



Daily SOON TIMES

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Saturday
June 15, 2024
Page: 4 Rs: 20
Vol: 4 Issue: 168
Sargodha
www.soontimes.pk

ABC Certified

Simultaneously Publishing from Islamabad, Sargodha & Karachi

+92 321 888 1135

Parvez Elahi granted exemption from appearance in illegal recruitments case



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Former Punjab chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi could not be indicted in the illegal recruitments case on Friday.
Duty Judge Arshad Hussain Bhutta of the anti-corruption court, who presided over the hearing, learned that Parvez Elahi could not attend the proceedings due to illness.
His legal representatives submitted a request for his absence from the hearing, citing his health condition. A medical certificate was also presented, indicating that doctors had advised him complete rest due to a rib fracture and underlying cardiovascular issues.
Subsequently, the court, while granting Elahi's request for exemption, postponed further proceedings until June 27.
The court also announced that during the next hearing, charges would be pressed against Chaudhry Parvez Elahi along with other accused persons.

Government to facilitate private sector for economic revival, says PM Shehbaz

Delegation proposed suggestions to boost international investment in Pakistan.



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured to provide all facilities to private sector for economic recovery.
A delegation of an international consultancy firm headed by former State Bank Governor Raza Baqir held the meeting with PM on Friday.
Delegation proposed suggestions to boost international investment in Pakistan.
PM highlighted that there existed a huge potential for investment in minerals and energy sectors.
He instructed the relevant authorities to hold consultation with the globally reputed consultancy firms to realize the investment agreements with the friendly countries.
PM Shehbaz Sharif also directed for consultation with the reputed firms for reduction in the volume of government's infrastructure and effective governance system.
PM added that private sector played crucial role in national economic development.
Federal ministers, Ahsan Iqbal, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Dr Musaddik Malik, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Awais Ahmed Leghari, ministers of state Ali Pervaiz Malik and Shauza Fatima Khanwaja and relevant senior officials attended the meeting.

Punjab MPAs meet CM Maryam, hail field hospitals and clinic on wheels project



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz called on members of provincial assembly (MPAs) from different districts of Punjab.
MPAs, Saud Majeed, Malik Khalid Mehmood, and Adnan Afzal Chaita met with CM Maryam Nawaz. MPAs commended the Punjab government's field hospitals and clinic on-wheels project.
MPA's also hailed the welfare and development projects of Maryam Nawaz in her province within 100 days.
MPA's also informed the CM Maryam Nawaz about the issues and needs of their constituencies. MPAs affirmed that field hospitals and clinic on-wheels projects were providing relief to public on their door-step.
CM Maryam Nawaz announced that field hospitals, and clinic on-wheels project was being expanded. She also highlighted that health sector matters were being monitored day and night.

Establishment's meddling in judicial affairs to end soon, says LHC CJ



Soon Times Correspondent RAWALPINDI
Outgoing Lahore High Court Chief Justice Malik Shehzad Ahmed Khan has said that interference of the Establishment in judicial affairs will end soon.
Speaking at a ceremony in Rawalpindi, Justice Shehzad Khan said thousands of cases were still pending with courts.
"One generation sues and the third generation goes and hears the verdict," he said.
"We get letters and threats," said the CJ. He said he was happy to see judiciary making decisions without fear and any pressure.
"We have to make decisions according to the Constitution and law. Many institutions are involved in interference in the judiciary," he added.
Justice Shahzad said one should not be afraid of rendering any kind of sacrifice. "A judge had announced he would make sacrifice," he said.
"To get rid of the establishment, we have to take bold decisions exhibit courage. Soon the interference of the Establishment from the judiciary will end," the CJ said and added, "We have to work with such people fearlessly staring into their eyes. We should not be afraid of anyone." He said for the first time in judicial history, judges had complained they were intimidated.

Punjab govt allocates Rs34bn for LHC in budget 2024-25



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The Punjab government has earmarked Rs34 billion for the Lahore High Court in the provincial budget 2024-25.
Similarly, the Punjab government has allocated Rs40 billion for Special Courts, Rs19 billion for Civil Courts and Rs14 billion for Session Courts and Lower Courts, with an additional allocation of Rs100 million.
Furthermore, funds to the tune of Rs4410 billion have been earmarked for the Prosecution Department and Rs4 billion for the Department of Law and Parliamentary Affairs.
Additionally, funds amounting to Rs1 billion have been set aside for the provision of interest-free loans to judges of the Lahore High Court, while Rs1.750 billion has been allocated for the Punjab Service Tribunal.

Punjab unveiled historic, people-friendly, tax-free budget, says minister

● Marriyum addresses post-budget presser, says it is Punjab's cashback budget



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The Punjab government has unveiled a historic, people-friendly and tax-free budget. Senior Punjab Minister Marriyum Nawaz said in a post-budget press conference in Lahore on Friday.
Aurangzeb referred to the provincial budget for the financial year 2024-25 a cashback budget, stating that it was not like the budgets presented previously. "Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has unveiled a tax-free budget for Punjab."
The minister said that the new budget served as a policy statement, making difficult decisions while providing stability to both the people and the economy. "Maryam Nawaz is working hard day and night to correct the direction of the economy."
Aurangzeb denied accepting the assertion made by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), saying that the incumbent Punjab government did not place their plagues on projects launched by the former [PTI] provincial government. Showcasing prominent features of the budget, the minister emphasised that the subjects of health and education have been prioritised.
Regarding the allocations for the health sector, the minister said that the basic health units and other health facilities would undergo.

Maryam urges Punjab youth to lead blood donation campaign on World Blood Donor Day



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has stated that Punjab's youth should serve as exemplars in the blood donation campaign.
In her message on the occasion of World Blood Donor Day, the chief minister said that this day serves as an opportunity to express gratitude to those who generously donate blood thereby saving the lives of others.
She expressed appreciation to all individuals who contribute to this noble cause by donating blood, especially on World Blood Donor Day.

Chinese Consul General Mr Zhao Shiren Explores China's Expanding Role in Global and Regional Politics and its Benefits for Pakistan at CASS Lahore

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS) Lahore, hosted His Excellency Zhao Shiren, the Consul General of the People's Republic of China, for an enlightening guest lecture titled "China's Growing Influence in Global and Regional Politics: Benefits for Pakistan" on 14 June 2024. Mr Ameer Abdullah Khan, Senior Researcher, CASS Lahore, introduced the speaker. The distinguished guest highlighted the importance of global peace. He argued that multipolarity with inclusive stakeholder engagement is more favourable than unipolarity and bipolarity for the developing world. He elaborated China's major initiatives under President Xi Jinping: the BRI, Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, Global Civilisation Initiative, and proposed Global AI Governance Initiative as crucial steps in this regard. He praised the strong partnership between Pakistan and China and noted significant trade growth and investment opportunities under the CPEC. Emphasising Pakistan's future economic and social growth, he highlighted the importance of embracing global, green, and digital initiatives. He further highlighted China's mediation efforts in international security, and reaffirmed support for a two-state solution for Palestine and backed Pakistan's stance on Kashmir. The talk was followed by an engaging and interactive session, during which the participants delved deeper into the various facets and dimensions of the enduring Pakistan-China friendship. The event concluded with closing remarks by Air Marshal Asim Sulaiman (Retd), President, CASS Lahore, who amplified the significance of the enduring partnership between Pakistan and China in all spheres as a vital contributor to the former's economic development and infrastructure. He stated that this strategic partnership should focus on



industrialising through SEZs, developing a long-term export strategy, modernising agriculture, and enhancing cooperation in science and technology, and security. He also acknowledged China's growing global influence and highlighted Pakistan's commitment as a strategic partner in the region and beyond. The talk provided valuable perspectives on how Pakistan can leverage its strategic alliance with China to navigate the complexities of global politics and regional developments. This event also signified the enduring partnership between the two nations.

Upcoming Summer Floods

Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, MNA Romina Khurshid Alam on Friday urged all the federal and provincial departments to take all-out measures to protect lives, livelihoods of the people from ongoing heatwave spell and possible monsoon floods. She also directed all the provinces including Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit Baltistan (GB) to ensure the maintenance of sufficient stocks of disaster relief items pre-monsoon onset to ensure in time preparedness against above-normal rainfall. The PM's Coordinator was chairing the meeting of the 2nd National Task Force on Global Warming and Heatwaves here on Friday whereas representatives of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Ministry of Science and Technology, Global

Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC), Ministry of Climate Change, Ministry of National Health, Services, Regulations and Coordination, Pakistan Meteorological Department, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and officials from the provincial governments joined through video link. She urged all concerned Federal and Provincial departments to enhance their preparedness with regard to threat of flooding due to upcoming monsoon spell, stock maintenance and heat wave effects. PM's Coordinator emphasized on timely execution by all stakeholders on NDMA's National Action Plan regarding flood threats in Southern Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan provinces. She also stressed upon inclusion of Lady Health Workers,

Midwives in the medical relief camps to be established by concerned Federating Units during the emergency situations. Chairing a high-level meeting, the PM's aide highlighted that the country's vulnerability to climate change-caused disasters would continue to deepen as the disasters, particularly heatwaves and floods are becoming more intense and frequent as the world continues to heat up because of untamed heat-trapping carbon emissions. "The adverse socio-economic impacts of the disasters are unlikely to be overcome as long as the well-coordinated disaster risk mitigation or prevention measures are not taken jointly by all federal and provincial departments," Romina Khurshid Alam warned. She assured of her Ministry's unwavering support at all levels so as the country's

disaster vulnerability is lessened through effective collaboration among the Federal and provincial departments, mainly the national and provincial disaster management authorities, health, education, agriculture, water and energy departments. The PM's aide said that like many other parts of the world, Pakistan is also experiencing the adverse repercussions of global warming, leading to more frequent and intense heatwaves as witnessed this year in May and during previous years. Changes in weather patterns contribute to unpredictable and extreme temperature variations. Highlighting the country's heatwave vulnerability, the PM's coordinator Romina Khurshid said that Pakistan has become highly vulnerable to heatwaves.

"The role of the United Nations in promoting global peace and security"

Tayyaba Ghaffar

The United Nations (UN) was established to promote international peace and security, through its comprehensive framework with a particular focus on preventing conflicts, resolving disputes and maintaining global stability. This article examines the pivotal role of UN in addressing global security threats and fostering peace among nations. It also highlights the current and future challenges facing the UN and provides recommendations to improve its effectiveness to meet the demands of the changing world.

The United Nations is an international organization which was founded in 1945 after world war II. It reflected the desire of the victorious states to maintain world peace, security and to remove the conditions that appeared to foster war such as colonialism, poverty, inequality and ignorance. It replaced the League of Nations and its headquarters is in New York city. The UN charter drawn up and signed by 51 states in San Francisco in 1945 was largely the product of American, British, and Soviet negotiations. Those negotiations began well before the end of the war and initially main focus was on maintaining unity against the axis powers but due to higher destructions and sufferings of the war, broader objectives relating to peace and security came to dominate the discussions which were conducted during the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, held in Washington, D.C. in 1944. The UN is comprised of 193 member states who are represented in various bodies like General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council and specialized agencies like WHO and UNESCO.

The primary objectives of the UN are to maintain peace and security at international level, protect basic human rights, provide humanitarian aid, promote sustainable development and implementation of international law. It provides a forum for states to address their disputes collectively and resolve conflicts through diplomacy and dialogues rather than military force. Since its inception, UN has faced significant challenges in promoting peace and security. The early years were marked by Cold War between two powerful states US and USSR which limit the UN ability to act independently. Moreover the veto permits each power to protect its interests by remaining in the organization. During 1946 states from Americas and western Europe had 60 percent partnership in the General Assembly. The heavy use of veto power by USSR 114 times during 1945 to 1975 was an effort to compensate for disproportionate

US influence. The UN was dominated by the great powers in the early days. However the end of Cold War in the late 20th century ushered in a new era of UN peace keeping and collective security.

There are 6 principle organs of the UN identified in the UN charter. The Security Council, The General Assembly, The International Court of Justice, The Trusteeship Council, The Economic and Social Council and The Secretariat.

The Security Council is the primary organ of action. There are five permanent members of the Security Council (the P5) the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China and 10 members are non permanent. Each P5 has the veto power which give them substantial influence over matters of peace and security. The General Assembly is the UN plenary set up comprise of all UN member state. It serve as forum for discussion and recommendations on a wide range of international issues. The Secretariat is headed by secretary General. It is executive and primary administrative body of UN.

It carries out day to day work of UN. Secretary General is appointed by General Assembly on the advice of Security Council. The Trusteeship Council was established to bring an end to colonialism and to guide the former colonial areas to independent stashed as soon and as peacefully as possible. The Economic and Social Council is assigned the task of dealing with international economic, social, educational and health matters. It aims to improve the world's living standard by ending poverty, inequality and by providing health facilities and best education.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the judicial organ of UN also known as world Court. It is a legal organ for dispute settlement. The UN uses various mechanisms to promote peace and security. The UN deploys peacekeeping forces to maintain peace and security. These operations include monitoring ceasefires, protecting civilians, supporting post-conflict reconstruction. Notable missions include those in Bosnia, Rwanda and more recently South Sudan and Democratic republic of Congo. The UN act as a forum for disputes resolution and mediation under article 33 of UN charter. It include negotiations, inquiry, mediation, and arbitration. The UN department of political and peace building Affairs (DPPA) works to prevent conflicts before they start by using diplomacy, dialogues, and early warning methods to identify and address the issue. The Security Council of UN can impose sanctions and use military force to ensure peace. Sanctions are imposed to pressurize the states or non-state actors to agree with international laws and peace enforcement involve the use of peacekeeping

force to maintain stability.

There are Several key case studies that highlight UN role in promoting peace and security. North Korea (1950) considered as aggressive state by UN and it authorized military action against North Korea to maintain peace in 1950. Iraq (1990) when Iraq occupied Kuwait the UN took military action against Iraq for collective security. Similarly in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992 to 1995) The UN role in Bosnia during Yugoslavia wars highlighted both the UN peacekeeping role and also limitations of peacekeeping. Efforts were made to ensure peace but the conflict escalated which brought criticism on UN response.

In Rwanda (1994) UN failed to prevent Rwandan genocide although it made attempts to maintain peace. Peru and Ecuador (1998) agreed to resolve their dispute over 50 mile territory by the UN arbitration. South Sudan (2011 present) the involvement of UN in South Sudan highlights its commitment to promote peace among new and weaker states. Some other example of major UN military operations are in Kosovo in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003.

Although UN is Playing a significant role in Peace keeping and stability but it has to face several challenges. The veto powers of UN permanent members can hinder decisive action. Their political interests often impact the UN ability to respond effectively to conflicts. Peacekeeping missions require significant resources and funding limitations can impact the UN effectiveness. Modern conflicts are often complex involving many states, new technology, weapons of mass destruction, ethnic and religious divisions which challenge the UN traditional peacekeeping approach. Terrorism and Extremism another challenge for UN peacekeeping efforts. The modern nuclear weapons, cyber threats complicates UN security efforts. The UN must adopt new reforms and changes to address the complex conflicts and new challenges of this modern and advance era. The UN should address the limitations of the security council's structure by changing its veto power and membership conditions. It should work independently without the pressure of great powers. It should enhance collaboration with regional organizations and must improve its peacekeeping operations by providing significant resources and better training for personnel. The UN should also strengthen its preventive diplomacy and local solutions

Unlocking Sesame's Potential



Sheeba Ashraf

An agrarian economy improves a country's BOT by transforming raw agricultural supplies into value-added products for potential buyers.

A crop known locally as *Till*, sesame is an oil seed that matures in around 90 days. Owing to the high concentration of protein, carbs, oil, fiber, and minerals, the main growing varieties of this plant are white to buff, gray, tan, gold, and black. Sesame seeds with light colors are traded the most, while black varieties predominate in Southeast Asia. It is seen to be a valuable crop due to its excellent flavor, aroma, and health advantages. It also has a 50-60% oil content, 82% free fatty acids, vitamins, and dietary fibers. It can be utilized for a variety of uses and doesn't quickly deteriorate when exposed to air. According to the FAO, this business is one of the fastest-growing in the world and its oil is an antioxidant that lowers the risk of chronic diseases in humans. It's widely used in Asian cuisine as a garnish for soups and dishes; in particular, it's used as lamp oil in India, as an ingredient in Taiwanese foods like "ginger duck dishes" and "sesame oil chicken," and because of its higher oxidation resistance, it's utilized commercially in China as ink. According to the Ayub Agricultural Research Institute, an Oil Seed Research Institute in Faisalabad, sesame is an industrial crop used to make carbon paper, food, and cosmetics. Asia and Africa are the world's top producers of sesame. FAOSTAT estimates that it produces on 8.8 million hectares of land and produces around 2.8 MT annually, with an average yield of 382 kg/ha. In 2022, its yearly projected global trade value was \$10980 million, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.90%. Pakistan is the second-largest producer of the white variety and the fifth-largest exporter of the raw form of white sesame, with a considerable portion of its global production in this variation. The Government of Pakistan states that Punjab, the country's most populous province, produces the majority of the country's sesame roughly

95% of its. Sindh and Baluchistan, on the other hand, produce lower 2.1% and 2.2%, respectively. According to the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, the National Oilseeds Enhancement Program (NOEP) has increased sesame production. The nation's exports of sesame increased dramatically, rising from \$89.320 million in FY-22 to an astounding \$407 million in FY-23. According to the State Bank of Pakistan, the value of exports of raw sesame seeds is \$157 million, making it a significant non-textile export for FY-22. Its export rose to 114 million kg in FY-22 on a year-over-year basis, of which China's share was 88 million kg. Sadly, Pakistan does not offer sesame products at the industrial level that could definitely be value addition, whether they be oil, tahini, sesame cake, or whatever. According to PACRA, in FY-22, Pakistan imported 3,964 (000MT) of edible oil to cover its domestic requirements for human usage and animal feed. As a result, it is imperative to boost local production and explore its industrial potential by adding value to products like sesame oil, tahini sauce, and sesame cake. It would influence the social sustainability of rural people in addition to enhancing Pakistan's balance of trade (BOT).

Tahini sauce is one of the sesame's value additions. A Middle Eastern sauce produced from toasted ground sesame seeds, is called tahini or tahina (ῥαβανάκι). It resembles paste, and the more widely consumed kind is made from hulled sesame seeds. In addition to being used as a sauce, tahini is a key component of hummus and halva. It has healthy fats, antioxidants, and vitamins A and E, which are good for human skin and lower cancer risk. An article published on June 8, 2024 in Dawn on Sedentary Lifestyle, shows that junk food is the primary cause of heart disease in students. However, tahini sauce is advantageous since it contains sesame, a natural oil source that enhances rather than compromises human health. In the Middle East, Asia, and North Africa, the market for fresh salad dressing, breakfast foods, and value-added products, particularly tahini and nut butter is expected to expand at a CAGR of 9.9% by FY-30. The student dining halls at Nal University Mianwali and Al-Madina Food in Layyah, where tahini samples were tested, served as the survey locations for the fast-food-loving consumers. According to the survey, more than 43% of the sample knew a lot about tahini sauce, which is used as a salad dressing and in

Arabic and Turkish cuisine. 85.8% of respondents thought tahini paste had a nutty taste; and 14.2% thought it had a little sour taste. According to the survey, 14.3% of respondents were thrilled with tahini's flavor, 71.4% expressed satisfaction with tahini's taste in fast food when compared to mayonnaise, and just 14.3% expressed neutrality. Thus, 85% of customers thought that it tasted great overall, while 15% thought that it was only ok. Just 14.3% of respondents preferred to stick to mayonnaise, while 85.7% of them wanted to use tahini as a topping on salads and in fast food. Finally, 90% of the customers recommended adding sesame as a value-added ingredient to a variety of goods. Sesame has a cost of production (COP) of 4,775 per mound (average per acre COP is PKR 70,000 and yield is 16 mounds), and the farmer gets PKR 14,000 per mound from the sale if they grow it and sell it raw in the market, according to this profitability analysis. Its raw profitability is therefore PKR 9,625. Conversely, if farmers enhance the value of sesame at the home level (by producing tahini, a sesame paste), they sell it at various superstores in major cities, especially in Lahore, Islamabad, Faisalabad, and Multan, where people, especially health-conscious corporate workers, frequently visit the gym, and consume healthy intakes to meet their daily caloric needs. The rate of return will then increase after that. As per the standard, a 15% of post-harvest loss due to poor quality of sesame seeds. Thus, it eliminates contaminants before producing 36 units of tahini (1 unit of 1000 grams). Farmers sell it for PKR 2300 per unit in the wholesale market, but its COP is approximately PKR 1,200 per unit. Thus, PKR 37,400 four times the profit that farmers get from selling their raw ingredients will be the profit that the tahini units/mound generate. Thus, in the light of farmers' domestic initiatives to increase profitability, the government must launch its own initiatives at the industry level. This will have a beneficial impact on the BOT by reducing the importation of value-added agricultural products such as tahini, sesame oil, and sesame feed. Supporting farmers enhances, the nation's economy, and this endeavor may become the backbone of the economy. As a country that relies heavily on agriculture, it must convert raw materials into finished, value-added products that can be used domestically and exported to satisfy the need for value-added agricultural products globally.



PM's Coordinator on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam chairing second meeting of Task Force on Global warming & Heat Wave in Islamabad on June 14, 2024.

Power Continuity will be ensured on Eid-ul-Azha Holidays: IESCO Chief Executive Dr. Amjad Khan

Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD: Complete work out has been done to ensure power continuity and redressal of customers individual complaints in minimum time during the joyous occasion of Eid al-Adha. IESCO Chief Executive Dr Muhammad Amjad Khan in his statement said that a monitoring room at Head office and Six at operation circles level have been established where officers and supporting staff will monitor power supply continuity on 1344 feeders and 114 grid stations. He said that complaint staff through out IESCO region will remain alert and to meet with any emergency extra cables meters transformers and other materials have been provided to complaint offices. Chief Engineer operation Muhammad Aslam Khan being focal person will monitor all activities personally. IESCO Chief Executive requested valuable customers that as a safety measures please don't tie sacrificial animals with electricity poles or under transformer and avoid to throw remainings of sacrificial animals under or near to IESCO installation as it attracts the birds which could cause interruptions in power continuity. Chief passed directives to all field formations that any negligence towards power continuity during Eid holidays will not be tolerated. He said that for registration of complaints relevant complaint office numbers, help line number 118, SMS service 8118 and complaint and monitoring cell numbers 0519252933, 0519252934 are available round the clock.

Raja inaugurates offices of Regional & District Election Commissioner in Sargodha

Soon Times Correspondent
SARGODHA: Chief Election Commissioner of Pakistan Mr Sikandar Sultan Raja formally inaugurated the newly constructed offices of Regional Election Commissioner and District Election Commissioner in Sargodha yesterday. These offices have been completed in one year and eight months (four months ahead of schedule). In the inauguration ceremony, the Chief Election Commissioner of Pakistan highlighted the importance of the new offices and said that these offices will not only help in making the election process more transparent and organized but will also help in providing better services to the people. Regional Election Commissioner Sargodha Division Abrar Ahmed Jatoi, District Election Commissioner Sargodha Ghulam Abbas, Election Officers Adnan Iqbal Awan,



Muhammad Ali Rana and others participated in the event. On this occasion, the Regional and District Election Commissioners also expressed their views. They said that the new offices have modern infrastructure, high quality communication systems and excellent file management system. The offices also have special counters and reception for public convenience.

Awan held an open court at the Provincial Ombudsman Office



Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has made history, becoming permanent member of Washington Accord for six years. International Engineering Alliance (IEA) approved the extension in Pakistan's membership during its 2-day session at New Delhi. The IEA unanimously approved the Pakistan's membership in Washington Accord. However, a delegation of Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) couldn't attend the IEA session as India rejected the visa and NOC to Pakistani delegation. India's motive behind rejection of visas to Pakistani delegation was to halt positive lobbying of Pakistan. Meanwhile, China, Turkey, and Hong Kong supported Pakistan in the IEA session. PEC officials attended the IEA session online. PEC Chairman Najeeb Haroon congratulated the Pakistani engineers on the milestone. He stated that engineering education of Pakistan has been recognized on international stage. He highlighted that extension in Washington Accord was the result of fruitful efforts of the Engineering Accreditation Board. It is pertinent to note that Pakistan elected permanent member of Washington Accord, an international forum of engineering in 2017. Pakistan also supported Indonesia, Turkey and other states for membership in the international engineering forum.

Soon Times Correspondent
SARGODHA: In-charge Federal Ombudsman Ahmad Awan held an open court at the Provincial Ombudsman Office

Joharabad Khushab yesterday on Friday 14-06-2024 at 9:00 am. He heard the complaints of the people against the federal departments and solved their problems by providing relief on the spot. Most of the complaints were from FESCO, Sui Gas, Post Office, Passport and CMA Lahore. The officers of these departments personally submitted the report and the overbilling units were refunded. Due to the excessive bills of Sui Gas, the complainants were given installments. On this occasion, the in-charge Federal Ombudsman Regional Office Sargodha issued instructions to the officers and provided relief on the spot to the complainants. New complaints were also received and registered for action.

PTI frets amid Senate committee elections

Says will protest against unjust allocation of panels' chairmanship

Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD: The PTI, the largest opposition party in parliament, has not secured the chairmanship of any Senate standing committee. Based on its seats, the party believes it is entitled to lead nine standing committees in the upper house. Talking to The Express Tribune, PTI Senator Ali Zafar said the parties in the ruling coalition are unfairly distributing the standing committees among themselves. "We will protest before Leader of the House Ishaq Dar and Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gillani over this matter. They have left us no option but to protest," he added. The PTI leader said his party is trying to conduct affairs according to the



Constitution, law, and democracy but is being continually pushed against the wall. On Thursday, members elected Senator Shahadat Awan of the PPP as the chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Water Resources. Senator Qusht-ul-Ain Marri proposed Awan's

name, which was seconded by Senator Poonjio Mal Bhecl. Independent Senator Faisal Vawda was also elected unopposed as the chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Maritime Affairs. After his election, Vawda thanked the committee members for their trust. "My priority will be not only to identify maritime issues but also to resolve them," he said. A day earlier, Senator Irfan Siddiqui of the PML-N was elected unopposed as the chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. The election, held on Wednesday, was supported by the government coalition, while opposition PTI senators abstained from voting.

Imran Riaz Khan released after courts dismiss FIRs lacking evidence

Soon Times Correspondent
LAHORE: Anchorperson Imran Riaz Khan was released by Sarwar Road police after magistrates dismissed two FIRs against him on consecutive days. The FIRs accused him of breaching trust and interfering in state matters. Imran Riaz was apprehended at Lahore airport in the early hours of Wednesday as he was departing to Saudi Arabia for Hajj pilgrimage, his lawyer Advocate Azhar Siddique stated. Earlier this year, Imran Riaz was arrested in a corruption case regarding the Dhrabi Lake contract in Chakwal and later granted bail by a special court. However, he was rearrested in another case related to violence outside PTI founder Imran Khan's Zaman Park residence. On March 10, an anti-terrorism court granted him post-arrest bail against surety bonds worth Rs200,000. "Registration of cases or even my arrest does not matter to me, but what hurt me the most was being restrained from performing Hajj," said Imran Riaz. The courts found that the cases lacked evidence and the accusations were unfounded. Requests for further physical remand by the investigation officers (IOs) were denied.

Imran Riaz's counsel, Mian Ali Ashfaq, opposed the IOs requests for physical remand. He argued that the cases were fake and intended to prevent Imran Riaz from performing Hajj. Breach of trust case According to the FIR, an oral contract for the sale of immovable property was made, and the complainant allegedly paid Rs25 million to the accused. The accused failed to deliver property files in DHIA Phase-9, Lahore. The court observed that the payment was a sale consideration, not an trustment of property. In trustment, ownership remains with the transferor, and the transferee possesses the property on behalf of the original owner. This case did not meet the definition of an offence under section 405 of the PPC. Judicial magistrate Muhammad Kamran Zafar stated, "I have carefully perused the file but found no progress by the investigation officer. The case lacks the necessary elements to constitute an offence under section 406 of the PPC." The magistrate discharged Imran Riaz from the case registered by Nishtar Colony police under section 406 of the PPC. Damaging state property and interfering in state matters

Iddat case: Sessions Court judge intends to decide on pleas against Imran-Bushra sentence soon

Soon Times Correspondent
ISLAMABAD: Judge Afzal Majoka of the District and Sessions Court has stated that he intends to decide on the appeals against the sentence in the Iddat case within 10 days, provided he remains alive. The judge took up on Friday the appeals requesting early hearing of the petitions which request the suspension of the sentence awarded to PTI founder Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi in the Iddat case. Appearing before the court, advocate Usman Riaz Gul, representing Bushra Bibi, the spouse of PTI founder Imran Khan, presented a written decision from the Islamabad High Court, pleading for an expedited hearing in



light of the high court's direction. At this, the judge remarked that he would announce a decision within 10 days if circumstances permitted, but holding the hearing the following day wasn't feasible due to numerous pending bail applications. Following the adjournment, the District and Sessions Courts issued notices to the involved parties, postponing further proceedings until June 21.



A delegation of an International Consultancy Firm called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on June 14, 2024.



Hezbollah fires new barrage at Israel, which vows to hit back



BEIRUT (AFP) – Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah group said it had fired waves of rockets and drones at the Israeli army on Thursday after an Israeli strike killed one of its senior commanders. The major attack comes after months of near-daily cross-border fire between the group and the Israeli military since Hezbollah ally Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel triggered the Gaza war. Hezbollah fighters launched "an attack with rockets and drones, targeting six barracks and military sites", while simultaneously flying "squads of explosive-laden drones" at three other Israeli bases, the group said in a statement.

One of the targets was an Israeli base that the militants said housed an intelligence headquarters "responsible for the assassinations". Hezbollah, which announced more strikes into the evening, said the attacks were "part of the response to the assassination" of its commander Taieb Abdallah on Tuesday.

Iran expands nuclear capacities further, UN watchdog warns



Web Desk
Iran is further expanding its nuclear capacities, the International Atomic Energy Agency said Thursday, one week after the agency's board of governors passed a resolution criticising Tehran's lack of cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog. The IAEA informed its members that Tehran told the agency it was installing more cascades at the enrichment facilities in Natanz and Fordow, according to a statement sent to IAEA. A cascade is a series of centrifuges, machines used in the process of enriching uranium.



South Korea, US sound alarm over North Korea-Russia ties ahead of Putin visit

Kremlin spokesman said Russia's right to develop closer ties with North Korea should not be in doubt

SEOUL
A possible impending visit by Russian President Vladimir Putin to North Korea could deepen military ties between the two countries in violation of UN Security Council resolutions, officials of South Korea and the United States warned. South Korea's vice foreign minister, Kim Hong-kyun, in an emergency phone call with US Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell, said Putin's visit should not result in more military cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow in violation of the resolutions, according to Seoul's foreign ministry.

Echoing Kim's concerns, Campbell pledged continued cooperation to tackle potential regional instability and challenges caused by the trip. "While closely monitoring related developments, the two sides agreed to resolutely respond through airight cooperation to North Korea's provocations against South Korea and actions that escalate tensions in the region," the ministry said in a statement.

On Wednesday, a senior official at Seoul's presidential office said Putin was expected to visit North Korea "in the coming days". Russia's Vedomosti newspaper on Monday reported Putin would visit North Korea and Vietnam in the coming weeks.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Thursday declined to date a date or agenda for a possible visit but said Russia's right to develop closer ties with North Korea should not be in doubt or a source of fear for anyone.

Trump talks tariffs and taxes, calls Republican host city 'horrible'



WASHINGTON
Donald Trump criticised US aid to Ukraine and suggested raising tariffs to replace the US income tax on a Thursday visit to Capitol Hill where he also called the city hosting his party's presidential convention "horrible".

In separate meetings with Republicans in the House of Representatives and the Senate, Trump sought to mend divisions ahead of the Nov. 5 election that could see his party win control of the White House and both chambers of Congress.

Trump floated the idea of reducing the US income tax and replacing it with tariffs, said Representatives Thomas Massie and Marjorie Taylor Greene. Participants said he shook hands with Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, despite their frosty relationship, and encouraged hard-liner Greene to "be nice" to House Speaker Mike Johnson, after her failed attempt to depose him.

There's tremendous unity in the Republican Party, Trump said after the Senate meeting.

But Republicans scrambled to explain after several media outlets reported that Trump privately called Milwaukee a "horrible" city, roughly one month before he is due to receive his party's presidential nomination there. That could potentially alienate residents of the biggest city in Wisconsin, one of a handful of competitive states that will determine the outcome of the election.

A campaign spokesperson and several Republican lawmakers said Trump was referring to what they said were the city's problems with crime and voter fraud. A nonpartisan audit of the 2020 election in Wisconsin found no evidence of irregularities.

North Macedonia's beekeepers face climate change challenge



Tetovo
Every day, Magda Milosevska dons a white, protective suit and enters the domain of the honeybees in the backyard of her small weekend house in North Macedonia. She has been producing honey in this picturesque corner of the country for more than 20 years. But climate change and disease have made what used to be a simple pleasure much harder work, she says.

Stence is a hillside village in the west of the country, surrounded by mountains and at a level of 650 metres (2,130 feet). Temperatures in June already exceed 30 degrees Celsius (86 Fahrenheit), three-degrees higher than usual, according to the state meteorological office.

"In the past, beekeeping was much easier," said 63-year-old Milosevska. "Beekeeping was a treat. Now, we simply have to fight both the climate conditions and the diseases that have entered the beehiving."

Just a hobby for some, but a source of income for others, beekeeping has surged in recent years in all regions of the country.

There were 6,900 beekeepers with 306,000 beehives registered across the country in 2023, according to the Food and Veterinary Agency.

But according to a European Commission study issued in July 2023, 10 percent of bees and butterflies are threatened with extinction in Europe -- largely due to human activities.

Honey production down
Milosevska may not have the data at her fingertips, but her every-day experience has made it clear to her something is wrong. "Older beekeepers say that in the past they could get 30-50 kilograms (44-66 pounds) of honey from one beehive," she said.

Sports & Showbiz



AFG vs PNG: Afghanistan beat PNG, qualify for Super 8 stage



Sports Desk
Afghanistan Friday clinched victory by seven wickets against Papua New Guinea in a major upset for New Zealand, which is now out of the T20 World Cup 2024. The match was played at the Brian Lara Stadium, Tarouba, Trinidad, where Afghanistan smoothly qualify for the Super 8 stage, while the Kiwis lost their chance to move ahead in the mega tournament. Afghanistan claimed the win in 15.1 overs for the loss of three wickets and chased a modest target of 95 runs. Openers Rahmanullah Gurbaz (7) and Ibrahim Zadran (0) were dismissed early but Gulbadin Naib scored an unbeaten 49 runs in 36 balls, with the help of four fours and two sixes, to take his side over the line. Earlier, a clinical bowling display helped Afghanistan dismiss PNG for only 95 runs in 19.5 overs.

PNG quickly slipped to 17-4 in the fourth over of the innings which severely dented their chances of posting a competitive total on the board.

Wicketkeeper-batter Kiplin Doriga was the highest scorer for PNG with 27 runs in 32 balls. Pacer Fazalqah Farooq was the pick of the bowlers for Afghanistan once again with impressive figures of 3-16 in four overs. "I want to congratulate the entire team because we have now officially qualified for the Super 8. I feel proud," Farooq, who was named Player of the Match, said. "Before the warm-up match, I was in the IPL. I did not get any chances there unfortunately. I played just one warm-up game. I know how to carry my body and I just tried to keep it simple. I try to get some wickets if there is some movement or swing."



Shehzada Imran is congratulating International Player of Pakistan Hockey team Abdul Rahman on his success. He presents him with a bouquet of flowers and appreciates Abdul Rahman's role in the Pakistan hockey team.

Shakira reveals why she's not dating anyone after Gerard Pique split



Web Desk
Shakira has finally revealed why she is "not dating" anyone after announcing her separation from ex-partner Gerard Pique. In her latest interview with Rolling Stone, the 47-year-old global music star made it clear that she is "not thinking" about finding a romantic partner anytime soon because she has "no space" for a new man in her life. "I'm not thinking about that," Shakira expressed to the outlet. "What space do I have for a man right now?" "What can I tell you, I like men. That's the problem."

Lee leads LPGA Meijer Classic by two

Los Angeles
Alison Lee fired a seven-under-par 65 to take a two-shot lead after the first round of the LPGA Tour's Meijer Classic on Thursday. The 29-year-old from California relied on a red-hot putter and a steadily improving swing to reel off seven birdies and an eagle to pull clear of a crowded leaderboard.



Lee, who is still looking for her first victory on the LPGA Tour just under a decade after joining the professional ranks, revealed afterwards she spent the build-up to this week's tournament in Michigan attempting to run out kinks in her swing. Yet despite long hours on the driving range last week, she remained uncomfortable even after teeing off at Blytheheld Country Club on Thursday in suburban Grand Rapids. "There can be some days I don't feel quite confident," Lee said after her round.

"You just have to work with what you got. That's how I felt today. As the round went on I would say the last four, five holes, definitely felt a lot better with my swing." The highlight of Lee's round came on her penultimate hole, a par-five eighth, where she nailed an eight-iron to within 15 feet with her second shot, before rolling in the eagle putt. "It was definitely really nice to shoot a low one today," Lee said. "Giving a lot of credit to my putter. I made a lot of really, really good par saves, and a lot of good birdies." "Overall really happy and pleasantly surprised about my round."

No fewer than nine players are tied for second place behind Lee on five under after shooting 67s. The chasing pack includes Canada's Brooke Henderson, who edged the 18th to move up the leaderboard. Eleven players are a further shot back on four under. This week's tournament is the final tune-up before next week's Women's PGA Championship, which is being held at the Sahalee Country Club in Sammamish, Washington from June 20-23.

Moment of truth for revamped Italy as Euros title defence begins



Wuppertal (Germany)
Italy kick off their European Championship title defence against Albania as a new-look team tries to rebuild the reputation of one of the world's most important football nations. Luciano Spalletti's Italy take on Albania in Dortmund in the first of three clashes in a fiendishly difficult Group B which also contains Spain and Croatia. And those two later fixtures make Saturday's hugely important, as with the four best third-place finishers in the six groups reaching the knockout stages, a win over Albania would give Italy a great chance of going through.