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SC rejects plea seeking live streaming of NAB amendment case hearing

Supreme Court also approves legal team's assistance for Imran Khan

SC allows provision of relevant materials to PTI founder. Apex court also approves legal team's assistance for Imran Khan.

Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
The Supreme Court Thursday rejected the Khayber Pakhtunkhwa government's request for live broadcast of the hearing of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) amendment case.

The apex court dismissed the request filed by KP advocate general by 4-1 as Justice Ahsan Minallah dissented with the majority judgement.

The development came as the SC heard the intra-court appeals filed by the federal and provincial governments against the NAB amendments struck down by the apex court.

The case was heard by a five-member SC largely headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa and comprising Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Minallah and Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi.

During the previous hearing on May 16, which wasn't



broadcast live, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) incarcerated founder Imran Khan appeared before the court via video link after the former prime minister expressed his wish to present his own arguments in the case. However, the ex-PM's appearance, his first in the apex court since his arrest last year from Zaman Park in Toshakhana reference, didn't go without controversy as the SC administration announced launching an investigation after his image, while appearing before the court, was leaked on social media.

Today's hearing before the commencement of the hearing today, Justice Minallah had called for the live streaming of the proceedings of the said case. "The [hearing of] case should be broadcast live since this was the case before as well," the judge said. As the hearing was about to start, the Khayber Pakhtunkhwa advocate general apprised the court that the provincial government had filed a request seeking a live broadcast of the case.

Govt forms new cabinet committee in Faizabad sit-in case



Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
The federal government has formed a new cabinet committee in the Faizabad sit-in case. Sources say the committee will recommend whether the case should be reinstated or not. The committee will give its recommendation in two days. In case the committee recommends the case should be reinstated, it will first prepare terms of reference (TORs). The PM will chair the committee while Attorney General and secretary will be the members of the law committee.

It is pertinent to mention here that in the Faizabad sit-in review case the Supreme Court had objected to the commission report.

Terrorism case registered against suspects after attack on Khawar Maneka



Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
The Islamabad police on Thursday registered a case of attack on Khawar Maneka on two suspects. The case has been registered on the complaint of district court's security in-charge. The FIR says Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawyers including Naeem Hader Panjuta, Ali Ijaz Butt, Zahid Rashid Dar, Usman Gull, and Ansar Kayani, besides 20 to 25 unidentified individuals attacked Maneka on 20 unidentified persons. It says Advocate Baruki led the mob as he incited it through provocative statements, hurled death threats and kicked Khawar Maneka. Naeem Panjutha and Ali Ijaz Butt also assaulted Maneka and he fell on the ground. Also read: PTI lawyers attack Khawar Maneka after Imran Khan's plea hearing. The case has been registered under terrorism and other charges.

Court acquits Imran Khan in two cases related to May 9 riots



Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
A district and sessions court in Islamabad on Thursday acquitted Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan in two cases related to the May 9 riots.

The petition challenging the two cases lodged at Shehzad Town police station against the PTI founder was approved by Judicial Magistrate Umar Shahbaz.

"Because of insufficient evidence presented by the prosecution, the PTI founder has been acquitted," the district and sessions court said in its verdict. Earlier, Khan was acquitted in two

cases pertaining to May 9 vandalism on May 15.

His acquittal orders were issued by Judicial Magistrate Sahib Bilal, who approved the former prime minister's plea challenging the cases. Both Khosa cases against Khan were filed in Khosa Police Station in Islamabad. His acquittal plea was approved by court because of insufficient evidence in the cases against him.

The cases were registered against the PTI founder for long march and violation of Article 144, Khan, who remains behind the bars in Adiala jail, and several others including some PTI leaders are facing various allegations in the cases related to the violence following his arrest on May 9. The vandalism was followed by PTI founder's arrest on the aforementioned date in 2023 during which party workers protested, taking to the streets across the country and damaging public and private property.

PIO Mubashir Hasan takes print media to Improvement



Soon Times Correspondent
Sargodha:
Thanks to the excellent strategy of Principal Information Officer Mubashir Hasan, print media is on the way to improvement. The print media was not in a good state during the caretaker government. Regional and metropolitan newspapers were near to closure. The Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar had ensured the appointment of Mubashir Hasan as Information Officer. With the appointment of Mubashir Hasan, the position of print media has improved a lot. Every newspaper has been assured of delivering advertisements that were

previously neglected. To ensure the delivery of advertisements on merit, Principal Officer Mubashir Hasan selected the hardworking and well-mannered Assistant Director Tousef Janjua who knows the journalists associated with each newspaper personally. On a daily basis, he meets around a hundred newspapermen associated with various newspapers and tries his best to solve the problems faced by them. A few miscreants who also take the media and do negative politics of character assassination are less to be condemned. Principal Officer Mubashir Hasan created media from various institutions and issued around three releases which strengthened the print media once again. Thanks to the excellent strategy, the journalist associated with every newspaper is happy and is forced to praise the PML-N government and Mubashir Hasan in particular.

Acting president Gilani promises relief for public in upcoming budget



Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
Acting President Yousaf Raza Gilani has called for providing maximum relief to the people in the upcoming budget.

Speaking to Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb in the acting president on Thursday, he said a comprehensive strategy was required to enhance revenue collection. The finance minister briefed the upcoming budget and measures taken to check inflation. The minister said the apparent reduction in inflation was the result of government's measures.

Planners, perpetrators of May 9 to be punished for 'collective good of country'

● 'Conspirators duly abetted by their foreign cohorts' are peddling blatant lies, fake news and propaganda: ISPR



Soon Times Correspondent

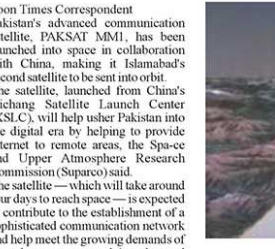
Rawalpindi
The military's top brass noted on Thursday that the planners, perpetrators, abettors, and facilitators of the May 9 riots "need to be brought to justice for the collective good of the country" and without swift and transparent dispensation of justice to the culprits, the stability of the country will remain hostage to such elements. A statement released by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the 83rd Formation

Commanders Conference was presided over by Chief of the Army Staff General Asim Munir and the forum noted that "politically motivated and vested digital terrorism" against state institutions, especially the armed forces, is meant to sow discord and "induce despondency" in the Pakistan nation. The participants also noted that "conspirators duly abetted by their foreign cohorts" are peddling blatant lies, fake news and propaganda. "However, the nation is fully cognisant of their ugly and ulterior

motives and surely the designs of these nefarious forces will be comprehensively defeated," added the military's media wing. The conference was also briefed on the current dynamics of the geo-strategic environment and emerging challenges to national security. The commanders expressed serious concern over continued cross-border violations from Afghanistan and terrorist attacks being orchestrated using Afghan soil, noting that the enemies of the country were using the neighbouring nation to target the security forces of the country and its civilian population.

PAKSAT MM1: Pakistan launches second satellite into space with aim for faster internet

Satellite will help usher Pakistan into the digital era by helping to provide internet to remote areas

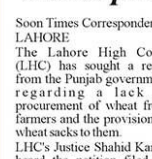


Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD
Pakistan's advanced communication satellite, PAKSAT MM1, has been launched into space in collaboration with China, making it Islamabad's second satellite to be sent into orbit. The satellite, launched from China's Xichang Satellite Launch Center (XSLC), will help usher Pakistan into the digital era by helping to provide internet to remote areas, the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) said. The satellite—which will take around four days to reach space—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. The agency, in a statement, had said "This high-power multi-mission

uplift of the country, Suparco said. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulated the nation on the satellite's launch, hoping it would help provide the fastest internet facility throughout the country. "I am particularly excited about the potential impact of Paksat MM1 on internet connectivity across Pakistan," the premier said in a statement. The prime minister said that Paksat MM1 would not only enhance the lives of Pakistani citizens but also contribute to the promotion of economic activities, e-commerce, and e-governance. Before PAKSAT MM1, Pakistan's historic lunar mission, CUBE-Q was launched on May 3 on board China's Chang'E6 from Hainan, China. The satellite iCube-Qamar mission marked Pakistan's first lunar exploration effort which is a significant milestone for the country's space endeavours. The satellite iCube-Q was designed and developed by the Institute of Space Technology (IST) in collaboration with China's Shanghai University STJU and Pakistan's national space agency SUPARCO.

LHC seeks reply from Punjab government over wheat procurement issues



Soon Times Correspondent

LAHORE
The Lahore High Court (LHC) has sought a reply from the Punjab government regarding a lack of procurement of wheat from farmers and the provision of wheat to them. LHC's Justice Shahid Karim heard the petition filed by Advocate Farhat Manzoor Chandio. The petition made the Punjab chief secretary and others respondents. Assistant Advocate General Hassan Jaz Cheema, representing the Punjab government, appeared before the court. The petitioner questioned the Punjab government's failure to adhere to its policy of purchasing wheat at a fixed price of Rs3,900 per 40kg.

According to the petitioner, despite the government's obligation to commence wheat procurement from farmers starting April 22, delay has left farmers in the lurch. The petitioner argued that the government had yet to initiate the procurement process, forcing farmers to sell their produce to private sector at lower prices. The petitioner highlighted a lack of timely provision of wheat stocks, exacerbating the challenges faced by farmers.

Pakistan-China Diplomatic Relations

The China Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a commemorative event titled: "73 Years of Pakistan-China Diplomatic Relationship: A Partnership of Peace and Development." The panelists included eminent speakers from academia, research and business community. The Embassy of People's Republic of China was represented by the Deputy Head of Mission, H.E. Shi Yuanqiang. Prominent personalities from diplomatic corps, academia, think-tanks and civil society attended. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, emphasized the importance of China-Pakistan relations, founded on mutual respect, strategic trust, and close cooperation. He stressed that from the very outset, this relationship developed as a special and unique example in interstate relations and has served the best interests of the two countries. Both nations have consistently supported each other on issues of core interest, with Pakistan backing 'One China' principle and China's principled stance on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. He also added that the Pakistan-China relationship has contributed enormously to the

advancement of Pakistan's national development goals and economic transformation. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has primarily focused on Pakistan's infrastructure, energy sector, Gwadar Port, and industrialization. The second phase of CPEC will focus on growth corridor, livelihood enhancing corridor, innovation corridor, green corridor, and open corridor. The Prime Minister's forthcoming visit would help take this process forward. Lastly, he emphasized that it is time to craft a long term vision of Pakistan-China relations, and agree on where they wish to see this vital relationship 25 years from now. In this enterprise, he stressed, it was important to engage the youth in both countries as well. Earlier, Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director China Pakistan Study Centre ISSI, highlighted the history of Pakistan-China relations, noting Pakistan's steadfast support for the 'One China' principle and China's support for Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He emphasized the importance of China's investment in Pakistan's energy, infrastructure, economic impact of CPEC, and cultural bonds through numerous exchange

programmes, and Confucius Institutes. He reiterated the commitment to strengthen ties in technology, innovation, and green development, while celebrating 73 years of exemplary friendship. The Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of People's Republic of China, H.E. Shi Yuanqiang, in his remarks emphasized on how the Pakistan-China relationship has remained strong for 73 years, encompassing economic and strategic cooperation. China eagerly anticipates the Prime Minister's visit to China, he informed the audience, emphasizing strengthened cooperation. According to him, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has spurred development in Pakistan and attracted foreign investment. He also reiterated that China supports Pakistan's territorial integrity as Pakistan supports the 'One-China' principle. Both nations are advancing cooperation in space programs and accelerating development projects, he stated. Going forward, he specifically stressed the importance of further deepening strategic trust; enhancing practical cooperation; carrying forward traditional friendship through P2P exchanges; and working together to

promote multilateralism. Mr. Raja Amir Iqbal, entrepreneur and former President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), highlighted China's rise as a global trade and manufacturing power. He urged Pakistan to learn from China's success to boost its own economy. He emphasized the importance of the second phase of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA), signed on April 28, 2019. He encouraged small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to pursue joint ventures, calling CPEC a game-changer for Pakistan. Despite challenges like policy gaps, political instabilities, rupee devaluation, and IMF restrictions, he stressed the need for closer collaboration including in matchmaking events to facilitate joint ventures. Dr. Hassan Daud Butt highlighted the enduring Pakistan-China friendship, evident in infrastructure projects like the Hakra-Yarik motorway. This relationship, based on mutual respect and shared values since 1951, has fostered peace, stability, and sustainable development. CPEC has advanced science, technology, and social development, with increased people-to-people connections through language.

Gulf States as Mediators in India-Pakistan Conflicts



Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer

Malaysia in 2019, seen as a challenge to Saudi leadership, failed to fully assuage tensions. Meanwhile, India's growing clout in the region was underscored by the UAE's decision to confer its highest civil honor on Prime Minister Modi, even amid controversy over India's Citizenship Amendment Act, which discriminates against Muslim refugees. Despite Pakistan's pleas, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have refrained from openly opposing India's actions, including the revocation of Kashmir's special status in 2019. However, the fluidity of bilateral relations in the region suggests that these dynamics are subject to change. The interplay between major Middle Eastern powers and South Asian states, particularly India and Pakistan, is increasingly influenced by broader strategic considerations amidst the emerging great power competition between China and the United States. As such, the geopolitical landscape in the Middle East and South Asia remains in flux, with implications for regional stability and global power dynamics.

The intensifying rivalry between China and the United States in the Middle East and South Asia has significantly heightened regional insecurities while simultaneously presenting unforeseen opportunities for reconciliation. As China seeks to challenge American dominance in the Middle East, India, too, endeavors to expand its influence to counterbalance China's growing presence in the region. India's collaboration with Iran, exemplified by its investment in the Chabahar seaport, has emerged as a direct challenge to China's investment in Gwadar via the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Conversely, China's substantial investment plans in Iran signal its ambition to deepen ties in the region, further solidifying its status as Iran's largest trade partner and facilitating Iran's integration into influential regional blocs. Despite Pakistan's aspirations to mediate between Iran and Saudi Arabia, China achieved a significant breakthrough by brokering the restoration of diplomatic ties between the two Middle Eastern rivals. Amid

escalating regional tensions triggered by conflicts such as the Gaza war, Saudi Arabia and the UAE demonstrate a willingness to de-escalate tensions with Iran rather than exploit them for strategic advantage. Recent efforts to repair ties between Iran and Pakistan, following tensions sparked by missile exchanges, reflect a renewed commitment to enhancing bilateral relations and fostering security cooperation. While the US appears open to increased Saudi and UAE investments in Pakistan, it is concerned about Islamabad's growing reliance on Beijing. With the US bolstering military cooperation with India to counter China, its neutrality in potential Indo-Pakistani crises is increasingly questioned. Consequently, the US may encourage regional actors with influence over both India and Pakistan to establish crisis management mechanisms to prevent cross-border escalation. Secret talks facilitated by the UAE between Indian and Pakistani intelligence officials, along with Saudi statements advocating dialogue on the Kashmir dispute, suggest a regional push for conflict resolution. While Indian media views such statements as endorsing its stance against third-party involvement in Kashmir, Pakistan interprets them as a show of solidarity against India's reluctance to engage in Kashmir talks. Despite diplomatic overtures, challenges persist, including India's upcoming elections and the delicate security situation in Kashmir. Despite the potential benefits of reconciliation for India and Pakistan, the current political climate may not favor immediate rapprochement. India's domestic politics and security concerns, coupled with ongoing tensions in Kashmir, present obstacles to meaningful dialogue. However, incremental confidence-building measures and continued international encouragement, particularly from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and the US, could pave the way for constructive engagement between India and Pakistan, reducing Pakistan's dependence on China and fostering regional stability and cooperation of the Middle East and South Asia.

Pakistan Air Force: Guardians of the Skies in the Face of Adversity



Izmi Herlani

As I returned to my hometown, the picturesque forests of Sakesar welcomed me with a sight that stirred both awe and concern - a massive fire raging through the lush greenery that had once defined this serene landscape. The tranquility of the mountains was shattered by the fierce flames, threatening to engulf everything in their path. However, amidst this chaos, a beacon of hope emerged in the form of Pakistan Air Force helicopters soaring through the skies, their rotors slicing through the smoke-filled air as they embarked on a mission of valor and determination. The legacy of the PAF as the first responder in times of national crisis shone brightly as the Mi-17 and Augusta-139 helicopters took to the skies, their blades cutting through the turbulent winds of Sakesar's challenging terrain. Day

and night, these aerial sentinels tirelessly carried out firefighting missions, their pilots displaying unwavering dedication and professionalism in the face of adversity. The roar of their engines echoed through the mountains, a symphony of courage and resilience that resonated with all who witnessed their valiant efforts. Amidst the chaos and destruction, the PAF's Unmanned Aerial Vehicles also played a crucial role in the firefighting operation, their keen eyes spotting and monitoring the fire with surgical precision. With their assistance, the firefighting efforts were guided with unparalleled accuracy, ensuring that every drop of water and every strategic maneuver was executed with meticulous care and efficiency. The collaboration between the PAF and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) further underscored the unity and strength of purpose in the face of adversity. Together, they stood as a formidable force against the ravaging flames, their coordinated efforts a testament to the power of unity in times of crisis. As the flames threatened to consume the very heart of Sakesar, PAF rose to the occasion, their helicopters

weaving through the smoke-filled skies like guardian angels, their mission clear - to protect and preserve the invaluable national assets that lay in the path of destruction. With unwavering resolve and unparalleled skill, the PAF pilots maneuvered through the treacherous terrain, their actions a testament to the ethos of the PAF - "Second to None". In the aftermath of the firefighting operation, as the smoke cleared and the embers smoldered, a sense of gratitude and admiration filled the hearts of all who witnessed the PAF's heroic efforts. The forests of Sakesar, once engulfed in flames, now stand as a symbol of resilience and hope, a testament to the unwavering spirit of the Pakistani people and the indomitable courage of the PAF. As I looked up at the clear skies, now free from the pall of smoke that had once darkened them, I couldn't help but feel a sense of pride and gratitude towards the Pakistan Air Force. In the face of adversity, they had emerged as true guardians of the skies, their legacy of service and sacrifice shining brightly in the hearts of all who had witnessed their heroic deeds.

Germany's Sports Diplomacy: Using Football to Build Bridges

Nimra Arooj

In the realm of international relations, sports diplomacy has emerged as a powerful tool for fostering goodwill, building bridges between nations, and promoting peace. Among the various sports, football holds a unique position due to its universal appeal and ability to unite people across cultural and political divides. Germany, with its rich footballing heritage and commitment to international cooperation, has proficiently harnessed the power of football to enhance its diplomatic efforts and build global bridges. Football, often referred to as the world's game, transcends linguistic, cultural, and political barriers. It is a sport that commands a global audience, with billions tuning in to watch major tournaments like the FIFA World Cup. Germany has long recognized the unifying potential of football, whose universal appeal makes it an ideal platform for diplomacy by reaching diverse audiences and fostering mutual understanding. The country's passion for the sport is evident in its successful domestic league, the Bundesliga, and its national teams' impressive performances on the international stage. However, beyond the competitive aspects, Germany has strategically used football as a means to promote international cooperation, cultural exchange, and social development. One of the most significant

examples of Germany's sports diplomacy through football was the 2006 FIFA World Cup, hosted by Germany. Dubbed the "Summer Fairytale," the tournament was not only a sporting success but also a diplomatic achievement. Germany's meticulous organization and warm hospitality left a lasting impression on visitors from around the world, showcasing the country's capacity for openness and inclusivity. The 2006 World Cup served as a platform for Germany to promote its values of tolerance, diversity, and international friendship. The event brought together people from different cultures, fostering a spirit of camaraderie and mutual respect. It also provided an opportunity for Germany to reframe its global image, moving away from the historical shadows of the 20th century and presenting itself as a modern, welcoming, and forward-thinking nation. Germany's commitment to using football as a tool for development and peace is evident in its various international initiatives. The German Football Association (DFB) and numerous NGOs have implemented programs that leverage football to address social issues, promote education, and support youth development in different parts of the world. One notable initiative is the "Football for Development" program, which uses the sport to foster social inclusion, health education, and conflict resolution in developing

countries. By partnering with local organizations, Germany has helped build football facilities, train coaches, and provide educational materials, thereby creating safe spaces for young people to learn and grow. In post-conflict regions and areas affected by social strife, football has proven to be a powerful tool for uniting communities and promoting reconciliation. The simple act of playing football can break down barriers, build trust, and offer a sense of normalcy and hope. Germany's participation in these initiatives highlights its commitment to using sports diplomacy to foster global peace and stability. Germany has also utilized football to promote gender equality and empower women and girls globally. The DFB and other organizations have played a key role in supporting women's football, both within Germany and internationally. Initiatives focused on developing women's football in countries where the sport is less established have helped challenge gender stereotypes and create opportunities for female athletes. In countries where women's participation in sports is limited due to cultural or societal constraints, Germany's support for women's football has been particularly impactful. By providing resources, training, and platforms for competition, Germany has helped to elevate the status of women's football and advocate for gender equality in sports.

Pakistan Awakening Movement, Glory of God Foundation & other religious organizations held peaceful protest



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad:
 Glory of God Foundation along with other religious organizations held a peaceful protest in front of Islamabad Press Club. They showed the Government of Pakistan that all Christian patriots strongly condemn the persecution of them on the latest incident in Sargodha Mujahid Colony on May 25 since 1997. According to the law against abuses, an FIR should be registered, a high-level judicial commission should be formed for a transparent investigation of Sargodha incident. It is the legal

responsibility of the state to protect the life and property of every citizen and every day religious terrorism. If those who burned houses, property, sacred books and places of worship in open religious terrorism against Christians in the past should be punished so that an incident like Sargodha could not happen again. The Foundation of Pakistan strongly condemned all this persecution and abuse. The Chief Justice of Pakistan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the President of Pakistan should adopt a concrete strategy to prevent such incidents, those who attack the Christian

population and such religious terrorists. Extremist organizations inciting actions should be banned. All defamation cases against Ms. Anita Sindhu should also be dropped so that she can lead a dignified life. Christian women burned their dupattas in front of the press club. Khairandish Chairman Naveed, Gul Glory of God Foundation and all Christian organizations International Minority Rights (USA) Minority Forum Pakistan Awakening Movement participated.

CM Punjab calls for a report on fire broke out in forests

Soon Times Correspondent Nowshera Soon Sakas:
 Efforts are on to put out the fire after a terrible fire broke out in the forests of Soon Sakas Valley since yesterday. Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz has called for a report on the terrible fire. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz expressed her heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the family of Raza Shah Shaheed of Forest Department. He has directed the air

operations to the DMA. Till now, two helicopters and several fire brigade vehicles are engaged in extinguishing the fire. Helicopters are taking water from Uchhali lake and spraying it on the fire. Air and ground operations are still ongoing. The fire has been brought under control. The Chief Minister further said that the forests of Soon Valley are a national asset. The concerned agencies will continue the operation until the fire is completely controlled.

Naqvi invites London mayor Sadiq Khan to visit Pakistan

LAHORE (Web Desk)
 Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi discussed current political situation and matters of mutual interest with London Mayor Sadiq Naqvi who is on a visit to Europe, called on Khan in his office in London. Naqvi, who is also chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board, discussed matters related to cricket team's visit to England. The minister reportedly invited Khan to visit Pakistan.



The meeting was also attended by Pakistani High Commissioner to the UK Dr Muhammad Faisal and the British High Commissioner to Pakistan Ms Jane Marriott.

The trend of extremism, intolerance & violence is alarming: DC & DPO

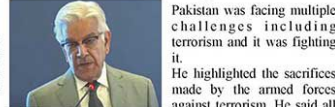
Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha:
 A seminar on interfaith harmony to promote tolerance, understanding and universal respect was organized in collaboration with Community Concern Group and Christian Study Center at Sargodha Gymkhana Club. Deputy Commissioner Captain Retired Aurangzeb Haider Khan and District Police Officer Dr Asad Ijaz Malhi addressed the seminar. They said, interfaith harmony is an issue that needs to be worked on the most. The trend of extremism, intolerance and violence is alarming. Everyone has to organize and work for the establishment of peace. The peaceful reaction of the people of

Sargodha to the recent incidents of religious intolerance is commendable. He said that on August 11, 1947, Quaid-e-Azam in his historic address had emphasized on the rights of minorities and its importance. This is the reason that in the year 2009, the government declared this day as a national day. Speaking to the seminar, the director of the Christian Study Center, Bishop Samuel Azrayah, said that the district administration, members of the peace committee and priests showed good strategy and wisdom to save Sargodha from a major accident. Sargodha was spared from a major accident like Janawala. We have to create mechanisms to deal with differences together. When a Muslim, Christian or any person from any

religious talks about interfaith harmony and peace, then he is talking about his faith. Speaking on this occasion, human rights advocate Sanawar Balam said that in order to promote inter-faith harmony, systematic practical efforts need to be made more than the theoretical statement of this subject. The police administration, members of the peace committee and the priests together should make the city peaceful. A large number of journalists and social personalities including Rtyasat Ali Ferozi, Qazi Nigha Mustafa, Father Amir Sarf, Pastor Khurram Shahzad, Anam Khan, Maulana Umar Farooqi, Muhammad Abdullah Saeed Hashmi and other peace committee members participated in the seminar.

Pakistan determined to wipe out extremism, terrorism: Khawaja Asif

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
 Defence Minister Khawaja Asif reiterated that Pakistan was determined to wipe out the menace of extremism and terrorism. Addressing a seminar on anti-terrorism in Islamabad, Asif stated that extremism not only wreaked havoc on economy and precious lives but also affected social fabric. He stressed that the circumstances demanded new strategic approaches to mitigate the challenges of extremism. He highlighted that Pakistan had borne the price due to extremism.



Pakistan was facing multiple challenges including terrorism and it was fighting it. He highlighted the sacrifices made by the armed forces against terrorism. He said all relevant state institutions performed commendable duties to eradicate extremism. The minister affirmed that the National Action Plan was being successfully implemented. He disclosed that there was evidence of cross-border elements involved in terrorism incidents. He stressed the need for concerted efforts to fight terrorism.

BAP president Khalid Magsi escapes assassination attempt

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad:
 Khalid Hussain Magsi, President of the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) and a member of the National Assembly, narrowly escaped an assassination attempt near Notal in Quetta, according to news officials. Armed assassins opened fire on Magsi's convoy, but security personnel and guards responded swiftly, forcing the



attackers to flee. Magsi and his companions emerged unscathed from the attack, and no injuries were reported on either side. Former Senate chairman Sadiq Sanjrani condemned the attack in strong terms. He contacted Magsi by phone to inquire about his well-being. Sanjrani described the attack as a premeditated conspiracy and urged the provincial government to swiftly apprehend those responsible.

Punjab introduces new transfer policy for teachers

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
 A new transfer policy for teachers has been introduced in Punjab, sources in the School Education Department said. Under the new policy approved by Punjab Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat, teachers will have the opportunity to apply for transfers throughout the year on hardship grounds, such as disability, widowhood, divorce or long-distance circumstances. Details of the policy indicate that general transfers will be permitted twice a year, mutual transfers will also be allowed twice a year, while inter-district and



wedlock transfers will remain open throughout the year. Under the new policy, all types of promotions will be completed within 30 days and all district committees will be required to decide on applications within the same timeframe.

PMD forecasts 'above-normal' monsoon rainfall

Dept warns increased rainfall may lead to flooding in rivers and urban areas



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad:
 The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has issued its monsoon outlook for the period from June to August, predicting normal to above-normal rainfall across most parts of the country.

During the upcoming monsoon season, most regions are expected to experience average or higher-than-average rainfall. Central and northern Punjab are likely to see a significant increase in rainfall. The department also forecasts above-normal rainfall in southern Sindh and rainfall. The monsoon season is also expected to bring thunderstorms and strong winds. The increased rainfall may lead to flooding in rivers and urban areas. There is also a risk of flash floods in hilly regions, including the Sulaiman Range.

TENDER NOTICE

- Sealed tenders based on item rates / percentage above or below on Approved T.S Estimate/ DMIT rates are hereby invited, for the works mentioned below from the contractors / firms enlisted / renewed with Pakistan Engineering Council for the financial year 2023-24 in the field of relevant code of Building 3000s.
- Tender documents can be obtained from any of the below mentioned offices at any working day during office hours after publication of this notice on the PPRA web site/ Newspaper upon written request accompanied with attested copies of PEC license 2023-24, CNIC of contractor, Managing partner / Director of the firm along with registered power of attorney, certificate of registration with income tax sale tax and Punjab Revenue Authority and on payment of prescribed tender fee in the shape of CDB Bank Draft / Cashier cheque only from any Scheduled Bank in favor of Executive Engineer Buildings Division Bhakkar:
 - i) Chief Engineer (North Zone), Punjab Buildings Department Lahore.
 - ii) Commissioner Sargodha Division Sargodha.
 - iii) Superintending Engineer Buildings Circle Sargodha.
 - iv) Deputy Commissioner Bhakkar.
 - v) Executive Engineer Buildings Division Bhakkar.
- Tendered rates and amounts should be filled in figures as well as in words and tenders should be signed as per general directions given in this in the tender documents. No rebate on tender rates will be acceptable.
- Tender documents will be issued from the date of publication upto 13.06.2024 and will be received on 14.06.2024 at 01:30 PM and the same will be opened at 01:30 PM in the office of the Commissioner, Sargodha Division, Sargodha by the respective Tender Opening Committee in the presence of intending contractors or their authorized representatives.
- Conditional tenders and tenders not accompanied with Bid security / earnest money (62% of estimated cost in shape of CDR / Bank Draft / Cashier's Cheque of any scheduled Bank and attested copies of registered partnership deed and power of attorney in case of firms will not be entertained.
- The procurement committee reserves the right of rejecting all of the tenders as per rules 55 of PPRA.
- Any applications received through courier / post or through e-mail and whatsapp will not be entertained.
- Note: In case of holiday by the Government or otherwise, next working day will be considered for opening of tender.

Sr. #	Name of Work.	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	T.S No & Date	Tender Fee	Time Limit	Last date and time for receipt / opening of tender.
1	SPECIAL EDUCATION Maintenance & Repair of Special Education Centre at Bhakkar.	46,364 (M)	427300 (M)	Was GE. No. 1172 of 23.5.24	2000	09 Months	13.6.2024 01:30 PM

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER BUILDINGS DIVISION BHAKKAR **IPL-5084** SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER BUILDINGS CIRCLE SARGODHA

France could announce sending military trainers to Ukraine soon, diplomats say



PARIS — France could soon send military trainers to Ukraine despite the concerns of some allies and criticism by Russia, and may announce its decision next week during a visit by the Ukrainian president, three diplomatic sources said.

The diplomats said Paris hoped to forge a lead coalition of countries offering such assistance to Kyiv's war effort even though some of its European Union partners fear it could make a direct conflict with Russia more likely.

France would initially send a limited number of personnel to assess the modalities of a mission before dispatching several hundred trainers, two of the diplomats said.

Top US officials Blinken, Austin to visit India for Indo-Pacific talks



MEXICO CITY — Clashes broke out on Tuesday between police and protesters outside the Israeli embassy in Mexico, rallying against the country's military offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, journalists said.

Some protesters covered their faces and threw stones at riot police who blocked their path to the diplomatic complex in the city's Lomas de Chapultepec neighborhood.

Around 200 people joined the "Urgent action for Rafah" demonstration, about 30 of whom started to break down barriers between them from reaching the Israeli mission.



Iran opens candidate registration for snap presidential vote after Raisi's death

Candidate registration for the 14th presidential elections began at 8 am (0430 GMT), said IRNA

Web Desk — Iran on Thursday began the formal registration of presidential candidates ahead of a snap vote next month to replace the late Ebrahim Raisi who died in a helicopter crash.

"Candidate registration for the 14th presidential elections began at 8 am (0430 GMT)... at the interior ministry," the official IRNA news agency said. Presidential hopefuls will have five days to register, IRNA added.

The elections were originally slated for 2025 but were brought forward following Raisi's unexpected death on May 19.

Raisi and seven members of his entourage, including foreign minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, were killed when their aircraft came down on a fog-shrouded mountainside in northern Iran.

The Islamic republic's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has since assigned vice president Mohammad Mokhber, 68, as caretaker president in accordance with the constitution.

On Thursday, state TV reported that "around 30 people" came forward to submit applications for

candidacy, but "none of them met the basic conditions for qualification".

Candidates must be between the ages of 40 and 75 and have at least a master's degree, according to Iran's electoral law.

As in previous election cycles, the main candidates representing Iran's leading political camps are expected to submit their application closer to the end of the registration process.

A final list of candidates will be announced on June 11 by the Guardian Council, a 12-member body of jurists whose members are either appointed or approved by the supreme leader.

The body disqualified multiple reformist and moderate figures ahead of the 2021 presidential elections which brought the ultraconservative Raisi to power.

The elections at the time saw a record low turnout for a presidential poll, at just 48.8 percent.

The June vote will be held during a turbulent time, as the Gaza war rages between Iran's arch-foe Israel and Tehran-backed Palestinian militant group Hamas, and amid continued diplomatic tensions over Iran's nuclear programme.

'Hong Kong 47' trial: 14 democrats found guilty in landmark subversion case

HONG KONG — Fourteen Hong Kong pro-democracy activists were found guilty and two were acquitted on Thursday in a landmark subversion trial that critics say could deal another blow to the city's rule of law and its reputation as a global financial hub.

The verdicts in Hong Kong's biggest trial against the democratic opposition come more than three years after police arrested 47 democrats in dawn raids at homes across the city. They were charged with conspiracy to commit subversion under a national security law imposed by China.

Sentencing will come at a



later date for those found guilty, with prison terms ranging from three years to life. Thirty-one defendants pleaded guilty, and four of them have become prosecution witnesses.

The US and some other countries have criticised the trial as politically motivated, calling for the accused to be immediately released.

Diplomats from several countries including Britain and the European Union attended the hearing.

Black passengers who were ordered to leave a flight sue American Airlines



(AFP) — Black passengers who were briefly ordered off an American Airlines plane in January sued the airline Wednesday, alleging that they were victims of racial discrimination.

Three of the men filed a lawsuit in federal court in New York. They said they were told to leave a plane waiting to take off in Phoenix and noticed five other black men who also had been ordered off the flight.

The three, who did not know each other and had been sitting in different parts of the plane, said an airline employee told them they were removed because a flight attendant had complained about a passenger's body odor.

The men said they responded that it appeared they were targeted for removal solely because of their race.

American offered to rebook them, but when it became clear after about an hour that there were no other available flights to New York that evening, they were allowed to reboard the plane, according to the lawsuit filed by Public Citizen, a consumer-advocacy group founded by Ralph Nader.

"If American Airlines received a complaint about a Black male passenger with offensive body odor but could not verify the complaint, the solution should not have been to eject eight separate Black men from the plane," Susan Huhta, an employment law attorney in Washington, D.C., who is representing the three men, said.

American said it was looking into the claims. "We take all claims of discrimination very seriously and want our customers to have a positive experience when they choose to fly with us," the airline said in a statement.

Sports & Showbiz

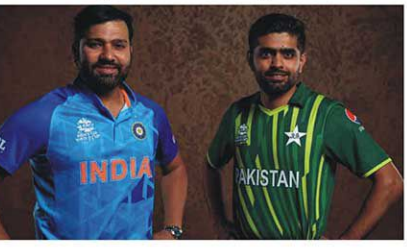
PAK vs IND match: New York boosts T20 World Cup security after reported

WASHINGTON — New York will boost security for the upcoming T20 Cricket World Cup in June, the governor said on Wednesday, after reports of threats especially related to the India-Pakistan match.

"In preparation for the @cricketworldcup, my team has been working with federal & local law enforcement to keep attendees safe," Governor Kathy Hochul wrote on X, adding there was "no credible threat at this time".

ABC News cited a New York City Police Department bulletin, opens new tab saying the tournament and its related events in New York City could be viewed by extremists as an opportunity to commit acts of violence or disruption.

"Recent pro-ISIS propaganda which specifically referenced the upcoming India-Pakistan match at this major event... raises concerns and reinforces the need for heightened vigilance" among security partners, the bulletin is



quoted as saying by ABC News.

Nassau County Police Commissioner Patrick Ryder said the World Cup received an ISIS-K-linked threat in April and more specific threats over the India versus Pakistan match.

World Cup matches between India and Pakistan, which have not played a bilateral series in several years due to tense political relations, are among the most viewed sporting events in the world.

Hochul said in a statement New York State Police had been directed to increase enforcement presence, surveillance and screening processes for the tournament.

Cricket has three formats - Tests, One Day Internationals and T20s, with T20s being the newest. The ninth T20 World Cup is set to run from June 1-29, with matches at nine stadiums - six in the West Indies and three in the United States.



Dortmund bank on solid defence, quick transitions against Real

BERLIN (Reuters) — Borussia Dortmund are clear underdogs in the Champions League final against 14-time winners Real Madrid but the Germans' surprise European run this season has been in sharp contrast to their rollercoaster domestic campaigns.

Edin Terzic's Dortmund, bidding for their second Champions League title after their 1997 triumph, finished a disappointing fifth in the Bundesliga.

They have, however, been far more consistent in Europe despite having 10% less possession in the Champions League than in the Bundesliga.

Dortmund kept six clean sheets in 12 Champions League matches this season, counting on a strong defence and quick breaks.

These clean sheets included both semi-final legs against Paris St Germain with Dortmund winning 2-0 on aggregate.

Terzic has set up his team in Europe with, at times, five defenders, providing a solid backbone as the foundation of their game.

Central defenders Mats Hummels and Nico Schlotterbeck have been in spectacular form in recent months and the latter was included in Germany's Euro 2024 squad.

That will be key for Dortmund along with quick transitions provided by speedy wingers Jadon

Sancho and Karim Adeyemi trying to stretch the Real defence. Their pace down the wings will be crucial in Dortmund's counter-attacks, knowing that Real will have a bigger share of possession and the Germans will wait to carve out chances on the break.

Terzic hopes Adeyemi and Sancho can open up space for centre Niclas Füllkrug, Dortmund's best striker in the competition this season with three goals.

Füllkrug's role, however, is far from just scoring, with the burly Germany forward often dragging opponents with him and allowing team mates opportunities.

It comes as no surprise that 12 different Dortmund players have scored at least one goal in the Champions League this season.

"I say 'don't play the occasion, play the game,'" Terzic said. "My aim is not to try out new things or to overcoach. But to use the experiences we made this season and say which experience fits this game."

"For the lineup we still have some training session to see who will prove themselves. But we know that our substitutions can have an influence," he said.

Among those likely to be on the bench but expected to come on is departing veteran Marco Reus.

Hania Aamir says fame triggers feelings of anxiety



(Web Desk) — Actor Hania Aamir during an interview has said she wants to amuse people and create positive influence through her work.

The actress expressed her dedication to radiating positive vibes through her craft and bringing happiness to audiences everywhere.

Hania Aamir talked about the mental health issues she has been facing.

The actress and model disclosed that fame triggers feelings of anxiety for her. Throughout her career, she has been consistently transparent about her struggles with mental health.

Cristiano Ronaldo loses THIS record

Sports Desk — Portuguese star forward Cristiano Ronaldo saw his record shattered in European football on Wednesday when the Greek club Olympiakos won the Europa Conference League.

Among his several records, Cristiano Ronaldo was also the top goal scorer at the European tournament knockout stages. During the 39-year-old's stay at Los Blancos, he had scored ten times in the club's 2016-2017 win.

Karim Benzema also held a similar record while bidding for the Champions League title in 2022 with Real Madrid.

But now, Ayoub El Kaabi has taken the honour from the two and struck a goal in the 116th minute, taking Olympiakos to crush Fiorentina and secure their first-ever European trophy.

This is how he hit for the 11th time in the knockout stages of the continental tournament.



El Kaabi, who is a Moroccan player, has been a noticeable player as he has a hat-trick against Aston Villa in the first leg of their semi-final and then backed up his team more by scoring a brace in the return leg.

However, Cristiano Ronaldo is at the zenith of his career with the most UEFA Champions League goals and 893 overall.

Ronaldo also has been named the top scorer of the recent Saudi Pro League, hitting two times against Al-Ittihad, and taking his tally to 64, in 69 appearances.