

# Daily SOON TIMES



Balochistan CM condemns Kuchlak blast

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## Yusuf Raza Gilani, Saidal Khan Nasir elected Senate chairman, deputy unopposed

No candidate submitted nomination papers against them for the coveted Senate posts.



Islamabad: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses a ceremony at the proposed site of Danish School, Islamabad on 9 April, 2024.

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Saidal Khan Nasir Tuesday were elected as the Senate chairman and deputy chairman "unopposed" amid protests by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). No candidate submitted nomination papers against them for the coveted Senate posts. Earlier today, 41 newly-elected senators took oath as PTI members protests on the floor of the house, terming the process of election of chairman and deputy chairman as "unconstitutional" due to an "incomplete house". President Asif Ali Zardari had summoned the house to meet for its inaugural session today for the oath-taking of newly-elected members and the election of the Senate chairman and deputy chairman. When the session began today with Senator

Ishaq Dar as the presiding officer, the PTI members launched the protest and demanded adjournment of the house till the election of senators from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Speaking on the floor of the house, PTI leader Senator Ali Zafar demanded the Senate election be deferred as Article 59 of the Constitution requires 96 members to be present in the house for the election of its chairman and that the "process would be unconstitutional till the house is complete". "We will not accept this illegal election till the senators from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are duly elected and are present here," he insisted. Lamenting that Senate polls in Punjab were held excluding the reserved seats, the PTI leader said that the election of the house's chairman and deputy chairman are being made "controversial". "We wanted to participate in the election [of chairman and deputy chairman], however, we would not be part of it where it is ultra vires of the Constitution," Senator Zafar added.

## Malala urges PM Shehbaz to pay attention to girls' education



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai has greeted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on becoming PM. She hoped Pakistan would make headway under his leadership. The Nobel laureate urged the PM to pay special attention to the education of girls in the country. In her letter, she wrote that Malala Foundation has donated \$1.5 million for the promotion of girls' education in the country. She noted that Pakistan was spending only 2 per cent of the total budget on education and the foundation wanted the rate should be increased upto 4 per cent. She urged the government to pay more attention to the education of the girls in the first 100 days of the government.

## PTI trading on path of chaos, destruction: Khawaja Asif



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Tuesday alleged that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was trading on the path of chaos and destruction by inciting the politics of denial, violence and hatred. Talking to media outside the Parliament House, the Defence Minister expressed his stance on the Sunni Tehreek-PTI led Opposition in the Senate to boycott the Chairman and Deputy Chairman Senate elections. Khawaja Asif said the

decisions of the majority could not be rejected as in order continuation of the democratic system, no one's decisions could be imposed on the other. He said that there should be a dialogue and reconciliation between the political parties and opponents to resolve issues instead of contestation. "The PTI wanted to take the path of confrontation and we will not be an accomplice in chaos and violence. If the Opposition wants to make decisions, do it for the interest of democracy, country and the common man," the minister said. "Will not support decisions made by one person or others for personal interest as unilateral decisions cannot be imposed on us," he added.

## PM Shehbaz, Qatari emir exchange Eid greetings; discuss bilateral ties

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday held a telephonic conversation with Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, and extended greetings on the occasion of Eidul Fitr. Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated the close fraternal ties between Pakistan and Qatar and reaffirmed Pakistan's desire to closely working with Qatar in all areas of common interest. He reiterated his government's commitment to deepen economic and trade relations between the two countries. The Emir of Qatar warmly reciprocated Eid greetings and conveyed his best wishes to the people of Pakistan.

The prime minister reiterated his invitation to the Emir of Qatar to undertake an official visit to Pakistan who assured that he was keen to visit Pakistan at an early date. Both the leaders renewed their commitment to work closely with each other and further broaden the cooperation in all mutually beneficial fields. Last year marked the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations. Later, the prime minister wrote on X that during the conversation, they prayed for the unity of the Muslim Ummah and for the prosperity of Pakistan and Qatar. Besides, they also expressed their resolve to further deepening and solidifying relations between the two nations.



## CM Maryam Nawaz directs foolproof security on Eid



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has sought foolproof security arrangements on Chand Raat and Eidul Fitr. The chief minister said police and law-enforcement agencies should be vigilant on Chand Raat and Eid days. She also directed to ensure the best security arrangements for gatherings, especially in mosques and Imambarahs. Additional police personnel should be deployed in markets, she said, adding that senior police officers should also be in the field to review security arrangements. The chief minister said police would have to work diligently and the security plan should be implemented in letter and spirit.

## Aurangzeb to meet Donald Lu in US next week

The mission is expected to arrive Pakistan after the completion of the current programme this month.



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb would meet with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva in Washington next week but his interactions with the United States officials might remain at a junior level. Sources told The Express Tribune, that Aurangzeb was scheduled to

meet with United States Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Donald Lu - a fourth-tier official in the US administration. The minister might also meet with the US Deputy Under Secretary of Treasury - a third-tier official in the US administration. The Pakistani delegation, comprising Finance Minister Aurangzeb, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Governor Jameel Ahmad, Finance Secretary Imdad Ullah Bosal and Economic Affairs Division Secretary Dr Kazim Niazi, would visit Washington from April 13 to 21 to attend World

Bank-IMF Spring meetings. Pakistan's external financing requirements for the next fiscal year would hover above \$25 billion, which the country plans to bridge with the help of all the multilateral and some bilateral creditors. Pakistan has decided to use these spring meetings as an opportunity to formally request the IMF for sending a mission to Pakistan to begin negotiations for the medium-term Extended Fund Facility (EFF). The mission is expected to arrive Pakistan after the completion of the current programme this month. However, days before leaving for Washington to request the IMF.

## Pakistan Railways announces 25pc reduction in fares on Eidul Fitr



LAHORE (Web Desk) - Pakistan Railways has announced 25 per cent reduction in the fares as a special package for the commuters on the occasion of Eidul Fitr. According to a press release issued in Lahore today, railway fares will be reduced by 25 per cent for first three days of Eid ul Fitr. This discount will be available on all types of trains and classes. However, the discount will not be applicable on Eid Special trains, BUSES, TRAINS ARE OVERCROWDED AMID USUAL EID EXODUS. Meanwhile, the bus terminals and railway station are overcrowded with passengers as people want to go to their hometowns to celebrate Eidul Fitr with families. According to some reports, almost half of the people living in Lahore belong to other parts of the province and they always wish to celebrate Eid with their families. The government has announced a four-day holiday from April 10 till 13. Muslims offer special prayers on Eid morning and spend time with their families and loved ones. Long queues of passengers can be seen at the bus stands in the city. The general bus stand at Badami Bagh, city terminal on Bund Road and bus stand at Thokar Niazi Beg are overcrowded as the outsiders want to leave Lahore before midnight.

## Dar appointed leader of House in Senate

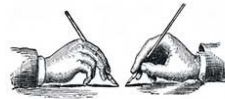


Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was appointed as leader of the House in the Senate on Tuesday, according to a notification issued by the Senate Secretariat. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who is also the president of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), appointed Dar to the post. "Dar will act as leader of the House on behalf of the Prime Minister to represent

Government and to regulate Government business in the Senate with effect from April 9, 2024," said the notification. Earlier, Peoples Party's (PPP) Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani was elected unopposed Senate chairman and PML-N's Syedul Khan Nasir deputy chairman on Tuesday. Presiding Officer Ishaq Dar administered oath to the newly-elected chairman. In his inaugural address, Gilani wished "Eid to all honourable senators."



From **SHAFQAT ABBAS AWAN** MNA NA-84 Sargodha



## Illegal Foreign Nationals

The fourth meeting of the Sub-Cabinet Committee on Law and Orders was held in the Home Department under the chairmanship of Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique on the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

Home Secretary, Special Secretary, Additional Secretary (Internal Security), Additional IG (Special Branch) Zulfiqar Hameed, DG (PP&PS) Muhammad Shahid Iqbal and other officers participated in the meeting. In the meeting, the

repatriation measures of illegally staying foreign nationals and the cases of release of prisoners serving their sentences in different jails of Punjab were reviewed. 11 prisoners have been ordered to be released. 39 prisoners have been released on parole since June

20, 2022. He said on this occasion that a strategy has been made to repatriate illegally staying foreign nationals across the province. The Home Secretary said that the help of NADRA, District Police and other law enforcement agencies is being sought in this regard.

## The Role of Diet and Lifestyle in Modern Health Crisis



Seerat Fatima

Hypertension, formally known as high blood pressure, is a commonly faced medical issue among people across the globe. Hypertension is caused by an increasing force of blood against the arteries, leading to serious health issues. Both systolic (when the heart beats or contracts) and diastolic (when the heart is at rest) numbers need to be monitored. Regular check-ups are the best way to diagnose hypertension; otherwise, no significant symptoms are observed in hypertensive patients. The risk of hypertension has been found to increase with old age. Many factors can contribute to this, but as the body ages, arteries can become constricted and less flexible, hindering blood flow. An unhealthy lifestyle throughout life

suffering from hypertension, and almost 18% of adults in Pakistan are coping with hypertension. Although hypertension can be aggravated by several factors, an unhealthy lifestyle and diet are worth mentioning. A low-sodium diet should be preferred by hypertensive patients because sodium directly influences blood pressure, and its intake must be limited. Patients should avoid foods that contain salt either directly or indirectly. Processed foods, salty snacks, and seasonal dishes often contain high levels of sodium. It's better to cook food at home rather than purchasing processed food and to add salt carefully. Adopt healthy cooking methods and use natural herbs and spices instead of salt in your food. Choose poultry and fish over processed meats, as they generally have lower sodium content. In contrast to sodium, potassium plays a vital role in regulating and lowering blood pressure. Potassium-rich foods are beneficial in a hypertensive patient's diet. Bananas are well-known for their high potassium content and can be included as a snack in a patient's diet. Oranges, a citrus fruit, also

potassium but also healthy fats that support heart health. Unlike potassium-rich foods, extremely fatty foods have adverse effects on human health and are a primary cause of several diseases, particularly hypertension. A diet rich in saturated fats increases cholesterol levels in our bodies, specifically LDL (low-density lipoprotein), which is considered bad cholesterol. LDL accumulates in arteries, causing blockages and increasing the risk of heart attacks and strokes. This buildup narrows and hardens blood vessels, making it difficult for them to dilate and contract, ultimately leading to increased blood pressure. Fatty foods also increase blood viscosity, making it harder for blood to flow easily through arteries, causing complications. Obesity is one of the major causes of hypertension, and the increasing rate of obesity, not only in older individuals but also among younger people, is concerning. It's worth mentioning that not all fats contribute to health hazards. Some monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats play a crucial role in human health. Foods like avocados, nuts, and fish are rich

various fatal diseases, including hypertension. Alcohol constricts blood vessels, leading to high blood pressure. It also acts as a diuretic, increasing urine production and potentially causing dehydration, which leads to a decrease in blood volume and an increase in blood pressure. Alcohol triggers stress hormones, such as adrenaline, which can affect blood pressure. Moreover, alcohol can lead to weight gain, and individuals with higher body weights are more vulnerable to hypertension. It's advisable to replace alcoholic beverages with healthier options like herbal tea, including green tea. Smoking is a harmful practice that humans engage in, jeopardizing their health. Smoke contains nicotine, which explicitly releases stress hormones, including adrenaline, and has a significant impact on heart rate and blood pressure. Smoking also adversely affects the internal lining of arteries (endothelium), reducing its elasticity and size. Narrowed arteries fail to allow blood to flow with normal pressure, leading to hypertension. Smoke contains devastating elements that restrict

Hypertension in young adults is not surprising. While the exact reasons for hypertension in youngsters are not known, an unhealthy lifestyle, poor dietary choices, excessive salt intake, alcohol consumption, and smoking are likely causes. People aged 18 to 30 are suffering significantly from hypertension. If hypertension occurs early in life, there is a prominent risk of uncontrolled high blood pressure later, which can adversely affect body organs, leading to issues such as kidney and heart failure. Stress is a significant cause of hypertension in our society. Under stress, our nervous system stimulates hormones that constrict blood vessels, leading to hypertension. Factors such as unemployment, job-related stress, emotional disturbances, financial instability, and the social environment impose significant mental stress on young minds. However, scientific studies have shown that stress may affect a person's mental health temporarily, but it does not cause long-term hypertension. Stress elevates blood pressure temporarily, manifesting hypertension symptoms, but the effect does not persist. Such

to combat highly adverse diseases. Regular exercise, a healthy diet, low mental stress, and an active lifestyle have long-term positive effects on human health. Humans need to abandon sedentary lifestyles and adopt healthier ones by making dietary changes. Nature has provided us with a bounty of blessings. Humans are fortunate to have found goodness in nature. Natural foods are available for humans, and nothing is more beneficial to human health than the fruits and vegetables found naturally. Humans should prefer non-harming and non-invasive therapeutic techniques to maintain a disease-free and healthy life. A healthy diet recommended by nutritionists or dieticians plays a primary role in the well-being of the body and mind. It not only has the power to heal but also provides long-lasting preventive effects on the body. Without external interference, the body can heal itself without suffering from side effects. An effective healing process is observed in patients who opt for a healthy diet and avoid restricted foods as advised by health consultants.

## The Political Divisions in Nebraska's Electoral Future



Dr. Muhammad Akram Zabeer

Nebraska is a triply landlocked state in the Midwestern region of the United States. It borders South Dakota to the north, Iowa to the east and Missouri to the southeast, both across the Missouri River; Kansas to the south; Colorado to the southwest, and

Wyoming to the west. Nebraska is the 16th largest state by land area, with just over 77,220 square miles. With a population of over 1.9 million, it is the 37th most populous state and the 7th least densely populated. Its capital is Lincoln, and its most populous city is Omaha, which is on the Missouri River. Nebraska was admitted into the United States in 1867, two years after the end of the American Civil War. The Nebraska Legislature is unlike any other American legislature in that it is unicameral and its members are elected without any official reference to political party affiliation.

The setback for a Donald Trump-backed initiative, Nebraska encountered a stumbling block in its endeavor to adopt a winner-take-all system for presidential elections in November. The proposal, supported by the former president, faced a critical moment on Wednesday as state lawmakers voted down a procedural motion, effectively thwarting its advancement. The Republican-dominated state legislature dealt a decisive blow to the measure, rejecting the procedural motion by a commanding margin of 36 votes to

eight. This outcome dashed hopes for proponents of the winner-take-all system, with one GOP state senator lamenting the missed opportunity, labeling it as "the last chance to pass winner-take-all this session." The defeat underscores the complexities and divisions surrounding electoral reform efforts, highlighting the challenges in altering established election procedures within the American political landscape. Despite the endorsements from former President Trump and Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen, LB 764, a legislative proposal by state Senator Loren Lippincott aiming to

allocate all five of Nebraska's Electoral College votes to the top-performing presidential candidate, has languished in the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee for over a year, resulting in renewed efforts to overcome the impasse through procedural maneuvers. The bill's intention to alter the allocation of electoral votes in the state has sparked significant debate and contention, reflecting broader national discussions on election reform and the Electoral College system. With its prolonged stagnation in committee, LB 764 underscores the complexities and challenges inherent in enacting electoral legislation, particularly when it involves fundamental changes to the electoral process. The involvement of prominent political figures such as Trump and Governor Pillen highlights the significance and polarizing nature of the proposed reforms, further amplifying the stakes involved in the ongoing legislative deadlock. As Nebraska navigates the intricacies of electoral reform, the fate of LB 764 remains uncertain, emblematic of the broader tensions surrounding electoral systems in the United States.

GOP state Senator Julie Slama recently brought forth a procedural vote aimed at potentially transitioning Nebraska to a winner-takes-all system for presidential elections, mirroring the majority of states. This initiative, proposed minutes before the vote, was presented as a pivotal moment by Slama, who asserted that the vote on the motion to override the chair would effectively signal support for the winner-takes-all approach. In her impassioned plea, Slama emphasized the significance of transparency, declaring that constituents and the nation at large were keenly observing. Despite her efforts, Slama garnered the support of only seven fellow GOP colleagues, falling short of the required number for passage and significantly below the threshold needed to overcome an expected Democratic filibuster, which would demand 33 votes. The outcome underscores the complexities and divisions within the political landscape, revealing the challenges associated with enacting substantial electoral reforms.

Democratic state Senator John Fredrickson responded to Wednesday's vote by addressing Trump and Turning Point USA CEO Charlie Kirk directly, particularly regarding Kirk's suggestion that a potential Republican presidential candidate might lose "by exactly ONE electoral vote" in November due to Nebraska's utilization of the congressional district method. This method involves allocating two electoral votes to the state popular vote winner and one electoral vote to the popular vote winner in each congressional district. Fredrickson's message, posted on X (formerly Twitter), emphasized the accountability of the Nebraska Legislature to the state's voters rather than to Kirk or Trump. He declared, "The Nebraska Legislature answers to the voters of Nebraska, not Charlie Kirk or Donald Trump." He underscored the significance of the vote as a means of safeguarding the Electoral College system in Nebraska, framing it as a victory for the populace's influence within the state. After Wednesday's vote, Lippincott expressed determination to persist in his efforts to advance LB 764, acknowledging the challenging outlook for the current year while affirming plans for a renewed push in the following year, characterizing it as the "varsity try." Despite the setback, Lippincott's commitment signals a sustained effort toward achieving his legislative goals. Concurrently, Nebraska state Senator Mike McDonnell's departure from the Democratic Party to join the GOP was notable. McDonnell cited the Democratic Party's internal response to his anti-abortion stance as a primary factor in his decision. This move underscores the complexities within political parties and highlights the ongoing debates surrounding contentious issues such as abortion within political spheres.



From  
**MALIK ABU BAKAR AWAN**  
Executive Editor Daily Manaqib



## SHO Sahiwal PS breaks network of drug dealers in Vijh

Soon Times Correspondent  
Sargodha:

SHO Sahiwal police station Muhammad AlZal Gondal arrested notorious drug dealers Karamat and Khalid in Vijh during a raid under the supervision of DSP Sahiwal Haq Nawaz Mehan. The drug dealers were wanted by the police. More than two kilos of hashish were recovered from the possession of drug dealers and various cases of drug

dealing have been registered against them. SHO Sahiwal police station said that the elimination of crimes is my first goal. Drug trafficking has destroyed many families. Vijh area was considered to be the stronghold of drug trafficking. Several drug dealers have been arrested from there. Those involved in drug trafficking do not deserve any exemption, so actions against them will continue.



Islamabad: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets a student of Danish School, Jang, Attock in the ceremony at the proposed site of Danish School, Islamabad on 9 April, 2024.

## KSE-100 crosses 70,000 mark in historic first

Soon Times Correspondent  
KARACHI:

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) reaches historic milestone as the benchmark index crossed the 70,000 mark on Tuesday on factors including hopes of a new International Monetary Fund (IMF) deal.

The benchmark KSE-100 index gained 694.73 points or 1% during the intraday trading to reach 70,314.71 points, up from the previous close of 69,619.98 points.

Saudi Arabia pledged to accelerate the first instalment of a \$5 billion investment in Pakistan, with Islamabad vowing to streamline the process to bolster economic cooperation between the two nations. This commitment was made during a meeting between Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Makkah on Sunday night.

The prime minister was on a three-day visit to seek economic assistance from the kingdom.

Mohammed Sohail, CEO of Topline Securities, in a post-market note, said the stock market crossed the 70,000 mark amid positive news on Saudi investment and



deposits. "Continuous foreign buying [is] also helping equities. KSE-100 is now up almost 70% from June end," he added. Samiullah Haq, head of research at Pak-Kuvam Investment Company, told Geo TV that the market is hopeful of a new IMF deal.

He also attributed the gain to high remittances and expectations of good company results to be announced for the March end quarter.

JS Research in a note said bulls maintained their control over the session, with the KSE-100 index concluding at 69,620, marking an increase of 1,203 points. Trading volume, however, decreased to 336 million shares from the previous session's 389 million shares.



## Al-Khidmat Foundation Pelo Wains distributed Eid gifts to orphans

Soon Times Correspondent  
Sargodha:

On the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid gifts were distributed to 42 orphans by Al-Khidmat Foundation Pelo Wains to bring the joy of Eid to the orphans in the suburbs of Pelo Wains. On this occasion, Ahmed Jasra, President of Al-Khidmat Foundation Pelo Wains

and Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Khushab District, Advocate Malik Muhammad Waris Jasra said that the sponsoring of orphans is great which has success in this world and the hereafter. They said that the role of donors in supporting orphans is commendable. Al Khidmat Foundation aims to help people financially. On this occasion, donors assured to provide full

support to Al Khidmat Foundation. On this occasion, a large number of political and social personalities including General Secretary Al-Khidmat Foundation Pelo Wains Zulqarnain Jasra, Malik Abdul Majid Bangi were present. At the end of the program, iftar dinner was organized.

## Appointment of SHO Muhammad Shahid in PS Urban Area; Drug dealers & gamblers are terrified

Soon Times  
Correspondent  
Sargodha:

It is a good move of DPO Sargodha Muhammad Faisal Kamran that he has posted the fearless police officer SHO Muhammad Shahid in the police station Urban Area. Drug peddlers and gamblers have been terrified in the area of Urban Area Police Station for a long time. The young generation was increasingly

involved in nefarious activities that required a good officer to stop them. Muhammad Shahid while talking to Soon Times said that protecting the life and property of the citizens is our first duty. According to the order of IG Punjab, cleanliness is maintained in the police station. Any citizen should feel at home in the police station. I have held a meeting with all the sub-inspectors and assistant sub-inspectors of

my police station to ensure the dignity of citizens. He has told the citizens that a police officer will ask for a bribe or make any demand from anyone. He said, if any of them demands anything from any citizen in the police station, I will take legal action against him. The doors of my office are open for the citizens. Every citizen's work will be done on merit and the FIR will be registered at the same time.



Federal Minister for SAFRON and Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan Engr. Ameer Muqam addressing the party workers in Swat on 09-04-2024.

## CM Punjab visits katcha area to monitor operation against miscreants

Soon Times Correspondent  
ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said his government would impose education emergency across country and the children will be equipped with education in the true sense.

Prime Minister Sharif, while addressing the inspection ceremony of Danish school site in Islamabad, greeted the federal education minister, ministers, chancellors and students and said it was a very happy day for him. Under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif,

Danish schools project was started, he said and added, Danish School supported those children whose parents had left the world. He said the parents of thousands of children and girls did not have resources for education.

"Today, the students of this school after getting education, exhibiting their excellence and proving their abilities in the whole world," said the prime minister. The prime minister said they were making excellent records in the field of sports as well.

"We faced a barrage of criticism when we started this project. I said when Aitchison

College can be built for the rich, why can't we build schools for the poor or orphans?" he said.

He said wonderful housing societies had been built in Islamabad, schools had been established for the children of the rich. "Is education only the right of the children of the elite? Is education not the right of poor boys and girls in Islamabad?" he asked. Prime Minister Sharif said a new era was going to begin at the federal level. "Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan. We will contribute for the project together with Balochistan chief minister," he said.

## Buses, trains are overcrowded amid usual Eid exodus

Soon Times Correspondent  
LAHORE

The bus terminals and railway station are overcrowded with passengers as people want to go to their hometowns to celebrate Eidul Fitr with families. According to some reports, almost half of the people living in Lahore belong to other parts of the province and they always wish to celebrate Eid with their families.

The government has announced a four-day holiday from April 10 till 13. Muslims offer special prayers on Eid morning and spend time with their families and loved ones. Long queues of passengers can be seen at the bus stands in the city.

The general bus stand at Badami Bagh, city terminal on Bund Road and bus stand at Thokar Niaz Beg are overcrowded as the outsiders want to leave Lahore before midnight.

The passengers also faced difficulty in getting the tickets as overcharging was rampant at the bus stands.

Similarly, the railway station was also overcrowded with the passengers because a large number of commuters travel by train.

Pakistan Railways had announced four special trains on the eve of Eidul Fitr this year to facilitate the passengers.

Railways authorities have instructed passengers to follow the standard operating procedures (SOPs) while



travelling by trains and at stations.

The first special train left Karachi for Peshawar. The second special train departed from Quetta for Rawalpindi.

The third special train left Karachi for Lahore. The fourth special train will depart from Lahore to Karachi at 5pm on April 9 (today).

### SOCIAL WELFARE & BAIT UL MAAL DEPARTMENT SARGODHA.

INVITATION FOR BIDS  
FOR FRAME WORK CONTRACT FOR PERIOD OF ONE YEAR FOR PROCUREMENT OF FURNITURE, MACHINERY AND OTHER ITEMS UNDER AOP SCHEMES 2023-25  
TENDER NO. SWD/S/GD/01/2023-24

1. Social Welfare & Bait ul Maal Department Sargodha, invites sealed bids from the eligible bidders for the Frame Work Contract for period of one year for Procurement of Furniture, Machinery and Other Items for following Schemes:

Sl. No.	Description of Items	Package Description	Package Wise Estimated Cost
1	Purchase of Furniture, Others and Machinery Equipment for the Development Projects.	PACKAGE-1 Furniture & Fixture	17,580,000
2	i) Establishment of Admin Block along with District Industrial Home at Sargodha.	PACKAGE-2 Machinery & Equipment	18,685,000
3	ii) Establishment of Multipurpose Hall in Social Welfare Complex Sargodha.	PACKAGE-3 Others	3,600,000
4	iii) Establishment of Panah Gah at all Divisional Headquarters across the Punjab Phase-1 One at Sargodha iv) Provision of Furniture & Equipment for institutions renovated through missing facilities Phase II including Sargodha Division and Faisalabad Division (Dar ul Amaan Sargodha, Manwali and Bhakkar)	Total	39,865,000

2. Bidders may get the Bidding Documents from the office of the Divisional Director Sargodha on the submission of written application along with payment of non-refundable fee of Rs. 3000/- (Two Thousand Rupees only). Bidding Documents are available up to 24-04-2024. OR bidders can download the copy of the Bidding Documents from the website of Punjab Procurement Regulatory Authority (www.pprapunjab.gov.pk), however, the receipt of purchase of bidding document shall be required to annex with technical bid even if it is downloaded from PPRPA.

3. The bidder is required to submit a 02% bid security mentioned against each package wise estimated cost in the form of CDR/ bankers cheque / bank guarantee from any scheduled bank in favor of Divisional Director, Social Welfare & Bait ul Maal, Sargodha.

4. Single Stage – Two Envelopes bidding procedure shall be applied as per rule 38(2) (a) of Punjab Procurement Rules, 2014.

5. The envelopes shall be marked as "TECHNICAL PROPOSAL" and "FINANCIAL PROPOSAL" in bold and legible letters. Sealed bids are required to reach on or before 24-04-2024 positively at the Office of Divisional Director, Social Welfare & Bait ul Maal, House No. 79 Awam Colony, Jail Road, Sargodha. Late bids will not be entertained. The technical bids received till the stipulated date & time shall be opened at 11:30 A.M on the same date in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives, who may choose to attend.

6. Detailed terms & conditions and specifications are given in the Bidding Document.

NOTE: The procurement shall be conducted as per PPRPA Rules, 2014.

### CONVENER PROCUREMENT COMMITTEE

DIVISIONAL DIRECTOR, SOCIAL WELFARE & BAIT UL MAAL, SARGODHA

DIVISION, SARGODHA

JAIL ROAD, SARGODHA: 048-9230542



## Vatican foreign minister travels to Vietnam in unprecedented Visit

HANOI

The Vatican's foreign minister Paul Richard Gallagher began an unprecedented six-day visit to Communist-ruled Vietnam on Tuesday as the two sides work on closer relations.

Gallagher's trip, the first to Vietnam for a Vatican foreign minister, could be followed by other top-level visits, including Pope Francis, who the Vatican has said is planning a trip to Indonesia.

Although no time frame for that trip has been announced, diplomats expect that could be combined with other countries in Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, if Francis' health allows. Gallagher said in January the pontiff was keen to visit Vietnam. Vietnam's foreign ministry said Gallagher will meet Vietnamese counterpart Bui Thanh Son late in the afternoon on Tuesday.

Vietnam News Agency reported Gallagher would also meet Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh and will hold mass at cathedrals in the capital city Hanoi, in Hue, in the centre of the country, and in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam's southern business hub.



## China's Xi meets with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov in show of support against Western

BEIJING

Chinese leader Xi Jinping met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Tuesday in a sign of mutual support and shared opposition to Western democracies amid Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

"We would like to express our highest appreciation and admiration for the successes that you have achieved over the years and, above all, over the last decade under your leadership," Lavrov told Xi, according to Russian media.

"We are sincerely pleased with these successes, since these are the successes of friends, although not everyone in the world shares this attitude and are trying in every possible way to restrain the development of China—in fact just like the development of Russia," Lavrov said.

Russia's growing economic and diplomatic isolation has made it increasingly reliant on China, its former rival for leadership of the Communist bloc during the Cold War. In past decades, the two have closely aligned their foreign policies, held joint military exercises and sought to rally non-aligned states.



## Threat alerts issued by terrorists for Champions League matches

As the government ramped up preparation for the Union of European Football Associations (Uefa) Champions League match between Manchester City and Real Madrid, authorities in Spain beefed up security amid receiving threats from a terrorist group Daesh.

Officials issued a high alert and activated all the emergency response systems, according to the local reports from Spain.

Despite, the terror threat, Uefa reiterated the commitment to carry out the first leg of the Sky-Blues and the Whites as per plan.

The threat was launched Monday by the militant outfit against all the four stadiums that are hosting quarter-final matches this week, including Arsenal's Emirates Stadium and Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu, the Mirror reported.

Bayern Munich is hosted by Arsenal and Manchester City by Real Madrid for their first legs Tuesday. Later on Wednesday, Borussia Dortmund will be travelling to face off against Atletico Madrid in the Spanish



## Pak vs NZ: PCB announces squad for New Zealand series

Sports Desk

LAHORE:

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday announced the much-awaited 17-member national squad for the upcoming T20I home series against New Zealand.

Pacer Mohammad Amir and all-rounder Imad Wasim, who recently reversed their retirement, have made a comeback in the squad for the series.

Meanwhile, Usman Khan and Muhammad Irfan Khan will debut for the national side. The two highly talented players earned the selectors' nod following impressive performances in the recently concluded ninth edition of the Pakistan Super League.

Babar Azam will lead the team in the five-match series after his reinstatement as white-ball skipper.

The five-match T20I series is scheduled to take place on April 18 and the visiting team will reach Pakistan on April 14.

Speaking during the press conference, Wahab Riaz, who is a selection committee member and senior team manager, said that the PCB has announced a squad of 17 players and five have been kept as reserves, which means that they will be relied upon to perform well ahead of finalising the World Cup squad before April 25.

"We will finalise which boys will be part of the World Cup squad from Pakistan before April 25."

Commenting on the return of Babar as captain as well as the lack of a vice-captain in the team, Wahab said: "Babar Azam is the white ball captain. As far as the vice-captain is concerned, discussions are still continuing. We want somebody to stand by Babar. We will look into everything that is beneficial for the betterment of the team and make announcements later."

## Protesters demanding restoration of Nepal's monarchy clash with police



KATHMANDU, Nepal

Hundreds of protesters demanding the restoration of the monarchy in Nepal clashed with riot police on Tuesday in Kathmandu.

Supporters of the former King Gyanendra, who was removed from power in 2008, attempted to

crash through police barricades in a bid to reach the offices of the prime minister and other key government departments.

Riot police used bamboo bats and fired water cannons to push back protesters. No major injuries were reported.

The protest was called by the Rastriya Prajatantra Party, or the National Democratic Party, a prominent supporter of Gyanendra.

"We love our king and country more than our lives. Bring back the monarchy. Abolish the republic," the crowd chanted.

The demonstrators also demanded that Nepal be turned back into a Hindu state. The Himalayan nation was declared a secular state in 2007 interim constitution. Weeks of street protests in 2006 forced Gyanendra to abandon his authoritarian rule and cede power back to Parliament. Two years later, Parliament voted to abolish the centuries-old monarchy.

Since then, Gyanendra has been living as a private citizen with no power or state protection.

## Putin claims Russia's military has the momentum in Ukraine and is poised to meet Moscow's goals

THE HAGUE, Netherlands

Germany on Tuesday strongly rejected a case brought by Nicaragua at the United Nations' top court accusing Berlin of facilitating breaches of the Geneva Convention and international humanitarian law by providing arms and other support to Israel in its deadly assault on Gaza.

"The minute we look closely, Nicaragua's accusations will appear," Christian Tams, a member of Germany's legal team, told the 16-judge panel at the International Court of Justice.

On Monday, Nicaragua urged judges to order a halt to German military aid to Israel, arguing that Berlin's support enables acts of genocide and breaches of international humanitarian law in Gaza.

The head of Germany's legal team, Tama von Usler-Gleichen, said, "Nicaragua's claims 'have no basis in fact or law. They are dependent on an assessment of conduct by Israel, not a party to these proceedings.'"

Preliminary hearings held Monday and Tuesday are focused solely on



Nicaragua's request for so-called provisional measures, including a court order for Berlin to halt military and other aid to Israel and reinstate funding to the U.N. aid agency in Gaza.

Closing Germany's arguments, Von Usler-Gleichen urged judges not to impose preliminary measures and to toss out Nicaragua's case.

Tams said that Germany had licensed only four exports of weapons of war to Israel since October, "three of which concern test or practice equipment." He said 98% of military exports to

Israel since the Oct. 7 attacks were not weapons of war, but other equipment.

Showing judges a photo of German aid being dropped over Gaza, Tams added that Berlin continues to provide humanitarian support to Palestinians "every single day under extremely difficult conditions, constructively engaging with international partners."

Nicaragua's case is the latest legal attempt to rein in Israel's offensive by a country with historic ties to the Palestinian people, after South Africa accused Israel of genocide

## Biden will meet Japan's PM Kishida amid shared concerns about China and differences on US Steel deal



WASHINGTON

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida begins a much-anticipated visit to Washington on Tuesday aiming to spotlight shared concerns about provocative Chinese military action in the Pacific and at a rare moment of public difference between the two nations over a Japanese company's plan to buy an iconic U.S. company.

Kishida and his wife will stop by the White House Tuesday evening ahead of Wednesday's official visit and formal state dinner as President Joe Biden looks to celebrate a decade-long ally he sees as the cornerstone of his Indo-Pacific policy. Kishida will be the fifth world leader honored by Biden with a state dinner since he took office in 2021.

Ahead of the White House visit, Kishida is set to visit Arlington National Cemetery and stop by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Tuesday. Biden and Kishida on Wednesday will hold talks and take part in a joint news conference before Biden fetes the Japanese leader with the state dinner in the East Room.

The prime minister has also been invited to address a joint meeting of Congress on Thursday. He will be just the second Japanese leader to address the body, Shinzo Abe gave a speech to Congress in 2015.

Ambassador Rahn Emanuel, Biden's envoy to Tokyo, sought Monday to downplay the impact of Biden's opposition to the U.S. Steel acquisition to the relationship. Emanuel noted that in February the Biden administration approved a plan that would drive billions of dollars in revenue to a U.S.-based subsidiary of the Japanese company Mitsu for crane production in the United States.



## UN atomic watchdog says status of Ukrainian nuclear plant occupied by Russia is 'extremely serious'

KYIV, Ukraine

An explosion caused by an alleged drone attack at Europe's largest nuclear plant in Ukraine on Tuesday posed no direct threat to its safety, but underscored the "extremely serious situation" at the facility that repeatedly has been caught in the war's crossfire, the U.N.'s atomic watchdog agency said.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said its team was aware of an explosion at a training center next to the plant. It said it was "informed" the blast was from a drone attack.

The IAEA, announcing the incident on the social platform X, gave no further details but its information presumably came from Russians occupying and running the plant since the early stages of the war.

The Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is one of the 10 biggest nuclear plants in the world, and fighting in the southern part of Ukraine where it is located has raised the specter of a potential nuclear disaster like the one at Chernobyl in 1986, where a reactor exploded and blew deadly radiation across a vast area.

Neither side has in recent months been able to make significant advances along the 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line crossing eastern and southern Ukraine. Drones, artillery and missiles have featured heavily in what has become a war of attrition.

Russia and Ukraine have frequently traded accusations over the Zaporizhzhia plant. On Monday,

Moscow alleged Ukraine was behind drone attacks on the facility a day before, and Kyiv accused Russia of disinformation tactics. The IAEA reported Sunday that its inspectors had confirmed "the physical impact of drone detonations" and watched as "Russian troops engaged what appeared to be an approaching drone." Energoatom, the Ukrainian nuclear plant operator, blasted Russia's latest allegations in a statement Tuesday. It accused Moscow of publishing "propaganda" and "false statements" to manipulate public opinion.

It noted that Russia has deployed troops and landmines at the site, which is one of four atomic power plants in Ukraine. The other three remain in Ukrainian hands.

"The dangerous game of the (Russian) occupiers at the nuclear facility must be stopped," it said. The most recent strikes did not compromise the facility, according to the IAEA. But the watchdog has repeatedly expressed alarm about the plant amid fears of a nuclear catastrophe.

The plant's six reactors have been shut down for months, but it still needs power and qualified staff to operate crucial cooling systems and other safety features.

According to Ukrainian emergency services, a nuclear disaster would compel the evacuation of some 300,000 people.