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Petrol price likely to reduce by Rs5 per litre in upcoming review



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Petrol and diesel prices are expected to decline by up to Rs5 per litre in the upcoming fortnightly review. The Petroleum Division sources said on Wednesday that the per litre price of petrol is likely to go down by Rs5 while diesel is expected to be slashed by Rs4 per litre. However, they said the next two days are important regarding any change in the fuel prices as the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) will forward its summary to the Finance Division on May 31. The final decision on the petroleum products prices will be made following the Ministry of Finance's consultation with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. If approved, this will be the third consecutive reduction in fuel prices. Earlier this month, the federal government had approved a massive cut of Rs15.59 per litre in the petrol price and the price of diesel was reduced by Rs.788 per litre. Currently, petrol is available at Rs273.10 per litre while diesel is being sold at Rs274.08 per litre.

Mohsin Naqvi leaves for Europe visit



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi left for Europe visit. Naqvi has left for United Kingdom from where he will embark on Italy and Vatican City. He will hold meetings with the British home minister and other top officials in United Kingdom. Later, the interior minister will hold meeting with his Italian counterpart during his visit to Italy. Mohsin Naqvi will also meet Pope Francis at Vatican City as well.

Election Act amendments meant for protecting fake government: Barrister Saif



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Adviser Barrister Saif said on Wednesday changes to the Election Act were meant for protection of fake government formed on Form 47. He responded to the new development in Election Act, asserting these amendments were meant to delay justice and abolish transparency. "We reject this black law," he said. He also announced that the KP Assembly had approved the resolution against the law. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) gets power to appoint serving as well as retired judges in the election tribunal, according to the amended law. The ECP is going to set up new tribunals comprising retired high court justices without consulting the high court chief justices.

Nikkah during Iddat: Judge writes to IHC for transfer of case after 'ruckus' in courtroom

District and Sessions Judge Shahrukh Arjum and was to announce the reserved verdict

Judge Arjumand says it will not be appropriate to announce the verdict as Manika has mistrust of the court



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
District and Sessions Judge Shahrukh Arjumand on Wednesday remarked that Khawar Manika and his counsel always tried to disrupt hearing on appeals of PTI founder Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi and requested the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to transfer the case regarding their alleged unlawful marriage to another court. The judge wrote a letter to the IHC registrar after Manika and his lawyers created ruckus in

the courtroom when he was due to announce his reserved verdict on the appeals. However, the judge retired to his chamber without announcing the decision. Judge Arjumand wrote that it would not be appropriate to decide the appeals as Manika has mistrust of the court. EARLIER PROCEEDINGS When day's proceeding started, the judge asked about public prosecutor Rizwan Abbasi. His assistant told him that he had to appear before the Supreme Court. The judge remarked that Abbasi should have been in court in time. His assistant replied that he had to argue against the appeal but had to go to the Supreme Court. The assistant sought time till 10:30am but Advocate Abbasi did not turn up. The judge asked the assistant to consult his senior and inform the court what he wanted. Manika's counsel intervened and sought transfer of the case to another court. Judge Arjumand remarked that the request had already been turned down.

PTI lawyers attack Khawar Manika after Imran Khan's plea hearing



After Khawar Manika's exit from courtroom, PTI lawyers hurled bottles on him and attacked him with punches and kicks. Afterwards, sessions judge Shahrukh Arjumand wrote a letter to the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to entrust this case to another court. Read: Nikkah during Iddat: Judge writes to IHC for transfer of case after 'ruckus' in courtroom

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Some Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawyers on Wednesday attacked Khawar Manika, Bushra Bibi's ex-husband, outside the Islamabad district and sessions court during the hearing of Nikkah during iddat case. Khawar Manika appeared before the court in the case of Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi's appeals against conviction in Nikkah during iddat case.

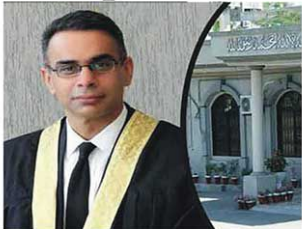
It is pertinent to note that court was slated to announce the verdict on the case it reserved on May 23. Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi were charged with seven-year imprisonment and Rs500,000 fine each in the case on Feb 3 by Senior Civil Judge Qudratullah. Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi had filed a petition in the district and sessions court of Islamabad against the ruling on Feb 23.

Missing poet Ahmad Farhad is in AJK police custody, AGP tells IHC



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
The federal government on Wednesday told the Islamabad High Court that poet and journalist Ahmad Farhad, who had been missing for the last 15 days, was in the Azad Kashmir police custody. Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani of the Islamabad High Court conducted hearing of the recovery of missing poet Farhad's case. Imran Mazari appeared before court on behalf of Farhad's wife whereas the Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) represented the federal government. During proceedings of the case, Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan told the court that Farhad was arrested and detained by the Azad Kashmir police. The attorney general also submitted a report of the Dheer police station of Azad Kashmir in court. It may be recalled that poet Farhad had gone missing 15 days ago in Islamabad. Farhad's wife Arooj Zainab had lodged a complaint in the IHC for recovery of her husband.

IHC restrains telecom firms from intercepting phone calls for surveillance purposes



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
The Islamabad High Court on Wednesday ordered telecommunication companies to refrain from recording phone calls for surveillance purposes, warning that they would be held accountable if their equipment was used for illegal surveillance. The order came as Justice Bahar Sattar of the IHC resumed hearing on a petition challenging the alleged audio leak involving former prime minister Imran Khan's spouse, Bushra Bibi, and Najam Saqib, the son of

former chief justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar. During the hearing, Justice Sattar asked the lawyer representing the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) why they had not submitted their response. The lawyer replied that they were unable to submit their response due to the holiday. Later, Additional Attorney General Munawar Iqbal Doghal appeared alone on the roster. Justice Sattar inquired about the law under which citizens' calls were being recorded.

In response, the additional attorney general stated that under Section 34, the PTA had the authority to record calls. The court inquired which law authorised the PTA to conduct surveillance. The AAG said the legal framework allowed it. The court demanded clarity on the law governing the recording of citizens' calls. It also instructed the AAG to provide a formal response and specify who had given permission and who had been authorised to record people's calls.

PTI says 'judge faced pressure not to issue verdict' in Imran Khan-Bushra Bibi marriage case



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
PTI leader Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has criticised the lower court's inability to deliver a verdict in the case involving the alleged illegitimate marriage of former prime minister Imran Khan with Bushra Bibi, calling it a 'travesty of justice' and 'pre-planned conspiracy'. The district and sessions court in Islamabad did not announce the verdict on Wednesday. Instead, Judge Shahrukh Arjumand requested the transfer of the case. Interacting with media alongside Shibli Faraz, Gohar stated that both

Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi had provided their statements to the court, but the judge allegedly faced pressure not to issue the verdict. "This is not justice; it's a violation of fundamental rights. It's a travesty of justice," Gohar said, noting that the case, which should have been concluded in two days, didn't allow them to present evidence. Gohar, however, expressed faith in the judiciary despite setbacks. Gohar further mentioned that Khawar Maneka, Bushra Bibi's former husband, engaged in indecent conversation in the courtroom during his allotted time. Expressing similar sentiments, PTI leader Shibli Faraz condemned Maneka's demeanour [in the courtroom] as immoral and obscene. He held the view that the court should have intervened to stop him.

Pakistan all set to launch new satellite PakSat MM1 tomorrow



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco) is all set to launch a new satellite PakSat MM1 tomorrow (May 30) through the support of China, in accordance with the National Space Program 2047. The Project Management Team of PakSat MM1 has finalised all the arrangements for the launch of this new satellite through evaluating its performance. Project Director, PakSat MM1, M. Imran said "Our team is very excited for the upcoming launch of PakSat MM1 on May 30". The satellite PakSat MM1, conceived keeping in sight the growing needs of the country in the broad spectrum of communication and connectivity, would be launched from Xichang Satellite Launch Center (XSLC), China. This satellite project is a hallmark of technological cooperation between the People's Republic of China and

Pakistan and is expected to revolutionise communication in Pakistan and serve as a giant leap towards a digitally connected Pakistan. Based on advanced communication technologies, PakSat MM1 will play a pivotal role in the socio-economic uplift of the country and will prove to be a stepping stone in the transformation of the country into Digital Pakistan. The launch ceremony will be shown live for media from the Islamabad and Karachi establishments of Suparco. The satellite is expected to contribute to the establishment of a sophisticated communication network and help meet the growing demands of the telecom sector and its advanced capabilities will address the increasing demand for high-speed internet and seamless connectivity.

Pakistan, Kazakhstan Bilateral Relations

Ambassador of Kazakhstan, Yerzhan Kistafan met with Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain and discussed issues of mutual interest and bilateral relations here on Wednesday. During the

meeting, it was agreed to further promote bilateral relations and share Pakistani students data with Kazakhstan so that there is no incident of violence. Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain said the concerned authorities of both countries should organize a security dialogue. He said

Kazakhstan's airline can become a means of communication with Pakistan. We can expand the airline business further. Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafan said dealing with Islamophobia is one of the priorities of Muslim countries. Discussion on religious

dialogue between Pakistan and Kazakhstan is very important, he added. He said that Kazakhstanis preparing to organize a religious conference next month and added we hope that Pakistan's participation in the conference will strengthen religious dialogue.

“AKAH Volunteers save life of a German tourist in high Mountains.”

By Sami Ullah Malik Ph.D



Pakistan's Hunza and Gilgit valleys are renowned for their stunning natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and warm hospitality, making them prime destinations for tourists. Every year thousands of tourists from across the world turn toward these regions to enjoy peace, tranquility and nature. High above the serene valleys and towering peaks, adventure calls to many. Paragliding offers an exhilarating experience, blending the thrill of flight with the beauty of nature. But sometimes, even the most experienced paragliders can find themselves in perilous situations. As was the case, on 27 May 2024, when two German tourists decided to paraglide over

the beautiful Altit region of Hunza valley. Unfortunately, the paraglider of Mr. Joutle (German tourist) collapsed around 1230 hours at an altitude of 4200 feet due to malfunctioning and fell near a high feature, resulting in severe foot and leg injuries. Luckily, his fellow tourist was able to communicate about the incident through WhatsApp messaging to the local service providers. He also sent an image through his mobile phone to give the location of the victim. The call for help was received by the local AKAH Community Response volunteers (CERTs). Trained for such emergencies, they spring into

action, knowing that every second counts. Mr. Ejaz and Mr. Staman, who are AKAH (Aga Khan Agency for Habitat) active volunteers and part of regional search and rescue group immediately responded to the situation and quickly mobilised a team of 30 volunteers comprising of AKAH Community Response Team (CERTs), Rescue 1122 and local Law enforcing agencies. The team had numerous challenges ahead including bad weather, sharp cuttings, and inaccessible slopes. Equipped with specialized gear and an unwavering resolve, the rescue team started their operation around 1300 hours. During the rescue

operation the team was detracting as the image sent by fellow paraglider led them to wrong location. Despite all odds and challenges team reached the victim site around 1830 hours. The paraglider was found conscious but severely injured. The team quickly assessed his condition, providing first aid to stabilize him. Communication with the Operational base was made to ensure additional medical support and further evacuation to specialise medical facilities. The paraglider was immediately evacuated to District health facility in Gilgit, and his current health condition is stable. Tourism is at a rise in Northern

areas of Pakistan, and it is extremely important to promote safe tourism for the foreigners and to encourage them. Keeping in view the expansion in local and international tourism, it has become paramount to promote, Community Mountain rescue teams. As they are critically important for spanning from the immediate safety of individuals to broader social and economic impacts. Community mountain rescue teams are essential for ensuring the safety of individuals in mountainous areas, supporting local economies, enhancing community resilience, promoting environmental stewardship, and

reducing the burden on national resources. Their presence not only saves lives but also fosters a stronger, more cohesive, and prepared community. Through their dedicated efforts, these teams make mountain regions safer and more sustainable for residents and visitors alike. In this context Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH) is doing exceptional work to promote a culture of safety among the locals and enabling them to serve their communities by providing them with technical equipment and knowledge to ensure safety culture and fight against global climatic changes.

Members of Governing Body, Ms. Sadia Javed (MPA) and Ms. Rukhsana Parveen (MPA), Visit NICVD and Praise Free Services



Soon Times Correspondent Karachi

The National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) was honored to welcome esteemed members of its Governing Body, Ms. Sadia Javed (MPA) and Ms. Rukhsana Parveen (MPA), for a comprehensive visit today. Professor Tahir Saghir, Executive Director of NICVD, provided a detailed briefing on the hospital's operations, emphasizing the institute's commitment to providing free of cost cardiovascular healthcare to all segments of society. During the briefing, Professor Saghir highlighted NICVD's pioneering initiatives and the state-of-the-art treatments available to patients. Following the briefing, Ms. Sadia Javed and Ms. Rukhsana Parveen toured various departments of the hospital. They were particularly impressed by the advanced technology and the efficiency of the medical staff. The visit included ongoing projects aimed at further enhancing the quality and reach of NICVD's services. Both Ms.

Javed and Ms. Parveen expressed their admiration for the exemplary services provided by NICVD. They commended the institution's unwavering dedication to patient care, particularly noting the significance of offering free medical services in improving public health outcomes. "NICVD's commitment to providing high-quality, free cardiovascular care is commendable. The impact on the community is profound, and we are proud to be associated with such a remarkable institution," stated Ms. Sadia Javed. Ms. Rukhsana Parveen added, "The ongoing projects and the dedication of the staff are truly inspiring. NICVD sets a benchmark in healthcare services, ensuring that everyone has access to the best possible treatments regardless of their financial status." The visit concluded with a renewed commitment from the governing body members to support NICVD's mission and vision, ensuring that it continues to lead in cardiovascular care and innovation.

PPAF and NCSW Unite for Women's Empowerment in Pakistan

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad

The Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) and the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) have entered into a strategic partnership, marking a significant milestone in Pakistan's journey towards gender equality and economic empowerment. This alliance reflects a joint effort to harness the potential of women as catalysts for change. Signing a Letter of Intent (LOI) in Islamabad, CEO PPAF Nadir Gul Barech and NCSW Chairperson Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar were the signatories of this momentous document. The ceremony was attended by the representatives from academia, media, and civil society organizations.



Through this partnership, PPAF and NCSW will initiate a series of programs aimed at advancing women's social and economic empowerment safeguarding their constitutional and fundamental human rights. These initiatives include advocacy efforts with the Women's Parliamentary Caucus to promote gender-equal policies, as well as inter-ministerial dialogues to address barriers hindering women's economic participation. Additionally, Both organizations aimed collectively to take forward the initiatives of partner organisation Dukhtarun E Pakistan across the country. It was agreed that collaborative research initiatives with academia and research institutions will explore avenues for women's involvement in poverty reduction, economic growth, digitalization, participatory development, and climate change response. CEO PPAF Nadir Gul Barech highlighted the transformative power of collective action in empowering women and creating a more equitable society. He expressed profound optimism about the partnership's potential to catalyze tangible change, enriching the lives of women across Pakistan and nurturing a future defined by equal opportunities and prospects for exploring their hidden potential. Nadir Gul also shared that since inception, PPAF has

established linkages and partnerships with civil society organizations, community-based organizations and engaged with international donors to serve the most marginalized communities in Pakistan. Till date PPAF has formed 94,000 women's community institutions to promote leadership skills in community women, helping them to contribute towards conflict resolution and peacebuilding. To ensure women's economic empowerment and build sustainable livelihoods, the organization has provided 128,400 productive assets, 125 matching grants to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), 1,738,000 interest-free loans, and vocational/enterprise development training to 222,000 women, he further added. Chairperson Nilofar Bakhtiar praised the collaboration as a landmark in promoting gender equality in Pakistan which is prerequisite for achieving sustainable development goals and creating a tolerant and peaceful society. She emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts to create an enabling environment for women to contribute to an economically stable Pakistan. She expressed the need for private and government institutions to implement the National and provincial policies on Gender Equality for ensuring gender responsive institutions that serve men and women according to their distinct needs. Nilofar Bakhtiar highlighted that this strategic collaboration



We should celebrate Youm-e-Takbir with full national enthusiasm: AC Martin

Soon Times Correspondent
Nowshera Soon Sakasr:
 A rally was held under the leadership of Assistant Commissioner Irfan Martin regarding Youm-e-Takbir of Pakistan. Rescue 1122, teachers, police personnel and others participated in the rally. Participants in the rally carried banners and placards highlighting the importance of the invincibility of the Islamic State. Assistant Commissioner Irfan Martin said that we are proud of the scientists. We should celebrate Youm-e-Takbir with full national enthusiasm. Our defense is impenetrable. At the end of the rally, prayers were made for the security of Pakistan.

SNGPL disconnected 63 connections; imposed fine of Rs 1.65 million

Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE:
 During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad. It disconnected 63 connections and imposed fine of Rs 1.65 million. In Lahore, the team disconnected 11 connections on illegal use of gas, 01 on use of the compressor, imposed fine of Rs 0.82 million against gas theft cases and lodged 01 FIR against gas pilfers. In Multan the team disconnected 07 connections on illegal use of gas, 05 on use of compressor. In Karak the company disconnected 02 connections on account of direct and illegal use of gas and booked Rs 0.14 million against gas theft cases. The regional team of Shiekhupura disconnected 05 connections on illegal use of gas and also booked an amount of Rs 0.2 million against gas theft cases. In Faisalabad the team disconnected 02 connections on illegal use of gas and imposed a fine of Rs 0.02 million against gas theft cases. In Peshawar the team disconnected 26 connections on illegal use of gas and booked an amount of Rs 0.07 million against gas theft cases. In Bahawalpur the team disconnected 01 connection on illegal use of gas. The regional team of Gujranwala disconnected 2 connections on illegal use of gas, 01 on use of compressor and imposed fine of Rs 0.40 million against gas theft cases.

Negligence of MC staff led to the death of the citizen



Soon Times Correspondent
Sargodha:
 Negligence of officers and staff of Sargodha Municipal Corporation led to the loss of another precious life. A young man named Amir died after falling into an open manhole. The manhole was left open after excavation by the Municipal Corporation at Block 16 Mission School Road, Sargodha area. A young man named Amir, who was returning home late at night, fell in this manhole which had been open for three days. On the information, an operation was started by the rescue team to pull out the youth, but due to the rapid flow of water, the body of the youth went into the line. After a long operation of many hours, the body of the young man was removed from the main disposal of Silanwali Road, after which the operation was completed. 30 years old Amir went to buy ice cream for his family but did not return. Many open manholes in the city are telling the stories of negligence and carelessness of the Municipal Corporation, but the administration does not pay any attention. Citizens say that there are no manhole covers for three months while there are written complaints about the lack of manhole covers in more than 400 manholes in city.

Fire broke out from Chitta Soon Valley engulfs vast area of forest



Soon Times Correspondent
Nowshera Soon Sakasr:
 A fire that broke out suddenly from Malkan Wali Chahar near Mouza Chitta on the outskirts of Soon Valley has engulfed a vast area which has quickly spread to several forests. It is feared that the forest and trees will be damaged on a large scale. As soon as information was received, Rescue 1122 and other teams were engaged in extinguishing the fire. In extinguishing the fire, the watchman of the forest department, Raza Shah, has lost his life due to severe burns in the fire. Administration looks helpless as it does not have fire extinguishers. Even earlier, trees worth crores of rupees have been burnt to ashes due to fire in different forests of Soon Valley. The local people have demanded the Provincial Government, Commissioner Sargodha, DC Khushab and Forest Department officials to take notice and conduct a high-level inquiry so that the forest can be averted from the brink of destruction in the future.

PTI moves LHC to reclaim 'bat' electoral symbol



Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE:
 The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has moved the Lahore High Court, seeking a directive for the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to allot it the electoral symbol of the "cricket bat". PTI argues that a political party cannot be deprived of its right to contest an election, particularly by withholding its symbol due to failure to hold intra-party elections. The petition was filed by PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan, Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan, Information Secretary Raouf Hasan, and others. They contend that since the 2002 general elections, PTI has contested using the cricket bat symbol, which has become emblematic of the party's identity for over two decades. "In the 2024 general elections, every attempt was made to exclude and handicap PTI's participation," the petition states. "This included the snatching of nomination papers, exclusion of candidates and their proposers and seconders from attending scrutiny proceedings, police raids, and heavy-handed actions denying rallies and gatherings. Hundreds of PTI workers were also incarcerated." PTI founder Imran Khan was disqualified, convicted, and incarcerated in a series of controversial trials, which are currently pending adjudication in appeal and subject to challenge before higher courts. "His name and picture became the subject of a de facto ban on television and electronic media," the petition adds. "These are all matters of record, and if required, the necessary documents can be filed."

Road Safety Seminar at M-14 with cadets of Isakhel cadet college

Soon Times Correspondent
Mianwali:
 Under special initiative regarding Seminars by IG National Highway and Motorway Police, Road Safety seminar was conducted yesterday under supervision of Zonal Commander Motorways North Farid Khan by SC M-14. Pre Cadets of Isakhel college were given lecture and tips along with shields and principal Malik Ferozudin paid the vote of thanks to high ups.



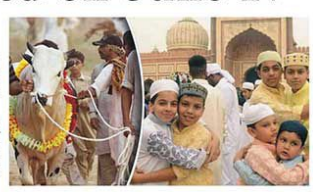
Eidul Azha 2024 - Digital options in sacrificial animal trade

Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE
 Eidul Azha is around the corner and sale and purchase of sacrificial animals has already begun across the country. The business activities associated with the religious festival have transformed over the years, with animal trade now just a click away. Gone are the days when people would love to invest time and money in the traditional cattle markets and through roadside sale points several days before Eid. The traders also seem less enchanted today by the prospects of making a fast buck but they used to be until a few years ago. Many people point out that the tradition of sacrificing animals to seek the Higher Power's blessings seems to have lost its spirit and charm despite the convenience one can have today in the form of technology. In order to avoid the hassle of haggling and pain points, and save time and money, most people today prefer technological tools to buy sacrificial animals while staying in the comfort of their homes. As online buying has become the order of the day, let's have a look at the options potential customers of sacrificial animals have. QR Code for animal trade The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has introduced a digital initiative to help buyers and sellers of sacrificial animals deal through Raast - Pakistan's first instant payment service that enables end-to-end digital payments among individuals, and businesses across the country. The SBP is said to be working with 25 banks to facilitate 50 cattle markets across the country for payment through QR codes. The transactions are likely to attract Rs550 billion or more, says an official. The QR (Quick Response) code is an online mode of transaction. It is a scannable barcode containing horizontal and vertical lines, dots, and patterns. A senior officer recently claimed that the SBP was working with banks to enable cattle markets and farmers to do transaction on QR code this Eid. "The SBP will make it easy for buyers of sacrificial animals to pay using a QR code mechanism at cattle markets during Eid. It is part of the application of payments through the Raast Instant Payment System," the officer explained. He said markets had been identified in 15 cities including Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Hyderabad. "We are covering six cattle markets in Karachi this Eid (falling in mid of June 2024). The banker said the QR code method would revolutionise the payment experience as the high cost of installing POS machines at vending points has its limitations. Online portal In addition to the Central Bank initiative, the Punjab government has launched its first official online portal to enable citizens to purchase sacrificial animals without hassle. Reports say it will allow people to buy sacrificial animals online ahead of Eid and streamline the process with the growing trend of modern technology. The portal provides detailed listings of animals, including their pictures, age, weight, species, breed, price, and other relevant information.



Eidul Azha likely to be celebrated on June 17

LAHORE
(Web Desk)
 The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted Eidul Azha is likely to be celebrated on June 17 (Monday). According to the Climate Data Processing Centre, the moon of Zilhajj is most likely to be sighted on June 7 (Friday) and Eidul Azha will be on June 17 (Monday). According to the processing centre, the moon will rise at 5:38pm on June 6, while the sunset is likely to be at 7:20pm. The moon is likely to be visible for 72 minutes after sunset. The moon must be 19 hours old to be visible while at the time of sunset, the age of the moon in Karachi will be 26 hours and 8 minutes.



On Eidul Azha or the day of sacrifice, Muslims follow the Sunnah of Hazrat Ibrahim (A.S) and demonstrate their obedience to Allah by sacrificing an animal. The day is a public holiday.

Govt tightens security for Chinese workers

ISLAMABAD
 The federal government has decided to tighten the security of the Chinese workers on CPEC projects. An additional Rs200 million will be released to the Intelligence Bureau (IB) for the security of the CPEC projects. Sources said anti-Pakistan elements were tasked to sabotage the CPEC projects and the funds would be used to counter their plans. The prime minister had already directed the authorities to ensure foolproof security of the Chinese nationals working in Pakistan. On March 26, a grisly terrorist attack killed five Chinese engineers and their Pakistani driver in Bisham town of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Following the attack, Pakistan's civil and military leadership expressed resolute commitment to completely eradicate terrorism from the country.



Billionaire prepares to plunge to Titanic wreck year after OceanGate tragedy



Web Desk
Undertaken by the OceanGate disaster, Larry Connor, a realty investor from Ohio, has announced plans to plunge more than 12,400 feet to the site of Titanic's wreck inside a two-person submersible with Triton Submarines co-founder Patrick Lahey.

In June 2023, OceanGate organised an expedition to the Titanic wreck deep under the North Atlantic Ocean with five people aboard its submersible, named Titan.

After an hour and 45 minutes, the submersible was lost and a rescue operation was initiated after the vessel failed to resurface at the scheduled time later that day.

Nuclear weapons issue: Rare spat shows China, North Korea still at odds



SEOUL
North Korea's rare swipe at China this week underscored how Beijing and Pyongyang do not entirely see eye-to-eye on the latter's illicit nuclear weapons arsenal, despite warming ties in other areas, analysts and officials in South Korea said.

The North condemned China, Japan and South Korea on Monday for discussing denuclearisation of the peninsula, calling their joint declaration after a summit in Seoul a "grave political provocation" that "violates its sovereignty."

Even though Beijing helped tone down the statement by advocating mention of the peninsula rather than the North specifically, that was enough to raise its neighbour's hackles, one analyst said.



US says Israel has 'not yet' crossed red lines in Rafah

Despite mounting concern over civilian toll of its war on Hamas, Israel shows no sign of changing course

Web Desk
Israel carried out fresh strikes on Wednesday in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where its forces are battling Hamas resistance fighters, after the UN Security Council met to discuss a deadly attack that sparked a global outcry.

Despite mounting concern over the civilian toll of its war on Hamas, Israel has shown no sign of changing course, and international efforts aimed at securing a ceasefire remain stalled.

AFP journalists in Rafah reported new strikes early Wednesday, hours after witnesses and a Palestinian security source said Israeli tanks had penetrated the heart of the city.

"People are currently inside their homes because anyone who moves is being shot at by Israeli drones," resident Abdelkhatib said.

US President Joe Biden has warned Israel against launching a major military operation in Rafah, but his administration insisted Tuesday that Israel had not yet crossed its red lines.

"We have not seen them smash into Rafah," said the US National Security Council spokesman John Kirby.

A civil defence official in Gaza said an Israeli strike on a displacement camp west of Rafah on Tuesday killed at least 21 people, after a similar strike over the weekend sparked global outrage and prompted the emergency UN Security Council session.

Israel's army rejected allegations that it had carried out Tuesday's strike in a designated humanitarian area.

"(The Israeli army) did not strike in the humanitarian area in Al-Mawasi," the army said in a statement, referring to an area that had been designated for displaced people of Rafah to shelter.

US says not changing Israeli policy despite Rafah strike

WASHINGTON
US President Joe Biden has no plans to change his Israel policy following a deadly weekend strike on Gaza's Rafah – but is not turning a "blind eye" to the plight of Palestinian civilians, the White House said Tuesday.



Gazan health authorities said 45 people were killed as a blaze tore through a camp for displaced people following the Sunday strike by Israel.

But Washington does not believe that Israel's actions in Rafah amount to a full-scale operation that would breach Biden's "red lines," National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said.

"As a result of this strike on Sunday I have no policy changes to speak to," Kirby told a White House briefing. "It just happened, the Israelis are going to investigate it."

Kirby added however that "this is not something that we've turned a blind eye to" when asked "how many charred

corpses" it would take for Biden to change course on the issue.

Biden has previously said he would not support a major Israeli military offensive in Rafah, from which one million civilians have fled, and earlier this month paused a shipment of heavy bombs to Israel over concerns they could be used against the southern Gaza city.

Witnesses told AFP that Israeli tanks were stationed in the center of Rafah on Tuesday, after intense fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants in recent weeks.

Ukrainian drones can strike deep but Moscow is safe, Russian official says



MOSCOW
Ukrainian drones have the capability of striking up to 2,500 kilometres (1,553 miles) into Russia, but the capital Moscow has been protected from their strikes, a senior Russian airforce official warned on Wednesday.

The statement from Dmitry Bogdanov, head of the radio-electronic warfare department of the Russian Aerospace Force, was carried by the TASS state news agency and suggests that a wide swath of Russian territory bordering Ukraine is vulnerable to potential attack.

"The enemy is not standing still," Bogdanov was quoted as saying.

"Now unmanned aerial vehicles can traverse an area of up to 2,500 kilometres, and many (Russian) regions are aware of this," Bogdanov told a security conference, TASS reported.

Bogdanov said measures had been taken to protect Moscow, the Russian capital, from Ukrainian drone attacks and that other regions were working on their defences.

Since the start of the war, Russia has been hit by a barrage of drone attacks from Ukraine, which have struck critical oil refining infrastructure in the world's second-largest crude exporter and shaken global markets.

Ukraine does not officially confirm or deny it is attacking refineries inside Russia, but it says such sites are legitimate targets as they aid Moscow's military effort at a time when Russian strikes are pounding Ukrainian infrastructure, including energy facilities.

We spoke to soldiers in infantry, artillery and drone units.

In what would be one of the deepest attempted drone strikes on Russian territory since the start of the Ukraine conflict, a Kyiv source said on Monday that a Ukrainian drone had targeted a Russian early-warning military radar system in the Orenburg region some 1,500 km (932 miles) away from the closest Ukrainian-held territory.

Sports & Showbiz

Fakhar Zaman jumps six places In latest T20I rankings

Babar Azam stands at fourth place in the rankings issued by ICC



Fakhar Zaman in action during a T20I match.

DUBAI
Left-hand batsman Fakhar Zaman has risen six places to 51st in latest T20I rankings following his innings of 45 from just 21 deliveries against England in going series.

While portions of England's home series against Pakistan have been hampered by inclement weather, that has not stopped players from both sides from making inroads on the latest rankings update just days out from the start of the T20 World Cup in the West Indies and USA.

England captain Jos Buttler rises one

place to seventh on the updated rankings for T20I batters on the back of his superb innings of 84 in Birmingham, while teammate Jonny Bairstow jumps eight places to 36th on the same list following his knock of 21 during the same contest.

It was Fakhar Zaman who top-scored for Pakistan during that match Pakistan slipper Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan stood at fourth and third spots, respectively.

There is also a trio of players from the West Indies on the rise following their recent series sweep over South Africa.



Sabalenka eases at rainswept French Open as Djokovic eyes turnaround

PARIS
Aryna Sabalenka eased into the French Open second round at the rainswept Roland Garros on Tuesday as Novak Djokovic prepared to begin his title defence, confident his Grand Slam pedigree will help turn around his lacklustre season.

Australian Open champion Sabalenka, a semi-finalist in Paris in 2023, over-powered Russian teenager Erika Andreeva 6-1, 6-2 in just 68 minutes under the roof on Court Philippe Chatrier.

World number two Sabalenka fired 27 winners past the 100th-ranked Andreeva and broke serve five times in a dominant display.

"I'm trying to do well on clay, it is tough conditions here but I enjoy playing here and I'm just trying to bring my best tennis every time... whatever the surface," said Sabalenka.

The Belarussian has made at least the last four at her past six Grand Slams and is expected to be Iga Swiatek's toughest rival in the

Pole's bid for a fourth French Open title. Heavy rain caused play on the outside, uncovered courts to be delayed by five hours and by 6pm local time only nine of the scheduled 40 matches had been completed.

World number one Djokovic, seeking a fourth Roland Garros title and record-extending 25th major, is enduring his worst run since 2018.

Djokovic, 37, has not won a title in 2024 and has yet to make a final with semi-final spots at the Australian Open and Monte Carlo Masters his best performances.

He also suffered the indignity of being accidentally hit on the head by a metal water bottle in Rome which caused nausea and dizziness.

In Geneva last week, where he was knocked out by Tomas Machek of the Czech Republic, Djokovic said he had been suffering from a stomach problem.

How motherhood is changing Zara Noor Abbas' life



(Web Desk) – Pakistani actor Zara Noor Abbas is a gifted actress relishing her new role as a mother. She married another actor Asad Siddiqui, and the pair welcomed their daughter Noor-e-Jahan into their family in March.

Zara talked candidly about how being a mother has changed her life.

"Being a mother has made my anger completely disappear. I have greater empathy for people now that I am a mother, especially mothers. I've learned to love other people more," she said. "I think I am more aware of time now," she continued.

When asked about which of the three roles – acting, being a wife, or being a new mother – is the most demanding, Zara said, "None of these things are difficult. If you think of these things as work then it will be difficult for you, but if you do them from a place of love.

Haris Rauf says injury lay-off a 'blessing in disguise'

LONDON
Pakistan pacerman Haris Rauf believes the three months he spent on the sidelines injured with a dislocated shoulder could yet prove a "blessing in disguise" as he gears up for the Twenty20 World Cup.

The 30-year-old fast bowler made an encouraging return to competitive cricket, taking 2-34, in the second match of Pakistan's warm-up series against T20 world champions England in Birmingham.

"I was injured the last few months but if you believe in yourself, then the layoff can be a blessing in disguise," he told a pre-match press conference in Cardiff on Monday ahead of the third T20.

"Because you have time to recover and reassess your game-plans. I felt good coming back to cricket. When you play for your country, it makes you very proud."

As for the mental and physical strain of returning from injury for a fast bowler, Rauf said, "It's hard. It's a struggle during your rehab, and it's difficult when you come back to maintain that pace and accuracy. But if you believe in yourself, it makes things easier. When I wasn't in the team and rehabbing, I had a lot of time to think about my game and work on myself."

"Thankfully I'm back now, and the World Cup is



coming up."

Rauf's return at Edgbaston could not prevent Pakistan suffering a 23-run defeat by England as they fell 1-0 behind in the four-match series with two to play following a washed-out opener.

But Rauf insisted Pakistan, the 2009 T20 world champions, remained in optimistic mood ahead of their opening match at this year's global showpiece against co-hosts the United States in Dallas on June 6.

"When you lose a game it hurts, but as a team, we are confident," he said. "We feel we can beat any opposition on any day. We've done it in the past, too. When you make mistakes you learn and try not to repeat those mistakes. We're looking to play better in the next few games and make a comeback."