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PTI's propaganda against COAS and family intolerable: PM Shehbaz Sharif



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday denounced the propaganda against the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir and his family on the PTI website, calling it intolerable and heartwrenching. He expressed these remarks during a federal cabinet meeting today. The premier condemned the actions of the group responsible for the events of May 9, accusing them of using new tactics to disrupt the country. "The May 9 group left no stone unturned in shaking the foundations of the country. Today, they are committing new offences with new tactics," he added.

PM Shehbaz also expressed his concerns about the ongoing atrocities in Palestine, stating that Israel has killed 40,000 Palestinians and that UN resolutions have had no impact on Israel. He emphasized that the situation must be condemned as much as possible. Read Ruling alliance wants PTI founder punished after 'confession' Regarding recent attacks on the Pakistani consulate in Germany and London, Shehbaz described these incidents as deeply unfortunate. He stressed the importance of ensuring the protection of Pakistani diplomatic missions and indicated that the foreign minister has taken immediate action. He called for the relevant countries' ambassadors to be summoned and urged them to take responsibility for protecting Pakistanis.

Punjab govt challenges PTI founder, leaders bail in May 9 cases



The Punjab government has challenged the bail granted to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and leaders in 14 cases registered in Rawalpindi in the context of May 9 riots, has been challenged in Supreme Court (SC). ARY News reported on Wednesday. The petition for bail cancellation was filed by the Advocate General on behalf of the Punjab government. The cases registered in various police stations in Rawalpindi involve more than 700 PTI leaders and workers who were named and arrested. The Anti-Terrorism Court in Rawalpindi had earlier approved the bail of PTI workers and leaders. The petition submitted to the Supreme Court includes a list of 37 accused, including PTI founder Imran Khan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and Sheikh Rashid. The petition details that over 700 PTI leaders and workers are named in the cases filed in Rawalpindi's police stations. The judge of the Anti-Terrorism Court Rawalpindi has been made a respondent in the petition.

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PA speaker abusing his constitutional powers, says Bhachar



Opposition Leader Punjab Assembly Malik Ahmad Khan Bhachar said on Wednesday that Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Ahmad Khan was abusing his constitutional powers. Speaking at a press conference at the Lahore Press Club, the

opposition leader blamed Malik Ahmad Khan for closure of opposition chambers of the Punjab Assembly. He also criticised the speaker for purchasing cars worth Rs180 million. "No PTI MPA went to get TADA. Our 111 members were suspended without any notice. Ours is a political party which I can't run alone in the assembly," he added. He also warned the government of moving court against PTI's witch-hunt.



German Ambassador meets Maryam Nawaz, vows to strengthen bilateral ties

Both sides to cooperate in vocational and technical education programs

During the meeting, both sides agreed to boost technical education and achieve sustainable development goals. Punjab CM and German ambassador reviewed suggestions of collaboration in health, education and other sectors. Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz assured German investors and businesses of full support. Both sides exchanged views to promote vocational and technical education training programs across Punjab. Punjab CM asserted to equip youth with skills to meet market demands. She also commended Germany's role as a global leader in renewable energy matters for serving humanity by environmental friendly measures. She informed the German ambassador about the solarisation project for the provision of clean and green energy.

Both sides discussed cooperation in economic and technical education sectors. Punjab CM hailed Germany's investment and cooperation in development sectors in Punjab. Both sides discussed more cooperation opportunities in renewable energy, vocational training, information technology and other sectors. The German ambassador commended the Punjab government's efforts for the provision of a suitable environment for investment.

Zardari, Nawaz on the wrong side of history: Fawad

Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry said on Wednesday that Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif were on the wrong side of the history. He made these remarks during his appearance in an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in a case registered against him. He said the cabinet meeting would deliberate on banning the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, adding that whoever was siding with Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari won't be able to survive in politics in future. Speaking about PTI founder Imran Khan, he said the 14-

month long illegal incarceration of Imran Khan couldn't achieve anything for the government as people had voted for his party without the PTI having a party symbol for the polls. He warned the government against rampant human rights abuses which may lead to anarchy. "The world is watching everything happening in Pakistan where even court orders are brushed

Arson, Askari Tower attack cases: ATC orders police to wind up investigation



Arson and Askari Tower attack cases: ATC orders police to wind up investigation. Lahore anti-terrorism court (ATC) has ordered police to conclude investigation of Askari Tower attack and arson cases related to May 9 by the next hearing. ATC judge Khalid Arshad heard the applications on the interim-bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders Omar Ayub, Asad Umar, Fawad Chaudhry and others in the arson and Askari Tower attack cases. During the hearing, the applications for exemption of appearance in the court by

Omar Ayub, Asad Umar, Azeemullah, Gul Asghar Khan and Malik Ahmed Chatta were filed. Omar Ayub counsels contended that Omar Ayub was engaged with Islamabad High Court in cases therefore he couldn't appear today. The court accepted their application of absence and ordered all accused in the cases to appear before the court in the next hearing. The court has summoned DIG investigation on immediate basis and also ordered the police to conclude investigation of cases by next hearing.

IHC summons Law Ministry, ECP on Election Amendment Act case

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the case filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) against the Election Amendment Act today. PTI counsel Ali Bukhari appeared before the court and presented the arguments. He stated that provision of appointment of retired judges on election tribunals was included in the Election Act through amendment and the section on consultation of chief justice high court for the appointment of judges was removed. The counsel contended that the consultation with the chief justice was needed and other parties could have reservation on the court order. Counsel Shoaib Shaheen requested formation of a larger or division bench on the case. CJ/Ameer Farooq remarked that a larger bench would be made on the case after the response of the other party. Consequently, the court has sought



Attorney General for assistance by suggesting formation of a larger bench on application against the Election Amendment Act. The court has fixed the case hearing within the next 10 days by issuing notice to the Ministry of Law and Election Commission (ECP) to submit a response within 10 days. ELECTION AMENDMENT LAW The acting President Yousaf Raza Gillani issued the Election Act Amendment Ordinance 2024 on May 27, mandating to appoint retired judges along with on-service judges on election tribunals. The Senate had on July 8 passed the Election Amendment Bill while the National Assembly on June 28.

Imran Khan refutes claims of inciting GHQ protests, calls May 9 riots 'false flag operation'



Former PM says masses were incited by 'humiliating' abduction of a former prime minister

Former PM says masses were incited by 'humiliating' abduction of a former prime minister. In November 2022, he said that there was an assassination attempt on him, and even his request for an FIR of his choice was denied. The former prime minister further revealed that his residence was attacked twice by military personnel. On one occasion, during his court appearance, there was a deliberate plan to assassinate him by deploying plainclothes individuals, he added. On May 9, he explained that the masses were incited by the humiliating abduction of a former prime minister and the leader of Pakistan's largest and most

incite violence," he added. In November 2022, he said that there was an assassination attempt on him, and even his request for an FIR of his choice was denied. The former prime minister further revealed that his residence was attacked twice by military personnel. On one occasion, during his court appearance, there was a deliberate plan to assassinate him by deploying plainclothes individuals, he added. On May 9, he explained that the masses were incited by the humiliating abduction of a former prime minister and the leader of Pakistan's largest and most

popular political party, which could have led to a major incident. He added that PTI's political training does not include elements of violence and the party believes in political, constitutional, and legal struggles. Imran Khan said that May 9 was a false flag operation. "Those who stole the CCTV footage of May 9 are the real culprits of that day. Their intellect is such that they compare the May 9 incident to the Capitol Hill protest in the USA, where a thorough investigation and review of CCTV footage led to the punishment of only those involved.

\$101 million in US aid for Pakistan sought by Biden administration



The Biden administration has requested \$101 million in aid for Pakistan to combat terrorism, support economic reforms, and provide debt relief. US Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia, Donald Lu, speaking before a subcommittee of the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Lu emphasized that the aid aims to stabilise Pakistan's economy and uphold democracy and human rights.

Govt is afraid of PTI's popularity: Barrister Saif



Govt is afraid of PTI's popularity: Barrister Saif. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Advisor Barrister Saif said on Wednesday that the government of "Ali Baba and 40 thieves" was afraid of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) popularity. He said whatever odds the government may stack against the PTI, neither would they make any deal nor flee the country, adding that the PTI is an idea that can never be killed. He said the PTI had been facing all sorts of troubles for the last 20 months, stressing that his party would continue to overcome all legal and constitutional barriers.

"Strengthening Pakistan-U.S. Relations Conference"

The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with Beaconhouse National University (BNU) Lahore, hosted an International Conference on July 24, 2024, titled "Strengthening Pakistan-U.S. Relations." The event featured distinguished diplomats, practitioners, and academics from both Pakistan and the United States. The keynote speaker, H.E. Donald Blome, Ambassador of the United States of America to Pakistan, discussed the importance of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, emphasizing the long history of partnership and cooperation between the two nations. He highlighted the U.S.'s recognition of Pakistan's potential, particularly its dynamic young population and economic opportunities. Ambassador Blome appreciated Pakistan's commitment to counter-terrorism and underlined the U.S.'s commitment to supporting Pakistan in various areas, including countering regional threats, economic collaboration, renewable energy, climate management, and education. He underscored that the

U.S.-Pakistan partnership goes beyond security and includes significant investments in health, trade, and development sectors. Ambassador Mariam Madhi Aftab, Additional Secretary (Americas), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stated that the U.S.-Pakistan relationship is dynamic and multifaceted, covering areas such as health, trade, defense, and energy security. She emphasized the importance of economic collaboration, security cooperation, educational exchanges, and climate change initiatives. Ms. Aftab also addressed regional dynamics, stressing the need for the U.S. to play a crucial role in fostering peace and stability, and called for a peaceful resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute in line with UN Security Council resolutions and will of the Kashmiri people. Ambassador Mansoor Khan, Director of the Beaconhouse Center for Policy Research (BCPR), emphasized the multifaceted nature of Pakistan-U.S. relations, highlighting political, security, defense cooperation, and economic ties. He announced the launch of a new

undergraduate course on Pakistan-U.S. relations at BNU. Dr. Neelum Nigar, Director of the Centre for Strategic Perspectives at ISSI, noted the significant contributions of the U.S. to Pakistan's development in sectors like education, healthcare, and climate change. She stressed the need for mutual respect and cooperation to address contemporary challenges and opportunities. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General of ISSI, provided an extensive overview of the historical and current dynamics of Pakistan-U.S. relations. He acknowledged the evolving nature of the partnership, with a shift in focus from security to areas like trade, investment, energy, and people-to-people exchanges. He noted the cyclical pattern of bilateral relations, shaped by external factors, regional developments, and a narrower security-centric focus over the past many decades. Stressing the importance of realistic expectations, he called for greater attention to Pakistan's historical role and cumulative power potential in the emerging global order and

the need for the U.S. to focus on Pakistan's preoccupations and interests. Relating to regional concerns, particularly the impact of U.S.-India strategic partnership on Pakistan's security especially within the 'Indo-Pacific' construct, he called for a responsive approach from Washington. He also emphasized that Pakistan wished to nimbly navigate the complex dynamics of U.S.-China competition, and wished that cooperation rather than confrontation would be the key driver of their relationship. Highlighting mutual benefits from past cooperation, such as Sino-U.S. rapprochement and post-9/11 counter-terrorism efforts, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood stressed the alignment of new trade and investment emphases with Pakistan's pivot to geo-economics. The inaugural session concluded with Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman Board of Governors ISSI, presenting shields to the Chief Guest and Keynote speaker, followed by a group photograph.

Azam -e -Istehkam, The destination is a stable Pakistan



Salman Ahmed Qureshi

sometimes sorrow for the leaders, the sufferings of the people have never decreased but everyone talks of democracy, a democracy in which merely they remain to be the number one, and they aspire to keep the political opponents in jail. This is not the way how democratic countries are run. Statements accompanied by the corresponding actions are the prerequisite. Respected Readers! In order to understand the underlying problems and defects in the above discussed excerpts, one has to start from the past, now let's try to conceive the hurdles while keeping the recent press conference of DG ISPR in view. DG ISPR Lt. Gen. Ahmed Sharif says that Azam-e-Istehkam is not a military operation but a coordinated campaign against terrorism. DG ISPR Lt. Gen. Ahmed Sharif while holding a press conference said that the purpose of the press conference is to elaborate the stance of the Pakistan Army on important issues. He said that there is pre-determined propaganda and lot of disinformation regarding the Armed Forces. The FC is being stopped, being told to allow us to do illegal smuggling. This security forces' conduct in thousand operations - 137 jawans have embraced the martyrdom this year, while 31 most wanted terrorists were killed during the operation. DG ISPR said that we want to address the rumors spread deliberately, and it is important that we hold our press conference regularly. Responding to a journalist's question about the Azam -e -Istehkam, he said that even the most serious issues are being politicized. Azam -e -Istehkam is a very important and fundamental matter, but unfortunately it is also being politicized. Lt. Gen. Ahmed Sharif said that Azam -e -Istehkam is an all-round coordinated counter-terrorism campaign. DG ISPR said that the operation was discussed at length in the National Apex Committee meeting on June 22nd. Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif also said that the National Action Plan was formulated in 2014 and Revised in 2021. It was proclaimed in the declaration that there is a dire need for a strategy to counter terrorism. The Prime Minister approved the National Counter-Terrorism Campaign. In the declaration, it has been written to accentuate the ongoing operations against terrorism and it has been reiterated that the Azam-e-Istehkam campaign will be started. This is a matter of national unity; it is also sacrificed to politics. The Declaration of the Prime Minister House is public property. A strong lobby wants the objectives of anti-terrorism operations not to be fulfilled, in 2014 the APS tragedy took place in the wake of which the National Action Plan was formulated. He said that the agreements signed in 2014 and 2021

to deal with terrorism which was signed by all political parties and stakeholders. It is very essential to listen and understand word by word this vital press conference of Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif recognizing the fact that political slogans, rhetoric and social media campaigns are aimed at politics and not the full understanding, perception and expression of facts. The army as an institution cannot respond to all allegations in the same way that political talk is done at street corners. The army has its own system; there are certain limits and restrictions, so the common man should show prudence. Do not question the eternal sacrifices of the institution on the basis of direct or indirect role of a few individuals in politics. Also put forward the actions of political leaders who talk about democracy. Also focus on political decision-making, consensus and implementation of these decisions. The most important thing is to keep emotions under control while forming opinions. Country is first and foremost followed by political affiliation and power. The state and leadership of the institution is maintained by the people, so differences of opinion should not be brought to the point of division. Everything that is brought to light through social media is not true, that's why spokesperson ISPR has decided to increase communication with the media and continue the process of bringing facts to light. Eradication of digital terrorism is as important as taking action against those who operate on the soil of Pakistan. Decision-making should be in the Houses and it must be fully implemented. The question is not about one's patriotism, the question is about establishing a consensus and sticking to it. Pakistan and Pakistanis have suffered a lot, now terrorism is on the rise along with inflation and we are busy finding solutions to our problems in political sloganeering. Political stability is the basis for national stability. Political stability can only be established by political leadership. Therefore, before criticizing or hoping in any other direction, force the political leadership not to bring political differences to the point of contradiction. Political parties are established not by leaders but by political vision and political workers, so there is a need to work on the intellectual front. Criticizing the army is wrong; similarly it is also wrong to be a tool for someone's agenda and wishes. We should ponder that in which direction we want to head on, and in which direction we are taking steps. There is a need to think and understand that's the invitation. Only such a course of action can lead Azam -e -Istehkam to the destination of a stable Pakistan.

Will Regional Changes define the Fate of Pakistan ?



Iqra Ashraf

A country which is like bridge between the south Asia and central Asia, having access to Arabian sea, shares borders with the emerging economic powers, definitely a centripetal point in the region. Pakistan's geostrategic and geopolitical location cannot be neglected in the region as China is the emerging economic global power, hence if an upcoming global power cannot neglect Pakistan because the mentioned provides the better ways for further growth and global connectivity as well as other regional states like in west of the Afghanistan and in south west Iran cannot deny the importance of Pakistan on geostrategic and geopolitical basis. In its south the Arabian sea make this focus point or location for neighbor states, emerging powers, world powers, central Asian states (CARs). It is a crystal clear reality that Pakistan plays a vital role in the regional prosperity and peace. It is providing ease to the China for global connectivity for trade, transport and technology innovations. It is also facilitating CARs by giving route in the Arabian sea for transport and trade which is direct increment in the regional prosperity, peace, connectivity and interdependence. Pakistan and Afghanistan could be great trade and security partners with collective collaboration. Iran has access to the Persian Gulf which is a strength of Iran it is also resource rich country amid energy sector. Ongoing energy projects with Iran can be a great opportunity for Pakistan and

other signed countries. Relations with the Russia can deeply impact on the regional image, connectivity, growth, and prosperity. India's importance can also not be denied as it shares the border with the Pakistan. India and Pakistan relations is a core concern for whole region. As regional connectivity brings prosperity, economic stability, opportunities of growth for developing countries, better workforce for developed states, and peace as well as any harsh situation in the region definitely affect the activities in the whole region, therefore, it is fact that regional changes either it is positive or negative impacts on the neighbor regional states in terms of economy, trade, environment, culture, peace and prosperity, education and innovations. Therefore, as it is aforementioned that regional changes can be a regional blessing as in case of Pakistan and its region in the form ongoing projects such as one belt one road initiative (OBOR) by China, BRI can provide path towards the global economy and trade, access to the European markets so, it will bring greater prosperity and peace and economic stability in the developing countries. China Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC) which is the extended project of OBOR is the golden opportunity for Pakistan for better regional access, connectivity or globalization and must be responsible for the economic stability. Likewise, CARs are the landlocked countries but rich in energy resources, hence Pakistan provides these states the route toward the Arabian sea for trade. The central Asia and south Asia power project, (CASA_1000) it includes the export of hydroelectricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Similarly, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India gas pipeline (TAPI) is one the gigantic initiative in this region

it can be responsible for huge revenue, opportune for development and especially in the energy sector. Importantly the contribution and motivation of whole region can fight with the environmental crisis. Hence it is proved that regional collaboration can be blessing for all the included states and as well as for Pakistan to increment in its crumbled economy. As every coin has two sides, as per the second point of view regional changes can be misfortunate or curse for the states because it can be responsible for cross border terrorism, refugee crisis, proxies, insurgencies, smuggling, nuclear wars, warming relations and tussles between the emerging economic states, border disputes, hydro disputes and security threats. In case of Pakistan currently Pakistan is facing the proxies and insurgencies, and cross boundary terrorism and paying having cost for it in terms of crumbled economy, national security threats, and interprovincial disputes, Saudi Iran conflagration is also alarming for Pakistan, similarly Pakistan and India's warming relation on the Kashmir issue is a core threat for the region because both states having nuclear arsenals. The Sino Indian border dispute is a territorial dispute between India and china which is also a confrontation point in the region. In a nutshell that, regional changes can be blessing or curse for the whole region, in case of Pakistan as it is located in the cross roads of Asia for its neighbor states and plays crucial role for trade, energy, and can also act as connectivity gate so, its importance cannot be neglected unquestionably, due to its geostrategic location Pakistan can enjoy the fruits of opportunities to stable its economy and for the welfare of its public on the contrary, tensions in the region also badly affects the Pakistan. As a result it is a crystal clear reality that regional changes will define the

Self-Care Family planning method and way forward

Muhammad Aslam Panhwar

In Sindh province very little financial resources are allocated and spent on healthcare for the majority of the population with low-income bracket. The poorest have to fend for themselves to meet exorbitant amount in highly expensive private health facilities. For meeting the health expenses through private health facilities, the low-income families have to either sell their meager assets or have to borrow the amount on high interest to meet the health emergency expenses. Despite

efforts to improve access to healthcare, like health insurance, help from other countries, and private money, there are still big challenges, such as not enough funding, complicated healthcare systems, management issues, and unequal access to services. Family planning is facing more challenges. Hundreds of thousands of Lady Health workers, who are appointed with responsibilities including educating the communities on benefits of small families and provide services for planning in majority cases, do little and. The medical experts in public sectors hospital and health centers scarce

the couples who approach for counseling and services to adopt family planning methods, saying that there would be complications and side effects. It is observed that in majority cases those with higher education and higher stable income keep their family size very small but unfortunately those in extreme poverty continue to enlarge their family size without educating their children and this keeps vicious cycle of poverty going on. They suffer health problems for food in case of health emergency. There is need for more funding for family

planning, especially for self-care family planning method i.e. Sayana Press. (birth control method through self-injecting method). But self-care family planning method i.e. Sayana Press, isn't widely available, especially in rural areas, and healthcare workers are reluctant to use it. Although Lady Health Workers (LHWs) are trained to use it, but they are not providing these services due to lack of motivation. There's a clear need for better training for these workers, especially on interpersonal skills and strategies to sensitize and motivate needy

couple about benefits and use of the Sayana Press, and women and girls are interested in using it for birth control. In Sindh, 60% of health budget goes is spent on salaries of healthcare workers and buying medicines and equipment. Rural healthcare services, managed by a semi government NGO PPHI. The PPHI mainly focuses on maternal, newborn, child health, and family planning. In 2020-21, PPHI budget was about 15 billion PKR, which is only 19% of what was needed for the people they serve. Most of the health budget goes to large hospitals, leaving very little

for primary health care facilities that actually see more patients for maternal and child health. The money meant for developing the health sector often goes to building new hospitals and improving facilities, but a lot of this budget isn't used properly. For example, from 2016 to 2020, 85 billion PKR was allocated to health projects in Sindh, but only 52% out of total 44 billion PKR budget was used, including for COVID-19 response and building or upgrading hospitals and medical colleges. A big portion of the budget for these projects wasn't spent by the end of the fiscal year.



Commissioner chairs a high-level meeting to review collection of water rate (arrears) and pay-off etc.

Soon Times Correspondent Sargodha: In a high-level meeting chaired by Commissioner Sargodha Division Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti, collection of water rate (arrears) and pay-off in all four districts, provision of government agricultural land to agricultural graduates, settlement issues, CVT and registration were discussed. A detailed review of legal and other issues including fixing the timeline for recovery of fee arrears was done. Chief Engineer Anhar Sadaqat Latif, Deputy Commissioners, ADCR and

Assistant Commissioners participated in the meeting through video link. In the meeting, it was agreed that the committees established at the tehsil and district levels in the four districts will review and sort each case of water rate current and compensation and send them to the commissioner's office with their recommendations within 30 days. Cases pending in courts of pay-off and water rate arrears will also be dealt with quickly. The meeting was told that 90% of the water rate current has been recovered in all the four districts. In the meeting, the extension and

cancellation of the lease of the agricultural land provided by the government to the agricultural graduates and the issues of giving ownership rights in the future were also discussed. He directed the Deputy Commissioners to prepare their recommendations in this regard and send them to his office. In the meeting, the Commissioner took a briefing from the four ADCRs on the settlement issues and directed that they to inform him in his office by setting timelines within three days to resolve such settlement issues.



Major Operation Against Gas Theft by Sui Northern Lahore East Region

Soon Times Correspondent Lahore: The Special Task Force of Sui Northern Gas Lahore East conducted a significant operation against gas theft during a raid in Chungi Saegian village. During the raid, a major gas theft was uncovered where a 2-

inch diameter gas pipeline was clamped at multiple points, allowing direct by pass to supply gas to over 40 houses. All direct bypasses have been disconnected, and legal action has been initiated against those involved in the gas theft.

PIC Overturns Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Restrictive Information Request Procedures

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad: The Pakistan Information Commission (PIC) has decisively rejected the restrictive procedures imposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) for filing information requests under the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017. The decision follows an appeal by Naeem Sadiq, a resident of Karachi, challenging MOFA's stringent requirements. In response to Sadiq's appeal, MOFA had stipulated that appellants must adhere to a specific procedure and complete a detailed form. The form required personal details

such as name, CNIC, profession, contact information, and email ID. Additionally, it included a category section marking the information as Confidential, Secret, Top Secret, or other, and mandated the purpose of the query. Notably, the form contained an undertaking that the information seeker would use the information solely for personal purposes and would not share it without MOFA's permission. The form also required signatures from the seeker and two witnesses. The Commission found these requirements to be inconsistent with the spirit and provisions of the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017,

particularly Section 11 (3) and (4). The Commission emphasized that the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017, as enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, aims to promote the public's right to access information. The PIC declared that MOFA's format and requirements were unsustainable and counterproductive to these goals. Consequently, the Pakistan Information Commission has directed MOFA to provide the requested information in Sadiq's appeal without further delay.

Delegation of Tehsil Bar Bhera met Chief Justice of High Court Alia Neelam



Soon Times Correspondent Bhera: A delegation of Tehsil Bar Bhera met the Chief Justice of the High Court Alia Neelam and presented flowers to her congratulating her on assuming office. The delegation was led by President Bhera Bar Chaudhry Muhammad Anwar BOLA Advocate. Vice President Anila Noreen Mehr Advocate, General Secretary Malik Usman Shahzad Advocate, Joint Secretary Chaudhry Tayyab Hussain Panjtoha Advocate, Finance Secretary Malik Sajid Iqbal Awan Advocate

and others were included in the delegation. Chaudhry Muhammad Anwar BOLA Advocate informed the Chief Justice about the problems of Bhera Bar. The Chief Justice said that in view of the excess of cases, one more civil judge will be appointed in Bhera and the construction of judicial complex bar room and lawyers' chambers will start very soon. Bhera Bar thanked her for this Registrar High Court District and Sessions Judge Madam Abbar Gul Khan and staff officers of the Chief Justice were also present in the meeting.

Majalis of martyrs of Karbala is a source of forgiveness: Qazi Ghulam Mustafa



Soon Times Correspondent Nowshera Soon Skesar: Syedna Imam Hussain (R.A) saved Islam by sacrificing his family and friends along with himself in Karbala. These views were expressed by the well-known religious scholar

Sahibzada Qazi Ghulam Mustafa Abid Alvi while addressing the 41st annual Majlis of martyrs of Karbala at Jamia Masjid Mola Ali Ghousia Razaviya Ugali Sharif. He said that participation in the Majalis of martyrs of Karbala is a source of forgiveness. Those who hold Majalis

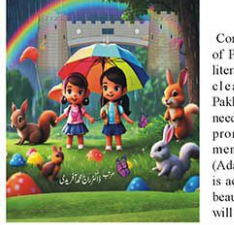
and participate in Majalis, their forgiveness and salvation are guaranteed. The meeting was held under the chairmanship and management of Pir Muhammad Amir Sultan Chishti. Later the langar was also distributed.

IESCO Power Suspension Schedules For Today

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 25th July 2024, From 06:00 AM to 10:00 AM, Islamabad Circle, Uppertupa, Patriata, TDCP, Industrial 1, Modern Steel, New PTN, Pak Iron Steel, Mumtaz Steel, Fazal Rubber, MG Steel, Potohar Bani, Holy Family, Isolation Hospital, Rahara, CM Pak Zong, D-1/21 & 2 Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Pindinton, 6th Road, Gulzar Quaid, Khanna Road, Gangal, Airport, Dhoak Choodhary, Shams Colony, Must Road Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, PAF, MES, Gracie Lane, Rahimabad, VVIP, FEGHS, Qureshi Abad, Gurja-I, Hayval, Gulistan Fatima, Ranval, Murat Feeders, Attock Circle, Shikardara, Ghorghashti,

Maskinabad, Punjab Small Industries, Mix Industries, Kohistan Enclave, Pind Pran, Valley, Gulshan Sahat, Sangiani, Shahullah Dutta, Pashval Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Dhadyal Express, Thar Bilalabad Feeders, From 05:00 AM to 09:00 AM, GSO Circle, Pindi Point, Barian, Public Health, Gharial, PAF, Upper Topa, Laura, Patriata, Company Bagh, Cecil Roster, Lora 2, MCM, TDCP, Kohala, Sunny Bank, Kaldana, PC, Dhirkot, Chamankot, Ringla, Dana Express, Dhila, Suhawah Minhasa, Nimble, Birut Kazmi, Dhirkot II, Desto, PAECE, Shah Dera Feeders, From 08:00 AM to 05:00 PM, Sohdan Gali, Bagh No. 2, Numanpura, Harjial, Numanpura 3, Delhi No. 1, Dhali No. 2, Bagh No. 1, Numanpura 2, Kharaal feeders and surrounding areas will remain closed. IESCO management apologizes to its esteemed customers for the power outage. If the work is completed ahead of time, the power supply can be restored even before the scheduled time.

Compared to other provinces of Pakistan, the lack of Urdu literature for children can be clearly felt in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,



Compared to other provinces of Pakistan, the lack of Urdu literature for children can be clearly felt in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, so there is a dire need for the publication and promotion of the above-mentioned genre. "AAP" (Adab e Atfal Pakhtunkhwa) is active in this regard. Soon, beautiful books for children will be released by "AAP". It

has been my long-standing wish to publish a book in the style of "Rang Barangi Kahanian". Alhamdulillah! This dream has become a reality. Very soon a unique book of its own style will be in your hands, which includes 33 charming and unique stories according to the mental level of children. The price of the book has been set at 500

Holding Open Kacheries Are The Best Forum To Find Out Consumers' Issues: Chief Executive IESCO

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad: IESCO has issued a schedule of open Kachery in all operational circles. According to the details, SE Islamabad Circle at I-10 Sub-Division Islamabad, SE Rawalpindi City Circle at Tech Bhata Sub-Division, Rawalpindi, SE Rawalpindi Cantt Circle at Sawan Sub-Division, Rawalpindi, SE Attock Circle at Hazzo Sub-Division, SE Jhelum Circle at Sangoi Sub-Division and SE Chakwal Circle at

Azhar Shaheed Sub Division will hold Open Kachery on July 25, 2024 (Thursday) From 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon. IESCO Chief Executive Officer Muhammad Naeem Jan himself will monitor the open Kachery. Consumers of IESCO Region should participate in these open Kachery for registering complaints/suggestion to power related issues. For more information call on CCMC number 051-9252933-34.

PMD predicts more rain in various parts of country

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted rain-windstorm/thundershower in Punjab, Islamabad, Pothohar region, Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, northeast and south Balochistan and southeast Sindh during the next 24 hours. Isolated heavy rainfall is also expected at a few places in northeast Punjab, Kashmir and upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the forecast period. As per synoptic situation, monsoon currents from Arabian Sea and Bay of



Bengal were penetrating upper and central parts of the country. A trough of westerly wave was also affecting upper and central parts of the country. The PMD has warned that heavy rainfalls

may generate flash flooding in local nullahs and streams of Murree, Galiyat, Manshra, Kohistan, Malakand, Dir, Swat, Shangla, Buner, Kurrum, Orakzai, Khyber, Mohmand, Nowshera, Swabi, Kashmir, Deira Ghazi Khan, Musa Khel, Barkhan, Kohlu and Loralai. Urban flooding is also expected in low lying areas of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa till July 24. Landslides may disrupt road traffic at the vulnerable hilly areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Murree, Galiyat, Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan during the wet period.



Five dead as Nepal plane skids off runway and catches fire, media and officials say



KATHMANDU (Reuters) — At least five people were killed after a small plane caught fire after skidding off the runway while taking off from Nepal's capital Kathmandu on Wednesday, media and officials said.

The plane was carrying two crew members and 17 technicians to Pokhara city for maintenance checks. Airport Security Chief Arjun Chand Thakuri said.

The Kathmandu Post newspaper said five bodies had been recovered from the crash site. Television visuals showed fire fighters trying to put out the fire and thick black smoke rising into the sky.

"It (the plane) caught fire after skidding off the runway at Kathmandu airport and crashing into a field east of the runway," Thakuri said.

Bangladesh partially restores telecommunication services as protests taper off



DHAKA (Reuters) — Bangladesh partially restored telecommunication services on Wednesday although internet connection was slow and social media remained suspended, days after deadly protests against reservations for government jobs killed almost 150 people.

The country has mostly been calm since Sunday when the Supreme Court sealed down reservations for various categories to 7%, overruling a high court verdict reinstating a 56% quota in government jobs that had been scrapped in 2018.



Harris leads Trump 44pc to 42pc in US presidential race, poll finds

That compares with a marginal two-point deficit Biden faced against Trump in last week's poll

Web Desk

Vice President Kamala Harris opened up a marginal two-percentage-point lead over Republican Donald Trump after President Joe Biden ended his re-election campaign and passed the torch to her, a Reuters Ipsos poll found.

That compares with a marginal two-point deficit Biden faced against Trump in last week's poll before his Sunday exit from the race.

The new poll, conducted on Monday and Tuesday, followed both the Republican National Convention where Trump on Thursday formally accepted the nomination and Biden's announcement on Sunday he was leaving the race and endorsing Harris.

Harris, whose campaign says she has secured the Democratic nomination, led Trump 44% to 42% in the national poll, a difference within the 3-percentage-point margin of error.

Harris and Trump were tied at 44% in a July 15-16 poll, and Trump led by one percentage point in a July 1-2 poll, both within the same margin of error.

While nationwide surveys give important signals of American support for political candidates, a handful of competitive states typically tilt the balance in the US Electoral College, which ultimately decides who wins a presidential election.

A pollster with Trump's campaign played down any polling showing an increase in Harris' support, arguing that she was likely to see a temporary rise in popularity because of widespread media coverage of her new candidacy.

"That bump is likely to start showing itself over the next few days and will last for a while," pollster Tony Fabrizio said in a memo circulated to reporters by Trump's campaign.

Candidates often expect a bump after formally accepting their party's nomination at stage-managed, televised conventions such as the one that Trump had last week. But the poll showed no sign of that. Bump or not, the most recent Reuters Ipsos poll underrode the rationale for Biden dropping out of the race and for Harris replacing him on the ticket.

Blast at Jose Cuervo plant in Mexico kills at least five people

MEXICO CITY

An explosion at a Jose Cuervo tequila plant in central Mexico killed at least five company workers and forced the evacuation of tourists from the area in the spirit's hometown of Tequila, the head of the state's emergency services.

Victor Hugo Roldan, the chief of emergency services and firefighters in Jalisco state, told Reuters the blast occurred in a 500,000-litre tank at the plant, and the resulting fire was put out by company personnel.

At least two other tanks at the facility, operated by the world's largest tequila maker Hecla, also collapsed, he said.

In a statement, the company confirmed the death toll from the accident at its Rojepla plant, adding that several other workers were injured. The explosion in one tank triggered a fire in three others, according to a statement from emergency services released later on Tuesday. The cause of the blast remains unknown.

A photo of the aftermath of the explosion released by emergency services showed a large metal tank emblazoned with the Cuervo logo collapsed on its side.

The town of Tequila, home to several distilleries of the agave spirit, is a popular tourist destination about an hour's drive northwest of Guadalajara, Mexico's second largest city.



China details expanded law on state secrets, eyeing data security



BEIJING

China revealed details this week of a revised state secrets law that changes curbs on government officials' handling of confidential information, banning those entrusted with state secrets from going abroad without approval. The State Council, or cabinet, issued regulations on Monday for implementing the law, a set of working-level procedures that take effect from September, with a sharper focus on data security.

Chinese officials responsible for the regulations see them as part of Beijing's effort to defend its national interests at a time of increasing competition with the West in areas of science and technology.

"With the popularisation of information technology, state secrets have become increasingly digital and networked and the risks of leaks and thefts have become more diverse and hidden," state news agency Xinhua quoted officials of the justice ministry and agency for protection of state secrets as saying.

"The struggle between theft and anti-theft has gradually manifested itself as competition and confrontation in scientific and technological capabilities," the unidentified officials said.

The rules are part of an overhaul of the state secrets law passed this year, which spurred concern among foreign businesses operating in China the law could impact their ability to access digital information amid the expansion of what is deemed sensitive, as President Xi Jinping steps up focus on national security and targets foreign infiltration.

The revised law gives police broader powers to conduct investigations into breaches and requires private companies to take steps to protect state secrets, as well as threatening legal punishment for those who disclose state secrets.

Monday's regulations require every central Communist Party and government unit to set up its own secret-keeping office with designated staff.

Sports & Showbiz



Bangladesh and Sri Lanka's 'A' teams to tour Pakistan



LAHORE

Web Desk

Pakistan Shaheens will play four additional four-day and six 50-over matches this year when Bangladesh 'A' and Sri Lanka 'A' visit Pakistan in August and November, respectively.

Following the second four-dayer against Bangladesh 'A' in Darwin, Australia, which will conclude on 29 July, both Pakistan Shaheens and Bangladesh 'A' will go toe-to-toe in two four-dayers from 10-13 August and 17-20 August in Pakistan (Vemes TBC). The four-dayers will be followed by three 50-over

matches on 23, 25, and 27 August.

In November, Sri Lanka 'A' will visit Pakistan for five matches against Pakistan Shaheens. The four-dayers will be played from 11-14 November and 18-21 November, while the 50-over matches will be held on 25, 27, and 29 November. Venues will be announced in due course.

Separately, Pakistan Emerging team will also defend their ACC Emerging Teams Asia Cup title in October, while the Pakistan U19 team will feature in an U19 50-over Tri-Nation Tournament and ACC Asia Cup U19 in November-December.

Pope says 600 runs in a day within England's reach



NOTTINGHAM

Ollie Pope believes England could yet score 600 runs in a single day of Test cricket in the right circumstances for Ben Stokes' men.

Pope was one of three century-makers for the hosts as England piled up 506-4 on the first day against Pakistan at Rawalpindi in December 2022, despite facing a mere 75 overs.

Victory in Nottingham was also the first time England had passed 400 in both innings in the 147-year history of Test cricket.

Pope was one of four batsmen to score a hundred when England piled up 506-4 on the first day against Pakistan at Rawalpindi in December 2022, despite facing a mere 75 overs.

And the England vice-captain believes the team now have the capacity to surpass that feat, but also an ability to adapt to more bowler-friendly conditions as they refine their aggressive 'Barball' approach.

"I think when Baz (England coach Brendon McCullum) and Stokesy took over, we were a batting unit with

not a lack of experience, but a lack of confidence at the time," said Pope.

"RUTHLESS" "At the time it was about building confidence, now it's about hopefully becoming more and more ruthless.

"Sometimes we might score 280-300 in a day but that's OK and probably because we're reading situations."

The 26-year-old Surrey star added: "We saw at Trent Bridge, when the lights were on and it started swinging more that was the time just to manage the game a little bit and that's something we want to keep getting better and better at."

"But there might be a day where we go and get 500 or 600 at some point in the future as well. That's a cool thing to have."

England, who previously thrashed the West Indies by an innings and 114 runs at Lord's, have now won a Test series for the first time since 2022 as they lead 2-0 ahead of this week's finale at the Edgbaston ground in Birmingham.

Sania Mirza shares glimpse of leisurely moments



(Web Desk) - Former Indian tennis sensation Sania Mirza took to Instagram after a break following her recent Hajj sojourn. The latest Instagram post shows her activities these days.

The 37-year-old has a worldwide fan following and her fans take keen interest in seeing Mirza's day-to-day errands.

However, it had been a while since she shared details about her time out with friends and family, especially during her break from social media platforms when she travelled to Saudi Arabia for performing Hajj last month.

Mirza's latest Instagram post showed her hanging around with family and friends. With the caption "Unrolling the B-roll" the athlete uploaded portraits of herself, a few snapshots with her adorable son Ishaan Mirza Malik, a few pictures with friends as well

Women's Asia Cup: Pakistan qualifies for semi-finals after India's win over Nepal

Web Desk

The Pakistan women's cricket team qualified for the semi-finals of the 2024 Women's Asia Cup after India claimed an 82-run win over Nepal at Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium.

India were already in a strong position to qualify in the final four after they posted 178.3 in 20 overs. The bowlers restricted Nepal on 96.9. India had defeated Pakistan and UAE previously too.

The Girls in Green had defeated the United Arab Emirates (UAE) by 10 wickets in a must-win match earlier today. Chasing the target of 104 runs, Pakistan's opening duo of Gull Feroza and Muneeba Ali showed impeccable performances with the bat as the Green Shifters reached home in just 14.1 overs without losing a single wicket.

Feroza scored 62 off 55 balls with eight fours while Muneeba contributed 37 runs on 30 deliveries with four boundaries.



Pakistan also became the first team to win a match by 10 wickets in the history of the Women's T20 Asia Cup.

After being asked the bat first, the UAE women did not have a great start as they kept on losing wickets at regular intervals.

Skipper Esha Oza (16 off 26) and Theertha Satish (40 off 36) were the top two scorers for UAE as other than them, only Khushi Shigma (12 off 13) managed to contribute runs in double figures.