



Daily SOON TIMES

Chief Editor
Shah Muhammad Awan

Tuesday
July 2, 2024
Page: 4 Rs: 20
Vol: 4 Issue: 182
Sargodha

www.soontimes.pk

ABC Certified

Simultaneously Publishing from Islamabad, Sargodha & Karachi

+92 321 888 1135

Mohsin Naqvi pledges unity to eradicate menace of terrorism



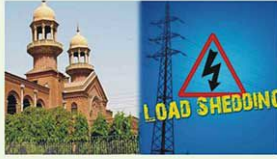
Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi pledged to end the scourge of terrorism with unity and cooperation.
Interior Minister paid tribute to the FC and police officials for foiling the attack on police check-post in Khyber district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
In his statement, he said, "we pay tribute to martyred FC official Shehzad and police official Ijaz for sacrificing their lives for foiling the notorious intentions of terrorists with courage. He added, nation paid salute to young for defending the motherland with bravery and nation would always remember their sacrifices for the state.
Mohsin Naqvi stated, "We are proud of the courage of both young defenders."
Interior minister reiterated, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police and FC officers were always on the frontline for the fight against terrorism and there was no example of their sacrifice and bravery.

Struggle for power has assumed form of ever-expanding wildfire, says Saad Rafique



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Top PML-N leader and former railways minister Khavaja Saad Rafique has stated that the decades-long struggle for power, authority and resources has escalated into a raging wildfire.
In a post on the social networking site X, the former minister remarked, "Hatred, malice, lies and revenge continually fuel this fire, knowing that while parties may destroy each other, they cannot extinguish it."
Rafique further said that no party was willing to pause, reflect, admit mistakes or step back for mutual progress.

LHC judge refers electricity loadshedding plea to another judge



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
A judge from the Lahore High Court returned a petition regarding nationwide electricity loadshedding to acting Chief Justice Shujaat Ali Khan on Monday, requesting that it be assigned to another bench for hearing.
Justice Faisal Zaman Khan conducted the hearing. During the proceedings, Advocate Azhar Siddique, representing the Judicial Activism Panel, presented his arguments.
However, the judge referred the case back to the acting chief justice, asking for it to be scheduled for a hearing by Justice Shahid Karim who was already handling a similar petition.
The petition highlights that despite the country's capacity to generate 40,000 MW of electricity, actual production remains capped at 28,000 MW. It argues that the failure to provide this basic necessity to the public constitutes a serious violation of the constitution.

CM Maryam Nawaz announces healthcare revolution in Punjab

CM underscores need to restore, restructure existing healthcare system in Punjab



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz announced on Monday her commitment to revolutionise the health sector by expediting health projects. Maryam made the announcement during a meeting with the provincial health adviser, Azhar Mehmood Kayani.
During the meeting, the chief minister underscored the need to restore and restructure the existing health system while promoting modern research in medical colleges and universities.
Maryam expressed her dedication to the health sector, stating that upgrades were underway for all health centres, TIQs and tertiary hospitals.
She highlighted initiatives such as delivering medications for heart diseases, TB, cancer and hepatitis

directly to people's homes, noting her satisfaction when a woman shared her positive experience with home-delivered heart medication.
The chief minister emphasised that field hospitals now provided free X-rays, lab tests, ECGs and medicines, with plans to expand mobile clinics by 500 and incentivize doctors to serve in underserved areas.
Maryam mentioned the resumption of halted medication supplies in hospitals, provision of free medicines in government hospitals, and plans to extend field hospital coverage to all districts.
The chief minister also outlined future plans to establish cardiology and pediatrics blocks in districts to reduce rural-to-urban patient transfers and ensure public-friendly health infrastructure.

PM Shehbaz commends Police, FC for thwarting terror attack in Khyber district



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday praised the Police and Frontier Constabulary personnel for foiling a terror attempt in Takhta Bag, Khyber district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
Prime minister paid tribute to police officer Ijaz and FC officer Shehzad, who sacrificed their lives fighting terrorists for the sake of the country.
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif prayed for the

martyrs' elevation in Jannah and for patience and strength for their families to bear this irreparable loss.
Prime Minister stated that the armed forces, police, and law enforcement agencies have made countless sacrifices to achieve peace in Pakistan.
He said the Pakistani nation is proud of its brave heroes and their families and stands united to eliminate the scourge of terrorism from the country.
A policeman and an FC officer were martyred when some unidentified terrorists attacked police posts in Khyber district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Sunday night.
According to details, the terrorists used rocket launcher and heavy weapons in attack on a joint picket of police and FC in Khyber district due to which a policeman and FC officer embraced martyrdom.

Ji to hold sit-in On July 12 in Islamabad against inflation, taxes



Soon Times Correspondent LAHORE
Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Hafiz Naeem Rehman has announced a sit-in in Islamabad on July 12 against inflated electricity bills and excessive taxes in the budget.
He criticized the government for the prevailing crises of inflation, poverty, unemployment, and lawlessness across the country, which he claimed were forcing young people to leave.
Hafiz Naeem highlighted the impact of inflation leading to a brain drain, lamenting that skilled professionals such as doctors, engineers, and chartered accountants were leaving the country.
Saying, "who would run the country and how would system work if all skilled professional

will move abroad."
He stated that half of the youth population had already emigrated, with those remaining often resorting to street crimes and drugs.
The JI leader criticized the incumbent government, alleging that a government formed on the basis of Form-47 was imposed on the country and accused the ruling party of plundering the nation.
He assured that Pakistan's young population could not be neglected in these challenging circumstances.

PTI repeatedly sought time, but failed to hold intra-party elections: CJP Isa

Justice Ayesha inquires ECP about allocation of reserved seats to BAP and whether it held any meeting on said issue



Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD:
Supreme Court's Justice Ayesha Malik Monday said that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is in control of the formula for the allocation of reserved seats, giving it the power to declare any candidate as independent.
"The ECP can declare anyone independent as per its will," Justice Malik said as a 13-member full-court SC bench heard the Sunni Ittehad

Council's (SIC) plea against the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) verdict upholding the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision denying them the reserved seats.
The bench, led by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, comprises Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Amir-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail,

Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Athar Minallah, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Shahid Waheed, Justice Irfan Saadat Khan and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan.
During the hearing today, ECP's lawyer Sikander Bashir apprised the court that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) issued party affiliation certificates along with Form 66, which were signed by Barrister Gohar Khan.

All races in Pakistan must be granted equal rights, asserts MQM-P Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui

Soon Times Correspondent KARACHI
Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) leader Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui asserted that all races residing in Pakistan must be granted equal rights.
During his press conference in Karachi, he claimed that they had been subjected to oppression for 50 years under the worst feudal system ruling across Sindh.
He highlighted that more than 56 thousand jobs had been granted based on racism over the past 50 years, stating that the Pakistani constitution advocated for job opportunities for local people.
He thanked the Sindh High Court (SHC) and the justice system of Pakistan for granting them their rights, stating that they had achieved these rights after many years of struggle.



MQM-P leader revealed that whatever had happened in the last 50 years was planned and a conspiracy.
The events of the Fall of Dhaka on December 16, 1971, and the takeover by Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto on December 23, proved the stance of

Pakistan's division and conspiracy against it to be correct.
He described how fake domiciles were created for urban areas of Sindh and jobs were taken away. He stated that justice was delayed, the quota system was unfair and cruel, and it

was imposed to protect the feudal system. Khalid Siddiqui raised the issue of the illiteracy, saying that the literacy rate in Sindh was quite low, standing last in Pakistan.
Quota system has created rift among races: Ferooz Sattar MQM-P leader Ferooz Sattar attributed the low literacy rate to the quota system, asserting that Sindh could have been the most literate and developed province, but the quota system had hindered progress.
He highlighted that government jobs in Karachi, Sukkur, and Hyderabad were hindered by the quota system being used for personal gain.
More than 80% of admissions and jobs were not granted to the youth of Karachi, Hyderabad, and Sukkur, despite these cities having a 40% quota.
MQM-P leader disclosed that children of farmers in rural areas of Sindh were deprived due to the quota system.

UN'S CARBON TRADING SYSTEM

A 3-member delegation of the United Nations Environment Programme's Denmark Mission, led by Senior Economist called on Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam in the Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination. During the meeting Advisor Carbon Credit Markets Urwah Khan at the United Nations Environment Programme briefed the PM's climate advisor

Romina Khurshid Alam about carbon market-related initiatives for their potential benefits economic Pakistan can gain by selling its carbon credits from different sectors including cement, oil & gas, textile and other industrial industries. He also assured the PM's climate aide of his organisation's fullest technical and non-technical support to build up policy infrastructure and its implementation for creating enabling environment for

various potential sectors including cement, waste, textile, oil & gas, telecom and information technology sectors to generate and sell their carbon credits in the international carbon credit markets. Both sides agreed to work together to enable Pakistan's various industrial sectors to sell their carbon credits in the international carbon trading markets and earn financial benefits. "We are very much aware of the huge untapped economic potential the

carbon markets offer for Pakistan to generate carbon credits in the international carbon market and earn economic gains by selling the carbon credits," the PM's climate aide emphasized during the meeting. Carbon markets are international trading systems in which carbon credits are sold and bought to compensate for their greenhouse gas emissions by purchasing carbon credits from entities that remove or reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Political Unrest and Public Panic



Amjad Rana

Political instability and poor governance have significantly impacted Pakistan's economic stability, leading to high inflation and economic hardship for the masses. Over the years, successive governments have struggled to implement sustainable economic policies, often resulting in repeated requests for financial assistance from international organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Frequent changes in government, political turmoil, and power struggles have created an unstable environment that hinders long-term economic planning and development. Issues such as corruption, inefficiency, and lack of transparency in government institutions have exacerbated economic problems. These governance challenges undermine public trust and deter investment. Pakistan has faced numerous economic challenges, including a high fiscal deficit, low foreign reserves, and a growing debt burden. These challenges have often necessitated seeking financial aid from external sources. The economic instability and poor governance have contributed to high inflation rates, significantly affecting the purchasing power of ordinary citizens. Rising prices of essential goods and services have created additional hardships for the population. Due to persistent economic difficulties, Pakistan has repeatedly turned to the IMF for financial assistance. While these programs provide short-term relief and stabilize the economy, they often come with stringent conditions, such as austerity measures, which can be unpopular and difficult to implement. To achieve long-term economic stability, Pakistan needs to

undertake structural reforms, improve governance, enhance fiscal discipline, and create an environment conducive to investment and economic growth. These issues require a concerted effort. Here's more detailed information on the various aspects affecting Pakistan's economic and political landscape. Pakistan has experienced numerous changes in leadership and government over the years. These changes often lead to policy discontinuity and short-term planning, which hamper long-term economic development. The complex relationship between civilian governments and the military has often resulted in political instability. Military interventions and coups have disrupted democratic processes and governance. The judiciary in Pakistan has sometimes played an active role in political matters, further complicating the political environment. High-profile cases and judicial reviews of government actions add to the uncertainty. Corruption at various levels of government remains a significant issue. It diverts public resources away from essential services and infrastructure, leading to inefficiencies and economic losses. A cumbersome and inefficient bureaucracy slows down decision-making processes and the implementation of policies. This inefficiency is often exacerbated by political interference. Limited transparency in governmental operations and public sector spending reduces accountability and fosters an environment where corrupt practices can thrive. Pakistan has struggled with a high fiscal deficit due to low tax revenues and high public expenditure. This deficit often leads to borrowing, which increases the national debt. Maintaining low levels of foreign currency reserves makes it difficult for Pakistan to manage its external debt and imports, leading to economic vulnerabilities. High levels of public and external debt strain the economy, as significant portions of the budget are allocated to debt servicing rather than development projects. Inflation in Pakistan is driven by factors such

as devaluation of the currency, high energy costs, and supply chain disruptions. These factors contribute to the increasing cost of living. High inflation erodes the purchasing power of the average Pakistani, making it difficult for many to afford basic necessities like food, healthcare, and education. Pakistan has sought financial assistance from the IMF multiple times. These bailouts provide temporary relief but often come with conditions requiring economic reforms and austerity measures' programs typically require Pakistan to implement austerity measures, such as reducing subsidies, increasing taxes, and cutting public spending. These measures can be politically unpopular and challenging to implement. Improving tax collection and expanding the tax base are critical for increasing government revenues and reducing the fiscal deficit. Inefficiencies and financial losses in the energy sector is essential for reducing the burden on the national budget and ensuring reliable energy supply. Promoting industrialization and improving trade policies can help diversify the economy, increase exports, and reduce dependency on imports. Strengthening social safety nets can protect vulnerable populations from the adverse effects of economic reforms and inflation. Pakistan's geopolitical position, especially its relationships with neighboring countries and major powers, affects its economic stability. Tensions and conflicts in the region can disrupt economic activities and deter foreign investment. Engaging in favourable trade agreements and partnerships can help Pakistan access new markets and boost its export sector. These challenges require a multifaceted approach involving political stability, governance reforms, economic restructuring, and effective implementation of policies. Sustainable development and long-term economic growth will depend on the ability of Pakistani leadership to navigate these complex issues and make difficult but necessary decisions.

The Bureaucracy Of Pakistan A British Colonial System and A Staunch Resistance To Reforms & Progress.



Iftikhar Uddin Anjum

The bureaucratic system in Pakistan traces its roots to the colonial administration, where it was designed to control and manage the local populace efficiently. Post-independence, the structure remained largely unchanged, with the same rigid hierarchical system continuing to dominate. Over the decades, despite numerous attempts at reform, the bureaucracy has remained a bastion of inefficiency and corruption. In Pakistan, bureaucracy, ostensibly designed to facilitate governance and ensure the smooth functioning of state machinery, has often been criticized for being an impediment to progress. The bureaucratic system in Pakistan, an inheritance from the British colonial rule, has morphed into a complex, inefficient and often corrupt entity that significantly hinders the country's development. At its core, Pakistan's bureaucratic system is highly centralized and hierarchical. This structure fosters a culture of excessive control and minimal accountability. Bureaucrats often enjoy significant discretionary power, which they wield without adequate checks and balances. This centralization has led to a disconnect between the decision-makers and the people affected by those decisions, creating a gap that perpetuates inefficiency and dissatisfaction among the populace. Corruption within the bureaucracy is rampant. The bureaucratic echelons are often seen as lucrative positions, where personal gain takes precedence over public service. Nepotism and favoritism further exacerbate the problem, as appointments and promotions are frequently influenced by personal connections rather than merit. This has led to a system where the most competent individuals are sidelined and those with the right connections rise to positions of power, regardless of

their capability or integrity. One of the most significant issues with Pakistan's bureaucracy is its staunch resistance to reforms. Over the years, multiple governments have initiated various reforms programs aimed at making the bureaucracy more efficient and accountable. However, these initiatives have largely failed due to the entrenched interests of those within the system. Bureaucrats, who benefit from the status quo, often resist changes that would curtail their power and influence. This resistance to change has perpetuated a cycle of inefficiency and corruption. The infamous bureaucratic red tape is a significant barrier to development in Pakistan. The cumbersome and often convoluted procedures required to get anything done within the bureaucracy discourage innovation and stifle economic growth. Entrepreneurs and businesses frequently find themselves bogged down by excessive paperwork and procedural delays, which not only increases the cost of doing business but also dissuades investment. The inefficiencies within the bureaucracy have a direct impact on governance and public service delivery. Essential services such as healthcare, education and infrastructure development are often hampered by bureaucratic delays and mismanagement. Projects that could benefit the public are delayed for years and funds allocated for development often go unutilized or are misappropriated due to lack of oversight and accountability. Political interference is another critical issue that hampers the effectiveness of Pakistan's bureaucracy. Politicians often interfere in bureaucratic appointments and decision-making processes, using their influence to further their own interests. This politicization undermines the autonomy of the bureaucracy and erodes public trust in the system. Bureaucrats, in turn, often align themselves with political patrons, further entrenching the cycle of corruption and inefficiency. A glaring example of bureaucratic inefficiency and corruption can be seen in the police service of

Pakistan. The police, meant to maintain law and order, are often criticized for their lack of professionalism, corruption, and politicization. Promotions within the police service are frequently based on political affiliations rather than merit, leading to a force that is poorly equipped to handle the challenges of modern law enforcement. This has led to a decline in public trust and an increase in crime rates, further destabilizing the social fabric. Addressing the bureaucratic malaise in Pakistan requires a multi-pronged approach focused on reform and accountability. Firstly, there is a need for comprehensive civil service reform that emphasizes merit-based recruitment and promotions. The introduction of modern management practices and continuous training for bureaucrats can enhance efficiency and professionalism within the system. Secondly, there must be stringent measures to combat corruption. This includes establishing independent anti-corruption bodies with the power to investigate and prosecute corrupt officials. Whistleblower protection laws can also encourage individuals to report corrupt practices without fear of reprisal. Thirdly, decentralization is crucial. Devolving power to local governments can bridge the gap between decision-makers and the public, ensuring that policies are more attuned to the needs of the people. This can enhance accountability and improve service delivery at the grassroots level. The bureaucratic system in Pakistan, with its deep-rooted inefficiencies and corruption, stands as a significant impediment to the nation's progress. While the challenges are formidable, they are not insurmountable. Through comprehensive reform, stringent anti-corruption measures, and decentralization, it is possible to transform the bureaucracy into a force for good. For Pakistan to realize its full potential, it must tackle the bureaucratic behemoth that has long hindered its path to progress. Only then can the nation hope to achieve sustainable development and improved quality of life for its citizens.

VIS affirmed the entity classification of Zarai Taraqiati Bank Limited

Soon Times Correspondent

Islamabad: Credit Rating Company Limited (VIS) has reaffirmed the entity rating of Zarai Taraqiati Bank Limited (ZTBL) at "AAA/A-1+" (Triple A/A-One Plus). A medium to long-term rating of "AAA" indicates the highest credit quality. The risk factors are negligible, only marginally higher than the risk-free debt of the Government of Pakistan. A short-term rating of "A-1+" indicates the highest certainty of timely payment. Short-term liquidity, including internal operating factors and/or access to alternative sources of funds, is outstanding and the security is well below the risk-free Government of Pakistan's short-term obligations

The last ranking action was announced on June 22, 2023. The rating assigned to ZTBL takes into account the bank's sponsor profile, which is directly owned by the Government of Pakistan (GoP) and indirectly through the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), independent ownership of ZTBL, historically. With the bank's track record of financial support, it translates into strong sponsor support. ZTBL experienced an increase in overall growth during 2023, reversing the previous year's decline. The bank experienced an increase in non-performing loans (NPLs). Provisioning coverage declined, primarily due to a reduction in specific provisions, with a significant portion of assets

classified in the OAEM category. ZTBL's liquidity profile remains strong supported by comfortable and growing cash balances, placements and investments. ZTBL achieved a significant turnaround in profitability in 2023, with higher net interest income from the treasury segment as well as recovery of charged-off portfolio from other key partners. The bank's profit after tax has more than doubled compared to the previous year. The bank's Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) has improved due to increase in Common Equity Tier-1 capital, which has resulted from higher retained earnings. Increase in Tier-2 capital has increased eligible general provisions.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif's Stormy Visits to Different Areas of Lahore

Soon Times Correspondent Lahore: On reaching Lahore, Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif had emergency visits to different areas of the city in order to review ongoing operations and arrangements to deal with the situation after unusual rains. Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioners and other administrative officers had to rush to the sites. She directed them to remain in the field to get things normal as early as possible. Madam Chief Minister took

information about the situation of water in different areas of the city, and directed the authorities concerned to ensure timely drainage of water in the entire province. She said, "Just like sanitation campaign on Eid, use safe city cameras and drone technology to monitor where water is not drained." Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed the administration to monitor and report on ground situation after every half hour. She inspected Shadman, Ferozpur Road, Davis Road and Shimla Hill areas on her way back from Airport. She personally

observed the inner and outer city streets. Madam Chief Minister also inspected roads, intersections and markets and reached Gaddafi Stadium. She directed for the immediate drainage of water, and the delivery of additional water pumps to Gaddafi Stadium. She stopped the vehicle at various places and personally inspected the drainage work. She met WASA staff and praised them for their hard work. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif also reviewed the sewage on streets and roads.

DC Visits THQ Hospital Shahpur



Soon Times Correspondent retired Aurangzeb Haider Khan Sargodha: Deputy Commissioner Captain suddenly reached Tehsil Headquarters

Hospital Shahpur. The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the cleanliness, staff attendance and stock of medicines in the emergency ward and various departments of the hospital. He inquired about the facilities for the patients and their families. Assistant Commissioner Shahpur Muhammad Zohaib Shafi was also with him. The Deputy Commissioner directed to ensure the provision of best medical facilities to the patients under treatment and said that doctors, paramedical staff and other staff should ensure their attendance 100%. No negligence will be tolerated in providing free medicines along with best treatment, diagnosis to the patients in the hospital.



Traders hold nationwide protests against tax hikes, electricity price increases

Warn govt of nationwide shutter-down strike if it fails to withdraw additional taxes on electricity

RAWALPINDI/ PESHAWAR/ ISLAMABAD: Traders in all major urban centres of the country staged protests against the government's decision to increase taxes and electricity prices in the upcoming fiscal year. In Islamabad, traders, responding to a call by the All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajirun, staged a major protest at Aabpara Chowk, blocking the main road. Heavy police presence was deployed to disperse the demonstrators as trader caravans from across the city converged at Aabpara Chowk. A large police presence was deployed as convoys of traders led by leaders from various markets across Islamabad arrived to protest against the government's tax increases and electricity price hikes. Chanting slogans against the government, protesters held banners and electricity bills. "This is purely a traders' protest, no political party is allowed to claim it," declared Aabpara Market General Secretary Akhtar Abbasi. "I am a member of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, but we have put politics aside for the public interest. We have raised our voices against the exorbitant increase in electricity bills for the sake of the poor," Abbasi added. Traders chanted slogans rejecting high electricity prices. "Traders nationwide are protesting the significant hike in electricity prices," stated Ajmal Baloch, President of the All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajirun. "Soon, the rulers will be held accountable by the people," he warned. "The prime minister, who says our budget is made by the IMF, should resign immediately," Baloch asserted. "There are

twenty-hour power outages in the country. The same companies you make agreements with are responsible for generating electricity," he added. Baloch highlighted the various taxes on electricity bills. "There is a 21% sales tax on a fourteen-thousand-rupee bill, followed by thirteen other types of taxes." He criticised political leaders for not fulfilling their election promises. "Nawaz Sharif and Bilawal promised free electricity for up to 300 units during elections," he said. "May God guide you, as you are failing to govern effectively," Baloch remarked. He further condemned the government for its mismanagement and corruption. Baloch also pointed out the widespread nature of the protests: "Traders are protesting in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Karachi, Balochistan, and Sindh. There is no district or tehsil in Pakistan without protests right now." He issued a warning to the government: "If these electricity taxes are not withdrawn, we will initiate a shutter-down strike. If the government does not roll back the electricity price hike, we will decide on further actions after consultation." Baloch criticised the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for labelling traders as thieves, emphasising that 17,000 industrialists and traders pay taxes. He accused parliamentarians of misappropriating funds allocated for infrastructure. "These rulers are not just thieves, they are robbers," Baloch declared. "Prime Minister, listen carefully, your government is on shaky ground. Withdraw the taxes on electricity, or the next protest will be a siege of the Prime Minister's House," he warned.

Sui Northern Achieves Major Operational Milestones



Soon Times Correspondent Lahore: Sui Northern has successfully achieved three significant milestones to enhance gas transmission and distribution. The bifurcation of Lahore Region into

This project addresses low-pressure issues, improves network operations, and reduces gas losses. The isolation of Rawalpindi and Islamabad has been completed to ensure better operational efficiency for Rawalpindi and Islamabad. A 24-inch line was constructed along Kashmir Highway, improving gas flow management and enhancing pressure and flow for both cities. New 24-inch and 18-inch lines were built to address low-pressure issues in the Red Zone and Blue Area of Islamabad, along with an 18-inch line from SMS Ranyal in Rawalpindi. Separate feeds for the twin cities will cater for more accurate UFG calculations and efficiency improvements. These projects have been completed by June 30, 2024, ahead of the December 2024 deadline, aiming to significantly improve the system operations.

Sultan Ahmad tries to molest his daughter-in-law; Victim requests CM to take action

Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha: A resident of Awan Colony came to Sargodha after getting married from Faisalabad. She was married to Ali Haider son of Sultan Ahmad a year ago. The woman said that her husband goes to Faisalabad for work. His father-in-law repeatedly expressed and tried to have sex with her, but she categorically refused. He tried to molest her several times. I mentioned this matter to my mother-in-law, but my mother-in-law did not help me and asked me to keep quiet. I did not mention it to my husband. When my father-in-law remained stubborn, I told my husband Ali Haider Sultan about it. On this my husband immediately returned and sent me to the house of one of his aunts. The woman said that I am Ali



Haider's second wife and Ali Haider has a son with me who is 1 month old. Talking to our correspondent, Ali Haider, said that my father Sultan Ahmad had the same attitude towards my first wife. But I didn't believe her and divorced her. I have 2 children, a daughter and a son from her.

But now my second wife also had the same complaint, so I investigated the matter myself and everything was true. When I filed an application against my father in the Jhal Chakian police station, he threatened me and my wife to withdraw the application and reconcile. For the sake of the life of my wife and child, I became silent and reconciled. But my father started urging me to leave the city to avoid disgrace and now threatens to kill me, my wife and child. Every day he submits a new application against me in the police station. I lost my job and now I am sheltered at my aunt's house with my wife and son. I request the concerned officers and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz to help us and provide protection.

Rescue 1122 helped 5794 people during the last month

Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha: Punjab Emergency Service Rescue 1122 Sargodha is working day and night to provide quality service to the public. These views were expressed by District Emergency Officer Mazhar Shah while issuing the report for the month of June. He said that 5794 people have been helped during the last month with an average response time of 8.3 minutes. Giving details, he said that Rescue 1122

among them 1103 of road traffic accident, 4465 of medical, 114 of various crimes, 06 of drowning in the canal, 2 of building collapse, 554 of miscellaneous and 117 of fire emergencies not only saved precious human lives but also secured property worth lakhs of rupees. Apart from this, 2140 persons were provided with first aid on the spot. He asked the public to call 1122 only in case of genuine emergency so that services can be made available to the public as soon as possible.

Punjab administration put on high alert in anticipation of heavy monsoon rainfall

Web Desk LAHORE: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has placed the administration of Punjab on high alert in anticipation of a projected 35 percent increase in monsoon rainfall this year. According to the PDMA, the forecast indicates varying amounts of rain across different weeks in July: 15 to 50 millimeters in the first week, 25 to 35 millimeters in the second week, 15 to 25 millimeters in the third week in Upper and



South Punjab and up to 70 millimeters later in the final week of the month. In a statement, the PDMA warned of heavy rains accompanied by thunder and lightning in Upper, Central and South

Punjab. There is a heightened risk of urban flooding due to monsoon rains and flash flooding in hill torrents in South Punjab. All relevant departments have been alerted as per instructions from Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. In the statement, PDMA DG Irfan Ali Kathia said that district administrations must ensure all safety measures were in place during the monsoon season. He directed immediate cleaning of rivers and drainage systems.

IESCO Power Suspension Schedules for Today & Tomorrow

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad: According to Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO)'s spokesman, System Maintenance/Development Work is in process. Therefore power supply of below mentioned feeders/areas will be temporary suspended as per given schedule: On 02nd July 2024, From 07:00 AM to 10:00 AM, Rawalpindi City Circle, Lakhoo, Ghousia Colony, Hyderi Chowk

Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, PWD-II Feeder, On 03rd July 2024, From 07:00 AM to 10:00 AM, Rawalpindi City Circle, Noon, Saidpur Road, E Block, Wasa Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Jail Park-I Feeder 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.

Gaza City's Shujaiya district heavily bombed for fourth consecutive day



GAZA
Gaza City's Shujaiya district was devastated by a fourth consecutive day of heavy fighting on Sunday. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have fled the devastated area as Israeli forces reported they had eliminated several targets, located weapons and conducted raids on booby-trapped compounds. Heavy battles and bombardment hit Gaza City's Shujaiya district for a fourth day on Sunday, months after the Israeli army declared Hamas's command structure dismantled in the northern area. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have fled the devastated neighbourhood, where the army said it has fought Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants both "above and below ground" in tunnels.



Delays, disruptions as South Koreans surge to sign online petition to impeach president

SEOUL
An online petition calling for South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol to be impeached experienced delays and disruptions due to the large number of people trying to sign it, the speaker of the parliament said, promising to fix the issue as soon as possible. More than 81,000 people have so far signed the petition, hosted on the National Assembly's website, since it went live on June 20. The petition calls on parliament to introduce a bill to impeach Yoon on the grounds that he is unfit for the job. In a statement late on Sunday, National Assembly Speaker Woo Won-shik apologised for the disruption, and said parliament would take action to uphold the public's constitutional right. "People trying to access the petition on Monday faced delays that lasted up to four hours. At one point, an error message showed more than 30,000 people were waiting to access the site."



Taliban govt representatives meet UN, Afghanistan envoys in Doha

Representatives of Afghanistan's Taliban government began meetings on Sunday with UN officials

DOHA
Representatives of Afghanistan's Taliban government began meetings on Sunday with UN officials as they attended talks in Doha with special envoys to the Central Asian country for the first time, a UN spokesman said. The two-day, UN-hosted meeting in Qatar is the third of its kind in the gas-rich emirate in just over a year but the first to include Taliban authorities who seized power in Afghanistan in 2021. "Preparatory discussions have begun with the UN meeting separately with many of the special envoys in attendance and with the Taliban representatives," the UN spokesman said. UN officials and over 20 envoys, including the US special representative to Afghanistan, were expected to meet with the Taliban government's delegation led by spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid. The talks in Doha were due to discuss increasing engagement with Afghanistan and a more coordinated response to the country, including economic issues and counter-narcotics efforts. In the aftermath of the Taliban's return to power, the international community has grappled with its approach to Afghanistan's new rulers. The Taliban government in Kabul has not been officially recognised by any other government since it took power, and the administration has imposed a strict interpretation of Islam, with women subjected to laws characterised by the UN as "gender apartheid". The Taliban authorities had been excluded from the first round of UN talks in May 2023 and declined to attend the second round in February, demanding that their delegation be the only Afghan representatives.

Le Pen's far-right party wins first round of French elections as Macron's gamble backfires

PARIS
Marine Le Pen's anti-immigrant National Rally led a first round of voting on Sunday in exceptionally high-stakes elections that could put France's government in the hands of a far-right party for the first time since World War II. President Emmanuel Macron's ruling coalition was beaten into third place by a fledgling alliance of the left as the incumbent's gamble with a snap election backfired spectacularly. Three weeks after trouncing its rivals in low-turnout European polls, Le Pen's National Rally (RN) confirmed its status as France's leading political force in a first round of legislative elections marked by the highest turnout in three decades. Le Pen's camp secured a clear victory, albeit not a decisive one, meaning the vote's ultimate outcome remains uncertain ahead of a second round of voting on July 7. Macron, whose decision to call the snap election had stunned friends and foes alike, has urged voters to rally against the far right next Sunday. RN and its allies on the right took 33.2% of the first-round vote, ahead of the left-wing New Popular Front (NFP) on 28.1%, according to projections by pollsters Ipsos-Italan. Macron's Ensemble alliance trailed in third place with 21%, followed by the conservative Les Républicains and their partners on 10%.



North Korea fires two short-range ballistic missiles, one launch fails



Web Desk
North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles but one launch failed, South Korea's military said Monday, a day after Pyongyang warned of "fatal consequences" following major joint exercises in the South. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the military had detected two launches, the first at 5:05 am (2005 GMT) and the second around 10 minutes later. "The short-range ballistic missile launched at around 05:05 flew approximately 600 km (372 miles)," it said, adding the second one travelled 120 km. JCS spokesperson Lee Sung-jun said the second missile appeared to fly abnormally in an early stage of flight, adding that if it had exploded in mid-air, its trajectory indicates debris could have landed over North Korea. Seoul's military has "strengthened surveillance and vigilance in preparation for further launches", JCS said in a statement. North Korea is accused of breaching arms control measures by supplying weapons to Russia to use in its war in Ukraine, and Russian President Vladimir Putin held a summit with leader Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang in June in a show of unity. The JCS's Lee declined to comment when asked whether the North's latest launch could have been a test of missiles intended for delivery to Russia. The launch also comes after Pyongyang on Sunday denounced joint military exercises by South Korea, Japan and the United States, calling them an "Asian version of NATO" and warning of "fatal consequences". The three-day "Freedom Edge" drills, which ran from Thursday to Saturday last week, included preparation in ballistic missile and air defences, anti-submarine warfare and defensive cyber training. They also involved Washington's nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, Tokyo's guided-missile destroyer JS Atago and Seoul's KF-16 fighter jet.

Sports & Showbiz

Babar Azam to now play under Mohammad Rizwan's captaincy



Sports Desk
Pakistan team skipper Babar Azam will now play under wicket-keeper batsman Mohammad Rizwan's captaincy. A Global T20 Canada League franchise, Vancouver Knights, has appointed Rizwan for the skipper's role on Sunday. The GT20 Canada franchise has also given the Pakistani opener title of 'sir' in the social media announcement. "He'ye, hear ye! The Vancouver Knights have chosen their captain for GT20 Season 4: Sir Muhammad Rizwan! ????? With his mighty batting skills and sharp wicketkeeping, he's ready to lead our charge to victory. Prepare for battle, Knights!" Vancouver Knights wrote on Facebook announcing Rizwan as their captain. Pacer Mohammad Amir, Asif Ali, New Zealand's Michael Rippon, South African Dwayne Pretorius, Namibia's Ruben Trampelmann and Guyana's Jeremy Gordon too are part of the Knights. GT20 Canada's season 4 will begin on July 25 and its final will be held on August 11 in Canada. Seven Pakistan cricket players — Babar, Asif, Amir, Rizwan, Iftikhar Ahmed, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Mohammad Nawaz — will feature in the league cricket.

Simone Biles secures third trip to the Olympics after breezing to victory at U.S. Trials

MINNEAPOLIS
Simone Biles is heading back to the Olympics. So are some of her friends. The gymnastics superstar earned a third trip to her sport's biggest stage by cruising to victory at the U.S. Olympic trials on Sunday night, posting a two-day all-around total of 117.225 to clinch the lone automatic spot on the five-woman team. Three years removed from the Tokyo Olympics — where she pulled out of multiple finals to prioritize her safety — Hazel Rivera was named to the five-woman team later Sunday night.

process — Biles returns to the games looking perhaps as good as ever at 27. "Trusting the process and (my coaches), I knew I'd be back," Biles said. Biles isn't going alone. Reigning Olympic champion Sunisa Lee, 2020 Olympic floor exercise champion Jade Carey, 2020 Olympic silver medalist Jordan Chiles and 16-year-old Hazel Rivera were named to the five-woman team later Sunday night.

Throwback video of Shah Rukh dancing with Reema brings back fond memories



MUMBAI (Web Desk)
It's always exciting to see popular actors from different film industries sharing a stage. In a time when tensions between India and Pakistan are affecting artists' ability to work together, a throwback video of Reema Khan and Humayun Saeed performing with Bollywood superstars Shah Rukh Khan and Preity Zinta is sure to bring back fond memories and take you to the old days. The clip is from Zee Cine Awards 2005 where Reema and Humayun joined Preity and SRK on stage. The actors danced to King Khan's hit songs, with the performance starting with Shah Rukh and Preity going through their popular numbers.

Texas Rangers rookie Wyatt Langford becomes the 1st major leaguer to hit for the cycle in 2024



BALTIMORE
Needing a home run for the cycle in the eighth inning, Wyatt Langford was focused on exactly that. Not that it changed his approach much. "I was obviously feeling really good at that point," Langford said. "Just kind of one of those things that happens." The Texas rookie completed the cycle with a three-run shot over the left-field line Sunday night, part of an 11-2 win by the Rangers against the Baltimore Orioles. It was the first cycle in the major leagues in 2024. By this time last season there had been four. It was also the first career four-hit game for the 22-year-old Langford, who was drafted last year by the Rangers with the No. 4 overall pick and made a swift rise to the majors to make Texas' opening-day roster this season. "He's just an exciting player," manager Bruce Bochy said. "He's a ballplayer, and you love how aggressive he is. No fear on the bases. Out of the box, he's

looking to get the double or triple." Langford tripled in the fourth, and his RBI double in the fifth was a grounder into right-center field that he stretched into a two-base hit. "How I was running, I guess," Langford said when asked about rousing so hard. "My dad would beat the crap out of me if I didn't. I'd credit him for that." His speed having already made an impact, Langford needed more power after his sixth-inning single left him a homer shy of the cycle when he came up in the eighth.

"SAY NO TO CORRUPTION"
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
NATIONAL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY
(PROCUREMENT & CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION SECTION)
TENDER NO. 2(566-A)
PROPOSALS FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION
DUALIZATION OF ROAD FROM CHIHTIAN TO CHAK NO. 46/3R VIA DAHRANWALA PACKAGE-I: FROM KM 0+000 TO KM 21+550 (LENGTH:21.55 KM)
1. National Highway Authority (NHA) invites Applications from the Constructors, registered with Income Tax department and who are on Active Taxpayers List of the Federal Board of Revenue having valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council in Category C-A with Specialization in CE-01 & CE-02 for prequalification of "Dualization of Road from Chishtian to Chak No 46/3R via Dahrwanwala Package-I: From Km 0+000 to Km 21+550 (Length: 21.55 Km)".
2. Prequalification Documents, containing detailed terms and conditions can be downloaded free of cost from the website mentioned below. Applicants are also advised to follow the said website for updates of schedule and addendums, if any.
3. The Proposals/Applications must be prepared in accordance with the instructions provided in the Prequalification Documents must reach at the address mentioned below, on or before July 23, 2024 till 11:30 Hours. Proposals/Applications will be opened on the same day at 12:00 Hours.
4. This Advertisement is also available on PPRA website at www.ppra.gov.pk.
GENERAL MANAGER (P&CA)
National Highway Authority
28-Mauve Area, Sector G-9/1, P. O. Box No. 1205, Islamabad
Phone: 051-9032727 & Email: gmnpca.nha@gmail.com
Website: www.ebidding.nha.gov.pk