

# Daily SOON TIMES



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Iranian president likely to visit Pakistan this month

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## PTI challenges Senate chairman, deputy's election in IHC



ISLAMABAD  
The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has challenged the upcoming election of the chairman and deputy chairman of Senate in the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

PTI's five senators have filed the petition in the IHC to halt the election of chairman and deputy chairman of Senate.

The party has requested the court to halt the election till the election on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's senate seats.

Registrar Office reservations  
The Registrar's Office had raised objections to PTI's filed petition seeking discontinuation in the house of custodians' election.

The Registrar's Office has remarked that KP's Senate seat case was under proceeding at Peshawar High Court and moved to the court for reservations on Senate's seat in KP.



## Shahnawaz Amir acquitted of illegally possessing Kalashnikov

ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has reconstituted the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC). Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has made Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rama Tanveer Hussain a member of the ECC.

After inclusion of the minister of industries and production, the number of ECC members has gone up from six to seven. The finance minister will remain the chairman of the committee.

Earlier, the prime minister had appointed the finance minister as the chairman of the ECC on the reconstitution. The prime minister had withdrawn the decision to head the ECC himself.

The ECC members include federal ministers for commerce, power and petroleum. Federal ministers for economic affairs and planning are also part of the committee.



## President Zardari To address joint session of Parliament on April 16

ISLAMABAD

President Asif Ali Zardari has called a joint session of the Parliament on Tuesday, April 16 at 4pm, the press wing of the President House said in a statement. According to the statement, the president will address the joint session of Parliament at the commencement of the parliamentary year after the general elections under Article 56 (3) of the Constitution.

Meanwhile, he has convened the joint session of the Parliament under Articles 54 (1) and 56 (3) of the Constitution.

It should be noted that this will be the first joint session following the start of the new parliamentary year in the country after both the upper and lower house have its members elected constitutionally following the conduct of general elections.

Despite elections taking place on February 8 and former president Arif Alvi still in office, he was unable to summon a joint session as elections in the Senate were yet to be conducted.

# Shehbaz, MBS agree to expedite first phase of \$5bn Saudi investment in Pakistan

The meeting emphasised on KSA's support to Pakistan's economy.



Soon Times Correspondent  
ISLAMABAD  
Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have reaffirmed their commitment to expedite the first phase of a new Saudi investment package worth \$5 billion in Pakistan. This meeting came during a development held between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud at the Al-Safwa Palace in Makkah Mukarramah on Monday. According to an official communique, the discussions aimed to further strengthen the fraternal relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and explore ways to enhance bilateral

cooperation in various fields, including trade and investment. During the meeting, the Saudi crown prince congratulated PM Shehbaz on assuming office and extended good wishes. PM Shehbaz expressed gratitude to the prince for Saudi Arabia's unwavering support and hospitality, reiterating Pakistan's commitment to enhancing bilateral relations and economic cooperation. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to expedite the first phase of the new \$5 billion Saudi investment package in Pakistan. They also discussed mutual interests in regional and global developments, including the concerning situation in Gaza.

## Centre, provinces should jointly end terrorism: Bilawal



ISLAMABAD

Expressing his sorrow over the martyrdom of policemen in Lakki Marwat area of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa on late Friday night, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said the federal and provincial governments should work together to eliminate the bane of terrorism from the country.

"The complete elimination of terrorists and destruction of their nurseries is our national duty. We should all come together [for this purpose]," he added. The former foreign minister expressed his grief over the martyrdom of DSP Gul Muhammad Khan as well as his two guards Naseem Gul and Salam Khan in the Lakki Marwat attack.

"The nation is proud of the bravery of DSP Gul Muhammad and other martyrs. Those who sacrifice their lives to eradicate terrorists are our national heroes, he added."

Apart from the attack on police officials, the PPP chairman's call for uniting against terrorism has come in the wake of an attack on a Chinese convoy in the Besham town of K-P's Shangla district. Six people, including five Chinese engineers, were killed in a suicide attack in Besham on March 26. An explosive-laden vehicle parked on the roadside blew up when the convoy, transporting Chinese engineers to Dasu Hydropower Project from Islamabad, passed by. This was the second attack on Chinese workers at the Dasu project.

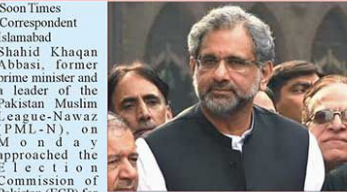
In July 2021, a similar terrorist attack claimed the lives of 13 people, including nine engineers. PM Shehbaz Sharif has already directed the interior ministry to increase cooperation with the provinces for the eradication of terrorism from the country. During a meeting, the premier announced that he would personally review the security arrangements of Chinese nationals.

He directed all the security agencies to take all the measures to ensure fool-proof security of the Chinese citizens present in Pakistan.

"We will continue the war against terrorism until it is eradicated from the country."

## Shahid Khaqan Abbasi to launch new political party

Ex-PM announces contesting next elections under banner of this new party; name not finalised yet



ISLAMABAD  
Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, former prime minister and a leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), on Monday approached the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for the registration of a new political party.

Abbasi arrived at the ECP office in Islamabad today where he submitted an application for the registration of the new political party. Along with the application, he also submitted the required documents.

"We're registering the party as per the Election Act 2017. We will actively participate under the banner of this party in the next elections," he concluded.

Abbasi had frequently alluded to the creation of a new party due to

his disagreements with the top leadership of the PML-N, and he had also suggested that a new party would emerge following the nationwide polls on February 8th.

In December last year, the former premier announced that he will not participate in the upcoming general elections.

In August, he took aim at his own government for eroding people's trust in the system, calling the National Assembly of that time the worst in the country's history.

# IHC rejects PTI's request to defer Senate chairman, deputy chairman elections

Party earlier today sought postponement due to 'incomplete' electoral college due to omission of K-P Senate elections



ISLAMABAD

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) rejected on Monday the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) request seeking deferment of tomorrow's elections on the slots of Senate chairman and deputy chairman.

The party has decided to boycott the elections. Earlier today, five PTI senators filed the petition, claiming the current electoral college was

incomplete and therefore 'unconstitutional', as Senate polls were not held in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P).

The party implored the court to postpone the chairman and deputy chairman polls till the election for Senate seats from K-P.

During today's hearing, PTI's counsel Shoaib Shauhan said it would be better if the elections, scheduled for tomorrow, were held after

Eid. "What could go wrong if the elections are held after Eid," he said.

However, IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq rejected the request shortly after reserving judgment. The court issued notices to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) seeking its response to the petition.

The party implored the court to postpone the chairman and

deputy chairman polls till the election for Senate seats from K-P. However, the registrar's office raised objections to the plea. "The case of the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Senate seats is already under hearing in the Peshawar High Court (PHC)," stated the registrar's office.

"For the election of the K-P Senate seats, the PHC should be approached," the registrar observed.

## PHC chief justice says all decisions made on merit



PESHAWAR

Peshawar High Court (PHC) Chief Justice Ibrahim Khan said that he made all the decisions on merit and also presented him for accountability.

Full court reference was held in his honour at High Court.

Addressing the reference, Chief Justice Khan said that he had been associated with this field for 31 years. He said that he has issued judgments in thousands of cases, worked day and night in the investigation of the

Army Public School incident, heard thousands of cases in the family court and issued judgments. Justice Ibrahim Khan said that he did not belong to any political party, and wished all the best for the incoming Chief Justice Ishaq Ibrahim.

Later, Justice Ishaq Ibrahim while addressing the full court reference said that Justice Ibrahim Khan made many sacrifices for the judiciary. The PHC CJ made decisions as per the constitution. "It was an honour for all the judges to work with the Chief Justice Ibrahim Khan," he stated. He said that the services of Justice Ibrahim Khan will always be remembered. PHC Chief Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan

## 'All time high': PSX hits new milestone as KSE-100 crosses 69,000 mark

KARACHI

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) hit a new milestone on Monday as it crossed the 69,000 mark due to several factors including stability on the economic front.

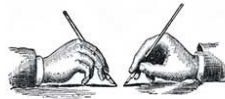
The benchmark KSE-100 index gained 1,203.20 points or 1.76% to close at 69,619.98 points, up from the previous close of 68,416.78 points.

According to Arif Habib Limited on X, formerly Twitter, the KSE-100 index crossed 69,000 and is trading at an all-time high. Samullah Tariq, the head of research at Pak-Kuwait Investment Company, attributed the gain to the stability on the economic front, hopes of a new International Monetary Fund (IMF) deal, the privatisation of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). Khurram Schehzad, CEO of the Alpha Beta Core financial



advisory firm, said that investors gained confidence due to "resuming the privatisation process with those making losses as a priority so the government fiscal can get better". "This is followed by IMF's last tranche to be received in the coming week to support externals." Stocks concluded the outgoing week on a high note, with expectations set for a positive performance in the upcoming short trading week, which will span only two days before the

extended Eid holidays, traders told The News. "In the upcoming week, we expect the market to remain positive," said broker Arif Habib Ltd. "Developments related to SOEs (state-owned enterprises) privatisation or EFF (Extended Fund Facility) program with IMF will further improve market sentiment." The market closed at 68,417 points, increasing by 1,412 points or 2.11% week-on-week.



## MEASURES TO CURB ELECTRICITY THEFT

Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, has issued instructions for immediate and stringent measures to combat the ongoing issue of electricity theft across Pakistan. Emphasizing the critical need to eradicate this illegal practice, Minister Leghari has set a decisive deadline of April 23 to eliminate all forms of electricity theft from the country's power grid. In

a letter minister Leghari has tasked all Discos' chairmen and CEOs with mobilizing their resources effectively to put an end to electricity theft. Additionally, he has instructed Superintendent Engineers, Executive Engineers, Subdivisional Officers, and relevant field staff to issue certificates certifying the absence of theft in their respective operational areas to ensure a robust verification

process. Under Minister Leghari's guidance, rigorous efforts are underway to identify and neutralize every avenue used for electricity theft. Any discrepancies or contradictory evidence will be met with swift legal and disciplinary actions against responsible departmental personnel. Recognizing the need for stronger deterrents, Minister Leghari has directed amendments to existing laws to ensure severe penalties for

employees found complicit in electricity theft. The government's commitment to a zero-tolerance policy against electricity theft underscores its unwavering dedication to ensuring a fair and transparent power distribution system. Minister Leghari has reiterated that performance evaluations will be conducted regularly to maintain a vigilant stance against any lapses or irregularities.

### Shifting Tides: The Socio-Economic Landscape of Globalization

By Zainab Mustafa

Globalization, from a socio-economic standpoint, is a multifaceted phenomenon that transcends mere economic transactions. It encompasses intricate webs of economic interdependence, vibrant cultural exchange, and profound geopolitical shifts, shaping the human experience in profound ways. At its core, globalization epitomizes economic interdependence, where nations are bound together through intricate networks of trade, investment, and production. This interconnectedness has ushered in an era of unprecedented prosperity, enabling goods, services, and capital to flow freely across borders. Yet, beneath the surface of this economic prosperity lies a tapestry woven with both triumphs and challenges. On one hand, globalization has fueled economic growth, lifting millions out of poverty and fostering innovation through the exchange of ideas and technology. However, it has also exacerbated income inequality, as the benefits of globalization often accrue disproportionately to the affluent while leaving behind marginalized communities. Moreover, the fragility of interconnected economies has been laid bare during times of crisis, such as the 2008 financial meltdown and the

recent COVID-19 pandemic, underscoring the inherent risks of overreliance on global markets. Beyond economics, globalization embodies a rich tapestry of cultural exchange, where ideas, beliefs, and traditions traverse borders, enriching societies and fostering a sense of global interconnectedness. From the fusion of cuisines to the spread of popular culture, globalization has given rise to a global village where diversity is celebrated and cultural barriers are dismantled. However, this cultural diffusion is not without its challenges, as it can also lead to the homogenization of cultures and the erosion of traditional identities. As local customs clash with global influences, communities grapple with questions of authenticity and belonging, navigating the delicate balance between preserving heritage and embracing change. Moreover, globalization is inseparable from geopolitics, as shifting power dynamics shape the contours of international relations. The rise of emerging economies, such as China and India, has challenged the traditional hegemony of Western powers, ushering in a multipolar world order characterized by competing spheres of influence. This geopolitical realignment has far-reaching implications, from trade tensions to security threats, as nations jostle for

strategic advantage in an increasingly interconnected world. Moreover, globalization has blurred the lines between domestic and international affairs, amplifying the impact of global crises and necessitating collective action to address shared challenges, such as climate change and pandemics. In navigating the complexities of globalization, it is imperative to recognize the human dimension that underpins this phenomenon. Behind the statistics and geopolitical maneuvers are real people whose lives are intricately intertwined with the forces of globalization. Whether it is a factory worker in China, a migrant laborer in the Middle East, or a smallholder farmer in Africa, individuals around the world are both agents and subjects of globalization, shaping and being shaped by its dynamics. In conclusion, globalization is a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses economic interdependence, cultural exchange, and geopolitical shifts. While it has ushered in unprecedented prosperity and connectivity, it also poses profound challenges that demand thoughtful and inclusive solutions. By embracing the human dimension of globalization, we can foster a more equitable and sustainable future where the benefits of interconnectedness are shared by all.

### Putin's Message to the United States



Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer

Russian President Vladimir Putin undertook an unprecedented action last week when a two-hour press conference intended for the American public. It didn't quite fit the conventional definition of a press conference, as Tucker Carlson, a talk show host perceived as sympathetic to Russia, was the sole reporter present. Nor was it strictly an interview, as Putin predominantly spoke without the benefit of questions. In a way, this format enhanced its value, allowing Putin to articulate his views in a manner that might not have been possible with questions framed from an American perspective. What emerged was a distinctly Russian perspective on the war in Ukraine, presenting Putin as a seemingly reasonable and thoughtful individual. While he made some dubious claims, it's acknowledged that leaders often make such assertions, even those who project statesmanship. Putin's conduct conveyed to the American public that his position is not entirely baseless. He emphasized his role as a Russian patriot working in the interest of his country, discouraging any comparison to figures like Stalin. Furthermore, he demonstrated extensive knowledge, surpassing that of most politicians. Though aided by pre-prepared questions, Putin gave the impression of a sophisticated thinker, showcasing Russia as governed by an adept leader.

However, due to the interview's length and complexity, there's a possibility that some of the American public might have tuned out early, missing parts of the conversation. The historical context, the intended American audience and the remarkably detailed description of Russia and its history seem to be

setting the stage for negotiations. In defense of Russian attack, Putin accused the United States and NATO of dishonesty and duplicity in dealing with Russia, which he argued was simply pursuing its historical imperative. This wasn't an ordinary program, nor was it a self-indulgent rambling; Putin's emphasis on the failure of negotiations in Turkey at the war's outset makes this clear.

Putin's main presentation delved into Russian history, explaining its formation centuries ago and drawing comparisons with the formation of Eastern Europe. He argued that Ukraine had always been a part of Russia, both physically and linguistically. Though unstated, implicit in his argument was the notion that Ukraine is an integral part of Russia and the invasion represents a return to an older reality. Consequently, according to Putin, Russian actions in Ukraine constitute a special military operation rather than an act of war. He also touched on Poland, suggesting that Poland and Lithuania are renegades inseparable from Russia. The discussion on Russian history was lengthy but not merely academic. Putin's argument was that history connects a place to its environment and inhabitants, giving Russia the right, in this case, to make claims on foreign territory. He subtly slipped in claims to the region that could be dismissed

or overlooked, laying the foundation for Russian claims in Poland. Some of Putin's statements were confusing. For instance, he claimed that the current Ukrainian government and its predecessors were Nazis and therefore enemies of

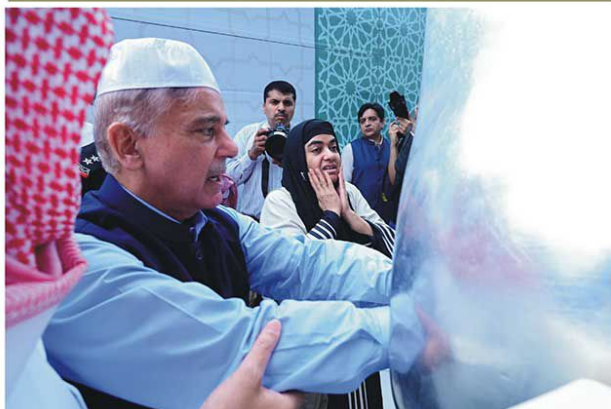
world not taking his claims seriously.

Elsewhere, while expressing his willingness to negotiate, Putin mentioned that the United States was harming itself by using the dollar to force foreign powers to align with its worldview. He then made disconcerting comments, stating that China's economy dwarfs that of the United States and that its economic future is bright. It's as if the reality of China has been overlooked in the two years since Ukraine was attacked. He said this in the context of claiming that a new economic order is emerging and that for that to happen, China must lead it. It's interesting that Putin's deeply analytical remarks, even if some parts are debatable, concluded with obviously erroneous claims, likely due to fatigue. Another point that caught my attention was his comments about Russian intercontinental hypersonic missiles. The speed and maneuverability of hypersonics make defending against an attack very difficult. The United States has not yet deployed a hypersonic missile and there is no evidence that it is developing an intercontinental version. If Russian intercontinental hypersonic missile is as capable as Putin suggested, then that may have been the most significant aspect of his statement. The remainder of Putin's comments comprised complaints about NATO and the United States and his insistence that the uprising in Kyiv in 2014 was the real start

#### Procurement of Solarization Services for Disposals and Water Works under Municipal Corporation, Sargodha

Municipal Corporation, Sargodha intends to solarize its premises on 16663 proposals to energy service companies (ESCOs) and investors for financing/ investment, design, supply, and installation as well as operation and maintenance (O&M) and upgradation (whenever required) on Turnkey Basis with Net Metering through competitive bidding process for grid tied solar PV Systems. The Tender is single stage-Two Envelope Bidding Procedure and Documents can also be downloaded from the Website (<https://www.pppa.punjab.gov.pk>) for information. Sealed Proposals for Pre-qualification (Clearly marked as "Procurement of Solarization Services for Disposals and Water Works under MC Sargodha") are required to be brought by the authorized representative on or before 30 April 2024 at 11:00am. Procurements shall be governed under the PPPA Rules 2014. All prospective firms/bidders are required to collect a challan of Rs. 1000/- in favour of MC Sargodha Account. The Deposit slip must accompany the bid; else the bid shall stand rejected. Income Tax registration certificate and other required documents mentioned in Tender Document must accompany the bids. All bids must be accompanied by bid security in complete conformity of the clause "Bid Security" of the prescribed tender document. Bids which are incomplete, not sealed, not signed, and stamped, late or submitted by other than specified mode will not be considered. Taxes will be deducted as per Government rules.

CHIEF OFFICER,  
MUNICIPAL CORPORATION,  
SARGODHA



Makkah Mukaramah: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif kisses Hajr-e-Aswad as part of Ziaarath of Al-Masjid e Haraam on 8 April, 2024.



# Dr. Humaira organized Iftar Dinner in honor of Special Persons Soon Times Correspondent



Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha: Executive Member of Women Chamber of Commerce Dr. Humaira organized an Iftar Dinner at Gymkhana Club in honor of Special Persons of DC Welfare Association Sargodha. In addition to women officials of Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, senior vice president of DC Welfare Irum Khan, political and social

leaders participated in the dinner. On this occasion, Dr. Humaira said that the last decade of the month of Ramadan is going on, which is the decade of blessings. The purpose of giving Iftar to special persons is to encourage them so that they don't think that people in the society stay away because of their disability. On this occasion, Dr. Atiqah Rehman said that these disabled people are a part of our society. We stand side by side

with them. On this occasion, Senior Vice President Sadia Khan said that it is our duty to serve these disabled children. Before Eid, every rich person should look for the needy around him and pay Fitrana so that the needy too can join in the joy of Eid. In the Iftar dinner, a special prayer was made for the Freedom of the Muslims of Gaza and Kashmir.

# PRCS and IFRC distribute buffaloes among flood-affected families in Sindh and Balochistan



ISLAMABAD To support the livelihoods of the communities affected by the 2022 monsoon floods, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), in collaboration with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has successfully completed the distribution of buffaloes in Sindh and Balochistan. Under the livelihood assistance initiative, 360 buffaloes were distributed among the flood survivors, with 60 buffaloes in each of the five districts in Sindh, including Larkana, Qambar Shahdadkot, Dadu, Khairpur, and Shikarpur. Additionally, 60 buffaloes were distributed in

Jaffarabad district of Balochistan. 120 buffaloes will be distributed in Dera Ismaili Khan district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Dera Ghazi Khan district in Punjab in the coming days. The distribution of buffaloes was done in separate ceremonies held in the aforementioned districts. The events were graced by Muhammad Abdullullah Khan, Secretary General, PRCS; Pivi Ophoff, Head of Country Delegation, IFRC Pakistan; the leadership of PRCS's respective district branches, staff and volunteers from PRCS and IFRC, and community representatives and notables. Speaking on the occasion, Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari, Chairman, PRCS expressed gratitude for the tremendous

efforts of PRCS staff and volunteers who have been tirelessly working day and night to provide much-needed assistance to flood-affected people. He highlighted PRCS's commitment to continuing its support to communities through various interventions, including cash assistance, shelter, livelihood assistance, healthcare, and hygiene promotion. He also called upon Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to play an active role in assisting the affected communities. "We remain dedicated to our mission of serving humanity and stand ready to support communities in their journey towards recovery and resilience", Chairman Laghari added. Pivi Ophoff, Head of Country Delegation, IFRC Pakistan, commended the teams involved in providing assistance to those in need. According to him, "The distribution of buffaloes among the flood survivors is one of the key initiatives taken by the national society to empower the livelihoods of the affected communities. IFRC remains committed to supporting the national society in providing livelihood opportunities to the flood survivors, to improve their well-being and building their resilience to climatic shocks." The beneficiaries and community elders have appreciated the PRCS and IFRC's initiative, as it will empower the livelihoods of the communities ravaged by the 2022 floods.

# Climate policy key to Mitigating Health risks for vulnerable

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE: Experts have highlighted the profound challenges faced by vulnerable communities in the wake of climate change-induced natural disasters, suggesting comprehensive policies to mitigate the impact, especially on women and the poor. Communities, particularly those already marginalised, are bearing the brunt of

events such as droughts and floods, exacerbating health risks like undernutrition and malaria. Talking to APP on Sunday, experts emphasised the intricate relationship between human health and environmental hazards, emphasising the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to address these issues. For many impoverished populations, adapting to climate change is not a choice but a bitter

reality. Research indicates that the poor, especially in developing nations, are disproportionately affected by climate variability and change. Experts in various findings have examined the myriad ways in which climate change adaptation policies and strategies are developed, and they systematically discuss the factors which either facilitate or hamper the involvement of all stakeholders in the development of these intervention measures.



Coordinator to PM on climate change Romina Khurshid Alam was called on by Ethiopian Ambassador H. E. Jemal Beker Abdula at her office in Islamabad on April 8, 2024.

# IHC directs PTI counsel to file contempt plea over non compliance with court orders

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) expressed displeasure on Monday over the jail authorities' failure to comply with court orders regarding arranging a meeting between incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi. The latter remains incarcerated in the couple's Bani Gala residence after it was declared a sub-jail. Justice Mianqul Hasan Aurganzeb, presiding over the plea, instructed the PTI counsel Usman Gul to file a contempt petition. The judge inquired why the court order was not complied with. At the outset of the hearing, Justice Aurganzeb stated that the court had already disposed of the matter with directions. The petitioner's counsel told the court that today they were seeking the execution of the same order. The failure to comply with the court order irked the judge, who then directed the petitioner's counsel to file a contempt petition. "We will take action, how can court orders be ignored?" The petitioner's lawyer urged the court to direct the jail authorities to arrange a meeting between Imran and Bushra on the occasion of Eid as the matter came under their jurisdiction. As the court resumed hearing the matter



following a short break, it asked the advocate generally why the court order was not implemented. The court also directed the state counsel to respond after contacting the chief commissioner's office, Adiala jail authorities, and other related entities. At the last hearing, the IHC allowed a meeting between the incarcerated former premier and wife Bushra Bibi over Eidul Fitr. The court observed that the two should be allowed to meet over the occasion and additionally allowed a meeting per week. Justice Aurganzeb expressed displeasure at the jail administration for not permitting the two to meet and not transferring the PTI founder's wife to Adiala jail. The court criticized the authorities' clarification for not transferring Bushra Bibi, asserting it lacked coherence in light of the ongoing admissions.



Makkah Mukaramah: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif performs Umrah on 07 April, 2024.

# Hyderabad's delicate Eid bangles go from furnace to forearms



Soon Times Correspondent HYDERABAD: Layers of intricately decorated bangles are a staple fashion accessory for women, a carefully considered part of their Eidul Fitr celebrations. More than a dozen people can be involved in the making of a single bangle, from sweltering factories to the homes of designers who skillfully decorate them by hand. "Whatever the fashion trends, when we attend any event and wear any outfit it feels incomplete without bangles," said 42-year-old Talat Zahid, who uses beads, stitching and embroidery to embellish bangles. "Even if you don't wear jewellery but wear bangles or a bracelet with your outfit, the outfit looks complete." In the lead-up to this week's Eidul Fitr festivities that mark the end of Ramadan, market stalls are adorned with a glittering array of colourful bangles, each turned over and inspected for their beauty and imperfections by women who haggle for a good price. They are often sold by the dozen, starting at around Rs150 and rising to Rs1,000 as stones and silk are added. Hyderabad is home to the delicate "churi" glass bangle, where a single furnace can produce up to 100 bangles an hour from molten glass wire shaped around an iron

rod. The work is arduous and frustrating – labourers are exposed to oppressive temperatures in unregulated factories prone to frequent power cuts, while the fragile glass threads can snap easily. "The work is done without a fan. If we turn on the fan the fire is extinguished. So, the heat intensity is high. As it becomes hotter our work slows down," said 24-year-old Sameer, who followed his father into the industry and earns less than the minimum wage of Rs32,000 a month. After the partition of British-ruled India in 1947, migrating Muslims who had produced bangles in the Indian city of Ferozabad took their trade to Hyderabad – where hundreds of thousands of people rely on the industry. But soaring gas prices after the government slashed subsidies have forced many factories to close or to operate at reduced hours. "The speed at which the government has increased the gas prices and taxes, (means) the work in this area has started to shrink instead of expand," said 50-year-old factory owner Muhammad Nafees. Most bangles leave the factory as plain loops, sent off to be embellished to different degrees by women who work from home, before they're finally passed on to traders to be sold in markets.



## Trump faces criminal trial, first for an ex-US president, in hush money case



**NEW YORK**  
Donald Trump next week is set to become the first former US president to face a criminal trial – a case involving hush money paid to porn star Stormy Daniels that carries major political and legal ramifications as he runs to regain the White House.

The trial is scheduled to start in Manhattan on April 15. It is the first of four potential criminal trials Trump faces, but may be the only one to take place before the Nov 5 US election in which he is the Republican candidate challenging Democratic President Joe Biden in a 2020 rematch.

Trump, 77, has pleaded not guilty to 34 counts of falsification of business records in the case brought by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg.

Trump is accused of arranging a \$130,000 payment made by his lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen to Daniels in the waning days of the 2016 presidential campaign to buy her silence about a sexual encounter she has said she had with him at a Lake Tahoe hotel in 2006 and then falsifying records to cover it up.

## Spurs bolster Champions League qualifying bid with Forest win



**LONDON**  
Tottenham Hotspur boosted their Champions League qualifying hopes with a 3-1 home win over relegation-battling Nottingham Forest on Sunday to move into fourth spot in the Premier League.

Second-half goals from Micky van de Ven and Pedro Porro, after Forest's Chris Wood had cancelled out Marillo's own goal in the opening period, helped Spurs capitalise on rivals Aston Villa and Manchester United dropping points this weekend.

Tottenham's victory puts them level with Villa on 60 points but with a game in hand and leaves United trailing with 49 after their 2-2 draw with Liverpool.

Spurs coach Ange Postecoglou, however, told reporters that he "couldn't care less about the race for fourth, what I care about is the way the team is progressing".

Tottenham led after 15 minutes when Brazilian Marillo, who minutes earlier almost scored an audacious goal from inside his own half, turned Timo Werner's cross into his own net.

## Australia thump Uzbekistan 10-0 to seal Olympic berth



**MIAMI**  
American Danielle Collins continued her late career high vein of form, winning the WTA Charleston Open clay court title on Sunday with a 6-2, 6-1 defeat of Russia's Darja Kasatkina.

The victory comes a week after Collins enjoyed the biggest win of her career, clinching the Miami Open 1000 hard court title and her back-to-back wins means she will move up to 15th in the world rankings.

The 30-year-old Collins has announced that she will retire from the sport at the end of this season but has found herself playing in the form of her life and has extended her winning streak to 13 matches.

Kasatkina, the 2017 winner in Charleston, reached the final after a three-set semi-final win over top seed Jessica Pegula but Collins proved to be a step too far.

Collins, who defeated Greece's Maria Sakkari in her semi, needed just 77 minutes to defeat Kasatkina and the contest moved decisively in her direction when she broke to go 2-0 up in the second set, celebrating with a forecourt fist pump.

The change in surface from Miami made little difference to Collins who marched to victory with her powerful strokeplay that was simply too much for the 26-year-old Russian.



## Selection committee meets Pakistan men's cricketers ahead of New Zealand series

**New Zealand men's team are set to arrive in Islamabad on 14 April to feature in a five-match T20I series**

**ISLAMABAD**  
(Web Desk) - The national selection committee met Pakistan cricketers who featured in Kakul physical training camp at a local hotel in Islamabad.

Among the 29 players who featured in the camp, only Mohammad Rizwan was not present, as he had left for Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah on Sunday night.

In the meeting, the selection committee took the players in confidence regarding the selection policy, which includes rotation policy and providing opportunities to new players. The national selection committee members present at the meeting were Abdul Razaq, Asad Shafiq, Bilal Aizal, Hasan Cheema, Mohammad Yousuf and Wahab Riaz. Usman Wahla – Director International Cricket Operations also attended the meeting.

The selection committee will announce the Pakistan men's squad for T20I series against New Zealand in Lahore on Tuesday.

New Zealand men's team are set to arrive in Islamabad on 14 April to feature in a five-match T20I series, commencing from 18 April at the Pindi Cricket Stadium in Rawalpindi. After the series, Pakistan men's team will travel to Ireland and England to feature in T20I series following which the team will travel to USA and West Indies to feature in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024.

## Ecuador armed forces to continue anti-crime operations with police-gov't



**QUITO** (Reuters) - Ecuador's armed forces will continue carrying out joint anti-crime operations with the police under a presidential decree announced at midnight on Monday, the government said.

The operations were first allowed under a 90-day state of emergency declared in January by President Daniel Noboa and meant to stem a wave of crime and violence blamed on drug trafficking gangs.

Military operations against organized crime, the joint operations with the police and increased security at prisons will continue under the decree, the government said in a

statement posted on social media overnight.

"These decisions will allow the government of new Ecuador, with the support of the forces of order, to continue deploying priority actions to protect citizen security and well-being," the statement said. Noboa, 36, took power in November and has been touting his "Phoenix Plan" to combat crime and violence, including the murders of public officials and an explosion of unrest in January, when gunmen stormed a live television broadcast and scores of prison staff were taken hostage.

## Brazil Supreme Court strikes down military intervention thesis in symbolic vote for democracy



**SAO PAULO**  
Brazil's Supreme Court unanimously voted Monday that the armed forces have no constitutional power to intervene in disputes between government

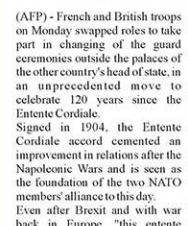
branches, a largely symbolic decision aimed at bolstering democracy after years of increasing threat of military intervention.

The court's decision came in

response to an argument that right-wing former President Jair Bolsonaro and his allies deployed in recent years. They have claimed that Article 142 of Brazil's Constitution affords the military so-called "moderating power" between the executive, legislative and judicial branches.

Bolsonaro presented this interpretation in an April 2020 meeting with his ministers, telling them that any of the three powers can request the armed forces take action to restore order in Brazil. In the years since, posters invoking Article 142 became a fixture at rallies calling for military takeover.

## French, UK troops swap guards to mark 120 years of friendship



(AFP) - French and British troops on Monday swapped roles to take part in changing of the guard ceremonies outside the palaces of the other country's head of state, in an unprecedented move to celebrate 120 years since the Entente Cordiale.

Signed in 1904, the Entente Cordiale accord cemented an improvement in relations after the Napoleonic Wars and is seen as the foundation of the two NATO members' alliance to this day.

Even after Brexit and with war back in Europe, "this entente cordiale is somehow the cornerstone... that allows us to maintain the bilateral relationship", French President Emmanuel Macron said in a video address on X, formerly Twitter.

"Long live the entente cordiale and long live the Franco-British friendship," he said, switching to English.

Macron and the British ambassador to France Menna Rawlings on Monday morning watched British guards taking part in the changing of the guard outside his Elysee Palace.

French guards then did the same in London outside Buckingham Palace, the official residence of King Charles III.



At the Elysee, 16 members of the Number 7 Company Coldstream Guards of the UK embassy, wearing their traditional bearskin hats, relieved French counterparts from the first infantry regiment.

The French army choir then sang the two national anthems – God Save the King and La Marseillaise.

"More to defend Russia!" British Foreign Minister David Cameron and his French counterpart, Stephane Sejourne, celebrated their countries' "close friendship" in a joint op-ed published late on Sunday.

They said it was key at a time when NATO is mobilised to ensure Ukraine does not lose its fight to repel the Russian invasion.



## Chad opposition figure was likely shot at point-blank range, experts say

**NAIROBI** (Reuters) - A prominent Chadian opposition leader, who was killed in February by government troops, appears to have been shot in the side of the head at close range, according to five forensic experts who reviewed a photo of his dead body for Reuters.

The experts' findings, based on the location and nature of the wound visible in the image, call into question statements by Chadian officials that Yaya Dillo was shot dead in an exchange of fire on Feb 28 when security forces tried to arrest him at his party's headquarters in the capital, N'Djamena.

Professor Derrick Pounder, a UK-based pathologist who has consulted for the United Nations and human rights groups, said the visible gunshot wound was "incompatible" with a scenario of an exchange of gunfire.

"Overall, I have a very high level of confidence that this is a contact gunshot wound and strongly corroborates the allegation of an extra-judicial execution," he said.

Reuters was unable to establish independently how Dillo was killed.

The opposition has called Dillo's death an assassination, based on the ferocity of the military assault on his party's headquarters. The yellow facade of the party headquarters was hit pockmarked by heavy and small arms fire. A day later, it was bulldozed to the ground.

Rights groups, including Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for

Human Rights (OHCHR), have called for an independent investigation and said Dillo's death raised concerns about the conditions for presidential elections due in May.

Western powers, led by France and the United States, who see Debby as a key security partner and a counterweight to Russia's growing influence in the turbulent Sahel region, have been muted in their response to Dillo's death. A string of military-led governments across the region have torn up Western defence agreements in recent years and welcomed Moscow's support.

Maw's election in Chad is meant to draw a line under military rule. Dillo was widely beloved, both by government and opposition figures as well as political researchers, to be planning to run against President Mahamat Idriss Deby, a military general who took power after his long-ruling father was killed in April 2021 while campaigning against rebel forces in northern Chad.

Success Masra, a former opposition figure who is Chad's prime minister, had promised on March 4 an "international-style" investigation into Dillo's killing, without providing further details.

Chad's government did not respond to requests for comment on the photograph, the pathologists' findings, the circumstances of Dillo's death, and the progress of any investigation.

## Ukraine 'will lose the war' if US Congress withholds aid



**WEB Desk**  
President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Ukraine will lose its war against Russia if the US Congress does not approve a major military aid package, as Russian forces heighten their pressure on a frontline city.

The Ukrainian military acknowledged that the fighting around the frontline city of Chasiv Yar was "difficult" and "tense" but insisted its forces were resisting.

Amid heightened air attacks by both sides, Russia said one Ukrainian drone had hit the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant that it has occupied since shortly after launching its invasion in 2022.

Ukraine has made increasingly urgent calls for the United States to start sending a proposed \$60 billion aid package that has been blocked by Republicans in Congress for months.

"It is necessary to specifically tell Congress that if Congress does not help Ukraine, Ukraine will lose the war," Zelenskyy said during a video meeting.

It would be "difficult" for Ukraine to "stay" (survive) without the aid, Zelenskyy added. "If Ukraine loses the war, other states will be attacked."

Russia has stepped up attacks on Chasiv Yar as it seeks to build on territorial gains in recent months.

Chasiv Yar is less than 30 kilometres (18 miles) from Kramatorsk, an important rail and logistics hub for the Ukrainian army.

"The situation is difficult enough and tense," said Oleg Kalashnikov, spokesman for an army brigade deployed in the area. Russia was using infantry and air attacks, he told Ukrainian television.

"The Russians are trying to carry out assaults directly on the small towns of Bogdanivka and Ivanivske, outside Chasiv Yar."

Authorities said a Russian strike on Gulyaipole in the southern Zaporizhzhia region killed three people.

"Two men and a woman died under the rubble of their own private house, which was hit by a Russian shell," the head of the region, Ivan Fedorov.