



# Daily SOONTIMES

ABC Certified

Simultaneously Publishing from Islamabad, Sargodha & Karachi

+92 321 888 1135

## Bangladesh PM Hasina Wajid resigns in response to protestors' demands

### Indian media alleges PM Hasina left Bangladesh by military helicopter, reportedly bound for India.



**Soon Times Correspondent**  
Dhaka  
Bangladesh's Sheikh Hasina has stepped down from the post of Prime Minister in the face of mass protests demanding her resignation. Earlier reports had said that the prime minister had left the capital Dhaka, a source close to the embattled leader told AFP on Monday. "She and her sister have left Ganakhaban (the premier's official residence) for a safer place," the source told AFP. "She wanted to record a speech. But she could not get an opportunity to do that."

The development was followed by Bangladesh's army chief Waker-Uz-Zaman address the nation during which he announced that the government's stance on the anti-government protest would be investigated. The army chief added that an interim

government would be formed in the country and that talks in this regard were under way. Meanwhile, Indian media alleged Hasina had left Bangladesh by military helicopter, reportedly bound for India after the protestors stormed the Prime Minister's House in Dhaka. Bangladesh student leaders on Saturday said they would carry on a planned nationwide civil disobedience campaign until Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned following last month's deadly police crackdown on protesters. Rallies against civil service job quotas sparked days of mayhem in July that killed more than 200 people in some of the worst unrest of Hasina's 15-year tenure. Troop deployments briefly restored order but crowds returned to the streets in huge numbers this week ahead of an all-out non-cooperation movement aimed at paralyzing the government planned to begin on Sunday.

## General Zaman Bangladesh army chief who announced PM Hasina's resignation

**Web Desk**  
Just over a month after he became Bangladesh's army chief, General Waker-Uz-Zaman has been thrust into the limelight, announcing the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who fled the country on Monday.



Bangladesh has been engulfed by protests and violence that began last month after student groups demanded scrapping of a controversial quota system in government jobs. That escalated into a campaign to seek the ouster of Hasina, who has been in power for 15 years and most recently swept to a fourth straight term in January. Nearly 250 people were killed in the violence. Zaman, 58, assumed the duties of army chief on June 23 for a period of three years — the normal tenure for the position.

## Response sought from Punjab government in Azma Bokhari fake video case



**Soon Times Correspondent**  
LAHORE  
The Lahore High Court (LHC) has sought response from Punjab government and other parties on an application against alleged fake video of Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari. LHC CJ Miss Aalia Nectum heard the case today. Applicant, Azma Bokhari along with her lawyers appeared before the court. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) lawyer informed the court that accused Muhammad Shafiq

## Military's stance on May 9 protests remains unchanged, says DG ISPR

### Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif reiterates war against terrorism will continue until the last militant is eliminated

**Soon Times Correspondent**  
Rawalpindi  
Director-General (DG) of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, has reaffirmed the military's unwavering stance on the violent protests that occurred on May 9, emphasizing that those involved in the riots must be held accountable. "Our position on May 9 is clear and remains unchanged, as stated in the May 7 press conference. There has been no shift in our stance, nor will there be," he stated while addressing a presser from Rawalpindi's General Headquarters (GHQ).

Director-General (DG) of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, has reaffirmed the military's unwavering stance on the violent protests that occurred on May 9, emphasizing that those involved in the riots must be held accountable. "Our position on May 9 is clear and remains unchanged, as stated in the



May 7 press conference. There has been no shift in our stance, nor will there be," he stated while addressing a presser from Rawalpindi's General Headquarters (GHQ).

He also announced a strategic shift in its terminology, declaring that the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) will now be referred to as 'Fina al-Khawarij' and its members as 'Kharij' or outcasts.

"This is because it is a mischief-making group; it's neither an ideology nor has anything to do with Islam or Pakistan," he asserted. He reported that in the first seven months of 2024, 139 soldiers of Pakistan's security forces were martyred in the ongoing battle against terrorism, stating that the nation honours these brave martyrs and their families and reaffirming the commitment to continue the fight against terrorism until the last militant is eradicated. "The armed forces are especially focused on the merged districts of the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa," he stated. Contribution to education and health. Referring to education, Lt Gen Chaudhry said "Digital education is also being provided to the youth," emphasising that the Balochistan students are the country's future and a scholarship programme has been started for them.

## Mushaal Malik demands UN action on Kashmir issue on Youm-e-Istehsal



**Soon Times Correspondent**  
ISLAMABAD  
Mushaal Hussain Mullick, the wife of Kashmir leader Yasin Malik, has demanded from the United Nations to resolve the Kashmir issue in accordance with its resolutions. In a video message released on Youm-e-Istehsal stated that she

## Senate unanimously passes resolution on Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh's martyrdom

### Israel is transforming into an international criminal and terrorist state, reads resolution tabled by Palwasha Khan



**Soon Times Correspondent**  
ISLAMABAD  
The Senate, chaired by Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, convened on Monday to address the martyrdom of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran. Senator Palwasha Khan presented a resolution, which was unanimously approved. The Senate expressed deep sorrow over Haniyeh's death in an Israeli Zionist attack and condemned the ongoing killings of Palestinians and violations of

human rights by Israeli forces. The resolution stated that Israel is transforming into an international criminal and terrorist state. It called on the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Pakistan, and all Islamic nations to unite against Israel's terrorist activities. The Senate urged Islamic countries to lift the blockade of Gaza to deliver emergency aid to the besieged Palestinians and to collectively work to halt the

bombardment of Gaza immediately. PPP parliamentary leader Senator Sherry Rehman shared her thoughts on the resolution. "International bodies are also speaking out against Israel's brutality. We need to address Israeli aggression in every session," said Rehman. "Israel and India have been given a free hand to perpetrate atrocities worldwide. Children, the elderly, and women are being indiscriminately targeted by Israeli attacks."

## IHC summons Rawalpindi DIG operations on Bushra Bibi's plea



**Soon Times Correspondent**  
ISLAMABAD  
The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has sought response from Rawalpindi DIG Operations by August 7 on Bushra Bibi's application seeking case details and moving to the relevant court to halt the arrest.

**Soon Times Correspondent**  
KARACHI  
Jammat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Hafiz Naeem Rehman has insisted on expanding sit-ins to other provinces until demands are met. He has demanded to close the independent power producers (IPP), and freeze assets of those who had agreements with IPPs. He stressed that his party's fair demands were meant to resolve a public crisis and claimed that some IPPs hadn't produced a single unit of electricity. He also asserted that JI always opposed IPPs since 1994 and highlighted that IPPs plants were performing poorly. He claimed that every government included representatives of IPPs and the public shouldn't bear the burden of government's favours for others. He also demanded the government to immediately remove tax slabs imposed on the



salaried class. JI emir advised the government to take austerity measures to provide relief to the public instead of bestowing favours on a few individuals. Hafiz Naeem called on the government to be transparent and fair about agreements with IPPs and present it before the public. Naeem also demanded accountability from the government to expose all the politicians, bureaucrats and others who transferred money to Dubai.

## Government forms task force for urgent power sector overhaul

**Soon Times Correspondent**  
ISLAMABAD  
Following widespread protests over skyrocketing electricity bills, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has announced the formation of a task force to implement structural reforms in Pakistan's power sector, according to media reports. The task force aims to alleviate the financial burden on the government and establish a more efficient, self-sustaining power market. Sources reveal that Power Minister Awas Leghari has been appointed as the chairman of the task force, with Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Power Muhammad Ali serving as co-chairman and Lt Gen (Retd) Muhammad Zafar Iqbal as the national coordinator. The task force also includes Syed Zakaria Ali Shah, a BS-21 officer, and representatives from NEPRA, the Central Power Purchasing Agency, the Private Power and Infrastructure Board, and the Securities and Exchange



Commission of Pakistan (SECP). The task force is authorized to engage experts and consultants from various sectors to support its mandate. It will focus on proposing measures to ensure the financial and operational sustainability of the power sector while overseeing the development and implementation of an efficient power market. The task force will also recommend ways to utilize excess capacity to stimulate industrial growth, examine the potential reduction of capacity payments by shutting down certain plants.

## Human Rights Violence in IIOJK

Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam here on Monday said that so called world largest democratic state India violating human rights continuously since August 5, 2019 adding that international community should put pressure on India to curb state terrorism, continued military siege from last five years and other atrocities in IIOJK. Pakistan will not allow India to succeed in its nefarious designs of turning the Muslim majority into the minority in the IIOJK, he added.

Addressing to the participants of the rally, he said that abrogation of 370 and 35A was major mistake of India it could not be to be succeeded in their nefarious designs. The minister said that like other parts of the World Kashmiris being observed Youm-e-Istehsal in Pakistan and Azad Jammu Kashmir. Without solution of Kashmir issue there is peaceful environment not possible in the region. He said that

incumbent regime highlighting Kashmir issue at all appropriate global forums effectively. A protest rally was taken out from Foreign office led by foreign secretary to D Chowk. A protest rally against the continuous military siege and human rights violation by Indian occupying forces in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) was held here on Monday a Youm-e-Istehsal, being observed every year on August 5, a large number of women, child, men and youth were arrested and killed.

The rally was led by Adviser to Prime Minister on Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaira which was participated by large number of people particularly officials and students of various educational institutions. Addressing the participants, Qamar Zaman Kaira thanked the people for expressing solidarity with their Kashmiri brethren and urged the international community to put pressure on India to curb state

terrorism, continued military siege since 5th August 2019 and other atrocities in IIOJK. Pakistan will not allow India to succeed in its nefarious designs of turning the Muslim majority into the minority in the IIOJK, he added. He termed the freedom of Kashmir as inevitable to make the freedom of Pakistan complete. The participants chanting slogans against India and carrying placards and banners inscribed with slogans "Go India, Go Back", "Stop Killing in Kashmir and Stop HR Violation in Occupied Kashmir". One minute silence was also observed in memory of the martyrs in Kashmir. "Our strong and steadfast moral, political and diplomatic support for the Kashmiri people will continue till the realization of their inalienable right to self-determination," he reiterated. The minister further said that 'Youm-e-Istehsal' was a somber occasion to recall India's illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019 in the Indian

Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). That day, India scrapped the special status of IIOJK and bifurcated it into two so-called 'Union Territories' to alter its internationally-recognized disputed status and undermine the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people. The Indian actions triggered a process of demographic change and political engineering. As a result, the Kashmiri people were confronted with the danger of becoming a disempowered minority in their own land, he added. Besides Hurriyat leaders Abdul Hameed Lone, Mohammad Farooq Rahmani and government representatives, the rally was heavily attended by the people from different walks of life. Former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu Kashmir Sardar Tanveer Ilyas said that Indian initiative of August 5, 2019 has been rejected by every Kashmiri and Pakistani and the motto of Kashmiris is We are Pakistanis, Pakistan is ours.

### A Diplomatic Balancing Act in Uncertain Times



Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer

The Biden administration and Congress were getting ready to welcome Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during a time of significant changes and uncertainty in U.S. politics. This visit happens as both countries face evolving domestic and international situations, making it challenging to manage their complex and long-standing relationship. In the U.S., President Joe Biden's administration is dealing with a divided political environment. The Democratic Party generally supports Israel but a growing group within the party that is more critical of Israel's policies, especially regarding the Palestinian territories and human rights issues. This division reflects a broader trend in American society, where younger and more progressive voices are increasingly against what they see as unbalanced U.S. support for Israel. On the Republican side, support for Israel remains strong, often influenced by evangelical Christian beliefs and strategic interests. However, the GOP is also facing its own internal challenges, with different groups competing for power after the Trump era. This political situation means that Netanyahu's visit will be viewed through these partisan divides, affecting the nature and outcomes of his meetings.

For President Biden, Netanyahu's visit presents a complex diplomatic challenge. The Biden administration has been trying to adjust U.S. foreign policy after the turbulent Trump years, focusing on

multilateralism, renewed alliances, and human rights. Balancing these goals with the strong U.S.-Israel relationship requires careful diplomacy. Biden is also dealing with the resumption of talks about the Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Netanyahu has strongly criticized the JCPOA, arguing that it threatens Israel's security. Therefore, his visit will likely bring these issues to the forefront, challenging Biden to balance the concerns of an important ally with broader international diplomatic goals.

Netanyahu's visit comes at a time of significant political change in Israel as well. Having recently returned to power, Netanyahu leads a government that includes far-right elements, raising concerns both in Israel and internationally. Issues like the proposed judicial reforms by his government have sparked widespread protests and criticism, showing a nation deeply divided on its future direction. Moreover, Israel's ongoing conflict with the Palestinians remains a central issue. Netanyahu's hardline stance and the policies of his coalition partners have made efforts toward a peaceful resolution more complicated. This ongoing conflict continues to be a key issue in U.S.-Israel relations, especially under an administration that emphasizes human rights and diplomatic solutions. Despite these challenges, the strategic relationship between the U.S. and Israel remains a crucial part of American foreign policy in the Middle East. Issues like defense cooperation, intelligence sharing, and counterterrorism efforts highlight the mutual benefits of this alliance. Netanyahu's visit will likely emphasize these aspects, even as both sides navigate their complex domestic and international political situations.

President Biden has six months left in office. He might spend more time on foreign policy, something he is passionate about from his time in Congress and as head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

With fewer campaign and domestic issues to deal with, Biden might focus on strengthening his foreign policy legacy. This leadership change in one of the US's main political parties comes at a hectic time for US foreign policy in the Middle East. The recent Houthis drone attack on Tel Aviv and Israel's response in Yemen show that events continue even when US politics are focused inward. US military and diplomatic efforts in the Middle East are still active due to ongoing issues in the region. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit to Washington this week, including a meeting with the Biden administration and a speech to Congress, will highlight the Middle East again. The context of his 2024 visit is different from his 2015 visit when US policy was more focused on the Middle East, such as with Iran nuclear talks and the fight against ISIS. Netanyahu may get a warmer reception from Republicans than Democrats, but unlike the surprising news about Israel-Hamas, Lebanon, or Iran, his visit might not get as much attention as in 2015. Ahead of Netanyahu's visit, Secretary of State Antony Blinken emphasized two key Middle East policies at the Aspen Security Forum. First, he highlighted the priority of achieving a cease-fire and hostage release deal in the Israel-Hamas conflict, which the US has been working on with Qatar and Egypt. Blinken said they are close to a deal. A successful Netanyahu visit would involve finalizing this deal and outlining a plan for Gaza, Israel, and Palestinians. Blinken reiterated the US goal of a two-state solution as a strong response to Iran and Hamas, despite Israel's parliament rejecting this idea. Secondly, Blinken stressed that the US is committed to preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. He mentioned that Iran could be weeks away from having enough material for a nuclear bomb, a critical point. Blinken's statements about a two-state solution and stopping Iran from getting a nuclear bomb show the US's need to focus on these goals, even with other pressing issues.

### Power Firms' Billion-Dollar Boom via Political Influence



Amjad Rana

The issue of inflated electricity bills due to the misuse of pro-rata billing practices and the involvement of major stakeholders in power companies who have significant political influence. Many of these stakeholders, often sitting in legislative assemblies, have the power to influence policies and regulations that govern the energy sector. When major shareholders or executives of power companies hold political office, there is a potential conflict of interest. Their dual roles can influence regulatory decisions, potentially undermining strict enforcement of consumer protection regulations. These political figures can lobby for lenient policies or regulations that favor power companies, which might lead to lax enforcement of standards meant to protect consumers from unfair billing practices. The investigation by the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) found that millions of consumers in Pakistan received inflated electricity bills between April and June. This occurred because these consumers lost their entitlement to subsidized rates and slab benefits, leading to higher charges. The report, based on data from the Power Information Technology Company (PITC), revealed that the practice of pro-rata billing had been expanded beyond its original intent. Instead of only applying to billing periods exceeding 30 days, pro-rata (in proportion) adjustments were also being applied to periods shorter than 30 days. This adjustment led to a significant number of consumers being reclassified from "protected" to "unprotected" categories, from lifeline to non-lifeline, and from lower to higher tariff slabs, resulting in inflated bills. All power companies, including Karachi Electric, implemented these pro-rata adjustments. The adjustments scaled up readings taken for periods under 30 days to a standard 30-31-day period using pro-rata calculations. Consequently, many consumers faced higher bills due to these adjustments for shorter billing periods. Nepra observed that this practice resulted in consumers losing their slab benefits and subsidized rates, leading to the overall increase in their electricity charges. The issues uncovered by Nepra and ensure fair and accurate billing for consumers. The involvement of political figures in power companies can erode public

trust in both the political and regulatory systems. Consumers may perceive that the interests of power companies are prioritized over their welfare. Strengthening consumer advocacy groups and ensuring they have a voice in regulatory processes can counterbalance the influence of political figures. These groups can pressure regulatory bodies to enforce consumer protection laws more effectively. While specific names and cases would depend on current political and corporate landscapes, historical instances show that political figures involved in the energy sector can significantly influence policy decisions. Detailed investigations and transparency reports are essential to highlight these conflicts. Policies favoring power companies over consumers, such as delayed implementation of metering reforms or lenient penalties for non-compliance, are often the result of such political influence. Ensure that Nepra operates independently of political influence. This might include legal provisions that safeguard its decision-making processes from political interference. Implement transparent regulatory processes where decisions and their rationales are made public. This can help mitigate undue political influence. Enforce strict disclosure requirements for politicians and public officials with stakes in power companies. Politicians with significant interests in power companies should recuse themselves from legislative discussions and decisions related to the energy sector to avoid conflicts of interest. Legislative measures to strengthen consumer rights in the energy sector, ensuring that consumers have robust avenues for redress in cases of unfair billing or service practices. Establish public accountability mechanisms where power companies and regulatory bodies report regularly on compliance with consumer protection standards. By addressing the political influence in the power sector and ensuring robust regulatory oversight, it is possible to create a fairer system that prioritizes consumer protection and promotes transparency and accountability. The issue of inflated electricity bills and the involvement of political figures in power companies, a comprehensive approach is needed. This involves regulatory reforms, consumer protection measures, and increased transparency. Enact laws to ensure Nepra operates independently, free from political interference. This includes secure funding mechanisms and independent appointment processes for its leadership. Require Nepra to publicly disclose its decisions and the reasoning behind them to enhance transparency and accountability. Politicians and

public officials to disclose their financial interests in power companies. These declarations should be publicly accessible. Conduct regular audits of these disclosures to ensure compliance and identify potential conflicts of interest. Implement policies requiring politicians with significant interests in power companies to recuse themselves from legislative decisions affecting the energy sector. Establish enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with recusal policies, including penalties for non-compliance. Pass laws that explicitly protect consumer rights in the energy sector, ensuring consumers have access to fair billing practices and redress mechanisms. Support and fund consumer advocacy groups to represent consumer interests and pressure regulatory bodies for better enforcement of consumer protection laws. Require power companies and regulatory bodies to report regularly on compliance with consumer protection standards. These reports should be publicly accessible. Establish a robust mechanism for consumers to provide feedback and report issues directly to regulatory bodies. Power companies must correct inflated bills issued during April-June 2024 based on actual meter readings, not projected usage. Consumers who couldn't pay the inflated bills should not be charged LPS. Those who paid with LPS should be compensated. Power companies should immediately replace all defective meters to prevent reliance on average billing. Ensure compliance with the Consumer Service Manual for accurate meter readings and billing practices. Conduct regular audits of power companies to ensure compliance with regulatory standards and consumer protection laws. Establish an independent oversight body to monitor regulatory compliance and investigate violations. Launch campaigns to educate consumers about their rights and proper billing practices. Develop robust customer support systems to address billing complaints and resolve issues promptly. Enact comprehensive energy sector reforms to address systemic issues and ensure fair practices. Involve all stakeholders, including consumer groups, in the legislative process to ensure balanced and fair policies. Create an online portal where all regulatory decisions, audits, and reports are publicly accessible. Hold public hearings on major regulatory decisions to ensure public participation and transparency. By implementing these solutions, the government and regulatory bodies can ensure fair and accurate billing, protect consumer rights, and mitigate the influence of political figures in the power sector.

### APJA Delegation Visits Korean Embassy to Foster Media Collaboration and Strengthen Bilateral Ties

Soon Times Correspondent Islamabad

A six-member delegation from the All Pakistan Journalist Association (APJA) was warmly welcomed at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Islamabad by Ambassador Park Kijun. The visit aimed to explore and enhance media collaboration to promote Pak-Korea relations, cultural exchange, and economic cooperation. The APJA members comprised Iffat Rauf - Vice President, Abid Chaudhry - Secretary General, Wasif Khan - Joint Secretary, Basharat Ali - President Punjab, and Adnan Hameed - Information Secretary. During the meeting, APJA Secretary General Abid Chaudhry shared his professional experiences in Seoul, highlighting the potential for future collaborations with the Korean Embassy. He emphasized APJA's commitment to strengthen bilateral ties and noted the successful dinner reception hosted in 2023 in honor of a Korean business



delegation at Shahi Qila, Lahore. Abid expressed enthusiasm for welcoming more Korean business leaders to Pakistan in the future. CNN Urdu's South Korea correspondent, Irfan Ghafoor, also joined via video call and conversed with Ambassador Park Kijun in Korean, which was greatly appreciated. The meeting was attended by the Cultural Counselor and the Public Diplomacy Incharge from the Korean Embassy. Traditional and elaborate Korean dishes were served to the APJA members. Vice President APJA Iffat Rauf introduced the APJA team to Ambassador Park and expressed gratitude for the hospitality extended during the lunch

reception. Ambassador Park Kijun commended the APJA members' media in fostering bilateral relations and shared his personal experiences of living and traveling in Pakistan. He assured the APJA members of his support in promoting cultural activities through media platforms. The ambassador also announced the Korean Embassy's upcoming mega events in Islamabad, scheduled for October 2024. These events will feature performances by renowned Korean artists and musicians at Liaquat Gymnasium and will be open to the public, aiming to attract large audiences and provide a vibrant cultural exchange experience. He further informed the delegation that the Embassy of the Republic of Korea is going to organize "2024 Korea Week" from 22nd October to 27th October 2024.



## Fazlur Rehman deplors lacklustre response to India's illegal act

Soon Times Correspondent  
DHIRKOT  
amiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) head Maulana Fazlur Rehman said on Monday that India by terminating the special status of Kashmir made a wrong decision and the rulers of Pakistan remained silent.  
He said the people of Pakistan were with the Kashmiris and victory in the Kashmir movement would be the fate of the freedom fighters.  
The JUI chief said the Kashmiris had a history. "Freedom movements do not reach their destination in months and years," he said. Maulana Fazl said "nations having perseverance and high determination reach their destination. Kashmiris are courageous as well as an oppressed nation."  
More to read: Pakistan observes Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir today with pledge to support the oppressed  
The war of independence was fought in the



subcontinent for more than 200 years, Fazl said. "The idea of freedom reaches from one generation to another."  
He said the land of the Palestinians could not be bought. The British allowed the Jews to build settlements there under a fabricated agreement in 1917.  
He said the resolution for the establishment of Pakistan was approved in Lahore in 1940. In the same resolution, it was also said that the Jewish settlements on the land of Palestine were illegal.

## Rallies & Seminars Observed In Connection With Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir

Soon Times Correspondent  
Sargodha:  
On the occasion of Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir seminars and rallies were organized across the country against the atrocities committed by the fascist government of India on Kashmiris for five years. A seminar and rally was organized in Sargodha under the chairmanship of Commissioner Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti. DC Captain Retired Aurangzeb Haider Khan, SP Investigation Farhan Ahmed, SP Headquarters Ziaullah Khan, Dr. Prof. Haroon Ur Rashid Tabassum and others participated in the seminar. The rally started from Arts Council Complex and ended at DPO Chowk. The participants of the rally carried Pakistani and Kashmiri flags, banners and posters on which protest slogans against the Indian government were written. Speaking at the seminar held at the Arts Council Complex, Commissioner Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti said that the international community should take immediate notice of Indian atrocities. Modi government

has illegally made Occupied Kashmir a part of India. DC Captain Retired Aurangzeb Haider Khan said that the Kashmir issue should be resolved by implementing the resolutions of the United Nations. Kashmiris have made immense sacrifices for freedom. Saplings were also planted in connection with the plantation campaign in the premises of the Arts Council Complex. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner also inaugurated a photo exhibition against Indian atrocities on Kashmiris organized by the Arts Council. Organized by the district administration Mianwali, a grand rally was organized to express solidarity with the Kashmiri people, which was led by Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Salman Ahmed Lone. The rally started from GPO Chowk and ended at Jahaz Chowk. Deputy Director Social Welfare Khizr Hayat Khan, Deputy Director Agriculture Extension Malik Gulam HUR, CEO Education Malik Tariq Abbas and others participated in the rally. The participants of the walk strongly condemned India's usurpation of Kashmir. ADCG said that the special status of Kashmir was abolished on

August 5, 2019. Denying freedom is not less than a big terrorism. Pakistani people will continue to support Kashmiris. Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir Rally was also organized in Nowshera Soon Valley which was led by Assistant Commissioner Irfan Martin. SHO Police Station Nowshera Malik Ijaz Ahmad, Deputy DO Education, former AEO Malik Shabbir Awan and others participated in the rally. The rally started from Government Model High School and ended after observing a minute's silence at the AC office. AC Irfan Martin said that India should withdraw the illegal measures and end the oppressive laws. Talking to the participants of Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir Rally in Bhera, Assistant Commissioner Mudassar Muntaz Haral said that despite all its tactics, India could not suppress the voice of Kashmiris. It is the duty of the United Nations to ensure the implementation of its resolutions and give Kashmiris their right to self-determination. In the event held in Bhera Press Club registered in connection with the Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir, the United Nations was demanded to stop the Indian atrocities in Occupied Kashmir.



## CM Punjab Has Approved Construction & Repair of 09 Roads In Soon Valley: Shaker Bashir Awan

Soon Times Correspondent  
Nowshera Soon Sakesar:  
MNA Malik Shaker Bashir Awan of Constituency NA-87 while talking to journalists said that a few days ago during the meeting with Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz, he requested regarding the development works in Soon Sakesar Valley. Chief Minister Punjab has approved the construction and repair of 09 roads in Soon

Valley. He said that construction of roads from Nowshera to Sakesar and Nowshera to Kahwa, Jaba to Peel, Khatlughad post to Jambhwa and Khushab to Manara has also been approved. Work on it will be started very soon. The construction of the said roads will promote tourism in the Soon Valley and provide transportation facilities for the landowners to transport their agricultural produce to other cities.

## PTI to hold power show in Swabi on Imran's one year detention

Soon Times Correspondent  
SWABI  
With one year in detention of its founder Imran Khan, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) will hold power show in Swabi to express solidarity with him. The arrangements for the public gathering have been finalised in Shah Mansoor Town, Swabi. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur will address the rally at 4pm,

for which lights have been installed and a huge stage has been set up. Pakhtunkhwa Mili Awami Party chief Mahmood Khan Achakzai and other PTI leaders including PTI chief Barrister Gohar, Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Omar Ayub Khan and Asad Qaiser will also address the participants of the long-awaited gathering.

## 31st December, 2024 Is The Last Date For Submission of Statements of Assets/Liabilities By Parliamentarians & Members of Provincial Assemblies For Financial Year 2023-2024

Soon Times Correspondent  
Islamabad:  
The Election Commission of Pakistan draws the attention of the Members of the Parliament and Provincial Assemblies to submit to the Election Commission by 31st December, 2024, yearly Statements of Assets and Liabilities including their spouse and dependent children as on the preceding thirtieth day of June on Form B for the financial year 2023-24, being a mandatory requirement under Section 137 of the Elections Act, 2017, which is reproduced below:- "137. Submission of statement of

assets and liabilities— (1) Every Member of an Assembly and Senate shall submit to the Commission, on or before 31st December each year, a copy of his statement of assets and liabilities including assets and liabilities of his spouse and dependent children as on the preceding thirtieth day of June on Form B. (2) The Commission, on the first day of January each year through a press release, shall publish the names of Members who failed to submit the requisite statement of assets and liabilities within the period specified under sub-section (1).

(3) The Commission shall, on the sixteenth day of January, by an order suspend the membership of a Member of an Assembly and Senate who fails to submit the statement of assets and liabilities by the fifteenth day of January and such Member shall cease to function till he files the statement of assets and liabilities. (4) Where a Member submits the statement of assets and liabilities under this section which is found to be false in material particulars, he may, within one hundred and twenty days from the date submission of the statement, be proceeded

against for committing the offence of corrupt practice." 2. The prescribed Form-B along with instructions / guidelines prepared in this regard can be obtained free of cost from the Election Commission Secretariat, Islamabad, offices of Provincial Election Commissioners of respective Province, Senate Secretariat, National Assembly Secretariat and Secretariat of concerned Provincial Assemblies. Moreover, Form-B can also be downloaded from the ECP's Website i.e. [www.ecp.gov.pk](http://www.ecp.gov.pk).

## Literary Grandees Condole Poetess Farishta-e-Yazdan On Her Father's Demise

Soon Times Correspondent  
Islamabad:  
The president of "Tameer-e-Nou Adabi Forum Pakistan", assistant and designer of daily "Mannaqib" Islamabad literary edition, poet and fiction writer Mrs. Farishta-e-Yazdan's father Syed Maqbool Hussain Shah has passed away. The deceased had been ill for some time. A few days ago the Liver of the deceased was transplanted in Nishtar Hospital Karachi. He was associated with the police department. Meanwhile, Senior Vice President of "Tameer-e-Nou Adabi Forum Pakistan" Syeda Sadia Amber Jilani, General Secretary Hafsa Faryal Baloch, Sughra Ameen Sahar, Tanavish Tani, Hafsa Butt Aden, Sana Fatima, Saleema Faryal Baloch and other officials and Secretariat Information of Pakistan Journals Council Syed Arif Saad Bukhari has expressed his heartfelt condolences to Farishta-e-Yazdan on this tragedy. They have prayed for the forgiveness of the deceased, his high status in Jannah and patience for the bereaved. They said that may Allah make the next steps of the deceased easy. (Ameen)



## India can't violate Kashmiris' rights by abrogating constitution: Ishaq Dar

Soon Times Correspondent  
ISLAMABAD  
Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Ishaq Dar reiterated India couldn't violate Kashmiris rights by abrogating the constitution.  
Addressing the rally, in connection with Youm-e-Istehsal at Constitution Avenue in Islamabad to register protest against Indian government's illegal action of August 5, 2019, revoking the special status of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Ishaq Dar stressed India could not succeed in its nefarious plans by abrogating Article 370 and 35A of its constitution aimed at changing the demography of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He said the incumbent government under the leadership of Prime Minister



Shehbaz Sharif was fighting the case of the people of Kashmir at all international Forums including the United Nations, Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization. He announced that OIC has appointed a representative on

Islamophobia. "We raised the issue of Gaza and Kashmir in a global forum and championed the cause. The actions taken by the Indian government five years ago was an open violation of the United Nations resolutions, the UN Charter and its constitution," he highlighted.  
Foreign minister insisted India should allow foreign observers to assess the atrocities being perpetrated by the Indian occupation forces in Kashmir, if India considered itself champion of democracy." Ishaq Dar said Pakistan will continue to extend its strong political, diplomatic and moral support to Kashmiri people till realisation of their inalienable right to self-determination as enshrined in the United Nations Security Council resolutions. He said India cannot suppress the freedom movement of Kashmiris and should announce holding a plebiscite. He stressed that Kashmiris have strong geographical and religious ties with Pakistan. Kashmir was a jugular vein of Pakistan and it will become part of Pakistan.

## 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 06th August 2024, From 08:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Islamabad Circle, PC, TDPC, MCM, Ghariali, Kohala, Sunny Bank Feeders. From 06:00 AM to 10:00 AM, Islamabad Circle, H-8/2, AG Mall (Commercial) Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Gulzar Quad, Gangal, Airport, Khanna Road, Commercial Centre, Chakra, Bajynal, ASTP, Qaziabad, Model Town,

Garhi Afghana, Pandparran, Veli, Gulshan Sehat, Sangiani, Shahullah Dutta, Paswal, PM Colony, Malhawali, Masood Shaheed, Muslim Town Feeders. From 07:00 AM to 11:00 AM, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Mehboob Shaheed, Park View, Pindi Board, Jail Park, Car Chowk, Morgah, Park View, Fuji Foundation, Mohra Nagyal, Wilayat Complex, X-Liar, AOWHS, Rahmatnabad-I Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Dhoda Feeder and surrounding areas will remain closed. IESCO management apologizes to its esteemed customers for the power outage. If the work is completed ahead of time, the power supply can be restored even before the scheduled time.

## Nigerian protests fizzle out after deadly police crackdown



**LAGOS**  
Protests in Nigeria over the soaring cost of living ebbed, with only a few hundred people turning out in major cities following a deadly crackdown by security forces since the demonstrations began last week. Hundreds of thousands of people have taken to the streets in the capital Abuja, Lagos and other big cities during the protests against economic hardship and crime, which started on Thursday and were meant to continue until Aug. 10. Amnesty International said at least 13 people have been killed in clashes with police since the start of the protests, which were held under the hashtag #10DaysOfRage. Police put the death toll at seven, saying some of the fatalities were caused by accidents and an explosive device.



## North Korea's Kim oversees delivery of new tactical ballistic missile launchers

**SEOUL**  
North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw the delivery of 250 new tactical ballistic missile launchers to front-line troops, state media KCNA which Seoul said could be used to threaten South Korea. The launchers have been described by state media as a modern tactical attack weapon personally designed by Kim and ready to be transferred to Korean People's Army units on the border with the South. North Korea said it test-fired a new tactical ballistic missile last month. "We believe (the missile launchers) are intended to be used in various ways,



## Gaza civil defence says Israel strike on schools Martyr 30

**These bring to at least 11 the number of schools in Gaza to be struck since July 6.**

**GAZASTRIP**  
Gaza's civil defence agency said an Israeli strike hit two schools in Gaza City, Martyr at least 30 people, while the military reported it had struck Hamas command centres. These bring to at least 11 the number of schools in Gaza to be struck since July 6, killing around 150 people, based on a tally of tolls previously given by officials in the Hamas-run territory. "The number of martyrs in the massacre of the Hassan Salameh and Al-Nasr schools' bombing has risen to 30. Dozens were also wounded," civil defence spokesman Mahamad Bassal. Bassal said most of the dead and wounded were women and children. He said the schools were housing Palestinians displaced from their homes in the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas militants. Israel's military confirmed the strike targeting the two schools. "The schools were used by Hamas' Al-Furqan Battalion as a hiding place for its terrorist operatives and as command centres," the military said in a statement. On Saturday, a similar Israeli strike hit another school compound in Gaza City, killing at least 17 people, according to the civil defence agency. The Israeli military has repeatedly accused Hamas of using civilian facilities as command and control centres or to hide their commanders and militants.

## Travellers rush to leave Lebanon amid spiking tensions, cancelled flights

**BEIRUT (Lebanon)**  
Travellers waited in long lines at Beirut airport, some after cutting summer holiday's short, as airlines have cancelled flights and fears have grown of all-out war between Israel and Hezbollah. "I'm not happy to leave. I wanted to spend the whole summer in Lebanon then go back to work" in France, said Joelle Steir from the crowded departures hall at Beirut airport. But "my flight was cancelled and I was forced to book another ticket today." "I cut my trip short so I could find a flight," she added.



Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah movement has traded near-daily fire with Israeli forces in support of ally Hamas since the Palestinian militant group's October 7 attack on Israel triggered the Gaza war.

## Kamala Harris To announce vice president pick before battleground states tour



**WASHINGTON**  
Web Desk.  
Vice President Kamala Harris is expected to announce her running mate by Tuesday after conducting interviews with top contenders at her Washington, D.C., residence over the weekend, two sources with knowledge of the matter said. Harris' decision could be announced at any time ahead of her first public appearance with the vice presidential nominee on Tuesday in Philadelphia, before they start a cross-country tour across several battleground states likely to decide the election, the sources said. Harris closed out her search by interviewing three top candidates - Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, U.S. Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona and Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro - at her Naval Observatory residence in Washington on Sunday, the sources said. The vice president met with Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg for 90 minutes on Friday and was also meeting candidates virtually, the sources said. Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear and Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker were the other candidates in contention for the job. Harris' search for a running mate began in earnest just two weeks ago, shortly after President Joe Biden withdrew from the race and endorsed her to replace him. The choice of a running mate was one of the most consequential decisions of Harris' political career, as she hastily pulled together a campaign to challenge Donald Trump in the Nov. 5 election. Harris' shortlist included all white men with a record of winning over rural, white or independent voters.

# Sports & Showbiz

## PCB announces comprehensive plan to improve domestic cricket

**Initiative will offer players a platform to experience rigours and pressures of int'l cricket at home, says PCB chief**



**Islamabad**  
Sports Reporter  
The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday announced its decision to launch Champions domestic tournaments to revolutionise the country's existing cricketing ecosystem and bridge the existing gap with international cricket. Speaking at a press conference at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium, PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi said that the board will organise the Champions One-Day Cup, T20 Cup and First-Class Cup which will bring together the most talented and consistent performers from domestic cricket with the board's centrally contracted players. The development comes as the board has been under scrutiny owing to the men's side's poor performances in mega events including the Asia Cup 2023 as well as the team's early exit from this year's T20 World Cup 2024 where the Green Shirts even failed to progress to the Super Eight stage of the tournament. The PCB chief, in recent times, has held meetings with former cricketers to discuss various matters, including domestic cricket, to improve the country's cricket infrastructure and ecosystem.

## Umar Butt responds to Janat Mirza's breakup comments



**LAHORE**  
Web Desk  
Pakistani TikTok star and actress Janat Mirza's ex-fiance, Umar Butt, has broken his silence following her recent comments about their breakup. In a recent podcast appearance, Janat Mirza discussed various topics, including the end of her relationship with Umar Butt. She mentioned that she was not prepared for the breakup but found solace in the fact that their relationship ended before marriage, as a separation after marriage would have been more painful. Mirza revealed that it took her two years to eventually part ways from Butt. "Despite enduring many things, my patience eventually wore thin," Mirza said. Following the viral clips of Janat Mirza's comments on social media, Umar Butt responded indirectly to her statements.

## Pakistan clinches bronze medal in Asian U18 Volleyball

**ISLAMABAD**  
Sports Desk  
The Pakistan team secured a bronze medal in the 15th Asian Men's U18 Volleyball Championship, at Bahrain. In a dominant display of skill and teamwork, Pakistan triumphed over Japan with a decisive 3-0 victory in the third-place match. The set scores were 25-13, 25-21, and 25-17, showcasing Pakistan's superior play. This impressive performance places Pakistan in the third position among 16 participating countries, including notable teams from Bahrain, Thailand, Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, Iran, China, Lebanon, the Philippines, India, Korea, and Kuwait. The victory not only brings a Bronze Medal but also marks a significant milestone for Pakistan volleyball, reflecting the growth and potential of the sport in the country. The success of the Pakistan U18 team is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the players, coaching staff, and the Pakistan Volleyball Federation (PVF). Under the expert guidance of Head Coach Saeed Ahmed Khan, the team has developed to a



formidable force in the Asian volleyball scene. The coaching staff's strategic planning and rigorous training regimen played a crucial role in honing the skills of the young athletes, enabling them to perform at their best on the international stage. The support and leadership of Ch Muhammad Yaqoob, Chairman of the PVF, have been instrumental in promoting volleyball in Pakistan. His vision and efforts have significantly increased the sport's popularity and participation across the region. This achievement is a reflection of the federation's commitment to developing volleyball talent and providing opportunities for young athletes to compete at the highest levels.



## Paris Olympics: Djokovic wins gold after beating Alcaraz in singles

**PARIS:**  
Novak Djokovic completed his career Golden Slam as the 37-year-old Serb fought off Spain's Carlos Alcaraz in a magnificent Olympic men's singles final battle at Roland Garros. After heartbreak in Beijing, London, Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo, Djokovic simply would not be denied the one title that had eluded him for so long, winning 7-6(5) 7-6(2) in front of an enthralled crowd on Court Philippe Chatrier. Top seed Djokovic delivered one of the finest performances of his career to deny Alcaraz and become only the fifth player to win all four singles Grand Slams and the Olympic title. Neither player took a backward step in a ferocious contest in which the first set alone lasted one hour 33 minutes as they wrestled for control in a series of spellbinding games. Alcaraz cracked first in the tiebreak and when another tiebreak was required to decide the second set, again Djokovic again found another gear, sealing victory with a stunning forehand winner down the line. Djokovic roared to the sky and after consoling Alcaraz at the net he then fell to his knees and sobbed in the centre of the court before climbing into the crowd to be swamped by his family, friends and team. While Djokovic, the oldest player to win the Olympic singles title since the sport returned to the Games in 1988, cried tears of joy, the 21-year-old Alcaraz was inconsolable after falling short of adding the gold medal to this year's French Open and Wimbledon crowns. Djokovic, who had lost three times in Olympic singles semi-finals and knew arriving in Paris this was his last realistic chance to fill the last remaining space in a trophy cabinet that contains a men's record 24 Grand Slam titles. And how he earned it - overturning his crushing loss to Alcaraz in last month's Wimbledon final to become the first man to win the Olympic singles without dropping a set. "It was an incredible fight and I had to play my best tennis," an emotional Djokovic told Eurosport before the medals ceremony as Serbian fans celebrated in the stands.