winning a match by ten wickets in the ongoing Women's T20 Asia Cup on Tuesday. Earlier, different teams won their respective matches by 9 wickets eight times.

The Girls in Green defeated the United Arab Emirates (UAE) by 10 wickets in a must-win match of the ongoing Women's T20 Asia Cup at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium today.

It was the second win for the Pakistan team in the tournament owing to an all-round performance. Pakistan lost their first match of the tournament to India. The Green Shirts have one step in the semi-final with four points from two victories.

In today's match, Pakistan opening duo Gull Feroza and Muneeba Ali, chasing the target of 104 runs, displayed formidable form with the bat as they reached home in just 14.1 overs without losing a single wicket, with 35 balls remaining. Feroza hit 62 off 55 deliveries with eight fours while Muneeba contributed 37 runs on 30 balls with four boundaries. Winning the match by ten wickets in the tournament's history.

Nepal will lock horns with India in the last match of Group A today and the Green Shirts require the Blues to beat their opponents to ensure a secure entry into the semi-finals.

Earlier, Pakistan won the toss and asked the UAE women to bat first. However, they could not have a great start as they kept on losing wickets at regular intervals.

Skipper Esha Oza (16 off 26) and Theertha Satish (40 off 36) were the top two scorers for UAE as only Khushi Sharma (12 off 13) managed to contribute runs in double figures. For Pakistan, Sadia Iqbal, Nashra Sandhu and Tuba Hassan took two wickets each while skipper Nida Dar managed to get one.—Agency

## Former Pakistan captain breaks silence on Bob Woolmer's tragic death

LAHORE: Former Pakistan captain Younis Khan broke silence on the tragic death of former head coach Bob Woolmer amid ICC Men's World Cup 2007.

Woolmer passed away a day after Pakistan's early exit from the tournament due to their upset defeat against Ireland on March 17.

He was found dead in his room and speculations emerged that it might have been a murder. However, thorough investigations, carried out by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and Jamaican authorities confirmed it was a natural death.

Meanwhile, legendary batter Younis Khan, during



an interview at a local news channel, spoke highly of Bob Woolmer and claimed that had the latter remained Pakistan's head coach, the team would have achieved great success. "I have no doubt that if Woolmer had remained head

together after a match or nets to discuss cricket. Unfortunately, the night he passed away, we didn't sit together as we had lost to Ireland.

"I was also out for a duck and was very upset with myself. So, I went to my room and locked myself in. The next day, I didn't see him at breakfast and later we learnt about his death," he added.

Younis then went on to reveal the "torture" the national cricket team suffered after Woolmer's death as they were relocated to some other island and were investigated by the local police.—Agency

## Carlo Ancelotti pushes for defensive signing after missing out on Leny Yoro



MADRID: Real Madrid boss Carlo Ancelotti is pushing the club to make a top defensive signing after missing out on Leny Yoro to Manchester United, reported Spanish news outlet SPORT on Tuesday.

Madrid had been after Yoro for a long time but they were not willing to pay more than €40million, so the Frenchman was sold to Man Utd by his former club Lille.

With Nacho Fernandez and Rafa Marin having left the club, Madrid are now just left with three centre-backs - Antonio Rudiger, Eder Militao and David Alaba - and the Austrian is expected to be out till 2025 due to the Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) tear he suffered last season. Ancelotti wants the Whites to sign a proven centre-back for the upcoming season and according to SPORT, the names of Al-Nasser's Aymeric Laporte, who won the European Championship (Euro) 2024 with Spain, and Arsenal's William Saliba are being discussed.

Laporte left Manchester City and joined Cristiano Ronaldo's Al-Nassr on a huge salary contract but a move to the Spanish capital could be appealing to him as he is just 30 years old and eyes playing FIFA World Cup 2026 with Spain. On the other hand, Saliba, 23, is one of the best defenders in the world and is certainly one of Mikel Arteta's most important troops at Arsenal. Due to his importance, the Gunners would be reluctant to sell the Frenchman.—Agency

# ENTERTAINMENT



## Jennifer Lopez used to 'torture' Ben Affleck in marriage

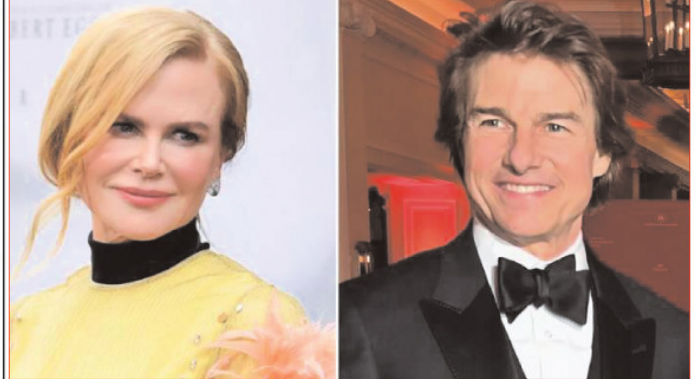


In his marriage with Jennifer Lopez, Ben Affleck reported bearing torture in the face of a tough workout routine she is said to be enforced on him.

Well-placed sources say the Argo star breathed a sigh of relief after he spent time away from his estranged partner who is said to be a fitness fanatic.

"Jennifer is in the best shape of her life and has one of the most envied bodies in Hollywood. She has a punishing workout ethic that's admirable from afar - but for Ben it was torture," the insider noted. Recovering from alcohol addiction, the Oscar

## Nicole Kidman talks about making sacrifices with Tom Cruise in 'Eyes Wide Shut'



Nicole Kidman has recently recalled her experience of working with former husband Tom Cruise in Eyes Wide Shut.

To mark 25th anniversary of Stanley Kubrick directed movie, Nicole spoke to Los Angeles Times and explained how Stanley took inspiration from her and Tom's relationship at the time. "I suppose he was mining it," said the Australia actress, who was married to Tom for 10 years until their 2001 split.

Nicole told the outlet, "There were ideas he was interested in. He'd ask a lot of questions. But he had a strong sense of the story he was telling. I do remember him saying, 'Triangles are hard. You have to tread carefully when it's a triangle.'"

The Oscar winner noted, "Because one person could feel ganged up on. But he was aware of that and knew how to manage us." Elsewhere in the inter-

view, Nicole, who shares two children with Mission Impossible actor, pointed out that she and her former partner had their "own relationship with their director." "There's something about being a woman in that equation, too," continued Far And Away actress. Nicole mentioned, "Stanley liked women. He had a different relationship with Tom. They worked more closely together on his character." Meanwhile, the Bombshell actress also praised Stanley, adding, "We (Nicole and Tom) loved working with him. We shot that for two years. We had two kids and were living in a trailer on the lot primarily, making spaghetti because Stanley liked to eat with us sometimes." "We were working with the greatest filmmaker and learning about our lives and enjoying our lives on set," she stated.

## Face of the Day



Name: Shakir Mangi  
Location: Karachi  
About me: Strike a pose if you love modeling like me!

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



# NATIONAL

# THE HEARTLAND



## CM Gandapur Suggests Calling KP Apex Committee Following Bannu Jirga Meeting

**PESHAWAR:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has hinted at summoning a meeting of the provincial Apex Committee - the top security body - in the next two days after the Bannu jirga put forth its demands.

Sources told media in the wee hours of Tuesday that the chief minister would furnish the demands of the jirga before the top body, days after firing on the Bannu 'peace march' killed one and injured several others.

The jirga's delegation, who placed a 10-point agenda before Gandapur during a meeting at the CM House, has opposed the federal government's anti-terrorism campaign 'Azm-e-Islah'. The sources said, "The people familiar with the meeting also said the jirga sought to dismantle armed groups, empower police and ensure their patrolling at night; allow CTD to conduct search operations or take action against terrorists instead of security forces;



form a body to investigate the incident. However, the federal government has said that it won't accept the findings as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) people had weapons and used them in the rally, which caused chaos. In a press conference on Monday, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) chief Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said that the Bannu marchers had raised anti-army slogans and also pelleted stones at the security forces' personnel. During his presser, in which he also criticised the role of social media following the march, Lt Gen Chaudhry also played footage from the incident, which showed armed marchers attacking an under-construction wall of the Bannu cantonment.

"Some armed protesters resorted to gunfire as a result of which there were injuries. This is how it happened. The army's response was as per the SOP and according to orders." —RT/Agency

and present missing persons before courts. Jirga chief Nasir Khan told journalists that the Bannu sit-in would continue despite the recent violent episode and that the KP chief minister had heard all their demands. "Ali Amin Gandapur will visit Bannu on Friday. The chief minister has also stated that he will call a meeting of the Apex Committee. Five members of the jirga will partake in the meeting of the Apex Committee."

During the protest in Bannu on July 19, people were fired upon, prompting the provincial government to

## Tando Jam Police Arrest Notorious Criminal

By Irfan Ali Soomro

**TANDO JAM:** In a successful operation, Tando Jam Police, led by SHO Inspector Riaz Ahmed Bhattu and DSP Agha Abdul Majeed Pathan, conducted a raid resulting in the arrest of a notorious criminal named Muhammad Bilal. During the operation, the police recovered a pistol from his possession.

According to the police, Muhammad Bilal was wanted in connection with multiple fraud cases. The arrest marks a significant achievement for the Tando Jam Police, reflecting their dedication to maintaining law and order in the area.

DSP Agha Abdul Majeed Pathan added, "The recovery of the weapon from Muhammad Bilal's possession high-



lights the potential threat he posed. Our proactive approach will continue to target such individuals to prevent any criminal activities." The police assured the public that they would remain vigilant and continue their efforts to apprehend individuals involved in illegal activities. The arrest of Muhammad Bilal is seen as a significant step towards improving the safety and security of Tando Jam.

## Man Killed for Picking a Few Dates from an Orchard

By Naz Solangi

**KUMB:** In a tragic incident, a 50-year-old man named Hazoor Bux Kanaso was brutally attacked and killed with sticks by local individuals after he picked a few dates from the orchard of an influential man in the village of Sohu Kanaso. The violent assault resulted in his death on the spot.

The body of the deceased was handed over to his heirs after the completion of the necessary medico-legal formalities at a local hospital.

The area police have taken notice of the incident and conducted raids to arrest the perpetrators. However, the case had not been registered at the time of this report.

Local residents expressed their outrage and grief over the senseless killing, calling for justice for Hazoor Bux Kanaso. The incident has sparked a debate about the influence of powerful individuals in the region and the urgent need for law enforcement to take swift action against such acts of violence.

The police assured the public that they are actively pursuing the suspects and will ensure that justice is served. "We are committed to apprehending those responsible for this heinous crime and bringing them to justice," said a police spokesperson.

This incident highlights the growing tensions in rural areas over land and property rights and the need for effective measures to protect the lives and rights of all citizens, regardless of their social standing.

## Garhi Hassan Branch Breach Expands to 100 Feet, Floods Villages and Crops

By Khair Muhammad Golo

**THUL:** A significant breach in the Garhi Hassan Branch, located near the village of Aitbar Khoso, has expanded to 100 feet due to the negligence of irrigation officials. The initial breach, which measured 50 feet wide, occurred as a result of inadequate maintenance and oversight. Despite being alerted about the situation, the irrigation officials failed to respond for over eight hours, exacerbating the problem.

As a result of the delayed response, water from the

breach inundated hundreds of acres of rice crops and spilled into five nearby villages: Allah Dino Khoso, Siddiq Khoso, Abdul Karim Katohar, Basheer Katohar, and Aitbar Khoso. The flooding has forced villagers to evacuate their homes to avoid further damage.

In response to the disaster, local residents, including Gulzar Ahmed and Hakim Katohar, have expressed their frustration and disappointment. They criticized the irrigation officials for their lack of prompt action, which they believe led to the severe

flooding of their villages and the destruction of their crops.

The affected villagers are calling for immediate action against the responsible irrigation officials and are demanding compensation for their losses. They have voiced their concerns about the inadequate response and the devastating impact of the breach on their livelihoods.

The situation underscores the urgent need for better management and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure to prevent such incidents and mitigate their effects on local communities.

## Mithi Municipal Committee Approves Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-25

By Ashraf Kunbhar

**MITHI:** The Mithi Municipal Committee, led by Chairman Dr. Manoj Kumar Malani, has approved the budget for the fiscal year 2024-25, presented under Section 110 of the Sindh Local Government Act 2013. The budget outlines projected total revenues of 543.8 million rupees and expenditures of 543.3 million rupees, resulting in a surplus of 538,804 rupees.

In his presentation, Chairman Malani high-

lighted that the budget does not introduce any new taxes and aims to be beneficial for the public. He assured that the approved budget will support various development projects aimed at enhancing cleanliness, lighting, and water facilities throughout the city. The budget received unanimous approval from all committee members. During the meeting, Councillor Sushil Soni raised concerns about the previous year's budget, questioning whether the allocated funds were effectively utilized for devel-

opment schemes. The Chairman addressed these concerns with detailed explanations, clarifying the utilization of funds and addressing the disagreements expressed by two members. The budget allocates more than 54 crore rupees for over 60 different items and projects. The meeting also featured remarks from Vice Chairperson Sumitra Manjani and other committee members, who supported the budget's approval and discussed its potential impact on the city's development.

## Khanpur Police Rescue Kidnapped Hasnain Arain in Successful Operation

By Adeel Alvi

**SHIKARPUR:** The Khanpur police have successfully rescued Hasnain Arain, who was kidnapped 20 days ago, in a targeted operation. The rescue operation, led by SP Shikarpur Shahzaib Chachar, took place in the rural area of Garhi Tegho.

Hasnain Arain was abducted from a passenger vehicle within the jurisdiction of the Rustam police station. The kidnappers had been moving him between various locations in the rural area. During a dramatic firefight between the police and the criminals, the kidnappers abandoned Arain and fled the scene.

Following the successful



rescue, the family of the victim expressed their profound gratitude to SP Shahzaib Chachar and the Khanpur police. They honored the police team with floral garlands, distributed sweets, and publicly thanked them for their efforts.

The police operation is set to continue until all kid-

napped individuals are recovered. SSP Shikarpur has assured that efforts will be intensified to clear the rural areas of criminal elements and maintain public safety. The commitment to addressing crime in the region remains strong, with expectations for further successes in future operations.

## Assistant Commissioner Iqbal Ahmed Tunio Seals Three Shops for Contaminated Milk Sales

By Farooq Junejo

**SHAHEED BENAZIRABAD:** Residents of Esarpur, including prominent figures such as Kashif Qazi, Faizan Jamali, Saber Jhooli Waro, Rashid Shah, Wasim, and others, have staged a protest against the Nawabshah Municipal Corporation, voicing their frustration over the area's poor sanitary conditions.

The demonstrators gathered to highlight their grievances, informing the media that their neighborhood has endured a dilapidated drainage system for over forty years. They reported that sewage water has been infiltrating their homes, resulting in severe mosquito infestations and numerous illnesses among their young children. The protesters criticized the Municipal Corporation for its lack of action, despite their repeated com-

plaints. They pointed out that piles of garbage have accumulated in front of their homes, with municipal staff failing to address the issue. This inaction has exacerbated the sanitary crisis in their community. The residents, many of whom are daily wage laborers, expressed their struggle to balance rising living costs with the need for medical treatment for their sick children. They are compelled to choose between feeding their families and affording necessary healthcare. The protesters have called on the district administration and municipal authorities to urgently replace the outdated drainage system, clean their neighborhoods, and take measures to protect their children from disease. They demand immediate action to address these pressing issues and improve the overall living conditions in their community.

As a result of the findings, these shops have been sealed. Deputy Commissioner Shikarpur Iqbal Ahmed Tunio conducted an inspection of local milk-selling shops to assess the quality of milk being sold. During the inspection of nine shops, it was discovered that three were selling

milk contaminated with boric acid, a substance highly detrimental to health. Among the affected shops, three outlets of Moazam Dairy were found to be distributing this adulterated milk. As a result of the findings, these shops have been sealed. Deputy Commissioner Shikarpur Iqbal Ahmed Tunio has urged the public to avoid purchasing milk from vendors who use harmful chemicals. He has also directed all Assistant Commissioners to ramp up enforcement against sellers of contaminated milk, impose significant fines, and publicly disclose the names of those involved. Deputy Commissioner Memon stressed the seriousness of these measures, highlighting the potential health risks posed to the community, particularly to children. He emphasized that such actions are necessary to protect public health and ensure safety.

## PTA Attributes Ongoing WhatsApp Disruption In Pakistan To 'Technical Glitch'

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan's telecommunication regulator has downplayed the ongoing issues with WhatsApp services being experienced by cellular users in the country, attributing it to a possible "technical glitch."

On July 20, numerous users in Pakistan began reporting difficulties in sending and receiving media files, such as voice notes, photos, and videos, on the popular messaging application while using their mobile networks.

Complaints included media files either taking too long to download or not downloading at all, with some users receiving the following message from WhatsApp: "Couldn't download document. Try again. If the problem keeps happening, try connecting to Wi-Fi."

According to a 2024 report by the World Population Review, there are 52.3 million WhatsApp users in Pakistan.

The disruptions have persisted for many users. In the last 24 hours, Downdetector, a global platform that monitors problems with websites and online applications, has continued to receive reports



regarding outages of WhatsApp in Pakistan.

Private telecommunication services in the country have also confirmed the issue. A spokesperson for Jazz, Pakistan's largest mobile network, who asked to remain anonymous, told media Fact Check that the company has received reports of WhatsApp disruptions.

"We are looking into the matter, and our commitment to providing uninterrupted services continues," he added. While a representative from Telenor Pakistan mentioned that they too had received "some complaints over the weekend" about WhatsApp's quality.

"We investigated the complaints and concluded

that there were no issues from our side or due to our network," he said. "If there was an issue from the backend or elsewhere, they can tell you better about it. That is beyond us."

A Zong Pakistan representative stated it was difficult to pinpoint the exact issue and declined to comment further.

However, Malahat Obaid, the spokesperson for the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), denied any issues with WhatsApp presently. "There is no issue with WhatsApp or any social media apps currently," she told Geo Fact Check through a written response. "In case anyone experienced any such issue lately it may be due to some technical glitch." —RT/Agency

## SUP's Khamiso Khan Bhand Ensures Repair of Out-of-Order Motors at RO Plant

By Yousif Rind

**NAWAB WALI MUHAMMAD:** In Nawab Wali Muhammad town, the RO (reverse osmosis) plant, which had been out of order for the past two months, has been restored to operational status thanks to the efforts of SUP leader Chairman Khamiso Khan Bhand. The repair work was carried out on the motors of the plant, which had previously been malfunctioning.

The RO plant, installed at a cost of millions of rupees, was crucial for addressing the arsenic contamination in the drinking water of Nawab Wali Muhammad town and surrounding areas. The contaminated water had become a severe health hazard, leading to widespread cases of dangerous diseases such as Hepatitis B and C, and contributing to fatalities among residents.

Mian Imran Anwar, a prominent social leader in

the area, had originally funded the installation of the RO plant at the local hospital to provide safe drinking water. However, the plant's motors had been out of service, forcing residents to rely on polluted groundwater.

Responding to complaints from the community, Khamiso Khan Bhand took decisive action by hiring a mechanic to repair the malfunctioning motors. The restoration of the RO plant is expected to significantly improve the quality of drinking water and reduce health risks for the local population.

Chairman Khamiso Khan Bhand expressed his commitment to addressing critical issues affecting the community and ensuring the availability of safe drinking water. The successful repair of the RO plant highlights the importance of timely maintenance and the impact of effective leadership in resolving community challenges.

## Residents of Esarpur Protest Against Poor Sanitary Conditions



By Farooq Junejo

**SHAHEED BENAZIRABAD:** Residents of Esarpur, including prominent figures such as Kashif Qazi, Faizan Jamali, Saber Jhooli Waro, Rashid Shah, Wasim, and others, have staged a protest against the Nawabshah Municipal Corporation, voicing their frustration over the area's poor sanitary conditions.

The demonstrators gathered to highlight their grievances, informing the media that their neighborhood has endured a dilapidated drainage system for over forty years. They reported that sewage water has been infiltrating their homes, resulting in severe mosquito infestations and numerous illnesses among their young children. The protesters criticized the Municipal Corporation for its lack of action, despite their repeated com-

plaints. They pointed out that piles of garbage have accumulated in front of their homes, with municipal staff failing to address the issue. This inaction has exacerbated the sanitary crisis in their community. The residents, many of whom are daily wage laborers, expressed their struggle to balance rising living costs with the need for medical treatment for their sick children. They are compelled to choose between feeding their families and affording necessary healthcare. The protesters have called on the district administration and municipal authorities to urgently replace the outdated drainage system, clean their neighborhoods, and take measures to protect their children from disease. They demand immediate action to address these pressing issues and improve the overall living conditions in their community.

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## PTI Central Office In Islamabad Sealed Again

**ISLAMABAD:** The central office of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in Islamabad has been sealed once again, this time due to inadequate fire and life safety arrangements.

Islamabad's Metropolitan Corporation took the action, citing the lack of necessary safety measures. This development comes amid ongoing legal challenges faced by PTI.

On Monday, Islamabad Police arrested PTI Information Secretary Raouf Hasan during a raid on the party's Secretariat.

Earlier today, Hasan and 10 other male detainees were handed over to FIA on a two-day physical remand. The raid resulted in the seizure of computers and other items from the PTI office.

Authorities allege that the digital media cell at the office had become a hub for international disinformation, col-



laborating with enemy agencies to carry out anti-Pakistan propaganda. PTI-Pakistani the raid, accusing law enforcers of seizing affidavits from MNAs and MPs, which are crucial for verifying party affiliations and could significantly impact the composition of the National Assembly. The FIA prosecutor argued that the remand was necessary to recover devices used for social media

accounts, which are essential for the ongoing investigation. PTI's lawyer, Latif Khosa, defended Hasan, stating he had no connection to the digital media wing and criticized the authorities for labeling party members as traitors.

The court ordered judicial remand for the arrested women, sending them to jail while granting physical remand for the male detainees. —RT/Agency

## Traders Threaten Nationwide Shutdown Over Advance Income Tax

**ISLAMABAD:** The traders' community threatened to observe a country-wide shutdown if the government does not withdraw the recently issued Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) under the Tajar-Dost Scheme, media reported.

President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajiran Ajmal Baloch in a statement rejected the SRO issued by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). He said that if the SRO

is not withdrawn, the traders will be forced to announce a nationwide shutdown.

Ajmal Baloch demanded from the FBR to immediately withdraw the SRO or else they would announce the strike.

Ajmal Baloch said that the SRO should be issued in accordance with the agreement terms between the government and the traders. The All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajiran president

said that out that during the negotiations, the FBR was informed that the scheme has failed, and both filers and non-filers are already paying advance income tax through electricity bills.

Ajmal Baloch categorically said that traders will not pay any further advance income tax under any circumstances.

It is pertinent to mention here that the FBR extended the Tajar Dost scheme to 42 cities. —RT/Agency



# METRO KARACHI



## Murad Orders SPSC To Conduct Annual Combined Competitive Exams



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah receives the 2023 annual report from Chairman of the Sindh Public Service Commission, Mohammad Waseem, during a meeting.—RT

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the Sindh Public Service Commission to ensure the holding of a Combined Competitive Examination every year so that the shortage of officers can be met in time.

This he said while speaking in a meeting held with a delegation of SPSC members led by its Chairman Mohammad Waseem at the CM House on Tuesday. The member who attended the meeting includes Rizwan Memon, Rizwan Ahmad, Malik Ghori, Qazi Shahid Parvaiz, Arif Hanif, Farhat Kamal, Vikram Singh Sodho, Nusrat Mangan, Ms Kalpna Devi, Rabia Salauddin, Dr Qazi Masood, Muzaffar Leghari, Dr Saad Mangrojo, and Secretary Nazeer Qureshi.

The Chairman SPSC briefing the CM said that the



SPSC was a constitutional body with the primary task of recruiting competent officers for the Sindh government. He added that the SPSC endeavored to recommend the most suitable candidates through a fair, transparent, and merit-based recruitment process. The CM was informed that approximately 28 requisitions were received from various departments of the provincial government for

that after due diligence, 5435 appropriate and qualified individuals, including Medical Officers (male/female) BPS-17, Staff Nurses BPS-16 Division-wise, Lecturers BPS-17, and Subject Specialists BPS-17, Municipal Officers BPS-17, Town Officer BPS-16, were recommended to the concerned administrative departments.

The CM instructed the Chairman SPSC to establish a computer-based testing laboratory to bring more transparency to the Commission and uphold meritocracy.

The number of Posts Recommended by the Sindh Public Service Commission for Various Departments in 2022 (September 2022 to December 2022), 2023 (January 2023 to December 2023), and 2024 (January 2024 to April 2024) is 9836.

Chairman SPSC informed the CM that the five

major departments served by the commission include the Health Department with 591 Posts, the Livestock Department with 257 Posts, Agriculture Supply & Prices with 127 Posts, Environment, Climate, 93 Posts, and College Education with 83 Posts.

To a question, the CM was informed that the commission was in the process of selecting 9466 posts of School Education, 1659 College Education, 383 Agriculture, 34 Works & Services, 179 Health Department, 1881 ASI, 1300 medical officers, and others. Murad Ali Shah directed the commission to select the best teachers for school and college education. The Chairman of SPSC along with his members presented an annual report to the CM.—RT

## Mustafa Kamal Labels Independent Power Producers As National Security Threat

KARACHI: MQM leader Mustafa Kamal has termed independent power plants (IPPs) as threat to the national security, media reported on Tuesday.

Mustafa Kamal in a statement demanded immediate removal of the capacity payments clause from the IPP agreements. "We are paying billions of rupees for the electricity, which is not being generated," MQM leader said.

He said the amount allocated for capacity payments has been more than the defence budget.

"These agreements were signed in various governments, but we don't want to talk over it, we want a solution of the problem," Mustafa Kamal said.

He said Pakistan and



these agreements could not go side by side. "We don't want to do politics by threatening to quit the government," he added.

MQM leader said the national economy and development have dropped down. "People could not buy electricity on 60 rupees per unit price," he

said. "These contracts require to be reviewed," he said.

He asked the prime minister to discuss the matter with China, "inform them, we have committed mistake, Pakistan could not bear the burden of these agreements," he added.—RT/Agency

## Sindh Government Launches New Red Bus Route From Memon Goth To Tower

By Asif Qureshi

KARACHI: The Sindh Government has inaugurated a new red bus route from Memon Goth to Tower. The opening ceremony was attended by Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Muhammad Saleem Baloch, Sindh Assembly Members Raja Abdul Razaq Baloch and Muhammad Sajid Jakhio, among others.

In his address at the event, Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad described the launch of the people's bus service from Memon Goth to Tower as a gift from the Sindh Government to the people of Malir. He emphasized that since the people of Malir have consistently supported the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) with their votes, it is their duty to serve the residents of Malir well and ensure that no effort is spared in providing them with essential services.

Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Muhammad Saleem Baloch highlighted that the PPP has introduced bus services across Karachi and throughout



Sindh, providing significant convenience to the public. During the ceremony, PPP Malir President and MPA Raja Abdul Razaq Baloch expressed his satisfaction with the new bus service, noting that it was a positive development. MPA Muhammad Sajid Jakhio remarked that the business community had faced difficulties in commuting to and from the city. He expressed happiness that the PPP is addressing

these issues by providing convenience to the public. During the ceremony, PPP Malir President and MPA Raja Abdul Razaq Baloch stressed that only the PPP could deliver such benefits to the public. The event was also attended by PPP Malir General Secretary Imdad Jakhio, Gadap Town Chairman Tariq Aziz Baloch, Information Secretary Shahjahan Khan, Muhammad Saleem Memon, and other notable attendees.

## Nine People Drown At Karachi's Seaview And Hawksbay Beaches



KARACHI: In a tragic incident, a total of nine people drowned while four others rescued at Karachi's Seaview and Hawksbay beaches, Munk, three individuals drowned while bathing.

Divers successfully rescued two of them, but the body of the third, identified as Danish, Hawke's Bay, while the rescue officials managed to recover one of the individuals. The police reported

that among the rescued, a woman and a man are in critical condition.

In a separate incident at Seaview's Chunky Munk, three individuals drowned while bathing. Divers successfully rescued two of them, but the body of the third, identified as Danish, Hawke's Bay, while the rescue officials managed to recover one of the individuals. The police reported



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah discusses issues with PPP MPA Syed Saleh Shah Jilani during a meeting at CM House.—RT



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah discusses matters with PPP MPA Khurram Karim Soomro during a meeting at CM House.—RT



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah discusses issues with PPP MPA Nadir Akmal Leghari during a meeting at CM House.—RT



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah discusses matters with PPP MPA Nazir Bughio during a meeting at CM House.—RT

## Sindh Extends School Summer Vacation Until August 14 Due to Heatwave

KARACHI: The summer vacations for all the public and private schools in Sindh have been extended till August 14 in the wake of ongoing heatwave and monsoon season.

The government notified the extension in an official statement issued on Tuesday.

Besides schools, the extension of vacations applies to all private and government educational institutions across the province.

"The summer vacation[s] are hereby extended in all public and private institutions under the administrative control of the School Education & Literacy Department till 14.08.2024 in the wake of the heat-wave and expected monsoon rains," the statement read.

It further stated that the extra-curricular activities regarding the Independence Day celebrations will be duly conducted in letter and spirit



Pakistan will mark 78th Independence Day on August 14, 2024, with traditional zeal and fervour.

As the heat continues to swelter Karachi and rest of the province, parts of Sindh and especially the port city is likely to get hit by another spell of monsoon rains between Wednesday and Sunday (July 24-28), depending on whether a weather system developing in the Bay of Bengal im-

pacts Gujarat, India's coastal state. A weather expert has forecast another spell of hot and humid weather starting Wednesday.

At the same time, he said a rain system, developing in the Bay of Bengal, might affect Sindh between July 24 and 28. He said if the same system hit Karachi might also receive showers.—RT/Agency

## Urgent Steps Needed To Address Karachi's Environmental Issues: Sindh Environment Minister

KARACHI: Sindh Environment Minister Dost Muhammad Rahimoon emphasized on Tuesday the urgent need to address Karachi's environmental issues. He made this statement during a meeting with a delegation from the National Forum for Environment and Health (NFEH), including its chief Muhammad Naeem Qureshi, Vice President Engr Nadeem Ashraf, and Information Secretary Mustafa Tahir.

Mr. Qureshi stressed the necessity for coordinated efforts to combat environmental degradation in Karachi. "Every individual must play their part in securing our environment," he stated, highlighting the urgent need for a massive tree plantation drive and the imposition of strict laws and heavy fines to curb the activities of those

harming the environment in Karachi.

Minister Rahimoon echoed these sentiments, expressing his commitment to environmental sustainability. "We must act now to prevent further degradation of our environment. Our ministry is ready to collaborate with NFEH to improve conditions and spread awareness among the masses," he asserted.

The meeting concluded with a mutual agreement to work together on several initiatives. Both parties recognized the importance of public awareness and community involvement in environmental conservation. The Ministry of Environment and NFEH will launch joint campaigns to educate citizens about the importance of protecting the environment and encourage sustainable

practices.

In a significant development, Minister Rahimoon accepted an invitation to be the chief guest at the 21st Annual Environment Excellence Awards and Conference 2024. His participation underscores the government's commitment to addressing environmental issues and supporting initiatives that promote environmental excellence.

The NFEH and the Ministry of Environment called on all Karachi residents to join their efforts in making the city greener and more sustainable. With collaborative action and stringent enforcement of environmental laws, Karachi could overcome its current challenges and pave the way for a healthier, more sustainable future, he concluded.—RT/Agency



### MALIR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MDA/MPD/DEH-534/2024/203

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF PROPOSED LAYOUT PLAN LAND MEASURING 300-00 ACRES FROM SURVEY NO. 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168 & 169, Deh Kotirero, Taluka Bin Qasim, District Malir KARACHI.**

It is hereby informed to the General Public that Additional Deputy Commissioner-II, District Malir, Karachi, has confirmed and forwarded the ownership title of land measuring 300-00 Acres from Survey No. 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168 & 169, Deh Kotirero, Taluka Bin Qasim, District Malir Karachi to Malir Development Authority, Karachi to the Director General MDA, in favour of M/s Asif S/o Abdul Majid holding CNIC No. 42301-1000973-5 R/o Ameer Khusr Road House No. 39 Block-7 / B, Mohallah KDA Overseas Society, Karachi East & Muhammad Zubair S/o Muhammad Haroon holding CNIC No. 42201-2186689-1 R/o House No.203 1st Floor, D.O.H.S Phase-I, Malir Cantt, District Malir, Karachi Builders & Developers in the capacity of General Power of Attorney (GPA) of M/s Associate Builders Pvt. Limited & M/s Maham Enterprises vide his letter No. DC/Malir/K/Rev.Br./1141/2024 dated: 11-07-2024 along with the Mukhtiar, Taluka Bin Qasim, District Malir, Karachi, vide letter No. Mukh/BQ/Malir/616/2024 dated: 11-07-2024 duly forwarded by the Assistant Commissioner, Taluka Bin Qasim, District Malir, Karachi vide letter No. A/C/B.Q/Malir/852/2024 dated: 11-07-2024, for approval of layout plan from planning point of view only.

In this regard, Public Notice Published in the light of Malir Development Authority (MDA) Act 1993-94 & (Revival & Amending) Act-2013 & KBTFR-2002 (Amended up to date) and Malir Development Authority Town Planning Regulations-2015 of Clause No. 15.5-2 that any concerned person(s) / organization(s) having any objection(s) may submit their objection(s) directly to the Director General, MDA, Director (Estate & Enforcement) or Director, Town Planning Department, MDA having office at G-4/B, Block-17, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi Phone # 021- 99239120, 021-99244762 respectively within 07 working days from the date of publication of this Notice.

Any objection(s) received after expiry date shall not be entertained.

LOCATION PLAN:



Town Planning Department

MALIR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

G-4/B, Block-17, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi Phone: 021-99239120, 021-99244762

SAY NO TO DRUGS



A man is very apt to complain of the ingratitude of those who have risen far above him.

—Oscar Wilde

# THE REGIONAL TIMES

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## READERS

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WEDNESDAY JULY 24 2024

## UK Parliamentarians Call For Immediate Release Of Imran Khan

LONDON: Nearly two dozen UK members of parliament have called for the immediate release of Imran Khan, the former prime minister of Pakistan, currently imprisoned in Adiala jail with his wife Bushra Begum.



The demand for Khan's release was made at a hearing today in the House of Lord's Committee Room about the erosion of democratic norms in Pakistan and the "illegal incarceration" of the former prime minister. The hearing was jointly convened by Labour MP for Bradford West Naz Shah, and Conservative Peer Lord Hannan of Kingsclere.

Sayed Zulfikar Bukhari, who was appointed Imran Khan's International Affairs Adviser today, and PTI candidate in the 2024 Pakistani general election Meher Bano Qureshi were guest speakers, as was Sarwar Bari, founder of Patten Development.

This hearing was attended by over 22 parliamentarians from all major parties, including the former Leader of the Conservative Party and Cabinet Minister Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP, the former Home Secretary Priti Patel MP, former Security Minister Baroness Neville-Jones, former Minister of

State in the Foreign Office Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon and former Conservative Party Chairwoman and Foreign Office Minister Baroness Warsi. Newly elected independent MPs Shockett Adam, Barrister Ayoub Khan, Iqbal Mohammad and Labour's Naushabah Khan were also in attendance.

PTI UK's leader Jahanzeb Khan was also in attendance as well as four other office bearers. The hearing resolved that parliamentarians will call on Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer MP and the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs David Lammy MP for the UK government to take note of the recent United Nations report into former prime minister

Imran Khan's incarceration, demand his immediate release and the return of democracy to Pakistan.

Bukhari spoke for ten minutes and gave a rundown of what has happened since the removal of Khan from power in April 2022. He alleged that this year's February elections were massively rigged and that there are fears Khan may be tried in the military courts.

He said: "Pakistanis deserve the right to self-determination. The current government of Pakistan is illegitimate and the world needs to be aware of the atrocities committed by the government of Pakistan against freedom and democracy over the past two years. I welcome that leading parliamentarians from the UK are now calling for the return

of democratic norms in Pakistan."

He told the meeting that PTI's former social media lead Azhar Mashwani was also set to attend the meeting as a "victim" of the state but he received a call from his abducted brother's phone, warning him that his other family members will be taken away too if he joined the meeting. He alleged that hundreds of PTI workers remain abducted and missing.

Meher Bano spoke for nearly 17 minutes, narrating the difficulties she and PTI candidates faced in general elections.

She said: "It has been disappointing [to see] the eerie silence from West democraticies, we would have expected they would stand up for democracy in Pakistan. It is wonderful to have these plaudits about being resilient and brave. I don't want to be resilient or brave, nor do the people of Pakistan, all we just want to be free. Free to choose what political party we support, free to choose what political party we contest the elections from, and free to our representatives. We want our voices to be heard and our votes to be counted."

She said the last general

elections were a farce and her father Shah Mahmood Qureshi, the former foreign minister, was being punished for siding with Imran Khan. She said the basis of the whole cipher case was to intimidate and cajole Khan and Qureshi into submission through draconian means.

Lord Hannan of Kingsclere said: "As friends of Pakistan and friends of Pakistani democracy, we want to see that country prosper. We want to see the UN's recommendations implemented, including an end to the detention of Imran Khan and a timetable for free and inclusive elections. We will continue to press for democracy on a cross-party basis, and in both parliamentary chambers. And we will link up with parliamentarians in other friendly countries to make the case internationally." Naz said the hearing on Pakistan was a "pro-Pakistan" event. She regretted that some people had called it "an event against Pakistan". She said that she decided to get involved in the event to become the voice of a significant section of Pakistanis who wanted Khan's release and wanted an end to all kinds of political incriminations.—RT/Agency

## Court Grants FIA Two-Day Remand Of Raouf Hasan

ISLAMABAD: A district and sessions court in Islamabad on Tuesday granted a two-day physical remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) Information Secretary Raouf Hasan to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in a case related to his alleged involvement in disseminating anti-state propaganda.



Presenting the PTI official before the court, the FIA prosecutor requested the court to grant physical remand of the suspect for recovering devices — allegedly used for anti-state propaganda.

A day earlier, Islamabad Police took Hasan into custody from the party's Central Secretariat for heading a digital media cell and its alleged involvement in running anti-Pakistan propaganda.

Commenting on the arrest, the police had maintained that the "PTI digital media centre had become a centre of international disinformation, from where anti-Pakistan propaganda is run throughout the world".

Although it was initially reported that party Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan was also arrested, the ICT later clarified that they had only arrested Hasan during the raid at PTI's Central Secretariat.

The police's raid drew a strong reaction from the former ruling party with Chair-

man Gohar condemning Hasan's arrest.

Flanked by National Assembly Opposition Leader Omar Ayub, and former NA speaker Asad Qaiser, the PTI chairman reassured that the party would fight for Hasan and would leave no resource untapped to secure his release at the earliest.

It is to be noted that the party's information secretary, in May, was left bloodied after being attacked by apparently four transgender persons in Islamabad.

The incident's CCTV footage showed Hasan being interrupted by an apparent transgender person while he was walking on the side of a road, subsequently, the attacker engaged in conversation with the PTI leader for a few seconds.

During the hearing today, the agency's prosecutor apprised the court that a 30-day physical remand can be granted in an FIA case

He then urged the court to hand over the PTI official to the investigative agency on a 10-day physical remand.

However, Hasan's lawyer Latif Khosa opposed the prosecutor's request for physical remand.

Meanwhile, defence counsel Bokhari questioned the need for a 10-day remand when there was no evidence against the PTI official.

Stressing that Hasan had nothing to do with the social media [team], the lawyer inquired what investigation had the FIA carried out in the last 24 hours.

"Is it a crime to use a mobile phone?" Bokhari said while further asking if on the suspect had posted anything on X. The court then granted Hasan and other PTI workers' two-day physical remand to the FIA, whereas two female PTI workers have been sent to jail on a judicial remand for 14 days.—RT/Agency

## Faisal Vawda Claims Faiz Hameed Presented Evidence Of Imran Khan's Involvement In May 9 Riots

ISLAMABAD: Senator Faisal Vawda has accused PTI supremo Imran Khan of being responsible for Pakistan's current political instability, citing evidence provided by former director general Inter-Services Intelligence Lt Gen (ret'd) Faiz Hameed, linking Khan to the May 9 vandalism incident.



"I cannot champion law and democracy when multiple cases are pending against me in courts. Some time ago, I revealed that Imran Khan's close associate, Faiz Hameed, provided evidence of Khan's involvement in the May 9 vandalism," stated Vawda during an interview with a private TV channel.

Vawda further stated that Imran admitted to directing his supporters to march towards GHQ. He pointed out that parties like PML-N, PPP, JUI-F, and MQM-P had also clashed with the establishment in the past but eventually sat down for negotiations.

When questioned if Faiz Hameed had advised the protest at GHQ on May 9, Vawda clarified, "This was not Faiz Hameed's suggestion; however, Imran Khan was part of the entire scheme."

Vawda expressed that the government does not face threats from a technocrat

government or martial law, but rather from the ongoing power struggle within the PML-N. He added that the IMF had reached a deal with the finance minister, but the decision regarding reserved seats will not be implemented, with the Election Commission, Parliament, Speaker of the National Assembly, and President standing in the way."

He emphasized that constitutional amendments are the responsibility of Parliament while interpreting the Constitution falls to the Supreme Court. Vawda stressed the need to dispel the notion of judicial martial law. "The establishment's stance on May 9 is clear. Regardless of future army chiefs, the military will remain focused on its battles.—RT/Agency

with IPPs, stating, "These political parties were responsible for the agreements that ensure payments to IPPs regardless of power supply. Such contracts involve kickbacks. The decision on reserved seats will not be implemented, with the Election Commission, Parliament, Speaker of the National Assembly, and President standing in the way."

He emphasized that constitutional amendments are the responsibility of Parliament while interpreting the Constitution falls to the Supreme Court. Vawda stressed the need to dispel the notion of judicial martial law. "The establishment's stance on May 9 is clear. Regardless of future army chiefs, the military will remain focused on its battles.—RT/Agency

## Finance Minister Aurangzeb Travels To Beijing To Discuss Rescheduling \$15 Billion In Chinese Loans



ISLAMABAD: Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb is set to embark on a three-day visit to China today, aiming to discuss the rescheduling of a \$15 billion energy loan.

According to sources from the Ministry of Finance, a joint working group may be established between Pakistan and China to facilitate the loan rescheduling.

The discussions will also address issues related to

China's energy circular debt, which currently amounts to approximately Rs500 billion. The minister is also expected to engage in talks regarding the Panda Bond, as Pakistan seeks to secure \$30 million through this financial instrument in China.

The finance minister's discussions will also cover the ongoing efforts and developments on CPEC and other collaborative projects.—RT/Agency

## Pakistan Increases Minimum Marriage Age To 18 For Christians



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has said that all minorities are equal citizens of Pakistan who have equal rights, underscoring the need to further enhance the employment quota for them in all government jobs.

President Zardari said this while addressing a special ceremony at Aiwan-e-Sadr after he signed into law the Christian Marriage (Amendment) Act 2024, raising the marriageable age for Christian men and women to eighteen years, according to the press release issued on Tuesday by the President's Secretariat Press Wing.

Speaking about increasing the employment quota for minorities in all government jobs, the president said that he would write to the government in this regard. Highlighting equal rights for all minorities in Pakistan,

he stressed that minorities should not be disheartened by some isolated incidents, saying that they had equal ownership over the homeland as much as anybody else.

The president accorded approval to the Christian Marriage (Amendment) Act 2024 under Article 75 of the Constitution. The act amends Section 60 of the Christian Marriage Act of 1872.

Previously, the age of Christian men and women intending to be married was 16 and 13 years respectively. The ceremony was attended by the Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony (MORA), Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Secretary Ministry of Religious Affairs, Zulfikar Haider, members of the Christian community and senior government officials.—RT/Agency

## Pakistan Navy Takes Command Of Multinational Task Force For Maritime Security

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy has assumed the charge of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF-150) for the 13th time at an impressive change of command ceremony held at Headquarters US Naval Forces Central Command Headquarters in Bahrain.

Commodore Asim Sohail Malik of the Pakistan Navy took over the command from Capt Mathews of the Royal Canadian Navy, the Pakistan Navy said on Tuesday.

The multinational coalition of navies, CTF-150 is one of the five task forces operating within the ambit of Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), with a mission to promote maritime security to counter illicit activities at sea.

"Addressing the audience, the incoming Commander CTF-150 Commodore Malik assured that his team is fully geared up to efficiently shoulder this prestigious responsibility to contribute to various Maritime Security and Stability in the region," the statement read.

The commodore also lauded the outgoing commander of the task force, Capt Mathews of the Royal



Canadian Navy, and his team for their staunch commitment and commendable services to achieve the set objectives of CTF-150.

Commodore Malik underscored that CTF-150's area of responsibility consisted of some of the world's most challenging and important international waters.

He assured that his team will strive to further strengthen the efforts of this multinational task force to provide robust security in this vital maritime region.

The CTF commander also highlighted that the Pakistan Navy was committed to working with coalition navies to ensure peace and stability within the Area of Responsibility.

"Pakistan Navy has the distinction of commanding CTF-150 twelve times previously. This being the 13th Command, is a manifestation of the trust and respect reposed in the Pakistan Navy by the coalition partners," the navy stated.

The change of command ceremony was attended by Pakistani Ambassador to Bahrain Saqib Rauf, Honorary Consul of Canada in Bahrain Hatim Zubi, Commander Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Vice Admiral George M Wikoff, Commander Royal Bahrain Naval Force Rear Admiral Ahmed Al Binalli besides representatives of several other navies operating with CMF.—RT/Agency

## ECP Requests Political Parties To Submit Wealth Statements By August 29

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) asked all political parties to submit their respective wealth statements for the last financial year 2023-2024, a mandatory requirement under the relevant electoral laws, by August 29. The ECP asked all political parties to submit their consolidated statements of accounts for financial year 2023-24 on or before August 29.



"The Election Commission of Pakistan reminds all the heads of Political Parties, in terms of section 210 of the Elections Act, 2017 read with section 204 of the Act ibid and rule 159 & 160 of the Election Rules, 2017, thereof, that they are required to file with Election Commission their Consolidated Statement of Accounts on (Form-D) for financial year, 2023-24 ended on 30th June, 2024 on or before 29th August 2024." The ECP said in a press statement. It is pertinent to mention here that Section 210 of the Elections Act, 2017 provides that a Political Party shall, in such a

manner as may be prescribed, submit to the Commission, within sixty days from the close of a financial year, a consolidated statement of its accounts audited by a Chartered Accountant on Form-D containing, annual income and expenses, sources of its funds and assets and liabilities, if further said. The statement of accounts is to be submitted on Form-D as provided in the Elections Act, 2017. Printed Forms are available, free of cost, in the Election Commission Secretariat, Islamabad and in the offices of the Provincial Election Commissioners, Punjab, Sindh, Khy-

ber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Form-D / Proforma for source of funds are also available on ECP's Website. The attested copy of Membership/Certificate issued by ICAP in respect of Auditor engaged shall be annexed to the Form-D along with the last valid renewal certificate. "The subject statement shall be addressed to the Secretary, Election Commission of Pakistan, Constitution Avenue, G-5/2, and Islamabad and shall be delivered through an office-bearer of the party; duly authorized by the party head in terms of rule 156 of the Election Rules, 2017.—RT/Agency

## Aurangzeb Anticipates IMF Board Approval Of Staff-Level Agreement By Late August

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb has stated that discussions are ongoing with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) regarding the financing gap, and he expects the loan deal to be approved by late August. Talking to media on Tuesday night, before his departure for China, the top economic executive, however, assured that these discussions would not impact the approval of the staff-level agreement.

"The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) executive board was expected to approve the staff-level agreement by the end of August, following the summer break," the finance czar told media. This month, Pakistan and the IMF reached an agreement for the \$7 billion loan programme spanning 37 months. Tough measures such as raising taxes on agricultural incomes and lifting electricity prices have prompted concerns about poor and middle-class Pakistanis grappling with rising inflation and the prospect of higher taxes. He also in-



formed the news channel that he would be leaving tonight for the visit to China along with Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Awais Leghari. To a question, the minister said, on the top of the agenda for the trip were discussions on energy sector reforms and Panda bonds with Chinese officials in his visit to China, the finance minister may explore the possibility of rescheduling Chinese independent power producers' (IPPs) debt of \$15.4 billion by halving the tenure of the amount extended by five years, from 2036 to 2041. The News reported citing sources last week Aurangzeb said he would also thank his Chinese

counterpart of Beijing's unwavering support to Pakistan through various forums.

Noting that Pakistan was aiming to enter China's capital market, Aurangzeb said Beijing was as important to Islamabad as Washington. The former banker said that during his visit, he would update Chinese officials on changes to power distribution companies and their boards. "Stability is not achieved overnight and discussions are ongoing in all sectors," the finance minister said adding, "Negotiations have already begun with retailers and developers, and similar talks will be held with stakeholders in the agricultural sector"—RT/Agency