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Social media spreading misinformation about Kyrgyzstan situation: Dar

- Reveals 16 foreign students injured out of which four to five are from Pakistan
- Tarar blasts a political party in Pakistan for spreading lies about deaths and rapes
- Announces more flights to be operated to bring back stranded Pakistanis



Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Sunday said his Kyrgyz counterpart Jeenbek Kulubayev had told him that situation in Bishkek was peaceful and social media had been used to create a hype about the situation. Addressing a press conference, Dar, quoting Kulubayev, said a total of 16 foreign students were injured in the attacks on Friday, including four to five Pakistanis, and described the reports about alleged deaths as completely false. The Kyrgyz authorities have said that paid bloggers are spreading rumours, he said and added that social media was being used to incite people to violence. Dar, who is also the deputy prime minister, said they had initially planned to leave for Bishkek,

but Kulubayev informed him that there was need to do so as the situation had been controlled. No incident has been reported since Friday, said the foreign minister who added that more flights would be operated to bring those Pakistani students back who wanted to do so. Speaking on the occasion, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said the incident wasn't targeted against Pakistan, as situation developed only after a brawl between the locals and some Egyptian students which later also affected those from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Without naming the PTI, he said a political party, which had previously written a letter to the IMF against Pakistan's interests, had launched a social media to promote lies about the state of affairs in Bishkek.

Turkish foreign minister to arrive in Pakistan today for two-day visit



Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD

The Foreign Minister of Turkey Hakan Fidan is set to touch down in Pakistan for a significant two-day visit today, according to sources. During his stay, the Turkish diplomat is scheduled to hold crucial meetings with several key figures, including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Hakan Fidan will also hold a meeting with Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, alongside a delegation. Turkish foreign minister is slated to meet with National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Senate Chairman Yousaf Raza Gillani.

Khawaja Asif says Punjab government will elevate citizens' living standard



Soon Times Correspondent
SIALKOT

Defence Minister and Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader Khawaja Asif reaffirmed the commitment of the Punjab government to improve the quality of life for the common man. He shared his remarks on the Punjab CM's performance in a ceremony in Sialkot. Asif lauded Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz for swiftly launching public

service initiatives within her first three months in office, following in the footsteps of her leaders, Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif. Highlighting the proactive stance of CM Maryam Nawaz, Asif commended her efforts to bring essential services directly to the citizens' doorsteps. He emphasized her awareness of the challenges facing healthcare facilities in Sialkot, specifically mentioning her forthcoming visit to the District Headquarter Hospital (DHO) in Sialkot. As part of the government's initiatives to revolutionize the healthcare sector, Asif spotlighted the introduction of mobile clinics, heralding them as a boon for rural areas.

CM Maryam meets with Japanese ambassador, discuss bilateral trade, investment

Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE

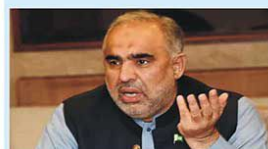
Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz met with Japan's Ambassador Wada Mitsuhiko on Sunday to discuss strengthening trade, business, and investment ties between the two nations. During the meeting, Maryam Nawaz emphasized the importance of educational and cultural exchange between Pakistani and Japanese delegations, aiming to enhance faculty programs for students. She underscored that mutual cooperation in trade, business, and investment would yield significant benefits for both Pakistan and Japan. Highlighting the vast investment potential for Japanese companies in Punjab, the Chief Minister pointed out that "Punjab is emerging as a significant consumer market". She also emphasized the value of Punjab's skilled youth population



as potential assets for Japanese companies. In response, Japan's Ambassador acknowledged the inevitability of people-to-people exchanges between Pakistan and Japan to strengthen bilateral ties. He reiterated Japan's commitment to its relationship with Pakistan and pledged cooperation with the

Punjab government. The Ambassador noted that eleven Pakistani students were pursuing master's and doctoral degrees in Japan under the MEXT scholarship program. He highlighted several Japanese projects aimed at public welfare and development currently active in Pakistan.

Punjab's policies hurt wheat farmers: Asad Qaiser



Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD

Former National Assembly speaker and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf senior leader Asad Qaiser said Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's biased policies hurt the farmers. He reacted to what he called widespread rumours about the Punjab government's decision to ban the transport of wheat mentioning that it would cause significant losses as the farmers of the province relied a great deal on the wheat crop. The former speaker said nothing conclusive had come out of the wheat inquiry as many influential figures were involved in the scandal. The PTI leader further said the Punjab CM might have some mental illness as she has been adorning the official uniforms one after the other.

Yousuf Raza Gilani receives threats



Soon Times Correspondent
MULTAN

Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gilani received a threatening message on his mobile phone from an unknown person. According to sources, the threatening message is related to his son Musa Ali Musa Gilani. It was stated in the message

that Musa patronize the notorious gangs in the area. A case has been registered with the cantonment police station against some unknown suspects on the complaint of Gilani. Also Read: South Punjab to have special economic zone, says Gilani. The mobile phone number was later traced from Khanewal. A police team headed by Cantt SP Tahir Majeed has been formed and it also includes officials from CIA. The raids are being conducted to arrest the suspects.

Special flight repatriates 140 Pakistani students from Bishkek



Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE

A special flight carrying 140 Pakistani students from Kyrgyzstan capital of Bishkek arrived at Lahore's Allama Iqbal International Airport late on Saturday following mob violence that targeted international students including Pakistani nationals. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi was present at Lahore Airport to receive the returning students. Naqvi greeted the students and inquired about their well-being,

expressed gratitude for their safe return and sought details on the unfortunate incident they experienced in Bishkek. He emphasized that Pakistani students in Kyrgyzstan are considered the nation's children, and noted that the premier took swift action to ensure their safety following the incident. Naqvi assured that efforts are underway to bring back other students still in Kyrgyzstan, stating that the top priority is the safe return of all Pakistani students. He announced that more special

flights would be arranged for their repatriation. Additionally, the minister informed that students from other cities will be provided with transportation facilities upon their arrival in Pakistan. Meanwhile, the Foreign Office (FO) summoned the Charge D'Affaires of the Kyrgyz Embassy for a demarche in response to mob violence against Pakistani students in Bishkek. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif instructed his deputy, Ishaq Dar, who also holds the portfolio of the foreign affairs ministry, and Federal Minister on Kashmir Affairs Amir Muqam to travel.

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No compromise on provision of best quality facilities to Pakistani pilgrims: Salik Hussain



Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD

Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain Sunday assured that no compromise will be made on provision of best possible facilities of food, accommodation, cleanliness, transport and healthcare to Pakistani pilgrims during this year's Hajj. "This year's Hajj would be exemplary for Pakistani

pilgrims, offering facilities that were not available in the past", he said in an interview with PTV news channel. He mentioned that accommodations, meals, and transportation, along with all basic necessities, had been standardized. Minister said that the strict monitoring system would also be adopted and effective round the clock. "Apart from the food flavor, food cleanliness and safety are also essential to keep in mind while serving the hajjis. Hence, our monitoring will encompass food preparation until the distribution processes," he remarked. An online app has been launched to train pilgrims from Pakistan to Hajj e Baatullah and provide them guidance for every step, he said.

Barrister Saif deplors Centre's unfair behaviour towards KP province



Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Adviser to Chief Minister on Information and Public Relations Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif took the centre to task over the latter's 'unfair behaviour' towards the province. His remark came days after when KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur lashed out at the federal government. In a presser with the province's Food Minister Zahir Shah, the barrister said, "the funds of the ex-FATA region have been ended and now its responsibility also falls on

KP's shoulders." Defending his chief minister's aggressive speech, he said the purpose his choice of words was to make the centre aware of its rights about KP. Meanwhile, Mr. Shah said the KP government has decided to buy 600,000 tons of wheat from the local farmers as the no imports in this regard would be made. Following this, the KP government has bought 17,000 metric tons of locally produced wheat from as it was the vision of the PTI founder to provide relief to the farmers.

"Clinic on Wheels"

Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that the "Clinic on Wheels" programme is providing modern healthcare facilities to people at their doorsteps. He said this while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Chief Minister Punjab Initiative "Clinic on Wheels" project in Sialkot here today. The ceremony was attended by Member Provincial Assemblies (MPAs) Muhammad Manshaullah Butt, Chaudhary Faisal Ikram, Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Zulqarnain, Chief Officer (CO) Health Dr. Rehan Azhar, Program In-charge "Clinic on Wheels" Sialkot District Dr. Muhammad Adnan besides local officials of the health department and field staff. Addressing the ceremony, Khawaja Muhammad Asif said that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) believes in the politics of public service and the government is providing necessary healthcare and education facilities to people,

especially women. He said that the provision of modern healthcare facilities is government's top priority. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has given the gift of health to the people of Punjab by starting the "Clinic on Wheels" program. Health facilities will be available at the doorstep of people through the mobile clinic, he added. He said that the condition of the District Headquarters (DHQ) hospital is a matter of concern. "On the instructions of the Chief Minister, I will visit the DHQ hospital tomorrow and steps will be taken to improve its condition. Maryam Nawaz is taking initiatives by following in the footsteps of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Nawaz Sharif. Apart from dental, eye facilities, mammography facilities will also be available at the clinic," he said. "Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz will bring a pleasant change in the life of the common man through the clinic in South Punjab. Maryam Nawaz has laid the

foundation of politics of service in three months. The focus of the Punjab government is on educational institutions, hospitals and roads. For development of Sialkot district, a feasibility report has been prepared for implementation of four important projects," he added. "The Sialkot Ring Road will be constructed in Sialkot by the provincial government which would link Wazirabad, Daska and Pasrur Road while work would soon start on the two-way construction project from Dharamkot to Sialkot by the federal government. Universities and colleges from the kutchery and the city will be shifted to Aimenabad Road. After their shifting, a park will be constructed on an area of 53 acres, and the general bus stand would be shifted outside the city, which would cost about Rs17 billion with the aim of making the city's environment healthy," he added. He said that the traffic would be managed in the city. "The residents of Sialkot will be given an organized life system. A

flyover will be constructed on Kashmir Road from Cantt to Kotli Bahram Chowk crossing. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif will soon lay the foundation stone of the IT Park. I am grateful to Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz for it," he added. He said that the district administration is diligently implementing the development projects. "When the government took over, the economy was in ICU and now it has started breathing. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government has not laid a single brick of development work in the district. Political opponents want economic instability so that chaos spreads and their looting is held accountable," he said and added that the future of Punjab and the country is in strong hands. He said that power is being transferred to new generation in terms of political leadership and the country is being run by young generation.

Corruption's Grip on Pakistan's Institutions

Sidra Bano

Pakistan reported that

corrupt sectors in

Corruption means doing something wrong or dishonest. It's when a person or a group does something bad that harms the rights and privileges of others. Bribery or embezzlement is common examples of corruption, but it can happen in many ways. Usually, people in positions of power are more likely to be corrupt. Corruption shows selfish and greedy behavior.

In Pakistan, corruption is a big problem and happens in every sector like the government, judiciary, police, health services, education and military. Corruption messes up economic decision-making, discourages investment, hurts competitiveness and weakens a country's economic growth. Despite calls for reform and attempts to fix things, there's not much progress. The government led by Imran Khan promised to eliminate corruption but hasn't been very successful. Corruption is a significant issue in India and among Muslims, especially the educated and intelligent ones. Unfortunately, this group is often selfish and morally and intellectually corrupt. While corruption is common, it's especially bad among this particular class of Muslims. In Pakistan, corruption remains a big problem and is seen as widespread and systemic. Small-scale corruption, like bribery, happens in law enforcement, procurement, and public services. The judiciary is not considered independent and is thought to protect corrupt political practices. Efforts have been made to address these issues, including a National Anti-Corruption Strategy, but political unwillingness and perceived

the judiciary was involved in the highest amount of bribery. In 2010, TI Pakistan found that a majority of people reported experiencing corruption when dealing with the judiciary. Court employees, public prosecutors, witnesses, judges, opponent lawyers and magistrates were all mentioned as being involved in corruption. In 2011, TI Pakistan identified the judiciary and police as the most corrupt institutions in Pakistan. However, the Supreme Court played a positive role in some high-impact corruption cases against government officials. Despite this, there were still allegations of nepotism and corruption in the lower judiciary in 2013. In 2010, TI Pakistan reported that about 23.7% of surveyed people got into educational institutions through non-normal and alternate procedures.

In businesses like these, rich and influential people, including politicians, technocrats, bureaucrats, and businessmen, often take advantage to make profits. This behavior is also a reason for the declining quality of education in public schools. State-owned schools face challenges such as poor management, ineffective governance, and the incompetence of successive governments in the education sector. Other factors contributing to the decline include insufficient funding, elite classes not using their resources for public benefit, and the appointment of under qualified teachers. During Pervez Musharraf's regime, Pakistan received significant investments in higher education, but this support dwindled with Zardari's government after 2008. In 2011, Dr. Syed Abdul Aziz declared education as one of the most r Dr.

TI Pakistan. Transparency International's 2013 findings identified corruption in education, including embezzlement of government funds, existence of ghost schools only on paper, bribes for confidential material, and poor utilization of funds. Corruption is widespread in the police force, identified as the most corrupt sector in a 2013 survey by Transparency International. The main causes are lack of accountability, low salaries, and bribery to escape charges. Ordinary citizens face challenges reporting police corruption. In 2005, a woman who exposed police corruption was falsely detained and raped. In 2002, 96% of surveyed individuals reported corruption issues with electrical utility officials, mainly related to billing. Some consumers admitted to illegally reducing their utility bills, while others faced inflated bills meant to solicit bribes. The power sector in Pakistan faces challenges like electricity theft, transmission losses, circular debt and rising electricity costs. A 2002 study revealed that 99% of respondents faced corruption in taxation. About 32% reported paying bribes to lower their tax assessment and nearly 14% received fictitious tax assessments until they paid a bribe. In the last I thank full to Sir Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer for his invaluable assistance in helping me to write an article. His expertise, guidance and unwavering support throughout the entire process have been instrumental in shaping the article into its final form. His deep knowledge and insightful feedback not only enriched the content but also improved my overall understanding of the subject matter.

Personal Goals and Aspirations



Yaar Sami Luhrani

Having goals and aspirations is an essential part of personal growth and fulfillment. They give us direction, motivation and a sense of purpose. Here are some key points to consider: Setting Meaningful Goals: It's important to set goals that align with your values and passions. Reflect on what truly matters to you and what you want to achieve in various aspects of your life, such as career, relationships, health, and personal development. Creating Vision:

Visualize your ideal future and create a vision board or write down your aspirations. This helps you stay focused and reminds you of what you're working towards. Breaking Down Goals: Break your goals into smaller, achievable steps. This makes them more manageable and allows you to track your progress along the way. Celebrate each milestone you reach. Embracing Growth Mindset: Adopt a growth mindset, believing that your abilities and skills can be developed through dedication and effort. Embrace challenges, learn from failures, and see setbacks as opportunities for growth. Taking Action: Goals are just dreams unless you take action. Create a plan, prioritize tasks, and commit to taking consistent steps towards your goals. Stay motivated by surrounding yourself with supportive people and seeking

inspiration from others who have achieved similar aspirations. Adapting And Adjusting: As you progress towards your goals, be open to adjusting your plans. Life is full of unexpected twists and turns, and flexibility is key. Embrace new opportunities and be willing to change course if necessary. Celebrating Achievements: Celebrate your achievements along the way, no matter how small. Recognize your hard work and the progress you've made. This boosts your confidence and keeps you motivated to continue pursuing your aspirations. Remember, personal goals and aspirations are unique to each individual. What matters most is that they resonate with you and bring you a sense of fulfillment. Stay focused, stay motivated, and believe in yourself. You have the power to turn your dreams into reality.

Provide maximum facilities to the patients: Dr. Babar Rehman

Soon Times Correspondent Bhera:

The government is spending billions of rupees to provide maximum facilities to the people. According to the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the medical staff should provide maximum facilities to the patients. These views were expressed by Additional Secretary Health Punjab Dr. Babar Rehman while talking to members of Bhera Press Club Registered during his visit to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Bhera. MS Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Ismail, IT Officer Khurram Gondal and others were also present on this occasion. Dr.

Babar Rehman checked the medicine store, emergency and medical wards and expressed his satisfaction. Talking to Ataul-Rahman Iqbal of Bhera Press Club Registered and others, he said that measures are being taken to meet the shortage of doctors in the hospital. The revamping of the hospital will provide more convenience to the patients. MS Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Ismail,



while giving a briefing, told the Additional Secretary Health that along with the provision of free medicines to TB patients, orthopedic and gynecological operations of the patients are being

NP Punjab held condolence reference to pay homage to Mukhtar Bacha

Soon Times Correspondent Talagang:

Under the auspices of National Party Punjab, a condolence reference was held in Islamabad on Friday to pay homage to Mukhtar Bacha. A large number of workers including NP Punjab Secretary General Senator Jan Muhammad Buledi, former Senator Farhatullah Babar, NP Punjab President Ayub Malik and others attended the reference. Addressing the gathering, Senator Jan Muhammad Buledi said he had always found Bacha very clear in his political vision. Bacha remained associated with the party



intellectual leader never compromised on his principles. He tirelessly fought for the rights of the backward classes. NP Punjab President Ayub Malik said that Bacha started his politics by joining the Communist Party of Pakistan. He supported all those who wanted to work for a just society. It was for this reason that he joined the NP and tried to organize it into KPK besides guiding the party workers. Important personalities from Talagang also participated in the condolence reference.

Disappointing performance of PHA; Parks are deserted



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad:
Addressing the National Press Club, Sadia Khan, also known as Khan Bibi, highlighted the crucial role of women in national development and the efforts of the Women's Aman Jirga. She expressed her gratitude for the support of all national institutions, particularly the Pakistan Army, in empowering women.

Sadia Khan underscored the consistent and positive contributions of women to the country's construction and development. The Women's Aman Jirga has been active for the past 20 years, advocating for the country's development and prosperity. It operates in collaboration with the Pakistan Army and government officials across all provinces. Sadia Khan acknowledged

the significant contributions of Raiatullah Khan, alias Khan Baba, whose efforts have garnered international recognition. Khan Baba's initiatives have led to two children, Malala Yousofzai and Hina Khan, being nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012. These nominations have been a source of inspiration for the Women's Jirga. In addition to the Jirga, Sadia Khan mentioned the establishment of two companies, Khan Baba World Link Travels Pvt., aimed at providing opportunities and attracting global investors to Pakistan. For the past four months, the World Aman Jirga Program has been actively engaging with national leaders, including the Chief of Army Staff, the President of Pakistan, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the Prime Minister.

DPO orders to arrest the accused of road accident

Soon Times Correspondent Nowshera Soon Sakas:
A case has been registered in Nowshera police station against the driver who was negligent in the accident in Soon Valley Manawan Panj Pir yesterday. DPO Khushab Touqeer Muhammad Naem has formed teams to arrest the accused. SHO Police Station Nowshera Malik Muhammad Jaz Ahmed expressed grief and sorrow over the accident and said that fourteen people

including men, women and children died in the accident. As soon as the accident was reported, I along with other officials shifted all the persons to THQ Hospital with Rescue 1122 at the accident site. RPO Sargodha, DPO Khushab, DSP Quaidabad and others visited the crime scene and visited the injured. The accident happened due to the negligence of the Mazda driver. A case has been registered against the driver who will be arrested soon.

Pakistanis included in Forbes 30 under 30 Asia list make nation proud

(Web Desk)
Renowned American magazine Forbes has released a list of individuals under the age of 30 who have made significant contributions in various sectors across Asia.



Each list issued by Forbes includes 300 individuals, all aged 30 or younger, who have achieved remarkable success in a very short span of time. These lists encompass categories such as sports, media marketing, entertainment, manufacturing and industries, retail e-commerce, social impact, and gaming, among others. In this compilation, young men and women from Egypt, Malaysia, South Korea, Lebanon, Bangladesh, and India have succeeded in securing spots, alongside 7 Pakistani individuals. Among those listed in the "30 Under 30 Asia" category are Sarkhaal Bowany (Abhi), Adeel Abid, Aizaz Nayyer, Ali Raza (Linkstar), Aleena Nadeem (EduFi), Kasra Zuumayyir (Triukr), and Bushra Sultan (Artist). Aleena Nadeem and Sarkheel Bowany are

included in Forbes' Finance and Ventures Capital category for their start-up ventures aimed at assisting students with educational expenses. Aleena Nadeem is the founder of EduFi with the motto of "Study Now Pay Later" an education startup in Lahore that helps students cover their educational expenses by paying university fees on a monthly basis. Sarkhaal Shahid Bowany leads the art-tech company 'Abhi' in Pakistan. His company allows employees to withdraw a portion of their salary before the end of the month if they are facing any urgent situation. Bushra Sultan

Hot and dry weather to persist in country with Lahore becoming world's 2nd most polluted city

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The country is in the grip of hot and dry weather with Lahore on Sunday becoming the second most polluted city in the world. According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), the air quality index (AQI) of Lahore was recorded at 181 in the morning. Meanwhile, the weather in the provincial metropolises of Punjab will remain hot and dry on Sunday. The Met Office forecast that the maximum temperature is likely to go up to 43 degrees Celsius. The humidity in the air in the morning was 77 percent. The Pakistan Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), in the meantime, issued an alert that the Punjab will likely remain in the grip of a heatwave



Centigrade. The humidity was recorded at 68 percent. The maximum temperature in the city on Saturday was recorded at 40.2 Celsius. Similarly, Quetta is also experiencing hot and dry weather. The Met Office, however, forecast slushy weather at some places in the Balochistan. The temperature in provincial capital Quetta was recorded at 31 degrees Celsius and in Kalat 29 degrees Celsius. Light rain is also likely in Kalat, Ziarat, Zhob, Qila Abdullah, Dalbandin and Musa Khel. The Met Office forecast partly cloudy weather with chances of rain-windstorm and thunderstorm at isolated places in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad, Gilgit Balistan and Kashmir.

from May 20 (tomorrow) to May 27. It said according to the instructions of the Punjab chief minister, an alert has been issued to the district administrations. The PDMA director also urged people to take extra caution while going out of homes. Karachi is also sizzling and the Met Office forecast that maximum temperature will likely to be between 38 to 40 degrees

Ishratul Ebad may 're-enter' national politics

Soon Times Correspondent Karachi
After remaining out of politics for a long time, former Sindh governor Dr Ishratul Ebad has now hinted at the possibility of him re-entering national politics. The former Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) leader Ebad stressed that there was a need for a "new platform" from where new leadership can come forward to address the national issues. The longest serving Sindh governor is still undecided about what party he would join despite holding meetings with disgruntled Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and Miftah Ismail, who have announced they would launch a new political party soon. Abbasi on April 8 approached the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for the registration of a new political party. He had submitted relevant documents to the poll organising authority's office for his party's registration. Pointing towards alleged "tug-of-war" between state institutions, Ebad said the judiciary, armed forces and parliament were crucial pillars of the state and there should not be the perception that their



that since the president was the head of the state and he represented the federation, hence, the presidency in the current political circumstances needed to utilise its power to allay miscommunications and strain among the pillars of the state. To a query, he said the party he belonged to earlier, MQM, and its founder had dissociated with him in 2015. "When the MQM disowned me, I also parted ways with them," he said dismissing the impression that he had any affection for the MQM. Such an "impression is completely wrong and ridiculous." Warning them to refrain from their misdeeds, the former governor said he was aware of the propagandists busy in diffusing misunderstandings and wrong perceptions about him.

Sindh intermediate exams postponed due to heatwave

Soon Times Correspondent Karachi
The Board of Intermediate Education Karachi (BIEK) exams slated to start on May 22 have been deferred for five days till May 27 in the wake of heatwave in Sindh. The postponement of the intermediate exams was approved by Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah on Sunday, as recommended by provincial Minister for Universities and Boards Muhammad Ali Malkani. A spokesperson of CM said that the Universities and Boards Department changed the date for intermediate exams as per CM Shah's directives. Karachiites have been left sweating due to the current heat spell that has gripped the metropolis for the past few weeks and a significant rise in temperatures is expected during the next 10 days. Weather expert Jawad Memon has said that the mercury in the city may stay between 38 to 40°C which will "feel like" 42°C to high humidity levels. Stressing that the prevailing heat spell in the metropolis will continue and might in fact see a further increase in temperatures, he ruled out the possibility of rains in the megalopolis for the next five to seven days.



Pakistan may experience three heatwaves. According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), humidity levels in the city have been recorded at 69% with a 19km/hr breeze blowing in the city from the south-west. It is to be noted that the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has predicted that Pakistan may experience three heatwaves in various cities during the next 25 days. As per the government authority, the risk of the first heatwave is expected in Umarmkot, Tharparkar, Tando Allahyar, Matiari and Sanghar in Sindh, while south

Punjab's Bahawalpur and Rahimyar Khan cities will also be affected. The NDMA said the first spell of heatwave may last for two to three days between May 15 and 30, as the mercury in those cities might touch 40°C and the heat could be felt even more. According to the NDMA, the second heatwave is expected to last for four to five days in late May or early June wherein the temperature might rise up to 45°C. The third heatwave is expected during the first 10 days of June, this heatwave will affect Tharparkar, Umarmkot, Sanghar, Badin and Khairpur, it added.

Punjab bans wheat smuggling to KP, flour millers criticize



Soon Times Correspondent RAWALPINDI:
Punjab government has issued a notification to take steps to curb smuggling of wheat to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ARY News reported on Sunday. Provincial secretary food has directed for establishing check posts on main highways and handing over responsibility to eligible officers to prevent smuggling. Meanwhile, the Flour Mills Association sources said that thousands of trucks have been parked outside warehouses in KP. "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has placed demand for supply of three Lac tonnes of wheat," sources said. Flour Mills Association sources said that the KP government purchasing wheat at the price of Rs. 3,900 per maund. "The wheat being sold between 2,800 to 3,000

rupees per maund in the open market in Punjab," sources said. "The government creating more difficulties for farmers by imposing restrictions," sources added. It is to be mentioned here that delay in the government's wheat procurement drive in Punjab has caught the growers off guard, which have produced bumper crop of wheat in this season. The farmers have been forced to sell the wheat at the price down to the government fixed price. Recently Adviser Finance KP Muzammil Aslam had announced that the provincial government has also started wheat procurement from Punjab's farmers. Talking to ARY News KP adviser said that his government has decided to include Punjab's farmers in its procurement drive of three Lac tonnes of wheat at the rate of Rs 3,900 per maund.

MQM-P calls meeting to discuss 'budget proposals'



Soon Times Correspondent KARACHI:
The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has summoned an emergency meeting to discuss budget proposals ahead of federal budget 2024. Sources told Media that the meeting will

focus on development schemes for Karachi and Hyderabad. MQM-P will present its proposals for increased funding for the cities, including for education, health, and law and order, sources added. The meeting will also discuss the Safe City project and transportation budget, with

MQM-P seeking to increase funding for these initiatives. Former Finance Minister Sardar Ahmed has also been invited to the meeting, where he will share his views on the budget and development schemes, sources claimed. The Pakistan government will likely present its federal budget for the next fiscal year 2024-25 on June 7, with an estimated total expenditure of Rs 16,700 billion. The government will present the budget 2024 with one eye on precarious economic conditions and the other on 24th "longer and larger" bailout programme of International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to sources, the initial estimate for expenditures on interest and loans is Rs 9,700 billion, while the initial estimate for subsidies is Rs 1,500 billion.

Hundreds of Tunisian president's supporters protest against 'foreign interference'



TUNIS
 Hundreds of people demonstrated in Tunis on Sunday in support of President Kais Saïed amid widespread criticism at home and abroad after a wave of arrests that included journalists, activists and lawyers. The European Union, France and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed concern at the arrests and at a police raid on the headquarters of the bar association this month in which two lawyers critical of the president were detained. Police this month arrested 10 people, including journalists, lawyers and officials of civil society groups, in what

Democratic Republic of Congo army says it stopped attempted coup



DAKAR
 The Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) armed forces repelled an attempted coup d'état involving Congolese and foreign fighters on Sunday morning, a DRC army spokesperson said in a televised address. "An attempted coup d'état has been put down by the defence and security forces. The attempt involved foreigners and Congolese. These foreigners and Congolese have been put out of action, including their leader," spokesman Sylvain Ekenge said. The spokesperson did not specify whether this meant they had been detained or killed.



Israel launches strikes across Gaza as US envoy meets Netanyahu

Sullivan was expected to press for Israel to go after Hamas militants in a targeted way,

CAIRO/JERUSALEM
 Israeli planes and tanks pounded areas across the Gaza Strip, residents said, as White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday amid US calls for a more focused military campaign. Sullivan was expected to press for Israel to go after Hamas militants in a targeted way, not with a full-scale assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah, the White House said before the discussions. Israel has been pushing into the city that it says is the last bastion of Hamas forces. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have fled the area that was one of their few remaining places of refuge. "Across the Gaza Strip, there is no safety," said Sahar Omran who told Reuters her family had fled Rafah and just returned to what was left of their home in the southern city of Khan Younis that they had fled nearly five months ago. "We took our children, grandchildren, and daughters and we came and lived above the rubble of our home. Because there is no place to take refuge here," Omran told Reuters inside the wrecked property as another woman cooked over a fire. Israeli forces also pushed deeper into the narrow alleyways of Jabalia in northern Gaza overnight and into Sunday, returning to an area that they said they had cleared earlier in the conflict, residents said.

Helicopter in Iranian president's convoy involved in accident: state TV

DUBAI:
 One helicopter in a convoy of three in which Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi was travelling was involved in an accident, Iranian state TV said on Sunday. As per initial reports, a helicopter carrying the Iranian president faced a rough landing. Iranian state TV said, adding that rescue teams are on their way to the site. State TV did not give any further details about the incident. Iranian media provided contradictory reports about the incident and there has been no official confirmation yet.

France mobilises police to regain control of New Caledonia airport road



PARIS
 French police trying to restore order in the island territory of New Caledonia after days of deadly unrest have cleared dozens of barricades that had been blocking the main road linking the airport to the capital, Noumea, a senior official said on Sunday. Around 60 barricades that protesters had put up along the 60 km (37-mile) road have been dismantled but the road is not yet open as debris needs to be cleared, which will take several days, the territory's high commissioner, Louis Le Franc, told reporters. The Touitouta airport is closed because of the unrest on the French-ruled South Pacific territory. Protests erupted last week, sparked by anger among indigenous Kanak people over a constitutional amendment that will change who is allowed to participate in elections, which local leaders fear will dilute the Kanak vote. Six people have been killed and the unrest has left a trail of burnt businesses, torched cars, looted shops, and road barricades, cutting off access to medicine and food. Three of those killed were indigenous Kanak and two were police officers. A sixth person was killed and two seriously injured on Saturday during a gun battle between two groups at a roadblock in Kaala-Gomen, French police said, without identifying the groups. More than 600 police were mobilised to clear the barricades on the airport road, including some 100 gendarmes who are part of a special, heavily armed unit, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said on X late on Saturday.

Sports & Showbiz

Du Plessis hails middle order as Bengaluru complete IPL playoff lineup



NEW DELHI
 Royal Challengers Bengaluru captain Faf du Plessis showered praise on the team's middle order after they grabbed the final playoff spot in the Indian Premier League (IPL) following a stunning turnaround in the tournament. A top-four finish looked like a distant dream for the star-studded squad after they succumbed to their sixth consecutive defeat of the season against table-topper Kolkata Knight Riders last month. Bengaluru, chasing their maiden IPL title, staged a remarkable turnaround and Saturday's 27-run victory against defending champions Chennai Super Kings in a virtual playoff shootout was their sixth victory on the trot. Du Plessis (54) and the league's leading scorer Virat Kohli (47) gave Bengaluru a strong start and their middle order followed suit to steer the team to a commanding 218-5 in their final group match. Chennai managed 191-7 in reply in the rain-affected match as Bengaluru joined Kolkata, Rajasthan Royals and Sunrisers Hyderabad in the playoff. "It felt like a day-five test match," du Plessis said explaining how difficult the pitch was to bat on after rain interrupted play. "For me and Virat to just get through it and find a way somehow...and then in the back end to get a 200-score was unbelievable." Middle order batters Rajat Pandar, Cameron Green, Dinesh Karthi and Glenn Maxwell produced breezy cameos to take Bengaluru past the 200-mark.



Benjamin wins 400m hurdles, McLaughlin shines in 200m

LOS ANGELES
 Olympic silver medalist Rai Benjamin powered to victory in his 400 metres hurdles season debut on Saturday at the Los Angeles Grand Prix, as Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone excelled in the 200 metres. It was exactly the start to the year Benjamin wanted ahead of the US Olympic trials, as he took an early lead and cruised to the line in 46.64 seconds. 1.47 ahead of Jamaican Roshawn Clarke. World silver medalist Kyron McMaster of the Virgin Islands came third. "I knew the strength was there," the Diamond League champion Benjamin told NBC. "I knew that I was in 46 (second) shape. It sounds cliché but (I wanted to) execute my own race." American Anna Cockrell won the women's race in 53.75, nearly a second faster than Jamaican Andrenette Knight, with compatriot Cassandra Tardif third. McLaughlin-Levrone, world record holder in the event, was absent from the field as she opted to run the 200 metres at Drake Stadium. She made the unfamiliar distance look easy as she led off the turn and finished in 22.07 seconds ahead of American compatriot Abby Steiner in 21.32. "Just (getting) speed work, getting used to turnover and being able to come off those last couple hurdles fast," said the Olympic champion, who plans to compete in her signature event at the U.S. trials. "Getting the speed work is always good." Dominican's world champion Marileidy Paulino kept her superb form going as she timed 50.27 seconds to win the 400 metres after two Diamond League victories this year. American Michael Norman accelerated at the halfway point to win the men's 400 metres in 44.53, beating three-time Olympic medalist Kirani James of Grenada by more than three tenths of a second. Norman, the 2022 world champion, took time away from the track last year after struggling with injuries. "Kind of had to find my rhythm again," he said. "Just trying to make some small adjustments under a heavy load." **S I M B I N E R E G I S T E R S F A S T E S T 1 0 0 M O F S E A S O N** South African Akani Simbine won the 100 metres in a world-leading 9.90 seconds at the Atlanta City Games on Saturday, while American Noah Lyles shone in the 150 metres.

Is Kohli going to retire; will Anushka follow suit?



MUMBAI (Web Desk)
 A Virat Kohli's cryptic comment during an interview has sparked speculations about his future as a cricketer. The ace cricketer has hinted at a significant life change in a recent interview. His cryptic remark, "Once I am done, I will be gone, you won't see me for a while (smiles). So I want to give it everything I have till the time I play, and that's the only thing that keeps me going." Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma are one of the most loved celebrity couples of India.

The Greatest, the Baddest and the Best: six undisputed heavyweight champions

RIYADH
 Oleksandr Usyk beat Tyson Fury early on Sunday in the first undisputed heavyweight clash since 1999. The ever-bubbling alphabet soup of boxing sanctioning bodies - the winner in Riyadh becoming the first four-belt heavyweight champion - means that becoming, and remaining, undisputed champion requires not just skill and toughness in the ring, but acumen outside it. Usyk joined a select group. Here AFP Sport picks six of the undisputed best: Jack Dempsey (Undisputed champion from Jan 1921 to Sept 1926, 3 defenses) The hard-hitting and aggressive Jack Dempsey became the first official world champion at the start of 1921 when the American National Boxing Association and the powerful New York State Athletic Commission agreed to recognise a world champion. The "Manassa Mauler", with a right



nickname "Iron Mike" and a left hook dubbed "Big Bertha" had become "lineal" world champion, in boxing parlance "Beating The Man to become The Man" when he bludgeoned Jess Willard in 1919. But the newly-minted official status helped turn his first sanctioned defence against Frenchman Georges Carpentier, into the first "million-dollar fight". He defended his title twice more, before losing twice to Gene Tunney and retiring.