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Alvi urges politicians, establishment to learn lesson from Hamoodur Rehman Commission report



Soon Times Correspondent

LAHORE

Former president Dr Arif Alvi said that fake and baseless cases were made against the PTI workers. He lauded the judiciary for standing firmly with the rule of law and said that there should be equal justice for everyone.

Talking to media in Lahore, the former president said that military, civilians and politicians should learn a lesson from the Hamoodur Rehman Commission report.

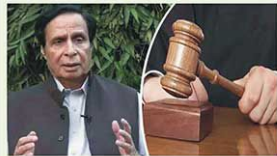
"There is a dire need to bring the country out of the prevailing crises," Alvi said, adding that the powerful quarters should find a way out.

The former president added that Pakistan needs growth and development and we can only move forward through dialogue.

"It is the right of PTI to ask any judge to recuse from the case," Alvi said.

According to Arif Alvi, he went to inquire after incarcerated PTI leader Mian Mehmoodur Rasheed but he wasn't allowed to visit him.

Parvez Elahi requests exemption from court appearance in PA illegal recruitments case



Soon Times Correspondent

LAHORE

Former Punjab chief minister Parvez Elahi filed an application with a lower court on Monday requesting one-day exemption from appearance in the Punjab Assembly illegal recruitments case.

The application was submitted to the anti-corruption court on behalf of the former chief minister along with a medical certificate.

In the application, the PTI Punjab chapter president informed the court that his doctors had advised him complete bed rest and asked to undergo certain heart and blood tests.

He requested the court that he be granted exemption from personal appearance in today's hearing.

Gaza march: JI's Hafiz Naeem says US is an enemy of humanity



Soon Times Correspondent

KARACHI

Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman says US President Joe Biden is supporting Israel in Gaza war. Addressing the participants in Gaza march in Karachi, the JI Emir said America is a hypocrite and terrorist country.

"The US is an enemy of humanity as it killed innocent people in Iraq and Afghanistan," said Hafiz Naeem. He added that the US only gives statement of ceasefire but doesn't take any practical step in this regard.

"The US has been exposed now by the social media as millions of people are showing solidarity with Palestine worldwide," he said.

The JI Emir was of the view that Hamas launched an organised attack on Israel and failed its intelligence.

"The OIC only passes ceremonial resolutions over this issue as its members cannot afford annoying the US," said Naeem.

Imran Khan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi walk free in cipher case

Trial court had sentenced both leaders to 10-year imprisonment



Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD

In another landmark judgement, the Islamabad High Court on Monday suspended the sentence awarded to PTI founder Imran Khan and Shah Mahmood Qureshi in the cipher case.

The trial court had sentenced both the party leaders to 10-year prison each in the case.

IHC Chief Justice Ameer Farooq and Justice Gul Hasan Aurangzeb heard the appeals against the sentences handed down to the PTI founder and Shah Mahmood Qureshi.

The lawyers of both sides advanced their arguments and the court earlier reserved the judgement.

Barristers Salman Safdar, Taimur Malik and others represented the appellants, while FIA prosecutor Zulfikar Naqvi was absent.

Barrister Safdar argued that there was no documentation proving that former Principal

Secretary Azam Khan handed over the cipher to Imran Khan. Safdar stressed that it was prosecution's responsibility to prove the case. He said the judgement was passed in a hurry. Safdar questioned how there could be charges for retaining the cipher that was lost and highlighted a lack of action against those who returned the eight copies of the cipher after the FIR was registered. He argued that the prosecution's request for additional documents indicated the failure to prove the case.

Barrister Safdar demanded that the accused be discharged, noting that the court was not told about any specific country with which relations had worsened.

In response, the chief justice referenced the prosecution's statement from the previous hearing which suggested the case be sent back to the trial court.

Courts should be 'mindful' of national security, govt reacts to IHC's cipher ruling

Barrister Aqeel Malik says "courts should never ignore national security's aspect" in any case

Soon Times Correspondent

After the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and Vice-Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi got relief from the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in cipher case, a federal government's spokesperson on legal affairs said on Monday that the courts should be "mindful" of national security while deciding on the sensitive matters.

Barrister Aqeel Malik, the federal government's spokesperson for legal affairs, stated this while addressing a press conference in Islamabad shortly after the IHC acquitted the top PTI leaders in the cipher case.

In a major relief to the embattled former ruling party, the IHC annulled Imran and Qureshi's conviction in the infamous cipher case containing charges of misusing and misplacing the classified diplomatic document.

"Detailed verdict of the case is due to arrive," Barrister Malik said, insisting that the cipher case was a "reality" which cannot be denied.



He said that the former prime minister waved a classified document at a public gathering, whereas, then-principal secretary Azam Khan also confessed about a "missing copy of the cipher."

"Nothing is more important than our national security. The prosecution will decide on challenging the IHC's ruling after the issuance of a detailed verdict," the lawyer-cum-politician said.

He urged that the courts to never ignore the national security's aspect in any case and the cipher case should be kept for retrial. Malik further clarified that both the accused were not sentenced "at the best of any individual".

He vowed that the federal government and the armed forces would never compromise on the national security affairs.

The politico, however, clarified that the federal government accepted the verdicts of the courts and never criticised the judiciary unlike a certain political party which continued to "malign the honourable judges".

IHC Chief Justice Ameer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb announced the short verdict on the pleas challenging the conviction in the cipher case after reserving it earlier today.

The PTI founder and party's vice-chairman were sentenced to 10 years each in prison in the cipher case in January this year.

The case pertains to allegations that the former prime minister had made public contents of a secret cable sent by the country's ambassador in Washington to the government in Islamabad.

The latest relief for the PTI founder came days after IHC approved his bail petition in the £190 million National Crime Agency (NCA) settlement reference on May 15.

Christian man attacked in Sargodha mob violence over alleged blasphemy dies

Soon Times Correspondent

SARGODHA

A Christian man who became a target of an angry mob in Punjab's Sargodha district over alleged blasphemy succumbed to his injuries on Monday morning, police officials said.

According to the Regional Police Officer (RPO) Sharik Kamal Siddiqui's spokesperson, Nazir Masih, who was over 70 years old, was under treatment in CMH Hospital in Rawalpindi for nine days.

Masih also had two surgeries but he couldn't survive the injuries inflicted on his head, said the spokesperson. His postmortem has been conducted and he will be buried later today.

According to the report, Masih died due to severe injuries to his head, said the hospital sources.

The incident took place on May 25 in Sargodha after an angry mob tortured Masih for alleged blasphemy.



The situation turned violent when enraged people attacked the victim's house in the Mujahid Colony area, damaging his belongings and torching a shoe factory established within it. They also burnt tyres and damaged electricity installations in the area.

Following the incident, at least 25 people were taken into custody by the police who also shifted the victim and his family to an undisclosed location after rescuing them.

Sargodha Division Commissioner Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti pledged that those involved in the incident would be brought to justice after holding a transparent inquiry into the incident.

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) had also expressed concerns over the situation in Sargodha and urged the Punjab Police and district administration to bring perpetrators to justice immediately.

IHC orders FIA to identify people who initiated campaign against judges

Soon Times Correspondent

ISLAMABAD

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani has said those who initiated social media campaign against Justice Babar Sattar and his family should be punished.

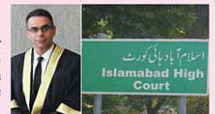
A three-member larger bench headed by Islamabad High Court (IHC) Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani heard the case. Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri and Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan were also part of the bench.

During the hearing, the FIA submitted an incomplete investigation report in the court for which Justice Kayani reprimanded the agency, ordering it to file a comprehensive report, identifying the responsible who initiated campaign to defame the judges and the families.

He questioned the FIA how come the documents in the FIA systems were extracted and uploaded on the social media. The attorney general responded that only travel documents were uploaded not the whole information.

Justice Sardar Ejaz disapproved the inability of the agency in identifying the wrongdoers and questioned the agency's ability to tackle the challenging situations in the country.

Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan told the FIA that the agency had disappointed the court.



Reserved seats conundrum: PML-N, PPP, JUI-F oppose SIC plea in Supreme Court

Plea filed against PHC's verdict that denied SIC reserved seats for women and minorities



Soon Times Correspondent

Islamabad

Pakistan Muslim League-Navaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) on Monday opposed Sunni Itehad Council's (SIC) petition against the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) verdict that denied it reserved seats for women and minorities.

The development came as the 13-member full court bench of the Supreme Court took up the plea of SIC,

a major ally of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), challenging the PHC's judgment regarding the reserved seats.

The bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, comprised Justices Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Munib Akhtar, Yahya Afridi, Amimuddin Khan, Janal Khan Mandokhal, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Ayesha Malik, Athar Minallah, Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi,

Shahid Waheed, Irfan Saadat Khan and Naqem Akhtar Afghan.

On May 6, a three-member SC bench headed by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, and including Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Athar Minallah, suspended the PHC verdict and referred the matter to the judges' committee for the formation of a larger bench since the matter required constitutional interpretation.

10,000 e-Rozgar centers

The government, in collaboration with the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), plans to establish around 10,000 e-Rozgar centers across the country to facilitate freelancers under one roof. "E-Rozgar centers, already established by the government, are providing top-notch facilities to freelancers, including high-speed internet, UPS, training centers, individual cabins, meeting rooms, and separate office rooms for startups," said an official of the Ministry of Information Technology. He said that the government has fulfilled its promise to the people by enabling a significant number of the existing 1.5 million

freelancers, along with new freelancers, to work independently at very low rates. He expressed hope that with the completion of this major project, IT exports would soon increase by \$10 billion annually. Through public-private partnerships, these centers will also significantly enhance the capacity and income of

freelancers. The official further said that the PSEB will provide freelancers with the necessary technical support for these centers. "We have taken all the required steps to build a robust digital ecosystem in Pakistan, and we are leveraging all available forums to establish Pakistan as an international Technology Destination,

Strategic Choices for Belarus in the Region



Dr. Muhammad Akram Zuber

operations. This support has made Belarus more separate from the West but also more reliant on Russia. People in Belarus and Russia still do a lot together like share media, education and have family connections that cross borders. The relationship between Belarus and Russia is strong in many ways, like politics, money, military, and culture. Both the countries have built this partnership over many years. Belarus is very close to Russia in politics, the military and the economy. They have agreements like the Union State and military deals that tie them strongly to Russia. This close relationship with Russia often causes problems for Belarus with the EU, especially in Eastern Europe. Belarus is also part of the EU's Eastern Partnership plan, which tries to create a common area with shared values and economic connections between the EU and six Eastern European countries. But Belarus doesn't participate much in this because of its internal politics and its closeness to Russia. The presidential election in 2020 in Belarus caused a lot of disagreement and protests. This made the relationship between the EU and Belarus worse. The EU increased sanctions and supported groups in Belarus who oppose the government. In 2021, Belarus was accused of causing a crisis with migrants at its borders with Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia as a way to get back at the EU for the sanctions. This made tensions even higher and led to more security measures and sanctions against Belarus from the EU. If Belarus makes big changes in its politics or leadership, it could improve its relationship with the EU. But Russia's influence over Belarus is a big factor. If Russia changes its foreign policies or internal situation, it could affect Belarus' relationship with the

EU. The way the EU deals with Eastern Europe, especially how it balances democratic values and security concerns, will also affect how it deals with Belarus in the future. Belarus is part of some regional groups. The CIS is one of them. It was made after the Soviet Union broke up and aims to help cooperation in politics, the economy, the environment, and other areas among the former Soviet countries. Belarus benefits from trade deals in the CIS which help its economy. The CIS also helps Belarus with security and military cooperation. The EAEU is another group Belarus is in. It's an economic union of countries in northern Eurasia. Being in this union helps Belarus trade more easily with other member countries like Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan. It also lets people move for work easily which is good for Belarusian workers. The CSTO is a military group of some post-Soviet countries. It helps them work together for defense and security. Being in this group helps Belarus with its defense and makes the region safer. The Union State between Russia and Belarus is another important partnership. It helps Belarus with energy and money from Russia, which is really important for its economy. The Eastern Partnership is the EU's plan for its relationship with some post-Soviet countries including Belarus. Even though things are complicated with the EU, this partnership gives Belarus a way to talk and maybe work together with the EU on trade and human rights issues. Belarus can get help for its development projects through this partnership. Belarus mainly looks to Russia and other post-Soviet groups for its partnerships. But it also tries to balance this with its relationship with the EU to look for more ways to grow its economy and society.

Scorching Heatwave Hits Pakistan: Confronting the Devastating Consequences of 52°C Temperatures

Faraz Ahmed Jamali

Pakistan has recently been gripped by a severe heatwave, with temperatures soaring to a staggering 52°C (126°F) in various parts of the country. This extreme weather phenomenon has brought immense suffering to the people, causing widespread health issues, water scarcity, and economic losses. The heatwave in Pakistan is attributed to a combination of factors, including climate change, urban heat island effect, weather patterns, and human activities. Climate change is leading to rising global temperatures, resulting in more frequent and intense heatwaves. The urban heat island effect is causing cities to absorb and retain heat, making them hotter than rural areas. Weather patterns, such as high-pressure systems and heat domes, are trapping hot air and leading to extreme temperatures. Human activities, including deforestation, industrialization, and pollution, are also contributing to the rising temperatures. The heatwave has led to a significant increase in heatstroke cases, with many

hospitals overwhelmed by patients suffering from dehydration and heat exhaustion. The existing water crisis in Pakistan has been exacerbated, leaving many without access to clean drinking water. Agricultural production has been severely impacted, resulting in crop losses and economic hardship for farmers. Power outages have become frequent, and infrastructure has been damaged, disrupting transportation and daily life. To mitigate the impact of heatwaves and prevent future occurrences, it is essential to take immediate action. Transitioning to renewable energy is crucial, shifting from fossil fuels to solar, wind, and hydroelectric power to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Reforestation and afforestation are also essential, planting millions of trees to absorb carbon dioxide, produce oxygen, and cool the environment. Building energy-efficient infrastructure is vital, designing and constructing heat-resistant roads, buildings, and public spaces. Sustainable agriculture practices must be promoted, adopting organic

farming methods, drip irrigation, and crop rotation to reduce water consumption and increase crop resilience. Climate-resilient water management is also necessary, implementing efficient water harvesting, storage, and distribution systems. Public awareness and education are critical, educating the public on climate change, heatwave safety, and sustainable practices. Government policies and regulations must be enacted and enforced to reduce emissions, promote sustainability, and support climate change mitigation efforts. By taking a comprehensive approach, we can reduce the severity and frequency of heatwaves, protecting the health, well-being, and livelihoods of the people of Pakistan. It requires a collective effort from the government, civil society, and individuals to prioritize climate action and work towards a sustainable future. The time to act is now, and we must work together to mitigate the impact of heatwaves and ensure a safer, more resilient tomorrow.

'Need for a consistent policy to manage the bilateral relationship with Afghanistan', urge speakers at CASS Roundtable.

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad

The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, convened a roundtable discussion on 'Reimagining Pakistan's Afghan Strategy.' The event aimed to explore and refine Pakistan's strategy towards Afghanistan in an evolving geopolitical regional landscape. Esteemed discussants included Pakistan's Special Representative on Afghanistan Ambassador Asif Durani; Mr Hassan Akbar, Senior Policy Specialist at the National Security Division, Government of Pakistan; Ms Amina Khan, Director at the Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad; Mr Aarish Ullah Khan, Research Analyst at the Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad; and Dr Usman W.



Chohan, Advisor on Economic Affairs & National Development at CASS. Air Marshal Farooq Habib (Retd), Senior Director at CASS moderated the proceedings, while President CASS Air Marshal Javid Ahmed delivered the concluding remarks. The discussion highlighted the need for a 'patient', 'proactive' and 'consistent' strategy, focusing on bilateral dialogue, enhanced border surveillance, and effective refugee management. The importance of employing advanced yet more cost-effective technology-driven security

systems such as UAVs for border control was underscored, alongside proposals for bolstering Afghanistan's economic capacity through improved connectivity, educational linkages, and trade routes. The roundtable also highlighted the necessity of a comprehensive approach rather than reactive measures, advocating for strategies that 'compartmentalise' various aspects of the Pak-Afghan relationship to prevent escalation and ensure cooperation across multiple domains.

Tehsil Bar Bhera went on strike against police violence against Panjotha



Soon Times Correspondent Bhera: Tehsil Bar Bhera went on strike in protest against the case of police violence and terrorism against its member and former Prime Minister's Power of Attorney Chaudhry Naeem Haider Panjotha Advocate. Tehsil Bars Bhalwal, Silanwali, Sahiwal, Kot Momin and Shahpur also went on strike in

support of Bhera Bar protest strike. Applicants faced difficulties as lawyers did not appear in courts. Speaking to the media, Bar President Chaudhry Muhammad Anwar Bola Advocate and General Secretary Malik Usman Shahzad Advocate said that the government should stop retaliatory actions against lawyers, otherwise the scope of the protest will be expanded. In the next phase,

road block and sit in will be given. Former President Bar Muhammad Shahid Qamar Bhatti Advocate, Chaudhry Azhar Mahmood Gondal Advocate, Muhammad Iqbal Gondal Advocate, Javed Rafi Advocate and others were also present on this occasion. They said that the government should withdraw the cases filed against the lawyers and stop the retaliatory actions.

IHC reserves verdict on plea challenging PTI central secretariat sealing

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD

The Islamabad High Court has reserved its verdict on a petition regarding the sealing of the PTI central secretariat in an operation carried out by the Capital Development Authority (CDA). IHC's Justice Saman Riffat Imtiaz presided over Monday's hearing. Lawyers Shoaib Shaheen and Umair Baloch represented PTI leader Omar Ayub Khan, while CDA lawyer Hafiz Anafat represented the Capital District Administration. During the hearing, one of the PTI lawyers argued that although the CDA had notices in its records, there was no mention of the existing notice,



Sartaj Ali had purchased a commercial plot and changed its use, which affected the neighbouring area. The construction exceeded the allowed limits, he added. At this juncture, the court questioned the CDA lawyer about the specific notice prohibiting the plot's alternate use. The court also required about the notice recipients in case the plot was rented out. The court expressed concern over inconsistent notice distribution by the CDA, and suggested simultaneous notification to both landlords and tenants to expedite resolution. After concluding arguments from both parties, the court reserved its decision.

implying fraudulent behavior. He pointed out that these notices were addressed not to the PTI but to Sartaj Ali. Shoaib Shaheen stated that media reports indicated the land was being handed over to Sartaj Ali and during the operation it was stated that the PTI was not notified. The CDA lawyer informed the court that

PTI celebrates IHC verdict vindicating Imran, Qureshi in diplomatic cable case



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad

After the Islamabad High Court (IHC) acquitted the top Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders in the cipher case, the former ruling party on Monday celebrated the victory in the legal battle which seemed to pave the way for Imran Khan and Shah Mahmood Qureshi's release. Commenting on the IHC's verdict, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali

Khan said that a "baseless and unfounded" case came to its conclusion today. He added that the PTI founder spent 10 months in jail due to the cipher case — the controversy first emerged on March 27, 2022. He claimed that the former prime minister would come out of jail very soon and pinned hopes on the judiciary to provide justice to the embattled party. The politico added that all "politically-motivated cases based on vengeance" against the PTI leadership would also be nullified.

Rain to subside heatwave conditions during this week: PMD

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast dust-thunderstorm rain in upper parts of the country from June 04-07 that will reduce the intensity of hot weather conditions. Heatwave conditions will subside following the rain this week and citizens will get relief from the sweltering hot weather conditions. A shallow westerly wave was likely to enter upper and central parts of the country on Tuesday evening or night and may persist during next 03 days. Under the influence of this weather system, rain-wind/thunderstorm is expected in Gilgit-Baltistan including Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Shigar, Kashmir (Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haven, Sudhanoti, Kothi, Bhimber and Mirpur from June 03 (evening/night) to June 08 with occasional gaps.



In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, duststorm/thunderstorm with rain is expected in Chitral, Dir, Swat, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Kohistan, Shangla, Buner, Malakand, Kohat, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Peshawar, Mardan and Kurram from June 04 (evening/night) to June 08 with occasional gaps. In Punjab & Islamabad, duststorm/thunderstorm with rain is expected in Islamabad/Rawalpindi, Murree, Galliat, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mandi Bahauddin, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Kasur, Okara, Sheikhpura,

Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh, Jhang, Khushab, Sargodha and Mianwali from June 04-06 with occasional gaps. Duststorm/thunderstorm with isolated rain is also expected in Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Dera Ghazi Khan, Sahiwal, Multan and Layyah from June 05 (evening/night) to June 07. In Balochistan, duststorm/thunderstorm with isolated rain is expected in Quetta, Zhob, Ziarat, Sherani, Kohlu, Musakhel, Dera Bugti and Barkhan from June 05 (Evening/night) to June 07 with occasional gaps. In Sindh, duststorm/gusty winds with isolated rain-thunderstorm is expected in Sukkur, Jacobabad, Kashmore and Larkana on June 06 and June 07. About the possible impacts, the PMD said that duststorm/windstorm and lightning may affect daily routines, standing crops, loose structures like electric poles, vehicles and solar panels etc during the period.

CTD says 44 terrorists arrested in Punjab IBOs during May

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE

The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) arrested 44 terrorists in the month of May in view of terror concerns in various cities of Punjab ahead of Eidul Azha. According to a CTD spokesperson, at least 794 intelligence-based operations were carried out in different Punjab cities, including Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Faisalabad, Narowal, Sialkot, Khanewal, Mandi Bahauddin, Jhang, Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalpur during May. Among those arrested were 44 terrorists identified as Muhammad Khan, Abdul Rauf, Habibullah, Muhammad Shahzad, Sahidullah, Osama, Azim, Tariq Khan, Tamveer Ahmed, Ahsan, and others. The spokesperson stated that these individuals



were planning attacks in various Punjab cities. The spokesperson mentioned that two operatives associated with the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) were apprehended in Lahore. The two terrorists were found in possession of explosive materials, explosive vests, a hand grenade, 37 detonators, 174-foot-long protective fuse wire, three improvised explosive devices, bombs, a prima cord, mobile phones and cash during the raid.

Special flight carrying Pakistani students from Bishkek lands in Peshawar

Soon Times Correspondent PESHAWAR

A special flight, arranged by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, carrying Pakistani students from Bishkek landed at the Peshawar airport late Sunday night. According to a press release issued by chief minister house, the fifth and final special flight, arranged by KP government, brought back 287 stranded Pakistani students from the capital of Kyrgyzstan. Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and his cabinet members were present at the airport to receive the students. Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and his



cabinet members were present at the airport to receive the students. About 1500 people including students were brought back home through five special flights of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government. Sources informed that the KP government has spent Rs 140 million to arrange special flights to bring back



Iqar ul Hassan , renowned journalist team SareAam and his wife Farah Iqar visited the head office of Journalist Association of Pakistan UK/Manchester.

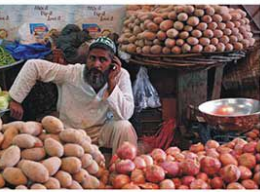
Report: (Wajha) Tamtheel Mirza Deputy Assistant Secretary JAP/Pakistan Syed Iqar ul Hassan Sahib, anchor person of Pakistan's renowned journalist team SareAam and his wife Farah Iqar visited the head office of Journalist Association of Pakistan UK/Manchester. Journalists Association of Pakistan/UK President Min Amir Ali and Women Wing President Humira

Sana Sahiba and other officials welcomed him warmly. The conversation started with the recitation of the Holy Quran. During the meeting, Syed Iqar ul Hassan discussed the atrocities committed by Haq Khatib "Shuf Shuf" and emphasized on the rights and efficiency of journalists. During the meeting, Amir Ali, leader of the Journalist Association, discussed other activities of JAP. The lunch was held at the JAP/UK Head Office.

Inflation slows to 11.8% in May, lowest in 30 months

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD

The consumer price index (CPI) in May rose 11.8% from a year earlier, data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) showed on Monday, the lowest reading in 30 months and below the finance ministry's projections. The lowest reading comes a week before the central bank meets to review the key rate which has remained at a historic high of 22% for seven straight policy meetings. Pakistan has been beset by inflation above 20% since May 2022. Last year in May, inflation jumped as high as 38% as the country navigated reforms as part of an International Monetary Fund bailout programme. However, inflation has since slowed down. Month-on-month consumer prices fell 3.2%, the biggest such drop in more than two years. In its monthly economic report released last week, the finance ministry said it expected inflation to hover between 13.5% and 14.5% in



May and ease to 12.5% to 13.5% by June 2024. The inflation outlook for May 2024 continues on a downward trajectory, attributed to elevated inflation levels (in the) previous year and improvements in (the) domestic supply chain of perishable items, staple food like wheat and (a) reduction in transportation costs," the report said. The actual readings have come in even lower due to a sharper dip in food prices, said Amreen Soorani, head of research at JS Global Capital.

محمد سعید

قائم ریسپنسیبل

فہمی سعید

قائم ریسپنسیبل



Pro-Kremlin activist couple quit Germany, move to Russia



LONDON
Two pro-Russian activists in Germany, who resented the Kremlin over their roles in a Reuters investigation last year, have left Germany and moved to Russia, the couple's lawyer said in a statement on Monday.
Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Elena Kolbasnikova and her romantic partner Max Schlund have been active in Germany, organising pro-Kremlin rallies to urge Berlin to abandon its military support to Kyiv.
The Reuters investigation last year identified them as among key individuals pushing a pro-Moscow stance in Germany and revealed that they had received financial help from a Russian government agency.



India awaits election results after deluge of disinformation

India's six-week election was staggering in its size and logistical complexity, but also in the "unprecedented" scale of online disinformation.
The biggest democratic exercise in history brought with it a surge of false social media posts and instant messaging, ranging from doctored videos to unrelated images with false captions.
Ragib Hameed Naik, from the US-based India Hate Lab, said they had "witnessed an unprecedented scale of disinformation" in the elections. "Conspiracy theories... were vigorously promoted to deepen the communal divide," said Naik, whose organisation researches hate speech and disinformation.
With seven stages of voting stretched over six weeks, AFP fact-checkers carried out 40 election-related debunkings across India's political divide.



Israel battles Hamas as mediators urge both to accept Gaza truce plan

Hamas has said it "views positively" what Biden described as an Israeli proposal.

RAFAH (Palestinian Territories)
Web Desk
Israel bombed the Gaza Strip and battled Hamas as mediators called on both sides to agree to a truce and hostage release deal outlined by US President Joe Biden.
Since Biden spoke at the White House on Friday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has insisted Israel will pursue the war, now nearing its ninth month, until it has destroyed Hamas and freed the captives. Palestinian militant group Hamas, meanwhile, has said it "views positively" what Biden described as an Israeli proposal.
Netanyahu, a hawkish political veteran leading a fragile right-wing coalition government, is under intense domestic pressure from two sides. Protesters backing an immediate hostage release, who rallied again Saturday in Tel Aviv, want him to strike a truce deal, but his far-right allies are threatening to bring down the government if he does.
Opposition leader Yair Lapid has offered Netanyahu political support if the government secures a deal. Fighting rocked Gaza Sunday, with Israel's military reporting air strikes and ground combat.
Netanyahu said Saturday that "Israel's conditions for ending the war have not changed: the destruction of Hamas's military and governing capabilities, the freeing of all hostages and ensuring that Gaza no longer poses a threat to Israel."
Mediators the United States, Qatar and Egypt later said they "call on both Hamas and Israel to finalise the agreement embodying the principles outlined by President Joe Biden".
White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told ABC News Sunday that "we have every expectation that if Hamas agrees to the proposal, as was transmitted to them -- an Israeli proposal -- that Israel would say yes."

Egypt's Sisi orders prime minister to form new cabinet

DUBAI
Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi reappointed Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly on Monday to form a new government after the latter submitted his cabinet's resignation following Sisi's reelection for a third term last year, the presidency said in a statement.
Sisi directed the new government to focus on lowering inflation and regulating markets as well as attracting and increasing local and foreign investments, the presidency added. Targets for new cabinet members would also include preserving the country's national security in light of regional and international challenges, and counter-terrorism, the statement said.
There was no immediate indication of which ministers would be replaced in the long-awaited reshuffle, or when the new cabinet would be announced.
In a post on X, Sisi said: "Today, I assigned Dr. Mostafa Madbouly to form a new government that consists of the necessary expertise and competencies to manage the next phase, in order to



achieve the desired development in government performance and confront the challenges facing the state."
Sisi was sworn in for his third term in April after sweeping to victory with 89.6% of the vote in an election with no serious challengers last December.
As Egypt tried to manage a chronic foreign exchange shortage and high inflation over the past two years there had been speculation that Madbouly himself could be replaced.
Earlier this year, the economy received some reprieve after a record investment agreement with the United Arab Emirates and international funding deals including an expanded loan programme with the IMF.

Zelenskyy in Manila to promote peace summit, which he says China and Russia are trying



MANILA, Philippines
Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with the Philippine president on Monday in a rare Asian trip to urge regional leaders to attend a Swiss-organised global peace summit on the war in Ukraine that he accuses Russia, with China's help, of trying to undermine.
Zelenskyy arrived unannounced and under heavy security in Manila late Sunday after speaking over the weekend at the Shangri-La defense forum in Singapore. He was given a red-carpet welcome with military honors Monday at the presidential palace before meeting with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. after which he left the Philippines.
Marcos pledged that his country would take part in the peace summit, Philippine Communications Secretary Cheloy Garafil said.
"I'm happy to hear today from you that you'll participate in our peace steps," Zelenskyy told Marcos. "It's a very strong signal."
Zelenskyy said Ukraine needs more mental health workers for its soldiers. Marcos promised to help and welcomed a decision by Ukraine to open an embassy in Manila this year which would hasten efforts to deliver assistance.
"We have ourselves been trying to promote the continuing adherence to international law in our part of the world," Marcos said. "The issues that you are facing are similar and in parallel to ours and, therefore, the position the Philippines takes is always to promote peace."
Both leaders spoke critically of China at the Singapore forum, which was attended by top defense and government officials from around the world, including from Washington and Beijing. The talks were held amid the raging wars in Gaza and Ukraine as well as growing tensions and rivalry for influence between the United States and China in the Indo-Pacific region.

Sports & Showbiz

Pakistan beat Canada in pool match of FIH Hockey Nations Cup



(Web Desk)
Pakistan on Monday outlasted Canada by 8-1 goals in a pool match of FIH Hockey Nations Cup at Gniezno in Poland.
For Pakistan, Abdul Rehman, Rana Ashraf Waheed, Ghazanfar Ali and Hannan Shahid scored goals.
Pakistan will play their third match of the event against France on Wednesday.
Last week, the match between Pakistan and Malaysia was tied with four goals each.
Fitri Saari, Abu Kamal and Faizal

Saari scored in the first 11 minutes as Malaysia were leading with 3-0 in the first quarter.
Pakistan managed to make their first goal when Abdul Rehman displayed stunning performance in the third quarter.
Sufyan Khan scored second goal for Pakistan in the 43rd minute while Hanna Shahid smashed another in 52nd minute.
Abu Bakr Mahmood helped Pakistan pull out stunning draw as he scored the equaliser in the dying seconds of the game.



T20 World Cup: Sri Lanka opt to bat first against South Africa

NEW YORK (Web Desk)
Sri Lanka won the toss and decided to bat first against South Africa in their T20 World Cup opener on Monday.
The Lankans, aiming to reach their first T20 World Cup knockout phase since winning the trophy in 2014, face the Proteas in Group D at New York's Nassau County International Cricket Stadium.
Coach Chris Silverwood will hope the low, slow pitch at the ground, with its drop-in wicket, will give some assistance to Sri Lanka's spinners.
In the opening game at the venue, a warm-up match between India and Bangladesh, some deliveries barely got above knee level.
The Proteas boast a formidable array of power hitters such as skipper Aiden Markram, wicketkeeper-batter Heinrich Klaassen, Quinton de Kock, David Miller and Tristan Stubbs.
In the recent Indian Premier

League, Klaassen made 471 runs in 16 matches at a strike rate of 171 for Sunrisers Hyderabad. Stubbs accumulated 378 runs from 14 matches at a strike rate of 190 for Delhi Capitals.
Both bring destructive hitting to the South Africans' middle order and are very effective against spin.
That will be a concern for Sri Lanka's spinners such as skipper Wanindu Hasaranga, the leading wicket-taker at the past two T20 World Cups, and Maheesh Theekshana, who have been struggling with injury of late.
But Sri Lanka must hope that their more varied attack, which also includes pacers Matheesha Pathirana and Dilshan Madushanka, will get more from the wicket than the Proteas.
The South Africans' attack leans heavily on express-paced Kagiso Rabada and left-arm wrist spinner Tabraiz Shamsi.

Chahat Fateh Ali Khan now embarks on film making



(Web Desk)
Chahat Fateh Ali Khan has surprised his fans by announcing that he is going to release his first film 'Sabaq' very soon.
The comedy film, directed by Faraz Ahmed, delves into themes of second marriages and social media influencers.
Chahat Fateh Ali Khan shared the trailer and said: "My first film, Sabaq, releasing on Eid Mubarak day, InshaAllah."
The trailer showcases Chahat Fateh Ali Khan playing himself, capturing his signature video snippets on his phone.

Swiatek into French Open quarter-finals after 40-minute blitz



PARIS
Defending champion Iga Swiatek needed just 40 minutes to reach the French Open quarter-finals on Sunday with a 6-0, 6-0 demolition of Russia's Anastasia Potapova.
World number one Swiatek, chasing a fourth Roland Garros title, will face either Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova or Serbia's Olga Danilovic for a place in the semi-finals.
The 23-year-old Pole's quickfire victory came on the same Court Philippe Chatrier where men's number one Novak Djokovic had completed his third round win at 3:07 am, the latest finish to a French Open match after more than four hours and five sets.
"I was really focused and in the zone. I wasn't looking



at the score so I continued working on my game," said Swiatek who had to save a match point to defeat Naomi Osaka in the second round.
"It doesn't feel like summer in Europe. We'll see what the weather is going to be like. The forecast is not precise."