



Khloe Kardashian clarifies 'insult' by son Tatum for Kourtney Kardashian

# The REGIONAL TIMES Of Sindh

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Murad Orders Immediate Release Of Rs1bn For Needy Minority Families

**Heartland**  
PPP's Hina Shah Jilani launches tree plantation campaign in Khairpur



**Money**  
-Zafar Moti is Sad!  
PSE 100-index down by 927.67 points to close at 78,469.33



**NATIONAL**  
CM Maryam Demands Accurate Data For Effective Public Relief



**SPORTS**  
Shoab Malik lost 'interest' in playing for Pakistan



## May 9 Cases: LHC Renders Imran's Physical Remand Verdict 'Null And Void'

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday declared a verdict, allowing the physical remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan in May 9 cases, "null and void".

A two-member bench comprising Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh and Justice Anwar-ul-Haq Pannu reserved the verdict on the petitions challenging the former prime minister's physical remand.

The high court also declared the notification of the PTI founder's appearance via the video link null and void.

During the hearing today, Justice Saleem said that the suspect cannot be forced to undergo photogrammetry test.

Meanwhile, Pannu questioned the prosecutor when did he get the idea that we should move towards the modern devices now.

Prosecutor General Punjab Farhad Ali Shah told the court that the facility to conduct the photogrammetry test is inside the jail and it would be an injustice to not give prosecution a "full chance".

"At the end, the prosecution is blamed that it failed," Shah added.

The prosecutor told the court the investigation would be impossible without the recovery of mobile phone through which the tweets were posted and WhatsApp messages were sent. At this, the Justice Pannu asked how will the mobile be recovered when the suspect is in jail.



The PTI founder filed petitions against the anti-terrorism court's (ATC) verdict, saying that it did not assess the records properly when granting police Khan's physical remand. An ATC in Lahore last week had approved a 10-day physical remand of the PTI founder in 12 cases related to the May 9 riots. He was remanded in five cases of Sarwar Road police station, three cases of Gulberg police station and one case each of Race Course, Shadman, Mughalpora and Model Town police stations.—RT/Agency

## ECP Designates 39 MNAs As PTI Members In Compliance With SC Order

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday declared 39 lawmakers who contested the February 8 elections as independent candidates and later joined the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) — as members of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in line with the Supreme Court's July 12 verdict in reserved seats case.

The ECP uploaded the notification on its website to declare 39 NA lawmakers as the former ruling party's members who had shown their affiliation with the PTI in their nomination papers for the February 8 nationwide polls.

The decision was taken in a key session held under the chair of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja today in which they reached a conclusion to upload the notification of 39 lawmakers' affiliation with the Imran-founded party.

Asad Qaiser, Sher Afzal Khan, Latif Khan Khosa,



Zartar Gul, Shandana Gulzar Khan, Zain Hussain Qureshi, Malik Aamir Dogar, Ali Afzal Sahi, Ali Khan Jadoon, and others were among the notified PTI MNAs.

The PTI MNAs who have been notified by the ECP today were those who had shown their party affiliation with the Imran-founded party before the 2024 general elections.

Having been deprived of its election symbol, the PTI's candidates contested the February 8 elections as independents. However, these independents were directed by the party to join the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) to be eligible for the reserved seats.

After winning the most seats in the general polls earlier this year, PTI was denied reserved seats by the ECP while its decision was also upheld by the Peshawar High Court (PHC), citing the party's inability to submit list of candidates for reserved seats in the stipulated time.

The apex court had on July 12 ruled that PTI was and is a political party that won general seats in the national and provincial assemblies in the February 8 elections, thus, is entitled to reserved seats.

The SC full bench headed

by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, by a majority of 8, set aside the Peshawar High Court's judgment of March 25 and declared the ECP order of March 1 to be ultra vires the Constitution, without lawful authority and of no legal effect.

Following the SC directives, the electoral body held multiple sessions to deliberate on the verdict.

Regarding the independent candidates' issue, the ECP stated in a session last week that 39 candidates of the embattled party had shown their affiliation with the PTI in their nomination papers.

However, 41 candidates who had not declared independent candidates hadn't mentioned PTI in their nomination papers neither they disclosed their affiliation with the party nor submitted the ticket of any party, it added.

"Therefore, the ROs allowed them to contest the election as independents. Later, these MNAs voluntarily joined the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) within three days as required by law after winning the election," the statement read.

The party appealed the decision of the Election Commission and the PHC in the Supreme Court, but it was rejected.

It further added that the PTI was neither a petitioner in the case against the ECP in the apex court nor the PHC.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the ruling parties, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), have filed a review petition in the apex court against the reserved seats' verdict, which came as an unexpected legal victory for the main opposition party. This not only paved the way for the PTI's return to parliament, which was kicked out of the February 8 polls owing to the ECP's December 2023 ruling but has also increased the pressure on the coalition alliance by changing the composition of the National Assembly.—RT/Agency

## Pakistan Comments China For Facilitating Palestinian 'Declaration Of Unity'

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office on Thursday welcomed the 'Declaration of Unity' signed by Palestinian political factions in Beijing, recognising and commending China's role in facilitating meaningful negotiations.

"Unity among the Palestinian people is of paramount significance given the ongoing war crimes against the Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza, and the blatant disregard for international law by the Israeli occupation forces," Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch stated during her weekly press briefing.

She urged the international community to intervene immediately to halt the ongoing illegal and relentless aggression in Gaza. Baloch reiterated Pakistan's support for the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination, their right of return to Palestine, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

Addressing the periodic report of the Human Rights Committee in Geneva on India, FO spokesperson noted that important questions were raised regarding arrests under draconian laws like the Public Safety Act and Public Security Act, as well as the frequent suspension of mobile internet services in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir

(IIOJK). "This demonstrates continuing concerns of the international human rights machinery about the dismal human rights situation in IIOJK. We call on the international community to take note of these human rights abuses by India in IIOJK and to bring an end to the suppression of the Kashmiri people," she said, reiterating Pakistan's continued political, diplomatic, and moral support for the Kashmiri people. Baloch announced that Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi will lead the Pakistani delegation at the 31st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting in Laos on Saturday where he will participate in discussions on political and security issues, share Pakistan's perspective, and hold bilateral meetings with participating dignitaries. The spokesperson also briefed the media on the visit of the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, Rashid Meredov, that concluded on Thursday. He held extensive talks with President Asif Ali Zardari, PM Shehbaz, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar. He co-chaired the third round of the Pakistan-Turkmenistan Bilateral Political Consultations. The discussions focused on intensifying efforts in political, economic, and defense cooperation, fostering parliamentary, cultural, and educational exchanges, and strengthening collaboration in multilateral forums.

Baloch apprised the media of a two-day Regional Conference on Export Control Programme for Dual-Use Goods in Central Asia, hosted by Pakistan on July 24-25. The conference will be attended by senior officials and experts from various countries and international organizations to discuss national approaches to strategic trade controls and promote international cooperation in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1540. Regarding the attack on Pakistan's consulate in Frankfurt, Baloch said the matter had been taken up with the German government. On reports of the US Administration seeking a budget of \$101 million for Pakistan, she called it an internal debate of the US Congress, traditionally meant for civil society and strategic priority areas. She also noted Pakistan's response to a discussion at a "private event" in the Houses of Lords, emphasising that legislative bodies should promote positive dynamics in bilateral relations. The spokesperson also stated that Pakistan has already sent humanitarian aid to the people of Palestine and is working to send more in the coming days.—RT/Agency

## IMF Board Expected To Approve \$7 Billion Bailout For Pakistan next month



ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board likely to approve a \$7 billion bailout package for Pakistan in August, media reported citing sources.

According to sources, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board meeting is expected to take place in August.

Pakistan and the IMF had reached a staff-level agreement on July 12. The IMF Board is expected to give final approval to the agreement within 4-6 weeks.

Finance Ministry sources said that before the board meeting, Pakistan will ensure external financing. The current loan program does not include funding for climate change. However, funding for climate change and natural disaster risks is expected in November, sources said.

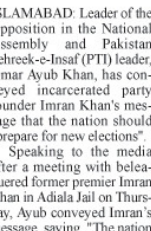
The IMF will consider Pakistan's proposed request for climate financing. After the first review meeting, there may be discussions on climate change programs.

Sources said that Pakistan will have to identify long-term priority projects related to climate change. The IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) program provides cheap and long-term financing.

To achieve this goal, Pakistan will have to work with other global institutions, sources from the Ministry of Finance said. Bangladesh has already received a \$1.5 billion IMF program for climate change.

It is pertinent to mention here that on July 13 Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund reached a three-year, \$7 billion aid package deal.—RT/Agency

## Imran Khan Wants Nation To Prepare For Elections, Says Omar Ayub



ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader, Omar Ayub Khan, has conveyed incarcerated party founder Imran Khan's message that the nation should "prepare for new elections".

Speaking to the media after a meeting with beleaguered former premier Imran Khan in Adiala Jail on Thursday, Ayub conveyed Imran's message, saying, "The nation should prepare for new elections because they will lead to the country's development."

He continued, "The current government has failed and has pushed the army against PTI and the public," noting that Imran urged the nation to be ready for elections.

Ayub, joined by leaders including Allama Raja Nasir Abbas and Sahibzada Hamid Raza Kazmi, described today's meeting with Imran as "positive".

He relayed Imran's message to army chief General Asim Munir, claiming that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the current government aim to create a rift between the Pakistan Army and PTI.

"90% of the public stands behind PTI," Ayub asserted. He also pointed out the alleged disappearance of footage from the May 9 protests at the Corps Commander's House and GHQ.

Ayub noted that footage from the March 14 raid at Zaman Park and the March 18 incident at the judicial complex is also missing, which he explained, has prompted Imran to seek legal action.

He stated that the Islamabad commissioner had cancelled PTI's rally permit, but PTI plans to hold another rally on August 5, led by Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

The general secretary of PTI said that during the meeting with the party supreme, PTI members proposed names for reserved seats to Imran, who suggested that women who stood firm during challenging times should be given these seats.

Kanwal Shauzab will finalise the details, he added.

Criticising the DG ISPR, Ayub stated that the press conference held by him highlighted the government's failure.

He also called for the Chief Election Commissioner and provincial commissioners to resign, accusing them of misinterpreting the apex court's decision.

At a hunger strike camp outside the Parliament House, Ayub emphasised that General Asim Munir should understand the government's attempt to pit the army against PTI and the people.—RT/Agency

## Sheikh Rashid Warns Political Landscape Of Country Is Heading Towards Destruction



RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League chairman and former federal minister Sheikh Rashid said on Thursday the political landscape of the country was moving towards destruction.

Speaking to media after appearing in court in a case, he voiced concern over the public crisis. He said inflated electricity bills and inflation had compelled the public to take to the street and the government was responsible for the hue and cry.

He also highlighted the political victimisation of the PTI, stating that it was denied electoral symbol. "Efforts are now being made to ban the PTI," he said.

All these injustices wouldn't affect the PTI but the government would ultimately pay the price, he added.

He lambasted the government, saying their acts would benefit PTI founder Imran Khan. He said politics was going towards destruction and things would be pretty clear by Aug 31.

He once again clarified that Lal Haveli was around three marlas and his personal property. He said he was being thrown away from his home and 19 houses had been built over there.—RT/Agency

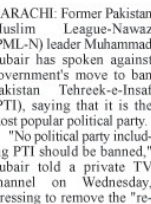
## Imran Seeks Court Intervention To Prevent Possible Custody Transfer To Military



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has filed a petition against his potential handover to military custody, arguing that detainees involved in the events of May 9 should remain under the jurisdiction of civilian courts, and sought an injunction to this effect.

The petition was submitted by Khan's lawyer, Uzair Karamat, to the Lahore High Court (LHC). The federal government and the Inspector Generals (IGs) of all four provinces have been made respondents in the case. Khan stated that a false narrative had been constructed, accusing him of inciting protests at the General Headquarters (GHQ).—RT/Agency

## Former Sindh Governor Mohammad Zubair Criticizes Government's Effort To Ban 'Popular' PTI



KARACHI: Former Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Muhammad Zubair has spoken against government's move to ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), saying that it is the most popular political party.

"No political party including PTI should be banned," Zubair told a private TV channel on Wednesday, stressing to remove the "restrictions" for the country's development as they had hindered progress.

His remarks came after Information Minister Attaullah Tarar doubled down on the government's decision to ban the PTI, saying the government had made up its mind to go ahead with its "principled" decision.

"[We] have consulted with the Pakistan Peoples Party with regards to the PTI ban and are currently in talks with the Mutahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan [...] the trash".

He claimed that the PML-N used the May 9 incident for political purposes.

PML-N leader Mian Javed Latif also said that no matter if a party has 70% support or 5%, it should not be banned. "If a political party was banned before then it was wrong," he stressed.

Latif said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz was wrongly arrested but the wrong cannot be corrected by justifying that.—RT/Agency

# THE HEARTLAND



HYDERABAD: Residents of Badin are holding a protest demonstration against the abduction of their community girl-RT

## Commissioner Muhammad Sajjad Haider chairs meeting of Divisional Enforcement Committee for Electricity Theft Prevention

By Farooq Junejo

SHAHEED BENAZIRABAD: A review meeting of the Divisional Enforcement Committee for Electricity Theft Prevention was held at the committee room of the Commissioner's Office, chaired by Commissioner of Shaheed Benazirabad Division, Syed Muhammad Sajjad Haider. During the meeting, Commissioner Haider emphasized the immediate registration of FIRs against individuals who have long been involved in electricity theft and those who have not paid their electricity bills for an extended period. He also instructed that the collection of electricity bills be expedited. Commissioner Haider directed the officers of HESCO (Hyderabad

Electric Supply Company) and SEPCO (Sukkur Electric Power Company) to register FIRs against all defaulters and those involved in electricity theft by this evening and submit a report to the Commissioner's Office. He also called for daily updates to the dashboard tracking these cases and requested details of the high-loss feeders. DIG Police Shaheed Benazirabad, Pervez Ahmed Chandio, addressed the meeting, stating that FIRs have been registered by the police following requests from HESCO and SEPCO to take action against those involved in electricity theft. He assured full cooperation from the police in this regard. SE HESCO, Farman Ali, informed the meeting that from June 1, 2024, to July 22, 2024, FIRs had been

registered against 42 individuals involved in electricity theft in the Shaheed Benazirabad Division, leading to the arrest of 18 individuals. FIRs against all other involved individuals are expected to be filed by this evening. He also mentioned that efforts to recover outstanding electricity bills are ongoing. The meeting was attended by HESCO's Chief Operating Officer, Zulfiqar Memon, Additional Commissioner Subhash Chander, Deputy Commissioner Sanghar Inramul Hassan Khawaja, Deputy Commissioner Naushahro Feroze Arsalan Saleem, Additional Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Nawab Sameer Laghari, DSP Police Abdul Hameed Jalbani and other committee members.

## Sindh Minister Shaheena Sher Ali visits Safe House Jamshoro

By Munawar Chandio

JAMSHORO: The Sindh Minister for Women's Development Department, Shaheena Sher Ali paid a visit to the Jamshoro Safe House on Thursday. She visited different sections at the Safe House and assured to ensure the provision of required facilities as soon as possible. She also expressed concern over the performance of the power companies including K-Electric, HESCO and others for carrying out process of prolonged outages in a daily basis. The Sindh Minister announced to set up women's police stations in Jamshoro district and make all out efforts for the development of Safe House Jamshoro.

## Tando Adam girl found in Mirpurkhas

By Younis Chandio

MIRPURKHAS: A 14-year-old girl named Shamina D/o Khanu Machhi, resident of Tando Adam has been found by the Mir-

purkhas Police while roaming in the city. The girl was shifted by Inspector Moomal Laghari to the police station under her custody and started searching for her family.

## MPK Mayor Abdul Rauf Ghouri visits UC Mir Sher Muhammad Talpur

By Younis Chandio

MIRPURKHAS: Mayor Mirpurkhas Abdul Rauf Ghouri paid a visit to the UC-6 Mir Sher Muhammad Talpur and listened to the problems of the local peo-

ple. He assured the people to resolve all their long-standing issues on a priority basis. On the occasion, former MNA Shamim Ara Panhwar and other elected representatives were also present.

## Man killed, six injured in Ghotki's Lund community clash



By Shad Mahar

GHOTKI: A clash erupted between two rival groups of Lund community over the matrimonial clash in village Soomar Mori. In the clash the people of both groups attacked each other with the sticks and axes which resulted in the death of two men and injuries to five others. The

deceased man was named Rajib Ali, while Manzoor, Raza Muhammad, Makhni, Hasina and others were amongst the injured. The dead body and injured were rushed to a local area hospital. The body of the deceased was handed over to his heirs, while no case of the incident was lodged till the filing of this news.

## DC Jamshoro Riaz Hussain Wassan orders to continue operations against power theft

By Shaikh Sindhi

KOTRI: Prime Minister of Pakistan's specific directives have led to a stringent crackdown on electricity theft in the district, according to Deputy Commissioner Jamshoro, Riaz Hussain Wassan. He made these comments while presiding over a meeting with police, HESCO, revenue officials, and other relevant officers at the Deputy Commissioner's office. The meeting was attended by SSP Jamshoro Muhammad Tariq Nawaz, XEN Mumtaz Memon, Assistant Commissioner Kotri Nadeem Qadir Kokar, Khaleel Baloch, DSP Headquarter, representatives of the Kotri

Trade and Industries (KATI), and other concerned parties. During the meeting, DC Jamshoro Riaz Hussain Wassan directed the representatives of the Kotri Trade and Industries to promptly settle any outstanding dues with HESCO. He emphasized that under the special instructions of the Prime Minister, the district administration, along with police and HESCO officials would conduct a rigorous campaign against electricity theft. DC Wassan also stated that effective measures would be taken to prevent electricity theft in industrial areas, and FIRs would be lodged against those involved, ensuring they are brought to justice.



LARKANA: Women residents of Pir Haji Mahmood Shah village are holding a protest demonstration at the Larkana Press Club against the killing of Shahid Mahmood Pirzado-RT

## PPP MPA Jameel Ahmed Soomro takes notice of prolonged power outages in Larkana

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's Political Secretary and MPA from Larkana, Jameel Ahmed Soomro, has taken notice of the power outages in Larkana city. He contacted the SEPCO Chief

and the Superintendent Engineer SEPCO Circle Larkana, urging them to provide immediate relief to Larkana's residents by reducing load shedding and ensuring a continuous power supply, especially in the intense heat. MPA Jameel Soomro also reached out to the Mayor of Larkana, instructing him to ensure the thorough cleaning of city drains due to the upcoming monsoon rains. He emphasized that, in case of power shortages, the generators at disposal stations should be operational to continue the drainage process and provide relief to the city's residents.

## SMBBMU & SRSO sign an MoU

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: The Vice Chancellor of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Medical University (SMBBMU) Larkana, Prof. Dr. Nusrat Shah, and the CEO of Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO), Muhammad Dittal Kalhoro, formally signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The ceremony, held in the witness of Asif Ali Khuhro, Chief Financial Officer, SRSO and Dr. Mir Hasan Khoso, Director ORIC & Research, SMBBMU Larkana, symbolizes a strategic alliance to foster a cooperative relationship between the two esteemed institutions. This MoU lays the foundation for joint research initiatives, including collaborative projects on rural development, women's empowerment, social entrepreneurship, and community health initiatives. Both SMBBMU and SRSO will prioritize research projects that address global challenges, foster innovation, and align with sus-



tainable development goals, thereby enhancing the impact and reach of their collaborative efforts. Dittal Kalhoro commended the Honorable Vice Chancellor for her remarkable achievements in rapidly transforming the university. During the signing ceremony, the Vice Chancellor expressed gratitude for SRSO's collaborative approach, underscoring the vital importance of such alliances in promoting regional growth. The CEO of SRSO, along with his team, engaged in discussions highlighting the crucial role that rural development plays in advancing the economic prosperity of the region. The discussions underscored the shared commitment of both institutions to leverage their collective expertise and resources for the betterment of rural communities. The event was graced by the presence of the Registrar, Dean of Dentistry, Dean Basic Medical Sciences, Principal Larkana Medical College Larkana, Director ORIC & Research and Principal BCON further reflecting the strong support and enthusiasm for this landmark collaboration.

## TCF, Human Rights Dept hold seminar on human rights abuses in Thar

By Ashraf Kunbar

MITHI: A seminar was organized at the Benazir Cultural Complex in Mithi by the Thar Citizens Forum, in collaboration with the Human Rights Department of Sindh, to discuss the economic and social violations of human rights in Thar. The seminar was attended by Secretary of Human Rights, Madam Tehseem Fatima, SSP Tharparkar Shabbir Sethar, Assistant Commissioner (Retired Captain) Farid Hameed, and various experts. At the seminar, Sindh University Professor Dr. Ameer Abro, Obhayo Junejo, Advocate Vasand Thari, Abdul Subhan Samejo, Ashok Suthar, Allah Rakha Khoso, Ashok Majrooh, Shankar Sotahar, Qurban Samejo, Imtiaz Noor Kumbhar, Ejaz Bajjeer, GM Sonaramani and others highlighted that Thar is a hub of human rights violations. They discussed issues such as the deprivation of basic rights related to water, environment, health, coal, china clay, granite, salt mines, livestock, and wildlife in

Thar. They also expressed concerns about the rising incidents of child malnutrition and suicides, considering these as violations of human rights. They mentioned that suicides are increasing daily, and innocent children are dying due to food shortages.

The local people are not given their due rights over Thar's resources, and they demanded prevention of these violations. During the seminar, Secretary of the Human Rights Department acknowledged awareness of the issues in Thar, including job allocations to outsiders by companies working in Thar, which neglects local people and constitutes a violation of human rights. She emphasized that the primary right to Thar's resources and assets belongs to the local people. She also highlighted the rising incidents of suicides and interest-related exploitation as significant issues, pledging that the Human Rights Department would work with Thar Citizens Forum to resolve these problems.

SSP Tharparkar Shabbir Ahmed Sethar, while addressing the seminar, stated that the increasing suicide cases are a major issue in Thar, now even involving children. He mentioned that the police are working to prevent such incidents and called for cooperation with the police from the Thar Citizens Forum to identify the causes of these suicides. He praised Thar as a peaceful district with peace-loving, educated, and hardworking people and acknowledged the role of the community in maintaining peace. Assistant Commissioner Mithi, Fareed Hameed, Deputy Commissioner Tharparkar Abdul Haleem Jagirani, stated that they closely monitor where human rights violations occur and will represent the people's issues to ensure they receive their rights.

The seminar was attended by hundreds of women, youth, and representatives from various walks of life, with District Education Officer Primary Tharparkar, Jan Muhammad Bajjeer, also addressing the gathering.



LARKANA: Residents of Alhanda Mirbahar village are holding a protest demonstration against the highhandedness of the Aqil Police Station-RT

## Norwegian Red Cross' Needs Assessment Unit distributes hygiene kits amongst Sehwan women

By Qaimuddin Memon

SEHWAN SHARIF: Representatives from the Norwegian Red Cross' Needs Assessment Unit in Oslo, led by Madam Henny Kristoffersen, visited the village of Bakhtiarpur in Union Council Arazi, Sehwan Tehsil, with the support of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS). During the visit, hygiene kits were distributed among 150 pregnant women benefiting from the Cash for Health program, to promote health care. Addressing the occasion, Dr. Ifikhar Aliyar, Country Manager of the Norwegian Red Cross, and Riaz Hussain Bhutto, Assistant Director of Coordination at the National Headquarters of the Pakistan Red Crescent Provincial Program Coordinator Norwegian Red Cross who are helping improve the health and well-being of deserving communities in Sehwan Tehsil through the Cash for Health project. Provincial Secretary Tayyaba Gul, and Dr. Raheela, EDO Jamshoro, were also present at the event.



LARKANA: Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Medical University (SMBBMU) Larkana Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nusrat Shah and Muhammad Dittal Kalhoro, CEO of the Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO) are witnessing the MoU signing ceremony between SMBBMU and the SRSO, at the VC's Secretariat-RT

# METRO KARACHI



**KARACHI:** The spiritual leader of the Sarwari Jamaat and former Sindh minister Makhdoom Jameel-uz-Zaman, Qazi Shahab, Muntaz Ali Shah condoled with former MNA and Chairman of the Ibrat Group Kazi Asad Abid, Khurram Abbasi, Dr. Moazzam Abbasi, and Kazi Mustafa Abbasi over the passing of Kazi Afzal Abid and Feroza Sattar Abbasi.—Photo by Saeed Lashari

## Three Killed In High Profile Karachi DHA Shootout



**KARACHI:** Following an exchange of fire between two groups in Karachi's Defence area, a total of two individuals lost their lives, media reported on Thursday.

DIG South Asad Raza confirmed that a total of two individuals have been dead while four others got injured after an exchange of fire between two groups in Karachi's Defence Nishat Commercial area.

Eyewitnesses to the incident reported that several people were injured during the violent altercation, while the vehicles belonging to both groups involved in the incident were also seen at the scene.

"The incident is currently under investigation," stated DIG South Asad Raza. Authorities are working to uncover the circumstances leading to the incident.—RT/Agency

# REGIONAL TIMES NATIONAL

## CM Maryam Demands Accurate Data For Effective Public Relief

**LAHORE:** Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has stressed the importance of accurate data for future planning and ensuring that relief reaches the public directly at their doorsteps.



In her address at the inaugural session of the Social Economic Registry, CM Maryam praised the efforts of Marryum Aurangzeb and the planning ministry. She reflected on her initial announcement of a relief package during Ramadan and noted challenges faced due to incomplete and outdated data.

"We encountered issues as the data we had was insufficient," CM Maryam said. "The addresses we had were often incomplete, with many phone numbers being obsolete or incorrect. With

Punjab's population of 130 million, it's unclear which figures align with the Social Economic Registry."

She also pointed out that updates were needed for the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) data, which was used for the Ramadan packages alongside

NADRA data. CM Maryam admitted that the government had made decisions based on incomplete information.

The Chief Minister acknowledged gaps in data regarding farmers with registered land for tax evasion, as well as information about the homeless, renters, and those with disabilities. To address these issues, she has opened helplines for project and scheme registrations and established over 5,000 registration centers with trained staff.

CM Maryam also highlighted efforts to introduce 4.5 million solar panels to assist those struggling with electricity bills, and reassured that data collection is ongoing to improve service delivery.—RT/Agency

## Murad Orders Immediate Release Of Rs1bn For Needy Minority Families

By Rahib Gaho

**KARACHI:** Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the Minorities Affairs Department to utilize Rs1 billion for financial assistance, medical treatment, scholarships, marriage assistance, and natural calamity relief for 10,000 needy minority families.



During a meeting at the CM House, attended by officials including Minorities Affairs MPA Mukesh Chawla and Special Assistants Lal Chand Ukrani and Rajveer Singh, Shah emphasized the mandate to safeguard and promote minority welfare.

Shah announced Rs366.463 million for installing CCTV cameras at 253 sensitive religious sites and urged quick implementation. He also mentioned the establishment of two girls' hostels at Swami Narayan Mandir with an allocation of Rs20 million, later increased to Rs60 million for completion.

Shah highlighted that 10,000 minority households, comprising Christians, Hindus, and others, are economically and socially segregated. He directed the department to expedite welfare programs and repair decaying religious buildings.

The Minorities Affairs Department's budget includes Rs580 million for repairs, Rs150 million for

financial assistance, Rs120 million for medical treatment, Rs50 million for scholarships, Rs50 million for marriage assistance, Rs20 million for natural calamity relief, and Rs30 million for Yatra. Financial aid ranges from Rs5,000 to Rs500,000 based on need.

Shah urged the department to accelerate ongoing projects, ensuring the release of additional funds upon completion.

## Taxes And Extra Charges In Domestic Power Bills Under Fire In SHC

**KARACHI:** A citizen has challenged the legal position of taxes and other charges in K-Electric's bills for domestic consumers in the Sindh High Court (SHC), media reported on Thursday.

The Federal Ministry of Water and Power, the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), and Karachi's sole power utility, K-Electric, have been named respondents in the case.

A resident of Karachi's Gulistan-e-Jauhar has submitted a petition in the high court. The court has served notice to the respondents and summoned their replies regarding the legality of the charges in domestic electricity bills.

It is noteworthy that another petition against the power company is also under hearing in the Sindh High Court. This petition, filed by Jamaat-e-Islami, addresses issues of load shedding and unannounced power outages during the heatwave in Karachi. The court has summoned arguments from lawyers based on the company's reply in the next hearing and has adjourned the case until August 15.

The petitioner has pleaded with the court to direct K-Electric to ensure an uninterrupted power supply, especially during heatwave conditions.—RT/Agency

## Ports & Shipping Stakeholders Rally Behind New Regulatory Authority

**KARACHI:** Ports and shipping sector stakeholders have unanimously supported the establishment of an autonomous Logistics Service Providers Regulatory Authority (LSPRA). This body will handle legal frameworks, issue guidelines, set charges, and oversee all activities within the sector.



During a meeting led by Chairman Karachi Port Trust (KPT) Syed Syedain Raza Zaidi at the KPT Head Office, it was agreed to revisit the LSPRA Bill, pending since 2013, and make necessary amendments before forwarding it to the government for approval.

Ifthikhar Sheikh noted concerns about inconsistent and high LCL charges by Off-dock Terminals and urged Chairman KPT to address this issue. He praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, and Chairman KPT for their efforts to enhance port and shipping sector performance.

The meeting, attended by President KCCI Ifthikhar Ahmed Sheikh, Chairman Customs & Valuation Subcommittee Sheikh Waqas Anjum, and representatives from shipping companies, agents, and freight forwarders, highlighted the need for a regulatory body to control unjust shipping charges and align port operations with international standards.

Sheikh also mentioned the new Saturday operational hours for shipping companies, made possible by its eventual approval with the Prime Minister's support.—RT

## Sindh Govt Boosting Agro-Economy With Climate-Resilient Crops, Industry, And Tourism: Murad



**KARACHI:** Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah advised the 31 probationers of the 7th Civil Service Training Program (CSTP) to be honest, dedicated, and hardworking in solving public problems during their careers. The probationers, of Grade BS-17, have completed pre-service training at the Training, Management & Research wing (TMR) and met with the CM at the CM House. The delegation was led by Secretary TMR Saeed Awan, with attendees including PSCM Agha Wasif and DG TMR Issa Memon.

Shah encouraged the officers to build an impressive career through service, honesty, and dedication. "Your career should be full of public service and earn you public prayers," he emphasized.

In response to their questions, the CM discussed how climate change has influenced planning and development. He highlighted the introduction of climate-resilient development and policies, including a massive stormwater drain system to combat urban flooding and the restoration of old waterways into the LBOD system.

Shah mentioned ongoing efforts to improve the agro-economy by introducing climate-resilient crops, developing tourism through public-private partnerships, and promoting the industrial sector.—RT

## Police Arrest Beachgoers Violating Section 144 At Karachi Beaches

**KARACHI:** Karachi police have arrested several citizens found violating Section 144 by bathing at the beaches, media reported on Thursday.

Despite the implementation of Section 144 at Karachi beaches, citizens have been repeatedly found breaking the law. In response, the police have arrested a total of 15 individuals and filed relevant cases against them.

"15 people were charged for bathing at Sunehra Beach and Paradise Point," confirmed the Commissioner of Karachi.

Deputy Commissioner Keamari reported these incidents to the Commissioner, emphasizing that the ban was imposed to safeguard the lives of citizens. The Commissioner noted that the administration has implemented stringent measures to enforce the violation of Section 144, aimed at preventing beachgoers from putting themselves at risk.—RT/Agency

## NBP Pledges To Expand Youth Loan Programs In Meeting With Governor Kundi



**KARACHI:** Mr. Rehmat Ali Hasni, President and Divisional Head of Government & Specialized Agencies, focused on NBP's role in economic development and customer service enhancement.

Governor Kundi praised NBP as a key national institution and highlighted the importance of supporting aspiring entrepreneurs and improving services for vulnerable groups.—RT

# SOUTHERN PUNJAB

## In-Charge Federal Ombudsman's Regional Secretariat Syed Shahid Hussain Jilani visits Passport Office in TTS

By Abid Mehmood Ch

**TOBA TEK SINGH:** Syed Shahid Hussain Jilani, Advisor In-Charge of the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat for the Faisalabad Region, visited the Passport Office in Toba Tek Singh on the directive of Federal Ombudsman Aijaz Ahmad Qureshi. The visit aimed to evaluate the efficiency and timeliness of passport issuance services.

He also engaged with citizens present at the office to address any issues they faced and to gauge the conduct of the passport office staff.

Assistant Director Shaikh Idrees informed Jilani that approximately 200 citizens visit the passport office daily, with their applications processed promptly. Idrees highlighted that he arrives before official hours and remains at the office until 4 PM, ensuring that the office is accessible for the citizens of Toba Tek Singh district for any passport-related concerns.

Jilani inspected the records room and assessed the workflow across various departments of the office.

Following the visit, Jilani commended Assistant Director Idrees for the efficient operation of the passport office despite resource limitations. He acknowledged the effective handling of public issues and the eradication of tout mafias at the office. Jilani noted that concerns about staff shortages and equipment needs raised by Idrees would be communicated to higher authorities. Overall, Jilani expressed satisfaction with the facilities and services provided at the passport office.

## Toba Tek Singh man killed under mysterious circumstances

By Abdi Mehmood Ch

**TOBA TEK SINGH:** Ahmed Raza, a 25-year-old resident of Muhalla Muhammad Pura, Street Number 3, was found dead under mysterious circumstances after being shot.

The City Police and Rescue 1122 responded to the scene. The rescue team confirmed Raza's death and transported his body to DHQ Hospital.

A forensic team from Faisalabad joined the City Police in gathering evidence from the site. The investigation is ongoing, with authorities exploring various possibilities, including murder or suicide.

## Illegal fishing continues unabated at Bahawalpur's Head Panjnad

By M Siddique

**BAHAWALPUR:** Illegal fishing at Head Panjnad has surged despite government restrictions, reportedly due to collusion with local authorities. Makhdoomza Syed Zain Haider Bukhari, along with Syed Ghulam Mustafa and Malik Siddique Ahmed, revealed these concerns to journalists, accusing local fishermen of exploiting extortion practices to deplete fish stocks in the area.

However, the financial allure appears to have compromised the enforcement of these restrictions. Bukhari warned that if this illegal activity is not addressed promptly, it could result in significant government revenue losses and threaten the extinction of local fish species. He called on the Chief Minister of Punjab and the Secretary of the Fisheries Department to urgently address the issue.

Sources indicate that this period is crucial for fish spawning and egg-laying, which is why a fishing ban is in place to protect natural balance.

## DHO Dr. Zeeshan Rauf reviews health facilities in Bahawalpur

By M Siddique

**BAHAWALPUR:** Dr. Zeeshan Rauf, District Health Officer of Bahawalpur, conducted an unannounced inspection of several health facilities, including the Rural Health Center Chini Goth, Ahmad Naich Health Center, and Tahir Wali Health Center, to evaluate the quality of healthcare services.



During his visit to the Rural Health Center Chini Goth, Dr. Rauf examined the newly constructed outdoor block, reviewed staff attendance, and assessed the medicine store and emergency department. He instructed that all available medications should be provided to patients.

Dr. Rauf continued his inspection at Ahmad Naich and Tahir Wali Health Centers, where he stressed the importance of maintaining high standards of cleanliness and hygiene. He warned that any lapses in delivering free medical services to the public should be reviewed daily by the center's in-charges.

Dr. Rauf emphasized alignment with the Chief Minister of Punjab and the Secretary of Health Punjab's directives. Dr. Rauf advised that materials used for constructing public washrooms at health centers should be reviewed daily by the center's in-charges. He also highlighted the importance of completing construction projects within the specified timeframe.



**KARACHI:** A delegation from Premier Crete Team visited ABAD House. Photo taken on the occasion shows Director Syed Turab Shahid, CEO Major (R) Fazal Abbas, Director Syed Ahsan Ali, Mehmoed Ahmed Khan, Suleman Saleem, Chairman ABAD Asif Sumsum, and Vice Chairman Mustafa Sheikhan.—RT



## Draconian measures from our colonial past like Section 144 have no place in a modern day democracy

The recent imposition of Section 144 in Islamabad and Punjab ahead of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) protests is a stark reminder of the draconian measures inherited from our colonial past. The British colonial administration employed such measures to suppress dissent and stifle the voices of those who yearned for freedom. Today, in an era where democracy should flourish and the will of the people should be paramount, the reimposition of these antiquated laws is profoundly troubling.

Section 144, which bans gatherings of five or more people, has been enforced to maintain law and order and to prevent potential terrorist threats, as stated by the Punjab Home Department. While the intent to safeguard public safety is understandable,

the method chosen is deeply flawed. Restricting the right to assemble and protest, especially in a demo-

cratic society, is counterproductive and undermines the very principles upon which our nation was founded.

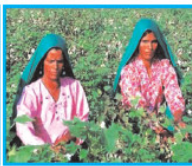
The PTI, leading a peaceful protest for the release of their incarcerated members and addressing issues such as inflation and peace, is exercising a fundamental democratic right. The imposition of Section 144 not only curtails this right but also sets a dangerous precedent. It suggests that the government is more inclined to silence dissent than engage in

meaningful dialogue with its citizens.

In the modern era, where the genuine will of the people should reign supreme, resorting to colonial-era tactics is unacceptable. Democracy thrives on the free exchange of ideas and the ability of people to voice their concerns without fear of retribution. It is imperative that the government reconsiders such measures and seeks to engage with its citizens constructively.

The imposition of Section 144 in Islamabad and Punjab must be condemned. It is an obsolete relic of our unceremonious colonial past, and it has no place in a contemporary democratic society. The government must prioritize the democratic rights of its citizens and ensure that the will of the people is respected and upheld.

## THE HEARTLAND



LARKANA: Members and leaders of the Sindh Mallah Forum are holding a protest demonstration for the acceptance of their demands, at Jinnah Bagh Chowk in Larkana.-RT

### Khairpur man demands justice



By Naeem Shaikh

KHAIRPUR: In the village of Wada Samang, Qari Muhammad Ramzan Rind, the Imam of Jamia Masjid Noor Mustafa and teacher at Madrasa Ghousia Qadria, protested, stating that the troublemaker responsible, Muzaffar alias Athar son of Taj Muhammad Abro, attempted to file a false case against me, Naeem Samang, and Muhammad Haroon by shooting himself in the leg

last night. Qari Muhammad Ramadan Rind explained that he was staying at the Gambat Police Station's mosque last night due to the religious trip, where the officials are witnesses. He said that some time ago, the adversaries of the opposition forcefully attacked the madrasa late at night, harassed him with weapons, and pressured him to leave the mosque and madrasa. When he refused, they threatened to send him to jail

### PPP's Hina Shah Jilani launches tree plantation campaign in Khairpur



By Naz Solangi

KUMB: PPP leader Hina Shah Jilani, has stated that radiation levels are increasing globally and the coming year will be particularly dangerous. She urged the people of Khairpur to plant as many trees as possible to reduce pollution and decrease radiation levels. Trees are our friends; they not only provide oxygen but also purify the air we breathe. She mentioned that her team has planted 14 saplings in Khair-

pur and expressed hope that the area will become greener and more vibrant in the future. Hina Shah Jilani emphasized that every individual in Khairpur should plant at least one sapling at their home to enhance the beauty of their surroundings and provide oxygen to the general public.

District Health Officer Dr. Zeshan Rauf conducted an unexpected visit to the Rural Health Center Chini Goth and several other health centers.

### Tando Allahyar newlyweds demand protection

TANDO ALLAHYAR: A Kashmiri woman from Muzaffarabad, Ms. Misbah Rajput, traveled to Tando Allahyar out of love and reached the Tando Allahyar Press Club along with her partner, Mehtab Lanjwani, to protest for protection. During the protest, Ms. Misbah expressed her concerns, saying that they have entered into a

By Afaque Khanzada

love marriage and wish to live their lives together. However, she is facing threats from her family and requests protection and justice. Mehtab Lanjwani stated that they married of their own free will in a court. Although he is originally from Shahdadpur, he has been residing here with Misbah since their marriage. He appealed to higher authorities for protection and justice.

### Khairpur's Phulpoto community demands justice for their killed youth

KHAIRPUR: The residents of the village of Danwro near Khairpur, including Muhammad Yousif alias Babu Phulpoto, Faiz, Muhammad Phulpoto, Abdul Wahid Phulpoto, Seral, and the innocent children of the deceased, continued their protest on the second day. They said that a week ago, their young relative Liaquat Phulpoto was brutally murdered by the influential landlord Iqbal Phulpoto, along with his two sons Abdul Rab Phulpoto, Shah Muhammad Phulpoto and an unidentified accomplice. Despite the murder case being registered at the B-Section police station, the police have so far failed

By Naeem Shaikh

to arrest the culprits. The protesters stated that the victim, Liaquat Phulpoto was working as a security guard at Sardar Tahir Imtiaz Phulpoto's bungalow when he was murdered. They mentioned that they had separate meetings with SSP Khairpur Zubair Nazir Shaikh and SHO B-Section Sikandar Panhwar to arrest the culprits. The protesters warned the IG Sindh, DIG Sukkur, and SSP Khairpur that if the culprits are not arrested within two days, they will stage a rally from UC Shah Bhungo to the SSP office in Khairpur, holding a sit-in protest. The protesters stated that the Khairpur police would be held responsible for any further inaction.



BADIN: Tariq Aziz Channa who is the owner of MBC & Sons Builders and Developers is briefing about the new LBOD system which will help revive old waterways.-RT

### Leading exporter Advocate Mian Abdul Haq Jatoi demands halting operations of blood sucking IPPs

By Javed Laghari

DADU: Advocate Mian Abdul Haq Jatoi, a leader of the Chamber of Commerce and Rice Exporters Association of Dadu, said that IPPs (Independent Power Producers) are playing a functional role in the destruction of the national economy. He urged the government to purchase electricity from IPPs at the rates of government power plants is not stopped, the country could face bank-

rupty. He said that buying expensive electricity brings no benefit to the government and instead harms both the country and its people. He questioned under which law such high prices per unit of electricity are being paid and described it as profiteering rather than business, leading to the plundering of the country. He urged the government to abandon the policy of expensive electricity to avoid damaging the public and businesses.

### Growers protest against water shortage in Lundki Minor Canal

By Aijaz Johkio

DAULATPUR: Growers from numerous villages, including those along the Lundki Minor Canal, have voiced their concerns about the lack of water supply to their agricultural lands. Speaking to the media, Hafiz Raza Muhammad Rahu, Ali Nawaz Unar, Faiz Muhammad Hothipoto, and others stated that the farmers relying on the Lundki Minor Canal are not receiving irrigation water, leading to the drying up of their crops and

resulting in financial losses amounting to millions of rupees. They further alleged that some farmers at the beginning of the Lundki Minor Canal are colluding with officials from the Irrigation Department. These officials, in exchange for bribes amounting to millions of rupees, are selling the water meant for the farmers to the public, causing the watercourses to dry up. Consequently, some farmers have resorted to breaking watercourses and stealing water using pipes and tractors, with

the alleged cooperation of irrigation department officers. The affected farmers are demanding legal action against the corrupt officers and farmers involved in this water theft, including engineers and other staff. They are calling on the Sindh Government to remove these corrupt officials from the irrigation department and provide water to the farmers to prevent further economic devastation. The farmers have warned that if their demands are not met, they will escalate their protests.

### Hingorja shopkeeper Javed Bhutto's family protests for arrest of his killers

By Sajjad Chang

HINGORJA: In Hingorja, family members of Javed Bhutto, a shopkeeper who was killed by armed robbers during a robbery two and a half months ago, have expressed their frustration over the police's failure to arrest the culprits. The family members, led by Manzoor Hussain Bhutto, Pervaiz Bhutto, Ayaz Bhutto and Wazir Bhutto, held a protest at Hingorja Stop and staged a sit-in, chanting slogans against the police. The protesters stated that the young shopkeeper, Javed Bhutto, was brutally assaulted by armed men at



his shop before being shot and killed. Despite the passage of two and a half months, the police have not made any progress in apprehending the culprits. They expressed their frustration at repeatedly visiting the offices of SSP Khairpur and DIG Sukkur without receiving any substantive response, only empty promises. The family, describing themselves as poor and helpless, said that no one is willing to help them. The protesters have appealed to the Inspector General of Sindh to take notice of the situation and ensure justice is served.

### Police constable killed in Maqsoodo Rind hit and run

By Sajjan Jani

SHAHADADPUR: A speeding car hit a police constable after he cautioned to stop it near Maqsoodo Rind police picket and as a result he sustained critical injuries. After the incident the car driver managed to flee from the scene. The injured police constable was rushed to a local area hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. The body of the deceased was laid to rest after performing his funeral prayers in village Nabi Bux Rind. The police officials have announced to ensure the arrest of the accused car driver very soon.

# SPORTS



## Hasan Ali reacts to Hafeez's claims regarding players sleeping in dressing room



LAHORE: Pakistan's right-arm pacer Hasan Ali responded to Mohammad Hafeez's claims regarding the national players sleeping in the dressing room during the away Test series against Australia.

Hafeez, who served as Pakistan men's cricket team Director from November 2023 to February 2024 and also as the interim head coach, lambasted the national players after Pakistan's group-stage exit from the T20 World Cup 2024 and highlighted that they lack discipline.

In a conversation with renowned cricketing figures, England's Michael Vaughan and Australia's Adam Gilchrist, Hafeez claimed that the players used to sleep in the dressing room during Test matches.

"You tell me, Gilly [Gilchrist] if a player is sleeping in the dressing room while we're playing Test cricket 4-5 players are sleeping in the dressing room. Should I allow that as a team director?" Hafeez questioned.

Vaughan wittily asked, "Are they tired?" to which

Hafeez continued with a serious tone, "I really don't know. I went into the dressing room and found 4-5 players sleeping while playing Test cricket. I was like, 'How come you guys can do that? If you do something like this, you cannot be a part of this team.'"

Meanwhile, Hasan Ali, in an interview denied Mohammad Hafeez's claims before going on to share that the previous management had allowed players, especially fast bowlers, to take naps if needed to recover.

"I don't know, actually, but it should be the way Hafeez said. I don't think anyone slept in the dressing room after that. When Hafeez said that I was not part of the first game, all the players who were not part of the playing XI were sitting in the dugout watching the game. Even the management was sitting there. But I would say especially for the fast bowlers, when you bowl for one and a half days you need to recover, and you could take a 20-30 minute nap, but for those who feel like they need it," Hasan said.—Agency

## Lionel Messi reacts to Olympic Games opening fixture chaos



Along with the entire Argentine nation, its football legend Lionel Messi was also left stunned after a bizarre series of events denied the country's national Under-23 team a last-minute equaliser in their opening fixture against Morocco at the Olympic Games.

A section of the considerable Moroccan contingent in Saint-Etienne stormed onto the field in protest, forcing both sets of players back to the locker rooms.

The game was put on hold amid chaos while the VAR decided whether to award Medina's goal. After a lengthy check, Medina was adjudged to have been in an offside position and the goal was ruled out. Incredibly, 92 minutes after the players retreated to their locker rooms, the game was restarted in front of empty stands.

A further three minutes was played without major incident before the referee finally ended this marathon match.—Agency

and they looked to have clinched a draw later on. Match officials signalled that there would be 15 minutes of stoppage time at the end of the second half.

Deep into stoppage time Cristian Medina headed home to level for Argentina.

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## Hijab-wearing French sprinter faces exclusion from Olympics opening ceremony

PARIS: French government and Olympics officials are seeking a solution to allow Muslim French sprinter Sounkamba Sylla to wear her hijab at the opening ceremony while still complying with the country's secularism laws, they said on Wednesday.

This effort comes after the 26-year-old member of France's 400-metre relay team recently took to her Instagram to reveal that her hijab - a head covering worn by many Muslim women - would prevent her from appearing in Friday's blockbuster opening ceremony.

She wrote: "You are selected for the Olympic Games, organised in your country, but you can't take part in the opening ceremony because you wear a scarf on your head."

Thousands of athletes, including some who wear a hijab, are placing an international spotlight on tensions in France over national identity and perceived discrimination against Muslims, Reuters reported.

France, home to Europe's largest Muslim minority, enforces laws to protect the principle of secularism under which state employees and school pupils are banned from wearing religious symbols and clothing in public institutions.

Rights groups say these rules effectively discriminate against Muslims.

French government and Olympics officials said they were willing to find a solution for Sylla, although it remains unclear what that could be.



"Our citizens expect us to follow these principles of secularism, but we also need to be inventive about solutions to make everyone feel good," Amelia Oudea-Castera, minister for sport and the Olympic and Paralympic Games, said on Wednesday, adding that Sylla "understands our principles, our rules."

Foreign athletes are not affected by the secularism rules.

David Lappartient, president of the French Olympic Committee, said the French Olympic team was "taking part in a public service mission and in this respect it is obliged to observe secularism."—Agency

## Shoab Malik lost 'interest' in playing for Pakistan



LAHORE: Veteran all-rounder Shoab Malik on Thursday shared that he has lost interest in playing international cricket for Pakistan again.

Malik, who is already retired from two formats, during an interview with a local sports outlet, hinted that his days in international cricket are over.

"No, I am happy and satisfied after playing for so many years. I have no interest in playing for Pakistan again," Malik stated.

"I have already announced retirement from two formats. I have been playing league cricket, and enjoying my time, wherever I get an opportunity to play, I try to avail it."

Upon being asked about his retirement from T20 international cricket, the former

captain stated that he would hang his boots from all forms of cricket altogether.

"I have no interest but as I said in my previous interviews I will announce my retirement from all forms of cricket once and for all," he said.

He also suggested that Pakistan's white-ball captain, Babar Azam, should step down from captaincy and focus solely on his batting. Shoab Malik believes that the star batter can perform better without the burden of captaincy on his shoulders.

"As for my captaincy, my firm stance is that he [Babar Azam] should play only as a player. That's my opinion. When he plays as a player, he can do wonders for the team. He should stay away from leadership," he added.—Agency

## Major Australia players likely to skip Pakistan T20Is to prepare for India Tests

LAHORE: Key Australia players may likely miss the three-match T20I series against Pakistan, scheduled later this year, in a bid to prepare for the five-match Test series against India, ESPN Cricinfo reported Thursday.

Cricketer Australia (CA) on Thursday, announced the schedule of domestic summer including the Sheffield Shield, scheduled to commence on October 8.

Consequently, Australia's all-format players will have an ample opportunity to prepare for the Test series against India but their availability in the tournament will be mostly affected by the white-ball series against Pakistan.



Pakistan's white-ball Adelaide and Perth, respectively. Pakistan and Australia will then engage in a three-match T20I series, scheduled to commence on November 14.

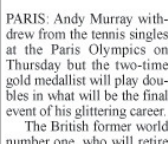
The T20I series will conclude on November 18, just three days prior to Australia's first Test of the five-match series against India.

As a result, only those Australia players, who will not participate in the Test series against India, will feature in the T20I series against Pakistan.

"Availability of multi-format players for the Shield will likely be impacted by the limited-overs visit of Pakistan with the ODI series starting on November 4," the report read.

"The proximity of the T20Is (November 14-18) to the start of the India series means only players not featuring in the Test will likely be selected," it added.—Agency

## Andy Murray withdraws from Paris Olympics singles



PARIS: Andy Murray withdrew from the tennis singles at the Paris Olympics on Thursday but the two-time gold medalist will double in what will be the final event of his glittering career.

The British former world number one, who will retire at the end of his fifth Games, has still not fully recovered from back surgery last month.

He believes the men's doubles, where he is playing with Dan Evans, offers his best chance of another medal.

"I've taken the decision to withdraw from the singles to concentrate on the doubles with Dan," said the 37-year-old.

"Our practice has been great and we're playing well together. Really looking forward to getting started and representing GB one more time."

Murray won gold in singles at the London Olympics in 2012 and in Rio four years later, as well as silver in mixed doubles with Laura Robson in 2012.

His withdrawal means his final singles match was his brief second-round appearance at Queen's Club against Jordan Thompson last month before he was forced to pull out because of a spinal cyst.

For the unversed, Andy Murray confirmed on Tuesday that he would retire after the Paris Olympics.

"Competing for Great Britain has been by far the most memorable weeks of my career and I'm extremely proud to get to do it one final time," the three-time Grand Slam champion posted on social media.

Murray has been ravaged by injuries in recent years, slumping to 121st in the world. He has played with a



metal hip since 2019 and suffered ankle damage earlier this year.

Murray was not fit enough to play singles at Wimbledon this month due to his back surgery but played doubles with his brother Jamie and was defeated in the first round before an emotional tribute arranged by tournament chiefs.

"It's hard because I would love to keep playing, but I can't," admitted Murray at the All England Club.

"Physically it is too tough now, all of the injuries, they have added up and they haven't been insignificant."

Murray ended Britain's 77-year wait for a men's champion at Wimbledon when he triumphed in 2013, defeating rival Novak Djokovic in the final.—Agency

weightlifter Nooh Dastgir But But lamented the lack of support from the sports institutions of the country for his absence from the Paris Olympics, scheduled to run from July 26 to August 11.

Butt appeared at private tv and expressed his disappointment over not being able to represent Pakistan in the biggest sporting event.

"The athlete from New Zealand, whom I beat in the Commonwealth Games, is participating in the Olympics but I am not. All because of the [authorities], neither I participated in any qualifying event nor was sent for international training," said Butt.

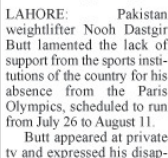
"They should have sent me for international training right after the Commonwealth Games and also for qualifying events so that I would participate in the Olympics and win a medal for Pakistan," he added.

When probed about the difficulties in his professional career, Butt termed the sports institutions as the biggest hurdle before going on to appeal to the government for an ample platform.

"The biggest difficulty for me currently is the sports institutions of Pakistan, who did not send me for Olympics qualifiers. But now, all I can do is appeal to the government to provide me an international platform so that I can prepare for upcoming events like Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and Olympics," Butt said.

In May this year, weightlifter Nooh Dastgir But But shared that he has been sidelined from this year's Asian Games and Paris Olympics 2024 for allegedly being part of a parallel weightlifting interim committee.—Agency

## Weightlifter Nooh Dastgir But But blames authorities over Paris Olympics absence



LAHORE: Pakistan weightlifter Nooh Dastgir But But lamented the lack of support from the sports institutions of the country for his absence from the Paris Olympics, scheduled to run from July 26 to August 11.

Butt appeared at private tv and expressed his disappointment over not being able to represent Pakistan in the biggest sporting event.

"The athlete from New Zealand, whom I beat in the Commonwealth Games, is participating in the Olympics but I am not. All because of the [authorities], neither I participated in any qualifying event nor was sent for international training," said Butt.

"They should have sent me for international training right after the Commonwealth Games and also for qualifying events so that I would participate in the Olympics and win a medal for Pakistan," he added.

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# REGIONAL TIMES ENTERTAINMENT

## Khloe Kardashian clarifies 'insult' by son Tatum for Kourtney Kardashian



Kourtney Kardashian Barker just revealed a nickname that she doesn't like.

In the latest episode of The Kardashians, the 45-year-old reality TV star expressed how she disliked being called "lovey" after a conversation she had with her sister, Khloé Kardashian, via FaceTime.

As the Lemme co-founder tours Australia with her husband, Travis Barker, Khloé's child, Tatum, talked to his aunt, moving his face closer to the screen as his mom tried to get her 23-month-old to say hello.

Using the nickname, he calls her grandmother, Kris

## Kim Kardashian shares reasons for dropping mystery guy after Pete Davidson



Kim Kardashian allows some rare insight into her love life and revealed why she ended up with her ex-boyfriend, whose name has not yet been disclosed.

During the end of season 5 of The Kardashians, Kim Kardashian was sharing how her recent therapy session made her realise how her fight or flight response is also impacting her love life.

Kim also talked about her past relationship that was negatively impacted by her trauma, and said, "When

someone tells me not to do something that I planned on, I physically get, like, 'You're getting in my way, and I will bulldoze whatever is in my way because you're not going to tell me to change my schedule!'"

She also continued to add, "I feel like that's how I would get in relationships," and that's where the end of the relationship started.

When asked about her ex she reacted instead of responding to the question

and further said, "Like when [redacted] would tell me, 'You work so much, why don't you just take a week off?' I'm like, 'Get out of here!'"

It is pertinent to mention that this stems from the time a group of masked men robbed Kim at gunpoint and stole millions worth of jewellery from her Paris hotel room in 2016.

On the July 8, episode The Kardashians, Kim who shared her therapist's ad-

vice with Khloé and stated, "You think calm is your superpower. I think you are so desensitized to trauma that you are literally frozen in fight-or-flight." She concluded the finale episode's conversation with insight into her regrets and said, "I think the one thing that just got me was just like, 'You can have better relationships with your kids and your future partner if you figure your s\*\*\* out, so that's why I'm doing it.'"

## Face of the Day



Name: Qudous Khan  
Location: Karachi  
About me: I love taking selfies!  
Please email us your photo for our Model Watch and Kids' Corner section at regionaltimes10@gmail.com

# NATIONAL

# THE HEARTLAND



## Barrister Saif Blasts Federal Agencies Over Bannu Propaganda Against K-P And Military

PESHAWAR: Barrister Saif, Information Advisor for Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P), has accused federal agencies of engaging in propaganda against the provincial government and the military concerning the Bannu incident, criticizing Atta Tarar's involvement as "ridiculous."

Addressing the media after an apex committee meeting chaired by K-P Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur on Thursday, Saif revealed that the meeting included military officials and members of the Bannu Jirga. The discussion centered on the province's law and order situation.

Saif highlighted the tragic loss of eight military personnel and two civilians in the Bannu cantonment attack. Additionally, a protest on July 19 resulted in the death of one person due to gunfire.

He noted that the previous apex committee meeting had reached significant decisions, which the government acted upon by engaging with the peace committee and presenting their demands to the Chief Minister. Saif emphasized that 16 points were discussed, including the Azm-



Istahkam operation, which proceeds a defined procedure to proceed.

Addressing concerns about confusion surrounding the operation, Saif clarified that it is not a new military operation and that existing actions will continue. He asserted that the police and the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) will lead all anti-terrorism operations. The K-P advisor announced an allocation of 3.3 billion rupees to bolster resources for the police and CTD, including increasing security personnel and recruiting 500 additional personnel for Kulachi. Additional recruits will be sourced from relevant districts for the CTD.

Saif assured that military

leadership would fully support maintaining law and order, and that the apex committee's mandate would extend to divisional and district levels. He promised complete enforcement against terrorist blockades and checkpoints, with increased resources allocated to southern districts. Additionally, Saif stated that the police and CTD would conduct operations and that a judicial commission would be established to investigate the Bannu incident. He explained that an administrative report is being compiled, and once the chief justice nominates a member for the judicial commission, the administrative inquiry will fall under its jurisdiction.—RT/Agency

## 10-year-old Thul clash victim succumbs to his injuries

By Khair Muhammad Golo

THUL: A 10-year-old boy named Asadullah S/o Sanaullah Burro, who had been injured in a clash between two groups of Banglani and Burro communities one month ago, succumbed to his injuries. The body of the deceased was handed over to his heirs after completing necessary medico legal formalities

from a local area hospital. It is worth mentioning that a large number of Burro community people recorded a protest demonstration after the death of a boy. The protesters demanded of the higher authorities to take notice of the matter and ensure arrest of the accused men, who have killed their boy, otherwise they have announced to widen their protest.

## Haji Ali Hassan Zardari expresses grief over Ghulam Qadir Malkani's passing

By Khuda Bux Brohi



THATTA: Sindh's Minister for Jails, Works and Services, and noted philanthropist, Haji Ali Hassan Zardari, has expressed profound sorrow over the demise of Ghulam Qadir Malkani. Malkani was a veteran political figure and esteemed member of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), who was known for his extensive contributions to his community and province. Ghulam Qadir Malkani, who began his political career in 1985, served in various significant roles, including Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA), Advisor to

the Chief Minister of Sindh and Provincial Minister. The passing of such a distinguished leader marks a significant moment of reflection for the people of Sindh, who will remember Ghulam Qadir Malkani not only for his political acumen but also for his unwavering commitment to the betterment of society.

## Tando Allahyar man axed to death

By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: In Tando Allahyar, a shocking murder occurred in the Nagina Colony area, where a young man was reportedly killed. The incident took place within the jurisdiction of the B-Section Police Station. Unknown assailants attacked the victim, who was sleeping, with axes, resulting in his death. The victim has been identified as 35-year-old Qasim Mayo. Upon receiving the information, the

police took the body into custody and transferred it to the Civil Hospital. The police have initiated an investigation into the incident from various angles. The victim's relatives expressed their frustration, stating that the Tando Allahyar police have completely failed to provide security to the citizens of the area. They demanded justice, calling for the arrest and punishment of the culprits. They also urged the SSP Tando Allahyar and DIG Hyderabad to take notice of the incident.

## JSM demands justice for Sikandar Mallah

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: A protest demonstration was recorded by the Jeay Sindh Mahaz against the arrest of Sikandar Mallah, open sale of drugs and deteriorating law and order situation on Thursday. While talking to the media, the protest lead-

ers, who included District President Ayoub Korjo, Abdul Khaliq Khaskheli, Sikandar Phalkor, Sahil Sindh and others said that the worker of a nationalist party Sikandar Mallah was killed by the armed men after which his wife also committed suicide. The concerned authorities have still not provided justice to the bereaved family. They also expressed concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in the province of Sindh and demanded protection for the people.—RT

## KP Apex Committee: No New Operations, Focus On Terrorism Crackdown

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Apex Committee has clarified that no new operation will be launched in the province following recent demands for the Bannu Aman Jirga for measures against terrorism and improved peacekeeping. The clarification followed a meeting chaired by KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, attended by senior civil, police, and military officials. The meeting addressed the ongoing concerns about terrorism and the Bannu incident, which resulted in the deaths of at least four people and injuries to several others during a protest against worsening law and order.

Representatives of the Bannu Aman Jirga had previously called for the dismantling of armed groups, enhanced police powers, and the right for the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) to

conduct search operations. They also demanded that missing persons be presented in court.

The apex committee's communiqué emphasized that terrorism in any form is unacceptable and that a crackdown will be initiated based on directives from the Chief Minister. Police have been instructed to arrest armed individuals not affiliated with the government and to take necessary actions against them.

Addressing concerns about the Operation Azm-e-Istahkam, the committee clarified that it is not a new military operation but rather a comprehensive counter-terrorism campaign. This clarification was supported by DG ISPR Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, who stated that the campaign is integrated and multifaceted.

The communiqué outlined that law-enforcement

agencies, including the police and CTD, will handle operations against militant offices without discrimination. A judicial inquiry into the Bannu incident will be pursued, with the Pakistan Army providing assistance in areas inaccessible to police.

The statement also called for continuous police patrolling and action against suspected seminars and areas as per the jirga's demands. It urged residents to avoid illegal activities and violent protests, reminding them of the sacrifices made by the armed forces, police, and citizens in the fight against terrorism. The statement condemned recent unjustified criticisms targeting state institutions and emphasized adherence to the law and respect for the sacrifices of martyrs' families.—RT/Agency

## SPSF's Dr. Mir Abdul Razaq Turab injured in Jamshoro road mishap

By Shaikh Sindhi

KOTRI: In a road accident on Jamshoro Road, former provincial spokesperson of the Pakistan People's Party and former Sindh President of the SPSF, Dr. Mir Abdul Razaq Turab, was injured when his car collided with a truck while traveling to Karachi. He was taken to the Liaquat University Med-

ical College (LUMHS) Hospital for treatment. Additionally, Syed Tabrez Shah, a former Union Council Chairman of Sindh University and a social leader, was also injured in a separate incident. His car was hit by a tractor while traveling from Kotri to Jamshoro, and he was also transported to the LUMHS Hospital for medical care.

## Diarrhea outbreak plays havoc in Thatta district

By Khuda Bux Brohi

THATTA: Over 800 patients are suffering from diarrhea due to extreme heat and substandard water usage have been admitted to eight hospitals in the district. Reports indicate that cases of diarrhea have simultaneously appeared in Civil Hospital Thatta, Gharo, Sakro, Baghan, Var, Jang Shahi, and Keeti Bandar hospitals. The administration has largely failed to address the situation effectively. Citizens and civil society have expressed their concerns over the adminis-

tration's inability to properly treat patients and ensure the availability of medicines and hospital facilities. There has also been a call for deploying teams of health workers to create awareness and provide mobile medical facilities in areas heavily affected by heat stroke and the use of substandard water and advise society to take precautionary measures and are urged to higher authorities to abide local health administration to ensure special care for those hospitalized so they can recover quickly and return home.

## Excessive load shedding irks people of Phulji Station

By Abdullah Shahani



PHULJI STATION: In Phulji, SEPCO staff has shut down transformers, leaving more than half of the city's transformers out of service in the extreme heat. They have justified the 18 to 20 hours of power outages by claiming it is necessary. This has led to widespread protests by the residents, who are demanding the restoration of electricity. The artificial power outages in Phulji have created a severe hardship for the citizens. They organized a rally from Fazil Rahu Chowk to the Press Club, where they demonstrated against SEPCO. During the protest, leaders including Lala Zabeer Soomro, Nazir Ahmed Chandio, Sikandar Ali Panhwar, Syed Zahid Shah, Mazhar Ali Jhatal, Halal Yasin Arain, M Umar Solangi and Sher Khan Mangi criticized the situation. They stated that the ar-

tificial power outages of 18 to 20 hours are making life extremely difficult. Despite the long power outages, households are still receiving heavy electricity bills amounting to thousands of rupees. They accused LS Ashraf Mallah of corruption, claiming that he is using illegal connections and pocketing millions of rupees monthly to cover up his corruption, additional units are being added to their electricity bills. They also reported that LS Mallah has shut down transformers in areas including Shafanabad, Ghafar Mohalla, Kalhoro, Arain Mohalla, and Mahmoodabad, leading to widespread outages. They demanded the concerned authorities to address the issues of excessive billing and artificial load shedding. They warned that if their demands are not met, they will escalate their protests.

## PTI's 'Neeli Pari' Arrested For Attacking PML-N's Tahir Anjum

LAHORE: Lahore Police have arrested Aneela Jutt, known as 'Neeli Pari', a worker of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), for allegedly assaulting Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Cultural Wing President Tahir Anjum.



Deputy Inspector General Operations Faisal Kamran reported that police apprehended Jutt after a raid on a residence in the Lohani area.

The incident occurred on Wednesday when Anjum, a stage actor, was attacked by Jutt while passing by a PTI hunger strike camp outside the Punjab Assembly. The camp was organized by PTI supporters in solidarity with their leaders.

Jutt reportedly attempted to drag Anjum out of his vehicle, tearing his shirt and physically assaulting him. According to Jutt, Anjum had been posting derogatory videos aimed at maligning

PTI founder Imran Khan, whom she labeled a "terrorist."

Videos of the confrontation, which circulated on social media, show Jutt hurling abuse at Anjum as he struggled to stay in his car, with his shirt sleeve torn. Despite interventions from police and bystanders, Jutt continued her assault and resisted security personnel, only ceasing when Anjum managed to escape the scene.

In a statement to journalists, Anjum expressed his

outrage over the attack, condemning the PTI workers for their aggressive behavior and disregard for the presence of his children in the car. He denied making any videos against PTI's founder or engaging in any actions that would provoke such a violent response.

The altercation took place outside the Punjab Assembly, where PTI is holding a hunger strike protest demanding the release of arrested party leaders.—RT/Agency

## Man Caught In Scam Marriage To Steal Wealth



LAHORE: A man has been arrested in Lahore for allegedly marrying a woman under false pretenses to steal her wealth.

According to police, the case was brought to light by a British citizen who accused her husband of deceitfully marrying her to gain access to her assets. The woman, who had come to Pakistan in 2023 due to her mother's health issues, reported that the suspect married her under false pretenses. After returning to the UK, she discovered that her husband had taken her jewelry, property, and other valuables while refusing to join her in the

UK. The complainant also learned that she was the suspect's fifth wife, with previous marriages purportedly undertaken with similar deceptive intentions. She has alleged that the investigating officer handling her case is biased and has requested intervention from the Punjab Inspector General to address the issue. In a related and alarming incident earlier this year, a French national of Pakistani origin was arrested in Mirpur City, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), for trafficking local girls abroad under the guise of marriage.—RT/Agency

## Prominent religious leader Allama Maulana Ali Haider Bhutto passes away

By Irfan Ali Khushk

hospital in Sakrand, where doctors transferred him to the cardiac ward. Unfortunately, the doctors confirmed his passing. Upon hearing the news of Allama Bhutto's sudden demise, a large number of his students and admirers gathered in his village. His funeral prayer was led by a religious scholar and he was laid to rest with tearful eyes in the village cemetery. A condolence meeting was also held in his village, Budho Chidhar.

## Prize distribution ceremony held at Shaheen Computer Center Pithoro

By M Ismail Khilji



PITHORO: A brief ceremony was held at Shaheen Computer Center Pithoro to announce the results of the annual test taken by the students. The event was attended by Muhammad Ashraf Kollachi, Principal of Modern Public School Pithoro, Ejaz Ahmed Arisar, Headmaster of Government Primary School Pithoro, Ameer Hassan Arisar, President of Pithoro Press Club, Ghulam Mustafa Arisar, Qamaruddin Arisar, Najmuddin Abro, Nawaz Mir Arisar, teacher Mohan Lal and Principal of Shaheen Computer Center Pithoro, Ghulam Qadir Arisar, along with a large number of students, their parents, social leaders, and journalists. At the event, shields and medals were awarded to the top-per-

forming students, and certificates were given to those who completed their courses. The attendees expressed their appreciation for the Shaheen Computer Center, which has been providing excellent computer education in the backward area of Pithoro for the past five years.

## Section 144 Slams Punjab And Islamabad To Quell PTI Protests

ISLAMABAD: The Punjab Home Department has enforced Section 144 across Punjab and in Islamabad, prohibiting public gatherings and rallies for three days, according to media reports on Thursday. The notification, effective from Friday, July 26 to Sunday, July 28, aims to maintain law and order and mitigate potential security threats. The administration will oversee the strict implementation of this order

throughout the province and the capital. Section 144 restricts gatherings of five or more people, and violations of this order may result in legal action. This decision comes ahead of a nationwide protest organized by the opposition alliance led by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) scheduled for Friday. The protests are calling for the release of "innocent" prisoners, including PTI chairman Imran Khan. Asad

Qaiser, former Speaker of the National Assembly and a member of the Tehreek-e-Tahaffuz-e-Ay-e-en (TTAP) - an opposition alliance led by PTI - announced that the protests will be "peaceful" and will address three main demands: ending soaring inflation, establishing peace, and releasing PTI founder Imran Khan and other political prisoners held in what they claim are "fabricated" cases.—RT/Agency

# METRO KARACHI



## Murad Demands Fast-Tracking Red Line Project, Utility Shifts, And Improved Traffic Management

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, presiding over a meeting to review the progress of the BRT Red Line project, directed utility agencies to relocate their installations within a month to expedite the project. He also emphasized the need for proper traffic management to reduce public inconvenience.



The meeting at CM House included Senior Minister Sharjeel Memon, PSCM Agha Wasif, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, MD SSWMB Imtiaz Shah, Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, DIG Traffic, MC KMC Afzal Zaidi, KE representatives, and the BRT Red Line Project director.

Shah emphasized the importance of coordination among utility agencies and directed KMC to work with the Transport Department on developing the existing Nulrah Crossing along the BRT Red Line. He instructed SSWMB to ensure regular cleaning and waste removal along the corridor. The CM directed K-Electric to expedite their procurement process and shift utilities promptly, as 80% of the payment for this has already been made. KE representatives cited a lack of right of way for shifting cables, to which Shah directed Commissioner Karachi to resolve the issue.

Completion is expected by March 2026 for Lot 1 and June 2026 for Lot 2. The CM urged speeding up the project to alleviate traffic issues in the Red Line Corridor. Memon highlighted ongoing work on mixed traffic lanes.

Shah also instructed the water board to coordinate with the transport department on the BRT Red Line and K-IV Augmentation works. A temporary traffic management plan, including the construction of walkways and the development of mixed traffic carriageways, was discussed. Shah directed DIG Traffic to deploy more officers at traffic diversions.

The chief minister scheduled another meeting for next week to review progress, emphasizing the need to complete the BRT Red Line project ahead of the targeted date.—RT



KARACHI: Office bearers of the Pakistan Tanners Association are presenting a shield to Sindh Minister for Industries and Commerce Jam Ikramullah Dharejo at his office.—RT

## Sindh To Roll Out 200,000 Solar Panels In August: Nasir Shah

KARACHI: The Sindh government will distribute 200,000 solar panels in August in collaboration with the World Bank, media reported on Thursday.



"We are trying to introduce policies for cheaper electricity supply in Sindh," said Provincial Energy Minister Nasir Shah.

"We are also considering providing 300 units of free electricity, which requires cooperation from the federal government," he added.

He stated that the province has allocated funds in its budget for 500,000 solar panels. "A solar panel can supply energy to a fan and three bulbs," he noted.

The provincial minister mentioned that the government has also discussed with

banks the provision of more solar panels. "The Sindh government will pay the interest on bank loans for solar panels," he said.

He emphasized that it is the vision of the People's Party to provide cheaper electricity to the people. "We will also launch programs for solar parks and e-

bikes." "What is the benefit of solar energy if taxes are imposed on it?" he questioned. Nasir Shah said that the Sindh government is working on projects for inexpensive energy. "People are shifting to solar after the increase in the price of grid electricity," he added.—RT

## Diya Academy Kicks Off Malaysia Tour For Football And Futsal Showdowns



KARACHI: Diya Academy has embarked on a tour of Malaysia to participate in several high-profile football and futsal tournaments. The 36-member squad, including both girls and boys, will compete in the U-15 Girls, U-15 Boys, and U-13 Boys categories.

The delegation features officials such as Founder and President Sadia Sheikh, Vice President Dr. Fizza, Naila Sheikh, and Manager Sheikh Ali. The tournaments are scheduled to run until July 30.

Sadia Sheikh expressed confidence in the team's preparation, stating, "Our players have trained rigorously for this tournament. We believe they will succeed with Allah's grace. Competing internationally allows our players to learn new techniques and improve their skills."

She also highlighted the academy's commitment, noting, "Diya Academy's players approach both domestic and international tournaments with determination and a winning spirit."

The academy's participation aims to showcase their talent and enhance players' skills by exposing them to diverse playing styles and techniques.—RT

## Chairman Saddar Town Mansoor Ahmed Shaikh commits to serving the masses

By Asif Qureshi

KARACHI: Mansoor Ahmed Shaikh, Chairman of Saddar Town, reaffirmed the town administration's dedication to public welfare and employee benefits at a recent ceremony. The event, held to distribute appointment letters to the families of deceased employees, showcased the administration's ongoing efforts in ensuring comprehensive support for its staff.

Shah also instructed the water board to coordinate with the transport department on the BRT Red Line and K-IV Augmentation works. A temporary traffic management plan, including the construction of walkways and the development of mixed traffic carriageways, was discussed. Shah directed DIG Traffic to deploy more officers at traffic diversions.

Shah also instructed the water board to coordinate with the transport department on the BRT Red Line and K-IV Augmentation works. A temporary traffic management plan, including the construction of walkways and the development of mixed traffic carriageways, was discussed. Shah directed DIG Traffic to deploy more officers at traffic diversions.

Shaikh highlighted the administration's focus not only on public welfare projects but also on providing essential benefits such as medical coverage, leave encashment, financial aid, and group insurance for its employees. He, along with Municipal Commissioner Noor Hassan Jokhio and Chief Account Officer Naeem Yousafi, praised the employees' vital role in the organization, describing them as its backbone.

In tribute to the deceased employees, including Muhammad Amin Khan, Muhammad Ammar, Muhammad Usama Siddiqui, and Jashunat Kumar, Shaikh commended their dedicated service to municipal affairs. He assured that their contributions were highly valued and that their legacy of service would continue to inspire.

Addressing the new appointees, Shaikh urged them to carry out their duties with integrity and dedication, maintaining the tradition of fair and equitable public service. He concluded the ceremony by presenting appointment letters to the families of the deceased employees.

Addressing the new appointees, Shaikh urged them to carry out their duties with integrity and dedication, maintaining the tradition of fair and equitable public service. He concluded the ceremony by presenting appointment letters to the families of the deceased employees.

## Prominent Businessman Zulfiqar Ahmed Goes Missing In Karachi

KARACHI: Prominent businessman Zulfiqar Ahmed has been reported missing in Karachi, according to media reports on Thursday.

Family sources state that Zulfiqar Ahmed, owner of Paracha Textiles, Meezan Oil, and Cola Next, was last seen being forcibly abducted by masked armed men. The incident took place on Maulipur Road in Keamari, where he was reportedly coerced into a double-cab vehicle at a point.

The businessman's family has faced difficulties in filing a First Information Report (FIR) with the police. Although they attempted to report the incident at the local police station the day following the abduction, the FIR has yet to be registered.—RT/Agency

## Karachi's Baloch Colony Flyover Reopens After Dramatic 14-Hour Shutdown From Overturned Oil Tanker

KARACHI: Police on Thursday finally reopened the Baloch Colony Flyover for traffic, 14 hours after a tanker carrying highly flammable jet fuel overturned on the busy thoroughfare.



At least one person was killed when the oil tanker overturned on a car in the early hours of Thursday. The car driver, identified as Asad, died on the spot. His vehicle was removed by a crane after three hours.

Since the truck was carrying jet fuel, it could not be removed without first emptying its contents, causing hours-long traffic disruptions on multiple roads, including Korangi Road, Sharea Faisal, and Shaheed-e-Millat.

Rescue officials reported that the tanker overturned due to overloading and detachment of its engine. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Traffic Karachi Ahmed Nawaz Cheema said the tanker, carrying 60,000 liters of jet fuel, was en route

to the airport area. All four compartments were full, and 600 liters of oil had spilled on the road. Cheema advised citizens to stay away from the tanker due to the high flammability of jet fuel. Additional security personnel were deployed to keep people away, as many had started collecting the spilled fuel. The tanker could not be moved until it was emptied to prevent the risk of fire. The company responsible for the tanker was contacted to bring suction pumps to drain the fuel.

The Baloch Colony Flyover was closed, and traffic was diverted to alternate routes. Vehicles traveling from Shaheed-e-Millat Road were diverted from Bohri Cut towards Sharea Faisal, traffic from Korangi via Jam Sadiq Bridge was redirected towards Akhtar Colony from a U-turn, and vehicles heading towards Korangi from the Baloch Colony bridge were sent towards FT Chowrangi.—RT/Agency

## SSGC Takes Down 1,182 Illegal Gas Connections In Sindh And Balochistan



KARACHI: Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) has intensified its efforts to combat gas theft. Over the past week, the Customer Relations Department (CRD), in conjunction with the Security Services and Counter Gas Theft Operations Department (CGTO), conducted raids across Sindh and Balochistan.

In Karachi, the highest number of disconnections was recorded, with 511 illegal connections removed. Major cases of theft were discovered in Nazimabad, F.B. Area, near the Water and Sewerage Board, Malir, and the Garden area. In Balochistan, a total of 638 illegal connections were disconnected, with 497 in Quetta and the remainder across various parts of upper and lower Balochistan. In Larkana and Nawabshah, 26 and 17 illegal connections were removed, respectively.

The teams have removed all clamps and rubber pipes used for illegal gas extraction and are pursuing legal action against those involved. SSGC will continue to monitor and address areas with rising incidences of gas theft.—RT

## Karachi Markets To Shut Down In Massive Protest Against Skyrocketing Electricity Bills

KARACHI: The traders and business community of Karachi have announced the closure of markets to protest against inflated electricity bills, media reported on Thursday.

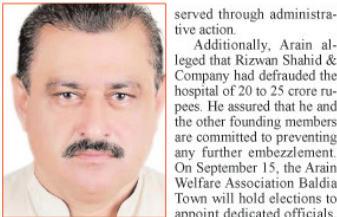
Faheem Noori of the All Sadr Alliance of Market and Mall Association stated that the markets will be closed from 12 PM to 3 PM as a form of protest. If the situation does not improve, they plan to escalate their protests to include demonstrations outside the markets after a week.

The decision follows an earlier announcement by the All Sadr Alliance of Market and Mall Association to close Sadr markets in response to soaring electricity and capacity charges.

The traders are set to hold an emergency meeting on Friday to discuss further actions regarding the high electricity tariffs. Noori emphasized that the current electricity rates make it impossible to run a business. He urged the government to reduce the electricity tariff, as the traders are under significant financial pressure.—RT/Agency

## Chaudhry Muhammad Akram Arain condemns embezzlement of Arain Welfare Hospital's funds

By Asif Qureshi




KARACHI: Chaudhry Muhammad Akram Arain, a founding member and prominent figure of Arain Welfare Hospital in Baldia, has accused certain individuals of embezzling millions from the hospital's funds. Arain alleged that these individuals solicited donations from the community under false pretenses, claiming the funds were needed to cover losses, even though the hospital is financially stable.

Arain revealed that the hospital's bank account, which originally held 6.5 million rupees, was subjected to fraudulent withdrawals. He claimed that 1 million rupees were withdrawn and misrepresented as expenses, with no actual expenditure occurring. The remaining 5.5 million rupees were preserved through administrative action.



KARACHI: Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan is presenting a simplified translation of the Holy Quran to S.M. Tanveer, Patron-in-Chief of UBG and former caretaker Punjab Minister.—RT



### MALIR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MDA/MPD/DEH-158/2007/212

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF REVISED & PROPOSED LAYOUT PLAN IN RESPECT OF LAND MEASURING 58-19 AC-GH OUT OF 98-24 AC-GH OF SURVEY NOS. 153, 154, 155, 156 AND 157 IN DEH ALLAH PHIAHI, GADAP TOWN, KARACHI.**

It is hereby informed to the General Public that the Deputy Commissioner, District Malir, Karachi has confirmed and forwarded the ownership title of approval of proposed revised layout plan on land measuring 58-19 Ac-Gh out of 98-24 Ac-Gh of Survey Nos. 153, 154, 155, 156 and 157, in Deh Allah Phiahi, Gadap Town, Karachi for its approval from planning point of view only, which was already approved layout plan vide letter No. MDA/MPD/Deh-158/2007/570, Dated: 04-09-2007, according to KBTPR-2002 (Amended up to date) and MDA/PRT-2015 to the Director General, MDA in favour of 1) Mr. Adnan S/o Abdul Razaq holding CNIC No. 42101-1391295-5 R/o. House No. R-643, Sector 11, North Karachi, & 2) Mr. Muhammad Arif S/o Muhammad Usman holding CNIC No. 42101-5769389-9 R/o. House No. D-10, Block 9 Gulshan-e-Iqbal Karachi vide his Letter No. DC/Malir/K/Rev.Br/310/2023 Dated 24-02-2023 along with the Mukhtiar, Shah Mureed, District Malir, Karachi letter No. MUKH/S/M/Malir/K/137/2023 dated: 06-04-2023 duly endorsed by the Assistant Commissioner, Shah Mureed, District Malir Karachi, Letter No. AC/S/M/Malir/K/306/2023, dated: 06-04-2023 for approval of layout plan from planning point of view for Residential Purpose.

In this regard, This Public Notice is Published in the light of Malir Development Authority (MDA) Act 1993-94 & (Revival & Amending) Act-2013 & KBTPR-2002 (Amended up to date) & Malir Development Authority Town Planning Regulations-2015 of Clause No. 2-130 and 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.

Upon expiry of 07 working days, no objection will be received / entertained.

**LOCATION PLAN:**



Town Planning Department

### MALIR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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

SAV NO TO DRUGS

"I am the wisest man alive, for I know one thing, and that is that I know nothing."

—Plato

Uniting People Every Day

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

FRIDAY JULY 26 2024

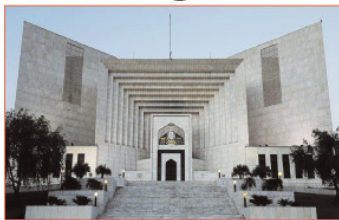
## ECP Seeks SC Guidance Over Challenges In Implementing Reserved Seats Verdict

ISLAMABAD: After notifying 39 out of 80 Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf members, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday approached the Supreme Court seeking legal and constitutional guidance on the matter of the remaining PTI lawmakers in the national and provincial assemblies.

The electoral body submitted a plea to the top court's registrar via its secretary Omar Hamid Khan to seek an elaborated version of its July 12 order regarding the PTI-backed independent candidates in which the SC declared the former ruling party eligible for reserved seats.

Following the apex court's ruling, PTI lawmakers in the national and provincial assemblies had submitted their affidavits of allegiance to the Imran-founded party to the ECP.

However, the ECP raised some queries before the top court despite receiving the relevant party association particulars from the PTI-



backed independent legislators.

In its civil miscellaneous application related to the SC order, the electoral body stated that the PTI lacked an organisational structure as per the ECP's record, which "is statutory obligation of every enlisted political party to conduct intra-party elections in terms of Section 208 of the Election Act 2017".

It further read that the SC order directed the PTI to confirm the statements of the MNAs and Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs).

However, the ECP was facing difficulty in implementing the order as the "PTI

at the moment has no organisational structure for confirmation of the statements of MNAs and MPAs, purportedly belong to PTI", it added.

Pointing towards ECP's records which did not authorise Barrister Gohar Ali Khan as the party chairman, the ECP also questioned the legal status of the PTI's confirmations of statements regarding the lawmakers in the assemblies by an "unauthorised person" on behalf of the party in absence of the "validly elected organisational bodies".

The poll organising body solicited the SC's guidance on the legal points to implement the top court's order in its true spirit.

In a relevant development today, the poll organising body notified 39 out of 80 MNAs on general seats as PTI members who had shown their party affiliation with the Imran-founded party before the 2024 general elections.

party's inability to submit list of candidates for reserved seats in the stipulated time.

The SC full bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, by a majority of 8, set aside the Peshawar High Court's judgment of March 25 and declared the ECP order of March 1 to be ultra vires the Constitution, without lawful authority and of no legal effect.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the ruling parties, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), filed a review petition in the apex court against the reserved seats verdict, which came as an unexpected legal victory for the main opposition party.

This not only paved the way for the PTI's return to parliament, which was kicked out of the February 8 polls owing to the ECP's December 2023 ruling but has also increased the pressure on the coalition alliance by changing the composition of the National Assembly.—RT/Agency

## FO: No Trade-Offs On Relations With China And The US

ISLAMABAD: In a policy statement, the Foreign Office on Thursday made it clear that Pakistan would continue to forge closer ties with China days after a senior Biden administration official told the US Congress that Washington wanted to prevent Islamabad's "further overreliance" on Beijing.

"Pakistan has said on several occasions that it does not believe in zero-sum relationships. For us, relations with the United States and relations with China are both important," Muztam Zahra Baloch told reporters in Islamabad.

"We do not believe in situations where relationship with one country can be sacrificed on the altar of relations with another. China is an all-weather strategic cooperative partner of Pakistan, and Pakistan will continue to strengthen this relationship going forward," she explained when asked to comment on the recent statement made by US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Donald Lu.

Lu sought \$101 million in assistance on behalf of the Biden administration to support democracy, human rights and Pakistan's efforts to stabilise the economy.

Commenting on Pakistan's economic relations



with China, Lu said the US was seeking to prevent Islamabad's "further overreliance" on Beijing.

He said Washington's "strong and growing influence" in Pakistan, adding that the US would supersede Chinese investments. "China is the past in terms of investment, we are the future," he claimed.

The spokesperson said Pakistan took note of the congressional briefing but added that it was an internal debate between the US Congress and the administration. Pakistan values its close relationship with the United States and believes in constructive engagement. We would like to develop this relationship on the basis of sovereignty equality, mutual respect, and non-interference in each other's domestic af-

airs," she said. "We believe that deliberations of legislative bodies should contribute to promoting positive dynamics in bilateral ties and should be based on mutual respect and understanding," she added.

"We do not comment on the State Department's budgetary requests. Traditionally, such allocations are made for support to civil society in areas of strategic priorities of the United States government," she further said.

"Regarding the discussions or negotiations that took place between individuals who were doing a sit-in in Chaman and our authorities, we would advise you to contact the relevant authorities, including the government of Balochistan, for any details of the understandings reached between the protesters and the authorities," she said.—RT/Agency

## Arshad Sharif Killing: Scotland Yard Drops Investigation Into Nawaz And Maryam

LONDON: Scotland Yard has decided not to investigate former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, his daughter Maryam Nawaz Sharif and their colleagues after allegations were made against them linking them to the killing of journalist Arshad Sharif in Kenya and a gun attack on PTI founder Imran Khan in Wazirabad around two years ago.

Scotland Yard has told media that it's Counter Terrorism Command Unit has decided not to commence an investigation after establishing that there are no grounds to begin a formal investigation as the complainant Sayed Tasnim Haider didn't produce evidence to back up his claims against the Sharifs and their colleagues Mian Saleem Raza, Nasir Mahmood, Zubair Gull and Rashid Nasrullah. In November 2022, PML-N senior UK activist Haider made headlines when he claimed he had evidence that Sharif, Mahmood, Raza, Gull and Nasrullah were involved in hatching a murder plot against Arshad in London— that year on Eid day, July 8, 2022. Responding to Haider's allegations, the Metropolitan Police started what it called a "scoping exercise" to assess the allegations and examine the evidence. Haider had made the allegations at a press conference in London with his solicitor Mahtab Anwar Aziz and both had attended the police station and media talks to stress there is enough evidence for the case



linking the Sharifs and their colleagues. The police took the allegations so seriously that Scotland Yard's Central West Command Unit passed the matter to its Counter Terrorism Command Unit— SO15. After an assessment lasting nearly 18 months, the police have told Geo News they "will not be commencing an investigation here in the UK" due to lack of evidence. A Metropolitan Police spokesperson told media: "In November 2022, the Met Police received reports from a complainant, which related to allegations of conspiracy to commit murder in Pakistan, and in Kenya." The information was initially reviewed by officers from the Central West Command Unit, but due to the nature of the allegations, including the international aspect of them, the matter was passed to the Met's Counter Terrorism Command. Specialist detectives carried out a full and thorough review of the allegations and information provided in order to determine whether an investigation should be launched. "The police confirmed that the "scop-

## Court Grants Three-Day Extension For Raof Hasan's Physical Remand



ISLAMABAD: A court in the federal capital approved an extension to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) spokesperson Raof Hasan's physical remand, handing him over to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for three more days.

The FIA has booked the PTI information secretary and several other PTI media cell members for heading a digital media cell and its alleged involvement in running anti-Pakistan propaganda.

The police had said that the "PTI digital media centre had become a centre of inter-caste disinformation, from where anti-Pakistan propaganda is run throughout the world".

Hasan and others who were arrested were produced before the court today after the completion of their two-day physical remand.

During the hearing, the petitions of two arrested female members of the PTI Secretariat seeking bail were

## Imran To Campaign For Oxford University Chancellor From Adiala Jail

LONDON: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supreme Imran Khan will apply for the position of chancellor at Oxford University despite being incarcerated in corruption and other cases relating to incitement of violence during May 9 protests last year.

Sayed Zulfi Bukhari, Imran's adviser on international affairs, told media that the seat at Oxford University has become vacant following the resignation of 80-year-old Lord Patten, who served in the role, and Imran will be running for the post. Former prime ministers Sir Tony Blair and Boris Johnson are also among the candidates to become the university's chancellor.

Khan studied Economics and Politics at Keble College, Oxford in 1972, and also captained the university's cricket team. He debuted for Pakistan's Test cricket team in 1971 and served as the chancellor of Bradford University from 2005 to 2014.

Bukhari cited public demand for Imran's participation. "We will announce it publicly once we get a go-ahead from Khan and start the signature campaign for it. He's the most suited person right now for this post and we hope he will win the con-



test," Bukhari said.

Oxford University describes the chancellor's role as a ceremonial head, typically an eminent public figure elected for life, presiding over all major ceremonies. The election process for the new chancellor will be conducted online for the first time, allowing the university's 350,000-strong convocation to participate. The PTI founder is currently imprisoned on charges of inciting protests and violence against the military in May of the previous year, allegations which he denies. In a recent interview from jail, he stated, "I am confined in a 7ft by 8ft death cell, typically reserved for terrorists. People voted for me because they are fed up with the current system and how Pakistan is being run." This will be the first time the chancellor elections will be held online, instead of

the traditional process requiring graduates to attend in full academic dress. The position typically goes to university graduates, often politicians.

Khan faces competition from former prime ministers Sir Tony Blair and Boris Johnson, making the competition tough but Bukhari said he was hopeful that the PTI founder will win. "We await approval from Khan and the campaign will begin," he said. Since Khan's imprisonment in August 2023, the UN has described his detention as having no legal basis, with hundreds of his supporters arrested and the government indicating its intention to ban PTI. His candidacy news was shared by Bukhari and Lord Hannan at an event this week in the House of Lords where nearly two dozen UK Parliament members called for his immediate release.—RT/Agency

## PM Orders Strategy To Ensure Equitable Job Access For Youth

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed the relevant authorities to prepare a comprehensive strategy with respect to provision of employment opportunities to the youth of the country on equal basis.

Calling the youth as the assets of Pakistan, the prime minister said the country's development was linked with their welfare and progress.

Chairing a meeting regarding Prime Minister's Youth Programme at the PM House, he said, with their immense talent, the youth could change the fate of the country if they were provided with the required resources.

The prime minister was of the view that provision of employment opportunities to the youth was the government's top priority.

He said all the training programmes at National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NVTTC) should be focused on creating job opportunities for the students.

He directed to conduct a detailed survey of job market



and then accordingly start the skill training programmes. During the meeting, it was informed that under PM Laptop Scheme, some 60,000 laptops had so far been delivered to the students.

Under this scheme, the government would provide additional 100,000 laptops during current year.

The meeting was informed that 64% students who got training under the Youth Skills Development Programme managed to get respectable jobs during previous three years.

It was told that the government funded 100 startups under its PM National Inno-

## PM Reaffirms Pakistan's Support For ECO To Enhance Intra-Regional Trade



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reaffirmed his commitment that Pakistan would continue to lend its full support to Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in enhancing intra-regional trade among ECO countries as well as on the ECO reforms agenda. He was talking to Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Ambassador Noziri who called on him at the PM House. He highlighted the significance of "ECO Vision 2025", signed during the

## PM Meets KP Lawmakers, Promises Development And Relief Measures For Province

ISLAMABAD: Members of the National and Provincial Assemblies from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Thursday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the PM House.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs Eng. Ameer Muqam, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, and other high-ranking officials.

In the meeting, the prime minister assured the lawmakers that the development of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly the merged districts, was the top priority of the government.

He said the PMN-N government had always prioritized worked for the development of the merged districts. Assuring the provision of standard health and education facilities in the merged districts, the prime minister said the government would



establish Danish Schools in the area to provide international standard quality education to the local students.

The prime minister also emphasized the need to stop electricity theft, promote solar energy, and provide relief to the poor and middle class. He said the government was converting agricultural tubewells to the solar energy across the country that would help development of the agriculture sector, increase the cultivation land and save billions of dollars in term of imported fuel. PM Shehbaz Sharif said recently the gov-

ernment had announced big relief for poor and middle income people in electricity bills.

On the occasion he also announced the formation of a committee, chaired by the Deputy PM, to find sustainable solutions to the problems faced by the elected representatives of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said the incumbent government had to take tough decisions to revive the economy and had save the country from falling into default at the cost of their policies.—RT/Agency