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My China visit to open new chapter in bilateral, economic ties, says Shehbaz

The prime minister spelled out his government's priorities to improve the national economy



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Tuesday that his visit to Beijing would open new chapter in bilateral relations and economic cooperation. As the prime minister embarked upon a five-day official visit to China, he reiterated his commitment to strengthening bilateral ties by "engaging in discussions with business leaders to secure investments and yield dividends mutually beneficial for companies on both sides." He stated this while talking to the representatives of different Chinese media groups, including Xinhua news agency, national broadcaster CCTV and CGTN Urdu, prior to his first official visit to China after assuming office. "We are coming with serious plans. We will engage with you and return to Pakistan with great dividends that will benefit Chinese and Pakistani companies and the two countries will have their relations strengthened and become much higher than the Himalayas or any other highest peaks and deeper than the deepest oceans."

He said through the visit, Pakistan hoped to promote interaction between enterprises in both countries, utilize Special Economic Zones and Pakistan's labor advantages to establish joint ventures, facilitate the transfer of industries and technologies, and enhance Pakistan's manufacturing output, to promote constructing upgraded China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the prime minister said. The prime minister spelled out his government's priorities to improve the national economy through structural and institutional reforms, cost-cutting, industrialisation and facilitation of the investors. He said Pakistan wanted to learn from Chinese experiences and build the SEZs with the first one to be developed at Pakistan Steel Mills premises already connected with the rail network, and located near the port. He invited the Chinese provinces and companies to build SEZs and enter into joint ventures with Pakistani companies for mutual benefits.

Mohsin Naqvi assures Pope Francis of minorities' protection



Soon Times Correspondent LONDON Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met Pope Francis in the Vatican City. During his foreign tour, Naqvi visited the Vatican City where he was accorded a warm welcome. He called on Pope Francis and the bilateral talks revolved around the imperative of inter-faith harmony. Pope Francis lauded the Pakistan government's efforts to renovate churches after the infamous Jaranvala case.

Pakistan Navy and Maritime Security Agency seized a large consignment of drugs



Soon Times Correspondent KARACHI Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency seized a large consignment of drugs at sea in a joint anti-narcotics operation. PMSA Zohb seized a large quantity of narcotics in the North Arabian Sea. The seized drugs are worth thousands of dollars in the international market. This is the

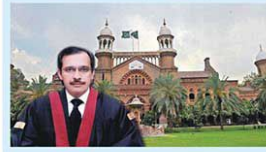
Sarkein Bahal... Punjab Khushhal: CM Maryam Nawaz Directs to Rehabilitate Roads Across Punjab at the Earliest

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE "Ensure to meet deadline for the construction, repair and rehabilitation of roads across Punjab," Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed the authorities concerned while chairing a special meeting to review progress on the construction, expansion and rehabilitation of roads in the province. Madam Chief Minister was briefed in detail about the progress made so far in the roads maintenance program in the Province. She was also briefed on the construction and maintenance of 5 major expressways in Punjab.



Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Ambassador of Qatar to Pakistan H.E. Mr Ali Bin Mubarak Al Khater, in order to discuss possible investment opportunities in Punjab, labor force supply from the province, and other matters of mutual interest. Cooperation in the development of infrastructure and other sectors in Punjab were also discussed in the meeting. Madam Chief Minister briefed H.E. Mr Ali Bin Mubarak Al Khater about the business-friendly policies of Punjab government, and invited Qatari businessmen and industrialists to invest in Punjab. Both leaders stressed the need to strengthen bilateral relations and find new ways of cooperation.

LHC's Justice Shahid Karim recuses himself from hearing election tribunals case



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE Justice Shahid Karim of the Lahore High Court has recused himself from holding further proceedings on a petition challenging the presidential ordinance, which allows the appointment of retired judges besides serving judges as members of election tribunals. On May 28, Acting President Yousuf Raza Gilani signed the Elections Act (Amendment) Ordinance, 2024, into law, allowing the appointment of retired judges alongside serving judges as members of election tribunals. On Tuesday (today), as the proceedings commenced, Justice Karim recused himself from further hearing and sent the case file to Chief Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmed Khan. On the previous hearing, the lawyer representing the federation opposed the petition brought against the presidential ordinance by a citizen Mashkoor Hussain, who was instructed by the court to prepare for arguments.

Depriving a political party of symbol main reason behind series of legal mistakes: Justice Muneeb

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD Hearing the Sunni Ittehad Council's appeal for allotment of reserved seats, the Supreme Court on Tuesday observed that depriving a political party of election symbol became the root cause of a series of mistakes. During the proceedings, Justice Muneeb observed that the Supreme Court decision was announced just before allocation of election symbols to parties. He remarked that there were a series of legal mistakes which began from this point.

Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa asked if apex court had given ruling that the bat symbol would not be allotted to the PTI. PTI lawyer Faris Siddiqui said, "No, the Supreme Court did not say so." The CJP said court had not asked the PTI to hold intra-party elections. If the PTI would hold intra-party elections, all the problems would be solved, he observed. Justice Athar Minallah said the PTI was continuously complaining it had not been provided a level playing field. The chief justice said the



complaint was not before the court. Justice Minallah said the Supreme Court was responsible for protection of basic rights of the people. "We will see how to protect basic rights of the people." Justice Ayesha Malik said the election symbol reserved for a party could not be given to a candidate of any other party. The chief justice remarked that after apex court ruling if the PTI candidates declared themselves independent and demanded bat symbol? He observed that the PTI deprived its people of democratic right by not holding intra-party polls. He remarked, "The ECP decisions are challenged everyday. You are not now

independents." Full Court Last week, a full court had been formed to hear the case except for the acting Justice Musarat Hilaal. A 13-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justices Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Munib Akhtar, Yahya Afridi, Amrullah Khan, Mandokhaili, Muhammad Ali Mughar, Ayesha Malik, Athar Minallah, Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Shahid Waheed, Irfan Saadat Khan and Naeem Akhtar Afghan, resumed the hearing on Monday.

Karachi street crime: MQM-P's Mustafa Kamal demands measures against deadly muggings

Mustafa Kamal laments the loss of 71 lives claimed by muggers in Karachi this year.

Soon Times Correspondent KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan's (MQM-P) leader, Mustafa Kamal demanded on Tuesday that the government to take measures to curb deadly street crime in the country that led to brutal killing of a number innocent civilians. Addressing a fiery press conference, Kamal termed the ongoing killing of civilians over resisting robberies 'genocide'. He rejected law enforcement agencies' claim of peace in the country highlighting 71 people killed by muggers this year. Kamal during the presser was surrounded by people carrying pictures of victims who lost lives in different mugging incidents in the metropolis. MQM leader urged the government to



According to the FIR registered on the complaint of Usman Moiz, brother of the victim, identified as 27-year-old Ittifa Moiz, two armed men on a motorcycle intercepted Ittifa as he was returning from a bakery run. They forcibly snatched his motorcycle, mobile phone, and cash, and started beating him. This is when Ittifa put up resistance, prompting the mugger to open fire. Kamal condoled with the parents of Ittifa and said that people of urban areas are being oppressed under the quota system in Sindh for the last 50 years. He alleged that jobs are given to the people of rural Sindh on the quota of urban Sindh by creating fake domiciles and now these talented youths are being killed under the guise of robbery.

Iddat case fixed for June 7 on Bushra Bibi's plea

Bushra Bibi had requested court to fix appeals against conviction in case for hearing this week

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Bushra Bibi, the wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, Tuesday moved a district and sessions court in the federal capital, seeking an early hearing of her appeals filed against her conviction in the iddat case. In her petition, the former first lady argued that the appeals against conviction are scheduled for hearing in the local court, requesting it to fix the appeals for hearing this week. Following her appeal, the court fixed the hearing of the appeals on June 7, seeking arguments on the case. The plea by Bushra had been filed a day after the Islamabad High Court



accepted District and Sessions Judge Shahrukh Arjumand's request seeking transfer of the iddat case to another court. The IHC's decision came days after the judge wrote a letter to its registrar, stating it would not be appropriate for him to announce the verdict in the aforementioned case due to reservations raised by Bushra's former husband and petitioner Khawar Maneka. Following the judge's request, the IHC transferred the case to the court of Additional District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Adze Majuka. Bushra Bibi's lawyers, Salman Safdar and Khalid Yusuf, appeared in Judge Majuka's court, requesting the suspension of the sentence which has been pending since March 11. Safdar said that the verdict was handed down on March 29, but Maneka expressed his lack of confidence in the judge — which has delayed the hearing. He added that Bushra Bibi did not even get the right to defend herself. "The innocent have been held prisoners. Her health is bad," the lawyer argued and requested the court to suspend the sentence this week.

Post-2022 Floods

The Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr. Ahmad Khan Cheema chaired the 4th meeting of the International Partners Support Group (IPSG) at the Prime Minister's Office in Islamabad on 4th June 2024. This meeting marked almost two years since the devastating floods of 2022, aiming to review the progress of flood recovery and realign efforts for a resilient Pakistan. The meeting was attended by Ms. Romina Khurshid, the Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, along with Secretaries and senior officials from the ministries of Economic Affairs, Finance and Revenue, Foreign Affairs, Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, and the Climate Change Division. Additionally, representatives from bilateral and multilateral development partners, including ambassadors

from Azerbaijan, Sweden, Kazakhstan, Norway, Australia, and diplomats from Germany, China, UAE, South Korea, USA, Qatar, Turkey, Netherlands, Russia, Japan, France, Switzerland, as well as officials from the Canadian and British High Commissions, participated in the event. Representatives from various international organizations such as UNDP, World Bank, ADB, IMF, AIIB, UNRC, EU, KfW, UNICEF, IsDB, WFP, AICS, and USAID were also present. In his inaugural remarks, Mr. Cheema warmly welcomed IPSG members, acknowledging the collaborative efforts of the international community and Pakistan in post-flood recovery. He expressed profound gratitude for the commitments of International Development Partners towards building a climate-resilient Pakistan. The Minister highlighted the importance of energy and infrastructure as essential

prerequisites for all development and reconstruction efforts, with hopes for continued focus from international development partners in these critical areas. Highlighting IPSG's pivotal role in coordinating the Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework (4RF), he outlined its objectives: assisting in plan development, securing financial commitments, providing guidance, and addressing funding gaps. Mr. Cheema emphasized provincial cooperation and reiterated the commitment to transparency in implementing 4RF projects, as pledged by the Prime Minister in the previous IPSG meeting. During the meeting, the development partners expressed their appreciation for the convening of the fourth meeting of the IPSG and lauded the sustained attention given to post-flood reconstruction and rehabilitation endeavors.

Deliberations underscored the significance of fiscal stability, economic growth, and the nurturing of human capital. Additionally, the World Bank and UNDP presented updates on post-flood activities. In his concluding remarks, the Minister recalled the pledges made at the "International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan" held in Geneva, with an amount of US\$ 10,987 billion pledged by the international community of which US\$ 2.8 billion, up to April 2024, has been disbursed. While acknowledging the support provided by the UNDP, Mr. Cheema thanked Dr. Samuel Rizk, the Resident Representative, for offering secretariat services to the IPSG. The meeting was concluded with a renewed commitment to collaboration and transparency in achieving the goals of the Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework.

Recognizing Palestine Marks New Era in Diplomacy



Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer

peace. Other European countries might follow suit adding to the over 140 nations that already recognize Palestinian statehood. However, the situation remains complex and tense. Rafah, a city in the Gaza Strip is under the heavy attack despite international calls for restraint. This includes appeals from the International Court of Justice, the United States and the European Union. This makes it challenging to see these diplomatic recognitions as anything more than symbolic gestures, highlighting internal divisions within Europe and its struggle to apply coordinated pressure on Israel. The actions by Ireland, Spain and Norway might reflect growing frustration in Europe over stalled peace efforts and the Israeli government's perceived stubbornness. Yet, without a unified European approach, these individual recognitions may not significantly change the situation.

The ongoing violence in Rafah emphasizes the gap between diplomatic actions and on the ground realities. Even though more countries recognizing Palestinian statehood could be a symbolic win for Palestinians, it is uncertain if this will lead to real progress towards peace especially with strong opposition from key players like Israel and the United States. For these recognitions to be effective, Europe needs to present a unified and strong front which is difficult given current geopolitical dynamics. The decision by Ireland, Spain and Norway was expected due to their national debates and growing public support for action supporting Palestine. Politically, this is notable because other European countries, such as Malta, Slovenia and Belgium have hesitated to take similar steps. Belgium has been vocal about Palestinian rights during its presidency of the Council of the

European Union however national elections and other factors have made it cautious. National election cycles and the upcoming election of a new European Parliament have influenced how European governments handle the sensitive Middle East issue, depending on their domestic politics and the views of their ruling parties. The decisions by Ireland, Spain and Norway's involvement (though not an EU member) are significant for breaking the EU's diplomatic unity rather than for their legal impact. Most of the few EU members that recognized Palestinian statehood did so in 1988 before joining the EU and were mainly former Warsaw Pact countries. Before the recent declarations only Sweden had departed from the EU's general stance on Palestine, doing so in 2014. The current Swedish government's different stance compared to the previous one

shows how volatile this issue can be. There is still no consistent, unified approach among all 27 EU member states that goes beyond national political cycles and short-term agendas. Even though there has been some agreement within the EU since the conflict started, reaching a comprehensive EU-wide consensus is still far off. It would be too cynical to dismiss the entire EU diplomatic effort after the October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorist attack as futile. The EU High Representative Josep Borrell has worked hard to coordinate a common European position during critical moments of the conflict, sometimes with success. The Spanish and Belgian EU presidencies have tried to convince Israel that resuming peace talks is a key to defeating Hamas politically not just militarily. Despite Israel's ongoing military campaign which has killed tens of thousands, EU leaders like Germany and France

have become more critical of Israeli policy. French President Emmanuel Macron even said in February that recognizing Palestinian statehood is no longer a taboo for Paris. However, the EU has not yet united around measures that would apply real pressure especially in trade and economic relations. The EU is the largest provider of aid to Palestinians and Israel's biggest trade partner. Recently, sanctions were seriously discussed for the first time at an EU foreign ministers' meeting but no agreement was reached. It's important for the EU to stay involved in resolving the conflict by engaging with Arab countries, but its effectiveness is limited by internal differences and political exigencies. With pro-Israel Hungary taking over the EU Council presidency in July, achieving a common and meaningful EU position will remain a challenge.

Message of Chief of The Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf on World Environment Day 2024



Soon Times Correspondent

for the WED is 'Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience'. The occasion will serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need to protect our land, sea, and everything in between. Pakistan's long coastline provides access to rich resources of livelihood for millions of people. Our marine resources are a treasure trove of biodiversity that support a vast array of marine life, from majestic sea turtles to colourful coral reefs. However, our coastal areas and marine eco-system is faced with grave threats from human activities that include marine pollution, such as oil spills and industrial effluents endangering marine life and contaminating the food chain. Overfishing and unsustainable fishing practices are depleting fish populations, damaging the delicate balance of our marine ecosystem. Rising sea levels are causing coastal erosion which is accentuated by deforestation and construction activities that threaten the very

existence of our coastal communities. Pakistan Navy celebrates WED to highlight the significance of environment in Pakistan to promote awareness amongst personnel and encourage them to adopt practices conducive to the marine environment. PN has initiated numerous measures and actions ranging from collection of solid waste from harbour, establishment of Reedbed Plants in all areas under its jurisdiction and extensive tree plantation campaign. PN also continues to sensitize concerned Government and Non-Government organizations and departments to join hands and take actions to stem marine pollution and desertification. A number of activities are planned by Field Commands and PN Units to inculcate a sense of responsibility amongst all to save and preserve our environment. I expect all under Command to make concerted efforts and conduct these

activities earnestly. National Institute of Maritime Affairs is also organizing a one day seminar on the theme of the day to create awareness in collaboration with Bahria University, WWF Pakistan and Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination. As a nation, we have faced numerous challenges and overcome them successfully through resilience and determination. Let us now unite to tackle the environmental crisis affecting our coastal areas and marine ecosystems with the same spirit, zeal and zest. We owe it to ourselves, our children, and the country's future to protect vast resources and nature's immense bounties. Remember, a clean and environment friendly Pakistan is a prosperous Pakistan! Let us join hands to build a sustainable future, where our land and sea are preserved and forests, both ashore and in coastal zones, grown and nurtured for the generations to come.

CORRIGENDUM
(Already advertised IP No 918)
TENDER NOTICE

PURCHASE OF ITEMS UNDER REVENUE COMPONENT OF SO (HOME, HILLD, ESTABLISHMENT OF MODEL E-REGISTRATION CENTER, DISTRICT SARGODHA).

The Contract for provision of goods / items for newly constructed **ESTABLISHMENT OF MODEL E-REGISTRATION CENTER, DISTRICT SARGODHA** are required. In this regard, sealed quotations / tenders / bid documents are invited from firms / vendors registered with Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) NTN / GST and registered by relevant body as per PPRR Rules / any other policy and rules of Government of the Punjab.

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- Interested parties are required to submit their tenders with Technical and Financial proposals (two envelopes single step) in separate envelope up to 21, June, 2024 at 11:00 A.M and will be opened at 11:30 A.M on the same date by authorized committee in presence of Firms / Vendors or their authorized agents. Tender form will be collected from office of the Deputy Commissioner Office, Sargodha well before 11:00 P.M on 21, June, 2024 after paying a tender fee of Rs. 20000/- (Non-refundable).
- Framework contract of goods/items for ESTABLISHMENT OF MODEL E-REGISTRATION CENTER, DISTRICT SARGODHA shall be made in accordance with the Punjab Procurement Rules-2014 (Amended upto date) on SINGLE STAGE TWO ENVELOPS BASIS.
- Tender documents along with qualification, evaluation criteria and standardized specification of the item/service are available on PPRR website for perusal.
- Financial Proposal shall accompany bid money CDR in the name of Deputy Commissioner, Sargodha as mentioned in the tender / bid documents.
- The rates offered for purchase of items / goods shall be of standard level as per the Bid documents.
- Bid documents which are incomplete, not sealed, every page not signed, affidavit not attached and late or submitted by other than the specified mode shall be rejected / consider to be rejected, if their authorized agents. Tender form will be collected from office of the Deputy Commissioner Office, Sargodha well before 11:00 P.M on 21, June, 2024 after paying a tender fee of Rs. 20000/- (Non-refundable).
- Vendors / firms shall have to show verified requisite samples before the technical evaluation committee.
- The Procuring Agency reserves the right to accept or reject the tender at any time prior to the acceptance of quotation without explaining any reason.
- The Procuring Agency has the right to increase or decrease the quantity. The decision of the Procuring Agency will be final and not be challenged in any Court.
- Every item will be installed by the Firms / Vendors and will also look after during the warranty period for said purpose. No separate charges will be paid to the contractor for all the installation / Detail terms & conditions will be mentioned in tender / bid documents and same will be followed by the Firm / Vendor.
- Rates offered in the letter / tender will be applicable for the whole financial year 2023-24.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue)
Sargodha

It is Sunnah of the Lord to mention the guardians: Allama Adnan

Soon Times Correspondent
 Haripur:
 Allah has mentioned his guardians in 90 verses in the Holy Quran. Allah has mentioned the guardians and said that it is Sunnah of the Lord to mention the guardians. The attribute of the guardians is that the guardian is neither afraid nor sad. Compared to Yazid's 72,000 army, only 72 Hussain's soldiers stood firm and they were neither sad. The saints were not afraid, if they practiced hard work, then we will be close to Allah. If we fight for the true guardians of Allah, then we will be closer to Allah and any guardian will be a

guardian until then it cannot be done unless the seal of Hazrat Ali is placed on his guardianship, because the Prophet himself said that whoever I worship, Ali is his worshiper. Allama Adnan Waheed Qasimi Khatib Sheikhupura expressed these thoughts in Sadat Panian yesterday in Panian. Addressing the annual Urs Mubarak ceremony of Jamia Masjidit held under the patronage and presidency of Pir Syed Azam Ali Shah Sajjada Nashin Astana Alia Gulzar Medina in Panian, in which Senator Pir Sabir Hussain Shah Darbar Shatalu Sharif Pir Syed Maqbool Hussain Shah Darbar Syed Abad Sharif

Sahibzada Pir Aatur Rehman Sajjada Nashin Darbar Chohar. Sharif Pir Syed Ahmad Shah Pir Syed Abdullah Shah Pir Syed Sabir Shah Pir Syed Hazrat Shah Pir Syed Amir Shah Pir Syed Sarwar Shah Darbar Syed Abad Sharif Allama Pir Shafriz Rehman Allama Qazi Umar Allama Pir Syed Mubarak Shah Allama Mushtaq Naqshbandi, including a large number of scholars, eminent scholars and hundreds of people of love and devotion. At the end Pir Syed Azam Ali Shah made a special prayer.

Khawaja Moinuddin is counted among the founders of dramas in Pakistan: Samdani

Soon Times Correspondent
 Karachi:
 Khawaja Moinuddin belonged to Hyderabad Deccan, whose own scholarly, literary, and cultural history is known. Among the companions of Khawaja Moinuddin were Mukhdoom Ibrahim Jalees, Nazir Hyderabad, Hamaayat Ali Shaar, and others. Professor Doctor Moinuddin Aqel, President of the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi District Central in collaboration with the idara-ilm Dost Pakistan, held a "Muzakrali" on the occasion of the centenary of Khawaja Moinuddin's birth. He said that the babo-e-drama Khawaja Moinuddin is counted among the founders of dramas in Pakistan. He wrote purposeful dramas in Pakistan and expressed societal issues. I am very pleased to see today's event, for which I think the President of the Arts Council,



Muhammad Ahmed Shah, Bashir Sadozai, and Shahid Mohiuddin, who organized the event at the Arts Council District Central. The distinguished guest of the event, Professor Rais Ahmed Samdani, described the history of Khawaja Moinuddin's dramas and said that Khawaja Shb depicted the same conditions in Lal Qila as those present in our city. He said that Khawaja Moinuddin introduced the principles of faith, unity, and organization in adult education so that they

could be adopted for problem-solving. Mir Husain Ali Imam, Secretary General of the idara-ilm Dost Pakistan, presented the agreement on this occasion and said that the auditorium of the Arts Council District Central should be named Khawaja Moinuddin Auditorium, for which I request Resident Director Bashir Sadozai to approve my agreement. Resident Director of the Arts Council, Bashir Sadozai, while approving the agreement, said that a formal announcement of this agreement will also be made. Bashir Sadozai said that English drama classes have started in the Arts Council and computer classes will also be held soon.

CM Maryam directs officials to expedite crackdown on power theft

Soon Times Correspondent
 LAHORE:
 Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Monday directed the officials to expedite the crackdown on the power theft.



A meeting was held with CM Maryam Nawaz in the chair over the issue of power theft. A detailed report was presented over the performance of five distribution companies including LESCO. Punjab chief secretary and IG police gave a briefing over the ongoing crackdown on the power theft.

"As many as 660 policemen are taking part in the crackdown on the power theft in every

district." IG briefed the meeting. The meeting was attended by Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Information Minister Azma Bukhari, MPA Samia Ashiq, Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, IG Punjab Dr Usman Anwar and Principal Secretary to CM Sajid Zafar Dal.

ANF recovered 49 kg drugs & arrested 3 suspects

Soon Times Correspondent
 Rawalpindi:
 ANF's operations against drug trafficking are continuing. ANF recovered more than 49 kg of drugs in 5 operations and arrested 3 suspects. 4.4 kg of ice was recovered from the parcel sent to Australia at the courier office in Islamabad. 424 grams of ice was recovered from a passenger going to Doha

at Islamabad Airport. ANF recovered 35 kg hashish from Panjgur. ANF recovered 6 kg hashish from the accused in Sialkot. 4 kg of opium was recovered from the accused near Qasim Chowk Road, Hyderabad. According to the spokesperson of ANF, investigations have been started by registering cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act against all the arrested accused.

Pro-Palestine Protest Held in Islamabad: Calls for Financial and Moral Support



Soon Times Correspondent
 Islamabad:
 A significant protest demonstration was held in Islamabad to express solidarity with the Palestinian people, organized by the Islamic Pakistan Organization. The protesters, carrying banners and placards, condemned Israeli actions against Palestinians, particularly

highlighting the eight months of bombardment. The demonstration began at the Martyrs' Mosque and culminated in a rally at Al-Babara Chowk. Participants emphasized that supporting Palestine financially and morally is a matter of national honor and faith. Addressing the crowd, speakers declared that raising a

collective voice against Israeli brutality is the responsibility of the entire nation, not just religious or political organizations. Amir of Punjab North, Ishfaq Hussain, invoked the words of Qasim-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Iqbal, urging unity and solidarity with the Palestinian people. He appealed to political and religious parties to set aside differences and unite to pressure Israel into ceasing its actions against Palestinians. Former Amir of Islamabad district, Dr. Zameer Akhtar Khan, underscored the importance of collective action. He emphasized that the plight of Palestinians affects the entire Muslim community and that Pakistanis must continue to support their Palestinian brothers financially and morally.

PSX drops more than 900 points as next year's federal budget approaches

KSE-100 dips by around 1.22%, shedding 908 points before closing at 74,666.65 points.

Soon Times Correspondent
 KARACHI:
 The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) took the plunge of more than 900 points in the KSE-100 index benchmark. During the intraday trading on Tuesday, the PSX dipped nearly 1.22%, closing at 74,666.65 points. The PSX plummeted a total of 1,212 points from its intraday high of 75,878.48 points yesterday. Earlier today, International Packaging Films Limited (IPAK) began public trading on the exchange, allowing shareholders to buy and sell shares on the open market. IPAK had previously raised equity financing worth Rs1.76 billion by selling 70.10 million



shares at Rs25.20 per share last month. The book-building phase of the initial public offering (IPO) generated significant interest from investors, resulting in oversubscription of the issue by a factor of 1.73 in terms of value. The strike price of Rs25.20 per share was

determined during this phase, according to a press statement released by PSX. On June 2, the market underwent some correction and concluded the outgoing week with a marginal decline of over 100 points. The decline occurred as the upcoming budget undermined investor interest due to potential changes, such as an increase in the sales tax rate and a slash to income tax slabs for the salaried class, which could be implemented to collect more taxes. Despite the finance ministry's projections of a sharp decline in inflation and a stable Pakistani rupee, which offered some support to the market, investors seemingly remained cautious. Last week, the exchange made a handsome

SNGPL disconnected 121 connections & imposed Rs 1 million fine

Soon Times Correspondent
 Lahore:
 During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilfers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad. It disconnected another 121 connections and imposed fine of Rs 1 million fine imposed. In Lahore, the team disconnected 14 connections on illegal use of gas and imposed a fine of Rs 0.15 million against gas theft cases. The team also lodged 1 FIR against gas pilfer. In Multan the team disconnected 10 connections on illegal use of gas while another 03 on use of compressor. In Karak the company disconnected 02 connections on account of direct use and illegal use of gas and amount of Rs 0.27 million have been booked against gas theft cases. The team also lodged 2 FIRs

against gas pilfers. The regional team of Sheikhpura disconnected 04 connections on illegal use of gas and also booked an amount of Rs 0.2 million against gas theft cases. In Faisalabad the team disconnected 02 connections on illegal use of gas and also imposed a fine of Rs 0.05 million against gas theft cases. In Peshawar the team disconnected 79 connections on illegal use of gas and also booked an amount of Rs 0.22 million against gas theft cases. In Bahawalpur the team disconnected 01 connection on illegal use of gas. The regional team of Mardan disconnected 05 connections on illegal use of gas and also booked an amount of Rs 0.15 million against gas theft cases. In Sahiwal the team disconnected 01 connections on illegal use of gas.

KCCI Real Estate Committee urges austerity & support for Real Estate Industry

Soon Times Correspondent
 Karachi:
 Muhammad Akram Rana, Chairman of the Real Estate Committee at the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Vice Chairman of the All Karachi Tajir Itehad, has emphasized the need for a frugal expenditure policy aligned with available resources. He advocated for the implementation of the previous government's austerity policy report, highlighting potential savings of 10 trillion rupees through the consolidation of 80 federal departments. Rana pointed out that the government could save 770 billion rupees by halting the provision of free petrol and electricity to the elite. Additionally, he noted the annual wastage of 28 billion rupees in the energy sector. Expressing concerns over the real estate industry, which is currently facing severe challenges, Rana warned against the impending taxes on property transactions. The proposed taxes include a 5% tax on properties worth 5 crores, 4% on properties worth 7 crores and 7% on properties worth 10 crores. He argued that such measures would push the real estate sector, which supports 72 associated industries, towards further decline. Rana stressed that the real estate



sector is a vital source of government revenue. Instead of imposing additional taxes, he urged the government to provide facilities to builders and developers to stimulate economic activity and reduce unemployment. He also highlighted the significant capital outflow, stating that 20 to 25 billion dollars have been transferred from the country to foreign.

ATC rejects AJK poet Ahmed Farhad's post-arrest bail plea



Soon Times Correspondent
 MUZAFFARABAD
 The anti-terrorism court in Muzaffarabad has rejected the post-arrest bail plea of Ahmed Farhad, a poet hailing from Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The court announced its decision, which was reserved on Monday, on the bail plea today (Tuesday). The court held back its verdict after the completion of arguments. Two days prior, the court had ordered a medical examination of Ahmed Farhad due to

determined during this phase, according to a press statement released by PSX. On June 2, the market underwent some correction and concluded the outgoing week with a marginal decline of over 100 points. The decline occurred as the upcoming budget undermined investor interest due to potential changes, such as an increase in the sales tax rate and a slash to income tax slabs for the salaried class, which could be implemented to collect more taxes. Despite the finance ministry's projections of a sharp decline in inflation and a stable Pakistani rupee, which offered some support to the market, investors seemingly remained cautious. Last week, the exchange made a handsome

How the Gaza war is reshaping the politics of Europe's left



BERLIN/PARIS/MADRID
Nadir Aslam, a German of Moroccan-Pakistani heritage, had been planning to vote Green in this week's elections to the European Parliament. Instead, he will throw his support behind Merz25, a start-up leftist party with a clear pro-Palestinian stance.

Aslam, 33, told Reuters it was a speech last November by a Green leader doubting down on German support for Israel, even as the Gaza death toll neared 9,000, which "destroyed" his support for the ecologist party, a member of Germany's ruling coalition.

This shift in support, echoed across Europe, represents the latest twist — this time from the left — to mainstream political parties whose project to deepen European integration is already under attack from the far-right.

Security tight in China and Hong Kong on Tiananmen anniversary



BEIJING/HONG KONG
Security was tight and access restricted to Beijing's Tiananmen Square on Tuesday, the 35th anniversary of the June 4 crackdown, while Hong Kong also increased policing as activists in Taiwan and elsewhere prepared to mark the date with vigils.

Chinese tanks rolled into the square before dawn on June 4, 1989, to end weeks of pro-democracy demonstrations by students and workers. Television news images of a lone Chinese man in a white shirt standing in front of a column of tanks spread around the world and became the iconic image of the demonstrations. Decades after the military crackdown, rights activists say the demonstrators'



Flood of sewage forces displaced Gazans out of tents

Displaced Gazans had to use empty plastic bottles on Monday to try to remove sewage from their tents

KHAN YUNIS (Palestinian Territories)
Displaced Gazans had to use empty plastic bottles to try to remove sewage from their tents after a pipeline burst in the main southern city of Khan Yunis.

"All the tents were flooded with sewage water. This is no life," said Abdullah Barabakh, surrounded by bombed out buildings in the Palestinian city which has been devastated by months of war.

"I implore all Arab countries and the entire world to see what is happening to us. We're living in the middle of sewage." Residents removed sodden carpets from their tents as they began the long process of getting rid of the dirty water, while children waded through a river of sewage that cut through a main road.

The spill has made it almost impossible to live in the city, where piles of debris and massive concrete slabs from bombed-out buildings line the streets, residents said.

The sewage has flooded over us. We can't eat or drink, and we're unable to sleep. We are sleeping in the streets," said Abdul Samad Barabakh.

Khan Yunis was a focus of the fighting in the early months of the Israel-Hamas war, but now it has become a hub for displaced people, many of whom have been forced to leave many times during the conflict.

About 1.7 million people are now sheltering in Khan Yunis and in central areas of the Gaza Strip, according to the UN agency for Palestinian refugees.

G7 leaders 'fully endorse' Biden's Gaza peace and hostage release plan

ROME
Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) major democracies "fully endorse and will stand behind the comprehensive" ceasefire and hostage release deal for the Gaza war outlined by US President Joe Biden and call on Hamas to accept it, a statement.

The deal "would lead to an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the release of all hostages, a significant and sustained increase in humanitarian assistance for distribution throughout Gaza, and an ending end to the crisis, with Israel's security interests and Gazan civilian safety assured", the statement said.

The G7, which Italy holds the rotating presidency for 2024, reaffirmed support "for a credible pathway towards peace leading to a two-state solution".

FOUR MORE HOSTAGES DEAD
Four more of the hostages abducted by Hamas on Oct 7 have died in captivity, according to the Israeli military.

The military identified the four men on

Monday as Haim Perry, Yoram Metzger, Amiram Cooper, and Nadav Poppelevit, all of whom were filmed alive in hostage videos posted by Hamas.

Of the more than 250 people abducted on Oct 7, about 120 remain in Gaza, according to Israeli allies. Many have been declared dead by Israeli authorities.

Military spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said the military would be able to ensure Israel's security in any Gaza truce and hostage release deal decided on by the government.



US Defense Secretary visits Cambodia as it moves closer to Beijing



SINGAPORE
S Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin arrived in Cambodia on Tuesday for a brief visit aimed at reversing some of the gains China has made in the country amid increasing concern about Beijing's growing presence at a key Cambodian naval base.

Cambodia's decision to allow China to develop Ream Naval Base, located at a key waterway on the coast of the Gulf of Thailand in Sihanoukville province, has Washington worried that it will give Beijing a new outpost near the contested South China Sea, most of which is claimed by China.

Adding to the US concerns, China last month sent two warships to Cambodia and East Timor on a tour that will last to mid-June.

Austin confirmed his arrival in Phnom Penh with a post on X on Tuesday.

A US defense official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said there was optimism in Washington that Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet, who studied at West Point, will be more aligned with Washington than his predecessor, his father Hun Sen.

After stepping down as prime minister last year, Hun Sen has become president of the Cambodian Senate, and told a local newspaper before the 2023 election that his son will rule in his own mold.

"This isn't a visit that is about significant deliverables and achievements," the US defense official said.

"We're very clear eyed about some of the challenges that we've had on both sides between the United States and Cambodia in the past. I think we'll be very direct and articulate about how we see US interests," the official added.

Sports & Showbiz



Pakistan will look to be positive at T20 World Cup, says Babar



NEW YORK
Pakistan captain Babar Azam called on his side to stay in high spirits as they begin their Twenty20 World Cup campaign off the back of a poor run of form.

Pakistan, T20 World Cup champions in 2009, have performed well in the past two editions of the competition, reaching the semi-finals in 2021 and losing to England in the final in 2022.

However, their preparations for this year's tournament in the United States and West Indies has been far from ideal, with a sobering defeat by Ireland in an eventful 2-1 series victory followed by a 2-0 defeat by

Alcaraz tackles Tsitsipas at French Open as Swiatek targets semis



Paris
Carlos Alcaraz and Stefanos Tsitsipas square off Tuesday in a repeat of their French Open quarter-final from last year, while Iga Swiatek looks to stay on track for a third consecutive Roland Garros title.

Alcaraz appears to be moving through the gears in Paris after an injury-hit preparation, taking care of 21st seed Felix Auger-Aliassime with minimal fuss to make the last eight here for the third year on the trot.

"We are in the process of collating various cricket and match-related information from players who have played there, which can help and assist us in our preparations."

Next up is an opponent he has dominated in his young career, swimming all five previous encounters with Tsitsipas. Three of those have come on clay, including Alcaraz's straight-sets win in the 2023 French Open quarter-finals.

"I'm really looking forward to playing this match. I love this challenge and these kind of matches," said the 21-year-old Spaniard, attempting to add to his Wimbledon title from a year ago and the 2022 US Open.

"I have seen a lot of matches from Stefanos lately. He has a lot of confidence right now and is playing great tennis. I think I have the key against him so I will try to make him in trouble."

Tsitsipas found himself in danger of falling two sets behind against Italy's Matteo Armandi in the last 16, saving four set points before swinging the match in his favour.

The Greek ninth seed, who lost the 2021 French Open final in five sets to Novak Djokovic, hopes to put a stop to Alcaraz's dominance. "He has said in the past he likes playing against me, so I hope he gets to like it a little bit less this time," said Tsitsipas.

Jannik Sinner dropped his first set of the tournament against Corentin Moutet, but the second seed quickly righted the ship to secure a seventh Grand Slam quarter-final.

It is the first time he has made the last eight at Roland Garros since the pandemic-delayed 2020 edition, when he was beaten by Rafael Nadal in a match that finished at 2.6am.

That had stood as the record for the latest ending at the French Open prior to Djokovic's 3:07am conclusion against Lorenzo Musetti in the early hours of Sunday.

Sinner next plays Grigor Dimitrov, the 10th seed from Bulgaria who is set for his first Roland Garros quarter-final on his 14th visit.

Brad Pitt's daughter Shiloh drops 'Pitt' from her last name



(Web Desk)
One week after Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt's 18-year-old daughter Shiloh filed to drop "Pitt" from her last name, a source close to Pitt tells PEOPLE that the father of six is "aware and upset" about the change.

"He's aware and upset that Shiloh dropped his last name. He's never felt more joy than when she was born. He always wanted a daughter," says the source.

"The reminders that he's lost his children, is so correct not easy for Brad. He loves his children and misses them. It's very sad," adds the insider.

"He's still happy with Ines [de Ramon]," the source continues, but the distance from his children "pains him."

Djokovic into French Open quarter-finals after five-set thriller



PARIS
Novak Djokovic pulled off another astonishing escape as he beat Argentine 23rd seed Francisco Cerundolo in a five-set thriller to reach a 15th consecutive French Open quarter-final.

The world number one shrugged off an injury to his right knee as he came from two sets to one down to outlast Cerundolo 6-1, 5-7, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3 after four hours and 39 minutes.

Victory gave him a record 370th Grand Slam win, eclipsing the mark he had shared with Roger Federer.

"Three or four times I was points away from losing this match and thank you to my opponent," he said. "He deserves so much applause that's for sure. I'm not sure how I won this match again."

Djokovic will play Casper Ruud, the player he beat in last year's final, or Taylor Fritz as he continues his bid for a record-breaking 25th Grand Slam title.

The 37-year-old Djokovic, coming off a five-set match in the third round that ended at 3.07am on Sunday morning, repeatedly received treatment for an injury to his knee after taking a medical timeout early in the second set.

But he once more displayed his immense powers of recovery, crucially retrieving a break in the fourth set to stay on course for a fourth French Open crown.

Djokovic rolled through the opening set against Cerundolo on the back of two service breaks, but his problems arose in the second as he summoned the trainer.

The Serbian had his knee worked on while lying flat on his back on a towel, and immediately found himself under pressure once play resumed.

After failing to convert any of seven break points over three different games, Cerundolo finally seized his chance with Djokovic serving to stay in the set.