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Kamal, Vawda suo motu: Supreme Court refuses to accept MQM-P leader's apology



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court Wednesday rejected Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) Deputy Convener Mustafa Kamal's plea seeking an instant acceptance of his apology in a contempt suo motu case.

The development came as a three-member CJPIsacled bench comprising Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan heard the contempt of court case against Kamal and independent Senator Faisal Vawda. Both politicians had done hard-hitting press conferences against the judiciary in Islamabad in May, with Vawda saying that no allegations could be levelled without evidence and Kamal sought to establish ethical standards for the judges as justice could "only be bought".

Their statements had come after six Islamabad

'Say No to Plastic': Punjab enforces immediate ban on plastic bag usage



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE:

The Punjab government has implemented a ban on the use of plastic bags across the province, effective today (Wednesday).

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has stated that this ban encompasses the use, production, sale and trade of plastic bags, citing their detrimental impact on both the environment and human health. The CM has highlighted the overarching objective of the "Say No to Plastic" campaign, aimed at combating environmental pollution and encouraging eco-friendly practices.

Maryam says that the enforcement of this ban will be rigorous, under which plastic bag usage will be prohibited in hotels, restaurants and food outlets, with a concerted effort to promote environmentally sustainable alternatives like paper bags.

Railways to run three special trains on Eidul Azha



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE:

The Pakistan Railways has decided to run three special trains to facilitate passengers on the auspicious occasion of Eidul Azha.

According to details, two special trains will be run from Karachi and one from Quetta. First special train will leave Karachi for Peshawar on June 14 at 6:30 pm with 1,164 passengers onboard. This train will have only economy class coaches.

Second special train will be headed for Lahore from Karachi on June 15 at 9:30 pm carrying 1,064 passengers. This train will have all economy class coaches besides two business and two standard class coaches.

PM assures resource availability, support for foreign investors

Shehbaz Sharif vowed providing security to Chinese workers in Pakistan



Soon Times Correspondent KARACHI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif assuring resource availability pledged to provide steadfast support for foreign investors. The premier attended the Pakistan China Business Forum in Shenzhen on Wednesday and lauded China's developmental achievements as exemplary during his visit to the brotherly country. Speaking at the forum, PM Shehbaz stressed the importance of bolstering the relationship between the two nations and fostering increased investment. He mentioned the

establishment of a business council to facilitate investments in Pakistan and reiterated the government's commitment to providing necessary facilities to foreign investors and businessmen. Highlighting Pakistan's abundant resources, the PM underscored the potential for economic growth. Regarding security concerns, Sharif expressed condolences over the tragic incident where five Chinese citizens lost their lives to terrorism in Besham. He affirmed China's status as a steadfast friend and partner to Pakistan, offering support in times of need, be it during

conflicts, natural disasters, or on global platforms. The PM assured heightened security measures for Chinese citizens working in Pakistan, promising to prioritize their safety. During a meeting with Zhu Zhaoliang, founder and chairman of Transsion Holdings, the premier welcomed the company's interest in expanding investments in Pakistan's mobile manufacturing sector and exploring opportunities in electric bikes, modern agriculture, and fintech. Shehbaz Sharif directed relevant authorities to collaborate with Transsion

Holdings to devise an action plan. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb addressed the issue of inflation, stating that government measures have led to positive economic indicators, including a reduction in the current account deficit. Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar emphasized Pakistan's investment potential, particularly in IT and mineral resources, while Pakistan Ambassador to China Khalid Hashmi highlighted Shenzhen's progress as a model for cooperation between the two nations.

Punjab CM Maryam seeks public support to address environmental challenges

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE:

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has underscored the importance of public support in the provincial government's mission of environmental protection. In her message on World Environment Day, the chief minister highlighted the need for collaborative efforts to address environmental challenges, stressing the imperative for people to rally behind the cause of safeguarding the planet.

Maryam announced that the Punjab government had implemented a comprehensive ban on the use, production, sale and trade of plastic, effective Wednesday (today).

Citing their detrimental impact on both the environment and human health, Maryam underscored the significance of reducing pollution and promoting eco-friendly practices. The CM highlighted the overarching objective of the "Say No to Plastic" campaign, aimed at



combating environmental pollution and encouraging eco-friendly practices. Maryam said that the enforcement of this ban will be rigorous, under which plastic bag usage will be prohibited in hotels, restaurants and food outlets, with a concerted effort to promote environmentally sustainable alternatives like paper bags.

The chief minister said that a special awareness campaign would be launched to educate public about the detrimental effects of plastic pollution and the importance of reducing reliance on fossil fuels while increasing the utilisation of renewable energy sources. Maryam also addressed the issue of deforestation, citing it as a primary cause of environmental degradation. She emphasised the necessity of collaborative action to preserve natural beauty and mitigate the adverse effects of environmental pollution.

Inflation is at the lowest level in recent five months, says Azma Bukhari

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE:



Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari has asserted that the inflation rate across the country has been reduced from 37 to 11 percent during the last 5 months.

She attributed this major development to PML-N's stating that reports of Bloomberg, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank are clear evidence of PML-N's performance.

She stated that World Bank and ADB have commended the government's economic policies.

She stressed that for the first time in 9 years, the prices of flour, ghee, vegetables, and petrol have been reduced sharply according to Bloomberg.

She highlighted that the

decrease in inflation became possible due to Allah's guidance and Mian Nawaz Sharif's leadership qualities.

She insisted that Shehbaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz's continuous efforts have borne fruit. "Both are striving to keep the country on track again," she added.

She stated, "Our leadership's agenda is restoration of the economy, reduction of inflation, employment, and bringing investment."

She hit out at rival political parties attributing their "anarchy group's agenda is to spread chaos and propaganda against state institutions."

Hybrid system is ruining foundation of Pakistan: Omar Ayub

Opposition leader has also announced to challenge the FIA notice in Parliament and court.



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD: Opposition Leader and Pakistan Treelock-e-Insaf (PTI) Secretary General Omar Ayub asserted that the hybrid system has ruined the foundation of the state.

Talking to media outside the Islamabad High Court (IHC) where he appeared for the hearing of FIA notice to him and PTI leaders, Barrister Gohar, Raouf Hassan on the controversial tweet and video on the 1971 debacle and the Hammond-Ur-Rehman Commission report.

Opposition leader has also announced to challenge the FIA notice in Parliament and court. He

also disclosed to file a petition against the Capital Development Authority (CDA) for contempt of court for sealing PTI secretariat Islamabad illegally despite IHC's order.

He stated that the venue 'Rawat' assigned by Islamabad administration for PTI's public gathering was 30 km away from Islamabad.

He added that the Main Srinagar Highway must be allotted to the party for public gatherings as Islamabad has many places, including Tarnol, for public rallies. He affirmed that the party leaders will face the cases against them

with courage and will be acquitted. He highlighted that PTI leaders Aliya Hamza and Sanam Javed have been detained in jail.

Jail SP has revealed that he has influence on him and he can't release PTI leaders. He also raised the issue of influence in jail administration, he said, "do aliens influence jail administration? This issue must be raised."

He also denied the credibility of the incumbent government, saying, "Is it a banana republic? We do not accept this regime and this hybrid system is ruining the foundation of Pakistan."

FIA takes social activist Sarim Burney into custody over human trafficking charges



Soon Times Correspondent KARACHI:

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) took social activist and entrepreneur Sarim Burney into custody from the Karachi airport on Wednesday.

According to sources in the FIA, Burney was arrested by a team from the FIA Anti-Human Trafficking Wing on Wednesday following a human trafficking complaint received from the US

government. It is alleged that Sarim Burney, the founder and chairman of a non-profitable organisation Sarim Burney Welfare Trust, was involved in illegal adoption practices, including human trafficking, spanning across the United States, Canada and other

countries. Sources further said Burney's activities had been under surveillance for some time and upon his arrival at the Karachi airport from the US today, he was taken into custody.

A case has been officially registered against the social activist. The FIA additional director general for Karachi South added that an investigation would be conducted, taking into account all evidence and the case would be decided on its merit.

Pakistan, Italy to undertake joint efforts against human, drug trafficking

Web Desk ROME:

Pakistan and Italy have agreed to a coordinated and effective action plan against illegal immigrants and human trafficking.

This came at a meeting between Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Italian Interior Minister Matteo



Piantedosi in Rome. Minister for Overseas Pakistanis Chaudhry Salik Hussain was also present in the meeting.

The two sides also agreed to undertake joint efforts against drug trafficking. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said steps have been taken at all levels to stop illegal entry of Pakistanis to Italy and to counter drug trafficking. A zero tolerance policy has been adopted against human trafficking and drug mafia. In his remarks, Chaudhry Salik Hussain said Italy can benefit greatly from Pakistan's skilled manpower. He emphasized the early finalization of the Skilled Manpower Agreement will discourage illegal immigration. The Italian Interior Minister said his country will cooperate with Pakistan in matters pertaining to border security and human and drug trafficking.

Pak, Jordan bilateral ties

President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday said that Pakistan and Jordan enjoyed close cordial relations and stressed upon further strengthening of these bilateral ties between the two countries.

The president expressed these views during a meeting

with Ambassador of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Pakistan Dr Maen Khreasat who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

The Jordanian envoy invited the president to a conference being held in Jordan on human relief

activities in Gaza on June 11. The president assured him of Pakistan's participation in the scheduled conference. The ambassador apprised the president that Jordan had signed memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Akhwat Foundation for provision of

relief assistance in Palestine. The president lauded Jordan for its efforts to provide relief in Palestine. The ambassador also conveyed a felicitation message from the Jordanian King to the President Zardari on assuming his office.

Navigating Climate Diplomacy: Addressing the Escalating Threat of Heat Waves in Pakistan

Kashmala Khan

The blistering heat waves of 2024 have put Pakistan on high alert, but this is not a new phenomenon.

Pakistan has a long history of grappling with extreme weather events, including devastating heat waves and catastrophic floods. For instance, the deadly heat wave in 2015 claimed over 1,200 lives in Karachi alone, while the 2010 floods affected approximately 20 million people and caused extensive damage to infrastructure and agriculture. More recently, the floods in 2023 were another stark reminder of the country's vulnerability, displacing millions and causing billions in economic losses. These recurring natural disasters underscore the country's susceptibility to climate change and the urgent need for robust measures to mitigate their impact. In recent years, the intensity and frequency of heat waves have increased, with the 2024 heat wave breaking previous records and exacerbating public health crises, water shortages, and energy demands.

Effective climate diplomacy is crucial for addressing the escalating threat of heat waves in Pakistan, necessitating a blend of national resilience strategies and international cooperation.

Understanding the Background of Heat Waves and Floods in Pakistan

Statistical Overview: Over the past two decades, Pakistan has experienced an alarming increase in the frequency and severity of heat waves and floods. According to data from the Pakistan Meteorological Department, the average number of heat wave days per year has risen from around 20 in the early 2000s to over 40 by 2023. Similarly, the frequency of severe flooding events has increased, with major floods occurring almost every year since 2010. Notably, the floods in 2010, 2014, 2017, and 2023 have been particularly devastating, each causing widespread destruction.

Impact Assessment: The economic, social, and environmental impacts of these extreme weather events have been profound. Economically, the 2010 floods alone caused an estimated \$10 billion in damages, affecting agriculture, infrastructure, and housing. Socially, these events have displaced millions of people; for instance, the 2023 floods forced over 1.5 million people to evacuate their homes. Environmentally, repeated flooding has led to soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, and degradation of arable land, exacerbating food insecurity in the region. Health impacts are also significant, with heat waves contributing to increased mortality rates, especially among vulnerable populations like the elderly and children. The 2015 Karachi heatwave, for instance, resulted in over 1,200 deaths.

Case Studies: 1. 2015 Karachi Heatwave:

In June 2015, Karachi experienced one of the deadliest heat waves in its

history, with temperatures soaring above 45°C (113°F). The heatwave led to the deaths of over 1,200 people, primarily due to heatstroke and dehydration. The event exposed severe inadequacies in urban infrastructure, such as the lack of green spaces and inadequate healthcare facilities, which were overwhelmed by the sudden surge in heat-related illnesses.

2. 2010 Super Flood:

The 2010 floods are considered one of the worst natural disasters in Pakistan's history. Triggered by unprecedented monsoon rains, the floods affected approximately 20 million people, submerged one-fifth of the country, and resulted in around 2,000 deaths. The agricultural sector was particularly hard-hit, with millions of acres of crops destroyed. The disaster highlighted the urgent need for improved flood management and early warning systems.

3. 2023 Floods:

In 2023, Pakistan faced another significant flooding event, exacerbated by climate change and deforestation. The floods displaced over 1.5 million people and caused extensive damage to infrastructure and agriculture, with economic losses estimated at around \$3 billion. This event underscored the continuing vulnerability of Pakistan to extreme weather and the need for comprehensive climate adaptation strategies.

Current Dynamics of Heat Waves in 2024

Recent Statistics:

In 2024, Pakistan has experienced an unprecedented surge in the frequency and intensity of heat waves. According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department, temperatures have soared to alarming levels, surpassing 50°C (122°F) in some regions, particularly in Sindh and Balochistan. As a result, there have been over 60 days of extreme heat recorded across the country, significantly higher than previous years.

Comparative Analysis: The heat waves in 2024 have surpassed all previous records in terms of both duration and intensity. Compared to the average of 40 heat wave days per year in the early 2000s, 2024 has seen a drastic increase. The temperature spikes observed this year have been exceptionally abrupt and severe, posing unprecedented challenges to public health and infrastructure.

Public Health Crisis: The 2024 heat waves have triggered a severe public health crisis, particularly affecting vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and outdoor workers. Hospitals and medical facilities are overwhelmed by the surge in heat-related illnesses, including heatstroke, dehydration, and cardiovascular complications. The impact of COVID-19 has compounded the crisis, with limited healthcare resources further strained. The combination of extreme heat and

the lingering effects of the pandemic has placed immense pressure on emergency response systems and exacerbated the vulnerability of communities already grappling with multiple challenges.

Challenges in Climate Diplomacy

National Policy Gaps: Despite acknowledging the pressing need for climate action, Pakistan faces significant challenges in translating commitments into effective policies. Existing policies often lack coherence, coordination, and enforcement mechanisms, leading to gaps in implementation. Key shortcomings include inadequate funding for climate adaptation and mitigation efforts, limited capacity for monitoring and evaluation, and a lack of integration of climate considerations into sectoral planning. Moreover, political instability and competing priorities further hinder progress, exacerbating vulnerabilities to climate change impacts.

Regional Cooperation: South Asian regional dynamics play a crucial role in shaping climate diplomacy efforts. While there is recognition of the shared vulnerabilities and the need for collective action, geopolitical tensions and historical mistrust pose significant obstacles to regional cooperation. Disputes over water resources, cross-border pollution, and territorial conflicts hinder efforts to develop joint adaptation and mitigation strategies. Moreover, disparities in economic development and technological capacity among South Asian countries complicate efforts to forge consensus on climate goals and priorities.

Global Climate Politics:

Pakistan's position in global climate negotiations and agreements is influenced by its status as a developing country with significant climate vulnerabilities. While Pakistan has actively participated in international climate forums and endorsed key agreements such as the Paris Agreement, it faces challenges in aligning domestic priorities with global commitments. Limited financial resources, technological constraints, and a reliance on fossil fuels for energy generation pose barriers to achieving ambitious climate targets. Moreover, power dynamics within international forums often marginalize the voices of developing countries like Pakistan, constraining their ability to influence decision-making and secure support for adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Strategic Imperatives for Pakistan

Strengthening National Resilience: To enhance resilience to climate change impacts, Pakistan should focus on the following policy recommendations:

1. Infrastructure Development: Invest in resilient infrastructure, including water management systems, urban green spaces, and energy-efficient buildings, to withstand extreme weather events

such as floods and heat waves.

2. Early Warning Systems:

Strengthen meteorological services and early warning systems to provide timely alerts and evacuation plans for communities at risk of climate-related disasters.

3. Public Awareness Campaigns:

Launch comprehensive public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about climate change risks, adaptation strategies, and sustainable practices, fostering a culture of resilience and preparedness at the grassroots level.

Enhancing Regional Collaboration: To foster better cooperation with neighboring countries on climate issues, Pakistan should implement the following strategies:

1. Transboundary Water Management: Engage in dialogue and negotiation with neighboring countries, particularly India and Afghanistan, to develop joint strategies for managing shared water resources and mitigating the impacts of climate change on water availability and quality.

2. Cross-Border Disaster Response:

Establish regional mechanisms for coordinated disaster response and risk reduction, enabling timely sharing of information, resources, and expertise to address transboundary climate-related disasters.

3. Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Building:

Facilitate knowledge exchange and capacity-building initiatives with neighboring countries to share best practices, lessons learned, and technical expertise in climate adaptation and mitigation.

Leveraging International Support: To secure more significant support from international bodies and climate funds, Pakistan should consider the following approaches:

1. Enhanced Diplomatic Engagement:

Strengthen diplomatic efforts to advocate for the needs and priorities of Pakistan in international climate negotiations, highlighting the country's vulnerability to climate change and its efforts towards climate resilience.

2. Accessing Climate Finance:

Improve capacity for accessing and utilizing climate finance from international sources such as the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund, through enhanced project preparation, stakeholder engagement, and institutional capacity building.

3. Partnerships and Coalitions: Forge strategic partnerships and coalitions with like-minded countries, civil society organizations, and private sector entities to leverage collective influence and resources in advancing climate action and securing support for priority projects and initiatives.

By prioritizing these strategic

imperatives, Pakistan can strengthen its resilience to climate change, foster regional collaboration, and secure the international support needed to address the escalating threats posed by climate-related disasters.

Success Stories and Lessons Learned

Local Initiatives:

Several successful local or community-driven initiatives have demonstrated effective mitigation of the impact of heat waves in Pakistan. Some examples include:

1. Urban Greening Projects:

Community-led efforts to increase green spaces within urban areas have proven effective in reducing the urban heat island effect and providing cooling benefits. Projects such as tree planting drives, rooftop gardens, and community parks not only enhance urban aesthetics but also contribute to temperature regulation and air quality improvement.

2. Heatwave Response Plans:

Local governments, in collaboration with civil society organizations and health authorities, have developed heatwave response plans tailored to the specific needs of vulnerable communities. These plans include measures such as establishing cooling centers, distributing free drinking water, and conducting public awareness campaigns to educate citizens on heatwave safety measures.

3. Community Resilience Building:

Grassroots organizations and community groups have implemented resilience-building activities focused on enhancing adaptive capacity and reducing vulnerability to heat-related hazards. These initiatives involve training community members in first aid, heat stress management, and sustainable livelihood practices to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of heat waves.

International Best Practices:

Examples of successful climate diplomacy and adaptation strategies from other countries provide valuable lessons for Pakistan. Some notable examples include:

1. Netherlands: Climate-Proof Cities:

The Netherlands has implemented innovative adaptation strategies to address urban heat island effects and flooding risks. These strategies include the construction of green roofs, water plazas, and climate-resilient infrastructure, coupled with community engagement and participatory planning processes.

2. Bangladesh: Community-Based Adaptation:

Bangladesh has pioneered community-based adaptation approaches to address climate change impacts, particularly in vulnerable coastal areas prone to cyclones and sea-level rise. These initiatives involve community-led disaster risk reduction activities, livelihood diversification, and

ecosystem restoration efforts, enhancing local resilience and adaptive capacity.

3. Costa Rica: Sustainable Land Management:

Costa Rica has implemented successful sustainable land management practices to mitigate the impacts of climate change on agriculture and ecosystems. These practices include reforestation, agroforestry, and sustainable agricultural techniques, promoting ecosystem resilience and carbon sequestration while enhancing rural livelihoods.

By learning from these success stories and international best practices, Pakistan can further strengthen its climate resilience efforts and advance effective climate diplomacy for sustainable development.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the threat posed by heat waves in Pakistan underscores the urgent need for effective climate diplomacy. As evidenced by the escalating frequency and intensity of heat waves in recent years, climate change presents a significant challenge that requires coordinated action at national, regional, and global levels.

Addressing the threat of heat waves through effective climate diplomacy is imperative for safeguarding the well-being of communities, protecting ecosystems, and promoting sustainable development. By leveraging diplomatic channels, policymakers can advance climate resilience strategies, enhance adaptive capacity, and mitigate the socio-economic impacts of extreme weather events.

It is essential for policymakers, international partners, and local stakeholders to collaborate more effectively in addressing the climate crisis. This requires a collective commitment to shared goals, transparent communication, and mutual support in implementing climate-resilient policies and initiatives. By fostering inclusive partnerships and mobilizing resources, stakeholders can maximize their impact and achieve meaningful progress in climate action.

While the challenges posed by climate change are daunting, there is reason for hope. With concerted efforts and political will, Pakistan can navigate climate diplomacy successfully and emerge as a leader in climate resilience. By embracing innovative solutions, prioritizing adaptation and mitigation measures, and fostering cooperation among diverse stakeholders, Pakistan can build a more sustainable and resilient future for all.

In closing, let us embrace a hopeful yet realistic perspective on what can be achieved through effective climate diplomacy. By working together, we can overcome the challenges of climate change and create a safer, healthier, and more prosperous world for current and future generations.

CPD directs to ensure implementation of price control mechanism across the district

Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha: Deputy Commissioner Captain Retired Aurangzeb Haider Khan has directed to ensure the implementation of the price control mechanism across the district as per the vision of the government. Check the prices of bread, fruits, vegetables, chicken,

grocery items etc. and deal with profiteers with iron hands. He said this while presiding over a high-level meeting. The Deputy Commissioner instructed the Assistant Commissioners that there should be no negligence in implementing the price control mechanism in the teshis. He reprimanded the poor performing

Price Magistrates saying that they are being given a last chance to improve their performance otherwise they will be surrendered from the district. The meeting was told that 54 Price Control Magistrates posted across the district have conducted 9,742 inspections since May 1. FIRs have been registered against 19 shopkeepers for violating the Price Act. While others

were fined a total of 52 lakh 88 thousand 8 hundred rupees. The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the implementation of the Chief Minister's good governance initiatives. He said that the prescribed indicators (KPIs) are being continuously watched. So the officers of the concerned departments should improve the progress. He directed the

Assistant Commissioners to personally visit tandoors, hotels and bakeries twice a week to ensure implementation of fixed prices of bread and bakery items, apart from reviewing the performance of subordinate price control magistrates. In the meeting, a review of the activities carried out under Clean Punjab during a week, visits to

marriage halls, inspection of ongoing development schemes, reports of visits to medical centers and educational institutions were also presented by A.Cs. Besides ADCR Mohsin Salahuddin and ADCG Umar Farooq, assistant commissioners and price control magistrates of all Tehsils participated in the meeting.

CPD leads Climate Advocacy on World Environment Day 2024: Calls for collective action towards a sustainable future in Pakistan



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad: World Environment Day 2024 marks a pivotal moment for environmental advocacy and action. On this occasion, the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) convened a significant event to address pressing climate challenges and promote sustainable development in Pakistan. Mr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ali, the Executive Director of CPDI, to

inaugurate the session. Mr. Ali underscored the global nature of climate change and its profound impact on Pakistan, emphasizing the urgent need for collective action. He advocated for a universal graduated taxation system to address environmental issues effectively and called for proactive measures, such as the ban on plastic bags, to mitigate environmental degradation. The event further proceeded with informative panel discussions, moderated by Mr.

Mukhtar Ahmed Ali and Mr. Sarmad Iqbal, focusing on the pivotal role of local governments in climate action and strategies for land restoration. Dr. Imdad Hussain highlighted the disparity in climate change experiences and stressed the importance of practical knowledge and local customs in addressing environmental challenges. Mr. Tahir Farooq underscored the significance of education, positive contributions and empowering local communities in urban planning processes. Mr. Anwar Sadat addressed legislative barriers hindering local government work and shared his tree-planting initiative, emphasizing the need for legislation to empower local governments effectively. Ms. Hurrah Javed critiqued the inconsistency in government policies, particularly regarding the ban on plastic bags and emphasized civic responsibility in addressing environmental degradation. Executive Director CPDI emphasized the importance of dialogue, civic responsibility, and maintaining traditional practices as cost-effective solutions to environmental issues. The event concluded with a vibrant exchange of ideas and a commitment to collective action for a sustainable future.

Historic Agreement Signed Between Riphah International



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad: An agreement was signed between RIPHAF and National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTT) at the NAVTTT Headquarters in Islamabad recently. IIMCT/Riphah International University was represented by Mr. Ahmed Nauman Anees, CEO/Project Director, Riphah ExcelTech Institute and Group Director of Human Development Services and Strategy while the Director General/Chairperson of Planning and Development signed on behalf of NAVTTT. This agreement marks the largest collaboration regarding vocational training in recent memory. The project is funded by the Prime Minister of Pakistan's Office and is part of the prestigious SFIC forum at the national level. This collaboration aligns with Chancellor, Hassan Muhammad Khan's vision of bridging the gap between industry and academia by transferring essential skills to the youth.

The agreement aims to empower the Pakistani youth with the necessary tools to become proficient professionals through hands-on skills acquisition locally and globally. The project focuses on various aspects of Allied Health Sciences and is designed to equip teams and faculty with substantial practical experience, turning them into vocational training experts. The ongoing mission is to equip Pakistani youth with 21st-century skills, aiming not only to contribute locally but also to export trained manpower overseas thus bringing in precious foreign exchange to the nation. As part of this initiative, a comprehensive, well-equipped micro-credentialing Academy is also being established. The Institute will be run by top industry experts and academicians having foreign exposure. RIPHAF International University is known for consistently working for the development of Pakistani Youth in terms of knowledge and skills development.

ANF recovered 64 kg drugs & arrested 2 suspects

Soon Times Correspondent Rawalpindi: ANF continues crackdown against drug trafficking. ANF recovered more than 64 kg of drugs during 4 operations and arrested 2 suspects. ANF recovered 918 grams of

heroin from a Shahjahn-bound passenger at Faisalabad Airport. 44 grams of weed was recovered from a parcel sent from UK at the courier office in Rawalpindi. ANF recovered 60 kg hashish from Pasi Gwadar. 3.6 kg hashish was recovered from

the accused in Ahmedabad Attock. According to the spokesperson of ANF, investigations have been started by registering cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act against all the arrested accused.

TENDER NOTICE
SHAHJAHAN DIVISION, SARGODHA
INVITATION OF BIDS (SINGLE STAGE-TWO ENVELOPES)
DATE: 23.05.2024

The Punjab Irrigation Department invites sealed bids of the following work on terms rates from approved contractors / firms who are registered / renewed for the year 2023-24 with PEC in the Category C-4 constructions / firms who have experience of related work as per specification ME-05 of Pakistan Engineering Council, renewed registration with Punjab Irrigation Department for the work of Manufacturing Pitching Stone and Gravel at Sahiwal Quary during the period 01.07.2023 to 30.06.2027. The Quary is situated at a distance of 02-kilometers from Nankarabad Railway Station in Sahiwal District. The Quary is linked with PUL No 111 on Sargodha Ghani Road through panna road and Sargodha District office via the advertisement.

- The approved tender forms/contract documents can be obtained immediately after the advertisement from the office of Executive Engineer, Shahpur Division LJC, Sargodha by depositing non-refundable printing charges as per clause 25(7) of PPRR Rules 2014 up to 22.05.2024 during office hours.
- The contractor who desires to obtain tender forms shall have to submit application on his printed letterhead with the following original documents and their certified copies:-
 - A. Original CNIC.
 - B. Enrolment/ Renewal for the financial year 2023-24 with the Irrigation Department.
 - C. Registration Certificates issued by the Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) and Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) for the year 2023-24.
 - D. Receipt of professional tax.
 - E. Enrolment/ Renewal fee receipt for the financial year 2023-24.
 - F. Company/ Firm registration certificate.
 - G. Authorization with the agent if he appears on behalf of the company/ firm.
- The bidders should satisfy themselves before bidding that they have complied with the directions as given in the PPRR Rules and contract form for guidance of the contractors. The bid shall be a single package consisting of two separate envelopes, containing separately the financial and the technical proposals.
- The tenders/bids (Technical & Financial) duly filled in the tender forms will be received by the tender opening committee (ME-05/2024) on 23.05.2024 up to 12.00 noon and after Technical Bids will be opened on same date at 02.00 PM, in the office of Executive Engineer, Shahpur Division LJC, Sargodha, in the presence of contractors or their authorized representatives who may desire to attend. In case of any holiday etc. the bids will be received on the next working day. The financial bids of those bidders who technically evaluated and qualified by their authorized committee will be opened later-on. The technical and financial bids will be opened and evaluated as given below preferably in the shape of call deposit or bank guarantee drawn in the name of Executive Engineer, Shahpur Division LJC, Sargodha from 11 scheduled banks must be submitted with the bids. The amount to be deposited shall be 5% of the estimated bank value. In case the total tendered amount is equal to or less than 5% of the approved estimated amount, the amount tendered will have to deposit Quary Assurance Security from the scheduled bank equal to the amount of difference between approved estimated amount and the quoted bid amount within 15 days of issuance of notice or within every period of bid, whichever is earlier.
- The contract clause 26 (B) of the evaluated lowest bidder shall, within 15 days of receipt by him of a notice in this regard, furnish to the tender approving authority, in form of bank guarantee (valid for three months beyond completion time) or extended completion time) from any scheduled bank of Pakistan, the amount to make up Performance Security and / or Quality Assurance Security where required and specified in the tender in item (5) of Memorandum of work, should the lowest evaluated bidder refuse or fail for any reason to furnish the Quality Assurance Security, it should constitute a just cause for rejection of his tender / announcement of award and in event of such rejection / announcement, the entire earnest money shall be forfeited to Government, as compensation for such default.
- The successful bidder shall have to execute an agreement with the Executive Engineer, Shahpur Division LJC, Sargodha within 03 days of issuance of Acceptance Letter.
- Conditional tender will not be accepted.
- The successful bidder will have to abide by the approved construction schedule of work which will be submitted by the contractor within 7 days of issuance of Acceptance Letter. In case of failure, the contractor shall be liable to pay compensation as per clause 26 of the agreement.
- The work to be executed according to approved specifications.
- The tenders/bids must be deposited by or on behalf of the intending bidders or their authorized agents in sealed envelope and submitted in tender box up to scheduled bid receiving time. No tender will be accepted which is received by post or by hand.
- PPRR Rules 2014 (amended), the procuring agency may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal.
- Contract documents, estimate and specifications can be seen in the office of the undersigned on any working day. Moreover, bidders are advised to inspect the site of work prior to participation in bidding process in order to quote realistic & practical technical / financial proposals.
- The payment will be made according to bill of materials as per work done, clause of the work done. The contractor will have no right to claim any interest on account of delay in making the payment for the work done because of non-availability of funds in time.
- Two or more contractors / firms become the lowest by quoting the same rates for this work, the decision of competent authority shall be final.
- The undersigned shall upon request communicate to any bidder, the grounds for his rejection of all bids or proposals but shall not be required to justify those grounds as per PPRR Rules.
- The tender notice is also available on the website of Irrigation Department, Lahore and PPRR Punjab. <http://irrigation.punjab.gov.pk> <http://www.pprp.gov.pk>

Name of Work	Estimate (Rs. in Million)	Estimate (Rs. in Million)	Earnest Money (Rs. in Million)	Tender Decision - To / - From (Rs.)	Time Limit
MANUFACTURING AND STACKING OF PITCHING STONE/ GRAVEL QUARY FOR THE PERIOD 01.07.2023 TO 30.06.2027.	243,896	243,896	4,878	10,000/-	03 year

Executive Engineer
 Shahpur Division LJC, Sargodha

DSP Mujtaba reviews the performance of Patrol Police Khushab



Soon Times Correspondent Nowshera Soon Sakesar: Under the chairmanship of DSP Patrol Police Khushab Rana Ghulam Mujtaba, the performance of Patrol Police Khushab for the month of May 2024 was reviewed. In this, Patrolling Police Khushab registered 05 drug cases in the month of April 2024. Among them, 25 liters of alcohol, 37 kg of hashish and 2.5 kg of opium were recovered. 04 cases of illegal weapons, 41 cases against vehicles using faulty gas cylinders, 09 cases against drivers driving vehicles with high speed and negligent were registered. Apart from this, 51249 persons and 17507 vehicles were checked through the modern police app. They recovered 02 stolen motorcycles, arrested 03 criminals and 03 fugitives from court. While 3225 challans were issued against overloaded vehicles, underage and helmetless drivers and vehicles and drivers who violated other traffic rules. A fine of 30 lakh 37 thousand 400 rupees was deposited in the national treasury. Apart from this, 492 different kinds of helps were provided to the passengers on the road. DSP Patrolling Rana Ghulam Mujtaba expressed his satisfaction with the performance of Patrol Police Khushab in the month of May 2024 and directed to improve it further.

Power Suspension Schedules for 6 to 14 June 2024

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad: According to Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) a spokesman, System Maintenance/Development Work is in process. Therefore power supply of below mentioned feeders/areas will be temporarily suspended as per given schedule: On 6th, 8th, 10th, 12th & 14th

June 2024, from 05:00 AM to 10:00 AM, Attock Circle, Nakka Kalan, Masood Shaheed Feeders and surrounding areas will remain closed. IESCO management apologizes to its esteemed customers for the power outage. If the work is completed ahead of time, the power supply can be restored even before the scheduled time.

گورنمنٹ سکول آف ٹیچنگ ایجوکیشن برائے متاثرہ صحت (ایوزی) میاں لالائی

پے گروپ تادم جاری ہے

ماہوار امتحان

- ☆ مفت تعلیم اور کتابیں
- ☆ 800 روپے ماہانہ وظیفہ
- ☆ مفت فرائیوڈ کی سہولت
- ☆ مفت ہاسٹل کی سہولت

فری خدمات ادارہ کی خصوصیات

- سائیکو لاجی
- تعلیمی اصلاحی
- دو کھیل زمینیں
- Behavior Modification
- سپورٹس ایجوکیشن
- ان دور آؤٹ ڈور گیمز
- عشیت کی تعمیر کیلئے خصوصی مہر کیس کا انتظام
- لازمی نصابی سرگرمیاں
- بانی کا اعزاز اور تربیت یافتہ اساتذہ کرام
- واخانے کیلئے ضروری سہولت
- کھیل کے بہترین میدان
- شادمانہ رات
- فری ٹیم
- صاف ستراہمت مند سہولت
- فول پروف سیکورٹی کا انتظام
- سنگینے کی سہولت
- سنگینے کی سہولت
- سنگینے کی سہولت
- فری ہسٹریگراڈنگ سہولت
- جدید سائیکلو گریوٹ

0333-4424274 **مشاق علی**

گورنمنٹ سکول آف ٹیچنگ ایجوکیشن برائے متاثرہ صحت (ایوزی) سہولانہ پان لالائی

0459-920108

US says response from Hamas on ceasefire proposal still awaited



WASHINGTON
A response from Palestinian Islamist group Hamas on Israel's ceasefire proposal that US President Joe Biden revealed on Friday is still being awaited. White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan

"We are waiting for a response from Hamas" through the Qatari mediators, Sullivan said.

CIA Director Bill Burns will be in Doha to consult with Qatari mediators on the Gaza ceasefire proposal, Sullivan added. Qatar has been mediating on Gaza between Israel and Hamas.

Qatar said on Tuesday it had delivered the Israeli ceasefire proposal to Hamas that reflected a three-phase proposal presented by Biden, and that the paper was now much closer to the positions of both sides.

A spokesman for Hamas, which has ruled Gaza since 2007, reiterated on Tuesday it could not agree to any deal unless Israel makes a "clear" commitment to a permanent truce and complete withdrawal from Gaza.

Gunman fires shots at US Embassy in Lebanon, army says



BEIRUT
A gunman fired shots at the US Embassy in Lebanon on Wednesday and was wounded in an exchange of fire with troops, the Lebanese army said.

The army said the attacker, a Syrian national, was taken to hospital for treatment and soldiers were searching through the area.

The US Embassy said small arms fire was reported near its entrance in the morning. The facility and staff were safe, it added.

A security source told Reuters a member of the embassy's security team was wounded in the attack and that Lebanese soldiers wounded an attacker in the stomach.



Fighting rocks Gaza as major powers push for truce

UN Middle East envoy Tor Wennesland also urged both sides to back the proposal.

GAZA
Heavy fighting rocked Gaza on Tuesday (Jun 4) after G7 and Arab powers urged both Israel and Hamas to agree to a truce and hostage release deal outlined by US President Joe Biden.

Mediator Qatar said it had yet to see statements from either side "that give us a lot of confidence", but the foreign ministry said Doha was "working with both sides on proposals on the table".

Washington said it would seek a UN Security Council resolution to back the three-phase roadmap which Biden presented last Friday as Israel's plan, even as the war has ground on.

Under the proposal, fighting would stop for an initial six weeks and hostages would be swapped for Palestinian prisoners, ahead of the start of a phase to rebuild Gaza, Biden said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has, however, stressed that fighting would only have to cease temporarily to free the captives and that Israel still plans to destroy Hamas.

A statement from the premier's office said Israel's war cabinet was meeting in Jerusalem on Tuesday, but no further details were given.

India's Manipur state rejects Modi's BJP after year-long ethnic clashes



GUWAHATI
India's main opposition Congress party bagged both parliamentary seats in strife-torn Manipur in the general election as the north-eastern state voted out Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party and its ally after year-long ethnic clashes.

Since May last year the remote state bordering Myanmar has been riddled by fighting between the majority Meitei and tribal Kuki-Zo people that killed at least 220 people and displaced 60,000 relief camps.

The state of 3.2 million people continues to be divided into two enclaves - ?a

valley controlled by Meiteis and Kuki-dominated hills, separated by a stretch of "no man's land" monitored by federal paramilitary forces.

In the lead-up to the election, victims on both sides of the sectarian divide expressed their displeasure with Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party for not being able to bring peace to the state.

"This is the voice of those who love their motherland and those who resented the kind of things we have gone through in the last one year... the suffering, the tragedy," said Congress's A Bimol Akojiam, who beat his BJP rival in the Meiteis-dominated inner Manipur seat by close to 110,000 votes.

The Outer Manipur seat, in the hills, has predominantly Kuki-Zo and the Naga tribal communities. Alfred Kanngam S Arbur won the seat for Congress, defeating the candidate put up by the BJP's ally by more than 85,000 votes.

Biden lands in France for D-Day anniversary, democracy speech



PARIS
Web Desk.
President Joe Biden landed in France on Wednesday to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day on a trip designed to underscore his commitment to US allies in Europe and contrast his vision of democracy with his 2024 political opponent Donald Trump.

Biden will spend five days in France and attend D-Day celebrations in Normandy, where US and allied forces stormed French beaches in an attack that helped defeat Nazi Germany in World War II, as well as deliver a high-profile speech and hold a formal state visit with President Emmanuel Macron.

While in Normandy Biden will sit down for talks with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the war effort to repel Russian invaders, White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters ahead of the presidential flight to Paris.

Biden's remarks in Normandy, both on Thursday at the formal 80th anniversary ceremony and on Friday at the famed Pointe du Hoc cliffs, will center around the dangers of isolationism and the need to stand up to dictators, Sullivan said.

Biden will draw a connection from World War Two through the Cold War and creation of the NATO alliance to today, "where we face once again war in Europe, where NATO has rallied to defend freedom and sovereignty."

In what promises to be an emotional moment, Biden will meet the aged veterans who participated in the D-Day invasion.

White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said the potential use of some \$300 billion in frozen Russian assets to aid Ukraine would be discussed by Biden and Macron during the visit.

Biden, a Democrat, is running for reelection in November against Trump, a Republican, and has made preserving and strengthening US democracy a key part of his campaign in the aftermath of Trump's chaotic four years in office.

Sports & Showbiz

T20 World Cup 2024: Pakistan undergo training session ahead of US clash



DALLAS:
The Pakistan cricket team participated in a rigorous training session on Tuesday in preparation for their upcoming match against the United States.

The Men in Green divided the training sessions into two parts. In the morning, from 11am to 2pm, the batters focused on indoor practice. They worked on improving their batting skills while practising at indoor nets in Dallas.

Due to the Netherlands vs Nepal match at the Grand Prairie Stadium, the practice pitch could not be readied. In the afternoon, the national players practised fielding and bowling at the Grand Prairie Stadium. They also dedicated time to practising high catches near the boundaries.



Alcaraz sets up French Open match 'everybody wants to see' against Sinner

PARIS
Carlos Alcaraz saw off Stefanos Tsitsipas in straight sets on Tuesday to set up a mouthwatering French Open semi-final clash with incoming world number one Jannik Sinner.

The reigning Wimbledon champion proved too strong for former Roland Garros runner-up Tsitsipas, powering to a 6-3, 7-6 (7/3), 6-4 victory on Court Philippe Chatrier.

"I was really calm in the moments I had to (be)," he said. "I'm really happy to play a semi-final here again at Roland Garros."

Alcaraz will be desperate to right the wrongs of last year - when he suffered cramps in a defeat by Novak Djokovic - in his second successive French Open semi-final.

The 21-year-old Spaniard has now won all six of his career matches against ninth-ranked Tsitsipas, including back-to-back quarter-finals in Paris after his three-set victory at the same stage last year. "I was pretty sure I could face Carlos today and maybe do

something different than any other time that I have played (him)," said Tsitsipas.

"The kid is just too good. I can only congratulate him because he's really playing amazing."

Alcaraz is bidding to become the youngest man in history to win Grand Slam tournaments on hard, grass and clay courts after his Wimbledon triumph and 2022 US Open title.

He will face Sinner Friday for the ninth time, with the pair's head-to-head record level at 4-4.

"It's a really difficult challenge. I'm not going to lie," said Alcaraz of Sinner, who will usurp Djokovic at the top of the rankings next week.

"I think right now he's the best player in the world, the player who's playing the best tennis right now."

There will be a new name on the men's trophy this year after Djokovic pulled out ahead of his quarter-final with a knee injury, while it will also be the first final without one of the 'big three' since 2004.

Hania Amir becomes most followed Pakistani celebrity on Instagram



LAHORE
(Web Desk)
Pakistani famous actor and model Hania Amir has amassed the most followers by any celebrity on Instagram.

With his followers reaching more than 14.1 million, the actor has beaten her colleagues in a race for the most followers on the photo and video-sharing app.

Aiman Khan was leading the race of most followers a few months back and now grabbed the distinction of third most followed actor. Her sister Minal Khan was also among the most followed actor.

Sabalenka 'to keep pushing' after powering into French Open quarters



PARIS
Aryna Sabalenka powered into a seventh consecutive Grand Slam quarter-final at the French Open on Monday with an impressive 6-2, 6-3 victory over American 22nd seed Emma Navarro.

Two-time Australian Open champion Sabalenka belted 36 winners past an overmatched Navarro to avenge her defeat by the 23-year-old at Indian Wells in March.

Second seed Sabalenka, a semi-finalist in Paris in 2023, will take on France's Varvara Gracheva or 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva of Russia for a place in the last four.

"It sounds crazy to me, to be honest, and I'm super happy that I was able to bring this consistency on the Grand Slams," said Sabalenka.

"That's really amazing. I just, yeah, it's motivating me a lot to keep pushing myself a lot and to see where is the limit."

Sabalenka has made at least the semi-finals at her past six Grand Slams and is expected to be Iga Swiatek's toughest rival in the Pole's bid for a fourth French Open title.

Her victory over Navarro means the top five women's seeds are through to the last eight at Roland Garros for only the third time in three decades. The other two occasions were in 1996 and 2013. After a first week plagued by wet and muggy conditions, Sabalenka had no trouble adjusting as the sun reappeared at Roland Garros and did away with the need for the oft-used roof on Court Philippe Chatrier.