

Daily SOON TIMES



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Thursday
August 15, 2024
Page: 4 Rs: 20
Vol: 2 : Issue: 315
Karachi
www.soontimes.pk

+92 321 888 1135

ABC Certified

Simultaneously Publishing from Islamabad, Sargodha & Karachi

Our people to steer country out of crisis with unity as emphasised by Quaid-e-Azam, Murad Shah

He added, 'The 2022 flood was a testament to the commitment of the province's people.'



Soan Times Correspondent
KARACHI
Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that Pakistan is passing through a very critical phase as some vested interests are infusing hatred in the society, but we must strive to make it positive, thwart their nefarious designs, and guide the country out of the crisis with unity and faith, as emphasized by the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

This he said on Wednesday while talking to media at Mazar-e-Quaid.

At the outset of the media talk, the chief minister extended heartfelt congratulations to the nation of celebrating

Independence Day.

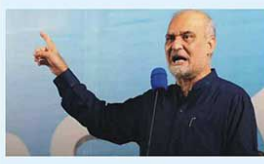
The actual problem in this country has been created by those who are spreading hatred and discouraging the youth. Our youth, our people, and the nation as a whole are very resilient, stated Murad Shah. He added, 'The 2022 flood was a testament to the commitment of the province's people. They drained the floodwater, prepared their lands, and cultivated wheat while the international community expected prolonged flooding in the province.'

The CM said that we are a resilient nation, and we have sailed out of the country from different crises in the past and would sail it out again. 'We will emerge as a strong nation because the people of

Pakistan, the source of our strength, have committed to making this country strong enough in terms of economy, development, education and health.

Talking about the tyranny and genocide in Palestine, the chief minister urged the international community to take a strong stance against the killing of innocent people, including children, women, and elderly individuals in Palestine. He also remembered the struggle and sacrifices of the people of Kashmir and demanded the resolution of the [Kashmir] issue under the United Nations Resolutions. 'If this tyranny is allowed to continue in Palestine and Kashmir people will lose their belief in the United Nations.

Rulers deviated from ideology of Pakistan, says Hafiz Naeem



Soan Times Correspondent
LAHORE
Jammat-e-Islami Emir Hafiz Naeem Rchman said that we couldn't reach our destination during last 77 years.

In his statement on the Independence Day, Hafiz Naeem said that our rulers deviated from the ideology of Pakistan and two-nation theory.

He added that Pakistan has lot of challenges but our rulers lack the vision to run the country. 'There is a need to remind our children the sacrifices rendered by our elders for this homeland,' said the JI emir.

Hafiz Naeem said that our rulers are distributing laptops in the name of promoting the Information Technology (IT).

We must be grateful for independence, asserts Maryam Nawaz Sharif



Soan Times Correspondent
LAHORE
Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz stressed that we all should be grateful for living in an independent country.

Addressing a ceremony at Hazoori Bagh on Independence Day, she felicitated the nation on the 77th Independence Day for having a blessing of freedom.

She highlighted the Palestinians being subjected to tyranny and oppression and prayed for their freedom.

She commended Arshad Nadeem, Olympic Gold Medalist, and stressed the need for hardwork and dedication.

Maryam Nawaz insisted that talent must be nurtured as there was no dearth of talent in Pakistan.

She stated that the youth were the future builder of state and they had to set an example of unity, faith and discipline.

Punjab CM stressed the need for protection of minorities as white colour in the Pakistan flag represented the minorities and all citizens were equal.

Nation marks 77th Independence Day anniversary amidst calls for unity and prosperity

Premier hoists national flag at Pakistan Monument, joined by Olympic hero Arshad Nadeem, Gilani, and other dignitaries

Soan Times Correspondent
Islamabad
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday hoisted the national flag at the Pakistan Monument, commemorating the 77th Independence Day anniversary of Pakistan.

The ceremony was attended by national Olympic hero Arshad Nadeem and Chairman Senate Yousuf Raza Gilani, among other dignitaries.

During the event, the prime minister laid a floral wreath at the Pakistan



Monument, paying homage to the country's founding fathers and national heroes.

In separate messages, President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif extended their

Shehbaz Sharif extended their congratulations to the nation on the occasion of Pakistan's 77th Independence Day.

President Zardari highlighted the day as the culmination of the historic struggle of Indian Muslims for self-determination. He called for unity, integrity, and economic stability, emphasizing the importance of upholding the rule of law and strengthening democratic institutions.

COAS Munir's statement reflects his thoughts: Chaudhry Shujaat



Soan Times Correspondent
LAHORE
Pakistan Muslim League (Q) president and former caretaker prime minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain says Army Chief Gen Asim Munir's statement reflects his thoughts.

Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain said he did not hear a better speech till today. He said that he wanted to give a gift to the soldiers of the army on this occasion.

Shujaat Hussain further desired that the names of the martyred should be displayed on the highways so that the local people also feel proud about it.

President Asif Ali Zardari approves awards for 104 individuals for their "service to Pakistan"

The awards will be presented at a ceremony on March 23 next year.



Soan Times Correspondent
Islamabad
On Independence Day, President Asif Ali Zardari approved awards for 104 individuals in recognition of their services to Pakistan.

The awards will be presented at a ceremony on March 23 next year.

Former Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Shaheed will receive the Nishan-e-Pakistan for his public service contributions. In sports, Arshad Nadeem will be awarded Hilal-e-Imtiaz and Murad Sadpara Sitara-e-Imtiaz. Nasir Kazmi will receive the Nishan-e-Imtiaz posthumously for his

contributions to literature. Prince Abdul Aziz bin Salman Al-Saud will be honoured with Hilal-e-Pakistan for his services to Pakistan.

In Science and Technology, Amir Hafeez Ibrahim will receive Hilal-e-Imtiaz, while Dr Ghulam Muhammad Ali and Sardar Muhammad Aftab Ahmed Khan Watto will get Sitara-e-Imtiaz. Dr Sara Qureshi, Dr Rafiquddin, and Professor Dr Usman Qamar will be awarded Tamgha-e-Imtiaz.

For education, Sadia Rasheed will be honoured with Hilal-e-Imtiaz, and Zia-ul-Haq, Dr Sulaiman Shahabuddin, and

Syed Azhar Hussain Abidi will receive Sitara-e-Imtiaz. Barkat Shah, Abdul Rasheed Kakar, and Anjiba Bano will get the President's Award for Pride of Performance.

In the health sector, Professor Dr Shehryar and Dr Zaryab Setna will receive Hilal-e-Imtiaz, while Dr Afkifullah Khan, Dr Syed Abid Mehdi Kazmi, and Ikrumulil Khan will be awarded Tamgha-e-Imtiaz.

In the field of arts, Colin David will get Sitara-e-Imtiaz, and Arshad Aziz Malik, Bakhtiyar Ahmed, and Barrister Zafarullah will be awarded Tamgha-e-Imtiaz. Fareeha Pervaiz.

Independence Day celebrations held at YMCA



Soan Times Correspondent
LAHORE
Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Christians came together in good numbers for Independence Day celebrations at the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

Punjab Minister for Human Rights and Minorities Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora was the chief guest at the event while the guests of honour included Rev Zaman Sultan, John William, Gulam Nabi Rana, Rao Dilshad, Muhammad Zaman and Saira Jehan.

General Secretary Emanuel Sarfaraz briefed the guests about the role YMCA played as a movement in the freedom struggle. 'The decision to vote in favour of Pakistan was taken in the YMCA Hall in a meeting presided by Punjab Assembly Speaker SP Singha and General Secretary YMCA Rallia Ram,' Emanuel said.

Minister Arora said youth of Pakistan is very positive. 'The government of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has taken a lot of steps to ensure religious harmony. The minorities are given opportunities to excel in life,' he said.

'The CM has clear vision for progress of minorities and their protection is top priority of her government,' the minister maintained. He praised the YMCA efforts for bringing together youth of all religions.

Punjab Assembly speaker, London deputy mayor exchange views on trade, bilateral ties



Soan Times Correspondent
LAHORE
Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan has met with London Deputy Mayor Malik Shaheel Akram.

Both sides exchanged views on investment, trade, Pakistan and Britain bilateral ties and matters of mutual interests.

Malik Ahmad Khan shared his contentment seeing a Muslim

and Pakistan-origin deputy mayor of London.

He lauded the pivotal role of the Pakistani community in the development of Britain.

Punjab Assembly speaker hailed the selection of Pakistan-origin Malik Shaheel for office of London deputy mayor.

He asserted that he was hopeful that Shaheel Akram would utilise all resources and capabilities to boost Pakistan and Britain ties.

The London deputy mayor insisted that Britain valued Pakistan's services and efforts for global peace.

Punjab, Sindh governors extend Independence Day greetings

Punjab, Sindh governors praise the founding fathers' relentless efforts and sacrifices

Soan Times Correspondent
LAHORE
Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan and Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori have issued separate messages congratulating the nation on the 77th Independence Day.

In a message, Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori praised the founding fathers' relentless efforts and sacrifices in establishing the country.

He paid tribute to the martyrs who gave their lives for the nation on this Independence Day. Tessori reaffirmed the commitment to develop and prosper Pakistan in line with the vision and ideas of the Quaid-e-Azam and pledged to leave no stone unturned in advancing the country's global economic position.



Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan also emphasised the immense blessing of freedom granted by Allah.

He acknowledged the sacrifices and struggles of ancestors in establishing the nation and stressed the importance of valuing and safeguarding this divine gift.

He urged citizens to overcome differences and unite as one nation, reflecting on the

principles of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

Governor Haider Khan called for active participation in the country's development. He paid homage to the military and security forces who sacrificed their lives for national security.

He also honoured the mothers of soldiers who sacrificed their happiness for the protection of the nation.

The Punjab Governor offered special prayers for the people of Kashmir, and hoped for an end to their suffering and the accomplishment of their freedom.

77th Independence Day of our beloved nation

As we commemorate the 77th Independence Day of our beloved nation, I extend my heartfelt greetings to all Pakistanis, both within the country and abroad. This day is a reminder of the sacrifices made by our forefathers, and it is an occasion to renew our commitment to the ideals of unity, faith, and discipline. Today, as we stand at a crossroads in our history, we face numerous challenges that demand our collective resolve. It is our duty to ensure poverty alleviation, inclusive growth and socio-economic equality. We must ensure that the benefits of economic growth are

distributed equitably, so that every Pakistani has the opportunity to live a life of dignity and respect. We must address with sound policies that promote inclusivity, foster sustainable development, and ensure that no segment of our society is left behind. Terrorism remains a grave threat to our security and our way of life. Our armed forces and law enforcement agencies have rendered tremendous sacrifices to ensure our safety. However, the fight against terrorism is far from over. By infusing unity, cohesion and undeterred resolve within our ranks we can not only

persevere but tide over the challenges. Climate change is another existential threat that looms large over our nation. The recent floods and extreme weather events are stark reminders of the vulnerability of our country to the impacts of climate change. It is crucial that we adopt sustainable practices, build climate-resilient infrastructure, and play our part in global efforts to combat this menace. To counter all these challenges we need to act in unison as national integration is the cornerstone of our strength as a nation. We must work towards fostering a sense of

belonging and unity among all Pakistanis. This is the only way we can build a cohesive society that is resilient to internal and external threats. In conclusion, as we celebrate this Independence Day, let us remember that the challenges we face are not insurmountable. With determination, and a shared vision for a better future, we can overcome these obstacles and build a Pakistan that is strong, prosperous, and just. Let us pledge to work together for the betterment of our nation, so that future generations can live in peace and harmony.

Independence Day of Pakistan A Journey of Struggle, Triumph and Unity



Iftikhar uddin Anjum

Every year on August 14th, Pakistan celebrates its Independence Day with fervor, paying homage to the momentous day in 1947 when it emerged as a sovereign nation. This day marks the end of British colonial rule and the birth of Pakistan as a separate state for Muslims of the Indian subcontinent, as envisioned by leaders like Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The journey to independence was long and fraught with challenges, but it culminated in a moment of unparalleled joy and national pride. This article delves into the historical significance, the freedom movement, and the contemporary celebrations that make Independence Day a cornerstone of Pakistani identity. The subcontinent's struggle for independence began in earnest in the early 20th century, fueled by dissatisfaction with British colonial policies and the desire for self-governance. The Indian National Congress (INC) initially spearheaded the independence movement, advocating for a united India. However, the Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, recognized the need for a separate state to safeguard the rights of Muslims, who constituted a significant minority in India. The demand for Pakistan was formally articulated in the Lahore Resolution of 1940, where the Muslim League called for "independent states" for Muslims in the north-western and eastern zones of India. This marked a pivotal shift in the political landscape, setting the stage for the creation of Pakistan. The 1940s were a period of intense political activity and negotiations. The Quit India Movement of 1942 intensified the call for British withdrawal, while World War II weakened British control over its colonies. As independence became inevitable, communal tensions between Hindus and Muslims escalated, leading to widespread violence and displacement. In 1946, the Cabinet Mission Plan proposed a united India with a decentralized federal structure. However, this plan failed to address the Muslim League's demand for a separate state. The political deadlock led to the announcement of the partition plan on June 3, 1947, by British Prime Minister Clement Attlee. The Indian Independence Act was passed by the British Parliament in July 1947, paving the way for the creation of two independent dominions, India and Pakistan, on August 15, 1947. For Pakistan, independence came a day earlier, on August 14,

1947. The transfer of power was marked by joyous celebrations across the country. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan, addressed the Constituent Assembly, emphasizing the principles of equality, justice, and democracy. The new nation faced immense challenges, including the mass migration of populations, communal violence, and the task of nation-building from scratch. Despite these hurdles, the spirit of independence infused the Pakistani people with a sense of purpose and unity. The creation of Pakistan was not just a political victory but a testament to the resilience and determination of its people. Independence Day in Pakistan is a time of national pride and celebration. The day begins with special prayers for the country's progress and prosperity. The national flag is hoisted at public and private buildings, accompanied by the national anthem. Major cities like Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi host grand ceremonies, including parades, cultural performances, and fireworks. In Islamabad, the capital city, the main ceremony takes place at the President House or the Convention Center, attended by government officials, military personnel, and foreign dignitaries. The President and Prime Minister deliver speeches highlighting the achievements of the nation and the challenges ahead. Military parades showcase the strength and discipline of the armed forces, while air shows by the Pakistan Air Force leave spectators in awe. Cultural events and exhibitions are organized nationwide, reflecting the rich heritage and diversity of Pakistan. Educational institutions hold special programs to instill patriotism and educate students about the significance of independence. Media outlets broadcast documentaries, dramas, and patriotic songs, creating an atmosphere of celebration and reflection. Since gaining independence, Pakistan has made significant strides in various fields, including education, healthcare, infrastructure, and technology. The establishment of renowned institutions like the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), and the Higher Education Commission (HEC) underscore the nation's commitment to scientific and technological advancement. Economic growth, particularly in the agricultural and textile sectors, has been a driving force behind Pakistan's development. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a testament to Pakistan's strategic geopolitical importance and its potential as a regional economic hub. However, Pakistan has also faced its share of challenges. Political instability, economic disparities, and security concerns have posed significant hurdles. The

struggle against terrorism, particularly in the post-9/11 era, has tested the nation's resilience. Efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, promote human rights, and ensure social justice remain ongoing priorities. One of Pakistan's greatest strengths is its cultural diversity. The country is home to a rich tapestry of ethnic groups, languages, and traditions. From the vibrant festivals of Punjab to the serene landscapes of Gilgit-Baltistan, each region contributes to the nation's unique identity. The people of Pakistan take pride in their heritage, celebrating festivals like Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, Basant, and the Sindh Cultural Festival with enthusiasm. Traditional music, dance, and cuisine are integral to Pakistani culture, reflecting the country's pluralistic society. The youth of Pakistan, comprising a significant portion of the population, play a crucial role in shaping the nation's future. With access to education and technology, young Pakistanis are making their mark in various fields, from science and technology to arts and sports. Initiatives like the Prime Minister's Youth Program and the Kamyab Javan Program aim to empower the youth by providing opportunities for skill development, entrepreneurship, and employment. The rise of social media has also given young Pakistanis a platform to voice their opinions, advocate for social change, and engage in civic activities. Pakistan's role on the global stage has evolved over the years. As a member of international organizations like the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Pakistan has actively participated in global diplomacy and peacekeeping efforts. The country's strategic location has made it a key player in regional politics, particularly in South Asia and the Middle East. Pakistan's efforts to promote peace, stability, and economic cooperation in the region are reflected in its foreign policy initiatives. The Independence Day of Pakistan is more than a commemoration of a historical event; it is a celebration of the nation's journey, its achievements, and its aspirations. The story of Pakistan is one of resilience, determination, and unity in the face of challenges. As Pakistan continues to evolve, the spirit of independence serves as a guiding light, reminding its people of the sacrifices made and the promise of a brighter future. On August 14th, Pakistanis around the world come together to celebrate their shared heritage, honor their heroes, and renew their commitment to the principles that define their nation. The green and white flag, fluttering proudly in the wind, symbolizes the enduring spirit of Pakistan, a spirit that continues to inspire generations to come.



Amjad Rana

The complex issues surrounding the case of Lt. Gen. Faiz Hameed (Retd) requires a multi-faceted approach to ensure accountability, restore public trust, and strengthen institutional integrity. The initiation of court martial proceedings against former ISI Chief Lt. Gen. Faiz Hameed (Retd) is unprecedented in Pakistan's history, signalling a critical moment for military accountability. The case, rooted in serious allegations of corruption and misuse of authority, underscores the importance of transparency and justice within the nation's institutions. As the process unfolds, it could set a significant precedent, impacting both the military's internal discipline and its relationship with civilian oversight, while potentially reshaping public trust in these key institutions. The arrest and initiation of court martial proceedings against former ISI Chief Lt. Gen. Faiz Hameed (Retd) marks a significant event in Pakistan's history, as it's the first time a former spy master is facing such disciplinary action. The proceedings are connected to allegations involving the Top City housing scheme scandal, where Gen. Hameed is accused of orchestrating a raid on the offices and residence of the housing scheme's owner, Moez Khan, among other serious charges. The Supreme Court of Pakistan had previously highlighted the gravity of these allegations, emphasizing that if proven, they could undermine the reputation of the country's institutions. This led to the formation of an inquiry committee within the military to investigate the allegations. The ISPR's statement clarified that multiple violations of the Pakistan Army Act by Gen. Hameed, both during and after his service, had been established, leading to the initiation of the

Field General Court Martial. His involvement in the Top City case and other related accusations, including allegations of corruption and misuse of authority, have now brought him under military custody. This development is noteworthy given Gen. Hameed's controversial past, including his early retirement and his role in various political controversies, particularly his alleged influence in political matters and his tenure as ISI chief. The outcome of this court martial could have significant implications for the military and civilian institutions in Pakistan. Ensure the court martial proceedings are conducted transparently, with clear communication to the public about the process and outcomes. This transparency will help maintain public confidence in the justice system. Consider involving independent legal experts or observers to oversee the process, ensuring it is free from undue influence and is conducted fairly. Enhance the role of civilian oversight bodies, such as the Ministry of Defence and parliamentary committees, to regularly review and monitor the activities of military and intelligence agencies. Strengthen internal accountability mechanisms within the military to prevent abuses of power and ensure that any violations are swiftly addressed. Re-examine and update the Pakistan Army Act to address any gaps that may allow for misuse of power or authority, particularly concerning post-retirement conduct. Consider implementing a system where certain military actions, especially those involving civilian affairs, are subject to judicial review to prevent overreach. Clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of military and intelligence agencies to ensure they operate within their legal mandates. Implement regular training programs focusing on ethics, the rule of law, and respect for civilian governance to foster a culture of accountability within the armed forces. Develop a communication strategy to keep

the public informed about the case and its implications for governance, emphasizing the commitment to justice and institutional integrity. Engage with civil society organizations to gather feedback and ensure that public concerns are addressed in the ongoing reforms. Implement stronger anti-corruption measures within the military and civilian sectors, including regular audits and the establishment of a whistleblower protection mechanism. Ensure that all individuals, regardless of their position or rank, are subject to the rule of law, reinforcing the principle that no one is above the law. By pursuing these solutions, Pakistan can work towards resolving the current crisis while laying the groundwork for a stronger, more accountable institutions in the future. According to media reports Lt Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed, the former chief of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) has been taken into military custody as part of court martial proceedings initiated against him by the Pakistan Army. These proceedings are connected to a scandal involving the Top City housing scheme, where Hameed is accused of misusing his authority during a 2017 raid on the project's offices. Allegations against him include the illegal seizure of valuables and extortion, with the Supreme Court of Pakistan ordering an inquiry into these claims. The Pakistan Army's media wing ISPR confirmed that a high-level inquiry had been conducted, which led to the initiation of court martial proceedings under the Pakistan Army Act. The accusations against Hameed include several violations of the law both during and after his service and the Supreme Court is closely monitoring the case. This development marks a significant moment as it is rare for such high-ranking military officials to face court martial proceedings, especially someone with Hameed's influential background and previous roles, including his controversial tenure as ISI chief during Imran Khan's government.

Heavy rain, thunderstorms expected in Karachi from 17 to 19 August



Soon Times Correspondent Karachi
The Karachi division is likely to experience heavy rain and thunderstorms from 17 to 19 August, with the possibility

gradually spread across the entire province. Under the influence of this system, Karachi is forecast to see moderate to heavy rain accompanied by thunderstorms and strong winds during the period. Some locations may experience particularly intense downpours. In rural Sindh, districts including Mirpurkhas, Umerkot, Sanghar, Jamshoro, Dadu, Thatta, Badin, Hyderabad, Tando Allahyar, and Tando Muhammad Khan are also expected to receive rainfall. In Sujawal, rain with thunderstorms is anticipated intermittently from the night of August 16 until August 19, with heavy to very heavy rainfall possible in several areas.

of downpours in some areas, according to a monsoon alert issued by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD). The new weather system is expected to enter eastern Sindh on August 16 and



CASS Lahore Unveils The Untold & Unseen Story of Quaid-e-Azam's Legacy

Soon Times Correspondent
The Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS), Lahore, hosted an enlightening guest lecture on 13 August 2024, exploring the untold and unseen dimensions of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's life and leadership. The event focused on the lesser-known aspects of the legacy of Pakistan's founding father. Wing Commander Amir Qayyum, Deputy Director of Research at CASS, Lahore, delivered the introductory remarks, emphasising the importance of understanding the intricate layers of Mr Jinnah's character to fully appreciate his monumental contributions to the nation. Air Commodore Khalid Chishti (Retd), a distinguished authority delivered the guest lecture on Quaid-e-Azam's legacy. His presentation provided fresh perspectives on

the early life, legal career and political journey of the nation's founder, uncovering lesser-known facets of Quaid-e-Azam's life. He also delved into the principles upheld by Mr Jinnah and highlighted the key characteristics of his multifaceted personality that empowered him to lead the struggle for an independent Pakistan. In the end, Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd), President of CASS, Lahore, delivered the closing remarks, extending gratitude to Air Commodore Chishti (Retd) for his illuminating presentation. He expressed his deep admiration for Mr Jinnah's steadfast principles, tireless work ethic, and visionary outlook, emphasising that his legacy stands as a powerful reminder of the values of unity, faith, and discipline. The guest lecture was attended by scholars, members of the academic community and Pakistan Air Force (PAF) officers.

Integrating Gender Perspectives into Environmental & Economic Policies to help Build Sustainable, Inclusive Future for All: Yousaf Raza Gilani

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad
Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has said that empowering women to take leadership roles in climate action will lead to more innovative and comprehensive solutions, driving progress in environmental conservation and sustainability. Chairman Senate expressed these views at a reception hosted in honor of the delegation of Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) at Parliament House on Tuesday. The delegation was led by Secretary General of AFPPD Dr. Jeth Srirathnout. Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has said that impacts of rising temperatures, erratic weather patterns, and natural disasters disproportionately affect women and marginalized communities and it is imperative that response to these challenges is inclusive, equitable, and transformative. He felicitated Romina



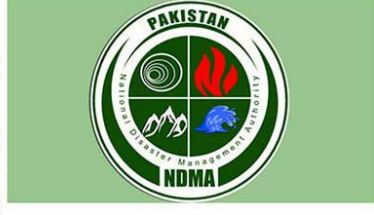
Khurshid Alam, Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, the Ministry, Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, and all the stakeholders for organizing such a significant and impactful conference on an issue that resonates deeply with our national and regional priorities. The diverse gathering of parliamentarians from Cambodia, Egypt, Japan, Jordan, Indonesia, Iraq, Lao PDR, the Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam and Turkmenistan is a testament to our shared commitment to addressing the critical

issues of climate change, green economy, gender equality and sustainable development. He also admired dedication to integrating gender perspectives into environmental and economic policies, which would help build a sustainable and inclusive future for our peoples. "Pakistan, like many of our neighboring countries, faces significant vulnerabilities to climate change", Chairman Senate remarked. The Chairman Senate observed that empowering women is not only a matter of social justice but also a strategic imperative for achieving economic growth and environmental sustainability. He said that women, who make up nearly half of our population, have always been key players in managing natural resources and advocating for sustainable practices. Inclusivity is the cornerstone of a successful green economy, he remarked. He said that transition to a green economy is inevitable and prudent to reduce environmental risks and empowering women within this framework is of paramount importance.

NDMA warns depts concerned as monsoon rains expected in KP from Aug 14 to 18

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Wednesday urged all relevant authorities and the public to take necessary precautions to mitigate the potential impacts of flooding and landslides as the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) anticipated further rains in various parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from Aug 14 to 18. Moderate to heavy rains are expected in Hazara, Malakand Division, Peshawar, Bannu, DI Khan, Hangu, Haripur, Kohat, Kurram, Lakki Marwat, Mohmand, Orakzai and Waziristan areas, a news release said. "Rains may cause urban flooding in various cities and flash flooding in hilly areas. Flow

of water in the streams is also expected to increase," the NDMA said. The NDMA issued instructions to all relevant departments to alert emergency response teams and mobilised resources to ensure a swift response to any situation. Tourists were advised to avoid travelling to these areas during the aforementioned period, whereas the public was advised to remain vigilant and follow instructions from local authorities.



KP CM stresses need for unity, responsibility on Independence Day

Says we must work together to serve country and use public funds for benefit of people



PESHAWAR
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur stated that nations progress based on unity and agreement. Speaking at the Independence Day ceremony in Peshawar, Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur extended his

congratulations to all Pakistanis on the occasion of Independence Day. He highlighted that the dream of Pakistan's existence was envisioned by Allama Iqbal, and our ancestors made sacrifices for it. He emphasised that nations advanced on

the foundation of unity and agreement. "We come to power through the votes of the people, and we must spend public money on the people. We must work together to serve the country and use public funds for the benefit of the people," Gandapur said. He particularly expressed high hopes from the youth, urging them to lead the country forward. Ali Amin Gandapur also noted the need to fulfill responsibilities to provide the best facilities to the public. He urged the youth to work honestly, pointing out that dishonesty and corruption were prevalent in society. The Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa concluded by affirming that Pakistanis were a great nation, and they must play their respective roles to collectively make Pakistan a great country.

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 15th August 2024, Islamabad Circle, From 08:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, PC, TDCP, MCM, Gharial, Kohala, Sunny Bank Feeders, From 06:00 AM to 11:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, Industrial I, II & III, Warid, Old PTN, Etilhad Foundry, SH Steel, Siddiqui Steel, SES, Fazal Ghi, U Phone, T&T, Anguri, Treat Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Ameer Hamza Colony, Madinah City, Lakho, Katarian, I-14/3, Holy Family, F-Block, Bani, Fazahiya, I&II, Top City, Mumtaz City, Bajayval, F-17/I&II, Nogzi, Kuri Road Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Car Chowk, Jhawara, Dhaniyal, I, Lalkarti, Cantt, UC Lakhan, Shah Jeevan, Chongi No. 22, New Klian, Old Klian, Jhata



Hatiaal, Bisali, Industrial, Bhal, Gumti, Jarrar Camp, Mahboob Shaheed, Park View, Pindi Board, Jail Park Feeders, Attock Circle, NASTP, Qaziabad, GBHP Colony, Masood Shaheed Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Dhoda, Tharpal Feeders, Jhelum Circle, Shukriya, Mandi Bhalwal, Chhapran, Sarai Alamgir, Shamsabad, Main Bazar, Suhawah, Captain Nisar Shaheed, Express Mangala, Madhu Kalas, Dhadanka Feeders, From 07:00 AM to 01:00 PM, Chakwal Circle, Bhudial, Patwali, Akwal 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.

Justice Mohsin Kiyani urges nation to plant trees on Independence Day

He urged people to involve their elders and children in planting trees.

Soon Times Correspondent ISLAMABAD
Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) stated that the struggle for an independent nation continued till today. Justice Kiyani said that they worked within the framework of the constitution and law to maintain ideological and geographical boundaries. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Arab Muhammad Tahir also participated at the Independence Day flag-hoisting ceremony held at the IHC. In his speech, Justice Kiyani highlighted the immense sacrifices made by the ancestors for the country,

noting that today's generation might not fully appreciate these sacrifices because they were not present at that time. He stressed the importance of remembering the martyrs, who have been offering their lives from the time of the country's formation up to the present day. Justice Kiyani also encouraged planting trees, suggesting that each tree planted served as a testament to the efforts made

for future generations. He urged people to involve their elders and children in planting trees so that these efforts remain as a symbol for future generations.



Ukraine pounds Russia with drones and says it is advancing deeper



MOSCOW
Ukraine pounded Russia with missiles and drones on Wednesday and said it was advancing deeper in the biggest foreign incursion into Russia since World War Two that U.S. President Joe Biden said posed a dilemma for President Vladimir Putin.

Thousands of Ukrainian troops rumbled through the Russian border in the early hours of Aug. 6 into Russia's western Kursk region in what Putin said was a major provocation that was aimed at gaining a stronger hand in possible future ceasefire talks.

Ukraine carved out a slice of the Russian border region of Kursk and though Putin said the Russian army would push out the Ukrainian troops, more than a week of intense battles have so far failed to expel them.

UN expert panel sent to Venezuela blasts lack of transparency in presidential elections



MIAMI
A panel of experts from the United Nations said Venezuela's recent presidential elections lacked "basic transparency and integrity," adding an important voice to those who have cast doubt on President Nicolás Maduro's claim he won the contest.

A four-member team sent by U.N. Secretary General António Guterres was in Caracas for over a month in the run up to the July 28 election, one of the few independent outside observers invited by Maduro's government.



Hamas to stay out of Gaza truce talks, Iran considers Israel attack

The US has said it expects indirect talks to go ahead as planned in Qatar's capital Doha on Thursday

CAIRO
Web Desk
The Palestinian Islamist group Hamas said on Wednesday it would not take part in a new round of Gaza ceasefire talks slated for Thursday in Qatar, dimming hopes for a negotiated truce that Iranian sources say could hold back an Iranian attack on Israel. The US has said it expects indirect talks to go ahead as planned in Qatar's capital Doha on Thursday, and that a ceasefire agreement was still possible. However, Axios reported that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has postponed a trip to the Middle East that had been expected to begin on Tuesday. Three senior Iranian officials have said that only a ceasefire deal in Gaza would hold Iran back from direct retaliation against Israel for the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh on its soil last month. The Israeli government said it would send a delegation to Thursday's talks, but Hamas, the Palestinian militant group that controls Gaza, requested a workable plan to implement a proposal it has already accepted rather than more talks. "Hamas is committed to the proposal presented to it on July 2, which is based on the U.N. Security Council resolution and the Biden speech and the movement is prepared to immediately begin discussion over a mechanism to implement it," Senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri told Reuters.

More than 1,000 arrested following UK riots, police

LONDON
British authorities have now arrested more than 1,000 people following days of rioting involving violence, arson and looting as well as racist attacks targeting Muslims and migrants, a national policing body. The riots, which followed the killings of three young girls in the northern English town of Southport, began after the July 29 attack was wrongly blamed on an Islamist migrant based on online misinformation. Violence broke out in cities across England and also in Northern Ireland, but there have been fewer instances of unrest since last week after efforts to identify those involved were ramped up. Many have been swiftly jailed, with some receiving long sentences. The National Police Chiefs' Council said in its latest update that 1,024 had been arrested and 175 charged across the UK. Those arrested include a 69-year-old accused of vandalism in Liverpool.



A 13-year-old girl pleaded guilty to violent disorder at Basingstoke Magistrates' Court, prosecutors said. It having been seen on July 31 punching and kicking the entrance to a hotel for asylum seekers. "This alarming incident will have caused genuine fear amongst people who were being targeted by these thugs – and it is particularly distressing to learn that such a young girl participated in this violent disorder," prosecutor Thomas Powell said.

Taliban are celebrating 3 years in power, but they're not talking about Afghans



KABUL, Afghanistan
Web Desk
The Taliban celebrated the third anniversary of its return to power at a former U.S. air base in Afghanistan on Wednesday, but there was no mention of the country's hardships or promises of hope for the struggling population. Under blue skies and blazing sunshine at Bagram — once the center of America's war to unseat the Taliban and hunt down the al-Qaida perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks — members of the Taliban Cabinet lauded achievements like strengthening Islamic law and establishing a military system that provides "peace and security." The speeches were aimed at an international audience, urging the diaspora to return and for the West to interact and cooperate with the country's rulers. "The Islamic Emirate eliminated internal differences and expanded the scope of unity and cooperation in the country," said Deputy Prime Minister Maulvi Abdul Kabir, employing the term the Taliban use to describe their government. "No one will be allowed to interfere in internal affairs and Afghan soil will not be used against any country." None of the four speakers talked about the challenges facing Afghans in everyday life. First Afghan woman to compete internationally after Taliban takeover seeks Olympic gold in Paris. Decades of conflict and instability have left millions of Afghans on the brink of hunger and starvation. Unemployment is high. The Bagram parade was the Taliban's grandest and most defiant since regaining control of the country in August 2021.

Sports & Showbiz

Pak vs Ban: No spectators to Be allowed in Karachi Test

Fans who have already purchased tickets will receive full refund which will be credited back to their accounts



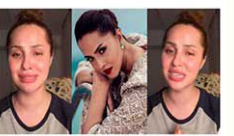
KARACHI
No spectators will be allowed in Karachi's National Stadium during the second Test match between Pakistan and Bangladesh owing to the ongoing renovations, said the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Wednesday. "We understand the vital role that our enthusiastic supporters play in cricket, providing encouragement and inspiration to our players. However, after thoroughly considering all options, we have concluded that the safest course of action is to hold the match without spectators," read the statement issued by the PCB. The second Test match between the two countries is set to take place from August 30 to September 3 in Karachi. The decision, as per the board, has been taken due to the venue's ongoing upgradation work ahead of the Champions Trophy 2025. As a result of this decision, ticket sales for the match have been immediately suspended. Fans who have already purchased tickets will receive a full refund, which will be automatically processed and credited back to their accounts. The PCB also expressed its commitment to ensuring that the stadium is fully prepared to host the Champions Trophy in 2025, the first International Cricket Council (ICC) event held in Pakistan since 1996. The ongoing upgrades are part of a broader effort to improve the stadium's facilities and make it more fan-friendly.



'Short memory' the key to success for Sabalenka

CINCINNATI
Aryna Sabalenka detailed her current tennis philosophy on Tuesday, with the three-time Cincinnati Masters semi-finalist revealing she's quick to forget about her losses. "Every week is a new tournament," the two-time Australian Open champion said as she prepared for a second-round start after a bye at the WTA and ATP Cincinnati Open, the last big test before the August 26 start of the US Open. "It's good to have a short memory. That helps to keep things moving and working hard and improving." The third seed reached the semis at the US Midwest venue at the previous two editions as well as in 2018. She's hoping to soon start improving that record as she comes back from the shoulder injury that forced her to skip Wimbledon. "Every loss is extra motivation to work hard and improve things -- just to keep going," she said. "If you're fighting every point and giving all you have in practice and matches, you'll have your opportunities. You just have to use them." Sabalenka said that her tennis also proves to be a welcome contrast to real life. The 25-year-old has been through the wringer over the years, losing her father as well as a former boyfriend who fell to his death from a Miami high-rise this year. Meanwhile, the WTA number three determined to improve her Cincinnati record. "I'm trying to figure out what I need to do to get to the finals. But I don't want to focus on that," she said. "I want to take things step by step and try to bring my best tennis every time I'm on the court. If I do that, then I will be able to get that semi-final win." Top-eight seeds wailed for opening opponents to emerge from first-round matches that filled courts Tuesday. Ninth-seeded Daria Kasatkina opened with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Ekaterina Alexandrova, sending over six aces and breaking four times. The win came as a relief after first-round losses in Washington and last week in Toronto. Number 13 Marta Kostyuk earned a 6-4, 2-6, 6-4 trip to the second round over Belgian Elise Mertens after nearly two and a half hours and a dozen double-faults. "I don't know how I won today," the Ukrainian said. "A lot of things did not go my way." Karolina Pliskova, tournament winner eight years ago, began her WTA campaign 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/3) over Bulgarian Viktorija Tomova while France's Varvara Gracheva put out Australian Ajla Tomljanovic 6-3, 2-6, 7-6 (7/5). Wimbledon quarter-finalist Lulu Sun, who had to qualify into the field, reached the second round over Czech Linda Noskova 6-4, 7-6 (7/4).

Actor Nimra Khan foils attempt of her kidnapping



KARACHI
Pakistani showbiz star Nimra Khan has foiled an attempt of kidnapping in Karachi. The actor took to the social media to inform about the tragic incident that occurred with her. She said she had been waiting for somebody in her car outside the hotel when three armed men tried to take her with them. She said she resisted the attempt and ran on the footpath while complaining that no one from the onlookers helped her. She said the kidnappers but have created many problems for her but she managed to evade the situation.

Pakistan women's volleyball star named 'Most Valuable Player' at Maldives Kings Cup



KARACHI
Pakistan's women's volleyball player, Azra Farooq, has been named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) at the Kings Cup Volleyball tournament held in Maldives. Representing the MK Club, Azra's outstanding performance became the highlights of the tournament as she not only proved to be instrumental in securing wins for her Milton Keynes-based MK Club in all four matches but the athlete was named the best player in each of the four games ensuring that her team clinched the tournament title. Individually, Azra took home six trophies from the event, including four player of the match awards, one MVP award, and one top player award. These achievements are a source of pride not just for Azra but for Pakistan's women's volleyball as a whole. Her performances demonstrate that Pakistani women athletes can excel and make their mark on the international stage. This was the second stint with a club in Maldives for Azra. Earlier, the athlete, along with Muqaddas Bukhari, created history when they became the first Pakistani women to be signed by a volleyball club outside Pakistan. The duo was signed by the Al-Fawz club for the MZC ladies' cup.