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Hajj 2024: Special prayers for Gaza, call for piety echo in sermon by Imam-e-Kaaba



Millions of pilgrims are currently in the Mount Arafat to perform Hajj where the Imam and Grand Mosque of Mecca preacher Dr Maher bin Hamd has delivered the annual Hajj sermon. The Hajj sermon has been live telecast and translated into 50 languages. Faith in oneness of Almighty Allah. The Imam said "Almighty Allah is one in His Self. The Oneness of Allah and the Prophethood of Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is the fundamental tenet of Islam. Allah has sent Muhammad (PBUH) as Rehamatulil Aalameen for the universe.

PM Shehbaz Sharif promises last IMF programme as govt completes 100 days

"Pakistan is on the way of development and economic prosperity," said the prime minister.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the nation on June 15, 2024.

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that his coalition government saved the country from default. "Pakistan is on the way of development and economic prosperity," said the prime minister. He was addressing the nation on Saturday as his coalition government completed 100 days in power. He also lauded the allied parties and their heads in playing their roles in country's development. "It would be the last IMF programme of the country if the targets are met and we'll be far ahead from our neighbouring countries," the prime minister said. He added that we also said goodbye to IMF in 2017 when Nawaz Sharif was the prime minister. At the outset of his address, he felicitated the nation on the eve of Hajj and Eidul Azha. "We have completed our 100 days in the

government. Pakistan witnessed a wave of inflation during last four years but we are committed to put the country on the path of development," said PM Shehbaz. He vowed to abolish tax ministries which are not contributing in the public service. According to prime minister, some important decisions would be made during the next one and half month regarding the economy. "We have made a robust mechanism to get benefit from the investment of our brotherly countries," said the prime minister. Read More: Government to facilitate private sector for economic revival, says PM Shehbaz The prime minister said that the inflation rate which was 38 percent a few months back, has now declined to 12 percent while interest rate has also reduced to 20.5 percent. He said that reduction in inflation and policy rate will promote investment and businesses in the country.

Mr. Sohaib Ahmed Bharth held meeting with the families of deceased sanitary workers in Balwal locality

The Minister for Communication and Works Punjab Mr. Sohaib Ahmed Bharth held meeting with the families of deceased sanitary workers in Balwal locality and consoled with families over the death of sanitary workers in an untoward incident. He also handed over compensation cheques amounting ten lac each for the children of the sanitary workers. The Chief Minister Punjab also announced 3 million for each sanitary worker which had been delivered to the families of workers two days earlier. Minister for Communication and Works Punjab directed official concerned to gear up the salary and other process on fast track for the facilitation of the widows. He also said that jobs would also be given to children of the sanitary workers. He also said that injured sanitary workers would also be looked after properly and announced that the Punjab government would bear the expenses of a sanitary worker having heart problem. He also instructed Deputy Commissioners to make sure that all sanitary workers would be equipped with necessary gadgets and subsequently they also used by the sanitary workers at the time of duty. MNA Malik Mukhtar Ahmad Bharth, MPA Mansoor Ahmed Sindhu, Commissioner Sargodha Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti and Deputy Commissioner Capt retired Aurangzeb Haider Khan were also present in this occasion.

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz increases lawyers' welfare grant to Rs1bn



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Saturday increased the grant meant for the lawyers' welfare to Rs1 billion and also announced establishing a hall and daycare centre for the female members of the community at Punjab Bar Council's premises. She also expressed sorrow over the killing of two lawyers in Attock and mentioned that police had arrested the accused immediately on her directives. Protecting the lawyers' community is a government responsibility, said the chief minister who praised them for their struggle for rule of law in the country. On the occasion, Maryam promised to extend

full assistance for establishing rule of law and provision of justice to each and every citizen, assuring the delegation of addressing their problems. Talking to a representative delegation of different lawyer bodies, she directed Law Minister Sohaib Ahmed Bharth to present the charges against the killer before a special court under the Legal Practitioners and Bar Councils Act 1973 and the Lawyers Welfare and Protection Act 2023. Maryam said the government would continue playing its role for improving the performance of judicial system and swift delivery of justice, the two dies discussed ways and means to strengthen cooperation between the government and the lawyers.

SARGODHA: COMMISSIONER REVIEWS DIVISIONAL FLOOD FIGHTING PLAN

Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha Commissioner Sargodha Division, Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti, has stated that the Meteorological Department has predicted unusually heavy rains during this year's monsoon season, with a particular concern for cloud bursts in some areas of Sargodha Division, posing a risk of urban flooding, therefore, all Deputy Commissioners are directed to assess their disaster management arrangements thoroughly and promptly address any deficiencies. He addressed a meeting in the conference room of his office on Saturday in this regard. The Commissioner emphasized that all departments must ensure their personnel and machinery are fully operational and functional to handle flood-like situations. Irrigation field staff should closely monitor water levels and flow in rivers. Concerned authorities should ensure the cleanliness of drains and main water passages. Chief Engineer Irrigation Anwar Sadq Latif expressed concerns over the rapid glacier melt affecting rivers, potentially leading to inundation. "There are 4 infrastructures on River Sindri, 31 on River Jhelum, and 15 on River Chenab in Sargodha Zone, all of which have been thoroughly inspected. Maintenance of river embankments and cleaning of drains have also been undertaken. Reporting of water inflow and outflow at Jinnah and Chashma Barrages has been intensified. Pre-flood inspections and while exercises have been conducted throughout the zone. The recent heavy rains could affect populations in the hilly regions of Khushab and Mianwali, necessitating immediate protective and rescue measures," he added. All four Deputy Commissioners briefed the meeting on their preparedness for expected monsoon rains and floods. Comprehensive preparations for flood control were also reviewed in all districts. The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer Anwar Sadq Latif, Deputy Commissioner Sargodha, Orangez Haider Khan, ADCR, Director Local Government, Director Health, as well as officials from municipal bodies, FMA, Rescue 1122, Deputy Commissioners of Khushab, Mianwali, and Bhakkar also participated via video link with their respective offices.

PNS Babur Participates In Pn-tn Bilateral Exercise Turgutreis-ix At Aksaz, Türkiye



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad Pakistan Navy's MILGEM Class Ship BABUR participated in PN-TN Bilateral Exercise TURGUTREIS-IX at Naval Base AKSAZ, Turkey. The exercise encompassed harbour and sea phases to rehearse various maritime operations and enhance interoperability. During harbour phase of the exercise, briefings, tabletop discussions and exercise coordination meetings were held onboard PNS BABUR. During the sea phase, PNS BABUR and Turkish Fleet units, including ADA Class Corvette TCG HEYBELIADA, Submarine TCG DOGANAY, and SH-70B helicopter, conducted joint maritime exercises and operations to enhance interoperability between both navies. Earlier, upon arrival at Naval Base AKSAZ, Rear Admiral Yusuf Akyuz, Commander Turkish Navy Southern Task Group welcomed the ship. During interaction with Commanding officer of PNS BABUR matters of mutual interest and

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FEDERAL MINISTER FOR POWER, BARBAR AWAN AMHAD KHAN LEGHARI OFFERING DUA AFTER INAUGURATION OF QUALIFICATION OF INDUS RIVER (Q-IR) DERGA KHAN ON JUNE 15, 2024.



By:
Ahmed Haecem Malik

Special Edition



Punjab Government: A HUNDRED DAYS of Excellence

Ever since assuming power in Pakistan's largest province, Punjab, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif hasn't rested, not even for a moment and from the very first day, her journey of serving her people continues with the same fervor and enthusiasm, which seems to be gaining momentum with time. Although a hundred days is a brief period to assess the performance of any government, the passion and dedication displayed by Maryam Nawaz's team

possible. It was through her efforts that within just a month and a half of assuming power, the price of bread was reduced to less than 16 rupees, and naan was reduced to less than 20 rupees, from the original 30 rupees. This directly benefited the laborers and hardworking class who were struggling to make ends meet. This action not only lowered the price of bread but also reduced the prices of fruits and

Program for the province's teachers and students. The purpose of the Digital Journey is to acquaint Punjab's teachers and students with important skills in information technology and to produce tech professionals for the future. In the



Ever since assuming power in Pakistan's largest province, Punjab, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif hasn't rested,

first phase of the Digital Journey Program, 1000 teachers and 50,000 students will be trained in IT skills, bringing

under her dynamic leadership suggest that they have achieved years' worth of goals in these hundred days. It wouldn't be wrong to say that in the first hundred days alone, Maryam Nawaz's government has revived memories of Shahbaz's speed. Due to Maryam Nawaz's swift decision-making, relief has reached the citizens through governmental initiatives in every sector. The current government of the Muslim League-N took power in Punjab on February 26th, and its first significant challenge was to pass through the month of Ramadan, providing relief to the people from the burden of inflation. For this purpose, the Ramadan Relief Package was introduced, benefiting over 6.5 million families and more than 30 million individuals in the province. These measures not only allowed the poor to benefit from the blessings of the holy month but also alleviated the suffering caused by soaring inflation. Another crucial initiative was the "Clean Punjab Campaign," launched across urban and rural areas alike, emphasizing cleanliness. In the initial phase, cleanliness campaigns were completed in selected villages, while in the second and current phases, this initiative has been extended to all villages in the province. Work is underway to strengthen the Solid Waste Management System and establish a comprehensive municipal system in every district, according to the vision of the Chief Minister. Inflation posed a significant challenge for the provincial government, which has seen a noticeable reduction in recent days. By relieving the people from the hardships of inflation, essential items were made more affordable. Due to the debilitating inflation of the past, the purchasing power of every individual has been severely affected, leading to a significant decline in the standard of living. The reduction in the price of wheat has resulted in lower prices for bread, naan, and bakery items, benefiting the common people. Maryam Nawaz, from the very first day, directed her ministers and all departments to reduce the prices of essential commodities as much as

vegetables. Maryam Nawaz Sharif not merely made verbal commitments but also toured markets and hotels with her father, former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, ensuring that their announced measures were being implemented effectively. Last week, the price of bread was further reduced to 13 rupees across Punjab. Additionally, petrol prices were

about a digital revolution, and teachers will be trained by Google champions. This program holds significant importance for digital literacy. With the collaboration of Tech Valley and Google, the Digital Journey Program will enhance digital literacy. The Chief Minister's resolve is to make every individual a digital citizen. In this regard, a global certification program will also be launched for teachers. The use of technology will reduce the burden on teachers, and being Google certified will enhance the professional importance of teachers. A car will be given as a gift to the top-performing teacher in each district. The vision of the Chief Minister for the promotion of education is to raise the standard of government educational institutions in Punjab to such an extent that after 2 years,



reduced to 268 rupees from 290 rupees, bringing further relief to the common man. The Chief Minister not only stopped at this but also stated that with the reduction in petrol and diesel prices, wheat prices, bread prices, and LPG prices, all essential items must also see a significant reduction. Therefore, she instructed the commissioners and deputy commissioners of all districts in Punjab to reduce the prices of pulses, rice, and other essential items according to their needs and issue new notifications. The Punjab government has allocated funds to improve medical facilities and cleanliness and maintenance programs in Rural Health Centers (RHCs) and Basic Health Units (BHUs) worth 40 billion rupees, paving the way for comprehensive health services in rural and urban areas. Maryam Nawaz's government announced a historic package of 400 billion rupees for farmers, ensuring that farmers have access to seeds, fertilizers, and all agricultural supplies according to their needs on control rates. In the initiative of digital transformation in Punjab, another important step was taken, launching the "Digital Journey

all children will be studying in government schools. To keep up with the demands of the modern era, the Punjab government is taking extremely important steps for the promotion of digital technology. The establishment of the Nawaz Sharif Technology Towers is also part of this series, after which hundreds of thousands of children in Punjab will be provided dignified employment, and they will prefer to work in their own country instead of going abroad. In conclusion, it can be said that in the first hundred days, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has initiated so many people-friendly projects in Punjab that it is difficult to encompass them all in these pages. In short, Punjab has entered a new era, and the current government has paved a strong path for the province economically, socially, and in terms of development, which will lead to a bright, stable, and prosperous Punjab in the end.





No new mega schemes for Karachi in Sindh budget

Rs1.38 billion allocated for ongoing projects in the port city

Soon Times Correspondent
Karachi
Karachi will not see any new mega schemes in Sindh's budget for fiscal year 2024-25, with Rs1.38 billion allocated for ongoing projects.

Sindh Chief Minister and Finance Minister Murtad Ali Shah presented a Rs3.056 billion budget for the fiscal year 2024-25. The budget excludes new mega projects for the country's largest city, Karachi, but funds several smaller initiatives.

The Karachi BRT Red Line project received Rs2.79 billion in the upcoming budget. The Karachi Urban Mobility Yellow Line project was allocated Rs60.97 million.

Rs850 million will be spent on the Karachi Orange Line project next fiscal year, and Rs3 billion has been earmarked for the purchase of 300 diesel hybrid buses. The Greater Karachi Sewerage Plan (S-III) project received Rs3.18 billion, while the K-IV water supply project was allocated Rs100 million.

Rs75 million has been allocated to the Karachi Livable Improvement Project (KLIP) to make the city more livable.

In the Safe City project's Phase One, 1,300 new cameras will be installed in the Red Zone Airport Corridor, with Rs1.10 billion allocated.

Under the Sindh Police Video Surveillance System, 10,000 CCTV cameras will be installed at 2,000 new locations in Karachi, with Rs1.63 million set aside for this purpose.

Additionally, Rs1.3894 billion has been

PSX hits historic high of 77,000 points as post-budget surge continues

KSE-100 benchmark closed at 76,706.77, marking a 0.65% rise from the previous close

Soon Times Correspondent
KARACHI:
The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a significant surge on Friday, with the KSE-100 index rising by 1,046 points. This rally propelled the index to a new all-time high, surpassing the 77,000-point mark for the first time in the country's history.



At 11am on Friday morning, the KSE-100 index stood at 77,252.44, reflecting a 1.36% increase from yesterday's close, as the PSX continued its upward trajectory.

The stocks closed at 76,706.77 on Friday.

Investors have been cheered by the absence of any hike in taxes on capital gains and dividend income in the federal budget for the fiscal year 2024-25, contributing to a positive sentiment.

Additionally, projections of a substantial increase in dividends from state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have further added to the overall optimism.

Yesterday, the stocks reached an all-time high, closing above the 76,000-point milestone for the first time in intraday trading.

The KSE-100 Index saw an increase of 3,410 points, surpassing key thresholds of 73,000, 74,000, 75,000, and 76,000 points.

Mohammed Sohail, CEO of Topline Securities, credited the upward trend to the "absence of tax increase on dividends and capital gains (CGT) for investors in the new budget."

Investor sentiment turned positive as the finance minister revealed while unveiling the Economic Survey 2023-24 on Tuesday that there were constructive talks with the IMF for a new loan programme.



Sought help from stakeholders for the success of Polio Campaign: Aqeeli

Soon Times Correspondent
Mirpur Khas:
Divisional Commissioner Mirpur Khas Faisal Ahmed Aqeeli has said that for the success of the polio campaign, understanding and help should be taken from all stakeholders for the success of the campaign. He expressed these views in the Commissioner Committee Hall

presiding over a meeting to review the advance arrangements against polio. He said that polio is a deadly disease which is very important to eradicate. He directed the officers of the health department to find out the union councils in which the performance of the polio campaign has been weak. On request of officers of Health Department he

directed SSP Mirpur Khas to check the entrances and exits of the city. Additional Commissioner One Dr. Ali Nawaz Bhoat, Deputy Commissioner Mirpur Khas Dr. Rashid Masood Khan, SSP Mirpur Khas Captain Retired Asad Ali Chaudhary and others attended the meeting.

Pakistan gets permanent membership of Washington Accord



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 visas 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 Najeb 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.

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.

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.

K-Electric decides to cut power connection of govt departments over non-payment

Power distributor intends to disconnect electricity of 64 government department/institutions over non-payment of dues



Soon Times Correspondent
KARACHI:
The city's sole power distributor K-Electric (KE) has decided to cut off the electricity of more than three dozen Sindh government departments for not paying the dues and clearing the bills.

The company has sent a letter to the chief secretary and secretary of energy. In the letter, it has been informed that the power of 64 departments of Sindh will be disconnected.

The power-distribution corporation highlighted that eight letters have been written, however, dues have not been cleared as promised. Therefore, it said, it has been decided that the electricity will be cut off.

It wrote in the letter that in 2019, the Sindh

government said it would pay all the dues and new bills. Moreover, the energy department was given the responsibility for the payment of the electricity bills and dues.

K-Electric has also included a list naming the 64 provincial departments and institutions in the letter. It was further added by the company that they have started the process of disconnecting the electricity connections of the provincial departments.

Parallel to this, the company is also facing criticism by the residents of many areas of the city over irregular loadshedding, especially during the current heatwaves and extreme summers. There have been many protests by the local masses demanding for an end to loadshedding.



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.

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 beekeeping."

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 hives 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 (66-110 pounds) of honey from one beehive," she said.

Sports & Showbiz

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



GURBAZ

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."

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.



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.

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.