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IHC stops police from arresting Sanam Javed till July 18



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday ordered the police not to arrest PTI leader Sanam Javed until Thursday (July 18), allowing her to go home. The IHC heard a petition filed by Sanam Javed's father for her release. The hearing was presided over by Justice Mianqul Hassan Aurangzeb, with Barrister Mian Ali Ashfaq representing Sanam. Sanam Javed was present in the courtroom, along with IG Islamabad Ali Nasir Rizvi, FIA officials, and personnel from Balochistan Police. Barrister Mian Ali Ashfaq stated that Sanam Javed had repeatedly inquired with the Islamabad police, but they had no FIR against her. Justice Mianqul Hassan Aurangzeb asked if she had been taken into custody, to which Barrister Ali Ashfaq confirmed she was detained from outside his office. The court ordered the police to present a complete one-year record against Sanam Javed and stopped them from arresting her until Thursday. The court allowed Sanam Javed to go home but warned that if she spoke a single word during this period, the court would revoke its order.

Non-bailable arrest warrant issued to Sher Afzal Marwat



Soon Times Correspondent RAWALPINDI Additional District and Session Judge Malik Mumtaz Hanjra of Rawalpindi's civil court has issued a non-bailable arrest warrant to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) member Sher Afzal Marwat, recently suspended from party membership. According to the court order, an arrest warrant was issued for the absence of Sher Afzal Marwat and his counsel in the case hearing. Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) has filed the case against Sher Afzal Marwat in the Naseerabad police station for violating RDA's bylaws for his alleged involvement in illegal construction of a building near Thalian Motorway Interchange, as per sources.

Govt doomed to crumble under its own weight : Barrister Saif



Soon Times Correspondent PESHAWAR Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Advisor Barrister Saif said on Monday that 'London Plan' had met its disastrous end, suggesting that people should keep an eye on those who might flee to London in a few days. Lashing out at the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz government, the KP Info Advisor said that both Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz were trying hard to save their governments in the centre and Punjab respectively. "The apex court verdict in reserved seats case has shaken the foundations of this fake government. Decisions awaited in the election tribunals, once announced, will further expose the ugly face of this Form-47 government," he added. Moreover, recalling Maryam Nawaz statements of ironing clothes with the help of a fry pan in jail, Saif insisted that these excuses won't help now.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif vows to make Punjab's youth skilled

To increase students enrolment by 40,000 gradually for TEVTA under CM Skills Development Initiative.



LAHORE Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz shared her vision to make every young citizen of Punjab skilled for financial independence. Sharing her message on World Youth Skills Day, she emphasised the pivotal role of youth for a sustainable future as skilled youth was an investment and asset, she described. CM stressed the need to abreast youth with skills and capabilities required in a rapidly changing world. Maryam Nawaz said the Punjab government was dedicated to providing resources of vocational training to youth. CM highlighted the importance of information and communication Technology

(ICT) roles in the global job market. She announced to increase students enrolment by 40,000 gradually for Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVTA) under CM Skills Development Initiative. She stated that middle tech, matric tech and intermediate tech were being introduced for students interested in IT. Every year, on July 15th World Youth Skills Day is being observed across the world including Pakistan. In 2014, the United Nations General Assembly designated World Youth Skills Day to highlight the need to prepare young people for employment, fulfilling work and

entrepreneurship. This year, the theme, "Youth Skills for Peace and Development," highlights the role of youth in peacebuilding and sustainable development. Pakistan ranks 5th among the 195 countries in the young populace. Around 64 per cent of population is below the age of 30 and young people between age 15 to 29 constitute 36 per cent of population. However, with inadequate financial resources and lack of career counselling, young people have no access to quality education. Young people are not taught practical based, market-driven skills and education in the universities that lead to unemployment and poverty.

Chairman RMA Chaudhry Qurban Hussain has been laid to rest

His funeral prayer & burial were held in Rawalpindi, attended by relatives & friends

Soon Times Correspondent Rawalpindi:

Senior journalist Chaudhry Qurban Hussain has been laid to rest in his native village Kotha Khurd, Rawalpindi yesterday. His funeral prayer was attended by a large number of relatives and friends. He died yesterday due to a sudden increase in blood pressure. His age was around 75 years. Chaudhry Qurban Hussain has been laid to rest in his native village Kotha Khurd, Rawalpindi yesterday. He worked for Daily Mahasab, Daily Jazba and Daily Khat Gujrat. He joined the English Newspaper Daily Soon Times in May 2024 and stayed till his last breath. Chaudhry Qurban Hussain was a dynamic personality who founded the Regional Media Association. The RMA members elected Chaudhry Qurban Hussain as the Chairman for life, which right he fulfilled well. He facilitated the welfare of the journalist community, especially approval of the facility of free treatment for heart diseases. He used to earn the pleasure of Allah by



distributing rations in Ramadan. He was deeply respected by the officers and staff of the Information Group. Chaudhry Qurban Hussain's characteristic was that he always supported the officers and staff of the Ministry of Information. That is why he used to act as a bridge between officers and media workers. He was son of Dr. Khan Gul Sail of Ashraf Colony, elder brother of Chaudhry Munir, Chaudhry Riaz, Chaudhry Jameel and Chaudhry Shabbir while father of Chaudhry Shahid, Qurban Zahid and Chaudhry Tahir. Expressing grief over his death, journalistic circles prayed for patience for the bereaved. In his memory, a prayer ceremony will be organized soon at the Press Club.

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi warns govt against dividing country

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD

Awam Pakistan Party Chairman Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said on Monday that by banning the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the rulers instead of uniting the country wanted to divide it. The former PM asked, "do you want a clash between institutions?" He said that with this decision (a reference to reserved seats), the Supreme Court had washed away its wrongs. Abbasi said that perhaps the ministers do not realise that the government cannot ban any party. "They are very fond of imposing Article 6. They don't realise that Article 6 will apply on many people. You have to sit on the table, he asserted. Former PM Abbasi said



unfortunately parliament in the country had become a platform for backbiting. Also read: Govt decides to ban PTI, initiate treason case against Imran Khan and Arif Alvi He questioned the direction of the rulers. He advised the government not to create confusion in the country. "It has been more than one year since the events of May 9. You could not prosecute even one person." He further said the system in the country should only be in accordance with the constitution.

”اور اللہ کی رسی کو مضبوطی سے تھامے رکھو اور تفرقہ کشی نہ پڑو۔“
(آل عمران - 103)



انسانیت کی خدمت ہے حسین کا پیغام باہمی محبت، مذہبی رواداری اور امن ہے اسلام

درس محمد ہے کہ ہم ایک قوم کی طرح کھڑے ہوں
ایمان اور مقصد میں ہمیشہ متحد ہوں

- دشمن کے وار سے نہیں
- مذہبی ہم آہنگی اور رواداری کے ساتھ ایک دوسرے کا احترام کریں
- عزم میں آپس کے کھول پھول کر رہیں
- کسی بھی منگول شخص کے ہاتھ میں جہم کو مطلق کریں
- سوشل میڈیا کا ذمہ دار نہ استعمال کریں

شہداء کی گریلا کی تعلیمات - امن و محبت اور برداشت

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World Bank greenlights \$1b loan for Dasu project

The World Bank has approved an additional \$1 billion loan for the Dasu hydropower project but at the same time sees a whopping \$18 billion energy sector circular debt a barrier to future investment in Pakistan. The World Bank's board of executive directors on Monday approved \$1 billion in a second round of additional financing for the Dasu hydropower project, according to a statement issued by the local office of the lender. The additional financing was critical for ensuring uninterrupted work on the scheme, which began a decade ago. With the fresh lending, the WB's exposure in the project has increased to 45% of the total cost. This marks the third major financing by the World Bank for the project, which has faced delays and endured at least two terrorist attacks targeting the Chinese nationals involved in its construction.

The additional \$1 billion included a \$435 million of a short maturity loan, \$365 million of regular IDA Scale-Up Window, and a \$200 million IBRD loan component, according to the project documents. The China Gezhouba Group Company (CGGC) serves as the contractor for the Dasu Hydropower Project, funded by the World Bank and a consortium of commercial banks. The World Bank said that the additional financing will support the expansion of hydropower electricity supply, improve access to socio-economic services for local communities, and build the Water and Power Development Authority's (WAPDA) capacity to prepare future hydropower projects. Pakistan's energy sector suffers from multiple challenges to achieving affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy, said Najy Benhassine, World

Bank Country Director for Pakistan. The Dasu hydropower Project site is one of the best hydropower sites in the world and is a game changer for the Pakistan energy sector, he added. The dam is a run-of-the-river project on the Indus River, and upon completion, it will have an installed capacity of 4,320 to 5,400MW. The project is being built in stages and the first stage has a capacity of 2,160MW. The WB also approved extending the closing date of the project to December 31, 2028. This extension will enable the completion of all ongoing activities under phase one, the possible use of the remaining \$250 million of the guarantee to raise additional commercial financing for the project, and, ultimately, the achievement of the Project Development Objective (PDO), said the WB. In Pakistan's current macroeconomic environment, Wapda's ability to

mobilise additional foreign commercial financing is limited in the near term, thus it is seeking additional financing to complete the project, said the WB. The WB said that new IMF programme is currently being negotiated to support continued sound economic management, new official inflows, and structural reforms. Robust economic recovery over the medium term will require the steadfast implementation of much broader fiscal and economic reforms, it added. The lender stated in the project report that lower-middle income poverty rate is estimated at 40.1% for this fiscal year with 7 million more Pakistanis living below the poverty line. It further stated that circular debt has continued to accumulate. At the end of January 2024, it stood at \$9.5 billion in the electricity sector and \$8.6 billion in the gas sector.

The Rapidly Increasing Population of Pakistan Challenges and Opportunities.



By Iftikhar uddin Anjum

Pakistan, a country located in South Asia, has experienced an explosive population growth over the past few decades. As of 2024, the country's population exceeds 240 million, making it the fifth most populous nation in the world. This rapid population increase presents both significant challenges and opportunities for the nation's development. Today we will discuss and explore the various facets of Pakistan's burgeoning population, the implications for its economy, society and environment, and the strategies needed to manage this growth effectively. The population of Pakistan has grown from around 33 million in 1951 to over 240 million today, reflecting a more than sevenfold increase in just over seven decades. This rapid growth can be attributed to several factors, including a high fertility rate, declining mortality rates due to advancements in healthcare, and a relatively young population. The country's fertility rate, although declining, remains one of the highest in the region, with an average of 3.6 children per woman as of 2021. Pakistan's demographic profile is characterized by a large young population, with approximately 60% of its people under the age of 30. This demographic dividend could potentially drive economic growth if harnessed correctly. However, it also places immense pressure on the country's resources, infrastructure and social services. The median age in Pakistan is around 23 years, indicating a young and potentially dynamic workforce that could transform the economy if provided with adequate education, skills, and employment opportunities. The rapid population growth in Pakistan has significant implications for its economy. On one hand, a growing population can contribute to a larger labor force, potentially boosting economic productivity and growth. On the other hand, it can strain economic resources and hinder development if the growth is not managed properly. One of the major challenges associated with population growth is unemployment and underemployment. Pakistan's job market has struggled to keep pace with the growing number of job seekers, leading to high levels of unemployment and underemployment, especially among the youth. This situation can lead to social unrest and increased

poverty levels if not addressed promptly. The increasing population puts additional pressure on the country's resources, including food, water, and energy. Ensuring food security for a rapidly growing population is a significant challenge, especially in the face of agricultural inefficiencies and climate change. Water scarcity is another pressing issue, with Pakistan being one of the most water-stressed countries in the world. Energy demand is also rising, necessitating substantial investments in energy infrastructure to meet the needs of the population. The growing population demands a proportional increase in educational and healthcare facilities. Pakistan's education system faces numerous challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, lack of trained teachers, and insufficient funding. Similarly, the healthcare system is under immense pressure to provide quality services to an increasing number of people, resulting in overcrowded hospitals and clinics, and insufficient medical personnel. One of the most significant social impacts is the rapid urbanization occurring in the country. Cities like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad are expanding rapidly as people migrate from rural areas in search of better employment opportunities and living conditions. This urban influx leads to the expansion of informal settlements and slums, putting additional strain on urban infrastructure and services such as housing, transportation, water supply, and sanitation. The population growth also affects family structures and gender dynamics. Large family sizes often lead to economic strain, limiting the ability of families to invest in education and health. Moreover, the high fertility rate and preference for larger families are often influenced by cultural and societal norms, which also impact gender dynamics. Women's health and empowerment are critical issues, as many women face limited access to family planning services and reproductive health care, affecting their ability to participate fully in the workforce and society. The environmental impact of Pakistan's rapidly increasing population cannot be overlooked. The growing population exerts significant pressure on the country's natural resources and environment. Increasing demand for housing, agriculture, and infrastructure development leads to deforestation and land degradation. This not only affects biodiversity but also contributes to soil erosion, loss of arable land, and increased vulnerability to natural disasters such as floods and landslides. The expanding population and urbanization also contribute to air and water pollution. The increase in vehicular traffic, industrial activities,

and energy consumption results in higher emissions of pollutants, deteriorating air quality in major cities. Water pollution from untreated industrial and domestic waste poses serious health risks and affects freshwater ecosystems. Pakistan is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events, changes in precipitation patterns, and rising temperatures. The growing population exacerbates the challenges posed by climate change, as more people are exposed to climate-related risks and the demand for climate-resilient infrastructure and resources increases. Despite the challenges posed by rapid population growth, there are opportunities that Pakistan can leverage to achieve sustainable development. The large youth population can be a significant asset if provided with quality education, vocational training, and employment opportunities. Investing in human capital development is crucial to harness the potential of the youth and drive economic growth. Policies aimed at improving education and skill development, promoting entrepreneurship, and creating job opportunities are essential in this regard. Effective family planning programs are critical to managing population growth. Increasing awareness and access to family planning services can help reduce fertility rates and improve maternal and child health. Empowering women through education and economic opportunities also plays a vital role in family planning and population management. To address the challenges of urbanization, Pakistan needs to invest in sustainable urban planning and infrastructure development. This includes improving public transportation systems, developing affordable housing, and enhancing urban services such as water supply, sanitation, and waste management. Smart city initiatives and green building practices can also contribute to more sustainable urban development. Protecting and conserving natural resources is essential for sustainable development. Pakistan needs to implement policies and practices that promote sustainable agriculture, reforestation, and biodiversity conservation. Addressing pollution through stricter regulations and promoting renewable energy sources can help mitigate the environmental impact of population growth. Building climate resilience is crucial for protecting vulnerable populations and ensuring sustainable development. This includes investing in climate-resilient infrastructure, improving disaster preparedness and response, and promoting sustainable water and land management practices.

Supreme Court Verdict Prompts PTI Political Moves



by: Amjad Rana

A vote of confidence motion can be put in the National Assembly following the Supreme Court verdict. The process of moving a vote of confidence is a political tool used to test whether the Prime Minister or the ruling coalition still enjoys the support of the majority in the assembly. Given the Supreme Court's decision on the reallocation of the 77 reserved seats, the political dynamics in the National Assembly might shift, prompting the opposition or even the ruling coalition to consider a vote of confidence. The impact of the Supreme Court's ruling could potentially alter the balance of power within the National Assembly. If the reallocation of seats strengthens PTI and its allies, they might seek to challenge the ruling coalition's majority; the ruling coalition might call for a vote of confidence to reaffirm its majority and stabilize its government following the judicial decision. The timing and likelihood of such a motion would depend on the political calculations of the involved parties and the evolving political scenario after the final decision of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court of Pakistan, led by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, delivered a verdict on the appeals regarding the allocation of 77 reserved seats for women and minorities. These seats were initially allotted to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's ruling coalition following the February 8 general elections, but the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), backed by PTI. The Supreme Court's decision to hear and rule on PTI and SIC's appeals may be perceived as a victory for the party. The legal battle highlighted PTI's persistence in fighting for its political rights and could enhance its image as a party committed to justice and fair representation. The narrative of PTI being denied its rights by the ECP and the subsequent court struggle could generate sympathy among the electorate. Many supporters might view PTI as a party that stands up against perceived injustices, thus bolstering its support base. The extensive media coverage of the case and the Supreme Court's deliberations could bring more attention to PTI's stance and activities, potentially attracting new supporters who were previously unaware of the specifics of the case. PTI can leverage the verdict to mobilize its base and energize its supporters. By framing the court's decision as a win, PTI can galvanize its members and attract undecided

voters who may appreciate the party's efforts in safeguarding democratic principles. The collaboration with SIC and the focus on minority and women's rights can broaden PTI's appeal to a wider demographic. This could help PTI attract support from groups that prioritize inclusive and fair representation in politics. According to media reports PTI-backed SIC argued that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had unfairly denied them these reserved seats, citing the ECP's misinterpretation of the Supreme Court's earlier verdict which stripped PTI of its "bat" symbol due to intra-party election issues. The ECP argued that SIC failed to submit the required list of candidates by the January 24 deadline and did not qualify for the seats because it did not allow non-Muslims in its party. Justice Athar Minallah and other judges pointed out discrepancies in the ECP's interpretation and emphasized that the ECP's records did acknowledge independent candidates as part of SIC. Despite these acknowledgments, the ECP denied the reserved seats to SIC, prompting the legal challenge. The Supreme Court's detailed hearing highlighted constitutional issues around the rights of political parties and their candidates. Ultimately, the case was a significant legal battle over electoral fairness and the representation of women and minorities in the assemblies. The Supreme Court's decision emphasized the need for transparency and adherence to constitutional principles in the electoral process. The Supreme Court's verdict could indeed come as a shock to the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). Several reasons could contribute to this reaction. The reallocation of the 77 reserved seats for women and minorities from the ruling coalition to PTI-backed candidates undermines the electoral strength and legislative control of PML-N and PPP. This reallocation could alter the balance of power in both the National Assembly and provincial assemblies, potentially hindering the ruling coalition's ability to pass legislation and maintain a stable government. This perception can create uncertainty and concern within the ranks of PML-N and PPP, signaling a shift in political momentum towards PTI. The court's decision might influence public opinion in favour of PTI, portraying it as a party that successfully challenged the establishment and won. This shift in public sentiment could erode the support base of PML-N and PPP, making it more challenging for them to maintain their political dominance. The ruling parties might need to reassess their strategies and policies to counter the potential rise in PTI's popularity. This could involve re-evaluating their approach

and public engagement to mitigate the impact of the verdict on their political standing. The Supreme Court's verdict could significantly impact the political landscape, posing challenges to the ruling coalition and potentially boosting PTI's standing among the electorate. The Supreme Court of Pakistan's decision to suspend the Peshawar High Court's ruling regarding the reallocation of reserved seats has significant implications for PTI and the current political landscape. The ruling grants PTI-backed Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) a chance to contest the allocation of 77 reserved seats for women and minorities, which were previously given to the ruling coalition of PML-N and PPP after the February 2024 general elections. PTI leaders have welcomed the decision, with Asad Qaiser suggesting that such verdicts could pave the way for PTI's return to power. On the other hand, the ruling parties, particularly PML-N and PPP, have expressed concerns about the interim nature of the ruling. They argue that the final decision could still uphold the original allocation by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). PTI has called for the immediate resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Sikander Sultan Raja, accusing him of violating the Constitution. The party's official statements and posts on social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter) emphasized this demand, citing the Supreme Court's ruling as evidence of the ECP's wrongdoing. The former KP finance minister congratulated PTI and its supporters, affirming their belief in being on the "right side of history" and highlighting what he sees as the ECP's malicious intent. Imran Khan's former aide echoed the demand for the resignation of the chief election commissioner, suggesting that the Supreme Court's decision effectively charges the ECP with misconduct. The former human rights minister celebrated the verdict on social media, critiquing the minority opinions within the court while praising the majority decision. Acting President of PTI Punjab, praised the judges who ruled in favor of PTI, calling for the release of Imran Khan and other PTI leaders, and demanded the end of what he called the "forgery of Form 47." PTI spokesman extended congratulations to the party, emphasizing that this victory is just the beginning and expressing confidence that Imran Khan will soon become the Prime Minister of Pakistan again.

PTI urges SC to take notice of govt's intransigence



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
In a stinging rejoinder to Federal Information Minister Atta Tarar's announcement of the government's decision of banning the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, senior PTI leader Barrister Ali Zafar Shah said no one, including the Supreme Court, would ever accept the decision of proscribing the PTI. Speaking to Dunya News, Barrister Shah said the apex court should immediately take notice of the political victimisation, adding that he was surprised at the verdict of the SC of granting reserved seats to the PTI instead

of the Sunni-Ittehad Council (SIC) which, he said, was contrary to his expectations. He further said no one would be able to do politics sans Imran Khan, insisting that the PTI founder had ruled out the possibility of forming the government by going into coalition with anyone including Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman. "Imran Khan only wants one thing, either return his complete mandate or conduct fresh elections," he added. Speaking about Imran Khan's release from jail, Shah said the PTI founder was days away from coming out of jail, adding that a review petition was a constitutional right of the government but this decision didn't seem to be overturned. He warned the government against flouting the clause 17 of the constitution by imposing a ban on the PTI, adding that he didn't have anything but to deplore on the decision of the government. He also called for the chief election commissioner's resignation for not giving fair share of the reserved seats to the PTI. Salman Akram Raja's response Replying in his characteristic style, PTI leader Salman Akram Raja said his party would deal with the government at all levels, be it public or in courts, emphasising that they won't become a party in the government's efforts to hide its fraud. "It is foolish to say that the PTI is working against the sovereignty of Pakistan. The government just wants to stifle democracy in Pakistan. We haven't thought they would stoop to this extent," he lamented. He further said the PTI never denied dialogue, adding that his party was sitting inside parliament and was member of the parliamentary committees. "I can't say anything about backdoor channels as the government has stooped to this low on the front door," he remarked. It must be noted that earlier Federal Information Minister Atta Tarar, in his fiery press conference, announced that the government would ban the PTI.

SHO City Pindi Bhattian's overbearing action against drug dealers

Soon Times Correspondent Pindi Bhattian:
According to details, SHO City Pindi Bhattian Malik Badar Munir Awan has been conducting daily operations against drug dealers ever since he was posted in the City Police Station. Despite strict security duties during Muharram, drug dealers are not let loose. The police nabbed and arrested notorious drug dealer Ameer Hamza alias Miro at Gol Chowk Pindi Bhattian while he was supplying drugs. People of City Pindi Bhattian have paid tribute to SHO City Pindi Bhattian.



PML-Q unaware of govt's decision to ban PTI

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The Pakistan Muslim League (Q) says the government has not taken it on board regarding the ban on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. According to sources, the key government ally PML-Q is unaware of the decision to impose the ban and invoke Article 6 against PTI founder Imran Khan and former president Anif Alvi. PML-Q stated that the government did not consult them on this matter. PML-Q mentioned that they have just



become aware of the issue and will hold consultations within the party. According to the statement, a response to the decision

will be given only after the party's consultation. Earlier, Information Minister Atta Tarar said on Monday that the ruling coalition had decided to move for a ban on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Addressing a press conference here, he said the federal government will file a case to ban the PTI. He added that the government would keep the current situation in mind before taking a step in this regard. "The PTI and the country cannot go

35 MNAs submit affidavits of allegiance to PTI

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
As many as 35 members of the National Assembly (NA) have submitted their affidavits of allegiance to the PTI following the Supreme Court's verdict on reserved seats. According to sources, nine members of PTI from the Sindh Assembly while 100 from the Punjab Assembly submitted their affidavits for proving allegiance to the party. However, the top leadership including Barrister Gohar Ali and Omar Ayub have not yet submitted their affiliation certificates.



Around 70 members of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly also submitted their affidavits. It should be noted that the move followed the SC verdict which declared the PTI eligible for the reserved seats.

PPP, ANP oppose govt's decision to ban PTI

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Senior leadership of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Awami National Party (ANP) opposed the government's decision to ban the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). According to sources, senior leaders of the PPP advised the leadership to oppose the decision openly. Some PPP leaders expressed surprise over Atta Tarar's statement about taking allies into confidence. Senior leaders of the PPP stated that they were not aware of being taken into confidence and that their party does not support the government's decision. Farhatullah Babar opposed the decision to impose the ban on the PTI. Meanwhile, ANP Senator Arbab Umar Farooq Kasi stated that the decision to ban political parties could not be supported in a democratic era. He urged the political parties to strengthen the democratic process instead of engaging in



leg-pulling. "It is the government's responsibility to prevent the derailment of the democratic system. The solution to the current crisis in the country is purely political, and the use of force will only increase instability," he added. Earlier, Information Minister Atta Tarar said on Monday that the ruling coalition had decided to move for a ban on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Addressing a press conference here, he said the federal government will file a case to ban the PTI. The government would keep the current situation in mind before taking a step in this regard, he added.

Muharram 2024: Mobile phone service closure at specified places

Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
The government has identified various localities across Punjab where the mobile phone service will be unavailable on 9th and 10th of Muharram. The Interior Ministry has recommended to the government not to suspend the service completely in any city. According to the spokesperson of the ministry, the mobile service will be partially suspended on 9th and 10th of Muharram from 8am to 10pm in most districts of Punjab. However, the service will not be suspended in Lahore, Kasur, Sheikhupura, Sargodha, Khushab, and Chakwal. The mobile service will not be suspended



in Multan, Khanewal, Lodhran, Vehari, Sahiwal, Pakpattan, Okara, Chinot, Gujranwala, Narowal, Toba Tek Singh, Bhakkar, Mandi Bahauddin, Wazirabad, Rajanpur, Faisalabad, and Bahawalnagar. The service will be partially suspended in

Hafizabad. The service will be suspended at 28 locations in Rawalpindi, 15 in Rahim Yar Khan, 11 in Mianwali and Bahawalpur, 10 in Layyah, seven in Muzaffargarh and six in Nankana Sahib. Read more: Punjab govt recommends ban on social media for six days during Muharram. According to the ministry, the mobile service was suspended in some areas in Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Jhang, Bahawalpur and Bahawalnagar on Muharram 7, on Sunday.

PMD predicts heavy rains across country

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD:
The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) announced on Monday that the country is set to experience more rain in various regions throughout the week. The Met Office said that monsoon winds from the Arabian Sea are expected to create most parts of the country starting July 16. Rain accompanied by strong winds and thunderstorms is forecast for Islamabad and several areas in Punjab starting from July 17 to July 20. Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) is likely to see rain with strong winds and thunderstorms from July 16 to 21. In Balochistan, rain with dust storms is expected from July 17 to 19, while similar conditions are anticipated in Sindh on 18 and 19 of July. The PMD also predicts partly cloudy weather with intermittent rain in Gilgit-Baltistan from July 17 to 21. Azad Jammu and Kashmir is expected to experience rain with thunderstorms from July 16 to 21. Earlier today, Karachi experienced rainfall in some areas of the city, bringing much-needed



relief from the intense summer heat. According to details, the rain was reported in Baldia Town, Surjani Town, Hamdard University, Kathore, and Malir along with adjoining areas. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) stated that the spread of low-pressure systems and high ground temperatures have increased the likelihood of rain in Karachi. Some parts of the Karachi Division could also witness thunderstorms today. It also said that light rain and drizzle are expected from evening to night on Tuesday, with the possibility of thunderstorms continuing from Wednesday evening to night, providing temporary respite from the hot and humid weather.

PSX hits record high, surges past 81,000 points milestone



Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad
The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark index KSE-100 hit an all-time high on Monday after crossing 81,000 points level. The KSE-100 index surged by 1,436 points and touched an intra-day high of 81,380 points. The benchmark index closed at a new all-time high of 81,155, up 1.52 percent or 1,211 points. Bullish momentum was observed at the KSE-100 after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff and Pakistani

authorities reached a staff-level agreement, said economic expert. Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund reached a three-year, \$7 billion aid package deal, the Washington-based institution said on Friday. The new programme, which needs to be validated by the Fund's Executive Board, should enable Pakistan to "cement macroeconomic stability and create conditions for stronger, more inclusive and resilient growth," according to a statement. The agreement is subject to approval by the IMF's executive board. "The programme aims to capitalise on the hard-won macroeconomic stability achieved over the past year by furthering efforts to strengthen public finances, reduce inflation, rebuild external buffers and remove economic distortions to spur private sector-led growth," the IMF statement said, quoting Nathan Porter, the Fund's mission chief to Pakistan. "In this regard, the authorities plan to increase tax revenues through measures of 1.5 per cent of GDP in FY25 and 3 per cent of GDP over the programme," it said. The increase in revenue collections will be achieved through "simpler and fairer direct and indirect taxation, including by bringing net income from the retail, export, and agriculture sectors properly into the tax system". The statement added that federal and provincial governments have agreed to rebalance spending activities in line with the 18th Constitution Amendment by signing a 'National Fiscal Pact'. Under the agreement, subjects including education spending, health, social protection, and regional public infrastructure investment will be devolved to provinces.



Yemen's Houthis claim attack on four ships at Israel's Haifa port

DAMASCUS
A Syrian soldier was killed early on Sunday and three others wounded in Israeli strikes on several positions in and around Damascus, Syrian state media said.
The Israeli military, meanwhile, said it had targeted a Syrian military command centre as well as targets and infrastructure belonging to the Syrian army and air defence in response to two drones launched towards Israel from Syrian territory. The statement was a rare acknowledgement by the Israeli military of action in Syria, where it has launched hundreds of strikes since the country's civil war erupted in 2011, mainly targeting army positions and Iran-backed fighters.



Gaza civil defence says 15 Dies in Israel strike on Gaza school

The UN-run Abu Araban school was housing "thousands of displaced people."

GAZASTRIP (Palestinian Territories)
The civil defence agency in Hamas-run Gaza said Sunday that 15 people were killed in a strike on a school sheltering war displaced where the Israeli military said it had targeted "terrorists".
The strike on the UN-run Abu Araban site in central Gaza's Nusirat camp was the fifth on a school-run shelter in eight days.
The Abu Araban school was housing "thousands of displaced people," civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP, adding that most of the dead were women and children.
Schools in Nusirat were the target for two of the earlier school strikes as Israel keeps up its offensive against Hamas Palestinian militants who triggered the war with their October 7 attack on Israel.
The Israeli military said its air force "struck a number of terrorists who were operating in the area of UNRWA's Abu Araban school building in Nusirat".
It said the building had "served as a hideout" and base for "attacks" on Israeli troops.
AFP TV images showed the three-storey complex standing with clothes and bedding airing out over its railings. A wall bearing the UN logo had been blown out, and rooms inside were damaged.
On July 6, Israeli aircraft hit Al-Jawni school, also run by the United Nations relief agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), in Nusirat.
UNRWA said about 2,000 people were sheltering there at the time.
The following day, four people died in a strike on the church-run Holy Family school in Gaza City, in the territory's north, according to the Civil Defence agency.

After assassination attempt, Trump and Biden seek calm, unity

MILWAUKEE
Donald Trump arrived on Sunday in Milwaukee, where he will be formally nominated as the Republican presidential candidate later this week after surviving an assassination attempt that has aggravated an already bitter US political divide.
President Joe Biden, a Democrat, ordered a review of how a 20-year-old man with an AR-15-style rifle got close enough to shoot at Trump from a rooftop on Saturday. Trump, as a former president, has lifetime protection by the US Secret Service.
Trump, 78, was holding a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania — a key state in the Nov. 5 election — when shots rang out, hitting his right ear and leaving his face streaked with blood. His campaign said he was doing well.
"That reality is just setting in," Trump told *The Washington Examiner* on Sunday. "I rarely look away from a crowd. Had I not done that in that moment, well, we would not be talking today, would we?"



One person in the crowd was killed and two others wounded before Secret Service agents fatally shot the suspect.
Both Trump and Biden on Sunday sought calm and unity.
Trump is due to accept his party's formal nomination at the Republican National Convention with a speech on Thursday. He pumped his fist in the air several times as he descended the stairs from his plane after arriving in Milwaukee.
"This is a chance to bring the whole country, even the whole world, together. The speech will be a lot different, a lot different than it would've been two days ago," Trump told *The Washington Examiner*.

The Secret Service is investigating how a man who shot and injured Trump was able to get so close



Web Desk
The roof was fewer than 150 meters (164 yards) from where Trump was speaking, a distance from which a decent marksman could reasonably hit a human-sized target. For reference, 150 meters is a distance at which US Army recruits must hit a human-sized silhouette to qualify with the M16 assault rifle in basic training. The AR-style rifle, like that of the gunman at the Trump rally, is the semiautomatic civilian version of the military M16.
President Joe Biden said Sunday he has directed an independent review of the security at the rally.
Biden said he also directed the US Secret Service to review all security measures for the Republican National Convention, which begins Monday in Milwaukee. Audrey Gibson-Cicchino, the Secret Service's coordinator for the convention, told reporters later the agency was satisfied with what she called its comprehensive planning for the Republican convention.
Biden urged Americans not to make assumptions about the motive of the shooter. He said investigators are working swiftly to investigate the attack.
"Unity is the most elusive goal of all," he said, but "nothing is more important than that right now."
Calls for an investigation came from all sides. Rep. Mark Green, a Tennessee Republican who chairs the House Committee on Homeland Security, sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Sunday raising questions about the shooting and demanding information about the former president's Secret Service protection.
"The seriousness of this security failure and chilling moment in our nation's history cannot be understated," Green wrote.
The Secret Service did not have a speaker at a news conference Saturday night where FBI and Pennsylvania State Police officials briefed reporters on the shooting investigation.

Car bomb at Mogadishu cafe kills five, injures 20 during Euro 2024

Web Desk
Jihadist group Al-Shabaab is suspected to have detonated a car bomb outside a cafe in Mogadishu, the Somali capital, while football fans watched the Euro 2024 final, causing five fatalities.
Five people were killed in a powerful car bomb blast late Sunday at a cafe in the Somali capital Mogadishu that was packed with football fans watching the Euro 2024 final, local media said, citing police.
Images posted online showed a huge fireball and plumes of smoke billowing into the night sky as the explosion ripped through the popular restaurant in the centre of the city.
"A car bomb detonated tonight outside Top Coffee Restaurant... placed by Kharijite terrorists," the Somali National News Agency reported, using the term officials adopt to describe the Al-Qaeda linked Al-Shabaab jihadist group.

Sports & Showbiz

PCB goes back to 'old model' of one-year central contracts, no pay cuts



LAHORE:
The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Monday announced going back to its old model of granting a one-year central contract to the national side's players, conditional to their performance.
Among several decisions taken during a meeting of the board's top brass, the officials decided against cutting the salaries of the players, who are under fire after their dismal T20 World Cup 2024.
The monthly salaries of the players and their income were under discussion after the Pakistani side failed to live up to the fans' expectations and crashed out of the tournament before even entering the Super 8 stage.
In a statement, the board said: "The central contract's tenure will be of a year. The players' performance and fitness will be reviewed every year. Inclusion of players in different categories will be made under a well-defined process."
The PCB also decided that players' fitness would be checked every three months and that it would be mandatory for the athletes to participate in domestic cricket.



Argentina clinch record 16th Copa America with 1-0 extra-time win over Colombia



Miami Gardens, Florida
Defending champions Argentina won a record 16th Copa America title by beating Colombia 1-0 thanks to an extra-time goal from substitute Lautaro Martinez at the Hard Rock Stadium in Florida on Sunday.
The game, which was delayed by more than an hour after thousands of fans without tickets tried to enter the stadium, was a cagey affair over 90 minutes but opened up in the extra period.
Martinez, the tournament's leading scorer, latched onto a precise through ball from Giovanni Lo Celso before filling his effort over advancing Colombia goalkeeper Camilo Vargas in the 112th minute to spark wild celebrations among Argentina fans.
Argentina's latest title comes on the back of their triumphs at the 2022 World Cup and 2021 Copa America, and gives eight-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi the perfect sendoff in what is likely his last international tournament.
The win also marked Angel di Maria's final Argentina match after the 36-year-old said last year he would retire from international football after the Copa, while defender Nicolas Otamendi, 36, is also set to end his international career.

Yashma Gill says no issue to befriend Babar Azam



KARACHI (Web Desk)
Lollywood diva Yashma Gill said there would be no issue in it if she becomes the friend of Babar Azam.
She stated this during an interview with a private news channel where she also called the right-arm batsman as his favourite cricketer.
She said Babar represented Pakistan at international platforms and it is a matter of pride. Responding to another question, she said she had never received any messages from cricketers.
When asked if she has friendship with any cricketers, Gill replied: "How can she become a friend of a player since she never met any of them".

Late Oyarzabal goal gives Spain its record fourth Euro title



BERLIN
Web Desk
England lose its second straight European Cup final as substitute Mikel Oyarzabal's 86th minute winner gives La Roja its first international trophy since Euro 2012, cementing Spain's place among the top teams in world football after years of rebuilding.
Substitute Mikel Oyarzabal scored a dramatic late winner as Spain triumphed in Sunday's Euro 2024 final, beating England 2-1 to confirm their re-emergence as a force on the international stage and end six decades' dreams of winning a first title in almost six decades.
Spain lost, but shrugged that off to take the lead within two minutes of the restart through Nico Williams, who was set up by his fellow star winger, Lamine Yamal.
England came from behind as they have done so often at this Euro, as substitute Cole Palmer dove in the equaliser on 73 minutes, moments after entering the fray.
But their resurgence in the game was cut short as Oyarzabal, the Real Sociedad forward, turned in a cross in the 86th minute to hand Spain a record fourth European Championship crown, and a third in the last five editions.
They previously won in 1964, 2008 and 2012, the last titles coming either side of their triumph at the 2010 World Cup during the golden era of Xavi Hernandez, Xabi Alonso and Andres Iniesta.