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Incarcerated Imran Khan moves IHC against denial of meetings with PTI leaders, lawyers



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Incarcerated former prime minister and PTI founder Imran Khan has filed a petition with the Islamabad High Court regarding the denial of meetings and consultations with his party leaders and lawyers. Khan, currently held in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, has named the Interior Ministry, Defence Ministry, home secretary, Punjab government and jail superintendent as respondents in his petition. The petition argues that despite court orders, the jail superintendent has prohibited meetings with lawyers and party leaders. Previously, the Islamabad High Court had permitted consultations between Imran Khan and his party leaders for the allocation of party tickets for the Feb 8 general elections. The petition claims that due to the ill intentions of his opponents, the process of consulting for the allocation of party tickets was obstructed.

LHC's election tribunal orders Atta Tarar, ECP to submit forms 45, 47 and 48



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The Lahore High Court's (LHC) election tribunal has ordered the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and Federal Minister for Information Atta Tarar to submit original forms 45, 47 and 48. Justice Anwar Hussain, heading the election tribunal in LHC, heard the petition and ordered submission of all original forms. The election tribunal has ordered Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Atta Tarar to submit forms 45, 47 and 48 along with affidavit until July 22.

New budget is an economic terrorism against public, claims opposition leader Omar Ayub



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Opposition leader in the National Assembly Omar Ayub has termed the new federal budget as economic terrorism against the public. Speaking at the National Assembly, he reiterated that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif himself claimed that the budget was IMF-directed. He asserted that this budget was devised by 'hit-man' and an economic terrorism against the public. He hit out at the federal cabinet on the wheat matter, stating, "is it a cabinet or circus, which imports the wheat first then exports that wheat. They don't know about the economy. He claimed that Mohsin Naqvi as a caretaker chief minister imported the wheat worth of 450 billion and didn't purchase wheat from the wheat growers. He demanded an investigation by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on the matter of wheat imports worth billions of rupees.

Budget 2024-25 sails through National Assembly amid optimism about IMF loan deal

NA Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq announces the passage of the bill in a live TV telecast



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
The National Assembly on Friday passed the government's tax-heavy finance bill for the coming fiscal year ahead of more talks on a new International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout as it seeks to avert a debt default for an economy growing at the slowest pace in South Asia. The government presented the tax-loaded budget two weeks ago, drawing sharp criticism from opposition parties, especially the PTI, as well as coalition ally PPP. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb had moved the finance bill in the NA, which was endorsed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Opposition parties, mainly parliamentarians backed by currently incarcerated former premier Imran Khan, have rejected the budget, saying it will be highly inflationary. On Tuesday, the PPP - which had initially boycotted the debate over the budget - decided that it would vote for the finance bill despite certain reservations. While giving a press briefing after a party meeting, PPP leader Naveed Qamar said the meeting decided that if the party did not vote for the budget, "it would amount to dismantling the government and paving the way for instability in the country".

Maryam Nawaz announces sweeping reforms in every sector in Punjab

She listed 100-day performance of her government "for uplift of the people of the province"

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Maryam Nawaz on Friday announced Punjab government's plan to modernize agriculture, bring reforms in the education system and health sector in the province. Addressing the Punjab Assembly, she listed 100 day performance of her government and promised sweeping changes in various sectors for uplift of the people of the province. "It is impossible for me to

summarize what we have done in 100 days in one budget speech," the Punjab chief minister added. She announced funding solar systems for agriculture tube-wells, tractors and farm equipment for the economic well being of farmers. The government would pay 70 percent price of a tractor, while farmer has to pay the remaining 30 percent, she added. Maryam outlined her preferences to reform education sector stating provision of milk to the primary

school students. The project would cost Rs27 billion, she continued. She announced relaunch of the laptop scheme which was started by Shehbaz Sharif for the outstanding students, and added that every year 300,000 students would be given IT training. US technology company Google would provide training to 300,000 children. The Punjab government also laid emphasis on skill development in schools, she maintained.



Supreme Court accepts Vawda, Kamal's unconditional apologies in contempt case

CJP Isa-led bench withdraws notices against both politicians



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
The Supreme Court accepted the unconditional apologies tendered by Senator Faisal Vawda and MQM-P leader Mustafa Kamal in the contempt of court case on Friday. The court also withdrew the notices served on the two politicians for their verbal

onslaught against judges of superior courts. A three-judge bench of Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa, Justice Irfan Saadat and Justice Naem Afghan presided over the hearing. At the outset of proceedings, Mustafa Kamal's lawyer Farogh Naseem argued that his client had apologised unconditionally

and had now expressed his regret in a press conference. Chief Justice Isa then asked Faisal Vawda who replied that he had also apologised. During the previous hearing on May 15, the apex court dismissed Mustafa Kamal's request for immediate pardon. Last Wednesday, Vawda also tendered an unqualified apology, appealing to the court for withdrawal of the notice against him. The court took suo motu after Vawda's press conference on May 15, where he indirectly implied that high court judges had vilified the country's intelligence agencies. The court initiated suo motu proceedings against Vawda and Kamal on May 18, with CJP Isa directing both to file their responses to the show-cause notices within two weeks.

Javed Latif condemns American resolution against Pakistani elections



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Pakistan Muslim League-N leader Javed Latif said that the American resolution regarding Pakistan's elections is condemnable. Talking to media in Lahore, Latif said that former PM Nawaz Sharif was repeatedly jailed. Those who want instability in Pakistan support such activities, he asserted. More to read: US urges Pakistan to fulfill constitutional, international obligations. Talking about the Occupied Kashmir, he said that bloodshed is being played



there. There was a plan to block China's investment in 2014 as well. He said that America does not consider the violation of human rights in Gaza, Syria, Iraq and other countries. The US House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved the resolution in favour of manipulation after the voting in the general elections in Pakistan on February 8, 2024. People's participation in the process was highlighted.

Pakistan denounces US Congress resolution as 'unsolicited interference'

FO says resolution stemmed from inadequate, erroneous understanding of Pakistani politics



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Pakistan on Friday said that Resolution 901 adopted by the US House of Representatives was an "unsolicited interference" in Pakistan's domestic affairs which was "neither welcome nor acceptable". The resolution clearly stemmed from an inadequate and erroneous understanding of political and electoral process of Pakistan, Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch stated at the weekly press briefing. "It is also an unsolicited interference in Pakistan's domestic affairs. We believe that bilateral relations between countries should be based on mutual respect and



sovereign equality. The unsolicited interference from the US Congress is therefore neither welcome nor acceptable," the spokeswoman added. Besides, the spokeswoman added, the timing and context of the said resolution were also not conducive to the current

positive trajectory of bilateral relations between Pakistan and the United States. "Pakistan will like to develop its relations with the US on the basis of mutual trust and confidence and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs."

Expressing concerns about the continued suppression of the democratic rights of the Kashmiris in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), Baloch said that a few days ago, Indian authorities banned the elections of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association and arrested its former president Man Qayoom. Indian authorities also disallowed Eid congregation at Srinagar's historic Jamia Masjid and house arrested prayer leader and prominent Kashmiri leader Mir Waiz, she added. "These oppressive measures are yet another example of the autocratic approach of the Indian authorities and a violation of the fundamental freedoms and human rights, especially of the rights of association and peaceful assembly," she said, reiterating Pakistan's stance for continued political, diplomatic and moral support to Kashmiri people for just and peaceful settlement of the dispute as per the UN Security Council resolutions. The spokesperson strongly condemned the indiscriminate bombing of Beit Lahia city in Northern Gaza by Israeli forces, killing women and children. "Pakistan deplors Israel's actions as war crimes against the people of Gaza and emphasizes the urgent need for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire to prevent further civilian casualties."

Sustainable Maritime Development

The second meeting of the committee tasked with assessing and facilitating the reconstitution of the Board of Directors (BoD) for the Korangi Fisheries Harbour Authority (KoFHA) was held today. The meeting was chaired by the Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, while the Federal Minister for Industries & Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Secretary Maritime Affairs Syed Zafar Ali Shah and other senior officers of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs were in attendance as committee members. The committee has been formed to ensure that the reconstitution of KoFHA's Board

of Directors complies with applicable laws; as the core focus of the committee lies in meticulously scrutinizing the Federal Government's selection of five Board members. During the first meeting, held on June 11, 2024, the committee meticulously reviewed the criteria and guidelines for the selection process. The discussions focused on ensuring that the nominated members would bring a diverse range of skills, experience, and expertise to the board, aligning with the objectives outlined in the KoFHA Ordinance and the SOE Act, 2023. In its second meeting today, the list was reviewed followed by a threadbare discussion

and would finalize the names after necessary consultation with stakeholders. Federal Minister Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh emphasized the importance of transparency and meritocracy in the nomination process. He added that we focus to reconstitute a Board of Directors that upholds the highest standards of governance and is equipped to drive KoFHA towards greater efficiency and success. Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain added that we are committed to ensuring that the process is conducted with integrity and in full compliance with the relevant laws and regulations, and also dedicated to

realizing the Prime Minister's vision of ensuring to reflect the diversity and inclusiveness of our nation. The committee evaluated potential candidates to finalize the nominations with the aim of completing the reconstitution process efficiently and effectively. This effort ensures that KoFHA's Board of Directors is fully equipped not only to fulfill its strategic objectives but also to strengthen the board and integrate local stakeholders into the mainstream, contributing significantly to the sustainable development of Pakistan's fisheries and maritime sectors.

Unveiling the Global Food Crisis: Causes, Consequences, and Sustainable Solutions

Alishba Iftikhar

The global food crisis is a complex issue that affects millions of people around the world. It refers to the widespread problem of hunger and malnutrition, where individuals and communities lack access to sufficient and nutritious food. This crisis has far-reaching consequences on both individuals and societies as a whole. One of the primary causes of hunger and malnutrition is poverty. Many individuals and families simply cannot afford to purchase or access nutritious food on a regular basis. Poverty often leads to food insecurity, where individuals have limited or uncertain access to food that meets their dietary needs. Poverty alleviation measures, such as income generation programs and social safety nets, can help address this issue. Conflict and political instability are also major contributors to the global food crisis. In regions affected by conflict, access to food becomes scarce due to disrupted agricultural systems, damaged infrastructure, and the displacement of populations. Conflict can also hinder humanitarian aid efforts, making it even more challenging to provide food assistance to those in need. Limited access to resources is another factor that contributes to the food crisis. Some regions lack the necessary resources for agriculture, such as arable land, water, and modern farming techniques. This can lead to low agricultural productivity and insufficient food production to meet the needs of the population. Investments in agricultural infrastructure and technology, as well as sustainable farming practices, can help address this issue. Some examples that illustrate how various interventions and approaches are addressing the global food crisis:

1. Poverty Alleviation Programs: Brazil's Bolsa Familia Program: This conditional cash transfer program provides financial aid to poor

families, requiring them to meet certain health and education criteria. It has significantly reduced poverty and improved food security among the poorest households.² Conflict and Political Instability: Syria Humanitarian Response: The World Food Program (WFP) and other humanitarian organizations have been providing food assistance to millions of displaced and conflict-affected Syrians. Despite the challenges, these efforts help prevent famine and malnutrition in war-torn areas.

3. Limited Access to Resources: Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA): This initiative focuses on improving agricultural productivity in Africa through access to better seeds, soil health programs, and small-scale irrigation. It aims to enhance food production and reduce hunger across the continent.

4. Supporting Vulnerable Populations: India's Midday Meal Scheme: This government program provides free lunches to schoolchildren in primary and upper primary classes. It not only improves nutrition among children but also encourages school attendance and retention, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

The impact of the food crisis is particularly severe on vulnerable populations, such as children, women, and marginalized communities. Malnutrition during childhood can have long-term effects on physical and cognitive development, leading to lifelong health issues. Women often face greater challenges in accessing food due to cultural and gender disparities, which can result in higher rates of malnutrition. Ethnic minorities, indigenous populations, and marginalized communities are also disproportionately affected by food insecurity, as they often face additional barriers to accessing nutritious food. Efforts to alleviate hunger and malnutrition involve a combination of interventions at the international, national, and local levels. International organizations like the United Nations World Food Program and the Food and

Agriculture Organization play a crucial role in providing emergency food assistance, implementing long-term solutions, and advocating for policy changes. Governments have the responsibility to implement policies that promote agricultural development, improve access to nutritious food, and combat poverty. These policies can include investments in agriculture, social safety nets, and nutrition programs.

Sustainable farming practices are also essential in addressing the food crisis. Adopting techniques such as agroforestry, organic farming, and precision agriculture can increase food production while minimizing environmental impact. These practices promote soil health, water conservation, and biodiversity, ensuring the long-term sustainability of agricultural systems. In addition to conventional approaches, innovative solutions are emerging to tackle the food crisis. Urban farming, for example, involves growing food in urban areas through vertical farming or community gardens. This approach can help address food insecurity in densely populated regions and reduce the reliance on long-distance food transportation. Reducing food waste throughout the supply chain is another crucial step in addressing the food crisis. By minimizing waste, more food can be made available for consumption, reducing the strain on resources and increasing overall food availability. Furthermore, developing climate-resilient crops and implementing strategies to mitigate the effects of climate change on agriculture are vital for ensuring long-term food security. In conclusion, the global food crisis requires urgent attention and collaborative efforts from governments, organizations, and individuals. By understanding the causes and consequences of hunger and malnutrition, we can work towards implementing sustainable solutions that ensure food security for all. It is crucial to address the underlying issues of poverty, conflict, limited resources and inequality to create a world where no one goes hungry.

Middle Class Burdened by Utility Bills



Anjad Rana

In recent years, the people of Pakistan have been grappling with the escalating burden of multiple utility bills, a consequence of poor governance by both past and current rulers. It is well-known that these leaders have continually increased the rates for electricity, gas, water, and other essential household and commercial utilities. This predicament is not merely a personal struggle for many but also a significant national concern. While leaders in other countries ensure essential human rights and services for their citizens, in Pakistan, people face monthly hikes in utility rates, whereas bureaucrats and ministers enjoy privileges such as free electricity, gas, petrol, government transport, and luxurious housing provided by the state. Regrettably, many Pakistanis have made the mistake of voting for parties and politicians with a history of widespread corruption. These corrupt practices are not only evident within our courts but have also been highlighted in foreign analyses. In such dire financial circumstances, it is our collective responsibility to combat corruption, as it affects everyone and tarnishes the image of our country. The current financial crisis stems from various sources, including land mafias, smugglers, and corrupt elites who have thrived since Pakistan's independence in 1947. These powerful entities manipulate the economy for their benefit, leaving ordinary Pakistanis at their mercy. Many feel like mere pawns in the hands of these influential figures who hold sway over the

Senate, National Assembly, and provincial assemblies. However, there is hope that the power crisis can be alleviated through the adoption of solar energy. If the government prioritizes the facilitation of solar energy to the people of Pakistan, it could potentially provide a solution to the ongoing energy challenges we face. The industrial sector in Pakistan stands to benefit significantly from the adoption of solar panels for various purposes, including heating for chemical, mineral, food processing, and oil recovery. The government has taken a commendable step by launching a comprehensive National Solar Policy aimed at providing environmentally friendly and affordable solar energy to address the nation's energy crisis. These initiatives require consistent effort, determination, and hard work to maximize the utilization of solar power across the country. One crucial aspect is the widespread implementation of net metering, allowing consumers to generate their own electricity through solar panels and feed excess power back into the grid. This not only promotes green energy generation but also helps reduce issues like power theft, circular debt, and distribution losses. While solar energy offers numerous benefits, including reduced electricity bills, its adoption in industries faces challenges. The initial cost of installing solar panels is high, and the process can be time-consuming. Additionally, the reliance on imported solar equipment, mainly from China, adds to the expenses, with limited after-sales services due to the absence of a local presence by Chinese solar companies. However, Pakistan possesses immense potential for solar energy utilization, particularly in regions like southern Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan, where solar radiation intensity is high for nearly 10 hours a day. This presents an opportunity

to generate significant amounts of power each month, ranging from 45 to 83 megawatts in these regions alone. The government has already taken steps in this direction by commissioning six solar power projects with a cumulative capacity of 430 megawatts across various provinces, including Kashmir, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan. Notably, the Quid-e-Azam solar park in Cholistan, Bahawalpur, stands out as one of the largest solar plants in the country, boasting a capacity of 100 megawatts. In conclusion, the National Solar Policy and other initiatives aimed at promoting solar energy must be pursued consistently to harness its full potential in Pakistan. By doing so, the country can move towards self-reliance in energy and effectively address the pressing challenges in the power sector. In conclusion, the escalating utility bills in Pakistan highlight a significant governance issue that has burdened the middle class and tarnished the nation's image. While corruption and economic manipulation by powerful entities continue to exacerbate the crisis, the adoption of solar energy offers a promising solution. The government's National Solar Policy and efforts to promote solar power could pave the way for self-reliance in energy, reduce electricity costs, and mitigate power sector challenges. Consistent dedication to these initiatives is crucial for harnessing the full potential of solar energy, ultimately leading to a more sustainable and prosperous future for Pakistan. To provide relief to the people of Pakistan from the burden of escalating utility bills, several measures can be implemented. The government can introduce targeted subsidies for low-income households to help them manage their utility bills. This would ensure that the most vulnerable segments of the population receive financial assistance.

The Essential Role of Trees in the Global Environment.



Iftikhar uddin Anjum

Trees are essential to the health and stability of our planet. They provide essential ecosystem, support biodiversity, mitigate climate change and offer numerous economic and social benefits. This article delves into why trees are necessary for the global environment, examining their ecological importance, their role in

climate regulation, their contributions to human well-being and the urgent need for their conservation. One of the most critical functions of trees is their ability to sequester carbon. Through the process of photosynthesis, trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it as carbon in their biomass (branches, leaves and roots). This natural process helps mitigate the greenhouse effect, which is responsible for global warming and climate change. A tree can absorb up to 48 pounds of carbon dioxide annually, making forests some of the most significant carbon sinks on the planet. Forests store vast amounts of carbon. The

Amazon rainforest alone holds approximately 86 billion tons of carbon. If these forests are degraded or destroyed, the stored carbon is released back into the atmosphere, exacerbating global warming. Thus, preserving existing forests and restoring degraded ones are critical strategies in the fight against climate change. Trees are often referred to as the "lungs of the Earth" because they produce oxygen as a byproduct of photosynthesis. An acre of trees can provide oxygen for up to 18 people annually. This oxygen production is crucial for all aerobic organisms, including humans and helps maintain the balance of atmospheric gases. Trees play

a vital role in the water cycle. Their roots absorb water from the soil, which is then released into the atmosphere through a process called transpiration. This process contributes to cloud formation and precipitation. Forests act as natural sponges, absorbing rainfall and reducing the risk of floods and soil erosion. They also help maintain groundwater levels by allowing water to percolate into the soil. Forests influence regional and global weather patterns. By regulating the water cycle, forests help maintain the availability of fresh water, a resource that is becoming increasingly scarce in many parts of the world. Tree roots help

stabilize soil, preventing erosion by wind and water. This is especially important in hilly and mountainous regions, where deforestation can lead to devastating landslides and soil degradation. Trees also contribute to soil fertility by adding organic matter through leaf litter and root decomposition. By preventing soil erosion and maintaining soil health, trees support agriculture and reduce the risk of desertification. Healthy soils are essential for food production and ecosystem stability. Trees provide habitat and food for a vast array of organisms, from fungi and insects to birds and mammals. Forests are home

to approximately 80% of the world's terrestrial biodiversity. The complex structure of forests creates microhabitats that support diverse species, making them crucial for maintaining biodiversity. Trees also support biodiversity by facilitating ecological interactions, such as pollination and seed dispersal. These interactions are essential for the reproduction and survival of many plant and animal species. Many endangered species rely on forest ecosystems for their survival. Deforestation and habitat loss are primary threats to these species. Protecting and restoring forested areas can help conserve endangered

species and maintain ecological balance. For example, the orangutan, which is critically endangered, depends on the rainforests of Borneo and Sumatra for its habitat. Forests are reservoirs of genetic diversity. This diversity is crucial for the resilience of ecosystems, allowing species to adapt to changing environmental conditions and resist diseases. The genetic variation found in forest species also has potential benefits for agriculture, medicine, and biotechnology. Preserving forest biodiversity ensures that we can continue to explore and utilize these genetic resources in the future. Trees

Experts Discuss Next-Generation Air Warfare Strategies at CASS Lahore



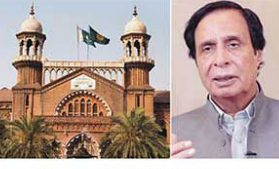
Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Lahore, hosted a seminar titled "Next-Generation Air Warfare: Transforming South Asian Air Forces" on 27 June 2024. The event focused on the evolving landscape of air warfare, amid emerging technologies. MS Nidaa Shahid, Senior Researcher, CASS, delivered the introductory remarks. Air Commodore

Khalid Banuri (Retd), a senior strategy analyst, delivered a compelling keynote address wherein he discussed the evolution of air warfare through emerging technologies such as AI and called for active partnership between the defence sector, government entities and the private sector to leverage emerging technologies and to ensure the modernisation of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF). Dr Ghulam Mujaddid, Assistant Professor, National Defence

University, provided insights from the Russia-Ukraine conflict, illustrating the effectiveness of advanced weapon systems in air warfare. He emphasized the strategic use of cyber warfare in modern military operations to bolster the resilience of smaller air forces against larger adversaries. Dr Adil Sultan, Dean FASS, Air University, illustrated the critical importance of continuous adaptation, stating that next-generation air dominance will feature advanced aircraft, drones, AI and integrated systems. In his concluding remarks, Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd), President, CASS, Lahore, said that the PAF stands at a critical juncture in evolving geopolitical and military scenarios. He highlighted the pivotal role of emerging technologies such as AI, big data analytics, hypersonic weapons etc. in national defence. Noting that the IAF is incorporating these advancements, he stressed the need for the PAF to remain proactive and innovative. He also praised Chief of Air Staff Zaher Ahmad Babar Sidhu's flagship project, NASTP, for its vital role in integrating these technologies and maintaining the PAF's strategic edge.

LHC fixes hearing on plea seeking Parvez Elahi's removal from ECL

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The Lahore High Court (LHC) fixed on Friday fixed hearing on plea seeking removal of the former chief minister Punjab, Parvez Elahi from the Exit Control List (ECL). LHC Justice Ali Baqar Najafi will conduct hearing after a while. The Federal Government and other relevant authorities have been made respondents in the plea.



The application reads that former CM wants to perform Umrah but the government had illegally put his name on the ECL.

It has been pleaded that the LHC should allow the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf President to perform Umrah.

Terrorism is a national Issue, mustn't be associated with one province, says Barrister Saif

Soon Times Correspondent PESHAWAR
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Advisor Barrister Dr Saif has clarified that terrorism was a national issue, it mustn't be associated with only one province,



He insisted that his province, KP was on the frontline against terrorism since 40 years. He cleared the air, stating, "no operation must be launched without the approval of Parliament, operations were launched with the approval of

referring to announcement of Operation Azm-e-Istehkam in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province against terrorist outfits. Addressing a conference in Peshawar, he asserted that PM only made announcement about the operation in the KP province but didn't provide any details, it has created confusions. These ambiguities has led to baseless criticism on Army, National Assembly and KP CM, he added. He stated KP CM has made clarifications on this matter in the parliamentary session. Barrister Saif insisted that KP CM was maligning that he was aware about the operation but he insisted that details were not discussed about the Azm-e-Istehkam operation. He added that KP CM was proved right when Federal Minister Atta Tarar claimed that decision on operation was not finalised in the apex committee of PM.

Parliament in the past as well. He stressed that operation will be launched in the province only with the approval of provincial assembly (KP Assembly). A federal cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif gave approval to Operation Azm-e-Istehkam and other related decisions taken at the Apex Committee formed under the revived National Action Plan (NAP). Shehbaz said it would be an intelligence-based exercise and didn't involve any hardships to general public, as he discussed the rumours circulating regarding the planned anti-terrorism operation. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said the operation had been envisaged to arrest the rise in terrorism activities in recent months and mentioned that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur did not raise any objection to the proposed operation at the Apex Committee meeting.

Al-Hussain Hospital claimed the life of a woman in delivery case



Soon Times Correspondent Kot Momin:
A woman who came to Al-Hussain Hospital in Kot Momin for a delivery

case lost her life due to the alleged wrong operation by the doctor. Al-Hussain Hospital situated at Salim Road

claimed the life of woman. The family members protested and said that the doctor did the wrong operation and asked us to take the woman to Sargodha, saying that the blood pressure was low. Our daughter died on the way, family members added. The family members have applied to Kot Momin police station for registration of FIR. Sargodha Health employees are also supporting these quacks in Tehsils of Sargodha by receiving monthly extortion from them. Citizens demanded action from CEO Health against these quacks but still CEO Health is reluctant to take action. The relatives of the deceased woman have demanded the Health Minister and Chief Secretary Punjab to take notice and take legal action against the quack who performed the operation.

Young Doctors Association calls off strike after 14 days of protests



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The Young Doctors Association (YDA) has decided to call off the strike across the government hospitals after 14 days of protests. The YDA general council held a session having detailed discussion till late night. It was decided in the meeting that protection would be taken from the court in anticipation of disciplinary action by

the health department against doctors. The YDA will request the court to order fulfillment of their fair demands and also seek formation of a judicial inquiry into Sahival's teaching hospital fire incident. Read: Sahival Hospital's high-ups face inquiry after 11 newborns die due to blaze. The doctors will also take up in court the demand for restoration and extension of

doctors who have been suspended from service. A day before, the LHC ordered the YDA to call off the strike immediately. Acting CJ Shujaat Ali remarked, "Punjab is the largest province with 120 million population who connect with you (doctors) daily." During the hearing, the judge expressed dismay over the doctors' presence in court, remarking, "Doctors must be available in hospitals, not in courts." YDA President Dr Shabbir Niazi had filed a petition through Advocate Noshab Khan, making the Punjab government and others respondents. The YDA pleaded to the court to suspend the decision of postgraduate training closure till the final verdict on the petition. Earlier, LHC's Justice Shahid Karim dismissed the plea filed by citizen Mazhar Abbas against young doctors' strike across government hospitals, declaring it inadmissible. Justice Shahid Karim remarked that "its government matter of concern, not ours (judiciary)".

Pakistan committed to UN peacekeeping partnership, says minister

(Web Desk) - Pakistan will work with the United Nations and all interested states to further develop the concept of peace enforcement, the interior minister said during a UN summit in New York on Friday. According to Radio Pakistan, Mohsin Naqvi in his address at the UN COP26 Summit 2024 at the United Nations General Assembly said Pakistan was proud of its longstanding contributions to the UN peacekeeping. He said that Pakistan was committed to peacekeeping partnership, especially with the African Union and the OIC. "In today's perilous times, the world faces threats of forced foreign interventions, suppression of freedom struggles, poverty, inequality, global tensions, military tensions and nuclear arm race." Naqvi said preventive diplomacy should focus on addressing the root cause of conflicts, adding that the UN peacekeeping missions faced increasing challenges from terrorist groups, tribal rivalries and threats to safety. He said Pakistan agreed with the cause of series and broad-based future reflection of



the UN peacekeeping. The minister suggested that peacekeeping missions must be part of an overall political strategy, which seeks to address and resolve the cause of conflict and violence. He said the mandate of the UN peacekeeping must be responsive to the special circumstances or situations. He added that each mission should be provided with adequate human and material resources and advanced capabilities like radars and early warning intelligence. Naqvi said improvement could be made in command and control structure especially to ensure timely response to attacks against civilians and peacekeepers. He said the collective mission of the UN peacekeepers was clear to foster international cooperation in safeguarding communities and ensuring the security of nations.

No factions within PTI, insists Shibli Faraz

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
A day after PTI firebrand leader Sher Afzal Marwat, who is at loggerheads with PTI leadership, demanded Shibli Faraz's resignation from party position and as the leader of the opposition in Senate, the latter snapped back on Friday, stating he did not wish to respond to unimportant people. Rejecting reports of internal divisions, Faraz insisted there were no factions within PTI, and added the names of fugitives would be condemned in history. Reports indicate that PTI leaders, including Shahyaz Afridi, Shandana Gulzar, Sher Afzal Marwat and even former party spokesperson Fawad Chaudhry, have



publicly aired grievances against the party leadership, criticising their failure to secure the release of party founder Imran Khan. Commenting on Thursday's verdict upholding the sentences of Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi in the alleged

un-Islamic marriage case, Faraz said it proved to be a laughing stock for the entire world. Faraz emphasised the importance of upholding the rule of law and the supremacy of the constitution, affirming that PTI founder Imran Khan endured imprisonment not for personal gain, but for the entire Pakistani nation. "Only a strong leader can propel the nation forward," Faraz said that unlike former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari, who had converted jail into five-star hotels during imprisonment, PTI founder Imran Khan embraced a death cell.

SNGPL disconnected 53 connections & imposed Rs 3.4 million fine

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE:
During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad. It disconnected 53 connections and imposed fine of Rs 3.4 million. In Lahore, the team disconnected 08 connections on illegal use of gas. In Multan, the team disconnected 10 connections on illegal use of gas. The regional team of Sheikhpura disconnected 02 connections on illegal use of gas and

booked Rs 0.99 million against gas theft cases. In Bahawalpur, the team disconnected 02 connections on the illegal use of gas and 08 on the use of compressors. The regional team of Faisalabad disconnected 01 connection on illegal use of gas and imposed a fine of Rs 0.02 million. In Mardan, the team disconnected 20 connections on illegal use of gas and booked Rs 2.4 million against gas theft cases. The regional team of Sahival disconnected 02 connections on the illegal use of gas.



Israel storms Gaza City neighbourhood, orders Palestinians to go south

CAIRO
Israel stormed a neighbourhood in Gaza City on Thursday (Jun 27), ordering Palestinians to move south as the tanks rolled in and bombed the southern city of Rafah in what it says are the final stages of an operation against Hamas there. Residents of the Shejaia neighbourhood in Gaza City said they were taken by surprise by the sound of tanks approaching and firing in the early afternoon, with drones also attacking after overnight bombing of the city, which Israel had combed early in the war.



Pope says he wants to visit Turkey for Council of Nicaea anniversary

VATICAN CITY
Pope Francis said on Friday he wanted to visit Turkey next year to celebrate the anniversary of the first council of the Christian Church. "It's a trip that I desire to go on, with all my heart," the pontiff told a delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in Istanbul, a Vatican statement said. The early centuries of Christianity were marked by lively debate about how Jesus could be both God and man, and the Church decided on the issue at the First Council of Nicaea - now known as Nizik - in 325. Earlier in May, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who is based in Istanbul, said Francis was planning to visit the city before heading to Izmir. The Pope's travel agenda for this year includes a September trip to Asia and Oceania, the longest of his 11-year papacy, with stops in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Singapore.



At UN, Pakistan debunks India's claim of Kashmir being its 'integral' part

Jammu and Kashmir remains a disputed territory, as recognised by Security Council resolutions"

UNITED NATIONS
Pakistan hit back after India described occupied Jammu and Kashmir as its "integral and inalienable part" during a UN Security Council debate on children and armed conflict, saying New Delhi was deluding itself by "stubbornly holding on to this legal fiction". "The reality is clear, Jammu and Kashmir remains a disputed territory, as recognised by Security Council resolutions demanding a free and fair plebiscite under UN auspices to determine its future," Pakistani delegate Rabia Ijaz told the 15-member Council. She was responding to an Indian representative who had claimed that Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh were Union territories while reacting to Pakistan Ambassador Munir Akram's earlier statement in which he exposed India's atrocities against children in the disputed Himalayan State with facts and figures. Detailing the plight of children in the occupied territories, where human rights violations are "tragically routine", the Pakistani Ambassador told the Security Council, "Generations of Kashmiri children have grown up amidst fear of violence and repression under foreign occupation." The Indian envoy, Ambassador R. Ravindra, called the Pakistan ambassador's remarks "politically motivated and unfounded", claiming, "As far as the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are concerned they were, are and always will be an integral and inalienable part of India." Exercising her right to reply, Ms. Ijaz, the Pakistani delegate, accused the Indian representative of evading the facts presented by Ambassador Akram, "opting instead to recycle and present

Harris acknowledges Biden had a 'slow start' in debate and tries to calm Democratic fears

WASHINGTON
Vice President Kamala Harris acknowledged that President Joe Biden had a "slow start" in his debate against Donald Trump on Thursday night, but she insisted that he finished "strong" in a performance that triggered a new round of concerns within their own party about Biden's fitness to be their standard-bearer. "It was a slow start. That's obvious to everyone. I'm not going to debate that point," Harris said in an interview on CNN following the debate. "I'm talking about the choice for November. I'm talking about one of the most important elections in our collective lifetime." Harris gave interviews on CNN and MSNBC amid growing Democratic panic over Biden's performance, which fueled longstanding questions about whether the 81-year-old president should step aside. As she acknowledged Biden's uneven performance, Harris emphasized the substance of Trump's remarks during the 90-minute debate, including his refusal to condemn the rioters who stormed the Capitol as well as his unwillingness to emphatically commit to accepting the results of this November's election. She also said the contrast between Biden and Trump ultimately has to be on Biden's performance in office, rather than in one debate.

Iran begins voting in presidential election with limited choices



DUBAI
Iranians started voting on Friday for new president following the death of Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash, choosing from a tightly controlled group of four candidates loyal to the supreme leader, at a time of growing public frustration. Polls opened at 8:00 am (0430 GMT) and close at 6:00 pm (1430 GMT), but are usually extended as late as midnight. The election coincides with escalating regional tension due to war between Israel and Iranian allies Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, as well as increased Western pressure on Iran over its fast-advancing nuclear programme. While the election is unlikely to bring a major shift in the Islamic Republic's policies, its outcome could influence the succession to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's 85-year-old supreme leader, in power since 1989. Khamenei called for a high turnout to offset a legitimacy crisis fuelled by public discontent over economic hardship and curbs on political and social freedom. "The durability, strength, dignity and reputation of the Islamic Republic depend on the presence of people," Khamenei told state television after casting his vote. "High turnout is a definite necessity." Voter turnout has plunged over the past four years, as a mostly youthful population chafes at political and social curbs. Manual counting of ballots means the final result is expected to be announced only in two days, though initial figures may come out sooner. If no candidate wins at least 50 percent plus one vote from all ballots cast, including blank votes, a run-off round between the top two candidates is held on the first Friday after the election result is declared. Three candidates are hardliners and one is a low-profile comparative moderate, backed by the reformist faction that has largely been sidelined in Iran in recent years.

Sports & Showbiz

Pakistan's first Olympic marks Woman guns for historic medal



JHELUM:
Slowing her breath and focusing on a bulls-eye in her pistol's sights, Kishmala Talat is aiming to become the first woman from Pakistan to win an Olympic medal. At the Paris Games starting on July 26, Talat will compete in the 10m air pistol and 25m pistol events, going for glory abroad and defying stereotypes past her home. Pakistan's medal prospects are undercut by modesty codes which dissuade women from participating in sport. The 21-year-old Talat, who comes from a military family, is the first Pakistani woman to qualify for Olympic shooting. "In Pakistan there's a prevalent taboo that dictates girls should stay at home, do girly things, and play with dolls, while boys are to play with guns," she said. "I see no one as competition. I compete with myself," she told AFP at a target range in the eastern city of Jhelum. Talat has won dozens of medals at national level and four internationally, including Pakistan's first shooting medal ever, a bronze.

The Lakers have hired Redick and drafted Bronny. They clearly hope to lock down LeBron for good next



EL SEGUNDO, Calif.
Three days after LeBron James' podcast partner became the Los Angeles Lakers' head coach, the team drafted James' oldest son, Bronny. Unless they rename the franchise after him next, it's difficult to think of anything more the Lakers could do to make sure the top scorer in NBA history stays with them for the rest of his matchless career. Well, short of actually acquiring a third superstar for James after years of trying. Although James' future still won't be a sure thing until he formally decides where he'll play next season, the Lakers' addition of his 19-year-old son in the second round of the draft Thursday seems to make it extraordinarily unlikely LeBron will be anywhere but Los Angeles in the fall. "The biggest moments in sports happen with the Lakers," general manager Rob Pelinka said. "That's how we're built, and we're excited to see this story unfold." LeBron and Bronny — LeBron James Jr., that is — would be the first father and son to play in the NBA at the same time, let alone on the same team. If LeBron Sr. picks up his \$51.4 million player option for next season this week, he would guarantee he'll get to take his son to work in the fall. Pelinka was careful not to get ahead of himself while triumphantly discussing Bronny's potential, but the GM acknowledged that a father-son pairing in purple and gold was "something that could be magical." "We know and have to respect, of course, that LeBron has a decision about his opt-out," Pelinka said. "I'm sure he and his family and his agent will deliberate what they're going to do there, and he has freedom to decide whatever is best for him and his family. But if it worked out that he was on our team next season, NBA history could be made, and NBA history should be made in a Lakers uniform." The Lakers have made it clear they're determined to stick with James as their centerpiece and leader through his record-tying 22nd NBA season this fall and beyond.

Indian actor Hina Khan diagnosed with stage 3 best



(Web Desk) - Hina Khan, a popular Indian actor who has worked in both movies and dramas, has been diagnosed with stage three breast cancer. The actor took to Instagram to announce this melancholic news with her friends and fans. She also requested for prayers amidst this tragic time. In her post, Hina expressed her determination to overcome the disease. "Despite this daunting diagnosis, I want to assure everyone that I am strong and resolute in my fight against this illness," she wrote. She confirmed that her treatment has begun and is ready for any challenge that comes her way. "I will fight every battle to defeat breast cancer, and I am confident of my success," she stated.

Paolini sets up Eastbourne semi against Kasatkina as Brits flop



EASTBOURNE (United Kingdom) (AFP) - French Open finalist Jasmine Paolini set up a semi-final at Eastbourne against last year's beaten finalist Daria Kasatkina on Thursday on a day to forget for Britain's women's players. Italian third seed Paolini broke British number one Katie Boulter twice as she dominated the first set but the second set was more even as the players swapped breaks. However, Paolini, who lost to Iga Swiatek at Roland Garros earlier this month, stepped up a gear in the tie-break, winning seven straight points to seal a 6-1, 7-6 (7-0) victory. "I played a really good match," Paolini, 28, said in her on-court interview. "She's a really good player on grass. Of course she's British, so it's tough to beat her here, especially. I'm happy. I'm enjoying the grass here in Eastbourne." Boulter, ranked 32nd in the world, came to Eastbourne in good form after retaining her Nottingham Open crown earlier this month. Russia's Kasatkina eased through 6-2, 6-2 against Britain's former US Open champion Emma Raducanu, who celebrated her first win over a top-10 player on Wednesday, ousting second seed Jessica Pegula. The sixth seed broke Raducanu twice in the first set to take a firm grip. Both players struggled on serve in the second set, with a total of six breaks, but the Russian held to complete the win when Raducanu went long with a forehand. "It's great to be back at Eastbourne and back on grass with the windy conditions and the seagulls," said Kasatkina. "I was trying to be controlled because the conditions were very tough. You have to play and try to win as many points as you can and try to put as many balls inside the court as you can."