

Daily SOON TIMES

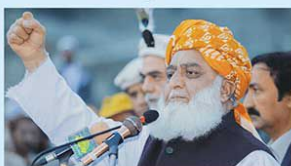
Wednesday
August 28, 2024
Page: 4 Rs: 20
Vol: 3 Issue: 238
Islamabad
www.soontimes.pk

ABC Certified

Simultaneously Publishing from Islamabad, Sargodha & Karachi

+92 321 888 1135

Fazlur Rehman endorses nationwide strike by traders on Aug 28



Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam (JUI) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has announced his support for the nationwide strike planned by traders on August 28. In his statement, Maulana Fazlur Rehman expressed full backing for the strike, and criticised inflation and unjust taxes for worsening the public's living conditions. He accused the IMF-directed budget of depriving people of their livelihoods. Rehman instructed JUI workers to support the peaceful strike and directed the Rs 1 business forums across the country to actively participate in the protest.

Cabinet approves Rs20b for Operation Azm-e-Istehkam



Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
The federal cabinet on Tuesday approved Rs20 billion for Operation Azm-e-Istehkam to tackle recent terrorist incidents. At a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the cabinet discussed a six-point agenda that covered the country's economic and political situation as well. Cabinet also approved Rs 1.95 billion for FC Balochistan to secure the Reko Diq project. More to read: 21 terrorists killed, 14 security officials martyred in Balochistan anti-terrorist operations. Additionally, the cabinet reduced its expenses and approved recommendations from the Right Sizing Committee to cut costs further. The decisions made in recent ECC meeting were also approved. Lastly, the cabinet was updated on the transfer of PWD staff, PSDP projects, and a review of an agenda item related to the Convention on the Recovery of Maintenance Abroad.

Barrister Gohar denies existence of any forward bloc



Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, stated that despite various challenges, PTI members remained united, and there was no forward bloc within the party. Speaking to the media after a hearing on PTI's intra-party election case at the Election Commission, Khan mentioned that the party submitted documents for the intra-party elections on March 8 for the third time but has yet to receive a certificate. He noted that the Supreme Court had ordered the declaration of 39 members as PTI MNAs, and the Election Commission sought guidance from the Supreme Court, hoping for a clear ruling soon. Khan also emphasised that the certificate provided for 39 candidates was applicable to all candidates. He expressed confidence that local body elections would occur on time, with PTI expected to achieve a cleansweep if they do.

Ring leader among 25 terrorists killed in Tirah IBOs: ISPR

ISPR says four soldiers, having fought gallantly, embraced martyrdom during multiple intel-based operations



Soon Times Correspondent
Rawalpindi

At least 25 terrorists, including a ring leader, were gunned down by security forces in multiple ongoing intelligence-based operations (IBOs) in Tirah valley of Khyber district since August 20, the military's media wing said on Tuesday. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the security forces are conducting "extensive IBOs" in Tirah valley against the Tehreek-e-Faliban Pakistan (TFP) labelled as Fitna-Al-Khwarizj and militant outfits "Laskar-e-Islam and Jamat-ul-Ahrar". These operations, it said, were based on robust intelligence and resulted into major

setbacks to Fitna-Al-Khwarizj and its affiliates. During the intelligence-based operations being conducted since August 20, the security forces so far killed 25 terrorists, including a ring leader named Abuzakara Saddam. "However, four soldiers, having fought gallantly, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced martyrdom," the ISPR added. "The heavy losses inflicted upon Fitna-Al-Khwarizj in these operations is testament to the valor and commitment of security forces to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country," it concluded. On Aug 25, terrorists attacked a check post in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Central Kurram, resulting in martyrdom of one policeman.

President Zardari honours Chinese General Li Qiaoming with Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military)

President Asif Ali Zardari honored General Li Qiaoming, with the Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military).



Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
President Asif Ali Zardari has honoured General Li Qiaoming, Commander of the Ground Forces of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA), with the Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) for his exceptional services and pivotal role in strengthening Sino-Pak defense relations.

The award was presented on Tuesday at a special investiture ceremony at Aizwan-e-Sadr, which was attended by military officials and members of parliament. The citation at the ceremony highlighted General Li Qiaoming's four-decade career, noting his significant contributions to the Chinese military. His intellect, administrative skills, and dedication have earned him a reputation as a courageous and capable officer, crucial in promoting peace and stability in China and beyond.

Urs of Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh (RA) ends with collective prayer

The three-day Urs celebrations of Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh (RA) concluded on Monday night with a collective prayer.



The participants prayed for peace and prosperity of the country and its people. Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Punjab Minister Bilal Yasin, Capt (Retd) Muhammad Saifdar and hundreds of thousands of devotees across the country participated in the Urs celebrations of great Sufi saint. They had a farewell to the annual gala of rich spiritual and cultural rituals with the traditional zeal and spirit which has been maintained for over a thousand years. The devotees gathered at the shrine of the 10th century saint from all parts of the country for three days, participated in a number of activities, including preaching congregations, Mahafil-e-Samaa (Qawwali), Naat Khwani, Qirat (recitation of Holy Quran). The spiritual gatherings were addressed by noted Ulama, Mashaikhs and Gaddi Naeem from all over the country. The district administration took special measures to ensure security for the devotees. Hundreds of uniformed and plainclothes policemen, besides the secret agencies personnel were deployed to check any miscreants among the visitors who were allowed entry from the walk-through gates and metal detectors.

No operation needed in Balochistan, single SHO enough to end terrorism: Naqvi

Interior Minister condemned recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan, calling it unacceptable.



Shehbaz says militant attacks aimed at thwarting China cooperation

Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
A day after Balochistan came under deadly attacks launched by hardened terrorists, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif ruled out any talks with those working against Pakistan, noting that time had come to uproot terrorism from the country. He made these remarks while addressing a federal cabinet meeting on Tuesday, called after recent attacks by terrorists in Balochistan claiming at least 50 lives in a single day.



"Attacks by separatist militants in Pakistan's southwestern province of Balochistan are aimed at stopping development projects that form part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)," Prime Minister Shehbaz said. The assaults that began on Sunday, killing more than 70, were the most widespread in years by ethnic militants seeking to win succession of the resource-rich province, home to major China-led projects such as a port and a gold and copper mine. "The terrorists want to stop CPEC and development projects," Sharif said in a

televised address to cabinet, adding that the militants also wanted to drive a wedge between Islamabad and Beijing. CPEC, said to have development commitments worth \$65 billion, is part of China's President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road initiative. Pakistan has not been able to fully build the infrastructure needed to tap mineral resources in poverty-stricken Balochistan, and has sought China's help in developing the province. CHINA SUPPORT In Beijing, China condemned the attacks and vowed to maintain its support for Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts.

that the federal government fully supports the provincial leadership. "The federal government is standing firmly behind Chief Minister Bugti, who will have our full backing in whatever decisions he makes," Mohsin said. He added that while some efforts in Balochistan are visible, much more is happening behind the scenes. Addressing the recent surge in violence, Naqvi expressed deep concern over the incidents, calling them unacceptable. "These acts of terror are intolerable, but they cannot

Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi seek post-arrest bail in new Toshakhana reference

Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
Ex-Premier Imran Khan, and his wife, Bushra Bibi, have filed applications for post-arrest bail in the Accountability Court in connection to the new Toshakhana reference. The bail applications were submitted through Barristers Salman Saifdar and Khalid Yousof Chaudhry. Advocate Khalid Yousof Chaudhry stated that both Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi were currently on judicial remand in the Toshakhana case. He noted that NAB had filed a new reference in this case and requested that the applications be heard as soon as possible. The court staff indicated that the applications could not be scheduled for the following day as NAB also



needed to be notified. Chaudhry requested that the applications be set for a hearing the day after, but the court staff mentioned that a trial related to the 190 million case was scheduled for that day, making it impossible to hear the bail applications. The court subsequently directed NAB to present all records related to the Toshakhana case and scheduled the bail applications for a hearing on August 30.

Pak-China Strategic Cooperation

President Asif Ali Zardari has said that China is a trusted and great friend of Pakistan, and both countries need to further strengthen strategic cooperation for the mutual benefit of the two sides. He said that both countries enjoyed historic relations, spanning over seven decades, and affirmed Pakistan's resolve to stand with China in view of the changing global scenario. The President expressed these views while talking to the visiting Commander of the Ground Forces of the People's Liberation Army of China, General Li

Qiaoming, who along with his delegation, called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Welcoming the Chinese Commander, the President underscored the need for further enhancing military and defence cooperation, people-to-people contacts, and cultural linkages to bring the two countries further closer. He said that Pakistan was encouraging the learning of the Chinese language which would greatly help promote people-to-people ties. The President remarked that China Pakistan Economic Corridor was his initiative, envisioned during his previous

tenure as the President of Pakistan. He said that enemies of Pakistan and China did not want our bilateral relations to flourish, adding the two countries should work closely to overcome shared challenges. Highlighting the importance of Pak-China friendship, General Li Qiaoming said that the friendship between the two countries was unbreakable. He added that both countries needed to work together to fight terrorism. He also condemned yesterday's terrorist attacks in Pakistan and offered his heartfelt condolences to the government and people of

Pakistan over the loss of life. Earlier, President Asif Ali Zardari conferred the award of Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon General Li Qiaoming in recognition of his meritorious services rendered towards enhancing defence cooperation between Pakistan and China, during a special investiture ceremony held, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The Chinese Commander thanked the President for the conferment of the Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) and said that the award was a testimony of the strong bonds between the two countries.

500mm Rain Forecast: Sindh Braces



Amjad Rana

potential impact of the heavy rainfall and ensure public safety. Accelerate the cleaning and maintenance of storm drains and sewer systems in Karachi and other vulnerable cities to ensure efficient water drainage. Invest in upgrading and expanding the drainage infrastructure to handle future extreme weather events. Deploy water pumping equipment to low-lying areas in advance to manage water accumulation and prevent urban flooding. Increase patrols and monitoring of river embankments and key water channels to promptly address any breaches or overflows. Conduct extensive awareness campaigns through media, alerting the public about the dangers of entering the sea and other high-risk areas during the rainfall period. Establish rapid response teams in each district to assist in evacuation, rescue operations, and providing relief to affected populations. Set up emergency coordination centres across the province to facilitate real-time communication between government agencies, the military, and local authorities. Maintain and publicize the rain-emergency cell hotline, ensuring citizens can quickly report issues and receive assistance. Ensure the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has sufficient supplies, including tents, hygiene kits, and food items, and streamline distribution channels to affected areas. Deploy health workers to provide medical care and distribute mosquito nets and water purification tablets to prevent the spread of waterborne diseases. By implementing these solutions, the Sindh government can effectively manage the anticipated heavy rainfall, minimize the impact on communities, and ensure a swift response to any emergencies that may arise. Karachi has experienced several instances of heavy rainfall that have led to significant challenges, including urban flooding and infrastructure damage. Karachi received record-breaking rainfall in August 2020, with some areas recording over 230mm in a single day. This resulted in widespread urban flooding, power outages, and significant disruption to daily life. The rain in August 2020 was considered one of the

heaviest in the city's history, leading to extensive damage to property and infrastructure. In July 2009, Karachi experienced around 245mm of rain in just a few hours. On July 24, 2003, Karachi received approximately 133mm of rain within a few hours. This heavy downpour led to significant flooding across the city, with many roads and low-lying areas becoming impassable. Karachi received around 207mm of rain in August 1979. The city experienced severe urban flooding, causing widespread damage to infrastructure and property. The 1979 rain is remembered as one of the most significant rain events in Karachi's history. These instances highlight the vulnerability of Karachi to heavy rains, particularly given its challenges with drainage and urban infrastructure. Each event has prompted calls for improved infrastructure and disaster preparedness to better manage future rainfall events. Lahore, like Karachi, has experienced several significant instances of heavy rainfall that have led to urban flooding and other challenges. heavy rainfall events in Lahore's history. In July 2018, Lahore recorded 288mm of rainfall within just 10 hours, making it one of the heaviest rainfalls in the city's history. This extreme downpour led to widespread flooding in many areas of Lahore, including the iconic Mall Road and several residential neighbourhoods. In September 2014, Lahore experienced around 200mm of rainfall over a 24-hour period. The heavy rain caused extensive urban flooding, with many streets and low-lying areas submerged. In August 2011, Lahore received 170mm of rain in a single day. This rainfall caused severe flooding across the city, particularly in low-lying areas. On July 13, 1980, Lahore recorded approximately 207mm of rainfall in a single day. Lahore witnessed around 221mm of rain on August 6, 1976. The downpour led to severe urban flooding, with several key roads and areas submerged under water. These instances highlight the challenges Lahore faces with heavy rainfall. Each event has underscored the need for better infrastructure planning and flood management strategies in the city.

Bangladeshi students are raising their voice against the government, but Pakistanis need more effort to awake.

Kashaf Waqar

In a stark contrast between the current situations in Bangladesh and Pakistan, Bangladesh students have shown a powerful reaction against their government, while the Pakistani government continues to struggle with unrest and dissatisfaction among its people. The recent protests in Bangladesh have gained attention worldwide, as students took to the streets demanding safer roads and better governance. The movement gathered momentum after two students were killed in a road accident, sparking anger and frustration among the youth. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's escape to India further fueled the fire, with critics accusing her of evading responsibility for the crisis. On the other hand, the Pakistani government is currently facing numerous challenges, including economic instability, political turmoil, and a lack of trust among the people. The recent arrest of opposition leaders and crackdown on dissent has further strained the relationship between the government and its citizens. Comparing the reactions of the people of Pakistan to those of Bangladesh, it is evident that the Bangladeshi people are more

vocal and proactive in expressing their grievances and demanding change. While the Pakistani government continues to face criticism and backlash, it remains to be seen whether they will take heed of the people's demands and work towards a more transparent and accountable system. As the world watches these developments unfold, the contrast between the two countries serves as a stark reminder of the power of the people and the importance of holding governments accountable for their actions. Bangladesh's current situation highlights the strength and determination of its youth, while Pakistan's challenges underscore the need for meaningful reform and dialogue between the government and its citizens. It is a testament to the power of peaceful protest and the role of young people in shaping the future of their countries. The actions of Bangladeshi students have inspired hope and solidarity among many, while the situation in Pakistan serves as a cautionary tale of what can happen when the voices of the people are ignored. In conclusion, the contrast between the reactions of Bangladeshi students and the Pakistani government highlights the importance of

accountability and responsiveness in governance. It is a reminder that the power ultimately lies with the people, and that change can only come about when voices are heard and actions are taken. As we continue to witness these events unfold, let us reflect on the power of unity, courage, and determination in the face of adversity, and the role each of us can play in shaping a more just and equitable future. The accomplishment of making Pakistan's foreign policy sustainable through the promotion of mercantilist has been the main source of its economic dominance and strategic freedom. Moreover, in recent years, these problems have become even more important in evaluating whether this approach is really justified and whether it is even effective. The record-high trade deficits of Pakistan have prompted queries regarding the viability of its mercantilist policies. The country's exports have lagged behind the imports, resulting in a trade deficit that has grown and put pressure on foreign exchange reserves. Along with that, Pakistan's exports still rely on a few commodities, such as textiles and cotton, a situation that leaves the country in the hands of the ever-changing global demand and prices.

Pakistan aims to raise \$4bn from Middle Eastern banks, SBP governor

Jameel Ahmad says recent interest rate cuts have slowed down inflation and brought current account under control



KARACHI:

Looking to plug its external financing gaps, Pakistan plans to raise up to \$4 billion from Middle Eastern commercial banks by the next fiscal year, the Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Jameel Ahmad, told Reuters on Tuesday. The governor's optimism stems from the government's efforts to roll over \$1.2 billion in loans from China, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), according to sources. In a wide-ranging interview with the wire, the SBP governor said Pakistan was also in the "advanced stages" of securing \$2

billion in additional external financing required for IMF approval of a \$7 billion bailout programme. Additionally, as per sources, the government has requested an extra \$1.2 billion loan from Saudi Arabia to bridge a \$2 billion financing gap. Pakistan and the IMF reached an agreement on the loan programme in July, subject to approval from the IMF's executive board and it obtaining "timely confirmation of necessary financing assurances from Pakistan's development and bilateral partners". However, the agenda is missing from the IMF country until

September 4, 2024, according to the lender's schedule of its Executive Board meetings released on August 26. Asked about monetary policy, Ahmad said recent interest rate cuts in Pakistan have had the desired effect, with inflation continuing to slow and the current account remaining under control, despite the cuts. Pakistan's annual consumer price index inflation was 11.1% in July, having fallen from highs of over 30% in 2023. "The Monetary Policy Committee will review all these developments," Ahmad said, adding that future rate decisions could not be pre-determined. The central bank cut rates for two straight meetings from a historic high of 22% to 19.5%, and will meet again to review monetary policy on September 12. "Now we have to focus on growth and other related areas because those are also equally important for job creation and other socioeconomic issues," said Ahmad. He added that the central bank's mandate was to ensure price and financial stability before shifting

Professors & Lecturers Protest Outside The Sargodha Press Club

Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha:
The main leaders of Punjab Professors and Lecturers Association Sargodha Division, Prof. Dr. Sahibzada Ahmed Nadeem, President of Piplan Sargodha Division, Prof. Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Ramzan and others have protested outside the Sargodha press along with the government college teachers. They said that our demands are very reasonable and legitimate demands. Our first demand is that the Secretary Higher Education should immediately issue the promotion orders of Grade 17 to 18 with previous upgradation and not dislocate any lecturer.



Our second demand is that promotion link training should be conducted online and exam should also be conducted online. Principal should be appointed immediately in those colleges of Sargodha division which do not have a permanent principal. Director Colleges

should also be appointed on permanent basis. The transfer policy should be revised and the transfer process should be initiated. The third demand is for pay and service protection. This long standing demand should be approved. Immediate refixation of college cadre under the four-grade formula to create scope for promotion in each grade is needed. They further said that the process of departmental promotion is extremely slow. It should be expedited on an urgent basis.

Tajir Dost Scheme Is Economic Murder Of People: Sajid Hussain Tarar

Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha:
The August 28th strike is not a problem of any trade organization or anyone's ego. It is the collective interest of traders. On August 28, all the traders should participate in the strike and give a positive message to the government on their behalf that now it is not the traders' turn to pay taxes, but the elites. The elites should end their extravaganzas so that the tax burden on the people can be minimized. These views were expressed by Sajid Hussain Tarar, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He said that Tajir Dost Scheme is economic murder of people. People are already paying huge illegal taxes in electricity bills. We reject the Tajir Dost Scheme.



Two-Day Training Workshop on Gender Transformative Approaches Concludes Successfully in Sanghar



Soon Times Correspondent Sanghar:
A two-day training workshop on Gender Transformative Approaches, organized by the National Disability and Development Forum (NDF) Sanghar in collaboration with Pathfinder International, concluded successfully today. The event saw the participation of 30 individuals from diverse sectors, all committed to advancing gender equity and empowerment. Dr. Daulat Ali Jamali, District Health Officer (DHO) Sanghar, graced the occasion as the chief guest. In his address, Dr. Jamali highlighted the importance of gender equality in fostering a healthier and more inclusive society. He emphasized the critical role of training and

awareness in transforming traditional gender roles and reducing gender-based disparities. The workshop was led by Ms. Sumaira Ishaq, a seasoned trainer from Pathfinder International, who provided in-depth insights and practical strategies for implementing gender-transformative practices in various community and organizational settings. Her sessions were highly interactive, encouraging participants to challenge gender norms and develop more equitable policies and programs. Mr. Tariq Hussain Channar, Program Manager of NDF, spoke on the significance of gender transformative approaches in the broader context of community development and disability rights. He underscored NDF's

commitment to working alongside partners like Pathfinder International to create an environment where gender equality is at the forefront of all initiatives. Other speakers at the event included Mr. Sabir Mahar, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Officer from the District Administration, who discussed the intersection of gender and disaster resilience, and Mr. Sikandar Babar, Program Manager at Pathfinder International, who focused on the organization's ongoing efforts to integrate gender considerations into health and development projects. Additionally, Mr. Muhammad Ashraf Soomro, Project Manager of NDF, shared the impact of gender-sensitive programming in local communities. At the conclusion of the workshop, training certificates were distributed among the 30 participants, acknowledging their dedication to advancing gender equality and their commitment to applying the knowledge gained during the training in their respective fields. The NDF Sanghar and Pathfinder International expressed their gratitude to all participants and stakeholders, reiterating their continued collaboration to foster gender-transformative changes across Sindh and beyond.

The Open Courts Of DPO Hafizabad Are Mere Formality; Citizens Aren't Informed

Soon Times Correspondent Pindi Bhattian:
The open courts of DPO Hafizabad are limited to mere formality only. DPO is setting up open courts on the order of Chief Minister Punjab to provide quick and cheap justice to the citizens. But when the citizens will not be informed about the open courts, how will they be able to express their problems. While open courts are kept hidden from journalists. Yesterday also, DPO Hafizabad held an

open court in Pindi Bhattian, which neither citizens nor journalists were informed about. Due to this, like the earlier open court, this open court was also left as a mere formality. Public circles are concerned about the situation that the complaints of the citizens are increasing day by day in the police stations and the crimes are also increasing. But instead of open courts, the district head of police is making up for it by setting up secret courts

CBA Staged Protest Against Privatization of WAPDA At FESCO Circle Office



Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha:
WAPDA Hydro Electric Workers Union

(CBA) staged a protest against privatization at FESCO Circle Office. A large number of employees participated in

the protest camp by locking the offices, raised slogans and protest against privatization. Chairman Zonal Circle Rao Kashif, Zonal Secretary Rana Nasir, Malik Mazhar Hayat and others said, we appeal to the government to stop the privatization of WAPDA. The previous agreements with IPPs also caused us great harm. The companies which were privatized earlier are also in losses. This department was established by the blood and sweat of the people and the employees, for which innumerable employees submitted testimonies. Privatization will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Every government took steps to privatize WAPDA. This government is preparing to sell every department including Schools, PWD, WAPDA. If the government does not stop, we will create such a situation that this government will not exist.

No Trader Is Negotiating With The FBR Representative: Business Leaders



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad:
Business organizations across the country have announced a complete shutdown on August 28. The strike will prove to be a public referendum. We will not pay taxes for the luxuries of the rulers. While holding a press conference at the National Press Club Islamabad, the business leaders, President of the Central Association of Traders Pakistan, Kashif Chaudhry, President of All Pakistan Bakers Association Shaheque Qureshi, Secretary General Mazlum Mughal and others said that an attempt is being made to spread misunderstanding regarding the strike on 28 August. Traders across the country make it clear that no trader is negotiating with the FBR representative. Both the major business organizations of the

country had announced a nationwide shutdown on August 16. If the government was serious, it would have had twelve days to negotiate. The businessmen tried many negotiations with the government but failed. On August 28, there will be a complete shutdown across the country from Khyber to Karachi. This strike is against increase in electricity bills and unnecessary taxes. Traders will not pay monthly or quarterly tax. People are fed up with the government. The government has also imposed taxes on food items in the budget. They demanded the government to withdraw the oppressive tax, Tajir Dost Scheme and hike in electricity bills by tomorrow evening and review the unnecessary and illegal taxes levied in all sectors including the real estate sector.

Federal Minister For Energy (Power Division) Visited IESCO Head Office



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad:
Federal Minister of Energy (Power Division) Sardar Awas Ahmad Khan Leghari along with Federal Secretary (Power Division) Dr. Muhammad Fakhr Alam Irfan and other senior officers visited Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO). On this occasion Chairman Board of Directors IESCO Dr. Fahir Masood gave a complete briefing to the Federal Minister of Energy (Power Division) about the administrative and operational affairs of IESCO. Federal Minister stated that the Government of Pakistan

and the Ministry of Energy (Power Division) maintain a zero-tolerance policy towards electricity theft and their facilitators. He emphasized the importance of 100% recovery of dues from both government and private consumers, assuring that IESCO has the full support of the Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Energy, and law enforcement agencies in this regard. He instructed IESCO CEO Muhammad Naem Jan to ensure the immediate delivery of the relief of PKR 14 per unit announced by the Punjab Government, to domestic consumers. He stressed that any delay in this process would not be

tolerated and that the entire relief distribution would be closely monitored to ensure transparency. Sardar Awas Ahmad Khan Leghari further highlighted that consumers are the most valuable asset of any organization, and the provision of quality and timely services, accurate meter readings, and prompt bill delivery must be ensured. He also mentioned that the complete eradication of electricity theft is possible by leveraging modern technology in the power sector. Regarding the high cost of electricity, he assured that all possible measures are being taken to provide cheaper electricity to esteemed consumers and that they would soon receive more good news in this regard. Dr. Fahir Masood, Chairman IESCO Board of Directors, assured Federal Minister that IESCO would meet the targets set for it. The meeting was attended by other IESCO board members and senior management.

ECP fixes contempt case against PTI founder, Fawad for hearing

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD:
The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) fixed the hearing of the contempt case against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and former Federal Minister Fawad Chaudhry. The ECP bench headed by Member Sindh Nisar Durani will hear the contempt case on September 4. During the last hearing, Fawad Chaudhry appeared before the ECP and sought time to submit the reply. The ECP contempt case was filed against PTI founder Imran Khan and Fawad Chaudhry for allegedly using derogatory

language against the election watchdog. It is pertinent to mention that PTI founder Imran Khan and former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry were indicted in the in the case on January 3, 2024. In August 2022, the ECP issued notices to the founder of PTI and others for allegedly using "intemperate" language against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja and the electoral watchdog. The political leaders repeatedly "lambasted" the commission and CEC Sikandar Raja and termed the electoral body a "subsidiary of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz".

IESCO Power Suspension Schedules For Today

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad:
According to Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO)'s spokesman, System Maintenance/Development Work is in process. Therefore power supply of below mentioned feeders/areas will be temporary suspended as per given schedule:
On 28th August 2024, From 06:00 AM to 11:00 AM, Islamabad Circle, F-1/14 Feeder, Rawalpindi City Circle, Officer Colony, Teneh Bhatta, Nust Road, SMD Dn, E-Block, FOEHS Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Zeta-1, Zarah I & II, IST, Dhok Awan, Mohra Nagyal, NPF-1, Major Rizar, Lala Zar, Lalkarti Feeders, Attock Circle,

Shakurdara, Kashif Gul, New City Block A, New City Block G, Nawazis shaheed, Kohsar Colony, Kalya Khan Feeders, Jhelum Circle, City Gujar Khan, Captain Nisar Shaheed, Express Mangala, Madu Kals Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Mugla, Dhalard, Dhoda, Toba, Ahmedabad, Rawal feeders, From 08:00 am to 12:00 Noon, Islamabad Circle, PC, TDCP, MCM, Chaurial, Kohala, Sunny Bank feeders and surrounding areas will remain closed. IESCO management apologizes to its esteemed customers for the power outage. If the work is completed ahead of time, the power supply can be restored even before the scheduled time.



Tulsi Gabbard, who ran for 2020 Democratic nomination, endorses Trump against former foe Harris

Former Democratic Rep. Tulsi Gabbard has endorsed Donald Trump's presidential bid, furthering her shift away from the party she sought to represent four years ago and linking herself to the GOP nominee's critiques of Vice President Kamala Harris and the chaotic Afghanistan War withdrawal.

Appearing Monday with Trump in Detroit, Gabbard, a National Guard veteran who served two tours of duty in the Middle East before representing Hawaii in the U.S. House, said the GOP nominee "understands the grave responsibility that a president and commander in chief bears for every single one of our lives."

The pair appeared at the National Guard Association of the United States on the third anniversary of the Aug. 26, 2021, suicide bombing at Hamid Karzai International Airport, which killed 13 U.S. service members and more than 100 Afghans.



Afghanistan Taliban gov't rejects criticism of morality law as 'arrogance'

KABUL, Afghanistan's Taliban authorities responded to criticism of recently codified morality rules, saying rejecting the legislation without understanding Islamic law showed "arrogance".

omen must cover completely and not raise their voices in public, among other rules restricting women's movements and behavior, according to a 35-article law announced on Wednesday by the justice ministry.

It imposes wide-ranging stipulations, including rules on men's clothing and attending theaters as well as bans on keeping photos of living beings, homosexuality, animal fighting, playing music in public and non-Muslim holidays.



Gaza ceasefire hopes dim, families flee after new evacuation orders

The Deir Al-Balah municipality says Israeli evacuation orders have so far displaced 250,000 people

CAIRO/GAZA Israel issued new evacuation orders for Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip late on Sunday, forcing more families to flee, saying its forces intended to act against militant group Hamas and others operating in the area.

In recent days, Israel has issued several evacuation orders across Gaza, the most since the beginning of the 10-month war, prompting an outcry from Palestinians, the United Nations and relief officials over the reduction of humanitarian zones and the absence of safe areas.

The Deir Al-Balah municipality says Israeli evacuation orders have so far displaced 250,000 people.

In a statement posted on X, the Israeli military urged residents in certain zones to move immediately to the west, as the area they are in is "considered a dangerous combat zone".

Israeli military strikes killed at least seven Palestinians on Monday, medics said. Two were killed in Deir Al-Balah, where around a million people were sheltering, two at a school in the Al-Nuseirat camp and three in the southern city of Rafah, near

the border with Egypt. Seven others were killed in two separate Israeli strikes, five in a car in Khan Younis and two people at a school in Gaza City, medics said.

The new orders forced many families and patients to leave Al-Aqsa Hospital, the main medical facility in Deir Al-Balah, where hundreds of thousands of residents and displaced people had taken shelter, for fear of bombardments.

The hospital is close to the area covered by the evacuation notice.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said in a statement on X on Sunday night that an explosion approximately 250 meters (820 feet) away from the MSF-supported Al-Aqsa Hospital triggered panic.

"As a result, MSF is considering whether to suspend wound care for the time being, while trying to maintain life-saving treatment."

From around 650 patients, only 100 remain in the hospital, with seven in the intensive care unit, it said, citing Gaza's health ministry.

Judge in Texas orders pause on Biden program that offers legal status to spouses of US citizens

McALLEN, Texas A federal judge in Texas on Monday paused a Biden administration policy that would give spouses of U.S. citizens legal status without having to first leave the country, dealing at least a temporary setback to one of the biggest presidential actions to ease a path to citizenship in years.

The administrative stay issued by U.S. District Judge J. Campbell Barker comes just days after 16 states, led by Republican attorneys general, challenged the program that could benefit an estimated 500,000 immigrants in the country, plus about 50,000 of their children. The states accused the administration of bypassing Congress for "blatant political purposes."

One of the states leading the challenge is Texas, which in the lawsuit claimed the state has had to pay tens of millions of dollars annually from health care to law enforcement because of immigrants living in the state without legal status.

President Joe Biden announced the program in June. The court order, which lasts for two weeks but could be extended, comes one week after the Department of Homeland Security began accepting applications.



Russia's deadly overnight barrage of missiles and drones hits over half of Ukraine



KYIV, Ukraine Russia battered much of Ukraine on firing scores of missiles and drones that killed four people, injured more than a dozen and damaged energy facilities in attacks that President Volodymyr Zelenskyy described as "vile."

The barrage of over 100 missiles and a similar number of drones began around midnight and continued through daybreak in what appeared to be Russia's biggest onslaught in weeks.

Ukraine's air force said swarms of Russian drones fired at eastern, northern, southern, and central regions were followed by volleys of cruise and ballistic missiles.

"Like most previous Russian strikes, this one was just as vile, targeting critical civilian infrastructure," Zelenskyy said, adding that most of the country was targeted — from the Kharkiv region and Kyiv to Odessa and the west.

Explosions were heard in the capital of Kyiv. Power and water supplies in the city were disrupted by the attack. Mayor Vitali Klitschko said.

Ukraine's Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said Russia fired dozens, cruise missiles and hypersonic ballistic Kinzhal missiles at 15 Ukrainian regions — more than half the country.

"The energy infrastructure has once again become the target of Russian terrorists," Shmyhal said, adding that the state-owned power grid operator, Ukrenergo, has been forced to implement emergency power cuts to stabilize the system.

He urged Ukraine's allies to provide it with long-range weapons and permission to use them on targets inside Russia.

"In order to stop the barbaric shelling of Ukrainian cities, it is necessary to destroy the place from which the Russian missiles are launched," Shmyhal said. "We count on the support of our allies and will definitely make Russia pay."

U.S. President Joe Biden called the Russian attack on energy infrastructure "outrageous" and said he had "re-prioritized U.S. air defense efforts so they are sent to Ukraine first." He also said the U.S. was "surging energy equipment to Ukraine to repair its systems and strengthen the resilience of Ukraine's energy grid."

The Russian Defense Ministry said the attacks used "long-range precision air- and sea-based weapons and strike drones against critical energy infrastructure facilities that support the operation of Ukraine's military-industrial complex. All designated targets were hit."



Pakistan placed in same group as India for Women's T20 World Cup

The highly-anticipated ninth edition of mega tournament has been moved from Bangladesh to UAE



Sports Reporter Pakistan Women have been placed alongside India Women and six-time champion Australia Women as the International Cricket Council on Monday announced fixtures and groups for this year's Women's T20 World Cup 2024.

Australia are also the defending champion as they won the last T20 World Cup in 2020, trouncing India in the final by 85 runs.

Pakistan will play their first match on October 3 against Sri Lanka and encounter India on October 6, in their second.

The highly-anticipated ninth edition of the tournament has been moved from Bangladesh to the UAE, after political instability marred the Asian country amid students' uprising in last month.

The event will now be played in Dubai and Sharjah in October.

The groups remain the same with Australia drawn alongside 20-runners-up India, Trans-Tasman rival New Zealand, Asian sides Pakistan and Sri Lanka in Group A, the ICC announced in a handout.



Golden Paralympics can boost Ukraine's disabled veterans, says star fencer

PARIS The Paris Paralympics are hugely significant for powerhouses Ukraine as great performances can help maimed veterans come to terms with their new circumstances.

The 25-year-old says previous impressive medal hauls have raised respect for disabled people in Ukraine to the highest level it has ever been.

However, for those who have suffered life-changing injuries on the battlefield since Russia invaded in February 2022, adjusting mentally is a challenge in itself.

Hence why Manko says it is imperative he and his teammates maintain Ukraine's pre-eminence when the Paralympics begin on Wednesday — they finished third in the medals table in Rio and sixth in Tokyo.

"It not only helps boost morale back home, it helps disability in society," Manko told AFP by phone from his training camp last week.

"After the last Paralympics Ukraine got so many medals we inspired the nation and I think we are now at the highest level of disability acceptance."

"That is really important right now as there are a lot of injured soldiers without legs, hands and in wheelchairs."

"It is hugely important for them to feel disabled people are accepted in society."

The challenge facing the Ukrainians though is many have had to cope with hugely disrupted preparations, just like many of their compatriots who experience hardship just going about their daily lives.

Manko has at least been able to train in Germany after he and his fencing teammates were first invited there two years ago by their German counterparts.

Many though, like Tokyo bronze medalist swimmer Anna Hontar, a two-time world champion in the 50 metres freestyle, have not been so fortunate.

While the 20-year-old told AFP she was looking forward to her second Games — "the second big start in life" — she adds preparations have been tough.

PCB announces five mentors for Champions One Day Cup teams



LAHORE The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has announced the appointment of five mentors for the teams participating in the Champions One Day Cup.

The selected mentors were Misbah-ul-Haq, Sajjan Mashtaq, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Shoab Malik, and Waqar Younis.

Their first assignment would be the Champions One Day Cup, starting in Faisalabad on September 12. PCB officials noted that these five cricketers brought extensive experience to the table.

The officials further stated that the PCB was committed to strengthening domestic cricket through a robust structure.

Mariah Carey's mother and sister died on the same day. The singer says her 'heart is broken'

LOS ANGELES Mariah Carey's mother Patricia and sister Alison both died on the same day, the singer said.

"My heart is broken that I've lost my mother this past weekend. Sadly, in a tragic turn of events, my sister lost her life on the same day," the Grammy-winning singer said in a statement.

"I feel blessed that I was able to spend the last week with my mom before she passed," the statement continued. "I appreciate everyone's love and support and respect for my privacy during this impossible time."

The Times Union reported Monday that Alison, who was largely estranged from Carey, died at 63 from complications with her organ function and that she had been in hospice care.

People Magazine first reported the news of their deaths and Carey's statement.

Patricia was a Juilliard-trained opera singer who Carey credits as an inspiration to her from a young age.

"I would sing little tunes around the house, to my mother's delight. And she always encouraged me," she wrote in her 2020 memoir,



"The Meaning of Mariah Carey." Patricia was previously married to Alfred Roy Carey, the singer's father. The parents divorced when the "Vision of Love" singer was 3. Carey grew up in Suffolk County on Long Island and lived primarily with her mother after her parents' divorce. Her father died of cancer in 2002 at age 72.

Carey detailed her complicated relationship with her mother and her sister in her memoir, in which she wrote that she and her mother often clashed, causing her to feel "so much pain and confusion," and accused her sister of putting her in unsafe situations as a child.