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Nation owes its independence and security to martyrs' sacrifices: COAS

Soon Times Correspondent
Islamabad
Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Monday, the nation owes its independence and security to the sacrifices of martyrs, the military said in a statement.
According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the army chief expressed these remarks during an investiture ceremony held at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. During the ceremony, General



Munir conferred military awards upon a army personnel for their acts of gallantry during operations and meritorious services rendered to the nation.
The statement said that a large number of senior army officers and families of awardees attended the ceremony. Officers and soldiers were awarded medals including Sitara-e-Imtiaz (Military) and Tamgha-e-Basalat. Medals of martyrs were received by their family members.

People are watching if you interfere in executive's affairs, Maryam tells LHC

Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE:
Reacting to the Lahore High Court's ruling barring the Punjab government from distributing bikes among students, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Monday requested the court not to interfere in the executive's affairs.
Addressing a ceremony at the Government Polytechnic College for Girls, the chief executive said, "People are watching if you interfere in the executive's affairs."
Her remarks came after the LHC last week barred the provincial government from distributing electric and petrol motorcycles among students and suggested that electric buses should be

promoted instead.
The provincial government, by flouting the LHC's ruling, held a balloting to give bikes to the students in interest-free and soft instalments under the Chief Minister's Youth Initiative programme at the SOF office on Saturday.
Expressing her displeasure over the judgment, the CM said: "We introduced the bike scheme for students. LHC judge stopped it."
Referring to the honourable judge's remarks on the proceedings, the chief minister said that she could not stop laughing when she heard the verdict.
"It was said that if bikes were distributed among the children [students],



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding Azad Jammu & Kashmir matters in Islamabad

PM Shehbaz approves Rs 23b for AJK

● **AJK govt accepts 'all demands of AAC' as protesters march towards Muzaffarabad**

Soon Times Correspondent
Islamabad
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved on Monday the provision of Rs23 billion for Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) amid violent protests in the region.
Violent clashes between the police and activists rocked AJK as the people took to the streets against an increase in electricity tariff. At least one police official died and dozens were injured on Saturday. A complete strike has also been observed in the territory since Friday, bringing routine life to a halt.
The approval was given at a special meeting chaired by the prime minister in Islamabad.
The high-level meeting was attended by Prime Minister of AJK Chaudhry Anwarul Haq along with political leaders and ministers of coalition parties.
AJK Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq announced a reduction in electricity tariff soon after the meeting chaired by the premier concluded.
"The residents in AJK have been advocating for affordable electricity and flour subsidies for the past few days. No one can

ignore the necessity of accessible electricity and affordable bread," said Anwar. He also announced a reduction in bread prices.
According to a notification issued by the AJK energy department, household consumers using one to 100 units, will pay Rs3 per unit. Those using 101 to 300 units, the new cost will be Rs5 per unit and for those consuming more than 300 units, the new rate will be Rs6 per unit.
The rates for commercial consumers were also decreased according to the notification.
In view of the gravity of the situation, President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday urged all stakeholders to exercise restraint and resolve the issues through dialogue and mutual consultation.
"The political parties, state institutions, and the people of AJK should act responsibly so that hostile elements cannot exploit the situation to their benefit," Zardari said while addressing a delegation of PPP lawmakers in the AJK Legislative Assembly according to an official statement.

Pakistan wants SCO states' collaboration to unlock region's potential

Soon Times Correspondent
BEIJING:
Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar has urged collaboration between the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states to harness the region's potential for sustained progress and prosperity.
Dar made this emphasis in a meeting with the SCO Secretary-General Ambassador Zhang Ming in Beijing, where the foreign minister arrived on Monday.
He is on a four-day visit to China to co-chair the Fifth Pakistan-China Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue with Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi which would cover a full spectrum of Pakistan-China relations.
FM Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the SCO Charter and the Organisation's fundamental ideals as enunciated in the "Shanghai Spirit".

Shehbaz steps down As PML-N president

Soon Times Correspondent
Islamabad
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stepped down as the president of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on Monday, paving the way for party supremo and three-time former premier Nawaz Sharif to be elected as the party head.
Party leader Marriyum Aurangzeb confirmed the news in a post on X that had the premier's resignation letter attached.
A meeting of the party's central committee has been called now on May 18.

Pakistani airlines' operations in Europe get one step closer to resumption

Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE:
In a positive development for Pakistan's aviation industry, the country's airlines' operations have come one step closer to restoration in Europe with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency's (EASA) decision to lift the ban. The News reported on Monday.
Both the European Commission and the EASA have forwarded the decision to the European Air Safety Committee for approval. Sources told the publication.
The development comes a day after a high-level delegation of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) headed by the CAA DG left for Europe to brief the authorities on the measures related to the restoration of flights by Pakistani airlines in European countries.

PTI 'victimised' under guise of May 9, says Ayub citing Benazir's assassination protests

Soon Times Correspondent
Islamabad
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Secretary-General Omar Ayub has delivered an explosive speech on the floor of the National Assembly, rejecting the allegations that his party was involved in the violent May 9 protests and reiterating

the demand to hold a judicial inquiry into the riots that broke out almost across the country following former prime minister Imran Khan's arrest last year.
Addressing the National Assembly session on Monday, Ayub — also the leader of the opposition in the lower house of parliament — said the country suffered immense damages following the assassination of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto in 2007.

People disseminating 'classified documents' to be charged under Official Secrets Act: Khawaja Asif

Soon Times Correspondent
Islamabad
Defence Minister Khawaja Asif Monday said the government has taken "strict notice of the unauthorised dissemination of sensitive and classified information" in the wake of classified documents surfacing across social media platforms.
Taking to X, formerly Twitter, the federal minister wrote that notice has been taken, particularly after the open display of classified documents, especially documents labelled as secret.
"The spread of such information can seriously damage Pakistan's relations with its friends and brotherly countries in

addition to harming Pakistan's strategic and economic interests," the minister wrote in his post.
He added that the federal government, in this context, has decided to register cases under the Official Secrets Act 2023 against all those individuals who are directly or indirectly involved in the disclosure or dissemination of secret information or documents.
"The punishment for this crime is two years imprisonment and [a] fine," he maintained.
The defence minister's statement comes days after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved a draft to amend the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2016 as part of the federal government's decision to regulate social media through legislation.
Last week, Geo News learnt from sources that as per the proposed PECA Amendment Bill 2024, the establishment of a Digital Rights Protection Authority has also been suggested.

No issue if Marwat follows party's line, says Imran after issuance of show-cause notice

Soon Times Correspondent
Islamabad
After expelling the firebrand lawmaker from the party's top decision-making bodies, incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan on Monday said that he has "no problem with MNA Sher Afzal Marwat" if he follows the party line.
Marwat, who remains in the limelight due to his blunt and controversial remarks, landed in hot water after he claimed that Sudi Arabi was also allegedly involved in the toppling of Khan-led government in 2022.
The top leadership of the former ruling party is only distanced itself from Marwat's statement about Riyadh but also served a show-cause notice on the beleaguered senior leader of the PTI. He was given three days to respond to



the notice and explain his position as to why disciplinary action should not be taken against him.
This is not the first time that Marwat was served notice by his party. In February, PTI had issued a show-cause notice to Marwat over his remarks about the party's Acting Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan. During a TV show, Marwat had claimed that Gohar was "removed as the party chairman over his unsatisfactory performance".

SC deems investigation into attacks on journalists 'unsatisfactory'

Apex court gives 30-day deadline to federal police, orders appointing 'competent' officers



Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD:
The Supreme Court (SC) deemed the investigation into the torture and kidnapping case of journalists Asad Toor, Absar Alam, and Matiuallah Jan "unsatisfactory" on Monday, and ordered the appointment of competent investigative officers to handle the cases.
During the hearing of the case against

harassment of journalists, a three-member bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa expressed anger over the lack of progress in the investigation concerning journalist Matiuallah Jan's abduction case.
The apex court ordered publishing the sketches of the journalists' attackers in newspapers and advertising a reward amount for the suspects' arrest. The SC

granted Islamabad police 30 days. The case was adjourned till June, with the date of hearing to be fixed later.
The court also ordered to send the complete CCTV footage of the kidnappers in the Matiuallah Jan case to Punjab forensic lab.
The court began the hearing by calling the senior superintendent of police (SSP) to the rostrum.

The SSP replied in the affirmative regarding the availability of written evidence.
The CJP inquired how long had the SSP been in the police force. "13 years," the police officer responded.
Irrked by the SSP's responses, CJP Isa then instructed the additional attorney general (AAG) to "suspend him immediately".

Pak-Turkiye Economic Partnership

The Ambassador of the Republic of Turkiye, Mr. Mehmet Pacaci, paid a courtesy call on the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema. The meeting was centered on reinforcing the longstanding brotherly relations between Turkiye and Pakistan, with a focus on elevating economic cooperation to new heights. The Minister for Economic Affairs warmly welcomed the Ambassador and highlighted the deep-rooted ties between Turkiye and Pakistan, which are founded on shared faith, history, and cultural affinity. Minister Cheema commended the

signing of the Trade in Goods Agreement/Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) on 12 August 2022 was hailed as a significant step forward. The Minister apprised the establishment of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) in Pakistan, aimed at attracting investments from friendly countries, and highlighted the potential for Turkish investment in Pakistan especially in Agricultural Machinery & Equipment and Large Scale Corporate Farming. He further highlighted the untapped potential in bilateral trade and investment and stressed the importance of enhancing

collaboration through Government-to-Government (G2G) and Business-to-Business (B2B) arrangements. The Ambassador thanked the Minister and acknowledged the brotherly relations between both nations. He reiterated the significance and conveyed Turkiye's eagerness to explore avenues for expanding bilateral trade through the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) and the Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) and fostering cooperation in energy, banking, commerce, railways, and tourism. Notably, plans for the next

session of the HLSCC, expected to convene soon, were discussed, with a focus on increasing the volume of trade to US\$ 5 billion. Additionally, plans for the establishment of a branch of a Turkish bank in Pakistan were also discussed in order to further solidifying economic ties between the two nations. In his concluding remarks, Minister Cheema reiterated the Government of Pakistan's commitment to continue working closely to realize the full potential of the bilateral relationship and enhance cooperation across various sectors for the mutual benefit of both countries.

Urgent Appeal to President of Pakistan for Peoples Bus Service Expansion: Enhancing Connectivity and Mobility in Shaheed Benazirabad District



Mushtaqe Ahmed Rahu.

attention and investment in transformative projects that uplift its communities. Introducing a Peoples Bus service along the Moro-Nawab Shah-Daur Sakrand route would be a remarkable step towards fulfilling this aspiration. It would not only facilitate seamless connectivity between these towns but also stimulate economic growth, educational opportunities, and access to healthcare for the residents. The implementation of a Peoples Bus system holds immense potential to alleviate the transportation woes faced by the people of Shaheed Benazirabad. Daily commuters, especially those reliant on public transportation, often encounter challenges such as overcrowded Vans, irregular schedules, and lengthy travel times. By introducing a modern and efficient Peoples Bus service, these hardships can be mitigated, ensuring a more comfortable, reliable, and time-saving journey for all. Moreover, investing in public transportation infrastructure aligns with broader goals of sustainable development and rural planning. By promoting mass transit options like the Peoples Bus Service, we can reduce traffic congestion, and enhance the overall quality of life in our cities and towns. This holistic approach to transportation management not

only benefits the present generation but also lays the foundation for a more prosperous and environmentally responsible future. Your Excellency, I am confident that your visionary leadership and commitment to the welfare of the people will guide you in making the right decision regarding the provision of a Peoples Bus service for Shaheed Benazirabad District. By extending this essential public utility to our communities, you will not only leave a lasting legacy of progress and prosperity but also fulfill the aspirations of countless individuals who yearn for improved transportation facilities. We respectfully urge you to consider the implementation of a Peoples Bus service connecting Moro to Nawab Shah and Daur Sakrand as a priority initiative for the betterment of Shaheed Benazirabad District. Your support in this endeavor would be deeply appreciated by the residents, whose lives stand to be positively impacted by this transformative project. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and may your leadership continue to inspire hope and progress for all Pakistanis. With warm regards, Citizens of District Shaheed Benazirabad.

The profound impact of science in human life.

Ahsan Ali Rind

Science has revolutionized human life in countless ways, transforming it from a primitive state to a modern, technologically advanced society. The effects of science on human life are multifaceted and far-reaching, impacting various aspects of our daily lives. Scientific discoveries and advancements have led to the development of new medicines, vaccines, and treatments, significantly increasing human lifespan and quality of life. Medical research has enabled us to understand and combat diseases, reducing mortality rates and improving overall health. Science has driven the creation of innovative technologies, revolutionizing communication, transportation, and entertainment. The internet, mobile devices, and social media have connected people worldwide, making communication faster and more accessible. Scientific discoveries in agriculture have led to increased crop yields, improved farming practices, and enhanced food security, reducing hunger and

malnutrition worldwide. Irrigation systems, fertilizers, and pest control methods have enabled us to cultivate land more efficiently. Science has helped us comprehend the natural world, enabling us to address environmental issues like climate change, conservation, and sustainability. We now understand the importance of preserving ecosystems and biodiversity. Scientific breakthroughs have enabled the efficient harnessing of energy resources, mitigating the impact of human activity on the environment. Renewable energy sources like solar and wind power have reduced our reliance on fossil fuels. Science has facilitated the development of transportation modes, enabling fast and efficient travel, and expanding our understanding of the universe through space exploration. We have explored the moon, Mars, and beyond, broadening our knowledge of the cosmos. Scientific advancements have enabled rapid global communication, access to vast information, and the internet, transforming the way we connect and learn. We can now access knowledge and

connect with others worldwide in real-time. Science-driven innovations have fueled economic growth, created new industries, and improved productivity, raising the standard of living for millions. Technological advancements have enabled us to produce goods more efficiently and effectively. Scientific discoveries have led to the development of safety measures, such as airbags, seatbelts, and medical treatments, reducing the risk of injury and death. We have also developed emergency response systems and disaster management strategies. Science has enabled us to enjoy a better quality of life, with advancements in fields like entertainment, recreation, and consumer products. We have access to a wide range of products and services that improve our daily lives. In conclusion, science has had a profound impact on human life, transforming it in countless ways. From improved healthcare and technological advancements to environmental understanding and economic growth, science has enabled us to live longer, healthier, and more comfortable lives.

Pakistan has long way to establish stable political system



Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer

populist campaign that now looks likely to see him returned to office in the next national election. The current political deadlock is particularly over setting the date for those elections, constitutionally mandated for October 12, 2023.

Building on the momentum of his move, Imran Khan and his Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supporters are trying to hold early elections, while a coalition led by the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) party arrives as late as possible. To stay in power, the government relied on its patronage networks and resorted to politicizing key state institutions such as the judiciary, the accountability office, and the country's electoral commission. In mobilizing his supporters, Khan

powers. Many Gulf States, which for years have relied on Pakistan's military to provide security for the government and value Islamabad's regional diplomatic role, need the security of a politically predictable and stable Pakistan. The same is true of the international financial community which, along with the Saudis, Chinese and others, has invested heavily in Pakistan.

The year 2023 probably has many open questions. Among them, can Pakistan's warm political system succeed in curbing election violence? Will the army keep its promise not to interfere in the electoral process? Could the resounding triumph of Khan's

conspiratorial populism reshape politics in a way that sets Pakistan on a more authoritarian path? How could a collapsing economy affect the political process, possibly postponing elections? The minor question is that Pakistan has a long way to go to establish a stable and functional political system, let alone build a democratic political culture.

Now all eyes are on how military-civilian relations that are being shape up under Asim Munir. Under Bajwa, the military consolidated its control over all sorts of behind-the-scenes politics. Bajwa presided over a close "same page" relationship with Khan. When this conflict occurred, the Muslim League (N) was eager to replace Khan as an

ally of the military and head of the civilian government. Bajwa resigned saying that the army would no longer be involved in political affairs. Very few people in Pakistan believe him. With politics dominating the agenda this year and elections approaching, army chief Asim Munir has a chance to show the country whether he will follow in his predecessor's footsteps or chart a new course for Pakistan's civil-military relations. The political parties must also agree that in future the opposition parties will fulfill their duties but will not attempt to overthrow any existing government before the end of their term. All political parties must also express their commitment to maintain continuity in the economic policies of each government.



PTI founder may face fourth Toshakhana case, says Barrister Gohar

Soon Times Correspondent
RAWALPINDI
PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan says efforts are afoot to file a fourth case against the party founder related to Toshakhana. He alleged that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) was being used against the PTI founder. Speaking to media outside the Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, Barrister Gohar quoted the PTI founder as having said apology should be sought from him (and not the other way round). He (founder)



condemned the May 9 violence and underlined the need for a judicial commission to investigate the matter. The PTI founder insisted he would pursue dialogue, not deal, for the betterment of Pakistan. He stressed that

personal interests would not drive these discussions. However, he lamented a lack of progress by the negotiation committee. Addressing concerns raised by the former prime minister regarding tax collection and the IMF programme, Barrister Gohar said power should emanate from democratic channels. Gohar urged the judiciary to expedite the hearing on the Iddat case and decide it without further delay. Also, he mentioned plans to move court on a statement made by former caretaker prime minister Anwarul Haq Kakar regarding Form 47.

Establishment should positively respond to olive branch: Parvez Elahi

Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE
Senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Parvez Elahi says the powers that be should positively respond to the dialogue overture (a reference to PTI's efforts to negotiate). Speaking to media after appearing in the anti-corruption court, he averred that negotiation was the only way out of the impasse. The PTI founder, he said, had agreed to sit on the negotiation table for the sake of country. He said talks with only those in position of authority could be successful and they should positively respond to Arif Alvi's olive branch. "Refusal to sit for talks at this juncture will be a disservice to the country," he said.



The former chief minister said the PML-N was sabotaging talks between the PTI and the Establishment as it knew that the stolen mandate had to be returned in case of successful negotiation. The PML-N was seeing its annihilation in successful PTI-Establishment talks, he emphasised.

Sindh considers to form Dolphin Force to combat street crimes



Soon Times Correspondent
Karachi:
Home Minister Sindh, Ziaul Hassan Janjua, paid a special visit to the Karachi Police Office. Additional IGP Karachi and other senior police officers welcomed him at the KPO. A guard of honor was presented to him by the police contingent. The Home Minister Sindh, chaired a high-level meeting on the law and order

situation in the city and issued further necessary instructions after a detailed briefing on various aspects. Additional IGP Karachi, Imran Yaqub Minhas, presented a briefing on the measures being taken to curb street crimes, including theft, robbery, and drug trafficking, and suggested the formation of a Dolphin Force, similar to the Punjab Police, to combat street crimes. He also

recommended the provision of 1800 motorcycles for this purpose. The Additional IGP Karachi informed the meeting that the police are constantly working to protect Chinese citizens, experts and other foreigners. He said that the incidents of motorcycle theft and mobile phone snatching have decreased significantly due to effective policing and constant action against criminals. The Additional IGP Karachi briefed the meeting on the measures being taken to curb street crimes, including the formation of a Dolphin Force. The Home Minister Sindh, directed that the police take effective and coordinated action against street criminals and their groups, and ensure the arrest of those involved in such activities. The Minister of Home, Sindh, said that he will again visit the city next month and review the progress on the instructions given. He said that he will personally visit different areas of the city and review the traffic situation. The meeting was attended by all the DIGs of Karachi Police, SSPs and other senior police officers.

ANF continue operations against drug trafficking

Soon Times Correspondent
Rawalpindi:
ANF continue operations against drug trafficking. ANF recovered more than 287 kg of drugs in 10 operations and arrested 16 suspects. The ANF recovered 8400 narcotic pills from a parcel destined for the UK at a courier office in Rawalpindi. 108 kg hashish, 3.6 kg opium and 2 kg ice were recovered from the accused near Expressway Islamabad. 72 kg hashish was recovered from the accused near Ring Road Peshawar. 48 kg hashish was recovered from near MI Islamabad. 24 kg of opium was recovered from 3 suspects near Kala Shah Kaku Toll Plaza Sheikhupura. 12 kg hashish was recovered from 2 accused in Sohrah Goth Karachi. ANF recovered 8 kg hashish from 2 accused in Tandujam Hyderabad. 5.8 kg hashish was recovered from 5 accused in G-9 Islamabad. 2 kg of opium was recovered from the accused near Burhan Interchange Attock. 105 grams of ice was recovered from the accused near the university in Islamabad. According to the



spokesperson of ANF, investigations have been started by registering cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act against all the arrested accused.

After SC order, ECP suspends lawmakers elected on reserved seats denied to SIC

Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD:
After the Supreme Court order on Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) petition regarding reserved seats, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Monday suspended 77 lawmakers elected on seats denied to the party. The issue of reserved seats had been a point of contention between the SIC, which primarily comprises Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-backed independent candidates, and the ruling parties notably Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Muttalidha Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P), and others. Dozens of members of the PPP, PML-N, MQM-P, JUI-F and others had taken oath on reserved seats in different assemblies across the country following the PHC's verdict. The ruling PML-N is the biggest loser as 44 of its members have been suspended while 15 lawmakers from PPP, 13 from Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) and one each from MQM-P, Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party, and



Awami National Party, Pakistan Muslim League and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians. Following the top court's order, the ECP today withdrew the notification of 22 returned candidates who were allotted seats in the National Assembly. Out of the 22, 11 of them are female lawmakers given seats in the NA from Punjab, 8 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 3 minority seats in the lower house. On the other hand, in KP Assembly 21 lawmakers on reserved seats for women and 4 for minorities have been de-notified. In the Punjab Assembly, 24 women lawmakers and 3 non-Muslim legislators have been de-notified. While in the Sindh

Assembly, the commission de-notified 2 female MPs and a minority member. All the lawmakers that have been de-notified belong to the PML-N, PPP, MQM-P, JUI-F, Awami National Party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-Parliamentarians (PTI-P), Pakistan Muslim-League-Quaid (PML-Q) and Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP). Supreme Court order
Last week, the apex court suspended the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) verdict on reserved seats while accepting the SIC's plea against the high court's ruling. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had rejected the party's plea depriving it of reserved seats. "We are accepting the [SIC's] pleas [against the PHC verdict], Justice Mansoor Ali Shah stated, and asked under what law [reserved] seats were allocated to other parties. A three-member bench headed by Justice Shah and comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Afjar Minallah heard the SIC's plea filed through Advocate Faisal Siddiqui last month.

£190mn scandal: Accountability court adjourns hearing until May 15

Soon Times Correspondent
RAWALPINDI
An accountability court on Monday adjourned the hearing of the £190 million scandal case against the PTI founder and his wife, Bushra Bibi, until May 15. Judge Nasir Javed Rana heard the case at Adiala Jail. PTI founder and Bushra Bibi, alongside NAB Prosecutor General Sardar Muzaffar Abbasi and his team were present. Lawyers representing the PTI founder and Bushra Bibi, including Zaheer Abbas Chaudhry, Intizar Panjutha, and Shoab Sihalheer, were also in attendance. Requests for medical examinations of the PTI founder and Bushra Bibi, as well as a meeting with Saeda Warsi, were filed by



respondent lawyers. This was approved by the court. During the hearing, statements from three NAB witnesses were recorded, and the cross-examination of two was completed. So far, statements of 30 witnesses were recorded while cross-examination of 19 was done.



The Ambassador of Bosnia & Herzegovina in Pakistan, Mr. Emin Cohodarevic, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad on May 13, 2024.

Wheat production in Sindh was more than 42 lakh metric tons, Jam Khan Shoro

Soon Times Correspondent
Karachi:
Food Minister Sindh Jam Khan Shoro has said that the process of purchasing wheat from farmers in Sindh is going on, the production of wheat in this season has been more than 42 lakh metric tons. Talking to the media, Jam Khan Shoro said that this time the wheat harvest has been better than the previous years. The provincial minister said that the food department will purchase 9 lakh metric tons of wheat this year. He said that Sindh The official price of wheat in India is four thousand rupees per forty kg. Jam Khan Shoro said there are already 5 lakh metric tons of wheat in the warehouses of the food department. He further said that the food department has so far 6 lakh 43 A



thousand metric tons of wheat has been purchased.



Israel offensive on Rafah would not eliminate Hamas, says Blinken



WASHINGTON: An all-out Israeli offensive on the Gaza city of Rafah would provoke "anarchy" without eliminating Hamas, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Sunday, as Washington stepped up a pressure campaign against such an assault. Separately, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan emphasized Washington's concerns about an offensive in a call with his Israeli counterpart, Tzachi Hanegbi. "Mr Sullivan reiterated President Biden's longstanding concerns over the potential for a major military ground operation into Rafah, where over one million people have taken shelter," a White House readout of the phone call said.



India elections: Fourth phase of polling begins as religious fault lines deepen

HYDERABAD/BHUBANESWAR: Millions of Indians are taking part in the fourth phase of the country's elections which commenced on Monday as religious and economic divisions deepen due to increased rhetoric. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) seeking a rare third straight term, the voting in the world's most populous nation commenced on April 19 whereas the ballots are set to be counted on June 4. The BJP is going up an alliance of more than two dozen opposition parties, including its main rival Congress.



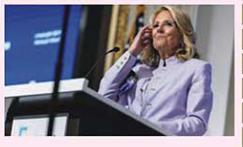
Russia says it downs 16 Ukraine-launched missiles, 31 drones

Five houses were damaged in Belgorod but there were no injuries, Governor Gladkov said

Web Desk
The Russian defence ministry said on Monday its air defence systems destroyed 16 missiles and 31 drones that Ukraine launched at Russian territory overnight, including 12 missiles over the battered border region of Belgorod. Five houses were damaged in Belgorod, but according to preliminary information, there were no injuries, Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov wrote in the Telegram messaging app. 15 people were killed in Belgorod when a section of an apartment block collapsed after being struck by fragments of a Soviet-era missile, launched by Ukraine and shot down by Russian forces, Russia said. The Russian defence ministry said on Monday the 12 guided missiles were launched from a Ukrainian Vilkha multiple rocket launcher. The ministry also said four Storm Shadow aircraft guided missiles and seven drones were downed over Crimea, eight drones were destroyed over the Kursk region and four were intercepted over the Lipetsk region. A drone sparked a short-lived fire at an electrical substation in the Kursk region, Igor Artamonov, the governor of the region in Russia's south, wrote on Telegram. "There are no casualties. The fire in the territory of the electrical substation is being extinguished," Artamonov said. Reuters could not independently verify the reports. There was no immediate comment from Ukraine. Kyiv says that targeting Russia's military, transport and energy infrastructure undermines Moscow's war effort and is an answer to the countless deadly attacks by Russia.

Dark side of First Lady Jill Biden revealed

First Lady of the US Jill Biden revealed another side of her personality while defending President Joe Biden as the commander-in-chief was under opprobrium from Vice President Kamala Harris. The frustration burst out during a group call in which Jill Biden reportedly told the participants that Kamala Harris could "go f-ck herself!" The comments were released days after the 81-year-old Biden recalled the early days in the Oval Office and highlighted about himself of being a negotiator. At that time when Harris was not VP in 2019, she criticised her incumbent boss for opposing "federally mandated interacial busing to desegregate schools". At that time, the first lady responded: "With what he cares about, what he fights for, what he's committed to, you get up there and call him a racist without basis? Go f-k yourself." "Many books will be written on the 2020 campaign, with countless retellings of events — some accurate, some inaccurate," LaRosa told Politico Playbook in a statement. "The First Lady and her team do not plan to comment on any of them." The 72-year-old Jill also declined to speak on the reported incident while visiting Children's National Hospital in Washington, telling reporters: "That was two years ago. We've moved on from that. We are here to do vaccinations."



Cold lava claims over 40 lives in Indonesia's Sumatra island



At least 41 people have lost their lives to flash floods and "cold lava" flowing from a volcano in the western Indonesian island of Sumatra, the BBC reported. Over the weekend, heavy rain swept torrents of ash and rocks down Mount Marapi, which is Sumatra's most active volcano, inundating two districts. The torrents swept people to their deaths and damaged more than 100 homes, mosques and public facilities. By Sunday afternoon, rescuers had found 19 bodies in the worst-hit village of Canduang in Agam district and recovered nine other bodies in Tanah Datar, according to the National Search and Rescue Agency. Meanwhile, 17 people are still missing. Survivors fled as the "cold lava", which is a mixture of volcanic material and pebbles that flow down a volcano's slopes in the rain, flowed towards their homes. "It was pitch black, so I used my cellphone as a torch. The road was muddy, so I chanted God, have mercy over and over again," Rima Devina, a 43-year-old housewife from the Agam district told AFP. She revealed that a neighbour's house had been "flattened by big rocks" and four of her neighbours died. What does 'cold lava' mean? The phrase 'cold lava' is a translation of the term "lahar" in Indonesian and Tagalog. Temperatures range between 0°C and 100°C, according to how they are formed, but are typically below 50°C, according to several academic reports on the phenomenon. A moving lahar resembles a "roiling slurry of wet concrete" that can grow in volume as it incorporates other debris in its path, said the US Geological Survey.

Sports & Showbiz



Pak vs Ire: 'We need same mindset in World Cup,' Shahid Afridi says after win



Sports Desk
Former Pakistan skipper and all-rounder Shahid Afridi appreciated the Green Shirts for their much needed win against Ireland in the ongoing T20I series. The Men in Green on Sunday inflicted a humiliating seven-wicket defeat on Ireland in the second T20I at the Clontarf Cricket Club in Dublin. Afridi, while lauding wicketkeeper-batter Muhammad Rizwan and batter Fakhar Zaman, said that the team needs the same mindset in the World Cup and similar strike rates for most batsmen. "We needed this win. Well done team, [especially] the way Rizwan and Fakhar played," wrote the former player. He also congratulated star pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi for achieving 300 wickets in international matches. The Men in Green chased down the target in the 17th over on the back of performances by Rizwan, Fakhar and Azam Khan. With the fresh victory, Pakistan levelled the three match series 1-1. Rizwan and Fakhar paired up to form a gigantic partnership. Their 140-run partnership is Pakistan's highest for the 3rd wicket in T20Is, breaking the record of 103 between Rizwan.



Babar Azam, Shaheen Afridi achieve career milestones after Ireland win

Sports Desk
Babar becomes most successful captain in T20Is, while Shaheen completes 300 international wickets. Pakistan skipper Babar Azam and star pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi achieved notable career milestones after the Green Shirts defeated Ireland in the second T20I on Sunday. The match being played at Dublin's Clontarf Cricket Club, saw the Men in Green securing a seven-wicket win against the hosts by successfully chasing down the 194-run target in the 17th over courtesy of Mohammad Rizwan, Fakhar Zaman and Azam Khan's fiery knocks. With the national side levelling the three-match series 1-1, the match held key significance for Babar and Shaheen with regards to their respective careers. Most successful captain For the star batter, Sunday's win made him the most successful T20I captain in history as the 29-year-old won his 45th match as skipper in the shortest format of the game — the most by any captain. Babar achieved the feat in 78 matches he's played as a skipper. He is followed by Uganda's Brian Masaba in second position with 44 wins in 56 matches. Meanwhile, Afghanistan's Asghar Afghan and England's Eoin Morgan are the third and fourth most successful T20I captains with 42 wins each. Afghan, however, led his side in 52 matches, while Morgan was England's captain for 72 games. 300 int'l wickets Separately, the win also saw Shaheen bagging 300 international wickets after dismissing three players during Friday's match. The left-arm pacer achieved the feat in 145 matches. He has 113 and 104 wickets to his name in Test and ODIs, respectively. Whereas in the T20Is, he has dismissed 84 players. Pakistan Cricket Board Chairman Mohsin Naqvi, who met the team on Sunday after their loss in the first T20I, congratulated and presented Babar and Shaheen with team jerseys for their achievements.

Katy Perry stuns fans with 'magical' Disney princess



Katy Perry has honored the stage of American Idol with her several stunning outfits but this time she has slayed it. During the last Disney-themed episode of the reality show on Sunday, May 12, the 39-year-old singer performed an outfit transformation that left her fans in awe. The singer-songwriter also took to her official Instagram account and shared a behind-the-scenes practice video showcasing a bright pink dress hastily changing into a glittery blue gown inspired by Disney princesses titled Cinderella. She captioned the video with the lyrics of the fairy godmother in the Disney movie that reads, "Bibbidi Bobbidi Boo." Moreover, she also shared a series of photos of her stories while posing in her illuminating dress.

Patrick Mahomes celebrates wife on Mother's Day with cute post



Sports Desk
Kansas City Chiefs star Patrick Mahomes took to social media to make sure that his wife, Brittany Mahomes, felt the love on Mother's Day. In an adorable post on Instagram on Sunday, the 28-year-old quarterback shared an adorable photo to celebrate his wife as the world marked the International Mother's Day. The photo he shared showed Brittany posing for a portrait with their two children: daughter Sterling Skye, 3, and son Patrick "Bronze" Lavon III, 16 months. The trio wore a simple wardrobe that consisted of white tops and denim. He captioned the post: "Happy Mothers Day!! Patrick's friend and Kansas City Chiefs' tight end Travis Keke also wished Brittany in the comment section, writing: "Happy Mother's Day Brit!!" Brittany also marked the day with an Instagram photoshoot including images of herself and Patrick posing with their kids.