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US braces for nuclear strike in Ukraine

NEW YORK (Agencies): President Joe Biden's administration is preparing for a possible nuclear attack in Ukraine by wiring the country with a network of sensors that can identify the origin of any atomic strike, the New York Times has reported. The sensors would be able to detect the radiation from either a dirty bomb or a nuclear weapon, the outlet said on Friday, citing Washington's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). "In part, the goal is to make sure that if Russia detonates a radioactive weapon on Ukrainian soil, its atomic signature and Moscow's culpability could be verified," the newspaper said. The network of radiation sensors is being deployed "throughout the region" and would be able to "characterize the size, location and effects of any nuclear explosion," according to a NNSA unit called the Nuclear Energy Support Team (NEST). The unit is reportedly working with Ukraine to install the sensors, train workers, monitor data and warn of dangerous levels of radiation. NEST added that data from the sensors



would deny Russia "any opportunity to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine without attribution." The Times said that this "goes to the fog of nuclear war and how the United States could use the new system to pierce it." Russian President Vladimir Putin announced last month that tactical nuclear weapons would be placed in Belarus as early as this summer, in response to the UK's decision to provide Ukraine with depleted uranium munitions. He has denied having any intention of using nuclear weapons

in Ukraine, but he also has pledged to use "all means available to protect Russia." The Times claimed that US radiation sensors could help prevent Moscow from carrying out a "false-flag" nuclear attack, such as claiming that Kiev detonated a bomb on the battlefield to provoke more direct Western intervention in the conflict. The US Energy Department is spending around \$160 million this year on nuclear precautions in Ukraine and has requested a similar amount of funding for the purpose in 2024.

BBC chairman resigns after row over loan to Boris Johnson



LONDON (Agencies): The chairman of Britain's BBC on Friday resigned following a report that found he breached the government's code for public appointments over a loan. Richard Sharp was recommended for the job in fall 2020 because he assisted – to a "very limited extent" – then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson secure a loan, according to the report by barrister Adam Hepinstall. Sharp was investigated over his appointment to the iconic broadcaster's helm, when he was reported to have helped facilitate an £800,000 (\$995,000) loan guarantee for Johnson, weeks before he was appointed the BBC chair by Johnson. The report also told how Sharp communicated to Johnson that he wanted to apply for the BBC chairman role in November 2020 but that Sharp would not be independent of the prime minister if he was appointed. BBC Director-General Tim Davie thanked Sharp for his service to the BBC and the "drive and intellect" he brought: "Working with him over the last two years has been rewarding and Richard has made a significant contribution to the transformation of and success of the BBC."

Barker to head US Army electronic warfare office

WASHINGTON (Agencies): A U.S. Army shop for everything electronic warfare and battlefield situational awareness is getting a new leader. Brig. Gen. Ed Barker was named the new boss of the Program Executive Office for Intelligence, Electronic Warfare and Sensors, or PEO IEW&S, according to an announcement from the Pentagon. Barker has served as the office's deputy since July 2021. He will succeed Mark Kitz, who has held the job as the program executive officer since May 2021. The announcement made no mention of Kitz's next move. The transition is expected to take place "sometime this summer," a PEO IEW&S spokesperson said.

Nation stands behind armed forces to defeat anti-Pakistan forces: PM



RISALPUR (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said the whole nation stood behind its armed forces like a solid rock and it would continue to do so in future to defeat the evil designs of anti-Pakistan forces. "This mutual bond of love, devotion and abiding reverence has remained unbroken. I have an unwavering belief that our armed forces will always live up to the expectations of the people in future as well," he said in his address at the passing out parade of cadets at the Pakistan Air Force's Asghar Khan Academy here. The prime minister congratulated the graduating cadets, their parents and the faculty on the most memorable moments of their lives. PM Shehbaz said over the last two decades the nation had been tested by a combination of challenges such as terrorism, extremism and militancy. "The manner in which our armed forces, including the air force, police and intelligence community have risen to the challenges and neutralized the threats to our national security is simply outstanding." He lauded the PAF leadership for making the Pakistan Air Force a truly professional, progressive and high-tech organization. He recalled the recent example of the PAF's true professionalism when it gave a befitting and determined response to the Indian aggression in February 2019. "The whole world saw how our brave sons humiliated the Indian Air Force with show of exceptional skill and expertise," he added. With respect to the economic challenges, the prime minister said the global economic crisis adversely affected all walks of life in the country. However, he vowed not to let the people be at the mercy of the disruptions in the global markets. The prime minister said Pakistan was a peace-loving nation and wished to maintain friendly ties with all countries, especially neighbours, however, "our desire for peace must not be misunderstood as weakness". Earlier, the prime minister reviewed the parade and presented awards to cadets. Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, and other civil and military officials were also present

on the occasion. According to a press release of Pakistan Air Force, it was the graduation ceremony of 147th GD (P), 93rd Engineering, 103rd Air Defence, 24th Admin and Special Duties, 7th (Bravo) Logistics and 129th Combat Support Courses. Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu was also in presence. A total of 147 Aviation Cadets, and one Naval Cadet graduated during the ceremony. The chief guest awarded Branch insignias and trophies to the graduating cadets and distinction holders. The Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Trophy for the best performance in General Service Training was awarded to Aviation Cadet Wing Under Officer Ijlal Karim. The trophy for overall best performance in Combat Support Course was received by Aviation Cadet Hafiz Ali Hassan of Medical Branch. The Chief of the Air Staff Trophy for best performance in Admin and Special Duties Course was awarded to Aviation Cadet Faizan Saeed, whereas the Chief of the Air Staff Trophy for best performance in Air Defence was received by Aviation Cadet Muhammad Bilal Raza. The Chief of the Air Staff Trophy for best performance in Engineering discipline was awarded to Pakistan Navy Cadet Sergeant Imad-Ud-Din, while Chief of the Air Staff Best Pilot Trophy for outstanding performance in flying training was received by Aviation Cadet Muhammad Shirjeel ur Rehman. The Sword of Honour for overall best performance in College of Aeronautical Engineering was awarded to Aviation Cadet Wing Under Officer Muhammad Hassam Zafar, whereas the Sword of Honour for overall best performance in College of Flying Training was received by Aviation Cadet Sergeant Abdul Manan Hassan. The ceremony was followed by thrilling aerobatics and aerial displays. The event was marked by the first ever flypast on a graduation ceremony by the PAF's front-line fighter jets, including Mirage, J-10, F-16 and JF-17 aircraft. Afterwards, the PAF Academy's aerobatics team "Sherdils" captivated the spectators with high quality formation aerobatics display.

Meltdown: 2023 looking grim for Swiss glaciers



Geneva (AFP/APP): This year is already shaping up to be another bad one for glaciers in the Swiss Alps, with the snowpack covering them around 30 percent below the 10-year average, according to the scientist tracking their decline. Every year in April, when the snowpack reaches its peak, the Glacier Monitoring in Switzerland (GLAMOS) organisation surveys around 15 glaciers. "This year, the conditions are quite similar to 2022 which had record ice losses. Once again, we have very little snow," GLAMOS chief Matthias Huss told AFP. "It's not as dramatic in every region as it was in 2022, but we're still well below average," the glaciologist said, referring to snowpack cover. "There are even regions with a deficit of up to 50 percent" below the 10-year average for the depth of snowpack covering the surface of the glaciers. "The preconditions for the coming summer are therefore bad, as it stands. But we cannot say if we will once again have a record melt during the summer," as that will depend on the temperatures over the coming months. The snowpack is doubly important for glaciers because the fresh snowfall not only feeds them but also provides them with a protective layer in the summer sunshine. For the first time this year, snowpack measurements were made on a glacier located at around 4,100 metres (13,450 feet) above sea level. "We had zero centimetres of snow depth. There was really nothing there at all. It was surprising," said Huss. The situation is "serious for the glaciers when even at 4,000 metres there is no snow towards the end of winter". According

to the UN's World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the past eight years have been the warmest on record and the average temperature of the planet in 2022 was 1.15 degrees Celsius warmer than the 1850-1900 average. In the European Alps, glaciers melted to a record degree last year due to low winter snowfall, Saharan dust settling on the surface in March and then heatwaves between May and early September. The situation was particularly dramatic in Switzerland, with the glaciers having lost 6.2 percent of their ice volume. Huss is struck by how quickly the glaciers are shrinking. "2022 was an absolute record. And what strikes me is that now, at the end of winter, we once again have a situation that is very particular," he said. The WMO says the game is already up for glaciers and there is no way to stop them melting further unless a way is found to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The disappearance of glaciers is "symbolic of climate change", said Huss. He noted the effects they will have on humans in the short term – ranging from natural hazards, loss of tourism – and in the longer term, as they supply rivers and hydroelectric power plants. Much of the water that flows into the Rhine and the Rhone, two of Europe's major rivers, comes from the Alpine glaciers. But Huss has not lost all hope. "If we manage to limit global warming to 1.5C or 2C, we could still save about a third of the volume of the Alpine glaciers," he said. "On the other hand, if climate change exceeds 4C, there will be an almost total loss of glaciers by around 2100."

Iran seizes oil tanker in Gulf, U.S. Navy

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Iran seized a Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman in international waters on Thursday, the U.S. Navy said, the latest in a series of seizures or attacks on commercial vessels in sensitive Gulf waters since 2019. Iran's army said it had seized a Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman after it collided with an Iranian boat, injuring several crewmen, Iranian state media reported. "Two members of the boat's crew are missing and several were injured due to the collision of the ship with the boat," an army statement said. The U.S. Navy identified the vessel as the Advantage Sweet. According to Refinitiv ship tracking data, it is a Suezmax crude

tanker that had been chartered by oil major Chevron (CVX.N) and had last docked in Kuwait. Chevron said it is aware of the situation involving the Advantage Sweet and is "in contact with the vessel operator with the hope of resolving this situation as soon as possible," a spokesperson said. The vessel's destination was listed as the U.S. Gulf of Mexico port of Houston, ship tracking data showed. Its manager is listed as Genel Denizcilik Nakliyatı AS. The Turkey-based company did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator said it was aware of the situation and was in communication with the vessel's owner/operator but declined to comment further.

Russia sacks deputy defence minister sanctioned by West over Mariupol - report

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russian Colonel General Mikhail Mizintsev, who was sanctioned by the West and dubbed the "Butcher of Mariupol" for his role in the Ukraine war, has been removed as deputy defence minister, according to a military blogger and a leading news website. Mizintsev orchestrated the siege of the Ukrainian city of Mariupol in the early months of the war last year. In September, he was appointed deputy defence minister in charge of logistics and supplies. Imposing sanctions against Mizintsev last June, the European Union referred to him as the Butcher of Mariupol and said he was responsi-

ble for the "inhuman" siege of the shattered Ukrainian city, which Russia says it is now rebuilding. His departure was reported by a Russian military blogger, Alexander Sladkov, and by the RBC news site. Neither offered an explanation for why he had apparently been removed. The defence ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment, while the Kremlin has said it cannot say anything on the subject and has referred questions on the matter to the defence ministry. Russia has seized more than a sixth of Ukraine's territory, but has sustained heavy losses in the course of the 14-month war.

About Khyber Mail The Khyber mail was first published in Peshawar, Pakistan in 1932. A newspaper in English by the eminent journalist Sheikh Sana Ullah. From 1932 to 1989 it has survived as leading English newspaper in the region by the sons of Sana Ullah i.e. Sheikh Zaka Ullah, Sheikh Inayat Ullah and Sheikh Saleem Ullah. The publication was shut down in 1989 due to various reasons. The current owner Rizwan Inayat son of Sheikh Inayat Ullah and grandson of Sheikh Sana Ullah, has restarted the family heritage but meeting with the requirement of the century, by giving the readers current happenings around the world with one touch anywhere any time and updating the reader to pace up with the world.

Managers of eight well known restaurants held over unhygienic conditions

PESHAWAR (APP): Following the directives of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shah Fahad the Assistant Commissioner (AC) Syeda Zainab Naqvi on Friday paid surprise visits to various renowned hotels and restaurants here and arrested eight managers over unhygienic conditions. An official communi-

cation issued here said that AC along with Deputy Director (DD) of Food Safety Authority, Asad Khan visited various restaurants in University Town, Phase-III Chowk, Arbab Road and Tehkal areas and inspected fast food shops, including Yasin Restaurant, Jalil Restaurant, Dum Pukh Food and Jamali Restaurant. She expressed annoyance over the poor hygienic conditions of the kitchen

and staff of the restaurants and hotels and ordered the arrest of managers. She issued warnings to several hotel and restaurants managers regarding the hygiene of the staff and the quality of food and drinking items. She urged the masses to dial the control room number 091-9211338 of the district administration in case of any complaint.

New spell of rain, thunderstorm predicted in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Met Office on Friday forecast a new spell of intermittent rain with dust, thunder and hailstorm for most parts of the province during the next 24 to 48 hours. It said that a westerly wave is affecting most parts of the country and is likely to persist till the first week of May, adding that the weather would remain partly cloudy over most districts of the province during the next 24 to 48 hours. Scattered thunderstorm-rain with wind-dust storms and hailstorm is likely to occur over Chitral, Lower

and Upper Dir, Swat, Buner, Shangla, Kohistan, Torghar, Battagram, Mansehra and Abbottabad. Isolated thunderstorm-rain with wind-dust storm and hailstorm is also likely to occur over Haripur, Swabi, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Charsadda, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, Hangu, Orakzai, Karak, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, Bannu, North and South Waziristan districts during the period. The weather remained partly cloudy in most districts of the province during the last 24 hours however thunderstorm-rain with

gusty winds occurred at isolated places in Abbottabad, Mansehra, Kohistan, Upper and Lower Dir, Swat, Bajaur, Risalpur, Khyber and Kurram districts. The chief amount of rainfall was recorded as; Saidu Sharif 26mm, Balakot 15, Timergara 07, Kakul 33, Pattan 20, Dir 05, Malamjabb 19 and Parachinar 01. The maximum temperature was recorded during the last 24 hours was Peshawar 33C, Parachinar 23, Bannu 34, Mardan 33, DI Khan 36, Chitral 25, Dir 26 and Malamjabba 17.

ANP also favours polls on same day,says Aqil Shah

PESHAWAR (APP): Senior ANP leader Syed Aqil Shah has said that their party is in favour of simultaneous elections in all federating units to bring political stability and curtail

expenses on polls. Talking to APP, he said that though elections should be held under any circumstances, holding separate elections at the provincial and national levels will cost additional expenses on it. “The completion of such an electoral process will take a period of one year,” he said adding that what is going on in the country is aimed to appease a particular individual and his political party. He said that the stance of ANP over elections is clear and it wants simultaneous and same-day polling across the country and will accept the win of any political party. He said that in the elections of 2018 injustice was committed with their party and Imran Khan and his political party were imposed on the country. He said that he himself was a candidate in a provincial assembly constituency, but the result was delayed and then a big turn-out was shown in favour of his opponent candidate. Syed Aqil Shah, who is also a former provincial minister, said that all institutions should work with-

in the ambit of their constitutional parameters. He said that under the constitution, the military is responsible for the defense of the country while the dispensation of cheap and speedy justice is the duty of the judiciary and parliament will have to make legislation for the country. He said that Pakistan Army is also not available for the provision of security during the election, as it is engaged in combating terrorism inside the country and also defending the frontiers of the state. He said that no other security force is capable to perform such a specialized duty. Furthermore, he said that the budget for the current financial year has already been allocated, which could not be diverted to other matters. He held the PTI chairman Imran Khan responsible for the prevailing political turmoil in the country and said that instead of national interest, the politics of Imran Khan is revolving around his personal interests and is bent on pushing the whole country towards anarchy for that purpose.

BKTSF hands over cheque of Rs.200,000 to PPC

PESHAWAR (APP): Bacha Khan Trust Sports Foundation (BKTSF) here on Friday handed over a cheque of Rs.200, 000 to Peshawar Press Club (PPC). The amount was announced by Awami National Party Provincial President, Aimal Wali Khan during a sports gala that was organized by PPC during Ramazan. The cheque was handed over to

President PPC, Arshad Aziz Malik by Senior Executive Officer Bacha Khan Trust, Syed Masoom Shah. Speaking on the occasion, Syed Masoom Shah also said that ANP believes in freedom of expression and added that the journalist fraternity would be provided support and needed help in the protection of their rights.

Four killed due to exchange of firing among rival groups in Bara

PESHAWAR (APP): Four persons were killed and two received critical wounds due to an exchange of firing between two rival groups in the Sarband area of Bara on the outskirts of Peshawar here on Friday. According to details, two rival groups came across each other in the Sarband area

and started an exchange of firing from both sides. The intense cross-firing resulted in the killing of four persons, two from both sites while two were injured and were shifted to hospital. The identity of the deceased is not ascertained yet. Police have reached the site and started an investigation.

Governor lays foundation stone of indoor Gymnasium in UoP

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Friday laid the foundation stone of University of Peshawar Volleyball Academy and sports Resource Center, costing Rs. 140 million, at the University of Peshawar Campus here. Along with foundation stone of the multi-purpose international standard indoor gymnasium and resource center at the lawn of the Directorate of Sports, UoP, he also inaugurated the KP Inter-Region Female and Male Volleyball League under the Prime Minister Talent Hunt Program involving five teams each of female and male athletes from various regions including Swat, Mardan, Hazara, Bannu, and Peshawar. After the Inter-Region, two male and female teams each would be selected for the National League, to be organized under Higher Education Commission either in Lahore or Karachi. The governor, in his speech, appreciated the UoP, University of Hazara for holding the Volleyball League Championship and assured them of extending full cooperation to athletes

who are striving hard to make Pakistan shine in the world. He also announced a Mega Sports Gala, to be organized in the province under the auspices of HEC, which will give the players an opportunity to showcase their hidden skills. Haji Ghulam Ali said that the completion of the international-standard gymnasium would not only help provide a space for volleyball players but also be useful in conducting other indoor games. He said that the volleyball academy would provide higher education opportunities for the players. “It is a great gift that will prove to be useful for the bright future of volleyball and its players.” Haji Ghulam Ali said, “We have to keep our vision big and high in every field of life and whatever plan we have, we should try to make it standard, brilliant and sustainable in every aspect.” He also assured of issuing instructions for the immediate completion of the four glass squash court in Peshawar University, which has been pending for a long time, and to construct a swimming pool.

Eight officers of KP police transferred

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General of Police (IGP) has ordered transfer and posting of eight officers of the police force in public interest and with immediate effect. A notification issued here said that Muzamil Shah PSP (BS-18) who was awaiting posting at CPO has been posted as SP Investigation Mansehra. Similarly, Tajamul Khan Additional SP DI Khan (BS-18) has been posted to CPO Peshawar office. Acting SP Upper Swat, DSP Khan Khel (BS-17) has been transferred and posted as Acting SP Investigation Swabi in his own

pay and scale. DSP Traffic Highway Shazia Shahid has been transferred and posted as Acting SP Traffic CCP Peshawar. SDPO Kohistan Dir Upper Ghulam Sadiq has been transferred and posted as Acting SP Upper Swat. DSP Fazl Wahid has been posted as Acting SP Ababeel Squad Peshawar, DSP DI Khan region Iftikhar Ali Shah has been posted as Acting Additional SP DI Khan in his own pay scale and Acting SP Investigation Mansehra Janas Khan has been transferred and posted to the disposal of Additional IGP CTD KP as Acting SP.

Prof Dr Khalid Saeed appointed as Dean Faculty of Sciences BKU

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Chancellor Bacha Khan University (BKU) Charsadda has appointed Prof Dr Khalid Saeed as Dean, Faculty of Sciences of the varsity. A notification issued here by the

Higher education Department of KP said that the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister KP and under Article 105 of the Constitution of Pakistan has appointed Dr Khalid as Dean for three years with immediate effect.

PPP plans workers’ convention for elections

PESHAWAR (APP): The Pakistan Peoples Party, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter on Friday held a meeting to discuss the provincial political situation, organizational issues, and party mobilization. Minister of State Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha chaired the meeting, wherein he instructed officials and workers to prepare for the

upcoming elections and emphasized the party’s commitment to fighting for the rights of oppressed classes. The party plans to organize a workers’ convention and mobilize workers in all Constituencies of the Peshawar district. Party tickets would be issued in consultation with the workers, the sources said.

Dist Admin finalises contingency plan to mitigate rain, thunderstorm damages

DIR LOWER (APP): In the wake of rain with dust and thunderstorm alert by the Met Office and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), the district administration on Friday finalised a contingency plan to mitigate the possible losses. According to the office of the Deputy Commissioner, the district administration while following the guidelines received from NDMA and PDMA activated all the line departments to identify the vulnerable areas and put in place precautionary measures. A control room has

been established at the DC office for prompt response to any emergency situation round- the clock. The deputy commissioner directed all the line departments to remain vigilant and respond promptly 24/7 to any emergency situation during rain-dust/ thunderstorms in the district till May 05. He also issued necessary directives to ADC Relief, TMOs, Rescue 1122, Irrigation, C&W, and PKHA departments for taking all precautionary measures well before time to avert any loss of life or damage to property.

DC imposes section 144 for SSC annual examination

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Commissioner North Waziristan district Rehan Gul Khattak on Friday imposed section 144 in the district for a period of 21-day due to SSC annual examination in the district. A notification issued here said that the section 144 has been imposed to ensure conduct of fair and transparent examination, curb the trend of cheating and maintain law and order in the district. It said that during the period all kinds of pub-

lic gathering within 200 metres of examination halls would be banned while printing, publication and sale of subject pocket guides, operation of photocopying machines within 300 metres of examination halls during the examination hours and use of phone and other communication gadgets within 300 metres of the examination centres would be restricted. It wanted that any person violating the order shall be punished under section 188 PPC.

15-day polio vaccination drive starts in Dir Payan

DIR (APP): A 15-day long anti-polio vaccination campaign started here on Friday in six union councils wherein as many as 65,170 children under the age of five would be immunised against the crippling disease. Additional Deputy Commissioner General Abdul Wali Khan presiding over a meeting here directed the health department and district officers to ensure the vaccination of each and every child during the drive. It was informed on the occasion that 241

teams of polio workers have been constituted to administer polio drops to the vulnerable children in six union councils of the district including Miskini, Durangal, Mian Kalay, Mayar, Timergara and Chakdara. The ADC directed police to provide foolproof security to polio teams to avert any untoward incident during the drive and also directed Assistant Commissioners Adenzai, Timergara and Samarbagh to personally monitor the polio campaign.

Journalists demand appointment of information cadre officer

PESHAWAR (APP): The journalist community and President of Peshawar Press Club here Friday demanded appointment of an Information cadre officer as Director General Information Department. The journalists lodged a protest in front of caretaker Information Minister Mian Feròz Jamal Shah Kakakhel against the appointment of a cadre officer

as DG Information. They demanded the Provincial Government review its decision and appoint an Information cadre officer with immediate effect. The provincial government has appointed an officer of Revenue Department Fazal Hussain after the retirement of DG Information Imdadullah who retired in February this year.

Adviser to KP CM on Health resigns

PESHAWAR (APP): The Adviser to the caretaker Chief Minister for Health, Dr Abid Jamil here Friday tendered resignation due to personal and family issues. He also cited a lack of time due to his cancer patients. He thanked the Chief Minister for reposing confidence in him, officials confirmed.



President calls for increased cooperation with Romania

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday called for boosting cooperation with Romania in all areas of mutual interest. In his meeting with Ambassador of Romania Nicolae Goia, the president said Romania was an important country in Eastern Europe and Pakistan desired to deepen its relationship with it in the fields of trade and economy. He thanked the Romanian government



for its support to Pakistan in granting and continuation of GSP plus status.

Both sides underscored the need for improving economic relations and undertaking regular exchanges and interactions at the highest levels to further cement bilateral ties. The Romanian ambassador conveyed gratitude on behalf of the President of Romania for the support provided by Pakistan in the evacuation of the Romanian nationals from Afghanistan during August and September 2021.

Induction of newly trained officers in PAF 'historic moment': Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Friday that the induction of newly trained officers into the ranks of the Shaheens of the Pakistan Air Force, guarding the air boundaries of Pakistan, was a beau-

tiful step to transfer the responsibility of homeland defense to the next generation. In a tweet, she said that Risalpur Academy was a proud historical institution. She also congratulated the passing out officers, their parents and teachers and Pakistan.

Balochistan Parliamentarians meet Sanjrani to discuss province development

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Parliamentarians from Balochistan met with Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at the Parliament House to discuss the development of the province in social, political, and economic spheres. The group, which included Members National Assembly (MNAs), Senators, and Senior Parliamentarians such as Sardar Akhtar Mengal, Aslam Bhootani, and Khalid Magsi, exchanged ideas and suggestions on how to overcome the challenges facing the region. They emphasized the importance of investing in infrastructure, education,

and healthcare, as well as promoting local industries and maximizing the use of the province's natural resources. The meeting was productive and aimed to improve the overall state of Balochistan's progress. Senate, Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, appreciated the concerns and suggestions of the parliamentarians and assured them of his full support in promoting the development of Balochistan Province. He emphasized the importance of unity and collaboration among all stakeholders to overcome the challenges facing the province.

ECC allows formation of committee for Roosevelt Hotel re-opening

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Friday approved the recommendations of the Ministry of Aviation to form a committee to negotiate with the New York City government and the Roosevelt Hotel Union for the re-opening of the hotel. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar presided over the ECC meeting, a Finance Ministry press release said. Ministry of Aviation submitted a summary of challenges and re-opening of Roosevelt Hotel, New York, and informed that PIA Investment Limited (PIA-IL) management

has got an opportunity offered by the New York City government to utilize the Hotel (1,025 rooms) over a period of three years for migrant business at the rate of US\$ 200 per room per day. After a detailed discussion, the ECC approved the formation of a four-member negotiating committee led by the Secretary Aviation Division to negotiate with the New York City Government and the Hotel Union. The ECC also allowed PIA-IL/ RHC to utilize the funds of \$ 1.145 million from the available balance as bridge financing to commence the re-opening work at the Hotel.

Goggle program to enhance teaching, learning concludes

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): A pilot programme by Google aimed at enhancing teaching and learning outcomes by leveraging the company's tools and technology, including Chromebooks, has concluded successfully in Pakistan. To mark the successful completion of the program, a Chromebook distribution ceremony was held where over 150 Chromebooks were distributed to students and teachers by the Secretary of Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Waseem Ajmal Chaudhary. Chromebooks are a new type of computer designed to help get things done faster and easi-

er. They run ChromeOS, an operating system that has cloud storage, the best of Google built-in, and multiple layers of security. They are easy to carry, have great battery life, and are less prone to viruses than other types of computers. The program was implemented by Tech Valley, a Google for Education Country Partner, and Panl in collaboration with Google for Education, the Federal Ministry of Education and Professional Training, the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) as a research partner, and CTL as a technology partner to equip classrooms with Chromebooks.

Gov't disburses Rs 1.22 trn agriculture loan under PM Kissan Package

ISLAMABAD (APP): Recognizing the importance of the agriculture sector, the government of Pakistan led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has initiated several measures to support and promote the farmers and agriculture sector in the country. These measures include financial assistance, infrastructure development, subsidy on electricity, and the provision of agriculture machinery and inputs such as seeds and fertilizers. To address the needs of flood-affected farmers in the country, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a historic relief package worth Rs 1.8 trillion in October 2022, for benefiting the poor farmers, especially those who sustained damages and loss to cultivated land of cotton and sugarcane during the devastating floods last year. The Rs 1.8 trillion special Kissan Package was formally announced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on October 31, 2022 aimed at promoting the agriculture sector and providing farmers, particularly in flood-hit areas free seeds, inexpensive loans and bringing down prices of fertilizers

and electricity for tubewells. Announcing the agriculture package, the prime minister said the economic progress of Pakistan was dependent on the agriculture sector and Rs 1800 billion spending on agriculture would be an increase of Rs 400 billion as compared to the last year. Under the package, the government allocated interest-free loans of Rs 10.6 billion for small farmers across the country while another Rs 8 billion would be given to the small farmers in the flood-affected areas. Likewise, for the first time in history, the Prime Minister Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme was also introduced under the package to engage youth in the agriculture sector to get maximum dividends for the young population, besides providing them employment opportunities in this sector. The agriculture loan is an important component of Prime Minister Kissan Package to revive Pakistan's agriculture sector, particularly restoring the agriculture of areas affected by catastrophic floods during monsoon season.

GCWUF cultivates wheat crop on experimental basis

FAISALABAD (APP): The Government College Women University Faisalabad (GCWUF) cultivated wheat crops on experimental basis over five acres at the new campus. Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Rubina Farooq did harvesting of the crop here on Friday. Pro Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Zil-e-Huma Nazli, Registrar Asif A Malik, Treasurer Ansar Mughal, head of Botany department Dr Abida Kausar and others were also present. She appreciated efforts of the horticulture department of the varsity and said that more land would be brought under wheat crop cultivation the next year. The VC also reviewed various ongoing uplift works at the new campus and issued directions to quarters concerned.

Pak-NZ matches: Three arrested for selling fake tickets

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police here on Friday claimed to have arrested three accused for selling fake tickets of Pak-New Zealand matches. According to a police spokesman, New Town police in an operation took action against those selling fake tickets of Pak-New Zealand matches and netted three suspects namely Asim Mehmood, Muhammad Umar and Muhammad Yousaf. The accused were also involved in black-marketing of the tickets of the matches.

IRSA releases 125,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 125,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 119,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1443.47 feet and was 45.47 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 30,400 cusecs while outflow as 40,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1119.90 feet, which was 69.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 42,000 cusecs and 38,000 cusecs respectively.

Rupee gains 08 paisas against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee gained 08 paisas against the Dollar in the interbank trading on Friday as it closed at Rs 283.83 against the previous day's closing of Rs 283.91. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of Dollars in the open market were recorded at Rs 286.6 and Rs 289.5, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs1.62 to close at Rs 311.98 against the last day's closing of Rs 313.60, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Russia and Pakistan commemorated in Islamabad

Islamabad (Adnan Hameed): On April 27, 2023, the Russian Embassy in Pakistan held a reception to celebrate the forthcoming 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Russia and Pakistan (May 1, 1948). The reception was attended by Ambassador of Russia to Pakistan H.E. Danila Ganich, Embassy staff, their family members, representatives of the diplomatic corps, politicians, social and political activists of Pakistan. Eminent guests included Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, President of the Centre for Pakistan and Gulf Studies Sehar Kamran, Honorary Consul General of Russia in Lahore Habib Ahmed and Honorary Consul

DC reviews census' progress in various ICT's UCs, Blocks

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon on Friday reviewed the progress of the census in various union councils (UCs) and blocks of the Federal capital. While presiding over a meeting here, he urged the ICT's residents to provide complete, correct and accurate information to the invigilators to make the census

process a success, said a press release. According to an ICT administration spokesman, the process of the census in ICT had almost been completed, adding that 873 invigilators were conducting the census in 1,783 blocks. The deputy commissioner directed the authorities concerned to complete the census by April 30, 2023, he added.

Nadia Hussain hails Faysal Qureshi's film 'Money Back Guarantee'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Lollywood sensation Nadia Hussain gave a huge shout-out to Faisal Qureshi's action comedy film 'Money Back Guarantee' calling it "An intelligent man's comedy". The latest buzz around town is Faisal Qureshi's directorial debut 'Money Back Guarantee' star cast include Fawad Khan, Hina Dilpazeer, Gohar Rasheed, Javed Sheikh, Mikhaal Zulfiqar, Kiran Malik, Adnan Jafar, Ayesha Omar alongside debut actors Wasim Akram and Shaniera Akram. From jam-packed cinemas to huge box office collections, the much-awaited film has managed to garner immense appreciation and applause from the attendees, critics and showbiz bigwigs. According to

the statement shared by 'Money Back Guarantee' official Instagram handle, "The film has become 'Pakistan's #1 movie of the year to grab 118 million views on all social platforms' Recognized as one of Pakistan's first supermodels, Nadia Hussain took to her official Instagram handle and posted a video while sharing her two cents on the much-talked-about film "I truly think the film is absolutely fantastic, I watched the film because of the script because I know how amazingly talented Faysal Qureshi is" While spilling the beans on the script, the diva stated "It is an intelligent man's comedy, one really needs to be tuned into the dialogues to understand the jokes".

Army assures nation of it's operational preparedness, combat worthiness: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Friday said the Pakistan Army assures the people of Pakistan that "we always took and will continue to take pride in our operational preparedness and utmost combat worthiness." In a news release here, the military's media wing brushed away all hearsay propagated against its operational preparedness, war equipment, and combat readiness and termed the statements of the former Army Chief being misreported and mentioned out of context. It said, "Recently,

there have been discussions in media on Pakistan Army's combat worthiness in view of the condition of certain weapon systems on its inventory. "To this end, it said, views of the former army chief on future threats to Pakistan, which he shared with media persons in an off-the-record interactive session, have been quoted out of context. Pakistan's Armed Forces always did and will continue to keep their weapons, equipment, and battle-hardened human resources ever ready for the defence of the motherland, the ISPR vowed.

Drive launched against unapproved LPG cylinders in public vehicles

FAISALABAD (APP): Traffic police in collaboration with the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) launched a drive against unapproved LPG cylinders fitted in public transport. Chief Traffic Officer Maqsood Ahmed Loone said on Friday that

installation of LPG cylinders in public vehicles had been prohibited and action would be taken against violators. He said joint teams comprising traffic wardens and staff of the RTA had been constituted which would take action against violators.

Renowned TV host, film star, poet Tariq Aziz remembered

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The birth anniversary of renowned Radio and Television host, film star, poet and writer Tariq Aziz was observed on Friday. Tariq Aziz was born in Jalandhar on April 28, 1936. After the partition, his family migrated to Pakistan and settled in Sahiwal. Tariq Aziz kicked off his career with Radio Pakistan in the 1960s and later became Pakistan's first television host. He became popular from his famous program Neelam Ghar which started in 1974 and

was later renamed as Tariq Aziz Show which continued for four decades. He appeared in a number of movies including Chiragh Kahan Roshni Kahan, Salgirah, Qasam Us Waqt Ki, Katari, Haar Gaya Insan and Insaniyat. He was awarded with Pride of Performance Award by the Government of Pakistan in 1994 for his services to the entertainment industry. Tariq Aziz passed away in Lahore on June 17, 2020, at the age of 84 due to cardiac arrest.

IESCO notifies 2-day power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday issued a 2-day power suspension programme for Saturday and Sunday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to an IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Saturday from 9:00 AM to

02:00 PM, Westridge, Rajahabad, Goltra, P&T Wani, Jhangi, Azharabad, Shams Colony, Quaid-e-Azam International, Zircon Heights, MFM, Dhok Chowdhury, NRC, Charing Cross, E ME Complex, Nogzi, Chahan, Chontra, Rajar, Chakri, SPD, SPF, Iqbal Town, Zia Masjid Feeders, On Sunday from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM Media 1 & 2, Swan Garden 1-, NPF 2- Feeders and surrounding areas.



General of Russia in Peshawar Muhammad Arsallah Khan. The Chief Guest of the reception was H.E. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs of Pakistan and Co-Chairman of the Russia-Pakistan Intergovernmental Commission. In his opening remarks the Russian Ambassador Danila Ganich said: The

arrangement to buy crude oil from Russia is a win win situation for Pakistan and Russia. Mr. Danila said, Since the 1990s, the volume of trade between Pakistan and Russia has increased from under \$100 million to \$500 million. "This trade agreement on oil was not possible unless it was advantageous for both countries."

President approves Code of Civil Procedure Amendment Bill, 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday gave assent to the Code of Civil Procedure Amendment

Bill, 2023. He approved the Bill in exercise of Article 75 of the constitution, the President House said.

700 kg of non-standard ghee, fines imposed

ATTOCK (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) Attock has conducted a grand operation against the sellers of substandard and hazardous food items. On the orders of Chairman PFA Mohammad Ali Raza Khan Khakwani and the instructions of Director General Raja Jahangir Anwar, under the PFA Act 2011, the PFA teams destroyed 700 kg of non-standard and unhealthy ghee on

the spot and imposed a heavy fine on the owners. Moreover, the food safety teams inspected hotels and restaurants and milk shops. During the inspection, heavy fines were imposed for selling adulterated milk, not keeping food items covered, poor freezer storage, poor drainage arrangements and non-compliance with SOPs. They also destroyed 25 liters of adulterated milk.

SOR takes notice of sale of stamp paper on high rates

LAHORE (APP): Board of Revenue Punjab (BOR) Senior Member Nabeel Javed took notice of a complaint by a citizen regarding the sale of Rs100 and Rs 200 stamp papers at exorbitant rates. He directed deputy commissioners and stamp inspectors across the province to take strict action against stamp vendors involved in this practice. In a statement issued on Friday, the BOR spokesman stated that the district administration had been instructed to take legal ac-

tion against those who did not issue Rs100 and Rs 200 stamp papers to the public. The spokesman clarified that there was no shortage of any type of stamp papers across Punjab and that the licenses of stamp sellers involved in creating an artificial shortage would be canceled. According to government instructions, stamp papers were issued on plain papers so there was no question of a shortage of stamp papers, the spokesman added.

PM to attend Charles & Camilla’s coronation ceremony in UK : FO

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will undertake a visit to the United Kingdom to attend the coronation of Briatian’s King Charles III and Queen Consort Camilla on May 6, the Foreign Office said Friday. Earlier on May 5, PM Sharif will participate in an event for Commonwealth leaders in London. He is also expected to hold bilateral meetings

with leaders participating in the celebrations. The FO said Pakistan and the UK had a long history of relations strongly anchored in the dynamic Pakistani-British community. “We see the British monarch and the royal family as friends of Pakistan and its people and look forward to further strengthening of ties between Pakistan and the United Kingdom,” it said.

Auqaf deptt directed to renovate saints shrines

MULTAN (APP): Commissioner Multan Division, Aamir Khattak, ordered officials concerned to prepare PC-I for the restoration and revamping of Hazrat Shah Shams (RA) tomb saying that the shrines are dubbed as the identity of South Punjab. Chairing a review meeting for the restoration of shrines at his office here on Friday, he said the scheme of Hazrat Shah Shams tomb renovation would be made part of ADP in the next fiscal year. He instructed the Auqaf department to revamp the shrine’s infra-

structure in its original shape and not to diminish its century-old designs. The Commissioner maintained that tourists take a keen interest in the architectural style of the centuries-old tombs adding that people from across the world visit these shrines for spiritual tranquility and peace. Mr Khat-tak ordered to make of water filtration plants functional at the tombs beside the construction of separate washrooms for men and women and differently able people at the tombs in the new scheme.

UAE set up one of largest’s visa center in Karachi: CM Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday said that the United Arab Emirates had established one of the largest visa centers in Karachi to issue work visas and provide consular services to people who apply for jobs in the UAE. He was speaking during a visit to the visa centre, accompanied by Consul General of UAE in Karachi Bakheet Ateeq Al-Remeithi. The chief minister visited different sections of the center and was briefed about their services. He was told that the visa Center had been authorized to issue work visas. The CM said that the people of Sindh

and Balochistan would be facilitated at the center if they get employment opportunities in the UAE. “I believe It would not be an exaggeration to say this Center is the window of employment in the UAE.” He was further informed that the attestation facilities were being provided on a daily basis at the visa center apart from providing consular services to the employees who apply for jobs in UAE. “This Visa Center assists the expats’ documents process quite smoothly and checks it thoroughly to avoid any glitch or error in the documentation,” the Consul General told the CM.

A meeting to resolve flight issues to Gilgit-Baltistan held today in Aviation Division Islamabad

GILGIT (APP): A meeting to resolve flight issues to Gilgit-Baltistan was held today in Aviation Division Islamabad wherein Chief Secretary GB, Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, Finance Minister GB Javed Manwa, and Minister Planning Mr. Fateh Ullah attended the meeting. In an official statement from the CS GB office said that the Secretary Aviation Division, Representatives of the Civil Aviation Authority, PIA, and Airblue were present in the meeting. In the meeting, it was decided that the frequency of flights to Gilgit and Skardu will be increased. Hajj special flights will be arranged to facilitate the hujjaj to travel directly from GB. Once the point of departure is notified civil aviation authority will contact PIA and PIA will lift the hujjaj directly from Skardu. It was also agreed to start special flights from Lahore to Gilgit, Lahore, and Karachi to Skardu as per last year’s practice w.e.f May 2023. The PIA rep was positively

inclined to add Faisalabad and Multan flights as well to Gilgit-Baltistan. The reservation on high fares to GB has also been conveyed and it was decided that the matter will be reviewed considering the route timings of the flights from/to GB. Secretary Aviation added that a special package to the deserving poor patients will need to be given ensuring their immediate lifting in case of emergencies and their airfare shall be recouped either from Bait ul Mall or Social Welfare Department Gilgit-Baltistan. The rep of Air-Blue said that 3 flights to Skardu will be ensured from July 2023 on a weekly basis however, the request has been made to ensure the facility as soon as possible to get maximum tourist flow to GBCivil Aviation Authority has said that once the old airport of Skardu is renovated it will be outsourced for operationalization and to get maximum tourist attractions both local and international.

PBS briefs politicians, MPs on 7th ongoing census; population reaches 237.448 mln

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) authorities on Friday gave a details briefing to leaders of political parties, parliamentarians; Federal and provincial ministers on the ongoing 7th Digital Population & Housing Census, under which around 237.448 million individuals have so far been counted in all four provinces. “The objective of briefing was to update the participants about the Methodology of Digital Census and Statistics collected

so far,” a PBS news release said. The participants were informed about the important role of provincial governments in efficiently collecting accurate data during the census process. The PBS shared how its field teams took prompt decisions to identify the blocks with ‘low-coverage’ using the ‘Digital System. ‘ The participants showed their satisfaction with the Digital System and appreciated the efforts of PBS for conducting the census exercise efficiently. The partici-

pants also visited the ‘Call Centre and Digital Census Working Groups’ at the Census Control Centre. According to the latest figures of the 7th Population and Housing Census of Pakistan, “Overall around 237,448,241 individuals have so far been counted.” Giving the break-up, the PBS informed that in Sindh as many as 54,138,485 individuals have been counted so far, while 116,442,499 in Punjab, 39,315,873 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and 19,713,823 in Balochistan.

EWA elections held in AIOU

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Employees Welfare Association (EWA) elections for the year 2023-25 were held yesterday on the main campus of the university. Ittehad Group and Alfatah Group contested the election. Ittehad group won seven out of 11 seats while Alfatah group won four seats, said a press release here on Friday. AIOU administration had formally established the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Office for this election and the Controller of Examinations, Mian Muhammad Riaz was appointed as the Chief ECP who conducted the election in a very impartial, transparent, peaceful, and pleasant atmosphere. According to the results, Yasir Mehmood (President), Sadiq Soomro (Senior Vice President), Faisal Munir (Vice President), Amjad Rehman (General Secretary), Aftab Ahmed (Deputy General Secretary), Mohammad Saeed Khan (Joint Secretary), Mohammad Ayas (Finance Secretary), Imran Ahmed (Information Secretary), Yasir Nabi (sports Secretary), Haq Nawaz (Culture Secretary) and Mohammad Shafiq (Communication Secretary) have been elected.

Heavy downpour lashes several parts of Hyderabad

HYDERABAD (APP): A heavy downpour lashed here on Friday afternoon, breaking the spell of heat and turning the weather pleasant. The thundershowers began to pour around 3 pm, turning the sky dark. A widespread power outage suddenly followed the downpour. The spokesman of Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) informed that a large number of the electric feeders were either shut down for safety reasons or had tripped. He said the restoration would begin once the rain stopped.

Anti-encroachment drive continues in Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Following the orders of the Peshawar High Court (PHC) Abbottabad bench, district administration Abbottabad Friday while taking action against temporary and permanent encroachment demolished encroachment structures and removed push carts on Link road to address issues related to traffic congestion and other problems faced by citizens. The operation was carried out under the directives of the PHC and was supervised by Assistant Commissioner Abbottabad Saqib Salim, Tehsil Municipal Officer TMA Abbottabad Shakil Hayat, TMA Abbottabad Tehsil Regulation Officer Abid Khan, and Additional Assistant Commissioner Zark Khan and continued on a third consecutive day. During the operation, all temporary encroachments on both sides of Eidgah Road were removed by the encroachment team of TMA Abbottabad while several stalls and pushcarts were also confiscated by the anti-encroachment team.

ACP to mark Int’l Dance Day tomorrow

KARACHI (APP): The Arts Council of Pakistan (ACP) Karachi will mark the International Dance Day 2023 on April 29, Saturday, by holding an event at ACP. Famous classic dancers including Nighat Chaudhry, Wahab Shah, Waqar Samart, Mani Chawa, Kaif Ghaznavi, Adnan Jehangir, Khurrum Taal, Abdul Ghani, Tashi and Rehman Rafique would perform on the occasion.

Fresh troops join force for conducting Kacha operation against criminals

RAJANPUR (APP): Fresh troops equipped with modern and long-range weapons have reached the Kacha operational area to join hands with the force that is already engaged in the operation against gangsters. District Police Officer Rajanpur Mehr Nasir Sial told APP on Friday that the operation against the dacoits in Tehsil Rojhan Mazari has entered 20th day. The search operation is going on in the cleared areas of Kacha Mianwali, he said, and claimed that thousands of acres

of land have been cleared from the dacoits and police posts have been established. He informed us that the search operation was underway in Kacha Mianwali, Chak Imrani, Chak Baley Shah, Chak Kapra besides a targeted operation in other areas. All the routes and passages leading to Sindh are being closely monitored, the DPO stated. Police teams are patrolling by boats inside Sindh and the police have been strengthened by providing additional personnel and modern weapons, he concluded.

Foreign investors should benefit from Pakistan’s investment friendly policies: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday said that as Pakistan offered investment friendly environment, the foreign investors should benefit from its pro-investment policies. The president, talking to a delegation of the Chinese Company (Easyway Innovation Technology Company Ltd), led by its CEO Joe Hanyu, here at Aiwan-e-Sadr, said that the development of the IT sector was one of the major priorities of the country. He said the foreign entrepreneurs needed to invest in this important sector with immense potential to grow. The president said that the Special Technology Zones Authority offered various incentives, including 10-years tax exemption for



the enterprises, and the Chinese IT companies should capitalize on these opportunities. The CEO briefed the president about the role of his company in providing various IT services and industry solutions. He highlighted that Easyway provided integrated solutions and professional software development for smart transportation, smart logistics and other fields.

Ethiopia-Pakistan Business Forum to give major boost to bilateral trade: Envoy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Jemal Beker Abdula on Friday said Ethiopia-Pakistan Business Forum in Karachi next month would provide an ample opportunity for boosting trade and commercial ties between the two countries. Ethiopia-Pakistan Business Forum is being organized jointly by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan and the Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia during the 2nd week of May in honor of high-level official and

business delegations from Ethiopia, said a news release here. Addressing the business community here at the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), he said bilateral trade between the FDRE and Pakistan would get a major boost with the establishment of strong linkages between the business community of both countries. He also appreciated the keen interest expressed by the business fraternity of Pakistan especially Karachi in bolstering bilateral trade between Ethiopia and Pakistan which would eventually increase people-to-people contacts between both nations.

Seven children blazed by a high-voltage electric wire in Lahore

ISLAMABAD (APP): Seven children were burned on Friday at Chongi Amarsadhu Javed Colony, Lahore after a fire broke out as a result of high-voltage electricity cables falling on the top of the house. Private media reports that a sad incident happened when the strings of children flying kites on the roof got tangled in the high extension wire, resulting in seven kids being burned by fire. Immediately after the event,

the rescue personnel arrived on the scene and quickly put out the fire while shifting the injured kids to the General Hospital for treatment. According to rescue officials, Ayan Ali 5, Ali Hasan Umar 4, Shahryar Umar 3, and Muhammad Hasnain 10 were among the injured, while one of the injured children was in critical condition. Police also arrived at the scene just after the event for further investigation.

Delay in rehabilitation of CRBC causing difficulties for farmers: Agri Minister

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Caretaker Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperative Department, Abdul Haleem Khan Qasuria has said the delay in rehabilitation of the Chashma Right Bank Canal (CRBC) was causing difficulties for local farmers. The provincial minister stated this while leading a delegation of farmers of Paroa Tehsil in a meeting with Deputy Commissioner Mansoor Arshad. The farmers’ delegation was comprised of Haji Abdul Rashid Dhad, Sardar Imtiaz Baloch, Malik Farooq Ahmed, and others while Chief Engineer WAPDA CRBC Gohar Zaman Bhabha, XEN Irrigation Hizbullah, Assistant Commissioner Paroa Karamatullah were

also present. Speaking on this occasion, the minister said the farmers and growers of Paroa Tehsil were facing difficulties due to the non-rehabilitation of CRBC after the devastating floods. He said there was a risk that the fertile lands could be converted into unproductive ones due to the non-availability of water. The deputy commissioner, while addressing the growers, said that the administration could feel the pain of farmers caused by the delay in the rehabilitation of the CRBC canal. He said all the steps would be taken to complete the repair work of the canal as soon as possible to ensure the provision of irrigation water to the farmers in order to resolve their issues.

Oil Updates — Prices head for another monthly decline as weak US data weighs

LONDON (Agencies): Oil prices were heading for another monthly decline on Friday after disappointing US economic data and uncertainty over further interest rate hikes weighed on the demand outlook, according to Reuters. Brent crude futures for June were up 42 cents, or 0.5 percent, at \$78.79 a barrel by 9:46 a.m. GMT while the more actively traded July contract was down 1 cent at \$78.21. Brent is set for its fourth straight monthly fall. Brent



prices retraced earlier losses after data showed the euro zone returned to growth in the first quarter, albeit only modestly and more slowly than expected. US West Texas Intermediate crude lost 15 cents, or 0.2 per-

cent, to trade at \$74.61 a barrel and is set for its sixth straight monthly decline. Data on Thursday showed that US economic growth slowed more than expected in the first quarter. Investors are worried that potential interest rate hikes by inflation-fighting central banks could slow economic growth and dent energy demand in the United States, Britain and the European Union. The US Federal Reserve's next policy meeting is over May 2-3.

Yen slumps to 9-year low vs euro after BOJ maintains ultra-low rates

SINGAPORE (Agencies): The Japanese yen fell to a nine-year low against the euro on Friday after the Bank of Japan left its ultra-easy monetary policy unchanged even as it scrapped a pledge to keep interest rates low, according to Reuters. The euro briefly rose to its highest level against the yen since December 2014 at 149.50. It was last up 1 percent at 148.98 yen with expectations the European Central Bank will hike rates again next week also



supporting the single currency. The outcome of new BOJ Governor Kazuo Ueda's first policy meeting was closely watched. As expected, the BOJ said it would maintain ultra-low

interest rates, and unanimously decided to make no changes to its yield curve control policy. However, the central bank removed a pledge to keep interest rates at "current or lower levels" and said it would "conduct a broad-perspective review of monetary policy." That review is expected to last around one to one-and-a-half years and would lay the groundwork for Ueda to gradually phase out his predecessor's massive stimulus program.

Sustainable aviation fuel production needs governments' backing to reach 'tipping point', International Air Transport Association warns

RIYADH (Agencies): Governments need to incentivise the production of Sustainable Aviation Fuel to create a "clear tipping point" for the sector's net zero ambitions, the head of cargo at the International Air Transport Association has insisted. In a major speech setting out the challenges facing the aviation industry, Brendan Sullivan warned that "every single drop" currently being created of the greener energy source was be-



ing used and more was desperately needed. Speaking at the 16th World Cargo Symposium, held in Istanbul, Sullivan said global events such as

the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine had underlined the importance of moving goods by air, but the sector needs to focus on sustainability, digitalization, and safety if it is to continue to thrive. In October, governments across the world used a meeting of the UN's International Civil Aviation Organization to agree to the goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050, in line with the industry's commitment adopted in 2021.

BBC chairman Sharp resigns after Boris Johnson loan row

LONDON (Agencies): BBC chairman Richard Sharp resigned today after an independent report found he breached rules for public appointments in relation to a loan for then prime minister Boris Johnson. Sharp said he had agreed to a request to stay on until the end of June to give the government time to find his successor. The country's public appointments watchdog has been investigating the way in which Sharp was selected by the



government to chair the broadcaster in 2021. The report found that while he did breach the government's code for public appointments by failing to

disclose a potential conflict of interest, it was also the case that a breach did not necessarily invalidate his appointment. But Sharp said staying until the end of his four year term would be a distraction from the broadcaster's "good work". "I have decided that it is right to prioritise the interests of the BBC," Sharp said in a statement. "I have therefore, this morning, resigned as the BBC chair to the secretary of state and to the board."

Sudan conflict threatens supply of key soft drink ingredient

NEW YORK (Agencies): Sudan's eruption into conflict has left international consumer goods makers racing to shore up supplies of gum arabic, one of the country's most sought-after products and a key ingredient in everything from fizzy drinks to candy and cosmetics. About 70% of the world's supply of gum arabic, for which there are few substitutes, comes from the acacia trees in the Sahel region that runs through Africa's third-largest



country, which is being torn apart by fighting between the army and a paramilitary force. Wary of Sudan's persistent insecurity, companies dependent on the product, such as

Coca Cola and Pepsico, have long stockpiled supplies, some keeping between three-to-six-months worth to avoid being caught short, exporters and industry sources told Reuters. However, prior conflicts have tended to be focused in far-flung regions such as Darfur. This time, the capital Khartoum has been brought to a standstill in the fighting that broke out on April 15, paralysing the economy and disrupting basic communications.

New EV charging group aims to double UK network in 2023

LONDON (Agencies): An industry group of nearly 20 electric vehicle (EV) charger companies said they aim to double the size of Britain's charging network this year with tens of thousands of new chargers, as the government tries to wean people off combustion engines. ChargeUK's members have cumulatively announced plans to invest more than £6 billion (US\$7.5 billion) installing and operating new EV charging infrastructure by 2030. Carmakers say that in return for the



hundreds of billions of dollars they are spending on electrification, countries like Britain and the European Union should focus on building out infrastructure to encourage more people to buy EVs and give them the confidence they

can find somewhere affordable to recharge. "The formation of ChargeUK... is a demonstration of the EV charging industry's growing size and importance to the UK economy," Ian Johnston, chair of ChargeUK and CEO of rapid-charging company Osprey Charging Network said in a statement. "We will continue to be a proactive partner to the government as we deliver a world-class charging infrastructure, giving the nation's drivers confidence to transition to EVs," he added.

Saudi Arabia commercial property market one of the world's 'leading lights': Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

RIYADH (Agencies): Saudi Arabia's commercial property market is one of the sector's "leading lights" across the world, according to a new survey by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The findings show that commercial property occupier demand in the Kingdom in the first three

months of the year was the highest among all nations monitored by the RICS, recording a positive 75 percent net balance reading — up from the 43 noted in the previous quarter. This represents Saudi Arabia's strongest result since the RICS launched its property monitor for the Kingdom in

the final three months of 2018. "Saudi Arabia's commercial property market remains one of the leading lights in both the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region and the world, while confidence in future market conditions remains high," said the RICS in a press release.

Bank of Japan to review, but maintain easing measures

TOKYO (Agencies): The Bank of Japan announced a review of its long-standing monetary easing measures on Friday, but said it would maintain them for the time being in the first policy decision under new governor Kazuo Ueda. "The bank has decided to conduct a broad-perspective

review of monetary policy, with a planned time frame of around one to one and a half years," the bank said in a statement following a two-day meeting. In the immediate term, the institution left its negative interest rate in place and did not adjust the band in which rates for 10-year gov-

ernment bonds fluctuate. Analysts had predicted no big changes from former economics professor Ueda, who took over earlier this month from Haruhiko Kuroda — the architect of the central bank's signature ultra-loose strategy, which has been in place for the past decade.

US economy grew at weak 1.1% rate in first quarter

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The US economy slowed sharply from January through March, decelerating to just a 1.1 percent annual pace as higher interest rates hammered the housing market and businesses reduced their inventories. Thursday's estimate from the Commerce Department showed that the nation's gross domestic product — the broadest gauge of economic output — weakened after growing 3.2 percent from July through September and 2.6 percent from October through December. But consumer spending, which accounts for about 70 percent of US

economic activity, remained resilient, growing at a 3.7 percent annual pace, the fastest such rate in nearly two years. Spending on goods, in particular, was solid: It rose at its fastest pace since the second quarter of 2021. Economists had been expecting overall GDP to grow at a 1.9 percent pace in the January-March quarter. Behind much of the quarter's weakness was a sharp reduction in business inventories, which subtracted roughly 2.3 percentage points from overall growth. Companies typically slash their inventories when they anticipate a coming downturn.

Norway plans to nationalise gas pipelines when concessions expire

OSLO (Agencies): Norway plans to nationalise most of its gas pipeline network when many existing concessions expire in 2028, the oil and energy ministry said today, to tighten control over key infrastructure. Norway has become Europe's largest supplier of gas, following a drop in Russian gas flows, which it supplies via a network of pipelines stretching some 9,000km. The ministry said today it was sending a letter to licensees "signalling the state aims to make use of the right of repatriation at the end of the license period". "The state wants complete state ownership of



the central parts of the Norwegian gas transport system," it said, without giving reasons. Norway takes an active role in its industry and is the top owner of the country's biggest bank, DNB, telecoms operator Telenor, and oil company Equinor, among others.

Sony logs record full-year sales as net profit beats forecast

TOKYO (Agencies): Sony reported record full-year sales of ¥11.5 trillion (US\$88 billion) today, attributing the "significant" increase to growth in the gaming, music, film and image-sensor sectors. The revenue figure was the largest ever for the Japanese conglomerate, beating the last financial year's record of ¥9.9 trillion (US\$73 billion). A weaker yen and strong gaming hardware sales helped boost sales, along with "higher revenues for anime streaming services", including from the acquisition of Japanese cartoon streaming giant Crunchyroll, Sony said. The compa-



ny's net profit for the year to March was ¥937.1 billion, up 6.2% year on year and beating a forecast of ¥870 billion. For the current financial year, which began in April, Sony predicts a lower net profit of ¥840 billion, partly for technical reasons related to tax expenses.

Telegram app to appeal suspension over neo-Nazi probe

SAO PAULO (Agencies): Messaging app Telegram said on Thursday it will appeal a fine and suspension imposed by a Brazilian court after its parent company failed to provide data sought by authorities on neo-Nazis operating on the network. The court fined Telegram a million reais (about US\$198,000) per day and ordered the temporary suspension of its activities for failing to assist a probe into neo-Nazi activity on social networks related to violence in schools. The app's executive director, Pavel Durov, vowed to "stand up for our users in Brazil and their right to private commu-



nication." He insisted that the data sought was "technologically impossible for us to obtain." "We are appealing the decision and are looking forward to the final resolution," he added. On Thursday, Brazilian users complained of instability in the app and shared advice on how to circumvent the blockage.

Amazon report profit ahead of expectations

SEATTLE (Agencies): Amazon.com Inc on Thursday reported quarterly sales and profit ahead of expectations, projecting confidence in its cloud business despite a clampdown on customers' spending and touting how its aggressive cost cuts were starting to pay off. Shares rose 8% in extended trading, also bolstered by a forecast for second-quarter results roughly in line with investors' targets. Addressing ongoing worries about the economy, CEO Andy Jassy has aimed to slash spending across Amazon's vast array of businesses. Last month, he said Amazon would cut more jobs, now from its long-profitable cloud and



advertising divisions, expanding the company's layoffs since November to 27,000 employees, or 9% of its roughly 300,000-strong corporate staff. Full and part-time headcount in the just-ended first quarter dropped 10% from a year earlier to about 1.47 million employees, reflecting in part attrition in warehouse staff.

World Bank says commodity prices to see largest drop in 2023

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Global commodity prices are likely to see the sharpest slump this year since the beginning of the pandemic, but food prices will still remain near record highs, reported Sputnik quoting the World Bank on Thursday. "Global commodity prices are expected to decline this year at the fastest clip since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, clouding the growth prospects of almost two-thirds of developing economies that depend on

commodity exports," the World Bank said in a statement that accompanies its latest Commodity Markets Outlook report. Commodity prices are projected to drop by 21% in 2023 year-on-year, the report said. The price of Brent crude oil is expected to average US\$84 a barrel, down 16% from last year's average. European and US natural-gas prices are expected to halve between 2022 and 2023, with coal prices set to decrease 42% in 2023, the World Bank added.

IPL 2023: Lucknow Super Giants make second-highest IPL total in Punjab Kings win

LUCKNOW (Agencies): Lucknow Super Giants made the second-highest total in Indian Premier League history as they thrashed Punjab Kings by 56 runs in Mohali. They posted 257-5 with Australia's Marcus Stoinis making 72 off 40 balls and West Indies' Kyle Mayers 54 off 24. It left them six short of the 263-5 made by Royal Challengers Bangalore against Pune Warriors in 2013. Punjab were bowled out for 201 off the penultimate ball, with Yash Tahkur claiming 4-37. It is only the second time a team has passed 250 in the IPL and is the 20th highest score in T20 history. "It was really important to win," said Lucknow captain KL Rahul. "We've always been clear about how we want to play. It is just more difficult at home because it is challenging there. "Kyle



set the tone for us and we took it from there. We do pre-plan a bit and think a lot about what tactics we can use." Lucknow accelerated from the start of their innings and raced to 74-2 in the six-over powerplay. Even after Mayers' dismissal off the penultimate ball of that period, Stoinis and Ayush Badoni carried on attacking, ultimately sharing 89 off 47 balls. Stoinis, whose 72 was his highest score in the IPL, should have been dismissed on 38 but England all-rounder Liam Livingstone inadvertently stood on the boundary while attempting to take the catch. The all-rounder also put on 76 in 30 balls with West Indies' Nicholas Pooran, who smashed a 19-ball 45. They went into the final two overs needing 28 to equal the record but England's Sam Curran only conceded 10, before Arshdeep Singh went for 12. Despite falling short, it was a devastating display of power hitting, with 41 boundaries hit in the innings. Punjab lost captain Shikhar Dhawan in the first over and that immediately put them on the back foot, with the left-hander - the second-highest scorer in IPL history - a crucial cog in their batting line-up.

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Cristiano Ronaldo strikes again to keep Al-Nassr in the title race



RIYADH (Agencies): For the first time since he arrived in Saudi Arabia in January, Cristiano Ronaldo and his Al-Nassr teammates faced a must-win situation on Friday. And when the pressure was on, he, and they, delivered a 4-0 victory over Al-Raed at Mrsool Park. The result means the Yellows are once again within three points of Saudi Pro League-leaders Al-Ittihad, albeit having played one game more, and still in the running for a 10th league title. It might not have been a vintage performance from Al-Nassr but, after a goalless draw at Al-Fayha and a 2-0 defeat against Al-Hilal in their previous two league games (as well as a shock King's Cup semi-final exit at the hands of Al-Wehda on Monday), it was nevertheless a welcome return to winning ways. A third-successive failure to win would have dealt a major, possibly

fatal, blow to their championship hopes. On Thursday, Al-Ittihad had defeated third-placed Al-Shabab, thanks to a late, late penalty, to go six points clear. Everyone was very aware that if Al-Nassr failed to match that result the following day, the Roshn Saudi League trophy would take a big step closer to Jeddah. In the end, however, it was a comfortable victory for the home side. And although Al-Ittihad is still three points ahead, and has six games left to play compared with Al-Nassr's five, there is plenty to play for. Top scorer Anderson Talisca was forced to watch the game from the stands due to suspension. But if their were any nerves because of this, Ronaldo helped to settle them after just four minutes with the kind of goal that fans of Real Madrid, Manchester United and Juventus know very well.

Talor Gooch unstoppable once again on Day 1 of LIV Invitational Singapore

SINGAPORE: A week after starting the LIV Invitational Adelaide in stunning fashion with back-to-back rounds of 10-under par 62 and then winning the tournament by three shots, American Talor Gooch moved to the top of the leaderboard for the fourth time in four rounds. On Friday, in the opening round of LIV Invitational Singapore, the 30-year-old from Oklahoma made

an eagle putt after a brilliant second shot from 253 yards on the 18th hole to finish on seven-under par 64 and edge ahead of a quality-chasing pack that included reigning Open champion Cameron Smith of Australia, Americans Brooks Koepka and Cameron Tringale, and Spain's Sergio Garcia. Major champions Phil Mickelson, Bryson DeChambeau and Lou-

is Oosthuizen added glitter to the leaderboard, tied sixth at five-under par 66. In the team championship, Hy Flyers — with counting scores from Tringale, Mickelson and James Piot (70) — were leading at 12-under, one ahead of the all-South African Stingers. Oosthuizen, Charl Schwartzel (67) and Dean Burmester (69) made up the Stingers' score.

Women's Six Nations 2023: England v France preview and teams for Grand Slam decider

LONDON (Agencies): The magnitude of Saturday's Women's Six Nations Grand Slam decider is so great that even England head coach Simon Middleton admits to being nervous. The Twickenham tapestry has been woven with many storylines. The largest women's rugby crowd in history awaits. England can ease World Cup heartbreak. France look to heal a five-year-old wound. Middleton hopes to sign off an eight-year project in the right way. It is a good job the Sugababes are booked

for half-time to diffuse some of the tension. After relatively straightforward tournaments so far, a much tighter scoreline will be seen in front of an expected record crowd of more than 53,000. The Red Roses are playing a first standalone Test at Twickenham as they seek a fifth successive Women's Six Nations title. France last won the tournament - and last beat England - in 2018. England have won all 11 meetings since and seven of those victories have been by six points or fewer. Middleton, who will step down as England head coach after Saturday's game, says his side has done "a little bit" to prepare for the noise of the crowd but would not expand on specifics. "I will be so nervous going into the game," he said. "You don't want to not be successful in front of 53,000 people. The occasion is so huge." Looking back on an agonising 34-31 World Cup final defeat by New Zealand in November, Middleton says England "want to be on the right side" of the result this time.

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Qatar to host 2027 World Cup in men's basketball

DOHA (Agencies): The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) picked Qatar to host the 2027 edition of its marquee men's World Cup. It did not say whether there were any other bidders. Doha will stage all games in the 32-team event, FIBA said, citing upgraded subway and public transport networks that were completed for the men's soccer World Cup played last November and December. "With all of the teams playing in the same city, fans can plan everything far in advance and enjoy a unique experience since all venues are within 30 minutes of each other," the Switzerland-based governing body said. "Additionally, all venues to be used for FIBA's flagship men's event are already constructed, while widely used green technologies will help in delivering the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 as a carbon-neutral event." The No. 89-ranked Qatar team will qualify automatically as host. Qatar



last played in the event at the 2006 world championship, and lost all five of its games. The women's World Cup in 2026 will be hosted by Germany in Berlin, FIBA also decided Friday. The 16-team tournament will be played in Berlin. Qatar is the third straight Asian host of the men's tournament. China hosted in 2019 and the Philippines, Japan, and Indonesia host this year's edition from Aug. 25-Sept. 12. Spain is the defending champion. Qatar's sports hosting peaked but did not stop with the FIFA World Cup.

The basketball World Cup will be one of its major events before hosting the 2030 Asian Games, which will use some stadiums built for the soccer tournament. A long-term goal for Qatar is to host the Olympics, although the next available Summer Games is the 2036 edition as hosts have already been picked for 2028 and 2032. A Doha candidacy was being prepared for the 2032 Olympics when the International Olympic Committee pushed ahead quickly to pick Brisbane. The 100-strong group of IOC members includes the Emir of Qatar, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, who joined the Olympic body in 2002 as one of its youngest ever members at age 22. Doha tried to enter the hosting contests for the Olympics of 2016 and 2020 but the IOC denied it candidate status. The main barrier was the IOC insisting on the games being held in July-August when temperatures in Doha routinely top 40 Celsius.

ATP announces line judges to be fully replaced by technology

LONDON (agencies): Human line judges will be replaced by an electronic calling system on a full-time basis on the ATP Tour from 2025. The ATP, which is the men's governing body, said the move will "optimise accuracy and consistency" in events. Some tournaments have already scrapped human line judges, including the majors at the Australian Open and US Open. "This is a landmark moment for our sport, and not one we've reached without careful consideration," said ATP chairman Andrea Gaudenzi. "Tradition is core to



tennis and line judges have played an important part in the game over the years. "That said, we have a responsibility to embrace innovation and new technologies." The electronic calling

system has been widely adopted since the Covid-19 pandemic when tournaments looked to minimise human interaction. It will be implemented across all surfaces on the ATP Tour, although the four Grand Slam tournaments continue to make their own decisions. Wimbledon, played on grass, and the clay-court French Open have been reluctant to remove human judgement. While Wimbledon allows players to challenge decisions using the Hawk-Eye system, the French Open has so far refused to introduce technology assistance.

Sri Lanka v Ireland: Tourists collapse to innings defeat in Galle second Test

GALLE (Agencies): Ireland collapsed to another innings defeat in the second Test against Sri Lanka, as the hosts completed a 2-0 series win in Galle. The tourists were out for 202 in their second innings, leaving them 10 shy of Sri Lanka's tally of 704-3 declared. Spinner Ramesh Mendis ripped through Ireland's batting as he took 5-64 despite Harry Tector's brave 85. Ireland had opened with their highest Test total of 492 in their first innings, before the hosts' response. The docile pitch had meant for a runs fest on the opening four days but Mendis' superb bowling



performance ensured that the hosts wrapped up victory before tea on Friday. Sri Lanka won last week's opening Test by an innings and 280 runs and the defeat sees Ireland's run of Test losses since becoming a full member of the

International Cricket Council in 2017 stretch to six matches. Asitha Fernando took three wickets, including the closing dismissals of Tector and Ben White that sealed Sri Lanka's victory. Despite his side's latest defeat, Ireland skipper Andrew Balbirnie said that his side had made progress from last week's hammering. "I would like to think that we have made improvement. We need to keep doing that," said the Irish captain. Ireland went into the final day on 54-2 - still 158 runs adrift of the hosts' mammoth first-inning total.

Everton fans call for Bill Kenwright to be removed as chairman



LONDON (Agencies): Long-serving Kenwright, 77, defended the way the club is run in an open letter to fans last week. Everton's 4-1 home defeat by Newcastle on Thursday leaves the club rooted in the Premier League relegation zone. "The situation is not sustainable [and] not befitting of our great club," said the Everton Fan Advisory Board. It added: "As Evertonians, we do not deserve it." Second-bottom Everton, who have been in the top-flight for 72 years, are two points adrift of safety with five games remaining. Kenwright and the rest of the board of directors have not

attended a home game since January after what the club described as "threatening correspondence" was received before a game against Southampton. Some supporters have held peaceful protest marches before every home game since, expressing their frustration at the running of the club. The target of their frustrations are Moshiri and the board of directors, which includes Kenwright, chief executive Denise Barrett-Baxendale, chief financial officer Grant Ingles and former Toffees striker Graeme Sharp. Kenwright, who has been Everton chairman since 2004,

DAILY HOROSCOPE: APRIL 29, 2023



cial challenges of all kinds, so dive right in!
- **VIRGO**: You're in a rather domestic mood no matter where you are. It's a great day to clean out the fridge or take care of any other projects that will make your environment a nicer place to be.
- **LIBRA**: Today is less about action than it is about listening. You need to be clear with people and make sure they do the same with you. And you may have to gently prod them to get them to do so.
- **SCORPIO**: Sit down and make plans for the next week, month, or year. Your ability to maintain many different details in your head at once should make it a lot simpler!
- **SAGITTARIUS**: Even though you desperately want to skip ahead, you need to stay the course for now. Your restless energy may actually be just what's needed to make things happen, so give it all you've got!
- **CAPRICORN**: Today should bring quite a few accomplishments your way and set you up for even greater success in the future! It's a good time for you to slow down and take everything as it comes.
- **ACQUARIUS**: You're feeling pretty down-to-earth and ready for all sorts of emotional business, if there is any to be had! Heart-to-heart talks with friends and family or intimate dates are just about perfect.
- **PISCES**: Try not to heap too much criticism on any one person today, though you may be sorely tempted! Sure, there's an awful lot wrong with the world, but that doesn't mean you can fix it all at once.

Tens of thousands fleeing Sudan,as spectre of ethnic clashes,hunger looms:UN

UNITED NATIONS, (APP): Civilians in Sudan, including scores of internally displaced people and refugees, are scrambling for safety and suffering the disastrous consequences of the violence there, as many aid operations have been forced to pause, UN humanitarian officials said on Friday. The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) said that tens of thousands of refugees from South Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea living in the country have fled the fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the Khartoum area. The newly displaced have found shelter in existing refugee camps further east and south, creating new humanitarian challenges, the UN agency said. UNHCR said it is also particularly concerned about the situation in the Darfur region, where fears are deepening of a revival of ethnic tensions. The agency's representative in Sudan, Axel Bisschop, told reporters in Geneva that Darfur might present the "biggest challenge" from a humanitarian point of view. "We're concerned that the intercommunal violence is going to increase and that we might have some situations which will repeat in relation to what we had a couple of years ago," in a region which has already experienced severe conflict and displacement, he said. UNHCR stressed that Darfur presents

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ents "a myriad of pressing protection issues", highlighting that a number of sites hosting internally displaced people have been burned to the ground, while civilian houses and humanitarian premises have been hit by bullets. Concerns over the region are shared by the UN rights office (OHCHR), which warned on Friday of a "serious risk" of violence escalating in West Darfur as the hostilities between the RSF and SAF have triggered intercommunal violence. OHCHR spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani said that in El Geneina, West Darfur, "deadly ethnic clashes" have been reported and an estimated 96 people have been killed since 24 April.

UAE's first gaming resort to cost \$3.9 bn: operator

Dubai (AFP/APP): The United Arab Emirates' first gaming resort will open in four years and cost \$3.9 billion to build, US casino operator Wynn has said, unveiling new details of the project. The resort in Ras Al-Khaimah, one of the UAE's seven emirates, will feature "exceptional entertainment and gaming amenities", Wynn Resorts said on its website. Gambling is generally prohibited under Islamic laws in the oil-rich Gulf state. But Ras Al-Khaimah's tourism development authority last year announced a new body to regulate "integrated resorts", including gaming facilities. Preliminary construction work has begun on Wynn Al Marjan Island, set on a man-made and hotel-studded promontory, Wynn Resorts said Thursday in a statement. The resort, with 1,500 rooms, 24 dining and lounge areas, spa facilities, "high end" shopping and nightly laser and



light shows, will open in early 2027, Wynn said, revising an earlier schedule of 2026. Artists' impressions of the site, about an hour's drive from the commercial hub of Dubai, showed a brown-gold high rise towering above a beach area and circular marina, as well as a luxuriously appointed lobby. "We have spent the past year meticulously programming and concepting Wynn Al Marjan Island, carefully considering its unique location," Wynn Resorts CEO Craig Billings said in the statement. Wynn operates casinos in Las Vegas and Boston as well as Macau, a Chinese territory close to Hong Kong.

Spain,Portugal smash April temperature records

Madrid (AFP/APP): Mainland Spain and Portugal have broken temperature records for April, officials said on Friday, as both nations wilt in an unusually early heatwave that has raised the risk of wildfires. The mercury hit 38.8 degrees Celsius (101.8 degrees Fahrenheit) in the airport in Spain's southern city of Cordoba on Thursday, beating a previous record of 38.6C in the eastern city of Elche, national weather office AEMET said. This "provisional data" must still be confirmed, a process that can take several days, a spokesperson for the agency told AFP. The highest temperature for all of Spain in the month of April, however, was recorded in 2013 in the Canary Islands off the northwest coast of Africa when the mercury hit 40.2C. In neighbouring Portugal, temperatures in the central town of Mora reached 36.9C on Thursday, breaking the record of 36C set in April 1945 in the northeastern town of Pinhao, weather agency IPMA said. While temperatures started dropping in Portugal on Friday, the scorching heat persisted in much of Spain with the mercury reaching 36C in Cordoba. The unusually early heatwave has been driven by a mass of very hot and dry air coming from Africa. The scorching temperatures have prompted warnings about the high risk of wildfires and worsened drought conditions that have already led some farmers in Spain not to sow seeds this year.

Iran President to visit Syria next week - senior source



TEHRAN (Agencies): Iranian President, Ebrahim Raisi, will visit Damascus next week, a senior regional source close to the Syrian government told Reuters on Friday. The visit will be the first by an Iranian president to Syrian President, Bashar Al-Assad, since war broke out in Syria in 2011. With military help and economic support from both Iran and Russia, Assad was able to turn the tide of the conflict and regain control of most of his country. The senior regional source told Reuters that a warming of ties between Saudi Arabia and Iran, as well as a thaw in Arab States' isolation of Syria, had paved the way for the visit. The Syrian daily, Al-Watan, which is close to the government, reported that Raisi's visit would last two days and would be capped by a string of agreements, particularly on economic cooperation. Iran has previously provided lines of credit to Damascus and imports phosphate from Syrian mines. This month, regional sources revealed that Iran had secretly brought weapons and other military equipment to Syria by disguising the transfers as part of the relief effort following the devastating February earthquakes in Syria and Türkiye.

WHO to assist Pakistan on Monkeypox

ISLAMABAD (APP): The World Health Organization (WHO) has been working and investigating with the Government of Pakistan on Monkeypox, as the situation is still evolving. In a statement on Monkeypox, the WHO said that it will assist the government of Pakistan as per their requirement, especially in lab testing, Points of Entry and provision of testing kits. Meanwhile, the NIH, provincial health departments and Border Health Services at all Airports, District Health authorities at Islamabad and provinces have been advised to ensure surveillance through laboratory diagnostics, contact tracing, rapid identification of suspected cases and clusters of infections as well as the source of infection in order to provide optimal clinical care, isolate cases to prevent further transmission, identify, manage and follow-up contacts to recognize early signs of infection, identify risk groups for infection and

for severe disease, protect frontline health workers, and tailor effective control and prevention measures. According to an official of the Ministry of National Health Services, as there is no evidence of localized transmission of Mpox as of now in Pakistan, the risk of the international spread of disease from Pakistan remains low. The World Health Organization (WHO) does not recommend any restrictions on trade on the currently available information regarding Mpox outbreaks. In Pakistan, since May 2022, a total of 22 samples from suspected cases were referred from different parts of the country, and PCR tests were carried out at NIH for the Monkeypox virus. The first case has been confirmed by NIH from travellers who arrived recently in Pakistan and have been isolated at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) hospital along with others who are being investigated.

US Fed admits to failings in Silicon Valley Bank oversight

Washington (Agencies): The US Federal Reserve called for greater banking oversight while admitting to its own failures in a widely-anticipated report published Friday into the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) last month "Following Silicon Valley Bank's failure, we must strengthen the Federal Reserve's supervision and regulation based on what we have learned," Federal Reserve vice chair for Supervision Michael Barr said in a statement accompanying the report. Barr said SVB's management failed to adequately manage risk prior to the bank's swift collapse, while Fed supervisors failed to take forceful enough action after they had identified issues at the Californian high-tech lender. SVB's failure on March 10 after taking on too much interest-rate risk caused shock waves throughout the banking sector, and led to the failure of another regional US

bank and the merger under pressure of Swiss investment banking giant Credit Suisse. Concerted efforts by regulators on both sides of the Atlantic in the days that followed SVB's collapse appear to have reduced the banking turmoil and lowered volatility in the financial markets. The report found that the Fed "did not appreciate the seriousness of critical deficiencies in the firm's governance, liquidity, and interest rate risk management," as SVB's assets more than doubled in size between 2019-2021 in the middle of a high-tech boom. In response, Barr said the Fed will look at strengthening banking supervision to ensure the Fed could more quickly identify risks and vulnerabilities. The Fed will also look to strengthen the regulatory framework for banks and consider toughening the rules around interest-rate risk, liquidity and capital requirements, and stress-testing.

Bilawal to attend SCO meeting amid Pakistan's demand for resolution of Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will undertake the visit to Goa, India, on May 4 to attend the meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) amid insistence from Pakistan that India should take steps to create an environment which facilitate peace and dialogue on outstanding disputes, especially the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir. Speaking at the weekly press briefing, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said, "The visit is taking place because Pakistan is an active member of the SCO and the foreign minister has to represent Pakistan in the SCO Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Any activities of the

foreign minister during his visit to Goa will be in the context of SCO." "Pakistan's voice must be heard in the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of SCO. I reiterate that this visit is taking place in the context of SCO and it is not a bilateral visit and any other noise that accompanies the visit of the foreign minister must be ignored, because that's just noise and has no bearing on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and its proceedings," she added. The spokesperson stressed that Pakistan would continue to raise its voice against grave and systematic human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Japan's PM to visit Egypt,other countries from Saturday

TOKYO: Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is scheduled to travel overseas from April 29 to May 5 to visit Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Singapore. During his trip, Kishida will hold meetings with the leaders of these countries to discuss a wide range of topics including regional and international issues, Ukraine

and bilateral relations. Kishida will have a summit meeting in Cairo and meet with other dignitaries in Egypt on April 30. He will depart the following day for the Ghanaian capital Accra before flying on the same day to Nairobi in Kenya. He will arrive in Maputo, Mozambique, on May 3 and after a summit meeting there will depart

Exuberant,bedazzled Pakistani truck Art reaching hearts in China



BEIJING (APP): To celebrate the National Day of Pakistan and the Year of Tourism Exchanges between Pakistan and China, a Pakistani Truck Art Debut Exhibition themed Phool Patti: Jingle Journey kicked off at Silk Road International Arts Center, Langfang, China on Friday. The dazzle of truck art from Pakistan won the hearts of Chinese visitors by its beautiful and artsy look and the deeply rooted tradition behind it. "I like it," A Chinese college student enjoying the art on-site told the reporter. She learned that Pakistani trucks are more than just trucks. "These vibrant, bedazzled trucks are an expression of Pakistani people - they are traveling billboards that convey messages to the world." "Somehow you can sense the drivers and the artists who decorate their vehicles," she added since this colourful tradition celebrates their culture and their way of life. "These moving, tangible pieces of art featured Pakistan's unique identity did wow me." Addressing the opening ceremony of the exhibition, Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque pinpointed that the event is part of the efforts aimed at building a close and culturally rich "China-Pakistan Community of Shared Future" in the new era. "Termed as 'Art on Wheel' by many, this artistic expression represents cheerfulness, optimism, appreciating the beautiful aspects of nature and seeing life in its brightest and positive way," the ambassador pinpointed, wishing the audience a wonderful experience of a rich cultural medley from Pakistan. Co-organized by the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Beijing, and Silk Road International Arts Center, the exhibition will last to July 24. As part of a cultural exchange project between both countries, the exhibition features a series of commissioned works and large-scale site-specific works, live events, along with educational programs.

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