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## Sharifs' ambition to vanquish Imran Khan, Gandapur won't materialise, says Saif



In a statement released here, Saif highlighted that despite concerted efforts by conspirators, the KP chief minister actively participated in the Special Investment Facilitation Council meeting, given his membership in the SIFC. Saif underscored that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's significance in the SIFC couldn't be overlooked. He noted that Imran Khan and Ali Amin Gandapur had become a nightmare for Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and her uncle Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as they could not sideline them from politics.

Soon Times Correspondent PESHAWAR  
Barrister Dr Saif, the adviser on information to the chief minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, stated on Sunday that the Sharif family's ambition to exclude PTI founder Imran Khan and Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur from politics would never materialise.



Islamabad: A delegation of Pakistan Peoples Party calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## PM Shehbaz, PPP leadership discuss budget 2024-25

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday met senior Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leadership to discuss the budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 which the federal government is set to present next month. The meeting, attended by PPP's Raja Pervez Ashraf, Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah, Sherry Rehman and Naveed Qamar along with Deputy PM Ishaq Dar, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Adviser to PM on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaulah, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar and Information Minister Attaullah Tarar also mulled over the prevailing political situation in the country. A report published in The News stated that the federal government intends to present the budget for the next fiscal year on June 7 — however, the government is yet to announce the official date when the budget will be unveiled. The high-level huddle comes as the PM Shehbaz-led Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government will need the PPP's support to pass the budget as it lacks the required numbers in the National Assembly to do so on its own. The two parties, following the February 8 polls, agreed to join hands with the PPP supporting the PML-N in the election of Shehbaz as the country's premier in exchange for various constitutional posts such as Senate Chairman, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab governorships. The passing of the FY2024-25 budget holds significance as the country, in April, made a formal request to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for seeking the next bailout package in the range of \$6 to \$8 billion under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF). An IMF team, led by Nathan Porter, the IMF's Mission Chief to Pakistan, visited Islamabad during May 13-23, 2024, to discuss the country's plans for a home-grown economic programme that can be supported under the EFF. The visiting IMF team had secured relevant data of all major economic fronts and informed the relevant authorities what kind.

## Emirs of Qatar, Kuwait accept PM Shehbaz's invitations for Pakistan visit

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: The emirs of Qatar and Kuwait have accepted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's invitations to visit Pakistan, marking another positive development in Pakistan's diplomatic relations. According to details, the ambassadors of Kuwait and Qatar in Pakistan separately met with PM Shehbaz to convey the acceptance of the invitations. During their meetings, the Qatari ambassador presented a letter from Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al



Thani, expressing acceptance of the invitation, while the Kuwaiti ambassador presented a letter from Kuwait's Emir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, conveying the same. Analysts believe that the visits of the emirs of Qatar and Kuwait will further enhance bilateral relations and cooperation, particularly in investment and other sectors. Related Topics

## Dialogue for inclusion in government is in process: Yousaf Raza Gillani



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE: Senate Chairman and Acting President Yousaf Raza Gillani has asserted that his party will support incumbent government in good government and negotiated the claims of exclusion from government. Talking to media in Lahore, Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) leader revealed that dialogue with Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) was ongoing for inclusion in government. Senate chairman highlighted the crisis plaguing the state, stating state was facing crisis like terrorism, extremism and threats at eastern and western borders.

## Two soldiers, including captain, martyred in Peshawar IBO: ISPR



Soon Times Correspondent RAWALPINDI: Two soldiers, including a captain of the Pakistan Army, embraced martyrdom during an intelligence based operation conducted by the security forces in Peshawar district's Hassan Khel area on Sunday, said the military's media wing in a statement. A statement issued by the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that the operation was launched on the "reported presence of terrorists" in the area. It added, during the operation, the troops "effectively engaged" with the terrorists and killed five of them while injuring three others. "However, during intense exchange of fire, leading his troops from the front, Captain Hussain Jahangir (age: 25 years, resident of Rahim Yar Khan District) along with another brave son of soil, Havildar Shafiq Ullah (age: 36 years, resident of District Karak), having fought gallantly, made the ultimate sacrifice, and embraced Shahadat," said the ISPR. The military's media wing said that sanitisation operation is being carried out in the area to eliminate any remaining terrorists. "Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve," said the ISPR. At least 92% of all fatalities and 86% of attacks, including those related to terrorism and security forces operations.

## PTI leader Yasmin Rashid discharged from hospital



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e Insaaf (PTI) leader Dr. Yasmin Rashid has shifted back to jail from hospital after improvement in her health. As per medical board sources, Dr. Yasmin Rashid has been discharged after completing anti-biotic course. Dr. Yasmin Rashid was suffering from stomach and dehydration health issues. After treatment in hospital, Dr. Yasmin Rashid medical reports are satisfactory. Dr. Yasmin Rashid has been discharged from Services hospital and moved to Kot Lakhpat jail. Yesterday, Dr. Yasmin Rashid wanted to move jail according to medical board. It is pertinent to note that three days ago, Dr. Yasmin Rashid health deteriorated and she shifted to Services Hospital by ambulance.

## Attack on Chinese nationals: Pakistan asks Afghanistan to hand over TTP terrorists



[In the court of law] or not, it should hand over the militants to Pakistan." At least six people including five Chinese nationals were killed after a suicide bomber rammed into the bus transporting the staff working on the Dasu hydropower project in Bisham, Shangla district, in March this year. Condoling the deaths of Chinese engineers in the attack, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had said that the "cowardly attack" was aimed at creating a wedge between iron brother Pakistan and China. In view of the investigation report, the interior minister said that the TTP operated the Besham terror attack on Chinese citizens from inside Afghanistan. "[Pakistan has formally] requested the interim government in Afghanistan to arrest the leadership of [banned] TTP," he added.

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: In a major development, Pakistan on Sunday demanded the interim Taliban government in Afghanistan to hand over banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's (TTP) terrorists involved in the Besham terror attack on Chinese nationals to Islamabad. Addressing a joint press conference flanked by officials of the National Counter-Terrorism Authority (NCTA), Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said: "Whether Afghanistan try the terrorists

## KP CM Ali Gandapur meets Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has met with Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi. KP CM visited the Ministry of Interior and met with Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi. Minister for Energy Awais Laghari was also present during the meeting.

During the meeting both sides exchanged views on KP province affairs and electricity load shedding and other crisis were also discussed. Both sides have pledged to solve the matters with cooperation. Interior Minister has announced to hold another meeting on Monday.

# Iranian president Raisi, FM Abdollahian were true friends of Pakistan: Gen Munir

### Army chief expresses sorrow over copter crash in telephonic conversation with Iranian general, says ISPR



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir has described late Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi and foreign minister Amir Abdollahian who died in last week's helicopter crash as "true friends of Pakistan," according to the military's media wing. The army chief's statement came during a telephonic conversation with Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement on Sunday. The COAS extended deep condolences over the sad

and unfortunate incident of the helicopter crash on May 19 which led to the demise of president Raisi, FM Abdollahian and other senior officials. Gen Munir expressed that the Iranian president and the foreign minister were exceptional leaders and true friends of Pakistan, as per the ISPR. The COAS highlighted that the loss of both the leaders and others was truly tragic and irreparable. "[The] COAS on behalf of all ranks of Pakistan Army extended prayers for the departed souls and well wishes for the bereaved families." The army chief further said that Pakistan has historic, cultural and brotherly ties with Iran and the Armed Forces of Pakistan and Iran have always

stood together. General Bagheri thanked the COAS for sharing grief and vowed to continue the cooperation between the two militaries. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also undertook a day-long visit to Iran earlier this week to offer condolences to the country's leadership on the death of the top officials including Raisi who was laid to rest on Thursday in his home town Mashhad. The 63-year-old died alongside his foreign minister and six others after their helicopter went down in the country's mountainous northwest while returning from a dam inauguration on the border with Azerbaijan.



## Blasphemy allegation & law enforcement response in Sargodha

**M**inister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain on Sunday expressed regret over the recent unrest in Sargodha following an alleged blasphemy incident. In a statement, he condemned the allegations and the subsequent disorder, underscoring the importance of adhering to the rule of law and maintaining peace. "The

reaction of Punjab Police and other law enforcement agencies in promptly addressing the situation is commendable," Salik said emphasizing that reacting impulsively to rumours is contrary to the teachings of religion, which advocate for patience and due process. He reminded the citizens that Pakistan has established legal procedures to handle accusations of blasphemy and

acts of hatred. He issued a stern warning against taking the law into one's own hands, noting that such actions will be met with legal consequences. Reiterating the state's commitment to safeguarding all citizens, regardless of their religious beliefs, he highlighted that the Constitution of Pakistan and the principles set by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah serve as guiding

lights for the nation. The minister also acknowledged the significant contributions of religious leaders in fostering societal harmony and called for unity to counteract any attempts to incite hatred or religious intolerance. He urged citizens to be vigilant against efforts to defame Pakistan through social media, advocating for a collective effort to maintain national peace and cohesion.

### Potential Unrest in Gilgit-Baltistan Over the Transfer of Tourism Sites:



Muhammad Aamir Hussain

previously utilized by officials from other districts visiting the Skardu headquarters for official duties.

2. The PWD Guest House in Chilas has also been taken over by Green Company, formerly used by officials from other districts visiting the Chilas headquarters for official purposes.

3. The green company will also take over Forest Guest House in Chillim. The Guest House serves as the entry point to Deosai National Park from the Astore side and previously functioned as both the office and residence for the park staff.

4. The Forest Rest House DheekKhunjerab serves as the entry point to Khunjerab National Park from the Pakistan side and previously functioned as both the office and residence for the park staff.

5.55 kanals of Forest Park in Skardu, the sole recreational park for the public in Skardu, have been leased to Green Tourism Limited.

6. 450Kanals Hoto Plantation, the biggest plantation in Skardu, is also leased to Green Company Limited.

7.92 acres of land in Phander, Ghizer, a significant tourist attraction in Gilgit Baltistan renowned for its beauty and lakes, are also being leased to Green Tourism Limited.

There are dozens of such guest houses and tourist sites that are given on lease to the Green Tourism Company. As per documents, a search on the Securities and Exchange Commission's official website shows that Green Tourism was registered at the Company Registration Office in Islamabad on January 26, 2024.

The official of Green Tourism Limited claimed that despite having immense potential, Pakistan lacks a robust tourism ecosystem, which could generate up to \$30 billion by 2030.

The project will prioritize local human resources, aiming to create 300 direct and approximately 3,000,000 indirect jobs in GB. To harness and promote GB's vast tourism potential, comprehensive global marketing strategies will be implemented. All projects will adhere to environmental sustainability principles, ensuring no trees are cut during development.

Furthermore, local cuisines, artifacts, and cultural heritage will be actively promoted to enrich the tourism experience and support local communities.

The Special Assistant to Information to the CM of the GB government, Eiman Shah, and the spokesman for the GB government, FaizullahFaraq, claimed that the guest house of the PWD and Forest Department and

the PTDC have been losing-making entities as they are used by government officials and guests on subsidized rates without payment most of the time.

Their maintenance and renovation have also been a burden on the government and institutions. By leasing out these tourist entities, the government would facilitate not only renovation, development, and better maintenance of such facilities but also earn a good share in the heads of rent and profits. Once these entities are functional and run successfully by the private investors, the army would step back and let them run the business," the sources claimed while replying to a query regarding apprehension of the army's role in the tourism business. According to him, private investors, who are already in the tourism business in the rest of the country, would turn the guest houses and motels into 4-star hotels, whose facilities are still lacking in GB.

The officials also clarified that 35% of the income generated from this investment will go to the Gilgit-Baltistan government, in addition to a 20% annual rent from the properties. They also mentioned the creation of a tourism management fund, where 20% of the company's total profit will be allocated. This fund will be managed by a Joint Management Board, comprising three representatives each from the government and the institution, to promote tourism in the region.

Faraq explained that these arrangements were made under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), involving federal and provincial government officials and the investment board, aimed at bringing prosperity to the area. He assured that the military's role would be limited to providing the necessary support to build confidence. He emphasized that the ownership of all guest houses will remain with the Gilgit-Baltistan government.

However, a representative of civil society claimed that the initiative was needed at a time when the tourism industry was already flourishing in the area, with mostly private investment and the private sector's involvement.

He said instead of leasing out the entities to a third company from the center, the GB government should have offered the facilities to the local industry to run and contribute revenue to the government.

As per the copy of the agreement, the Secretary of Tourism Gilgit Baltistan Rana Muhammad Saleem Afzal had signed the agreement on behalf of the GB government, while Arsalan Ahmed Malik had signed on behalf of the Green Tourism Company as a second party on April 23, 2024. At a press conference on

### World English Language Day & Shakespeare



BY SALAHUDDIN CHOUDHRY

**For ages & eras,** languages came about from peoples and places of sorts both independently and needs-based cross-fertilization of diverse and even disparate customs, traditions & values. These in turn found and advanced orally and in black & white by writers of various interests & backgrounds led gradually to language-dependent literature of different kinds & forms. Human civilization since time immemorial has been cognized of and accordingly served time & efforts in developing the needed medium of communication which resulted in words & phrases founded on personal & sound-based signs used by animate objects in particular human beings culminating into a language of expression. Today, as languages throughout the world developed in shapes & formats, we see an unlimited world of languages alongside literatures enriched by their unabated and definitive inculcation through human cultural pursuits giving identity to each one of them, recognized and esteemed the world over. No wonder, in this respect, one sees with awe and values all languages & literatures in man's modern world. And, here, the United Nations fortunately ensures valued continuity & development of these modes of human expression as prevalent and as required to preserve and promote any of them from going extinct.

**The English Language Day,** founded by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2010, is traditionally observed to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six official languages throughout the Organization. **The English Language Day** was established to commemorate birth anniversary (23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1564) of the most famous and celebrated worldwide English playwright and poet, **William Shakespeare**, who died on the same date in 1616.

This Day aims to entertain and inform people and to increase awareness and respect about the history, culture and achievements associated with each of the six working languages among the UN community. The day often features book-reading events, English quizzes, poetry and literature exchanges, and other activities that promote the English language.

**William Shakespeare** is considered by many to be the father

of modern English Literature. It is not just his popularity and influence on modern writers that allows for this title to be attributed to him but because of the massive contributions he made to the development of the English language.

Shakespeare's 154 sonnets are marked by recurring themes and variable beauty with the transcendent power of love and art. Today, over 400 years later, his plays are performed and read more often and in more nations than ever before.

**The Tamil** language of South Asia is recognized as the oldest language in the world and it is the oldest language of the Dravidian family. This language had a presence even around 5,000 years ago. According to a survey, 1863 newspapers are published in Tamil language every day.

Surprisingly, another very old Sanskrit-based language of South Asia that is **Bengali** spoken by the majority people of Pakistan (then Eastern Wing), received recognition from the UN in the context of a four-year-long movement since 1948 to achieve officialdom of the Bengali language. The 21<sup>st</sup> Feb. (1952) declared by the world body as **International Mother Language Day** is a worldwide annual observance to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism.

The other old language that is English was founded in the year 450 when German tribes spoke a similar language. The language of that time is referred as **Old English**. Even native English speakers find it difficult to understand that, as it has a lot of differences to what we consider as the English Language.

The current English language that we speak is referred as **Modern English**. It is originated in the year 1800. Modern English has more words, which was founded to name new technologies during the time of the industrial revolution.

A Germanic language that began to develop during the 5th and 6th centuries when Anglo-Saxons settled in Britain, early English is also influenced by **French, Latin,** and many other languages. These influences were so profound that that modern English could be regarded as a **Latinized, Frenchified dialect** of Old German (an over-simplification, of course) to which it bears some resemblance.

The Germanic roots of English are evident in the many words that are virtually the same in both modern tongues.

The **Latin** influence on English gave the developing language a richer vocabulary, and, since the monasteries were centers of literacy and learning, today the learned among us tend to use a lot of words with Latin roots, while the less educated speak "plain" (Anglo-Saxon derived) English. The sciences and fine arts employ a great deal of terminology that comes from the language of the Church, in which all learned discourse was conducted (both words come from Latin).

The French nobility brought with them many words to English language. French is widely regarded in English speaking countries as the language of h in

refinement and high culture. From fine cuisine to what is in vogue (both words French in origin), this strong French influence is evident today.

The closest major language to English is **Dutch**. With 23 million native speakers, and an additional 5 million who speak it as a second language, Dutch is the 3rd most-widely spoken Germanic language in the world after English and German.

When the **British Empire** spread English around the globe, its language had already taken its modern form, and dialects spoken in America, Canada, and Australia are all variants of "the king's English" comprehensible to all native Anglophones. Our modern language was born and raised in England. That's why it's called English.

While English is the most spoken language in the world, it is the native tongue for only one-quarter of those who speak it. Or, more impressively, for three-quarters of those who speak English, it is at least their second language (not third or fourth).

The father of English Language & Literature is **Geoffrey Chaucer**, who was born in London sometime between 1340 and 1344. He was an English author, poet, philosopher, bureaucrat (courtier), and a diplomat.

Of English language ownership, no one owns English; there is no single standard for it, though American and British English are the main dialects in the world today; they are both very influential in different spheres but the future of **World English** will be largely determined by **people who speak it as a second language**.

The English language is far from perfect. With so many words that mean the same thing, or phrases and sayings that make no literal sense. Weirdly, two people with English as a second language can communicate information easier and more accurately than two English people.

Billions of people study English around the world, making it the **third most widespread native language**, and many are enrolled in an English speaking course as an adult or from a young age. Though apparently difficult, it has been one of the most simple languages, especially in the Commonwealth countries.

Unlike other languages, **English is somewhat easy to learn** as it has no cases, no gender, no word agreement, and arguably has a simple grammar system. English speakers sometimes have difficulties when learning Portuguese because they are not used to words having genders.

English is easy because it's much easier to spell than most languages, and none of the grammatical rules have any exceptions. Thirdly, it only has easy sounds for foreigners to pronounce unlike difficult languages like Spanish, which has such strange tongue-twisting sounds.

Unlike other languages, English has no cases, no gender, no word agreement, and arguably has a simple grammar system. English speakers sometimes have difficulties when learning Portuguese because they are not

1. Green Company has acquired the Baltoro Guest House in Skardu

# Sindh allocates Rs3bn for Karachi Safe City project



**Soon Times Correspondent KARACHI**  
The Sindh government has planned to make Karachi a safe city, setting aside Rs3 billion for the project. Sindh Interior Minister Zia Linjar said the first phase of the Safe City project would be completed in 12 months. The project would be extended to the other cities of the province gradually which would improve the law and order situation, he said. Talking about the performance of police, he said the police department was performing better and all-out efforts would be made to improve law and order situation, he concluded.



# Attock is determined to tackle the Congo Virus: DC Rao

**Soon Times Correspondent ATTOCK**  
Actions have been started on an emergency basis to prevent the Congo virus across the district. These views were expressed by Deputy Commissioner Rao Atif Raza while presiding over the meeting regarding the anti-Congo campaign. Additional Deputy Commissioner General Anil Saeed, Assistant Commissioner Attock Shagufta Jabin, CEO Health Dr. Asad Ismail and others were present in the meeting. During this briefing, it was told that so far two patients have died due to Congo virus in Attock district, while the third patient from

Congo Virus has tested negative and is healthy. The Deputy Commissioner, while giving orders for emergency measures, ordered the closure of cattle markets across the district under Section 144 and ban on inter-district and inter-provincial movement of cattle from May 24 to May 30. He said that committees of officers should be formed in the district from the union to the district level, Anti-Congo spray should be ensured in every area. The Deputy Commissioner has directed to conduct public awareness campaigns, establish border check posts for close monitoring of cattle health and movement.

# Ji to start movement for constitutional supremacy after Eid

**Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE**  
The Jamaat-e-Islami announced on Sunday to start a movement for the constitutional supremacy after Eidul Azha. This remark was made by the party's chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman in a presser in Lahore. He said the country has been suffering from varied forms of slavery for the past 76 years because the elites have taken a complete hold. He said those who have come to power through rigging cannot stem the country out of crisis as they do not enjoy the trust



of the people. He said the incumbent rulers who have come to power through the form-47s wanted to develop ties with India while claiming that it was the agenda of United

States. He applauded the role of South Africa in taking Israel to ICJ as the problem of Gaza was an humanitarian one while also lambasting the Pakistani rulers for not criticizing Israel, let alone at the forefront. He said "the supremacy of the constitution is very important as if the country runs constitutionally, it is better for everyone and when it is isolated, both the country and the institutions are ruined." He said Pakistan can reduce its ever-increasing gas import bills if it completes Pak-Iran gas pipeline.

# MS Sheikhupura makes DHQ Hospital a hotbed of corruption

**Soon Times Correspondent SHEIKHUPURA**  
MS Sheikhupura has brought corruption to a peak in DHQ Hospital. MS Faiza Kanwal has kept the rate of passing each cheque at 15 percent. Leave rate for doctors is fixed separately. The hospital lacks facilities. Patients are dying on a daily basis due to lack of doctors. Conditions are so bad that even bermalas are not available. MS takes monthly extortion from Security Company. The attendants of two patients were raped by the guards, one of whom filed a police

case and the other victim committed suicide by consuming pills used to put in wheat. But despite this, MS did not even dismissed this supervisor named Faisal from his job nor punished him. Both the rapists were brothers of this supervisor. Their third guard was caught twice molesting two separate fourteen year old girls and was caught and handed over by the sister to her in front of the admin but MS did not say anything to him. He is still working on the same post. MS also takes monthly extortion from canteen due to which they sell substandard

# Punjab governor vows to consult all stakeholders before signing defamation bill



**Tariq Mehmood, Imtanan Shahid and Muhammad Usman.** Senior PPP leader from central Punjab Syed Hassan Murtaza was also present in the meeting. The representatives of journalist community expressed their concerns regarding the defamation bill and urged the governor to play his role in this issue. The representatives of JAC said that the defamation bill is meant to silence the voice of media and it is against the freedom of expression. "All the stakeholders would be taken into confidence over the controversial clauses of the bill," said the governor. The governor added that he will not sign the bill without further consultation with the stakeholders. PPP leader Syed Hassan Murtaza said that we are standing with media and we don't support this bill in its current form.

**Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE**  
Punjab Governor Sardar Salim Haider announced more consultation with all the stakeholders over the defamation bill. The representatives of Joint Action Committee (JAC) called on Punjab Governor on Sunday to express the

reservations of journalists' community over the controversial bill. The meeting was attended by CPNE President Irshad Anari, Lahore Press Club President Irshad Ansari, Dunya Media Group Managing Director Naveed Kashif and former CPNE president Kazim Khan. The meeting was also attended by Hafiz

# PANAH organized training session for social media influencers

**Soon Times Correspondent MURREE**  
PANAH organized a training session for social media influencers in Murree to raise awareness to increase taxes on ultra-processed foods and sugary drinks that cause non-communicable diseases. Pakistan has the highest prevalence of diabetes worldwide with 35 million people suffering from diabetes. About 1100 deaths occur in Pakistan every day due to diabetes and its complications. If urgent and decisive policy action is not taken, the number of people with diabetes is likely to reach 62 million by 2045. Many countries in the world increased taxes on sugary drinks and ultra-processed foods to reduce these unhealthy foods, which not only reduced their consumption but also

reduced diseases. Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) is running an effective campaign to reduce sugary drinks and ultra-processed foods that cause many non-communicable diseases. In this regard PANAH organized a training session for social media influencers on 22 May 2024 at a local hotel in Murree. The objective of the training was to train social media influencers to run an effective advocacy campaign to increase taxes on sugary drinks and ultra-processed foods in the upcoming budget and to attract the attention of policy makers. PANAH Secretary General Sanauallah Ghuman performed the duties of training. 30 social media influencers from across the country participated. At the end certificates were distributed to the participants.

# Gas theft crackdown: UFG Task Force for the Lahore West Region conducts successful raid

**Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE**  
During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad. It disconnected 143 connections and imposed fine of Rs 2.9 million. The UFG Task Force for the Lahore West Region successfully conducted a raid at Shah Kamal Road in Kamboh Colony, where they dismantled a direct bypass installed on the main gas line. The stolen gas was being used by a tandoor and hotel. The owner had also installed two gas compressors to siphon gas. The bypass was removed and a request for an FIR against the culprit has

Station. In Lahore, the team disconnected 12 connections on illegal use of gas, 3 on use of compressor, imposed fine of Rs 1.31 million against gas theft cases and lodged 2 FIRs against gas pilferers. In Multan the team disconnected 04 connections on illegal use of gas, 04 on use of compressor. In Karak the company disconnected 67 connections on account of direct use and illegal use of gas. In Peshawar the team disconnected 32 connections on illegal use of gas and imposed fine of Rs 0.07 million against gas theft cases. The regional team of Sheikhpura disconnected 04 connections on illegal use of gas and booked an amount of Rs 0.2 million

team disconnected 03 connections on illegal use of gas and imposed fine of Rs 0.04 million against gas theft cases. In Sialkot the team disconnected 01 connection on illegal use of gas. The regional team of Bahawalpur disconnected 01 connection on illegal use of gas. In Gujran the team disconnected 01 connection on illegal use of gas. The regional team of Gujranwala disconnected one connection on illegal use of gas and also imposed fine of Rs 0.30 million against gas theft cases. In Mardan the team disconnected 10 connections on illegal use of gas and also imposed fine of Rs.01 million against gas pilferers.

# Afghan soil used in attack on Chinese nationals, says Mohsin Naqvi

**Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE**  
Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that Afghan soil was used in the attack on Chinese nationals working in Pakistan. Speaking to media in Lahore, the interior minister said that China always supported Pakistan and we have very deep ties with this country. "The attack on Chinese nationals was pre-planned and we have raised the issue with the interim government of Afghanistan," Naqvi said. He added that Pakistan has beefed up the security at borders and we know very well the forces who want to sabotage the Sino-Pak ties. According to Mohsin Naqvi, the Threkk-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is being supported in the border areas and we have

The prime minister will also visit China next month," said Naqvi. The chairman of National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) Rai Tahir said that the car used in the suicide attack entered Pakistan via Afghanistan. "The TTP was behind the attack on Chinese nationals in Besham and the plan was orchestrated in Afghanistan," said Rai Tahir. Five Chinese nationals were killed when the vehicle they were travelling by was attacked near Besham—a town located in Shangla district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in March this year. A suicide bomber had rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into the convoy of Chinese engineers which was on its way from Islamabad to their camp in Dasu.

# ASF foils heroin smuggling attempt at Multan airport

**Soon Times Correspondent KARACHI**  
The Airports Security Force (ASF) on Sunday successfully foiled a smuggling attempt at Multan Airport, recovering 950 grams of ice heroin from a passenger

of a Dubai-bound flight. The passenger, identified as Mohammad Ramzan, had expertly concealed the heroin within the iron rods of his bag. However, ASF personnel detected and recovered the drugs

during a thorough search of his luggage. Following the preliminary investigation, the accused was handed over to the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) authorities for further legal process.



## US may lift ban on sale of offensive weapons to Saudi Arabia



**Web Desk**  
The United States is expected to lift a ban on the sale of offensive weapons to Saudi Arabia, potentially in the coming weeks.

Washington has already signaled to Saudi Arabia that it was prepared to lift the ban, the newspaper reported, citing a person familiar with the matter.

Soon after taking office in 2021, Biden adopted a tougher stance over Saudi Arabia's campaign against the Iran-aligned Houthis in Yemen, which has inflicted heavy civilian casualties, and over Riyadh's human rights record, in particular the 2018 killing of Washington Post journalist and political opponent Jamal Khashoggi.

Saudi Arabia, the biggest US arms customer, has chafed under those restrictions, which froze the kind of weapons sales that previous US administrations had provided for decades.

## Sunak's plan to make 18-year-olds do national service grabs attention on UK election trail

**LONDON**  
All 18-year-olds in Britain will have to perform a year of mandatory military or civilian national service if the governing Conservative Party wins the July 4 national election, the party said Sunday.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak pledged to bring back a form of national service for the first time in more than 60 years, seeking to energize his election campaign after a faltering start.

The UK introduced military conscription for men and some women during World War II, and imposed 18 months of mandatory military service for men between 1947 and 1960. Since then Britain has had an all-volunteer military whose size has steadily shrunk.



## Hamas says it launched 'big missile' attack on Tel Aviv

**Hamas' military wing claimed the attack, and rocket launches could be heard in central Gaza.**

**CAIRO/JERUSALEM**

Hamas armed wing al-Qassam Brigades said it launched a "big missile" attack on Tel Aviv on Sunday as the Israeli military sounded sirens in the central city warning of possible incoming rockets.

In a statement on its Telegram channel on Sunday, al-Qassam Brigades said the rockets were launched in response to what it called "Zionist massacres against civilians".

Hamas Al-Aqsa TV said the rockets were launched from the Gaza Strip. Rocket sirens had not been heard in Tel Aviv for the past four months. The reason for the sirens was not immediately stated by the Israeli military.

Israeli emergency medical services said they had received no reports of casualties.

The attack signaled the Islamist faction was still able to fire long-range rockets despite more than seven months of devastating Israeli military offensive from the air and the ground.

Hamas fired a barrage of rockets from Gaza that set off air raid sirens as far away as Tel Aviv for the first time in months on Sunday in a show of resilience more than seven months into Israel's massive air, sea and ground offensive.

There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage in what appeared to be the first long-range rocket attack from Gaza since January. Palestinian militants have continued to sporadically fire rockets and mortar rounds at communities along the Gaza border since then. Hamas' military wing claimed the attack, and rocket launches could be heard in central Gaza. The Israeli military said eight projectiles crossed into Israel after being launched from the area of the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where Israeli forces recently launched an incursion. It said "a number" of the projectiles were intercepted.

Earlier, aid trucks had entered Gaza from southern Israel through a new agreement to bypass the Rafah crossing with Egypt after Israeli forces seized the Palestinian side of it earlier this month. But it was unclear if humanitarian groups would be able to access the aid because of ongoing fighting in the area.

## UN migration agency estimates more than 670 killed in Papua New Guinea

**MELBOURNE, Australia**

The International Organization for Migration on Sunday increased its estimate of the death toll from a massive landslide in Papua New Guinea to more than 670 as emergency responders and 11 Australian relatives gave up hope that any survivors will now be found.

Serhan Aktoprak, the chief of the UN migration agency's mission in the South Pacific island nation, said the revised death toll was based on calculations by Yamabali village and Enga provincial officials that more than 150 homes had been buried by Friday's landslide. The previous estimate had been 60 homes.

"They are estimating that more than 670 people (are) under the soil at the moment," Aktoprak told The Associated Press.

Local officials had initially put the death toll on Friday at 100 or more. Only five bodies and a leg of a sixth victim had been recovered by Sunday.

Relief crews were moving survivors to safer ground on Sunday as tons of unstable earth and tribal warfare, which is rife in the Papua New Guinea Highlands, threatened the rescue effort.

The national government meanwhile is considering whether it needs to officially request more international support.

Crews have given up hope of finding survivors under earth and rubble 6 to 8 meters (20 to 26 feet) deep.



## Death toll in Kharkiv attack rises to 14 as Zelenskyy warns of Russian troop movements



**KYIV, Ukraine**  
President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned Sunday that Russia is preparing to intensify its offensive along Ukraine's northern border, as the death toll rose to 14 in an aerial bomb attack on a large construction supplies store in the city of Kharkiv.

The bombing of Kharkiv on Saturday afternoon also left 43 injured and 16 missing, Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Synyehubov said initially after the attack.

In a video statement from Kharkiv, Zelenskyy said that Russia is preparing offensive actions 90 kilometers (55 miles) northwest of Ukraine's second largest city. He said that Russians "gather another group of troops near our border."

He did not specify where the troops are being assembled, but Ukrainian officials have expressed strong concern about the Sumy region. Both Kharkiv city and Sumy with about 250,000 people are within about 25 kilometers (15 miles) of the Russian border.

Moscow's troops have in recent weeks captured villages in the Kharkiv area as part of a broad push, and analysts say they may be trying to get within artillery range of the city. Ukrainian authorities have evacuated more than 11,000 people from the region since the start of the offensive on May 10.

Russia launched wide missile and drone attacks on much of Ukraine during the Sumy region. Ukrainian officials said air defense units intercepted 31 Shahed drones and 12 cruise missiles launched by Russia in the Mykolaiv, Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava, Zaporizhzhia, Khmelnytskyi, Kirovohrad, Vinnytsia and Chernihiv regions.

In total Russia launched 14 missiles and more than three dozen drones, according to a statement from Ukraine's air force. It was not clear what damage may have been caused by missiles and drones that were not shot down.

# Sports & Showbiz

## T20 World Cup 2024: ICC to set up fan park in Rawalpindi for Pakistan, India clash



**KARACHI:**

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has confirmed that it would set up a fan park at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium to allow fans to enjoy the highly-anticipated T20 World Cup 2024 match between India and Pakistan while being 11,000 kilometers away from the match being played in New York's Nassau County International Cricket Stadium.

The ICC's decision will allow fans to feel the game's intensity and cheer for the Green Shirts via a big screen at the Rawalpindi stadium on June 9.

The match between arch-rivals will be shown at 10 different fan parks including Cedar Creek Park in Seaford, New York, hosted by Nassau County and the Indira Gandhi Indoor Arena in New Delhi, India.

The fan park in Rawalpindi will open for fans 90 minutes before the start of the game and will remain open until 60 minutes after the end of the play.

"The ICC has announced a record number of fan parks to broadcast the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 with nine live sites in five different countries," read a statement released by the ICC.

## What is Hania Aamir's recipe to deal with online trolling



**LAHORE**  
Pakistan showbiz industry actor Hania Aamir has recently revealed her way to deal with online trolling.

## PAK vs ENG: I am comfortable with bowling at any position, says Imad Wasim

**KARACHI:**  
Pakistan cricket team's all-rounder Imad Wasim has said that he is comfortable with bowling wherever required as per the team's requirement.



Talking to the media persons after the second T20I against England, the all-rounder said that during the series against Ireland, Pakistan were experimenting few things.

"I am ready to bowl at any position, be it with the new ball or the death overs, whenever the captain feels that I should come to bowl, I will and I will try to give my best for the team," Imad said.

## Nadal unclear on French Open participation after Rome exit



**EUGENE**  
Kenyan Beatrice Chebet shattered the women's 10,000 metres world record at the Prefontaine Classic as Britain's Josh Kerr beat arch-rival Jakob Ingebrigtsen in the mile race at the Eugene Diamond League meet.

Chebet clocked 28 minutes 54.14 seconds, taking nearly seven seconds off the previous world record set by Ethiopian Letesenbet Gidey three years ago to qualify for the event at the Paris Olympics.

"The last lap just motivated me, especially when Gudaf dropped. Then I realized 'Oh, I am the best, so I can go,'" said Chebet, who had the fans on their feet at Haysward Field in Oregon as she cruised through the finish.

The men's mile served up the biggest drama of the day as Kerr faced Norwegian Ingebrigtsen for the first time since he stunned the Olympic champion to win the 1,500 metres world title in Budapest.

Ingebrigtsen hot on his heels through the final stretch. Ingebrigtsen, twice world champion over 5,000 metres, tried to find another gear but could not get past Kerr who crossed the line in a national record time of 3:45.34.

Making his season debut after missing eight months due to an Achilles injury, Ingebrigtsen finished in 3:45.60 with American Yared Nuguse third.

"These guys I'm racing against are going to get better and better each month, and I need to do the same to try and stay ahead," said Kerr.