



# Daily SOON TIMES

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## Bilawal forms committee to engage with govt over privatisation



Soon Times Correspondent  
ISLAMABAD  
Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has constituted a committee to engage with the government over privatisation issues.

According to a notification issued by the PPP Chairman's Secretariat, the committee comprises Sherry Rehman, Syed Naveed Qamar and Saleem Mandiwalla.

The coalition government has already formed a commission which is actively pursuing the matter of privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), including the Pakistan International Airlines and the Pakistan Steel Mills etc.

In April, the Privatisation Commission invited bids from the interested parties so that the government could dispose of PIA's 51 per cent shares.

## Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail takes oath as Balochistan governor



Soon Times Correspondent  
QUETTA  
Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leader Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has been sworn in as the governor of Balochistan.

The investiture of the newly appointed governor took place at the Balochistan Governor's House in Quetta on Monday morning.

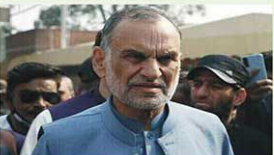
The swearing-in ceremony was witnessed by outgoing Balochistan governor Malik Abdul Wali Kakar, Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti, the ministers, MPAs and other distinguished guests.

Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail is the 24th governor of Balochistan.

Meanwhile, Sardar Saleem Haider will be sworn in as the Punjab governor at the Governor's House in Lahore on Tuesday (tomorrow).

The appointments of new governors of Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are being made following the decision taken during a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

## Azam Swati gets extension in interim bail in controversial tweets case



Soon Times Correspondent  
ISLAMABAD

The Special Judge Central Islamabad has extended interim bail until May 15 of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Azam Swati in the controversial tweets case.

Special Judge Central Hamayun Dilawar heard the case against Azam Swati on Monday.

During the proceedings, the judge ordered maintaining order in court and to avoid crowding in the courtroom. Ali Bukhari reiterated that the lawyers present in court did not belong to the International Legal Foundation (ILF) but were instead junior associates.

The court directed that only the lawyers responsible for presenting arguments in the case should be actively involved and others should remain seated.

# Pakistan 'High Priority' Economic Opportunity For Us: Saudi Investment Minister

Pak-Saudi investment moot begins in Islamabad; FinMin expresses commitment to facilitate private sector



Soon Times Correspondent  
ISLAMABAD  
Two-day Pakistan-Saudi Arabia investment conference kicked off on Monday with a positive note from the head of the Saudi delegation who said they considered "Pakistan a high priority economic, investment and business opportunity".  
A 50-member high-level Saudi trade delegation led by the Deputy Investment Minister of Saudi Arabia, Ibrahim Almutbarak, is in Islamabad to explore various avenues of trade and investment.  
The conference has been organised in light of decisions taken during meetings between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince

Mohammad Bin Salman to promote bilateral trade and investment, besides fostering a new era of growth and prosperity for the people of both countries.  
Addressing the event, Ibrahim Almutbarak said that Saudi companies consider Pakistan "very suitable for investment" and underscored that the delegation's visit will provide opportunities to expand trade relations between the two countries.  
"Our visit to Pakistan is a continuation of the previous visit [...] Saudi government and companies are giving preference to Pakistan for investment," the dignitary said. Highlighting that a large number of Pakistanis are

contributing to the development of the Kingdom, the dignitary said that Saudi investors are interested in investing in various sectors in Pakistan.  
Earlier, speaking at the opening session of the moot, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb expressed the government's commitment to fully facilitate the private sector to take the country towards export-led growth. He said the government is focusing on bringing foreign direct investment to uplift various sectors.  
Stressing that the government's job is to provide the policy framework, the finance czar noted that the private sector should lead from the front with the ministers and bureaucrats taking the back seat.

## Supreme Court suspends PHC's verdict on SIC reserved seats



Soon Times Correspondent  
ISLAMABAD  
The Supreme Court Monday suspended the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) verdict on reserved seats while accepting the Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) 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 Athar Minallah heard the SIC's plea filed through Advocate Faisal Siddiqui last month. Barring the members, who have taken oath on the reserved seats, from casting their votes in legislation, the SC said that it will hear the case on a daily basis from June 3.

Furthermore, the court noted that the said issue only concerns the additional reserved seats allotted to the political parties later on.  
The case in March, a five-member PHC bench, headed by Chief Justice Ibrahim Khan, and comprising Justice Ishaq Ibrahim, Justice Ijaz Anwar, Justice Arshad Ali and Justice Shakeel Ahmad had rejected the SIC's petition against ECP's decision depriving it of reserved seats.

The electoral body had ruled that the SIC was not eligible for reserved seats allotted to women and minorities "due to non-urable procedural and legal defects and violations of mandatory provisions of the Constitution".

While rejecting the plea of SIC, the ECP accepted applications of the opposing parties and decided that the seats in the National Assembly would not remain vacant and be allocated by a proportional representation process of political parties on the

## CM Maryam Nawaz welcomes the arrival of Saudi investors delegation in Pakistan



Soon Times Correspondent  
LAHORE  
Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has warmly welcomed a high-level Saudi Arabia's trade delegation's visit investment in Pakistan.

She has sent her heartiest wishes for the Pak-Saudi Investment Conference, stating that the historical bilateral relationships were transforming into economic ties.

CM Maryam Nawaz stated, 'I warmly welcome Saudi investors in Pakistan.' She affirmed that the

commencement of the Pakistan-Saudi Arab Investment Forum was a sign of prosperity and progress.

She emphasized that the arrival of a high-level delegation comprising 50 Saudi investors was a strong evidence of Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman's affiliation and strong ties with Pakistan.

The Punjab CM attributed the agreement between Pakistan



## IHC orders to place Parvez Elahi under house arrest within 15 days

Soon Times Correspondent  
ISLAMABAD  
The Islamabad High Court Monday ordered the Interior Ministry to complete

the procedure of placing Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Chaudhry Parvez Elahi under house arrest within 15 days.

The court's orders came after it approved the petition seeking either the transfer of the PTI politician to the hospital or to declare his residence as a sub-jail.

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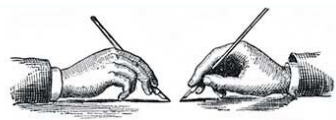
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# Problems of Farmers

Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ehsan Afzal Monday assured that government was taking all possible steps to protect the rights of farmers on priority and formulating fruitful policies for the welfare of farmers which will improve crops to enhance productivity. Talking to a private news channel, he said that all necessary steps regarding the purchase of

wheat and said that there should not be any delay in the procurement of wheat so the farmers can get reward for their hard work. The authorities concerned strictly directed by PM to complete the procurement of wheat from farmers, he said, adding, the wheat procurement target was also increased from 1.4 million tonnes to 1.8m tonnes. An

strict inquiry committee was constituted to prob a wheat import scandal which will submit its report to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he said, adding, after getting details we will take further decisions. Replying a question, he said that the inflation falling towards the lowest level which was a sign of improvement in the economy. To another

question, he said present government was trying to reduce the prices of other essential items and flour price control committees had been reactivated along with finalizing a comprehensive price control policy. He also expressed government's resolve to continue heading in the same direction to improve people's lives and to control further inflation.

## Climate Change and Its Effects on the Environment

(Faraz Ahmed Jamali)

Climate change happens when people burn fossil fuels, cut down forests, and do other things that add greenhouse gases to the air. These gases, like carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, trap heat in the atmosphere. This makes the Earth's temperature go up, changes rainfall patterns, and raises sea levels. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says that humans are mostly to blame for the warming we've seen since the mid-20th century. How Does Climate Change Affect Nature? Climate change is bad for nature. It messes up where plants and animals can live. It makes the oceans warmer, which is bad for

coral reefs. It also melts ice in the Arctic and Antarctic, which is bad for animals like polar bears and penguins. How Does Climate Change Affect the Weather? Climate change makes the weather more extreme. There are more big storms, heatwaves, droughts, and floods. Warmer oceans make hurricanes stronger and bring more rain. Higher temperatures also make heatwaves more common. Changes in rainfall can cause droughts in some places and floods in others. What Does Climate Change Do to Natural Resources? Climate change makes it harder for people to have clean air, water, and food. It hurts farming and makes food shortages more likely. Melting ice makes sea levels rise, which can flood coastal

cities. Saltwater can also mix with freshwater, making it salty and unusable. And, more carbon dioxide in the oceans makes them more acidic, which hurts animals like corals and shellfish. How Can We Help? To stop climate change from getting worse, we need to use more clean energy like wind and solar power and use less dirty energy like coal and oil. We also need to protect nature and make sure that our cities and farms can handle the changes that are coming. In Conclusion Climate change is a big problem, and we need to act now to stop it from getting worse. We need to protect nature and make sure that people have clean air, water, and food. If we don't, things will only get worse for us and for future generations.

## Love's Liberation: Breaking Free from Difficult Partnerships



Amina AG

In today's age of rapid technological advancement and globalization, the sophistications of relationships and love often take a backseat amidst the hustle and bustle of life. With the rise of dating and marriage apps, the dating landscape has undergone a significant transformation, turning the search for love into a mere swipe game. Many individuals find themselves caught up in this whirlwind, engrossed in the process of swiping through potential matches rather than investing in meaningful connections. Even for those who seek genuine companionship, decoding the true intentions of others remains a tough challenge. While we hold onto the hope for future technological innovations that may one day unveil the true feelings of potential partners, we are left with no choice but to rely on our instincts and understanding of the essence of love in the meantime. In this context, the importance of love awareness cannot be overstated; it becomes essential to our well-being as the very air we breathe. Navigating relationships can feel like a delicate dance, where we're often drawn to people who challenge us and stir our emotions deeply. But amidst this attraction lies a tricky trap: loving difficult individuals. It's a familiar pattern, where we strive to please someone who seems indifferent to our efforts. Who decided this was normal? Love shouldn't feel like a burden. If it weighs heavily on your heart, it's time to take a step back and reassess. The idea that enduring hardships makes love stronger might sound

romantic, but it's not true. This notion is often glorified in media and literature. True love should bring tears of joy, contentment, and fulfillment. It should be filled with compassion, selflessness, and understanding. Real love doesn't cause pain; it uplifts and nurtures. If your journey is marked by tears of sadness, manipulation, or neglect, it's a clear sign that you're experiencing isn't love. Too often, we find ourselves entangled with people who constantly demand proof of our love while giving little in return. This toxic dynamic eats away at our well-being, turning life into a battlefield of one-sided efforts. It's time to recognize our own worth. Love shouldn't demand more than we can give, nor should it chip away at our core. We deserve partners who meet us halfway, reciprocating our care and devotion. **Recognizing when love has turned sour is crucial. Signs of deception, abuse, or emotional neglect should never be justified as acts of love. We owe it to ourselves to set boundaries, keeping out those who don't value our hearts. Admitting we may have chosen the wrong person is scary, but it's the first step toward freeing ourselves.** In our quest for love, we must distinguish between the real and the fake. Some souls resonate with love's true essence; those who respond with kindness, cherishing our presence without conditions. These are the ones worth embracing, where love feels effortless and genuine. However, leaving should be the last option. Communication is key in healthy relationships, bridging misunderstandings and illuminating our darkest corners. If something bothers us about our partner, we must speak up openly and honestly. Through dialogue and understanding, we navigate the complexities of love, building bonds based on trust and respect. Understanding your partner plays an important

role in relationships, what your partner is anticipating and what makes them happy, sad, or angry. Try to accommodate it following healthy boundaries. Whenever you feel overwhelmed and it's only you who is suffering, STOP and take a break. Sit, think, evaluate, and ask yourself if the other person is worth it or not. If you think it's worth it, reevaluate your relationship, talk to your partner, communicate your true feelings, speak your heart, set your roadmap, and follow it. Do not forget to re-evaluate it at any point in time wherever you think it is not going well. Rethink everything, trust yourself, and take your move. Egoism can be the downfall of love and every other relationship in life. It's important to recognize when ego becomes toxic and when it's healthy. Healthy egoism should be welcomed in a relationship. We should learn to compromise and sometimes surrender for the sake of loving our partner, but without losing ourselves in the process. Remember, healthy egoism is the essence of a loving life. As Ehsan Segal said in his Poem;

*If I kill my ego  
I kill myself  
If I don't  
I kill my love  
The dilemma  
Between love and the ego  
Force me to lie  
So that I don't lose the love  
And the ego*

Breaking free from the cycle of loving difficult people requires courage and self-awareness. We must prioritize our own happiness, refusing to settle for anything less than mutual love. Though the path may be uncertain, it leads to liberation; a place where love flows freely, without struggle or resentment. Let's commit to breaking free from toxic love, embracing the simplicity of loving those who uplift us. Let's value ourselves enough to walk away from those who fail to see our worth. In the vastness of humanity, there are souls waiting for us; those who will love us effortlessly and unconditionally.

## 'Won't tolerate interference in Pakistan's internal affairs', PTI tells US envoy



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad

In a major development, PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan on Monday said that his party told the US ambassador to Pakistan that they would not tolerate foreign interference in the country's internal affairs. The statement came after a four-member PTI delegation headed by Omar and comprising party chairman Gohar Ali Khan, Asad Qaiser and Raouf Hasan met US envoy Donald Blome in the federal capital. The US ambassador, through the Foreign Office, requested for the meeting. The PTI leader said, adding that political officer was also present during the meeting. It is pertinent to mention here that PTI founder Imran Khan had earlier blamed Washington for overthrowing his government in April 2022. Khan was ousted from power after losing a no-confidence vote that the PTI founder alleged engineered by the US by colluding with the then opposition parties.

The cipher controversy first emerged on March 27, 2022, when Khan — less than a month before his ouster in April 2022 — while addressing a public rally waved a letter before the crowd, claiming that it was a cipher from a foreign nation that had conspired with his political rivals to topple the PTI government. He had alleged that Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Affairs Donald Lu had sought his removal in a meeting with the then Pakistan ambassador to US Asad Majeed. Lu, however, had rubbished Khan's cipher "conspiracy theory" and called it "complete falsehood". After months of allegations, the ousted premier turned his guns towards the former army chief General (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa, holding him responsible for the "conspiracy" which resulted in his ouster from power. Talking to journalists after his meeting with the US ambassador

today, Omar, also the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, said: "Matters related to military courts and cases against the PTI founder and other leaders of the party were discussed with the US envoy." In January this year, a special court established under the Official Secrets Act handed down 10 years imprisonment to the PTI founder and Shah Mehmood Qureshi 10 years imprisonment in the high-profile cyber case. Omar said that he apprised the US ambassador that cases against their female supporters and workers were being tried in the military courts. Matters related to rule of law and supremacy of the Constitution in the country were discussed in the huddle. "We have repeatedly said that these are Pakistan's internal issues." The PTI leader said that he told the US ambassador that they wanted rule of law in the country as it would bring investment. He reiterated that the Khan-led PTI government was toppled under the "London" plan. The PTI founder has claimed that an "agreement" was signed in London wherein his political rivals plotted to put him behind bars and give clean chit to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif in all cases to pave way for his political comeback.





## Punjab Govt should start purchasing wheat at official rate: JI's Speakers



Soon Times Correspondent  
Sargodha:  
Under the auspices of Jamaat-e-Islami

District Sargodha, a farmer protest camp was held outside the Deputy Commissioner Office. Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Sargodha

District Mian Awais Qasim Tala, General Secretary Fazal Elahi Awan, Zubair Ahmed Gondal, Amir Mahmood Chema, Salman Jaja, Usama Ijaz, Rana Umar Farooq, Akhtar Rasool Chaudhry and Imran Hasan Awan spoke in the camp. The speakers demanded that the Punjab government should immediately start purchasing wheat at the official rate. Farmers should be kept out of the clutches of the middle man and contractors. If our demands are not implemented, we will besige the Chief Minister's House under the leadership of leader of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman. Farmers and local citizens participated in large numbers in "Kisan Bachao" protest camp.

## Khawaja challenges opponent group to hold election on any voter list:

Soon Times Correspondent  
Sargodha:

In the election of the Central Traders Association of Sargodha City and District, the candidate of the Tajir Ittehad Group, Khawaja Ahmed Hanif, has said that it is an open challenge to my opponent group to hold an election or referendum on any condition or voter list. We are ready for the election and we will show it by winning. Candidate for General Secretary Mirza Sulaiman Moghal, Chairman Sheikh Nadeem Khawar, Group Leader Mukhtar Mirza, Group Secretary Amjad

Mehmood Bhatti and a large number of market presidents and business leaders were present with him on this occasion in Sargodha Press Club. Khawaja Ahmed Hanif said, opponents should not do politics of blaming against businessmen. He said, I have served the traders before and now I will unite the traders to restore their self-respect and solve their problems. I have no backdoor policy. 6-member Election Committee is functioning. Converter must be neutral. We submitted 13 names which were rejected by the other group. Its committee members are absent from the meetings and absent minded, he added.



Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi and Federal Minister for Defence and Aviation Khawaja Muhammad Asif visiting the Sialkot International Airport on May 6, 2024.

## Private ambulances & rescue vehicles must have registration certificate from Rescue 1122: Mumtaz Awan

Soon Times Correspondent  
Lawa:

Tehsil In-charge Rescue 1122 Mumtaz Awan Jabi has warned all private ambulance and rescue vehicle owners that according to the notification number 223770 of the Secretary to the Chief Minister of Punjab, all private ambulances and rescue vehicles must have a registration certificate from the organization of Rescue 1122 in their

respective tehsil. Otherwise, private vehicles used as ambulances will not be allowed to run on the road. While instructions have also been issued to the District and Tehsil Excise and Taxation Officers to take legal action against private ambulances and rescue vehicles that do not have the registration certificate of the Rescue 1122 organization and take such vehicles off-road.



## IHC confirms hearing bail pleas in £190m NCA scandal case on May 8

Soon Times Correspondent  
Islamabad

Chief Justice of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) Aamer Farooq has confirmed to the defence lawyer that he would fix the hearing of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and Vice-Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi's bail pleas in the £190m NCA scandal case a day after tomorrow (May 8). A two-member bench of the IHC — comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hasan Aurangzeb — heard the appeals against the conviction of both PTI politicians in the cipher case on Monday.



The former prime minister and the former foreign minister had been sentenced in the said case on January 30 earlier this year. At the outset of the hearing, defence lawyer Latif Khosa told the IHC chief justice that the hearing of bail petitions in the NCA scandal case was still pending.

To this, CJ Farooq remarked that he would fix the hearing on May 8 as the previous case list of the regular was suspended owing to his unwellness. He added that he was not in good health today but conducting today's hearing due to the importance of the cipher case.

except the one with the former prime minister Khan. Later, the foreign office disposed of all copies of the classified telegram, he added.

The prosecutor of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Hamid Ali Shah also appeared in the hearing. He appraised the high court bench that all cipher telegrams with "classified stamp" are disposed of after six months, even if these are "declassified".

"Can an accused be defended in the absence of a defence lawyer or it would lessen the importance of the defendant's testimony?" questioned CJ Farooq.

The National Security Committee (NSC) had decided to demarche on March 31, which marked the completion of the prescribed procedure for the classified document, except for sending back its copies to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hamid said.

The FIA prosecutor replied that there was no need to ensure the defence lawyer's presence during a testimony under Section 342 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

He apprised the court that all cipher copies had been sent back to the foreign ministry.

The IHC CJ also questioned the legality of the sentence on both charges of "willful" and "negligent" loss of the classified document. The FIA prosecutor defended the outcome as both charges would be imposed on the accused persons' moves on separate occasions.



## Every human being should prepare for the Hereafter: Allama Hamidi

Soon Times Correspondent  
Nowshera Soon Saksekar:

Ekhstame Chelkham ceremony was held in Mauza Shakar Kot for the repose of the souls of President of Pakistan Peoples Party Youth Wing Nowshera Malik Shahid Raz Awan late Sharkoti and Malik Jahangir Kutcher. Senior leaders of Pakistan People's Party, Malik Ali Sawal Awan, Malik Ishaq Awan Saqi, scholars, religious personalities, journalists and doctors participated in the event. After the

recitation of the Holy Quran and Naat Khwani, Shahbazada Hazrat Allama Muhammad Hamid Aziz Hamidi Astana Ailya Makam Sharif Kutbi, Nuruddin Siyalvi spoke on the philosophy of life and death. He said, death is real and therefore every human being should prepare for the Hereafter. The rights of the people should be taken care of. Offering prayers and fasting and are the best deeds that will be useful to a person after death.



Islamabad: Pakistani Federal Ministers, Saudi Assistant Minister, Ambassadors and Pak-Saudi bussiness dignitaries standing while hearing National anthem of both nations on Saudi-Arabia Pakistan Investment Forum 2024 held here on Monday May 06, 2024.

## Murad urges NHA to hand over Lyari Expressway Karachi-Thatta and Mirpurkhas-Umerkot road to Sindh govt for further uplift

Soon Times Correspondent  
KARACHI

Sindh chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presiding over a joint meeting of National Highway Authority and provincial Works & Services department reviewed the progress of various road sector projects being executed by the NHA. "Mr Shah urged the federal government to hand over Lyari Expressway to the provincial government so that it can be open for heavy traffic apart from carrying out its repair and maintenance. Construction of Interchange at M9: The Sindh Chief Minister said that the substantial completion of the M9 - N5 Link Road Project was achieved in July 2023, with 7.2 km out of a total 21 km of the road open for traffic with partial toll. The remaining work, the construction of the Interchange at M9, was initially under the scope of the Sindh government. "After detailed discussions, NHA told the Sindh government that it [NHA] is bound to get any new infrastructure development inside the Right of Way (ROW) of M-9. Subsequently, the MoU was signed at approximate cost including

escalation charges and NHA charges between the Works Dept and NHA for the construction of an Interchange at M9 for Rs. 3.5 billion in February 2024. Murad Shah urged the NHA to revisit the cost of the M9 interchange as the provincial government has to bear a huge burden as the cost is exorbitantly high. At this, the NHA chairman assured the chief minister that his technical team would reconsider the construction cost. De-federalization of Karachi-Thatta dual carriageway: Discussing the project, the CM said that the National Highway Authority (NHA) handed over the Karachi-Thatta-Hyderabad section (N-5) to the Sindh government in January 2012. In the handing over letter the NHA said that the road would not be de-federalized but the NOC being granted to the provincial government for its development and dualization on PPP/BOT basis as NHA's deposit work. The CM urged the NHA to de-federalize the Karachi-Thatta - Hyderabad Section (N-5), as the Government of Sindh constructed dual carriageway at Section (N-5) from Karachi to Thatta for Rs8.2 billion under

Public Private Partnership Modality and was unable to collect project revenues such as Commercial revenues, issuance of NOCs to the utility providers etc. He added that apart from toll collection, other revenues from utility providers, right of way (ROW) fees, and NOC charges from Petrol Pumps, therefore it was imperative to seek complete ownership of the road. The chairman of NHA said that it was a policy decision and it would be discussed with ministry. Jamschoro - Selwan Road Indus Highway (130 kms): Murad Ali Shah said that work on 130 km Jamschoro.

Selwan road was started by NHA in 2018-19. Initially, it was an asset of NHA but the Sindh government has also contributed Rs. 7 billion in its rehabilitation. Talking about it issues, Mr Shah said that the progress on the project was terribly slow. "The divider are low in height (like M9) causing severe glare of light / disturbance of opposite side traffic, therefore it is imperative to increase the height of divider in order to decrease glare of light / disturbance for opposite side traveler," he said and added the straightening of curves.







## Putin orders tactical nuclear weapon drills to deter the West



MOSCOW  
Russia said on Monday it would practise the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons as part of a military exercise after what the Moscow said were threats from France, Britain and the United States.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, Russia has repeatedly warned of rising nuclear risks - warnings which the United States says it has taken seriously though U.S. officials say they have seen no change in Russia's nuclear posture. Russia says the United States and its European allies are pushing the world to the brink of confrontation between nuclear powers by supporting Ukraine with tens of billions of dollars of weapons, some of which are being used against Russian territory.

Russia's defence ministry said it would hold military drills including practice for the preparation and deployment for use of non-strategic nuclear weapons.

## Israeli army tells Palestinians to evacuate parts of Gaza's Rafah ahead of an expected assault

JERUSALEM  
The Israeli army ordered some 100,000 Palestinians on Monday to begin evacuating from the southern city of Rafah in Gaza, signaling that a long-promised ground invasion there could be imminent and further complicating efforts to broker a cease-fire.

The looming operation in Rafah — where more than 1 million Palestinians are sheltering and a high number of deaths is feared — has raised global alarm and Israeli's closest allies have warned against it. On Monday, the United Nations agency serving Palestinian refugees said it would not comply with the evacuation order. Israel has described Rafah as the last significant Hamas stronghold after some seven months of war, and has repeatedly said the invasion is necessary to defeat the Islamic militant group, which unleashed the current conflict with an attack on Israel on Oct. 7.



## Israel strikes Gazan city of Rafah, say residents

"Driving through Rafah, the tension was palpable with people evacuating as rapidly as they could."

RAFAH, Gaza Strip  
Israel's military carried out airstrikes in Rafah on Monday, residents said, hours after Israel told Palestinians to evacuate parts of the southern Gaza city where more than a million people uprooted by the war have been sheltering. Fears are growing of a full-blown assault in Rafah, long threatened by Israel, against holdouts of the Palestinian militant group Hamas as ceasefire talks in Cairo stall.

There was no immediate comment from Israel, which Hamas-affiliated Al-Aqsa TV said had targeted areas in eastern Rafah near neighbourhoods given evacuation orders. Instructed by Arabic text messages, phone calls, and flyers to move to what the Israeli military called an "expanded humanitarian zone" 20 km (7 miles) away, some Palestinian families began trundling away under chilly spring rain.

Some piled children and possessions onto donkey carts, while others left by pick-up or on foot through muddy streets. "It has been raining heavily and we don't know where to go. I have been worried that this day may come. I have now to see where I can take my family," one refugee, Abu Raed, told Reuters via a chat app. A senior Hamas official said the evacuation order was a "dangerous escalation" that would have consequences. "The U.S. administration, alongside the occupation, bears responsibility for this terrorism," the official, Sami Abu Zuhri, told Reuters, referring to Israel's alliance with Washington. Aid agencies have warned that the evacuation order will lead to an even worse humanitarian disaster in the crowded coastal enclave of 2.5 million people reeling from seven months of war.

## Biden meets Jordan's King Abdullah as Gaza ceasefire hopes dim

WASHINGTON  
President Joe Biden will meet Middle East ally, Jordan's King Abdullah II, at the White House on Monday with prospects for a Gaza ceasefire appearing slim and Palestinian Islamist group Hamas and Israeli officials blaming each other for the impasse.

On Sunday, Hamas reiterated its demand for an end to the war in exchange for the freeing of hostages, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu flatly ruled that out. Hamas also attacked the Kerem Shalom crossing into Gaza that Israel said killed three of its soldiers.

A Jordanian diplomat told Reuters Monday's meeting between Biden and King Abdullah is not a formal bilateral meeting but an informal private meeting. It comes as the Biden administration and Israeli officials remain at odds over Israel's planned military incursion in the southern Gaza city of Rafah where it told Palestinians to start evacuating some parts on Monday. Biden last met King Abdullah at the White House in February and the two longtime allies discussed a daunting list of challenges, including the looming Israeli ground offensive in southern Gaza



and suffering of Palestinian civilians. Jordan and other Arab states have been highly critical of Israel's actions and have been demanding a ceasefire since mid-October as civilian casualties began to skyrocket.

The war began after Hamas stunned Israel with a cross-border raid on Oct. 7 in which 1,200 people were killed and 252 hostages taken, according to Israeli tallies.

More than 34,600 Palestinians have been killed and more than 77,000 wounded in Israel's assault, according to Gaza's health ministry.

Biden last spoke to Netanyahu on April 28 and "reiterated his clear position" on a possible invasion of Rafah, the White House said.

## Macron sets trade and Ukraine as top priority as China's Xi Jinping pays a state visit to France



PARIS  
China's President Xi Jinping arrived at the French presidential palace on Monday for a two-day state visit that is expected to focus both on trade disputes and diplomatic efforts to convince Beijing to use its influence to move Russia toward ending the war in Ukraine.

In Paris, Xi first joined a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen meant to address broader EU concerns. Macron said in his introductory remarks the meeting would first address trade issues and how to ensure "fair competition," then the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East.

"We are at a turning point in our history" as the Europe-China relationship is faced with challenges, Macron said.

The talks are aimed at sharing "both our shared positions and our concerns, to try to overcome them, because the future of our continent will very clearly also depend on our ability to develop balanced relations with China," he said.

Macron, a strong advocate of Europe's economic sovereignty, wants to raise French concerns about a Chinese antidumping investigation into cognac and other European brands, and tensions over French cosmetics and other sectors.

In a recent speech, he denounced trade practices of both China and the United States as shoring up protections and subsidies.

At the start of the meeting in Paris, Xi said "the world today has entered a new period of turbulence and change."

"As two important forces in the world, China and Europe should continuously make new contributions to world peace and development," he said.

The EU launched an investigation last fall into Chinese subsidies and could impose tariffs on electric vehicles exported from China.

## Sports & Showbiz News



## 'Splendid' Narine powers clinical Kolkata to top of IPL



LUCKNOW  
Red-hot Sunil Narine smashed 81 off 39 balls to help Kolkata Knight Riders thrash Lucknow Super Giants by 98 runs and take top spot in IPL table on Sunday. Narine's blitz, laced with six fours and seven sixes, guided Kolkata to 235-6 after they were invited to bat first in Lucknow's final home game. Two-time champions Kolkata bowled out Lucknow for 137 in 16.1 overs for their eighth win in 11 matches and almost guaranteed a play-off berth. Second-placed Rajasthan Royals have played one match fewer. In the first game of the day, all-rounder

Ravindra Jadeja starred with bat and ball to help holders Chennai Super Kings defeat Punjab Kings. The top four teams will make the play-offs with the final on May 26 in Chennai. Narine, who has impressed after being promoted to open by Kolkata this season, led their batting charge in a 61-run first-wicket stand with Phil Salt. "He was splendid," Kolkata skipper Shreyas Iyer said of his team's player of the match Narine, who has amassed 461 runs at a strike rate of 183.66. "The start from openers has been great. Pure bliss."



## Babar Azam is sure Pakistan will win T20 World Cup

LAHORE  
Skipper of national cricket team Babar Azam on Monday expressed the hope that the Green Shirts would win the T20 World Cup being played in the United States and the West Indies next month. "In the past also our focus was to bring the trophy, and I hope that we will return with the trophy," Babar said during a press conference at the Gaddafi Stadium here. He was sure that every player of the team would give his 100 percent in the World Cup. "Our focus is the trophy. Every player is focused on winning," he added. He said all the players are fit. Haris Rauf is better and improving, Babar said and added that he did not expect him to get fit so quickly. He said the team combination

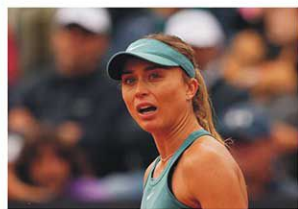
was good and every player was training enthusiastically. Responding to a question regarding wicketkeeper-batsman Mohammad Haris, Babar said he could not perform well in the PSL (Pakistan Super League). The players who performed better have been included in the team. In the top order, Rizwan, Fakhar and Saim Ayub were performing better. So there was no room for Haris in top order, the skipper continued. Regarding Aamir Jamal, he said he would improve. He said that Test match performance cannot be compared to the T20 cricket. "We took decisions that are the best for the team." The Pakistan cricket team is set to depart for the Ireland tour.

## Virial meme of her dancing hurts Dua Lipa



(Web Desk)  
Dua Lipa has spoken out about the "humiliating" experience of being turned into a meme for her dancing on social media. A clip of the singer performing at one of her 2017 concerts became a viral video, with fans likening her motions to a pencil in a "pencil sharpener". The 28-year-old singer, who has just released her third studio album Radical Optimism, described the deep impact the jokes had made on her in a new interview with The Guardian. "When people took that snippet of me dancing online and just turned it into a meme, and then when I won the best new artist Grammy and people were like, 'She's not deserving of it, she's got no stage presence, she's not going to stick around.' Those things were hurtful. It was humiliating. I had to take myself off Twitter," she said. The Albanian-British artist said that the memes led to increased scrutiny as audiences picked apart her talent while she was "still growing."

## Tsitsidosa era ends as Badosa Announces split with Tsitsipas



Sports Desk  
Former world number two Paula Badosa is no longer in a romantic relationship with fellow tennis player Stefanos Tsitsipas after nearly a year together in the spotlight, the Spaniard said. Badosa and Tsitsipas made their relationship official on social media during last year's French Open and have often been seen at each other's matches, while also posting pictures on their joint Instagram

account. But the 26-year-old Badosa, who has fallen to number 126 in the world with a string of injuries derailing her career, said that the sport's power couple dubbed Tsitsidosa by fans had split amicably. "After careful consideration and many cherished moments together, Stefanos and I have decided to amicably part ways," Badosa wrote in an Instagram story on Sunday. "We have shared a journey filled with love and learning, and it is as friends with immense mutual respect that we now choose to move forward on our own paths. "We are grateful for the support of our friends, family, and all who have been part of our story. As we transition into this new chapter of our lives, we continue to wish each other nothing but the best in all our endeavors." Former French Open quarter-finalist Badosa said recently that doctors had told her it would be complicated to continue her career because of her chronic back pain.