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CM Maryam inaugurates daycare center at Children's Hospital

"We want to build the best hospital for people in every district" she vowed.



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said the Punjab government is committed to provide quality healthcare services to people. Inaugrating a daycare center at Children's Hospital Lahore on Monday, the CM directed the relevant authorities to build a new ICU unit in Children's Hospital, and directed to ensure timely release of funds for its early completion. The chief minister said that every penny was a trust of the nation, it would be spent transparently on the improvement of healthcare facilities. "We want to build the best hospital for people in every district" she vowed. The CM said shortage of doctors in remote area hospitals would be catered too. She also reviewed a proposal to build Children's Hospital at the Divisional Headquarters and

link them with the Children's Hospital Lahore. She directed the provincial ministers to visit the hospital on daily basis. Maryam Nawaz also witnessed signing of a MoU between Islamic Aid UK and University of Child Health Sciences for the establishment of a college block. Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique, VC Dr Masood Sadiq and Chairman Islamic Aid Mahmoodul Hasan signed the MoU. The CM thanked Islamic Aid for their cooperation and support. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif also visited the daycare center and reviewed facilities available there. She directed the daycare center staff to take good care of the children. Earlier, the CM was briefed that the education and research facilities related to children's health will be provided to medical students in the new college block.

SIC's Hamid Raza advises PTI to quit assemblies



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Summi Ittehad Council (SIC) head Sahibzada Hamid Raza advises the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to once again resign from the assemblies. In a statement on social media site 'X', he said the PTI leadership needed to resign from the assemblies and take to the street to get justice. Sahibzada Hamid Raza said the party members would quit assemblies if the PTI founder could not get justice. "I will be the first person to resign from the National Assembly for the PTI founder," he added.

President confers Nishan-i-Imtiaz (M) upon Commander Turkish Land Forces



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon Commander of the Turkish Land Forces General Seluok Bayraktaroglu, in a special investiture ceremony held at the Arianwasi-Sadat officials. The Nishan-i-Imtiaz (M) was conferred upon General Seluok Bayraktaroglu in a recognition of his illustrious services. According to citation read out in the ceremony, Turkish commander 'is a sincere and close friend of Pakistan' and played a prominent role in promoting and strengthening the defence relations between two brotherly countries. General Seluok Bayraktaroglu is an officer of high intellect and his excellent administrative qualities earned him the reputation of being a courageous and professionally competent officer. He had served on different military posts.

Pakistan Saudi Arabia's priority for investment, says Saudi minister

● Kasabi says a delegation of Saudi businessmen will visit Pakistan soon

RIYADH (Web Desk)
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says Pak-Saudi economic ties have entered a new era with bilateral trade volume poised for significant increase due to steps taken in this regard. He was speaking to Saudi Minister for Commerce Majid al Kasabi who called on him in Riyadh on Monday, on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum meeting. The prime minister said the Special Investment Facilitation Council of Pakistan was fully active in promoting foreign investment and facilitating investors. On the occasion, the Saudi minister said Pakistan was Saudi Arabia's priority for investment and trade as per the directives of Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman. He said targets were being set to increase bilateral economic and



trade relations during the next one to one and a half years. The Saudi minister said a delegation of businessmen would visit Pakistan soon. Acknowledging the role of Pakistanis in the development and prosperity of Saudi Arabia, the minister emphasised inculcating the sentiments of Saudi-Pak friendship among the youth and new generation of both countries.

Four TTP men arrested for Bisham attack



Soon Times Correspondent PESHAWAR
The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) claimed on Monday to have arrested four members of the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) for attacking the convoy of Chinese engineers in Bisham. According to the CTD spokesperson, a joint investigation team (JIT), with the help of other law-enforcement agencies, arrested the four terrorists involved in the attack. He said the terrorists had confessed to attacking the Chinese convoy. It may be recalled that on March 26, a convoy was attacked on way to Dasu Hydropower Project from Islamabad as a result of which five Chinese engineers and a Pakistani driver were killed.

SC moved to form inquiry commission to probe judges' letter



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
A new petition has been filed in the Supreme Court to form an inquiry commission on the letter written by the six judges of the Islamabad High Court. The petition was filed by Advocate Khudayar Mohla, requesting the apex court to form a commission consisting of three judges to investigate the letter. The commission should determine the responsible of the interference in judicial matters, the applicant said. The applicant asked for a legislative order to determine the powers and responsibilities of the officers of the intelligence agencies. Federal government, Interior Ministry, Law Ministry and Cabinet Division were made parties in the petition.

Interior Minister Naqvi suspends Lahore passport office officers over mess



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE/ISLAMABAD
Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has taken a decisive action against corruption during his visit to the passport office in Lahore's Garden Town, suspending the director and assistant director. He has also directed stern action against the wrongdoers. The minister conducted a visit to the passport office on Monday, where he encountered evidence of

tribery, delays and the influence of agent mafia in passport processing on complaints of citizens. During his visit, citizens presented proof of payments to agent mafia for expediting passport applications, lamenting that corruption was rampant in the office - from security personnel to administrative staff. When questioned, passport office officials failed to provide satisfactory explanations, leading Naqvi to express his frustration and

blame the administration for the corruption. Asserting the government's responsibility to facilitate citizens and address their grievances, Naqvi emphasised the need to tackle technical issues and corruption in passport issuance. He assured citizens that while resolving these issues might take time, passports would eventually be issued efficiently, citing the suspension of incompetent officials as a step towards reform.

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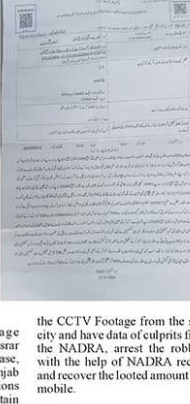
Barrister Gohar denies 'backdoor talks' with any party



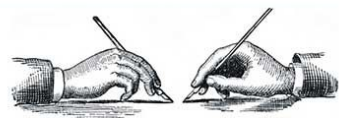
Soon Times Correspondent RAWALPINDI
PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar denied 'backdoor negotiations' with any party, asserting transparency in their dealings. He addressed concerns regarding a perceived politically motivated case of Al-Qadir Trust. He said that PTI's founder was wrongly involved in the case. Expressing dismay over media coverage restrictions during PTI's founder's statement, Barrister Gohar accused the police of interference. He blamed the leniency towards

PS Anarkali failed to arrest robbers

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Dacoits deprived journalist of Rs. 2 lac 50 thousand and OPPO mobile at Bala Majoj Daria Chowk Lahore. Case 608/24 us 392 registered in Police Station Old Anarkali, Lahore. Old Anarkali Police failed to apprehend the culprits despite the passage of sufficient time. According to details on the very next day of Eid-ul-Fitre three dacoits robbed the senior journalist Malik Muhammad Aslam Malik and deprived him of Rupees 2.5 Lac and mobile worth Rs. 20 thousand. After the registration of case on 14-04-2024 the police has made no progress and seemed dormant to recover the looted amount and mobile despite the CCTV footage available with the safe city. Asrar Ahmad, complainant of the case, has appealed to the CM Punjab and I.G.P. Police to issue instructions to the police high-ups to ascertain



the CCTV Footage from the safe city and have data of culprits from the NADRA, arrest the robbers with the help of NADRA record and recover the looted amount and mobile.



MoU Between ISSI and ISAS

The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), represented by its Director General, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and the Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, represented by Director, Dr. Iqbal Singh Sevea, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in a virtual ceremony today. This represented the beginning of a new chapter, being the first MoU signed between the think-tanks of Pakistan and Singapore. In addition to Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and Dr. Iqbal Sevea, the MoU signing ceremony was joined by Ms Rukhsana Afzaal, High Commissioner of Pakistan to Singapore; Mr Muhammad Junaid, Director East Asia & Pacific Division, Ministry of

Foreign Affairs Pakistan; Dr Talat Shabbir, Director China Pakistan Study Centre, ISSI; team India College Centre, ISSI; and colleagues at ISAS. In his remarks on the occasion, DGISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood hailed the MoU as a crucial step towards instituting a formal relationship between the two Institutes. He expressed gratitude for the valuable support lent by High Commissioner Rukhsana Afzaal throughout this process. The DG ISSI highlighted the comprehensive scope of the MoU, envisaging mutually-agreed agendas of research, exchanges and dialogue on regional, global and strategic issues of common interest. He also underscored the significance that Pakistan attaches to its

relations with Singapore, bilaterally and in the context of ASEAN. He termed the signing of the MoU as an important step towards strengthening soft connectivity and people-to-people links between the two sides. High Commissioner Rukhsana Afzaal expressed gratification over the conclusion of the MoU. She mentioned ISAS as Singapore's prominent think-tank and important in terms of connecting Pakistan with Singaporean researchers and academia. Underlining the High Commissioner's efforts to foster linkages between research communities of the two countries, she noted seven joint webinars organized earlier in collaboration with ISAS. She said that the goal of these efforts was to generate

opportunities for forging better understanding of each other's perspectives. Dr Iqbal Singh Sevea stated that the MoU between ISAS and ISSI signified an important step towards mutual collaboration. He highlighted the inter-disciplinary nature of research at ISAS in order to better understand the complexities surrounding South Asian security dynamics. In this regard, he underlined Pakistan as an important country, particularly in terms of its role in the Indian Ocean region and Central Asia. In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood congratulated ISAS on their 20th anniversary. The two sides agreed to consult closely to decide on the next steps in this new partnership.

Labor and our society



Tarique Rajper

factories. There, they called for a strike. In the strike, American workers demanded eight hours of working days and strong labor unions. Many workers from other countries also participated in this protest, standing with American workers. The strike began peacefully on the first day and continued into the second, but on the second day, there was some violence against both police and workers in Chicago Haymarket. According to the British Council website,

motivation and opened their eyes to stand up and fight for their rights. In 1894, Grover Cleveland, the 22nd and 24th President of the United States, signed into law Labour Day as a holiday. People around the world celebrate International Workers Day, a public holiday honoring labor, on May 1st. However, some countries, like Canada and the USA, celebrate it on specific dates, such as the first Monday of September. What types of events take place on Labour Day? Some countries organized rallies, commemorated the struggles of Chicago's workers, and loudly protested for their rights and improved facilities. Most countries organize parades, marches, barbecues, and other events based on their unique traditions. The first Labour Day parade took place in New York City in 1882. Pakistan's working conditions are not better than in other countries. The Pakistani government is responsible for that. They faced issues such as lower wages, unsafe working environments, and child labor.

When the wages of those who make decisions for the Pakistani people in parliament, such as the Prime Minister, Chief Minister, Judges, Senators, Ministers, Members of the National Assembly, and Members of the Provincial Assembly, are equal to the wages of the workers, the fate of Pakistani workers can improve. They will then understand how workers manage expenses and spend their lives on lower wages, as well as their value and dignity. On May 1st of last year 2023, the Pakistan Central Cotton Committee Sakrand dismissed its daily wage employees without any reason, despite their many years of service. Despite protesting throughout the year and continuing to do so today, over forty employees in the same institution remain unreinstated. They and their families spend their lives in misery and starvation. On International Workers Day, I salute those who strive with dedication, truthfulness, and honesty to earn a better life. They should raise their voice and protest in front of higher authorities for their rights and facilities, as Chicago revolutionary workers do. While raising wages, the government should eliminate labor injustices and inequalities. They should also implement it, as we stand shoulder to shoulder with the world's workers and proudly say that the workers are ours and we are from the workers.

May 1 is known as the important and revolutionary day of labor. Labor is the backbone and essential part of our society



and nation. They make our society and nation meaningful and fruitful. Every religion teaches us about the dignity and respect of labor. As in Islam, it was narrated from 'Abdullah bin 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah (?) said: "Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries." (Sunan Ibn Majah, 2443). Laborers work hard day and night to run their homes, but expenses are too high these days. Laborers protested from time to time for their rights and facilities. Many countries still require children to perform labor, despite significant efforts by international organizations to prevent this practice. In the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, Article 11 also prohibits children from working in certain conditions. These laws aim to protect children from exploitation and ensure their right to education and a safe childhood. It was a day for American workers, who raised their voices for their rights and demanded better working conditions. The day was May 1, 1886, when workers raised their voices and protested in Chicago, Haymarket (USA), against injustices like lower wages, unsafe working conditions, and working 12 to 16 hours without any break—anyone who attempted to take leave faced punishment and fines. Do not give them any kind of rights, like health and protection, and do not work with children under eighteen in hazardous places like coal mines and other

the police shot at unarmed workers and killed many of them. On the fourth day (May 4th, 1886), a large assembly of workers gathered there, and amid the strike, an unidentified individual hurled a bomb. The bomb claimed the lives of seven police officers and four civilians, in addition to injuring numerous other police officers and workers. The bomb blast led the police to arrest eight workers. One of them committed suicide in jail; four workers (Engel, Fischer, Parsons, and Spies) were hanged in the city jail; and three workers were pardoned. This event is known as the Haymarket Affair, or the Haymarket Incident, where working people came together for their rights and better working conditions. Many people in that area and the USA didn't believe that workers had not committed any crimes; they were not guilty of this crime, and they also criticized the trial, saying that it was unfair. The Haymarket was the symbol of the labor movement's success and victory, making it a revolutionary day. This led to the decision to designate May 1 as International Workers Day. In 1892, the eight-hour working day became law for workers in the United States. After this successful movement, workers now fight for their rights all over the world. The City of Chicago and the commercial area of Haymarket, where workers protested, gave the world's workers' movements hope and

Imran Khan's Popularity and Controversies



Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer

The term populism is a political ideology that prioritizes the needs and interests of the common people over those of the elite or the establishment. Populist movements typically focus on issues such as economic inequality, political corruption, and social justice, and often reject the political establishment in favor of more direct democracy. Populism can manifest in various ways across the political spectrum, and may be associated with authoritarianism, nationalism, and a disregard for the rule of law. Populist leaders may appeal to emotions rather than reasoned debate and may be willing to violate democratic norms to maintain power. Pakistan has a history of populism in its politics, with populist leaders appealing to the common people by positioning themselves as champions of their needs and interests and criticizing the elites. Imran Khan's personal charisma and celebrity status have played a significant role in his success. Prior to entering politics, Khan was a well-known cricket player, and his achievements in the sport made him a household name in Pakistan. This gave him a platform from which to launch his political career, and his popularity with the masses has only grown since then. Khan is known for his eloquence and ability to connect with people, which has helped him to win the hearts and minds of the Pakistani people. Imran Khan's rise to power as the leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party in the 2018 general election is one example of populism in Pakistan. The PTI campaigned on an anti-corruption platform, vowing to fight against the country's entrenched political and economic elites and provide social services to the poor. However, while populism can drive positive change,

it can also be associated with authoritarianism and disregard for democratic norms, as we have criticized the PTI's approach to governance, including its use of military courts and crackdowns on political opposition and media freedom. Another key factor that has made Imran Khan a

champion of populism is his focus on addressing the needs of the common people. Throughout his political career, Khan has been a vocal advocate for social justice, and he has campaigned for better education, healthcare, and job opportunities for ordinary Pakistanis. He has also spoken out against corruption and political nepotism, which are issues that have long plagued Pakistani society. By positioning himself as a champion of the people, Khan has been able to win over the support of the masses and build a broad-based coalition of supporters.

His focus on social justice, Imran Khan has also been a vocal critic of Western imperialism and globalization. He has argued that Western powers have exploited developing countries like Pakistan for their own benefit, and that globalization has led to the erosion of traditional values and cultures. This stance has resonated with many Pakistanis who feel that their country has been neglected and marginalized by the global community. Khan's anti-imperialist rhetoric has helped to cement his position as a populist leader who is willing to take on powerful interests on behalf of the common people.

Imran's vision of nationalism and Islamic populism garnered support from the military. He spoke passionately in both Urdu and English and urged the people to dream of a Pakistan where both the rich and the poor were treated equally. He envisioned a country that would not be subservient to Western powers and referred to Medina as a just society. He used the term "jihad" to encourage citizens to pay taxes and vowed to fight for Pakistan's sovereignty. He challenged the United States in the war on terror and pledged to make Pakistan economically strong by holding corrupt politicians accountable, taxing the wealthy, and establishing a welfare state.

Imran Khan came to power on an anti-corruption and pro-reform platform, positioning himself as a champion of the people and opponent of the traditional political elite. However, his leadership has also been criticized for its authoritarian tendencies, including crackdowns on the media and political opposition, leading many to associate his politics with populism. Despite resonating with marginalized Pakistanis, it is crucial to ensure his leadership does not undermine democratic institutions or exclude certain groups. The political leadership in Pakistan is influenced by personal charisma, party loyalty, and institutional factors such as

the military's role in politics. While there have been successful leaders who made progress on democracy and development, controversies persist.

Including crackdowns on the media and political opposition, leading many to associate his politics with populism. Despite resonating with marginalized Pakistanis, it is crucial to ensure his leadership does not undermine democratic institutions or exclude certain groups. The political leadership in Pakistan is influenced by personal charisma, party loyalty, and institutional factors such as the military's role in politics. While there have been successful leaders who made progress on democracy and development, controversies persist.

According to a survey titled "Public Pulse Report," Imran Khan was the most highly rated politician in Pakistan, with a positive rating from 61% of the population and a negative rating from 37%. Nawaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto shared the second position, with a positive rating of 36%. The survey was conducted in February 2023 and covered 2,000 respondents from urban and rural areas in all four provinces of Pakistan.

Nawaz Sharif received a negative rating from 59% of the respondents, while Bilawal Bhutto received a negative rating from 57%. Maryam Nawaz, Asif Ali Zardari, and Maulana Fazur Rehman all received negative ratings of 61%, 67%, and 57%, respectively. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif received a negative rating from 65% of the respondents.

Imran Khan continues to cultivate his image as a champion of the people, focusing on access to education and healthcare, social justice, and empowering the marginalized. His government had taken steps to address corruption and inefficiency in the public sector, but his policies and actions had also faced criticism for being undemocratic and closely tied to the military establishment. While Khan enjoys some degree of popular support in Pakistan, the long-term implications of his populist approach remain to be seen. Imran's arrest and the government's actions may be seen as an attempt to rein in Imran Khan's populism. Many observers saw the arrest as part of a broader pattern of repression and intimidation of opposition voices by the Sharif government, which had been accused of using state institutions to suppress dissent and criticism. Imran Khan's arrest is a pivotal moment in Pakistani politics that reflected the growing polarization and repression of opposition voices in the country. The arrest serves as a reminder of the fragility of democracy and the importance of protecting freedom of speech and expression, even in the face of political opposition and criticism.



NIMA organized Symposium on increasing the capacity of environment friendly ship recycling:



Rabia Razaq from the United Nations ILO provided valuable feedback and a global perspective. The symposium highlighted Pakistan's immense potential to become a leader in the field of sustainable ship recycling and emphasized adherence to international standards and regulations to ensure the safety of workers and the environment. Special guest Senator Nisar Ahmed Khoro during his address highlighted the need for the revival of this industry and the joint efforts of all stakeholders. He urged the stakeholders to ensure cooperation on a comprehensive program, envisaging a new era for Pakistan's maritime sector that includes economic growth, worker safety and environmental responsibility. In his closing remarks Vice Admiral (Retd) Ahmed Saeed, President of the National Institute of Maritime Affairs, emphasized the importance of safety and environmental responsibility in the ship recycling process.

Soon Times Correspondent Karachi: An International Symposium organized by the National Institute of Maritime Affairs was organized in Karachi on increasing the capacity of safe and environmentally friendly ship recycling in Pakistan. The event brought together key stakeholders from various maritime sectors to address key challenges facing the industry as mandated by the Hong

Kong Convention. The event paved the way for a sustainable future in ship recycling. Representatives of Federal and Balochistan Government, PSBA, Karachi Shipyard and Engineering Works, Karachi Port Trust, PMSA, JEMS, Gadani Shipbreaking Labor Union and NTUF participated in the symposium. Additionally, global experts including Prof. Raphael Baunier of the World Maritime University and Mrs.



Mrs. Marilina Armellini, Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan, calls on the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr. Ahsan Khan Cheema in Islamabad on April 29, 2024.

PS Nowshera arrest inter-district gang



Soon Times Correspondent

Nowshera Soon Sakasur:

On the instructions of DPO Khushab Touger Muhammad Naqem, the police under the supervision of SHO Police Station Nowshera Inspector Malik Muhammad Ijaz Ahmed arrested the inter-district gang involved in the theft of motorcycles. Three motorcycles, a mobile phone, cash worth 552000 were recovered from the possession of the accused and two 30 bore pistols used in the incidents were recovered and cases of illegal weapons were registered against the accused. The accused, Ghulam Rasool

Arain resident of Mochh District Mianwali, Muhammad Shehzad resident of Paikhel Mianwali were arrested. On their identification, three motorbikes, mobile phones, cash, stolen property worth Rs. 552000 were recovered and handed over to their owners. SHO Malik Muhammad Ijaz Ahmad said that the accused were wanted by the police in several incidents of stealing motorcycles at gunpoint in Nowshera district Khushab, Lawah district Chakwal, Jand district Attock and Harnoli district Mianwali.

Unity of journalists of Gilgit-Baltistan is the need of the time right Now.Says Hussain Bulgari.

- Efforts are being made to solve the problems facing by the Journalists of Gilgit-Baltistan in Islamabad. Raja Iqbal Maqpan
- There is a need to solve community problems through mutual agreement and unity. Sher Balti and other like-minded journalists met at table...



ISLAMABAD (PR)

The unity of journalists of Gilgit-Baltistan is the need of the time right now. This is what the President of Gilgit-Baltistan Journalist International Forum Hussain Bulgari told and addressed to a large number of journalists from GB in Islamabad during a meeting..... Hussain Balghari is the chairman of GB journalist international forum

In solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian brothers and sisters, the foundationstone of the Al-Aqsa Museum was laid in Blueworld City.



raise a voice in favor of the oppressed Muslims of Palestine! We do not know whether our Lord will agree with us on this action or not, or how effective its fruits will be, but if we still do not do something to wake up and unite this Ummah, neither will our future in this world. There will be no identity and there will be no status for our existence and actions on the Day of Muhshar. The participants of the event not only appreciated

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad -Rawalpindi The first tourist city built in the world i.e. Blue World City laid the foundation stone of Al-Aqsa Museum to express solidarity with the people of Gaza and Palestine and to highlight the Islamic and historical importance of Jerusalem. In this regard, in the event held at the Blue World City site, the sad reality of

the ongoing Israeli atrocities in Gaza was presented to the participants and the message of freedom and unity of the Ummah was given by raising the voice for the oppressed Palestinian brothers and sisters. BlueWorld City Management says that the people of Pakistan stand with the besieged and oppressed Muslim brothers of Gaza. The construction of the Al-Aqsa Museum is an attempt to create reasons to

Blue World City's raising voice for the people of Palestine and highlighting the importance of Jerusalem, but also called the foundation stone of Al-Aqsa Museum in Blue World City the most important global effort. A special prayer was also offered for the development and prosperity of Pakistan and the freedom of Palestine and Kashmir.

International conference on anti narcotics organized by ANF

Soon Times Correspondent

Rawalpindi:

A 2-day international conference on anti-narcotics was organized by ANF and National Crime Agency. The conference will be held on 29-30 April 2024 at Serena

Hotel Islamabad. Federal Minister for Anti-Narcotics Mohsin Naqvi will attend the conference as a special guest. Senior officers from law enforcement agencies and the British High Commissioner will also attend the conference.

K-Electric seeks nearly Rs19 per unit hike for seven months



Soon Times Correspondent KARACHI

The K-Electric is planning to shock consumers as the sole power utility in Karachi has sought the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority's (Nepra) permission to charge Rs18.86 per unit additional fuel cost adjustment (FCA) from its consumers for the past seven months.

According to details, the KE requested provisional monthly fuel charge adjustments for the period from July 2023 to March 2024.

In its application, the power distribution company sought Rs18.86 per unit increase in the FCA for the past seven months and suggested Re0.29 decrease for the rest of the two months period.

If the power regulator approves the KE's plea, the total increase would be Rs18.57 per unit.

Nepra has set May 9 as date for hearing the KE's plea.

Last month, Nepra allowed power distribution companies and the KE to collect an additional Rs2.7492 per unit from power consumers on account of periodic adjustments for three consecutive months starting from April 2024.

The regulatory authority has authorised power companies to collect over Rs85.3

billion from power consumers as an adjustment for the second quarter (Oct-Dec 2023).

This Rs2.7 per unit adjustment will apply to K-Electric as well. Notably, the stated Rs85.275 billion does not encompass the collection from the Karachi-based utility.

If incorporated, the total amount may escalate to over Rs90 billion. It's essential to highlight that consumers were burdened with multiple taxes on these additional charges, adding to their financial strain.

Specifically, the 18% Goods and Services Tax (GST) on this amount will further impose an additional burden of over Rs16 billion on power consumers. In a nutshell, the consumers will pay over Rs106 billion (or \$380 million) in these three months.

It is to be noted on February 14, 2024, Nepra held a public hearing on the petition of these companies who had demanded Rs85 billion upward adjustments for the quarter under review.

This amount is to be collected on account of variation in capacity charges, variable operation and maintenance (O&M), additional recovery on incremental sales, use of system charges (UoSC), Market Operator Fee (MoF) and FCA impact on transmission and distribution (T&D) losses for the quarter.



Islamabad: PM's coordinator on climate change & Environmental coordination Romina Khurshid Alam in a group photo during a launching ceremony of WEF's National plastic action partnership held at COMSATS wherein more than 12 countries ambassadors participated on April 29, 2024.



Man City extend WSL lead, Bristol relegated



BRISTOL, England

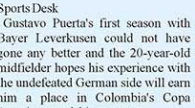
A superb second-half brace by Mary Fowler set Manchester City on course for a 4-0 away win over Bristol City on Sunday that moves them six points clear at the top of the Women's Super League table, relegating Bristol City into the process.

With 20 of their 22 league games played, Manchester City top the standings on 52 points with Chelsea, who lost their Champions League semi-final to Barcelona on Saturday, on 46 points but with two games in hand and City enjoying the advantage when it comes to goal difference.

For Bristol, their stay in the WSL came to an end after a single season with one win and three draws -- all away from home -- giving them a meagre six points after 20 games, eight behind Leicester City with two games left to play.

Bristol had their fair share of decent chances and kept a clean sheet in the first half, but Australia international Fowler sent a wonder strike flying into the top corner in the 62nd minute and added a second 13 minutes later.

Needing a win to have any chance of staying up, Bristol's fate was effectively sealed when Amy Rodgers turned the ball into her own net to make it 3-0 in the 75th minute, and Alex Greenwood's header with the last touch of the game was the final straw for the Robins.



Puerta hopes Leverkusen success will bring a place in

Sports Desk
Gustavo Puerta's first season with Bayer Leverkusen could not have gone any better and the 20-year-old midfielder hopes his experience with the undefeated German side will earn him a place in Colombia's Copa America squad this summer.

Puerta has made eight appearances this season for Bundesliga champions Leverkusen, who are unbeaten in 46 matches across all competitions under Xabi Alonso.

They will play AS Roma in the Europa League semi-finals and are also through to the German Cup final.

"This year has been wonderful for me and for my career. I hope to keep winning titles and get minutes at the end of the tournament," Puerta told Reuters.

Puerta enjoyed success with Colombia's under-20 side and has received his first call-up for the national team's friendlies against Spain and Romania in March.

Henry takes bowling spot as Williamson set to lead New Zealand in T20 World Cup fourth time

Web Desk
Matt Henry has edged out Ben Sears for the vacant seam bowling berth in New Zealand's squad for the T20 World Cup in the West Indies and United States.

Henry slots into a seam bowling attack featuring Trent Boult, Tim Southee and Lockie Ferguson, with Adam Milne ruled out due to ankle surgery and the injured Kyle Jamieson also unavailable.

Kane Williamson will captain the T20 World Cup squad for a fourth time as New Zealand hunt for a maiden title after reaching the semi-finals of the last three tournaments and the final in 2021.

"We expect the venues in the West Indies to offer quite varied conditions and feel we've selected a squad with the scope to adapt to those conditions," Black Caps coach Gary Stead said in a news release on Monday.

Thirteen members of the 15-man squad have had recent experience in the Caribbean, featuring on the last tour of the West Indies in 2022.



Israel kills at least 30 Palestinians in Rafah, new Gaza ceasefire talks expected in Cairo

Israeli officials concerned about possible ICC arrest warrants as pressure mounts over war in Gaza

CAIRO
Web Desk
Israeli airstrikes on three houses in the southern Gaza city of Rafah killed at least 25 Palestinians and wounded many others, medics said on Monday, as leaders of Hamas arrived in Cairo for a new round of talks with Egyptian and Qatari mediators.

In Gaza City, in the north of the Gaza Strip, Israeli warplanes struck two houses, killing at least four people and wounding several people, health officials said. The strike on the other house killed two brothers, they added.

The strikes on Rafah, where more than one million people have sought refuge from months of Israeli bombardment, took place hours before Egypt was expected to host leaders of the Islamist group Hamas to discuss prospects for a ceasefire agreement with Israel.

The Israeli military said it was checking the reports. Speaking on Monday at a World Economic Forum meeting in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said Egypt was hopeful about a proposal for a truce and the release of hostages in the Gaza Strip but it was waiting for a response on the plan from Israel and Hamas.

"We are hopeful the proposal has taken into account the positions of both sides, has tried to extract moderation from both sides, and we are waiting to have a final decision," Shoukry said.

Asked about the new round of talks in Cairo, a Palestinian official close to mediation effort told Reuters: "Things look better this time," but he declined to say whether an agreement was imminent.

Israel has vowed to eradicate Hamas, which controls Gaza. Its six-month-long military operation has now killed 34,488 Palestinians, 34 of them in the past 24 hours, and wounded 77,643, according to Gaza's health authorities. The war has displaced most of the 2.3 million population and laid much of the enclave to waste.

Chechen leader's 16-year-old son named trustee at special forces university

Web Desk
Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov said on Sunday that he named his teenage son, who was shown beating a prisoner in custody last year, a trustee of the Russian University of Special Forces named after President Vladimir Putin.

Adam Kadyrov, who turned 16 in November, was appointed last year as his father's top bodyguard and an observer in a new battalion that is part of Russia's defence ministry forces.

"He is closely familiar with the activities of the famous university, so I believe that he will cope with his assigned responsibilities perfectly," Kadyrov wrote in a statement on the Telegram messaging app.

He added that the nomination came after a request by the head of the university, which is located in Gudermes, a town in Chechnya. Russia's private educational institution provides professional training for special units.

In September, the younger Kadyrov was shown in a social media video posted by his father punching and kicking a prisoner accused of burning the Koran. The prisoner, Nikita Zhuravel, has since been sentenced to three and a half years.



At least 40 people die in western Kenya after a dam collapses following heavy rains



NAIROBI, Kenya
A dam collapsed in western Kenya early Monday, killing at least 40 people after a wall of water swept through houses and cut off a major road, police said.

The Old Kijabe Dam, located in the Mai Mahiu area of the Great Rift Valley region that is prone to flash floods, collapsed and water spilled downstream, carrying with it mud, rocks and uprooted trees, police official Stephen Kiriri told The Associated Press.

Vehicles were entangled in the debris on one of Kenya's busiest highways and paramedics treated the injured as waters submerged large areas.

Ongoing rains in Kenya have caused flooding that has already killed nearly 100 people and postponed the opening of schools. Heavy rains have been pounding the country since mid-March and the Meteorology Department has warned of more rain.

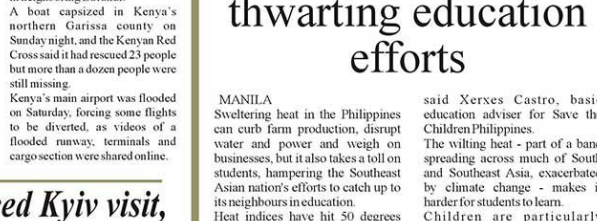
Kenya's Interior Minister Kituro Kindiki ordered the inspection of all public and private dams and water reservoirs within 24 hours starting Monday afternoon to avert future incidents. The ministry said recommendations for evacuations and resettlement would be done after the inspection.

The Kenya National Highways Authority issued an alert warning motorists to brace for heavy traffic and debris that blocked the roads around Navasha and Narok, west of the capital Nairobi.

The wider East African region is experiencing flooding due to the heavy rains, and 155 people have reportedly died in Tanzania while more than 200,000 people affected in neighboring Burundi.

A boat capsized in Kenya's northern Garissa county on Sunday night, and the Kenyan Red Cross said it had rescued 23 people but more than a dozen were still missing.

Philippine students suffer in wilting heat, thwarting education efforts



MANILA
Sweltering heat in the Philippines can curb farm production, disrupt water and power and weigh on businesses, but it also takes a toll on students, hampering the Southeast Asian nation's efforts to catch up to its neighbors in education.

Heat indices have hit 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit) in various regions in the Philippines, as the weather phenomenon El Niño intensifies the heat enveloping the nation in its summer months of March to May.

The Philippines scores among the lowest in the world in math, science, and reading, partly because of years of inadequate remote learning during the pandemic, according to the Programme for International Student Assessment, an international study of education systems.

"It is extremely hot now. The heat burns my skin, it's not like the usual (summer) heat that is tolerable," said senior high school student Kirt Mahusay, 23, whose education was halted during COVID-19.

Thousands of schools have suspended classes due to the heat, affecting more than 3.6 million students, education ministry data shows.

Turkey says it backs outgoing Dutch prime minister Rutte's candidacy for NATO chief



ANKARA, Turkey
Turkey has told its NATO allies that Ankara will back the Netherlands' outgoing Prime Minister Mark Rutte's candidacy for the military alliance's secretary general position, a senior Turkish official said Monday.

The official said Turkey notified NATO allies' diplomats in Brussels on Monday. The decision comes three days after Rutte traveled to Turkey to seek support from President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for his bid. The official spoke on condition of anonymity in line with Turkish government protocol.

Incumbent NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg, a former Norwegian prime minister who has been NATO's top civilian official since 2014, is nearing the end of his term. His mandate had been extended several times as the alliance sought to keep a steady hand at the helm after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

NATO members Turkey and Hungary had earlier expressed reservations about Rutte's candidacy, and Erdogan made no commitments during a joint news conference with Rutte on Friday.

NATO officials and envoys want the nomination for Stoltenberg's successor wrapped up by the end of April, before competition for top European Union jobs begins in earnest around the June 6-9 elections.

They are keen to avoid having the potentially divisive issue mar the alliance's 75th anniversary summit in Washington in July.

NATO secretaries-general are responsible for chairing meetings and guiding sometimes delicate consultations among member countries to ensure that an organization that operates on consensus can continue to function. They also ensure that decisions are put into action and speak on behalf of all members.