



Parvez Elahi shifted to PIMS as his health deteriorates in Adiala jail

Daily SOON TIMES



Chief Editor
Shah Muhammad Awan

Thursday
March 28, 2024
Page: 4 Rs: 21
Vol: 4 Issue: 88
Sargodha

www.soontimes.pk

Simultaneously Publishing from Islamabad, Sargodha and Karachi



Hamid Khan demands judicial commission to probe judges' letter



Senior lawyer and a leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Hamid Khan on Wednesday demanded a judicial commission to investigate the issue raised by six judges of high judiciary in a letter to the chief justice.

Speaking to the media at the Lahore High Court Bar Association office here, he said "this matter is very sensitive and the Bar has to play a role in the issue."
"The six judges have done a great job. This letter is very important; there should be a joint strategy to address the issue raised by them. We have to salute these judges," he added.

Hamid Khan said the role of the chief justice of Islamabad High Court had become controversial. The judges brought the matter to his notice but he did not take any action, he continued.
The senior lawyer demanded the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) to constitute a judicial commission on this issue. The CJP has to play his role. Both the chief justices will be accountable to the people.

Opposition demands release of PTI founder in Punjab Assembly



During the Punjab Assembly session, the opposition demanded the release of the PTI founder.

The session started after a delay of one hour and forty minutes. Deputy Speaker Zaheer Iqbal Channar presided over the meeting.
Opposition members displayed banners featuring the PTI founder within the House, chanting their demands for his release.

Opposition leader Malik Ahmad Khan Bhachar questioned why Mian Aslam Iqbal was being stopped from entering the House. He expressed dissatisfaction with the presence of police outside and insisted that both Mian Aslam Iqbal and Ahmad Rashid Bhatti should be brought to the assembly. He said the opposition would not make any compromise.

IHC allows PTI to hold rally in Islamabad



The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday granted the PTI permission to hold a political rally in the federal capital on April 6.

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq presided over the hearing of PTI's plea against denial of permission by law enforcement agencies citing security concerns.
"One's right of assembly can not be taken away," said the judge as he directed the federal capital's administration to specify their conditions for permitting the rally.
PTI counsel Sher Afzal Marwat said that the party wanted to hold a public gathering on April 6, to which Justice Farooq said the party should ensure "there is no riot".
The state counsel stated that PTI was not granted permission due to security concerns and that the party violated the rules earlier.

Army vows to take all-out measures for safety of Chinese citizens in Pakistan

Nation had defeated nefarious designs of Pakistan's adversaries: COAS.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a high level security meeting in Islamabad

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD

Strongly reacting to Shanga terrorist attack which claimed six lives including five Chinese nationals, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir has said that the military "shall not leave any stone unturned to ensure that every foreign citizen, especially the Chinese nationals—contributing to the prosperity of Pakistan—is safe and secure in the country".

The army chief reiterated the resolve of armed forces to eliminate the scourge of terrorism afflicting the country during an emergency meeting chaired on Wednesday by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the aftermath of Shanga's Besham city terrorist attack on Chinese nationals working on Dasu Hydel Power

Project, read a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office today.

The army chief said that the nation had steadfastly fought the war on terror for the last two decades and had defeated the nefarious designs of Pakistan's adversaries.

Noting the recent surge in terrorist incidents, COAS Munir remarked that the enemies of Pakistan had once again "underestimated the resilience and grit of the state and the people of Pakistan".

He added: "We shall fight terrorism till every terrorist casting an evil eye on Pakistan, its people and their guests, is eliminated; we shall not leave any stone unturned to ensure that every foreign citizen, especially the Chinese nationals, contributing to the prosperity of Pakistan, is safe and secure in Pakistan."

CM Maryam Nawaz approves measures for narcotics control, tax reforms

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has accorded approval for the establishment of three police stations dedicated to control narcotics control. The decision came during a meeting of the Department of Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, presided over by the chief minister. The chief secretary, treasury secretary, Senator Pervaiz Rasheed and MPA Samia Ashiq were also present.

During the session, the idea of forming a new department specifically aiming at anti-narcotics efforts was proposed and subsequently agreed upon. It was decided to set up 13 excise check posts aimed at curbing the smuggling of drugs and other items.

Maryam Nawaz also directed the establishment of a tax consultancy unit and sought a comprehensive report to be prepared on tax discrepancies regarding rental values and DC rates.

She emphasised the need to expand the tax base, particularly focusing on house taxes, while also



urging for the resolution of the backlog in motorvehicle registration plates.

It was highlighted during the session that the implementation of an e-title document system for vehicle's e-registrations would lead to a 12.5 per cent increase in tax collection.
Discussions also took place regarding the revival of opium factories, with projections indicating a potential profit of Rs900 million for the pharmaceutical sector.

Regarding service delivery, the Excise Department briefed the CM on its plans to offer services through the Dastak Program and collaborate with the Safe Cities Authority for challan recovery.

JIT to probe attack on Chinese engineers, says info minister

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD

Information Minister Attaulah Tarar said on Wednesday that a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) will be formed to probe the terrorist attack on Chinese engineers in Besham.

Addressing the media following a high-level moot of the country's top security and civil officials, the minister said the meeting recognised the imperative of a "coordinated strategy" to tackle terrorism.

The high-profile meeting was attended by the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Syed Asim Munir, federal ministers, chief ministers, chief secretaries, and IGPs of the four provinces.
Tarar also said that it was decided to establish a mechanism aimed at enhancing collaboration among pertinent stakeholders.

The minister emphasised the



pivotal role of security forces in the fight against terrorism and said the commitment of all forces to "leave no stone unturned" was applauded in the meeting.

He also condemned efforts by anti-Pakistan elements to disrupt the longstanding friendship between Pakistan and China, asserting that such attempts would be futile.

The information minister lauded China's unwavering support during challenging times, highlighting its consistent backing of Pakistan's stance on international platforms.

CJP summons full court meeting over IHC judges letter about spy agencies



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa on Wednesday summoned a full court meeting of the apex court over the letter written by the six Islamabad High Court judges about the alleged interference of spy agencies in judiciary.

The meeting will begin shortly. The development takes place after the bar associations and legal experts called for a probe into the letter.

Sources said that the meeting will

deliberate upon the letter by the IHC judges. They said that the Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan met the CJP and discussed the matter.

After the meeting, AGP said while talking to journalists that the matter is serious and it should be probed.

Bar associations of Sindh, Lahore, Islamabad and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well as senior lawyers condemned the alleged interference, urging the top judge to look into the matter.

Letter by IHC judges
The letter, written a day earlier on Tuesday, urged the council to convene a judicial convention over the alleged interference of members of the executive, including operatives of intelligence agencies, in judicial affairs.

The IHC judges—who wrote the letter to the SJC—include Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, Justice Babar Sattar, Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan, Justice Arbab Muhammad.

PHC directs KP Assembly speaker to administer oath to MPAs elected on reserved seats

Soon Times Correspondent PESHAWAR

The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Wednesday directed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Speaker Babar Saleem Swati to administer the oath to the lawmakers elected on reserved seats.
The decision was announced after a two-member PHC bench comprising Justice Attique Shah and Justice Shakeel Ahmad had reserved the verdict earlier today on a petition filed by the opposition parties in the provincial assembly regarding the swearing-in of the members.
Oath-taking on reserved seats in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been

subject to controversy owing to the deadlock between the provincial government and opposition parties, wherein the former has objected to the KP governor's decision to summon the assembly session upon the opposition's request.
On Monday, opposition parties including the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) had moved the PHC, seeking timely oath-taking of members linking it to their ability to participate in the upcoming Senate elections.
The issue has become crucial for both the ruling and opposition parties as it will play an important role in the Senate polls slated for April 2.

PTI questions credibility of verdicts against Imran following judges' letter

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders associated on Wednesday the letter written by six Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges to the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) to court decisions against party founder Imran Khan and claimed the same have lost their credibility.

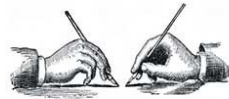
Six IHC judges reached out to the SJC a day earlier seeking clarity on the alleged intrusion of executive members, including intelligence operatives, in judicial matters.

Addressing a press conference today, PTI chairman Barrister Gohar Khan, accompanied by general secretary Omar Ayub and information secretary Raouf Hasan, highlighted the unprecedented nature of the letter, terming it as "the first of its kind".
Gohar emphasized the alleged pressure faced by the judges, suggesting external influences



aimed at swaying arbitrary decisions, which he argued depleted judicial independence. "The judges have run out of patience," he added.
The PTI chief said the judges' letter cites the Tynian White case, adding that the Toshakhana case is also an example. He maintained that the undue influence impacted the judges of the sessions court, adding that six judges of the IHC also came under

pressure.
Gohar cited the alleged interference in judicial matters as the reason Imran was sentenced in three different cases within a span of five days. He criticized the previous coalition government, that took over the reins following Imran's ouster in a no-confidence motion in April 2022, for allegedly fabricating 200 cases against the PTI founder.



Besham terrorist attack

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday instructed to conduct a thorough joint investigation of the Besham terrorist attack on Chinese nationals working on Dasu Hydel Power Project, utilizing all resources of the state. The prime minister offering deepest condolences to the families of the innocent victims of the attack assured that the perpetrators of this barbaric act would be brought to justice swiftly. Chairing a high level emergency meeting in the aftermath of Besham terrorist attack on Chinese nationals, the prime minister appreciated the alacrity with which law enforcement agencies and locals responded to the attack, saving many precious lives which could have been lost. The

meeting was attended by the Federal Ministers, Chief of the Army Staff, Chief Ministers, Chief Secretaries and Inspector Generals of Police of respective provinces, a PM Office press release said. The meeting discussed in detail the heinous attack on innocent civilians working on a development project, meant to contribute to energy and water security of Pakistan. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif underscored the enduring bond of brotherhood between the people of Pakistan and China and conveyed that the whole nation was saddened by the loss of Chinese lives. He stated, "Terrorism is a transnational threat that has been instrumentalized by the enemies of Pakistan to stymie Pakistan's progress and development. The

acts targeting Pakistan-China friendship are particularly aimed at creating mistrust between the two iron brothers". Participants of the meeting expressed resolute commitment to completely rooting out terrorism from this country. The participants expressed serious concerns over sanctuaries available to terrorists across the borders and emphasized upon the need for a regional approach for countering terrorism. During the meeting, the COAS reiterated the resolve of armed forces to eliminate the scourge of terrorism afflicting the country. COAS stated that the nation had steadfastly fought the war on terror for the last two decades and had defeated the nefarious designs of Pakistan's adversaries. Noting the recent

surge in terrorist incidents, COAS remarked that the enemies of Pakistan had once again underestimated the resilience and grit of the State and the people of Pakistan. He said, "we shall fight terrorism till every terrorist casting an evil eye on Pakistan, its people and their guests, is eliminated; we shall not leave any stone unturned to ensure that every foreign citizen, especially the Chinese nationals, contributing to the prosperity of Pakistan, is safe and secure in Pakistan. We shall fight terrorism with all our might, to the very end." The meeting concluded with the participants reiterating resolve to comprehensively combat terrorism employing all resources available to the state.

Artificial Intelligence in Waste Management



Engr. Sayed Mazhar Ali

transportation. Waste creation is growing at an alarming rate. Underdeveloped countries are developing without effective waste management systems for their population. Our oceans are congested with plastic debris, which accounts for 90% of marine trash. Rapid population expansion, urbanization, and economic development will cause global garbage to rise to 3.40 billion by 2050.

As the technology is growing and world becomes more reliant on it, artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming a solid tool. Artificial intelligence can easily make a significant impact on waste management. Using artificial intelligence has main benefit for waste management better understands patterns of waste production and consumption. With this data, we are able to develop a efficient plans for waste management. We can forecast the future waste production levels and can plant according to received information using artificial intelligence. Furthermore, artificial intelligence can help to develop more efficient disposable strategies, by analyzing data on waste being produced and where they are being disposed of.

Artificial intelligence with use of internet of things can optimize waste management in many aspects as:

Machine vision for recycling: The process of separating recyclables from waste is done by humans. It consumes cost and time for recycling of

materials. The machine vision is image processing technology which can be easily utilized to separate the materials in waste.

Intelligent Smart Dustbins: IoT-enabled smart dustbins can be able to send alerts when they are full. It gives benefit in itself, especially it stops people throwing garbage in bin. Data from bins can be collected is used to forecast using artificial intelligence for making efficient strategies and planning for waste management.

Predictive Maintenance: Waste collection can take a heavy toll on equipment. To keep trash trucks and smart bins in better condition, AI may be applied to keep an eye on condition of equipment and vehicles, forecast when they will need repairment. This saves the time, money and makes efficient planning for waste management.

As we strive to make the world a cleaner environment, it is clear that artificial intelligence will play an important role in waste management. Artificial intelligence can help us build better planning strategies, improve recycling facilities, and optimize waste management workflows. Our waste management system is designed to be as effective and sustainable as possible by utilizing AI. It will be interesting to observe how artificial intelligence affects trash management in the years to come.

Mahira's husbands are hot: Fans crack up as scholar deems marriages in dramas valid

Showbiz Desk

A recent statement made by a religious scholar on a television show regarding the portrayal of nikkah (marriage) in dramas has sparked a heated debate on social media platforms. According to the scholar, if two actors enact a scene of nikkah in a drama, their marriage would be deemed valid in reality.

The assertion made by the religious scholar has stirred widespread controversy, with individuals from the entertainment industry and social media influencers weighing in on the matter. Notably, model and actor Nadia Hussain took to her Instagram to express her concerns regarding the declaration.

In a lengthy video shared on her Instagram account, Nadia was visibly shocked by the scholar's viewpoint. She highlighted that the portrayal of nikkah in dramas



is purely fictional. She further pointed out the use of fake names, witnesses, and signatures in these fictional scenarios, asserting that the entire setting is not conducive to a legitimate marriage ceremony. Nadia further argued that such statements from religious scholars on television could potentially set a dangerous precedent by incorrectly legitimising invalid marriages. Joining the discussion, comedian Ali Gul Pir shared the widely

circulated discussion video on his Instagram Story, injecting humour into the debate by humorously suggesting that uttering the phrase "Say pencil, your marriage cancel" would lead to divorce. Similarly, actor Ushna Shah also took a lighthearted approach to the controversy, jokingly remarking on owing her husband an explanation in light of the scholar's assertion. "Time for an awkward conversation with my husband," she stated.

PSX extends gains, nears 66,000 mark

KARACHI:

Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued its bullish momentum as it extended gains from the previous session, primarily fuelled by a surge in stock valuations in oil and banking sectors.

Though trading commenced with the intra-day low of 65,492.70 points, the KSE-100 index gradually climbed upwards later. The positive trajectory got support from different factors including surging global equities, stability of the Pakistani rupee amid robust foreign currency inflows, and elevated global crude oil prices. Although certain stocks registered losses, the positive performance from fertiliser, banking and cement sectors aided the overall bullish sentiment. The market maintained its upward march for almost throughout the session and reached the intra-day high of 65,989.54 towards the end of trading. Eventually, the KSE-100 index closed near the 66,000 level with gains of nearly 400 points. "Stocks closed higher, led by oil and banking shares on strong valuations," said Ahsan Mehanji, MD of Arif Habib



Corp. "Surging global stocks, rupee stability amid foreign inflows and higher global crude oil prices played the role of catalysts in bullish close at the PSX." At close, the benchmark KSE-100 index recorded an increase of 380.63 points, or 0.58%, and settled at 65,906.28.

Topline Securities, in its report, said that Tuesday's trading session at the Pakistan stock market concluded at 65,906, marking a 0.58%, or 381-point, increase.

Contributing positively to the index were fertiliser, banking and cement sectors, with Fauji Fertiliser, Meezan Bank, United Bank, Lucky

Cement, and Engro Corp collectively adding 305 points.

Conversely, Engro Fertilisers, Bank Alfalah and MCB Bank incurred losses totalling 51 points, it noted. Arif Habib Limited (AHL), in its review, wrote that the PSX knocked on the 66,000 mark again, which had been tested in six sessions since the start of March. "Bias remains for an eventual breach and moves towards new highs," it said.

"The index is currently looking poised to breach 66,000 this week and see accelerated gains," AHL said, adding that 58 shares rose while 33 fell with Fauji Fertiliser (+4.31%).



Hon'ble Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training is being briefed by the NAVTC Regional office officials during his visit on 27 March 2024



Commissioner Sargodha convinces traders to reduce chicken meat price



Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha: Commissioner Sargodha Division, Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti, convened a meeting in his office on Wednesday, taking notice of the rising prices of chicken meat. Director Livestock,

representatives of chicken Farmers and Traders Association, along with Deputy Commissioners of Khushab, Mianwali and Bhakkar, attended the meeting. The Commissioner directed individuals associated with the broiler business to ensure effective implementation of

orders and prescribed rates to reduce prices during the remaining days of Ramadan and on the days of Eid ul-Fitr. He emphasized that Ramadan is a month of blessings and mercy, urging every businessman to contribute to providing relief to the public during these sacred times. Broiler farms and traders announced an immediate reduction of Rs. 10 per kilogram in the price of chicken meat, unanimously agreeing to further decrease prices to the possible extent in coming days. They told that due to the absence of a broiler market in Sargodha, rates are fixed according to Rawalpindi market. They assured that rates in Sargodha Division would be Rs. 10 less than those in Rawalpindi market. They further explained that noted generally, broiler consumption decreases during Ramadan, leading to the production of lesser chicks on farms, but this year an extraordinary increase in prices is being observed due to an increase in consumption.



Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain presenting souvenir to Turkish Ambassador H.E. Dr. Mehmet Façacı in Islamabad on March 27, 2024.

Senate election: Five from PML-N, two from SIC elected unopposed in Punjab

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD Seven candidates have been elected unopposed from Punjab on general seats in the Senate election. According to details, these seven candidates include five from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and two from the Sunni Itehad Council (SIC). The five candidates elected unopposed from the PML-N include Pervaiz Rasheed, Nasir

Mehmood, Ahad Cheema, Talal Chaudhry and the coalition government-backed Mohsin Naqvi. Similarly, advocate Hamid Khan and Raja Nasir Abbas have been elected unopposed from the SIC. These seven candidates got elected unopposed after Waleed Iqbal, Shihabzad Waseem, Ijaz Minhas, Musaddik Malik and Umar Cheema withdrew their nomination papers for the Senate election.

PS Satellite failed to arrest murderer of innocent citizen

Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha: According to details, a few days ago, a few people shot and killed Muhammad Ali Tipu, a citizen, while his son was seriously injured, in broad daylight near Forough-e-Taleem School located in Satellite Police Station area. The senior police officers comforted for the

immediate arrest of the accused. But despite the passage of several days, the main accused Malik Inran and others are still roaming freely. The residents of the area have also demanded immediate justice for the victim's family. The relatives have alleged that the SHO Satellite Town police station is providing relief to the accused while pressuring them

to remain silent. The residents of the area have demanded the IG Punjab to immediately order the DPO of Sargodha to arrest the accused and also issue instructions to stop the threats to them. Residents of the area say that they will protest if the accused are not arrested immediately.



Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari addresses the CEOs and chairmen of DISCOS via video link in Islamabad on March 27, 2024.

Fundamental changes required to improve border situation: Khawaja Asif

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD Defence Minister Khawaja Asif says fundamental changes are required to improve the border situation with Afghanistan. Khawaja tweeted that the Afghan soil was being used for terrorism in Pakistan. "Pak-Afghan border has a unique position in the world and it is different from other borders of the countries," said the defence minister. As Afghanistan government has failed to cooperate to stop terrorism in



Pakistan, the country must keep all options open, he suggested, adding despite efforts, the Afghan government was not taking up the issue.

President Zardari visits Chinese embassy, condoles killing of Chinese engineers

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday visited the Embassy of People's Republic of China and offered condolences on behalf of the government and people of Pakistan over the killing of Chinese citizens in a terrorist attack in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bisham town. The president strongly condemned Tuesday's terrorist attack, saying that the Pakistani nation shared the grief of the Chinese people. He said that the people of Pakistan stood in solidarity with the Chinese people in this hour of grief. Upon his arrival, the president was received by Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong. During his meeting with the Chinese ambassador, President Zardari said that enemies in the region couldn't accept the fact that Pakistan and China were further strengthening their bilateral



ties. He assured the Chinese ambassador that the criminals involved in the gruesome act would be apprehended and brought to justice. Zardari further said that all necessary measures would be taken to ensure the security of Chinese citizens working on various projects across Pakistan. The Chinese ambassador thanked the president for personally visiting the embassy to offer condolences. He appreciated that Pakistanis from all walks of life had condemned the terrorist attack. Zaidong highlighted that Chinese workers had made outstanding contributions

towards Pakistan's socio-economic development. He said that terrorists were enemies of humanity and needed to be hunted down for targeting innocent people. The ambassador underscored the need for increasing counter-terrorism cooperation and providing enhanced security to Chinese workers in Pakistan. He reiterated his country's resolve to further strengthen cooperation with Pakistan and continue its support for CPEC and other projects. While registering his remarks in the Visitor's Book at the Chinese embassy, the president stated that the inhuman attack struck at the core of shared values and the enduring friendship between the two countries. "This incident was orchestrated by the enemies of Pakistan-China friendship", he added. He also wrote that "Pakistan would never allow terrorists to undermine our shared goals for peace, prosperity and security in the region".

Balochistan may elect senators unopposed on April 2

Soon Times Correspondent QUETTA It has been proposed to elect unopposed senators in Balochistan in the upcoming election scheduled to be held on April 2. As per sources, there is a possibility of mutual agreement on unopposed election of senators among political parties. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) will get three seats each out of 11 seats of Senate for Balochistan. Read more: ECP issues schedule for Senate election Jamaat Ulema-e-Islam will get two seats or

senators in Balochistan. The Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), the National Party and the Awami National Party (ANP) will get one seat each in the Senate. As per the schedule, the polling for the Senate election will be held on April 2 in the upper house and four provincial assemblies. Also read: Polling for Senate's 48 vacant seats on April 2 The Senate election is held every three years when one-half of the members of the upper house retire after completion of their tenure.

LHC grants permission to Usman Dar to perform Umrah

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE Court has allowed Usman Dar to perform Umrah by accepting the plea seeking name removal from the Provisional National Identification List (PNIL). Lahore High Court's (LHC) Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza heard the plea filed to remove Dar's name from the PNIL. During the hearing, Dar's counsel stated that his client wanted to perform Umrah along with his family but he was unable to do so as the Federal Investigation Agency had included his name in the PNIL, barring him from travelling abroad. The counsel added that Dar had requested police and the FIA for his name to be removed from the PNIL but the said departments hadn't taken any action on the



application. Usman Dar's counsel requested the court to order the removal of his name from the list and direct the FIA to abstain from hindering his travel to Saudi Arabia. The court accepted Usman Dar's plea and directed the authorities to remove his name from the no-fly list to enable him to perform Umrah. Meanwhile, the LHC also accepted Usman Dar's seven-day protective bail in the GHQ attack case.



NCRC Chairperson Collaborates with Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan to Elevate Child Rights Agenda and Boost Pakistan's Global Image in Islamabad on March 27, 2024.



Eighth suspect in Moscow attack appears in court, rights commissioner warns on torture



MOSCOW/DUSHANBE Russia remanded in custody on Tuesday a Kyrgyzstan-born man suspected of involvement in Friday's mass shooting at a Moscow concert hall, and sent investigators to Tajikistan to question the families of four men charged with carrying out the attack. Eight suspects have now been remanded in pre-trial detention since gunmen sprayed concertgoers with bullets in the deadliest attack in Russia in two decades, days after President Vladimir Putin declared an election that handed him a fifth term. Islamic State has claimed responsibility and released footage from the attack. The United States and France say intelligence suggests the group was indeed behind the attack, in which 139 people were killed and 182 wounded. Putin said on Monday the attack had been carried out by Islamic militants but also suggested that Ukraine, which is at war with Russia, may have played a role. Ukraine has denied any role.

Finnish unions extend strikes over labour reforms by another week



HELSINKI Finland's industrial, logistics and electrical workers have agreed to extend strikes in protest against planned labour market reforms to a fourth week, the head of trade union association SAK said on Wednesday. "The workers have been on strike since March 11, targeting exports, imports and cargo transportation. "The strikes will continue from Monday morning onwards for a week," SAK President Jarkko Elovirta told Reuters. "We are trying to negotiate and compromise with the government but unfortunately there has been no response to these efforts."

Several of Finland's largest companies have said the strikes, which are disrupting ports and the rail system, are negatively affecting their operations. Employers' organisation EK said in a statement that SAK had not presented credible alternatives to the planned reforms. It estimated that the strikes had a negative effect on GDP of nearly 300 million euros (\$325 million).

Medvedev, Alcaraz and Sinner through in Miami



Defending Miami Open champion Daniil Medvedev and top seed Carlos Alcaraz marched into the quarter-finals of the tournament on Tuesday with convincing victories. Medvedev earned a 7-6 (7/5), 6-0 win over Germany's Dominik Koepfer while Alcaraz took care of Italian Lorenzo Musetti with a 6-3, 6-3 win in 85 minutes.

Second seed Jannik Sinner of Italy also moved into the last eight beating Christopher O'Connell of Australia 6-4, 6-3. Alcaraz, who is searching for the 'Sunshine Double' after winning in Indian Wells, was too much for 23rd seed Musetti although the Italian certainly contributed to a crowd-pleasing contest.

Stadium court erupted after a rally in the third game of the second set saw Musetti clip the ball between his legs, lobbing Alcaraz, but the Spaniard returned it with a 'twener' only to lose the point to a deft volley at the net. But overall it was a comfortable match for Alcaraz whose all-round game looks in strong shape.

"I don't know if this is the best game I've played but without a doubt it is the best feeling I feel great on the court, I'm moving great, I am not injured and not thinking about my ankle anymore...it's the best feeling since the summer," he added.



Dozens killed in Israeli strikes on north and south of Gaza

"A new massacre against the families of Abu Suhail Abu Haseera, his children and grandchildren,

CAIRO RAFAH Israeli strikes killed dozens of Palestinians at both ends of the Gaza Strip overnight, hitting the area around Al Shifa hospital in the north and Rafah on the southern edge where more than a million people have sought shelter. In the north, where intense fighting has raged for more than a week around Al Shifa, members of the Haseera family told Reuters dozens had been killed in a strike that wiped out a family compound near Gaza's biggest hospital.

"A new massacre against the families of Abu Suhail Abu Haseera, his children and grandchildren, totalling around 30 people," family member Abu Ali Abu Haseera said in a text message to Reuters. Reuters journalists were not able to reach the area around Al Shifa, which Israeli forces stormed on March 18. Israel says it has killed and arrested hundreds of Hamas fighters who were using the hospital as a base. Hamas and medical staff deny fighters were present and say civilians have been rounded up.

In the south, where more than half of Gaza's 2.3 million people are sheltering in Rafah against the border fence with Egypt, health authorities said 18 people including eight children were killed in a strike on the Abu Nqira family home. Blankets and children's clothes were strewn amid the rubble on Tuesday morning, where relatives picked through the debris to retrieve belongings. Outside, a pillar of reinforced concrete had crushed a burn-out car. Family members wept over corpses laid out at a nearby hospital morgue.

Israel says it plans a ground offensive into Rafah, where it believes most Hamas fighters are now sheltering. Its closest ally the United States opposes such an assault, arguing it would cause too much harm to civilians who have sought refuge there. Also in the south, a siege by tanks around two other hospitals in Khan Younis continued for the third day.

PCB refutes FICA's claim of PSL payment delays

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has refuted FICA's claim of PSL payment delays, asserting that there has never been a delay in payments in the league's history. Usman Wahla, the PCB's director of international cricket operations, stated that all players have been paid on time in all nine seasons of the PSL.



"There is no - and never has been - any delay in player payments in any of our nine PSL seasons... we have written to FICA to rectify this in our document," Wahla told ESPNcricinfo. The league's contract terms ensure prompt payment, with 70% of the fee disbursed within seven days of arrival in Pakistan and the remaining 30% within 40 days of the final match.

This rebuttal comes after the Federation of International Cricketers' Associations reported payment issues across various franchise leagues, including the PSL, over the past two years.

The PCB previously denied any payment issues in the PSL, even when Australian player James Faulkner withdrew from the 2022 season, alleging contract non-fulfillment.

PCB nears coaching decision, Kirsten and Ronchi offered long-term contracts



The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) will make the decision regarding the appointment of new coaching staff for the Pakistan cricket team by next week. PCB officials are in talks with South Africa's Gary Kirsten and New Zealand's Luke Ronchi for coaching positions of national

team after Shane Watson, Mike Hesson, and Darren Sammy turned down offers.

However, both Kirsten and Ronchi have requested time before giving their consent. Long-term contracts have been offered to both of them, and they have asked for some time to consult with their families

and friends before providing their response.

Although senior players have expressed interest in participating in the decision-making process regarding coaching appointments, they have yet to be consulted. However, they have expressed no objection to foreign coaches, given their familiarity with them from various franchise leagues.

The board officials will also acquire the services of local coaches along with foreign coaches. Saqib Ajmal and Umar Gul already have a two-year contract with the board. It is worth noting that PCB officials are handling the coaching matters with caution and confidentiality as they work towards finalizing the deal.

Pakistan players slip down in latest ICC Test rankings

Dhananjaya de Silva's outstanding performance in the first Test against Bangladesh has elevated him to the brink of the top 10 batsmen globally. His twin centuries as Sri Lanka's new Test captain led to a massive 328-run victory, propelling him to a career-high rating in the ICC Men's Test Player Rankings. De Silva's remarkable feat saw him ascend a remarkable 15 places to claim the 14th position overall, courtesy of his scores of 102 and 108. The 32-year-old's stellar performance elevated his rating points to an all-time high of 695, placing him a mere 40 points shy of cracking into the esteemed top 10 list of Test batsmen worldwide.

As a result of De Silva's ascent, Pakistani batters Saud Shakeel and Mohammad Rizwan each slid one spot in the rankings. Shakeel now occupies the 15th spot with 693 rating points, while Rizwan descended to the 18th position with 668 rating points. Meanwhile, Pakistan's batting stalwart, Babar Azam, maintains his position at third place with 768 rating points, with New Zealand's Kane Williamson leading the chart with 859 rating points. Sri Lanka's joy extended to the updated rankings for Test bowlers, with right-arm quick Kasun Rajitha emerging as one of the notable climbers following his five-wicket haul in the second innings against



Bangladesh. Rajitha's commendable performance propelled him six places up to the 38th position, boasting 515 rating points. Furthermore, teammates Vishva Fernando and Lahiru Kumara also made significant strides, with Fernando ascending seven spots to 43rd place and Kumara climbing six rungs to share the 46th position. Rajitha's rise resulted in Naseem Shah slipping down to the 39th spot with 514 rating points. Fernando's advancement to the 43rd position with 489 points saw Noman Ali and Abrar Ahmed each dropping two places to 44th and 45th, respectively. Furthermore, Anwar Jamal also descended one place, now sharing the 46th spot with Lahiru Kumara. Shaheen Afridi remains the sole Pakistani bowler in the top ten, securing the tenth spot with 733 rating points.

UK Libor trader Hayes loses appeal against rate-rigging conviction



LONDON

Tom Hayes, the first trader jailed worldwide for interest rate rigging, lost his appeal against his conviction in a London court on Wednesday.

Hayes, a former star Citigroup (C.N), opens new tab and UBS (UBSG.S), opens new tab trader, was convicted in 2015 of conspiracy to defraud by manipulating Libor, a benchmark rate once used to price trillions of financial products globally. Prosecutors said Hayes and other traders were acting illegally by taking their or their employer's commercial interests into account when they made submissions on the London interbank offered rate (Libor). Hayes, who was released from prison in 2021 after serving half of an 11-year sentence, has always said that the Libor rates he requested fell within a permissible range - and that his conduct was common at the time and condoned by bosses.

His appeal against his conviction was heard alongside that of Carlo Palombo, a former Barclays (BARC.L), opens new tab trader convicted in 2019 of skewing Libor's euro equivalent, Euribor.

Their cases were referred to the Court of Appeal in London after a landmark U.S. court decision in 2022, in which two former Deutsche Bank (DBKGn.DE), opens new tab traders' convictions for Libor rigging were overturned.

Hayes and Palombo's appeals were dismissed, senior judges announced on Wednesday after a hearing which began last week.

Judge David Bean said in a summary of the Court of Appeal's decision that both Libor and Euribor "required the submission of what the individual bank 'could' borrow, which must mean the cheapest rate available to it".



Rohingya rescued off Indonesia relocated after local anger

JAKARTA Dozens of Rohingya refugees saved after their boat capsized off Indonesia's westernmost coast last week have been forced from their temporary shelter due to local protests, a United Nations refugee agency official said on Wednesday.

The mostly Muslim ethnic Rohingya are heavily persecuted in Myanmar, and thousands risk their lives each year on long and expensive sea journeys to try to reach Malaysia or Indonesia. But the influx of refugees has sparked anger in Indonesia's Aceh province, where some locals have pushed boats carrying Rohingya back into the sea or tried to storm their temporary shelters in recent months.

The survivors of last week's capsizing were taken a 10-minute drive away to the local government chief's office in West Aceh. UNCHR protection associate Faisal Rahman said AFP.

"They are moved to the backyard of the bupati (local regent) office," he said. Authorities last Thursday rescued 69 Rohingya refugees found after clinging to the hull of their overturned vessel for more than a day. Six others were rescued by fishermen a day earlier.

At least 11 Rohingya were found dead at sea after rescuers called off the search Friday, despite some survivors saying more than 150 people had been aboard the boat when it capsized.

The survivors were given shelter in an old Red Cross building in West Aceh Regency, but dozens of locals stormed the facility on Tuesday to demand their eviction, forcing authorities to move the group of 75 refugees.

Indonesia Foreign Ministry spokesman Lalu Muhammad Lajal told AFP Wednesday that Jakarta gave the Rohingya temporary shelter for humanitarian reasons but the UN and nations signed to the UN Refugee Convention were obliged "to give permanent shelter".

Indonesia is not a signatory to the convention. From mid-November to late January, 1,752 Rohingya refugees landed on Indonesian shores, according to the UNCHR, which said it was the biggest influx since 2015.

Some Aceh locals have protested against those who reached land. In December, hundreds of students forced the relocation of more than a hundred Rohingya refugees, storming a function hall where they were sheltering and kicking their belongings.

In another incident, a police line stopped locals from storming a Rohingya shelter on Aceh's Sabang island. Many Acehnese are sympathetic to the plight of their fellow Muslims. But others say their patience has been tested, accusing Rohingya of anti-social behaviour. Related Topics