



www.thekhybermail.com

Chief Editor: Rizwan Inayat

Pages 8 Price: Rs. 25/-

Vol 11, No 203 - Thursday 4 May 2023

Shawwal 13, 1444 A.H.

Editor: Omer Rizwan



Putin survives Ukraine drone attack

- Ukrainian counteroffensive has started :Wagner boss - Fire erupts at another Russian oil facility - US embassy in Kiev fears 'missile attacks'

MOSCOW (Agencies): Ukraine launched two drone attacks overnight intended to strike the Kremlin residence of Russian President Vladimir Putin, his office has reported. The aircraft were downed using measures designed to counter electronic warfare and caused no casualties or damage, according to a statement. Moscow considers the incident an act of terrorism. The incident occurred late on Tuesday night, and both unmanned aircraft fell on the grounds of the iconic Moscow complex, according to the president's office. Putin's schedule was not affected, and he is working on Wednesday, at his residence outside Moscow. Russia reserves the right to retaliate in a manner, place and time of its choosing, the statement noted. "We consider this a preplanned terrorist action and an attempt against the Russian president," it



added. The incident happened "ahead of Victory Day [when Russia celebrates the World War II defeat of Nazi Germany] and the parade on May 9, when foreign guests plan to be present." - The head of the private military company Wagner Group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, said on Wednesday that the Ukrainian forces had begun their counterattack in Artyomovsk (known in



Ukrainian as Bakhmut) and are threatening to overwhelm his undersupplied troops. Wagner forces advanced more than 200 meters on Wednesday, sustaining 116 fatalities and leaving less than three square kilometers of the Donbass city in Ukrainian possession, Prigozhin said in an audio clip shared online. However the PMCs leader then announced that the Ukrainian military

has "...begun its counterattack," with "...unlimited manpower and ammunition." Meanwhile, he painted a dire picture of Wagner's own situation, saying "ammunition shortages are acute" and his troops have enough rounds remaining "for just a few days." The Russian Defense Ministry is refusing to issue artillery ammunition to Wagner, "ignoring our every request," Prigozhin claimed. Wagner forces have been at the forefront of street fighting in Artyomovsk, known by Ukrainians as Bakhmut, a key rail and road junction in Donbass. Kiev has funneled tens of thousands of soldiers to the city, even as Wagner and other Russian troops established fire control over all the supply roads, leaving the Ukrainians half surrounded. - A fire broke out overnight at an oil storage facility in Russia's Krasnodar Region following a suspected drone

strike, TASS news agency reported citing a source in the local emergency services. No injuries have been reported, and local residents are not in danger, the official added.

- The US diplomatic mission in Ukraine's capital has advised Americans not to ignore air alarms and shelter appropriately, warning that the security situation could deteriorate rapidly following an attempted drone attack on the Kremlin, which Russian officials have pinned on Kiev. The US Department of State issued a security alert about a "heightened threat of missile attacks" across Ukraine on Wednesday night, citing a "recent uptick in strikes across Ukraine and inflammatory rhetoric from Moscow." Earlier in the day, Russian officials warned of "retaliation" for Ukrainian drone attack on the Kremlin.

Islamic Jihad announces truce after Gaza rocket fire



GAZA CITY (AFP/APP):Palestinian freedom fighters group Islamic Jihad announced a truce around Gaza Wednesday, after it traded fire with Israel following the death in Israeli custody of a hunger striker from its ranks. One Palestinian was killed and five wounded in pre-dawn air strikes Israel carried out in retaliation for alleged rocket fire from Gaza, the territory's health ministry said. But mediators from Qatar, Egypt and the United Nations succeeded in brokering a return to calm from 4 am (0100 GMT), sources in Islamic Jihad and fellow group Hamas told AFP. Egypt -- a peace broker between Israel and Palestinian groups in previous conflicts -- corroborated the truce, though Israel did not immediately confirm any agreement. "We managed to reach a calm with both sides responding to it from this morning," an Egyptian security source told AFP on condition of anonymity. The Israeli army said the last warning sirens sounded near the Gaza border at around 5:30 am (0230 GMT).

Agreement signed to establish Climate Tech Hub in Seoul

NICHEON (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Republic of Korea here on Wednesday signed three strategic agreements to build resilience among developing economies of Asia and the Pacific by promoting access to climate technology, improving access to digital services, and enhancing sustainable and inclusive infrastructure development through public-private partnerships (PPPs). The agreements were signed by ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa and Choo Kyung-ho, Deputy Prime Minister Republic of Korea and Minister of Finance on the sidelines of ADB's 56th Annual Meeting. In the first agreement, ADB and the Government of the Republic of Korea have agreed to work towards establishing an ADB-Korea Climate Technology Hub (K-Hub) in Seoul to connect ADB's developing member countries (DMCs) to cutting-edge climate technology, experts, service providers, and other stakeholders in the climate tech ecosystem. Through the K-Hub, DMCs will be able to access and implement solutions to challenges posed by climate change.

US Air Force prepares to retire U-2 spy planes in 2026

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The US Air Force is forging ahead with its plan to retire the storied U-2 Dragon Lady spy aircraft in fiscal 2026, as part of a years long effort to reshape how the service surveils American adversaries from above. Air Force leaders have considered retiring the U-2 fleet for nearly two decades, asking Congress in some years to ditch the Cold War-era workhorse or, in others, to retire the RQ-4 Global Hawk drones that were meant to replace it. Now both are on the chopping block. If Congress approves the divestment and lets the Air Force retire its remaining RQ-4s one year later, the service would finish out the decade without the high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft that peer across borders and track enemy movements. Sen. Ted Budd, R-N.C., noted the service's plan for the U-2 on Tuesday in a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on the Department of the Air Force's fiscal 2024 budget request. The pending retirement was briefly mentioned in military



budget documents released earlier this spring. The service's previous spending requests have foreshadowed the end of the U-2 fleet in the mid-2020s, including in its asks for fiscal 2021 and 2022. Last year's request did not specify when the airframe would retire but zeroed out modernization funds after 2025. The newest slate of budget documents acknowledges that the Air Force plans to keep the U-2 fleet viable through the end of September 2025, before shifting that money to higher priorities. The Air Force said it expects Congress to remove legislative language that has blocked the jet's retirement in the past, allowing the service to "move forward with U-2 divestment in FY 2026."

Kevin Costner and wife Christine Baumgartner are getting a divorce



NEW YORK (CNN/Agencies): In a statement shared with CNN on Tuesday, Costner's representative Arnold Robinson said that "circumstances beyond his control have transpired which have resulted in Mr. Costner having to participate in a dissolution of marriage action." Robinson continued with a request that Costner's, Baumgartner's, "and their children's privacy be respected as they navigate this difficult time." The "Dances with Wolves" star wed Baumgartner, a handbag design-

er and former model, in Colorado in 2004. The pair initially met on a golf course, and years later reconnected at a restaurant opening. Costner and Baumgartner share three children, and Costner also has four other children from previous relationships, including with his first wife Cindy Silva, to whom he was married from 1978 to 1994. In February, one month after Costner won a Golden Globe for his performance on "Yellowstone," he made reference to his wife on social media, who helped celebrate his achievement when they were unable to attend the awards event due to flooding near their home. "We watched from home and it wasn't the same," Costner said in a video as he recounted what it was like to watch the show remotely.

Singapore selects Colt's IAR as new section automatic weapon

SINGAPORE (Janes/Agencies): The Singapore Army has selected American firearms manufacturer Colt's Infantry Automatic Rifle 6940 (IAR6940) as the new section automatic weapon (SAW) to replace in-service ST Engineering's 5.56 mm Ultimex 100 Mk2 light machine gun (LMG). "As part of continued force modernisation efforts, our army has conducted extensive trials and evaluations of various weapon models. The Colt IAR6940 has been assessed to be a suitable replacement for the SAW," the Singapore Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) told Janes. At the time of publi-



cation, the MINDEF had not replied to Janes request for comment about the number of rifles to be procured, the budget, and the timeline for induction into the army. Janes learnt that Colt's IAR was competing with Heckler & Koch's M27 5.56 mm IAR for the Singapore Army's new SAW selection programme.

US troops ordered to Mexico border for migrant surge

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The Pentagon said Tuesday it will deploy more troops to help provide security at the US-Mexico border as officials fear a surge in migrant crossing attempts when Covid-19 immigration restrictions end on May 11. Some 1,500 troops will be sent to the border, adding to the 2,500 already there to support Border Patrol authorities in the face of a possible gush of frontier crossings. "For 90 days, these 1,500 military personnel will fill critical capability gaps, such as ground-based detection and monitoring, data entry, and warehouse support," spokesman Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder said in a statement. On May 11, President Joe Biden's administration will lift Title 42, the strict protocol implemented by previous president Donald Trump to deny entry to migrants and expel asylum seekers based on the Covid pandemic emergency. With the easing of coronavirus regulations -- including Monday's de-



cision to end vaccination requirements for inbound travelers -- the Biden administration can no longer justify using Title 42 to stem migration. Instead, the administration plans to deter undocumented migrants using Title 8, which essentially criminalizes illegal border crossings, making future legal residency impossible. Washington says hopeful migrants and asylum seekers must now register for interviews with immigration officials from their own countries, or countries they pass through to reach the border. The interviews can be arranged on a new smartphone app, CBP One.

Press freedoms shrink,journalists targeted: UN and media



United Nations (AFP/APP): Press freedom is under attack in every corner of the globe, with journalists continually harassed, jailed and killed, UN officials and media outlets warned Tuesday. Speaking ahead of World Press Freedom Day on Wednesday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres issued a rallying cry for journalists and media worldwide. "All our freedom depends on press freedom," he said in a video message, calling it the "foundation of democracy and justice" and the "life-

blood of human rights." "But in every corner of the world, freedom of the press is under attack," Guterres added, addressing a conference held at UN headquarters in New York. Highlighting the problem, UNESCO awarded its 2023 World Press Freedom Prize to three Iranian women, two journalists and a human rights activist, who have been jailed. While Guterres did not cast blame on specific countries, other speakers highlighted individual cases, such as that of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich, detained in Russia on espionage charges he has rejected. "The fight for press freedom, the fight for Evan's release is a fight for everybody's freedom," Wall Street Journal publisher Almar Latour told the forum.

PLA's 80th Group Army receives armoured vehicles

BEIJING (Agencies): Northern Theatre Command (NTC) of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has inducted several ground force components including ZBL-09 infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs), ZSL-10 armoured personnel carriers (APCs), and ZTL-11 fire support vehicles (FSVs). A video clip of the equipment-deploying exercise released by state-owned broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV) confirms the delivery of at least 34 armoured vehicles in the 203rd Medium Combined Arms Brigade of PLA's 80th Group Army. The delivery comprises 18 ZBL-09 IFVs, six ZTL-11 FSVs, four ZSL-10 APCs, four ZBL-09 communication platforms (CPs), and two ZBL-09



bridging platforms (BPs). According to Janes Land Warfare Platforms: Armoured Fighting Vehicles, the ZBL-09 is China North Industries Group Corporation's (Norinco's) 8x8 family of IFVs designed to provide the PLA with a modern and capable vehicle to replace ZSL-92 armoured fighting vehicles in service.

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.

PFMA-KP for removal of ban on wheat transportation from Punjab to other province

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Flour Mills Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (PFMA-KP) on Wednesday urged the Prime Minister to take notice of ban on wheat transportation from Punjab to KP and other provinces. Addressing a press conference here, chairman PFMA-KP Muhammad Iqbal said that under Article 151 of the constitution the ban on wheat transportation was unconstitutional, adding that the Prime Minister, Chief Ministers Punjab and KP should have to take notice of the issue and order removal of all the check posts of the police and other agencies set up by the Punjab Government to stop the transportation of wheat to other provinces. He further called for steps to avert such ban on edible items especially on wheat in future and provide re-

lief to KP people and flour mill industry. He said that at present, there are abundant reserves of wheat in the province of Punjab and the food department under its wheat procurement policy allowed flour mills of Punjab to purchase wheat, however due to ban on transportation of wheat to other provinces, the people are forced to purchase flour at the rate of Rs 3000 to 4000 per 20kg. He said that PFMA-KP requests the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shehbaz Sharif, the Governor KP Ghulam Ali, KP Chief Minister Azam Khan, KP Food Minister, Chief Secretary and the Food Department to allow KP flour mills to freely purchase wheat from the private market of Punjab so that the closed flour mill industry of KP could restart their operation and provide cheap and quality flour to

the people of KP. He urged the Prime Minister to announce a special relief package for KP flour mills so that the unemployed labourers could get back to their jobs. He deplored that a petition over the issue was filed in the Supreme Court of Pakistan in the month of August last year but despite the passage of 10 months, no hearing was conducted. Iqbal said that the Chief Justice of Pakistan should have to take notice of the violation of Article 151 and fixed a date for a hearing on the petition of PFMA as soon as possible. He said that the flour mills industry in the province is in dire straits due to economic crisis and militancy while on the other hand, the Punjab government has imposed on transportation of wheat to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, using the pretext of smuggling.

Huge quantity of arms,ammunition recovered in Kohat

PESHAWAR (APP): Kohat police on Wednesday foiled an attempt of arms' smuggling and recovered a huge quantity of foreign-made arms and ammunition from a truck on Indus Highway, Kohat. DPO Kohat, Jamil ur Rehman told media persons that during an intelligence-based operation, a truck was intercepted at Indus Highway near Toll Plaza and a huge quantity of arms and ammunition was recovered from its secret components. He said during the action two inter-provincial arms smug-

glers were also taken into custody. The recovered arms and ammunition included foreign-made rocket launchers, repeaters, hand grenades and hundreds of cartridges. The recovered arms and ammunition were being smuggled to Peshawar through Darra Adam Khel. The arrested arms smugglers identified as Samiullah and Ayub khan of Kurram district were shifted to Riaz Shaheed police station where a case was registered against them and further investigation was initiated.

Over 239.8mln people enumerated till May 03:PBS

PESHAWAR (APP): The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Wednesday said that during the ongoing 7th population and household census, 239,782,259 people had been enumerated nationwide as of May 03. According to official data, the process of enumeration would continue till May 15 and all the relevant officials have been directed to complete their tasks within the stipulated time. It said that out of 156 districts, 100 percent of work had been completed in 122 districts while 90 percent of work had been completed in the remaining districts, adding that work would continue in big cities like Karachi, Lahore, and Rawalpindi

di till May 15. PBS said that based on the enumerated population till the end of April the annual population growth rate between 2017 and 2023 was 1.92 percent and was expected to rise slightly with the remaining uncounted population being added to the total. It said that the overall growth rate was down from 2.38 percent annually between the 1998 and 2017 censuses. The bureau said that as per the directives of the Prime Minister, complaint centres had been set up at the Tehsil level and people could approach these centres in case of any complaint, adding that PBS could also directly be contacted on the toll-free number 0800-57574.

KP Information Directorate employees,journalists protest against appointment of non cadre DG

PESHAWAR (APP): The employees of the Information Directorate went on strike to protest against the appointment of non cadre Director General Information. The Department Officers Association associated with the Information Directorate also participated in the strike, and senior journalists from tribal districts of South Waziristan, North Waziristan, President Wana Press club Zafar khan Wazir, station manager Wana Pukhtoonkhwa

Radio Zahid Wazir supported the protest. Employees of the Information Directorate demanded the appointment of the DG Information from within the directorate. Recently, senior journalist Shamim Shahid has stopped the press conference of the caretaker information minister against the appointment and said that the appointment of a bureaucrat in this position is a violation of the rights of the employees of the Information Department.

Govt to establish education city in South Waziristan: Official

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN (APP): The government would establish a mega education city in South Waziristan tribal district to equip students with quality education. KP Higher Education Department official told APP on Tuesday that the proposed education city would be setup on 7,000 kanal in South Waziristan where vast land was available for its construction. He said additional land would also be procured for expansion of the education city to cater future requirements. The University of Education Technology Peshawar and Agriculture University of

Science and Technology, Peshawar have shown a willingness to establish their campus in the education city. Besides the University of Science and Technology Swat and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Peshawar, he said other top private sector universities would also establish their campuses there. He said land would be provided by the government to the universities while the latter would construct campuses with own finances. He said the promotion of education was essential to alleviate poverty and combat illiteracy in merged areas.

ANP announces to start new membership campaign

PESHAWAR (APP): Awami National Party (ANP) here on Tuesday announced to start a new membership campaign and reorganization of the party. According to a release issued from Bacha Khan Markaz, a six-member central election commission has also been formulated under the leadership of Mian Iftikhar Hussain to look after the campaign.

It was decided that the membership campaign would start from July 1 till September 30 while village and neighbourhood councils would be constituted from October 1 to November 30. The central membership drive would start in January 2024 and old party organizations would perform constitutional duties till the establishment of new organizations.

KP mulls reduction in BRT subsidy

PESHAWAR (APP): Following reservations shown by the office bearers of the caretaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government and in the wake of financial issues faced by the province, a reduction in the subsidy provided for the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) was being considered. Official sources on Wednesday said that scrutiny of BRT employees inducted from other districts was also being carried out. The sources said a subsidy of Rs 3 billion was being provided to this project on an annual basis, however due to financial issues of the province, a reduction in this subsidy was being consid-

ered. The official sources said that a reduction of Rs one billion was being mulled in the BRT subsidy that would cause an increase in BRT fares and abolishment of additional staff services. The sources said that hundreds of inductions were made in BRT during the past KP government while 55 BRT vehicles were still nonoperational. Despite an expenditure of hefty 92 billion rupees on the BRT project, the sources said the construction of three BRT commercial plazas was yet to be completed and an additional cost of around 12 billion rupees was needed to complete these structures.

Cloudy weather with widespread rain,thunderstorms predicted for KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Wednesday predicted mainly partly cloudy to cloudy weather over most districts of the province during the next 24 hours. However, it said that widespread rain-wind/thunderstorm (with isolated heavy rainfall/ hail-storm) is likely to occur over Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Swat, Bun-

er, Malakand, Shangla, Kohistan, Torghar, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Swabi, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Charsadda, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, Hangu, Orakzai, Karak, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, Bannu, Tank, D. I. Khan, North & South Waziristan districts. During the last 24 hours, mainly partly cloudy/dry weather prevailed over most districts of the province. However, thunderstorm-rain (with isolated heavy rainfall) with gusty winds occurred at scattered places in Abbottabad, Mansehra, Lower & Upper Dir, Swat, Mardan, Nowshera, Mohmand, Bajaur, Kohat and Kurram districts. Rain (record-

ed in mm): Kakul 61, Buner 26, Mal-amajaba 22, Balakot 19, Parachinar 18, Timergara 15, Bajaur (Khaar & Pashat 08), Takht Bhai 06, Dir & Saidu Sharif (each) 05, Mamad Gut 04, Kohat 02, Risalpur & Cherat (each) 01. The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar City 28/19, Chitral 26/10, Timergara 22/14, Dir 23/11, Mirkhani 24/10, Kalam 16/05, Drosh 23/13, Saidu Sharif 25/14, Pattan 23/17, Malam Jabba 12/06, Takht Bhai 28/17, Kakul 28/17, Balakot 20/10, Parachinar 19/05, Bannu 30/18, Cherat 25/13, D.I. Khan 29/19.

Role of free press in egalitarian society undoubted, says KP Caretaker CM

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Azam Khan has said that the role of free press in the establishment of independent and balanced society is undoubted. In a message issued here on Tuesday on the eve of the World Press Freedom Day, he said that journalism is an important element and recognized as fourth pillar of democratic state. He said that the right of the freedom of expression is the foundation of the protection of all other human rights, which is essential for the setting up of a successful and peaceful society. The Caretaker Chief Minister said that the purpose of the observance of the day on one hand is to highlight the importance of the free of expression and pay tributes to those journalists, who have sacrificed their lives in the struggle for the right of expression and supremacy of rights and truth. He was

of the view that the freedom of expression is one of the fundamental human rights, which is also mentioned in the international charter of human rights. He said that in the present modern era wherein right and wrong, truth and lying, injustice and justice are combating each others, the importance of the responsible press and freedom of expression have increased further, saying that is the reason behind the observing of the Press Freedom Day across the world. The chief minister said that media and journalist community have played major role in the salvation of democracy, stability of democratic institutes and protection of human rights in Pakistan. The caretaker chief minister paid glowing tributes to the services of those journalists, who have rendered the sacrifices of their lives during the struggle and prayed for eternal of peace of their souls.

Mohmand Press Club rejects appointment of new DG Information KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Mohmand Press Club on Wednesday rejected the appointment of the new Director General (DG) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Department by the provincial caretaker government and demanded immediate withdrawal of the notification. In an emergency meeting of the press club, President Shakir Ullah Mohmand, Deputy Chairman Tribal Union of Journalists Gul Muhammad and other office bearers said that the appointment of an officer other than the Informa-

tion department as DG Information was unjustified and condemnable. They said that Mohmand Press Club would fully support the stance of Senior Journalist Shamim Shahid, Peshawar Press Club and officials of the Directorate of KP Information and said that any such appointment would not be accepted. They said that if the caretaker government would not withdraw the notification of the new DG, the journalists' community would extend the scope of their protests.

Power suspension in Mingora,Batkhela, Khwazakhela notified

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) on Wednesday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from132 KV Shangla/Besham Grid Station on 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9thand 10th May from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 132 KV Maira and Shangla grid connected with 11 KV feeders will face inconvenience. It said that power supply will also remain suspended from 132 KV Mingora Grid Station 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th May from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. due to which consumers of 11 KV Malam Jabba, Saidu Hospital, Bandhai, Mingora 1,2, Kabal, Mingora 3,4,5, Kabal 2,3,4, Gulkadra, Marghazar, Senior Hospital, Gogdara, Takhtaband, Qambar, Singar, Kanjo-

Cantt, MES, Haji Baba, Saidu Baba, Bara Bandai, Shahdara, Hospital Express, Dardyal and Ajrangfeeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Khwazakhela Grid Station 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th May from 8:00 a.m.to 2:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV New Khwazakhela, Shin, Charbagh, Shangla, Matta, Charbagh Express, Matta 3, Chopriyal, Baidara, DarweshKhela and Express Shawar feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Shangla Grid Station on 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th May from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Alpuri, Puran and YakhTangay feeders will face inconvenience.

GOLD PRICE IN PAK

Gold Rate	24K Gold	22K Gold	21K Gold	18K Gold
Per Tola Gold	Rs 221,000	Rs 202,582	Rs 193,375	Rs 165,750
Per 10 Gram	Rs 189,472	Rs 173,682	Rs 165,788	Rs 142,104
Per Gram Gold	Rs 18,947	Rs 17,368	Rs 16,579	Rs 14,210
Per Ounce	Rs 537,145	Rs 492,381	Rs 470,002	Rs 402,859

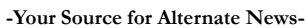
FOREX RATES

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	286.35	289.25
China Yuan	40.99	41.39
Japanese Yen	2.05	2.1
Saudi Riyal	75	78.5
U.A.E Dirham	77.5	78.3
UK Pound	359	362
Euro	313.5	316.5
Australian Dollar	188	190
Canadian Dollar	212	214.5

Emergency Numbers

Organization	Phone No
Rescue 1122 HQrs	091-2264224-25
Rescue 1122 Mardan	0937-9230770
Fire Brigade Cantt:	091-9212534
Fire Brigade City	091-2566666
Police Emergency	091-9212222
Edhi Ambulance	091-2214575
Red Crescent Ambulance	091-2210836
Emergency Ambulance	091-2590846
Civil Defence, Peshawar	091-9212176
Lady Reading Hospital	091-9211430
HMC Peshawar	091-9217140-46
KTH Peshawar	091-9216340-8
Irnam Hospital	091-9216115
Mission Hospital	091-2212371
Al-Khidmat Hospital	091-2215945
Fauji Foundation Hospital	091-9212771-4
Frontier Foundation Blood Services	091-5703463
Hamza Foundation, Peshawar	091-5841632
Sui Gas, Peshawar	091-9213016
Wapda Complaint Peshawar	091-9212041
PIA, Peshawar	091-9213351
Airport Inquiry	114
Railway Inquiry	117





 thekhybermail

 thekhybermail@gmail.com

Journalism in Pakistan enjoying complete freedom now: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Wednesday that the present coalition government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif fully believed in the freedom of the media and it would continue to take practical measures to protect journalists. In a statement on the occasion of Press Freedom Day being observed today (Wednesday) all over the world including Pakistan, she said now journalism in Pakistan was enjoying complete freedom. "The Constitution of Pakistan guarantees freedom of



the press and citizens' right to access accurate information," the minister said. Paying tribute to those journalists who lost their lives in search of truth, she said that journalism in Pakistan went through a difficult period from 2018 to 2022. The minister said that in four years of PTI rule, there was a "mysterious censorship"

in the country that scared journalists. In 2017, Pakistan was ranked 139th in the World Press Freedom Index, due to PTI's anti-media policies, Pakistan's ranking decreased by 12 points. The person sitting in the chair of the Prime Minister was given the shameful title of "Press Freedom Predator", she remarked. She said that Imran Khan not only silenced journalists but got them kidnapped and they were fired at to pressurise them. She said that the PTI's four-year tenure was a dangerous period for journalists as Imran Khan had imposed restrictions on journalism.

Three dacoits killed, cop martyrs in Katcha operation

MULTAN (APP): The operation against dacoits was underway in Katcha area as three robbers were killed while a police jawan martyred. According to South Punjab police spokesperson, the extensive exchange of firing between police and robbers was continued in Chak Imrani area and the Elite force jawan named Ghulam Qasim Jam martyred during the firing. While three robbers were also killed during an exchange of fire. The police have tightened the noose against criminals in Katcha area and the sacrifices of the police personnel would not go in vain. The police entered the hideouts of the bandits and destroyed their barricades and Punjab police jawans were committed to wipe out the notorious dacoits from the area.

75pc wheat procurement target achieved:DFC

SARGODHA (APP): District Food Controller Sargodha Mudassar Javed said that the food department had so far procured 71730 metric tonnes of wheat against the set target of 96000 metric tonnes in the district, which was 75 percent of the total target. Talking to APP here on Wednesday, he said that a total of 3450 applications were received in 13 procurement centers from the farmers to get 'bardana' and 1,175,502 gunny bags were distributed among them which was 22% more the total gunny bags distribution target due to expected bumper yield production of wheat in the district, he added. The DFC said that all the facilities had been ensured in the wheat procurement centers in the district.

DC bans construction on govt lands

LOWER DIR (APP): Deputy Commissioner Itfikhah Ahmad has imposed section 144 in the district and banned all sorts of sale, purchase and exchange and construction on government land for a period of 30 days. A notification issued here on Wednesday said that keeping in view the illegal construction and encroachment on the government land, the DC had imposed the ban to protect the government land from illegal occupation. It said that action would be taken against the violators under section 188 of PPC.

IRSA releases 136,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 136,300 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 138,900 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1439.38 feet and was 41.38 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 32,200 cusecs while outflow was 33,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1122.00 feet, which was 72.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 48,400 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 62,000, 45,700, 32,800 and 9,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 32,200 cusecs of water were released at Nowshera and 17,200 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

ANF foils two bids to smuggle heroin; arrests two

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in two operations managed to foil two bids to smuggle heroin and arrested two accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He said ANF in an operation at Lahore International Airport arrested a Colombo-bound passenger resident of Lahore and recovered 40 heroin-filled

capsules and 428 grams heroin. In another operation at Lahore International Airport, 26 heroin-filled capsules were also recovered from the possession of an Italy-bound passenger resident of Sheikhupura. He said that separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.

ADB's private sector operations boost support for climate action, food security

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank's (ADB) private sector operations in 2022 saw project commitments reach \$1.1 billion with the percentage of projects receiving climate finance double the level of 2021, according to ADB's Private Sector Operations in 2022 – Report on Development Effectiveness. The report, prepared by ADB's Private Sector Operations Department (PSOD), cites a number of landmark projects that received climate-related financing, including ADB's first private sector renewable energy investment in Azerbaijan; a first wind power project in Uzbekistan; and assistance to develop a fleet of electric ferries in Thailand, which is a pioneering initiative in Southeast Asia. ADB's 2022 private sector operations also scaled up support for agribusinesses amid strained global food systems and in line with the bank's goal of expanding assistance to ease food insecurity. This includes the first

project under the Asian Development Fund – Private Sector Window facility, which will help an animal feed producer expand operations in Cambodia, and the first-time use of a sustainability-linked financing agreement in India to boost climate-resilient fishing practices. Other investments were committed to the development of sustainable blue economies, health care, information and communications technology, sustainable transport, water and other urban infrastructure and services, and PSOD's first energy efficiency project in the industry and trade sector since 2012. "ADB's private sector investments helped its developing member countries directly address climate change and food security, while helping small businesses to revive their operations in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic," said ADB Vice-President for Private Sector Operations and Public-Private Partnerships Ashok Lavasa.

IIOJK among the most dangerous places for journalists in world: Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) is one of the most dangerous places in the world where people associated with the press and media are performing their professional duties in the most difficult circumstances. According to a report compiled by Kashmir Media Service Editor, Raies Ahmed Mir, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, today, twenty journalists have been confirmed killed while performing their duties during the Kashmiris' ongoing liberation struggle since 1989. They include Shabbir Ahmed Dad, Mushtaq Ali, Muhammad Shaban Wakeel, a woman scribe Aasiya Jeelani, Ghulam Muhammad Lone, Ghulam Rasool Azad, Pervez Muhammad Sultan, Shujaat Bukhari, Ali Muhammad Mahajan, Syed Ghulam Nabi, Altaf Ahmed Fakhtoo, Saidan Shafi, Tariq Ahmed, Abdul Majid Butt, Javed Ahmed Mir, PN Handoo, Muham-

mad Shafi, Pradeep Bhatia, Ashok Sodhi and Rayees Ahmad Butt. The report pointed out that the journalists face manhandling, abductions, murder attempts, harassment, detentions, summoning to police stations and death threats by Indian Army, police and other agencies almost routinely in the territory. It said that in the occupied territory, almost routinely, the journalists face manhandling, abductions, murder attempts and death threats by the Indian troops and all this has made their everyday work extremely difficult. It revealed that the Kashmiri journalists and many other scribes while performing their professional duties are roughed up, injured and detained by the troops on fake charges in the territory. They were later released after long detentions. Another journalist Qazi Shibli was booked under the black law, Public Safety Act (PSA) on 08 August 2019 and was released on 23 April 2020.

Victim Support Officers posted in Bahawalpur police

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Following the policy and directions of senior officials of the Central Police Headquarters, Victim Support Officers have been posted at police stations in the Bahawalpur district. Bahawalpur Police spokesperson said here that District Police Officer Bahawalpur Syed Muhammad Abbas has issued a notification for the appointment of victim support officers

in police stations. He said that the affected support officers have also been assigned the duty of being in charge of the complaint cell in the police stations. The spokesman further said that such a step was taken to bring more improvement in the performance of police personnel besides providing facilities to people visiting police stations to submit their complaints.

Repair of dilapidated bridge at river Indus demanded

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): The locals demanded the Punjab government to repair the Hakki Super Bridge located in the low-lying area of ??the Indus River near Daira Deen Panah in Kot Addo as it was dilapidated since the 2010 floods. Thousands of people in Khadimwala, Buttwala, Nishan-

wala and Chhajra villages are suffering from numerous problems due to the dilapidated brigade. People have no land connection to the city area and citizens and school-going children face problems in transferring patients or going to their educational institutions respectively.

Police to use drones to identify violators involved in kite flying

MULTAN (APP): Multan Police decided to use drones for the identification of citizens involved in the illegal activity of kite flying. According to official sources, police teams will be deputed at all eight flyovers in the city and they would operate drones for identification of the outlaws. Dolphin Police will also assist in the arrest of the outlaws. During the last four months, Multan police recovered 56,000 kites from citizens and also sealed two factories. The police teams also managed to arrest 456 outlaws. The use of metallic string is injuries for road users,

especially motorcyclists. The outlaws who used to deal in kites have been fined Rs 100,000 and imprisoned for three years. Similarly, police also decided to prescribe the Names of such citizens in character certificates so that the outlaws could not find jobs, said sources in Police Department. Police also warned citizens to avoid kite flying. The owners of the houses will also be booked from where the kite flying activity was done. Citizens have been appealed to inform 15-Police in case anyone was found flying kites.

Srinagar in mess because of G-20 'Tamasha': NC Senior Leader

ISLAMABAD (APP): In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference leader, Omar Abdullah has termed the upcoming G-20 meeting in Srinagar a 'tamasha'. According to Kashmir Media Service, Omar Abdullah in a statement said that the preparations for the same are causing inconvenience to the people of Kashmir valley. While lashing out

at BJP, Omar tweeted, "Things are a mess in Srinagar because of this G-20 tamasha. The actual meeting will probably see most areas locked down and people stuck in their homes. Perhaps the BJP is being sensible sparing the people of Jammu the pain we are suffering here in the valley, hesaid. The G20 has only punished the residents of Srinagar," he added.

Excise dept launches App for physical inspection of vehicles in Punjab

FAISALABAD (APP): Director General Excise and Taxation Punjab Muhammad Ali has said physical inspection of vehicles with Islamabad numbers would be done in Punjab, while this facility would also be available for Punjab vehicles in Islamabad. According to a handout issued here, he said that the step had been taken in the light of the orders of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. He said that for this purpose a mobile app had been introduced through which vehicle registration and chassis number verification in Punjab and Islamabad would be made. The DG said, it was

an important step as there were large number of vehicles with Islamabad number in Punjab and people had to go to Islamabad first to change the ownership of the vehicle. It was a big relief for citizens provided by the government in view of the extremely expensive fuel expenditures, he said. The DG further said that the facility of physical inspection had been provided in Lahore, Faisalabad, Multan and Bahawalpur to cover entire Punjab. He said that the staff of Excise Department Punjab had also been trained to run this program successfully.

SBP organizes memorial lecture to acknowledge contributions of first governor

ISLAMABAD (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Tuesday organized the 24th Zahid Husain Memorial Lecture (ZHML) series to recognise the efforts and contribution of the first governor to the country. Addressing the event titled "ZHML on Democratizing Lending: Challenges and Opportunities for Financial Inclusion in Emerging Economies" Governor SBP Jameel Ahmad said that it was one of the flagship events of the SBP organized to pay tribute to late Zahid Husain. He said that the memorial lectures offered the opportunity to discuss some of the most important economic issues. The "ZHML series started in 1975 on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the SBP, he added. Zahid Husain was

a legendary personality of a very high caliber and repute which is evident from his record of serving at the highest levels. He told the audience that late Zahid started with teaching at Aligarh University, before passing the competitive examination for civil services and joining Pakistan's Finance Department. After partition, he was posted as the first High Commissioner of Pakistan to India, he added. Late Zahid had also served as the Chairman of Taxation Inquiry Committee as well as first Chairman of the Planning Board, thereby authoring the Five-Year Development Plan of the country. He spearheaded the Central Bank of Pakistan through its infancy, which was not an easy task by any means.

MCCI demands police to extend complete security to foreign businessmen, experts

MULTAN (APP): The Multan Chamber Of Commerce & Industry (MCCI) Tuesday urged the police to provide complete security to foreign businessmen, experts and engineers visiting or working in Multan. The demand was made by an MCCI delegation during a meeting with Regional Police Officer (RPO) Sohail Chaudhary here at his office. The delegation consisted of MCCI President Main Rashid Iqbal, SVP Nadeen Sheikh, VP Asim Saeed, former president and Convener Government Liaison Sub-committee Khawaja Muhammad Hussain and ex-pres-

ident DG Chamber Shafiq Patafi and others. Rashid urged the RPO to take effective measures for ensuring security to foreign businessmen, especially Chinese, engineers and other experts because a peaceful and secure environment was vital for trade in the country. He refused the impression that providing security to such people was the job of MCCI as if they visited it for business purposes. RPO Sohail Chaudhary admitted that the promotion of business with linked with a safe environment, and the Special Branch would be given the task in that regard.

Armed forces, security institutions pride of nation: governor Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that the martyrs of the armed forces and security institutions of the country are pride of the nation and their sacrifices will be etched in golden words. Talking to a delegation comprising participants of Gunnery Staff Course Artillery school Nowshera led by Major General Muhammad Umer Bashir during a meeting at the Governor's House here on Tuesday, he said the Pakistan Army is revered across the globe for its professional competence. He emphasized on learning technology and new skills to cope

with the requirements of modern era, adding that no country can be civilized unless it has the rule of law and constitution. He said the media should highlight the problems, but also highlight the positive things. He added, there is a need to see both sides of the picture. The Governor Punjab said that it is very important to research and know the facts before forming an opinion about anything. Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that for the first time pro Vice Chancellors have been appointed in 35 universities out of total 50 public sector universities of Punjab.

Heavy Rains: DG Agriculture cancels leaves of officers, staff

QUETTA (APP): Director General Agricultural Engineering Balochistan Bashir Agha cancelled the leave of all the officers and staff to deal with any kind of emergency in view of the recent rains and flood-like situation in the province and directed them to be present at their place of posting. He said this while talking to the journalists who called on him here at his office on Tuesday. DG Agriculture said that leaves were cancelled on the instructions of the Provincial Agriculture Minister Asad Baloch, and Secretary

Agriculture Umaid Ali Khokhar. “The decision will help deal with any emergency situation effectively,” he emphasized. He further said that bulldozers and other machinery throughout the province have also been kept on standby in view of any emergency situation. “The field officers have been strictly asked to remain in contact with the district administration and cooperate with them,” In response to a question, he noted that negligence on the part of any officer or staff will not be tolerated during the rains.

Ammonia gas leakage from ice factory affects residents

ATTOCK (APP): Scores of people especially women and children were affected by ammonia gas leakage from an under construction ice factory running illegally in a residential area along with GT road in Hassanabdal, police, rescue 1122 and civil defense sources said. According to the information, most of people fainted in gas leakage incidents specially children. On getting information, Rescue 1122 and local administration teams reached the spot and controlled the leakage of the gas. As per reports, the labourers were on routine duty when suddenly the gas started leak-

ing due to defective and substandard gas cylinders. District Emergency Officer Attock Ali Hasnian has said following the incident, rescuers entered the factory using safety gadgets and controlled the gas leakage by closing the main valve of the gas cylinder. According to rescue sources, the gas leakage enveloped the surrounding residential areas which left dozens unconscious who were taken to various hospitals of the area for treatment. He said that liquid ammonia is used as the refrigerant in ice plants as it takes a lot of energy from the surroundings to vaporize.

FDA to construct wall to avoid pollution of industrial units

LAHORE (APP): On the direction of the Office of the Ombudsman Punjab, Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) started construction of a boundary wall at a cost of seven million rupees to protect the residents of FDA City from sewage and industrial wastewater emanating from nearby industrial units. In a statement issued on Wednesday, the spokesman added that the Director General FDA directed the environment protection department and municipal corporation to take action against delinquent industrial units for not properly disposing of industrial waste in Samana village and dumping sewage into the watercourse. These measures aimed to provide the inhabitants with re-

spite from the perils of environmental pollution. In a separate development, the ombudsman office interceded on a complaint of Rai Muhammad Samiullah Khan to ensure the issuance of a BS (Hons) English degree to him by Government College University Faisalabad, the spokesman reported. Meanwhile, besides registering an FIR with the anti-corruption establishment, the excise & taxation department in Gujranwala district initiated departmental proceedings against Inspector Excise Iram Abbas, under the Punjab Employees, Efficiency, Discipline and Accountability Act, 2006, for fraudulently transferring the vehicle of one Ghulam Abbas to her name.

21 new Corona cases reported in last 24 hours: NIH

ISLAMABAD (APP): Health officials on Wednesday said that 21 new Coronavirus cases were reported during the last 24 hours across the country. As per the data shared by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the case positivity ratio was 1.18 percent while eight patients were in critical condition. No death was reported from the Coronavirus in the last 24 hours while 1,780 Covid-19 tests were conducted. Meanwhile, Minister for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, Abdul Qadir Patel said the government has strengthened the role of Border and Health Services in Pakistan to deal

with any sub-variant of Covid-19. The minister said there was a surveillance system at all entry points of the country including airports. There will be rapid tests and screening of passengers at all airports, he added. He added 90 percent of the country’s population already got the Covid-19 vaccine. “An efficient system with a proper management team is fully functional in the country to remain vigilant and is ready to make an emergency plan to deal with any sub-variant of Covid-19,” the minister added. He said the Border and Health Services Pakistan was ensuring the implementation of international health regulations.

Azerbaijan, Pakistan enjoying ties based on ancient, historical traditions of both countries: Envoy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Azerbaijan Ambassador to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov has said that Pakistan and Azerbaijan have very good and friendly relations and these ties are based on ancient historical traditions of both countries. Addressing an event arranged to celebrate the 100th birth anniversary of Heydar Aliyev, the National Leader of the Azerbaijani people, he said, “President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev attaches great importance to Azerbaijan-Pakistan relations, which were constructed by Heydar Aliyev. The ties between the two brotherly countries are at a high level in all fields.” The ambassador further said that Pakistan was one of the first states to recognize Azerbaijan after it declared independence. Heydar Aliyev, he said, was the “architect of the development of Azerbaijan-Pakistan relations”. He attached great importance to Pakistan. On April 9-11, 1996, Heydar Aliyev paid an official visit to Pakistan and during his stay, several documents were signed between Azerbaijan and Pakistan. “That visit played an irreplaceable role in the development of relations between the two countries,” he not-

ed. While sharing about Heydar Aliyev, the envoy said, 2023 was declared the “Year of Heydar Aliyev” and the day would be celebrated solemnly in Azerbaijan and abroad. He said Heydar Aliyev proved that he was a visionary and decisive politician when he first led the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic from 1969-1982. As a result of the intense activities of Heydar Aliyev, great successes were achieved in the economy, industry, agriculture, education, and culture, the envoy said. The adoption of the Constitution of the Azerbaijan SSR in 1978 and the establishment of the Azerbaijani language as the state language are the services of national leader Heydar Aliyev. At that time, when the totalitarian Soviet regime ruled, the determination of the legal basis for the preservation and development of the moral wealth of the Azerbaijani people, especially the language, in the supreme law of the republic was considered a very brave step, the envoy added. In 1991, Heydar Aliyev was elected as chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan.

Community development imperative for sustainable national growth: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said passing on the benefits of development to individuals, communities and under-developed localities was imperative for achieving sustainable national progress. Chairing a meeting on development projects of backward districts, he said the government had prepared a special package for 20 selected under-privileged districts to bring

them at par with other developed areas of the country. Sharing detail of the package, Ahsan Iqbal said development activities would be carried out in 11 selected districts of Balochistan, five of Sindh, three of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and one of Punjab, with 50 per cent contribution by the federal government and 50 per cent of respective provinces. The minister said surveys of the selected backward districts were being conducted to determine the required

development projects of different natures. “We want to bring these districts at par with other developed districts in 5-7 years,” he added. He said different facilities like education, health, communications, agriculture, industries and employment opportunities were being examined in the under-privileged areas to plan the development schemes accordingly. “Ensuring equal distribution of resources in the country is a priority of the government,” he remarked.

Police handover stolen cash to owner

BAHAWALPUR (APP): The district police recovered stolen cash from an accused and handed it over to the owner on Wednesday. According to a Bahawalpur police spokesman, a man lodged a complaint with Civil Lines police that someone had stolen his money. “The police registered FIR and traced the whereabouts of the thief by availing the facility of modern technological devices, information technology and data of offenders,” he said, adding that the police arrested the accused and recovered cash amounting to Rs 250,000 from his possession.

PU contradicts news item regarding ACE raid

LAHORE (APP): A spokesperson of Punjab University (PU) has dismissed some media reports regarding Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab raid at Punjab University to arrest former chief minister Punjab Usman Buzdar as concocted and baseless. In a statement issued here on Tuesday, the PU spokesperson said the former chief minister Sardar Usman Buzdar was neither residing in Punjab University nor anti-corruption authorities conducted any raid inside the university.

Power tariff likely to up by 34 paisa for March

ISLAMABAD (APP): The power tariff is likely to increase 34 paisa per unit for the consumers of XWAPDA power distribution companies under monthly fuel cost adjustment (FCA) mechanism for March. National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) concluded public hearing into the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) petition on behalf of XWAPDA DISCOs here with Chairman NEPRA Tauseef H Farooqi in the Chair. Other members including Masqood Anwar Khan, Rafique Ahmad Shaikh, Mathar iaz Rana and Amina Ahmed were also present on the occasion. The CPPA sought Rs 1.17 per unit increase in the tariff for March. However, as per the authority calculation, the increase stood at 34 paisa. The raise would be applicable to all consumers except lifeline, K-Electric and electric vehicle charging stations. Meanwhile, the authority also concluded hearing into petition of KE for the said period. K-Electric sought Rs 4.49 per unit increase in the tariff for the said period. However, the authority calculated the increase as Rs 3.70 per unit.

Textile Factory Guttled

FAISALABAD (APP): Valuables in a textile factory were reduced to ashes due to a fire in Khurarianwala police limits on Wednesday. A Rescue 1122 spokesman said the fire erupted in Bin Farooq Textile Mills situated at Sheikhpura Road due to unknown reasons. On information, fire fighters of Rescue 1122 reached the spot and brought the fire under control after hectic efforts. However, no loss of life was reported in the incident, he added.

Six Food Points Sealed

FAISALABAD (APP): Punjab Food Authority (PFA) sealed six eateries and discarded 5330 packets of ‘gutka’ during past 24 hours. PFA spokesman said here on Wednesday that PFA teams checked various hotels, restaurants and food shops across the division and sealed six outlets over sale of spurious food items, poor cleanliness and other violations.

On Press Freedom Day, PM pays tribute to journalists for commendable work

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the international community observed World Press Freedom Day on Wednesday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif paid tribute to journalists across the world, particularly those in Pakistan, for their commendable work to inform and educate the people. “On World Press Freedom Day, I pay glowing tributes to journalists across the world, particularly those in Paki-

stan for the commendable work they are doing to inform and educate the people,” the prime minister wrote on Twitter. He said the environment in which the journalists worked was often full of challenges and risks and yet they never faltered in their responsibility. “The watchdog role of journalism has helped the ideas of democracy and transparent governance evolve,” he commented.

US envoy calls on Finance Minister; expresses confidence in Pakistan’s economic policies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Charge’d Affaires of the United States Andrew Schofer on Wednesday called on Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and expressed confidence in the policies and initiatives taken by the government of Pakistan for its economic stability. The envoy also extended his country’s support to give further impetus to the economic and trade relations between the two countries, a Finance Division news release said. During the meeting, the minister exchanged views on remarkable bilat-

eral relations and apprised the envoy of the current challenges being faced by the country, especially on the economic front. Ishaq Dar further communicated about the difficult policy decisions recently being taken by Pakistan aimed at stabilizing the economy that resulted into an upward curve ensuring sustainable and inclusive growth. The minister also informed the US Charge’d Affaires about the on-going International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme and assured his government’s commitment to complete it.

Presidents approves Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) Immunities and Privileges Bill, 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday gave approval to the Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) Immunities and Privileges Bill, 2023. The president gave assent to the bill in the exercise of Article 75 of the Constitution, the President House said.



World Migratory Day to be marked on May 13

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Migratory Bird Day will be marked on May 13 (Saturday) across the globe including Pakistan to highlight the need to protect migratory birds and their habitats. The United Nations is one of the many organizations that support this global awareness campaign. The ‘Blue Jay’ is one of the world’s migratory birds. On the second weekend each May, people around the world celebrate World Migratory Bird Day by organizing public events such as bird festivals,

education programs and bird-watching excursions. Although the event is usually on the second weekend of May, the first World Migratory Bird Day was launched on the weekend of April 8, 9, 2006. The event was created to help turn the world’s attention to the wonders of bird migration and the need for their conservation. Each year, the total number of registered World Migratory Bird Day events has steadily increased along with the number of countries in which these events occurred.

Collective efforts stressed for agriculture university’s development

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Vice Chancellor of Agriculture University Prof. Dr. Shakibullah on Wednesday underlined the need for making collective efforts to take the university to new heights of development. He expressed these views while chairing a meeting of heads of various departments of the university to discuss issues about academic activities. He said education was a key to development and every department of the university had to play a role to equip students with a quality education while keep-

ing in view modern-day challenges. The VC said new programs would be started at the University of Agriculture to enhance opportunities and explore the hidden talents of the youth to keep pace with the changing world and earn a good name for their families and the country. In this regard, there was a need to maintain a good relationship between teacher and student which would help promote an atmosphere of love and affection and ensure an enabling environment for students to have better learning.

AIOU holds Int’l moot on Pakistan-Turkiye Relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): A one-day International Multidisciplinary conference on “Pakistan-Turkiye Relations” was held at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) yesterday. Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr Nasir Mahmood presided over the opening ceremony while the Ambassador of Türkiye to Pakistan, Prof. Dr. Mehmet Pacaci was the chief guest. Prof. Dr Mehmet Pacaci said that Pakistan and Türkiye have deep brotherly relations, both countries have always helped each other in difficult times. He said that Pakistan and Türkiye have historical and ethnic ties and they are also connected to each other culturally. The ambassador appreciated AIOU and

Yunus Emre Institute for organizing this conference to further strengthen the brotherly relations between the two countries. Vice-Chancellor, AIOU Prof. Dr Nasir Mahmood said that this university pays special attention to cooperation with international universities. He said that this conference is a step towards strengthening the research and shared educational interests of both countries. AIOU has signed several MoUs for educational, research, and exchange programs with Turkish universities/institutions including Istanbul University, Ibn Khaldoun University, Anadolu University, ILKE Foundation, and TUG-VA Foundation.

Australia's biggest hydropower project faces 5-year delay

SYDNEY (Agencies): Australia's biggest hydropower project faces a delay of up to two years, likely pushing its start-up out to 2028, the company said on Wednesday, in the latest setback for the A\$5 billion (US\$3.33 billion) renewable energy project. The Snowy 2.0 project is now expected to cost more due to the delay, which the government-owned company blamed on a shortage of skilled workers, com-



plex designs, soft ground and supply chain disruptions. The updated guidance meant the first power could be generated as late as De-

cember 2028. The setback comes as the federal government aims to get 82% of the east coast market's power from renewables by 2030, up from 30% now. The government had first hoped Snowy 2.0 would be built by 2021, but that deadline was later pushed out to 2026. The market will need power from the Snowy 2.0 project to help replace capacity from three coal-fired power stations due to close by 2028.

Ford reports solid profits but EV outlook weighs

NEW YORK (Agencies): Ford reported solid quarterly profits Tuesday behind higher vehicle volumes and improved operating performance, but said vehicle pricing was becoming less favourable compared with last year. Thanks to strong results in conventional auto sales that offset losses in electric vehicles, Ford reported better-than-expected first-quarter results. Profits came in at US\$1.8 billion, compared with a US\$3.1



billion loss in the year-ago period connected to an accounting loss. Revenues jumped 20.2% to US\$41.5 billion. But Ford maintained its full-

year targets, pressuring shares, as executives signalled an evolution from a period of exceptionally lean vehicle inventories of recent times that lifted sticker prices. While pricing remained exceptionally strong in Ford's Pro division aimed at commercial enterprises, chief financial officer John Lawler said pricing was "about flat" in Ford Blue, which comprises best-selling trucks and iconic vehicles such as the Mustang.

Ronaldo tops Forbes' highest-paid athletes list in 2023

JERSEY CITY (Agencies): Cristiano Ronaldo became the world's highest-paid athlete after his move to Saudi Arabian side Al-Nassr nearly doubled his annual playing salary while Paris St Germain duo Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappe round off the top three, according to Forbes. Ronaldo, who joined the Saudi soccer club on a deal until 2025 after leaving Manchester United last year, earned US\$136 million with Forbes saying his annual



playing salary went up to an estimated US\$75 million. Ronaldo's contract has been estimated by media to be worth more than €200 million (US\$219.98

million). PSG forward Messi, 35, was next on the list after bringing home a combined US\$130 million while club teammate and France captain Mbappe – the youngest on the list at 24 – earned US\$120 million to sit third. PSG are owned by Qatar Sports Investments. Los Angeles Lakers player and NBA great LeBron James (US\$119.5 million) and Mexican boxer Canelo Alvarez (\$110 million) rounded out the top five.

S&P slashes First Republic Bank's ratings to 'CC'

CALIFORNIA (Agencies): S&P Global on Tuesday slashed First Republic Bank's credit rating deeper into junk territory after California banking regulators seized the US lender and sold its assets. S&P cut its rating to 'CC' from 'B+' and said it expects default to be a "virtual certainty". On Monday, JPMorgan Chase & Co struck a deal with the US Federal Deposit Insurance



Corp (FDIC) to take control of most of the San Francisco-based bank's

assets. Since JPMorgan assumed the substantial majority of First Republic's assets, it is most likely that the lender would default on any other senior financial obligations given what would be an insufficient remaining asset base, S&P said. S&P also lowered credit ratings on First Republic's subordinated debt and preferred stock to 'D' from 'B-'.

US lawmakers query Shein, Adidas, Nike over Uyghur rights concerns

NEW YORK (Agencies): Multiple groups of US lawmakers have sought reassurances this week about clothing giant Shein and other brands facing allegations their products use forced Chinese labour or material from regions where such conditions allegedly occur. On Tuesday, a group of lawmakers sent letters to the CEOs of Adidas, Nike, Shein and Chinese shopping app Temu with questions about their supply chains. In the letters, seen by



AFP, the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the US and the Chinese Communist Party cited witness testimony that alleged Nike and Adidas might

be sourcing materials from China's Xinjiang region, in possible violation of US law. "We would like to offer" Nike and Adidas "an opportunity to respond to these serious allegations and to provide information regarding" compliance with the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, the letters read. The committee also reached out to Temu and Shein, asking their executives to explain how they verify the compliance of their supply chains with US law.

Dollar on defensive as markets await Fed's rate policy

SINGAPORE (Agencies): The dollar was subdued on Wednesday, weighed by bearish US labour market data as investors fretted over the US debt ceiling and banking sector risks while waiting for the Federal Reserve's policy decision later in the day. US job openings fell for a third straight month in March and layoffs increased to the highest in more than two years, data showed on Tuesday, offering some hope that softening in the labour market could



aid the Fed's fight against inflation. The dollar index, which measures the US currency against six rivals, eased 0.029% to 101.820 after sliding 0.245% on Tuesday. The US central

bank is widely expected to raise interest rates by 25 basis points when it concludes a two-day meeting on Wednesday and investor focus will be on whether the Fed hints at a pause or further tightening. "The reaction by currencies will come from whether the post-meeting statement and press conference are deemed 'hawkish' or 'dovish'," said Joseph Capurso, head of international and sustainable economics at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

Saudi PMI hits 59.6 in April as non-oil business activities improve

RIYADH (Agencies): Saudi Arabia's overall non-oil business activities witnessed an improvement in April, as strong domestic demand triggered an increase in new orders at the fastest rate since September 2014, an economy tracker revealed. The latest Riyadh Bank Saudi Arabia Purchasing Managers' Index report, formerly known as the S&P Global Saudi Arabia PMI, revealed that the Kingdom's PMI went up to 59.6 in April from 58.7



in March. This is fractionally lower than the eight-year peak in February, when the metric hit 59.8. According to the index, PMI readings above the

50-mark show non-oil private sector growth, while those below 50 signal contraction. Naif Al-Ghaith, the chief economist at Riyad Bank, said: "April PMI data highlighted another steep expansion of business activity across the Kingdom's non-oil private sector economy. We have witnessed rising tourism numbers, higher consumer spending and new business opportunities related to major infrastructure projects."

World Economic Forum report: 36 percent of experts expect weak economic growth in MENA

DUBAI (Agencies): Experts are evenly divided on their economic predictions for the near future, in particular the prospects of a global recession this year: 45 percent of those surveyed said it is likely and the same proportion said it is unlikely, according to the latest Chief Economists Outlook report by the

World Economic Forum. "The latest edition of the Outlook highlights the uncertainty of current economic developments," said Saadia Zahidi, the forum's managing director. The May 2023 edition of the quarterly report contained some signs of emerging optimism but the disruption in the banking industry this year has

adversely affected global prospects. Almost 80 percent of chief economists believe central banks face a trade-off between managing inflation and maintaining the stability of the financial sector, and a similar percentage expect central banks to struggle to reach their inflation targets.

IBM plans to replace 7,800 jobs with AI

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The CEO of IBM said he was eyeing to downsize the tech giant's back office workforce by nearly a third because those jobs are being made redundant by advances in artificial intelligence. In an interview with Bloomberg on Monday, Arvind Krishna said that his company would enact a pause in hiring in those roles, and potentially reduce the payroll by 7,800 jobs over several years. "These non-customer-facing roles amount to roughly 26,000 workers," Krishna said. "I could easily see 30% of that getting replaced by AI and automation over a five-year period." Back office employees are only a fraction of IBM's roughly 260,000 workers, and



the company has continued to hire in certain roles, even after recently letting go about 5,000 workers in other areas, the Bloomberg report said. In a statement to AFP on Tuesday, an IBM spokesman cautioned that "there is no blanket hiring 'pause' in place" at the company, based in Armonk, New York.

UK regulator looks to simplify London listing rules

LONDON (Agencies): Britain's financial regulator on Tuesday launched proposals to simplify London stock market flotation rules, amid fierce competition from New York. The Financial Conduct Authority "proposes to reform and streamline the listing rules in the UK to help attract a wider range of companies, encourage competition and improve choice for investors", it said in a statement. The development comes as London's top-tier FTSE 100 shares index battles to remain a global force after Brexit. London has already lost its crown as the top European trading hub following Britain's departure from the European Union in early 2021, despite



earlier post-Brexit reforms. The FCA said Tuesday that some issuers and advisers regarded rules for UK listings as "too complicated and onerous". The watchdog proposes "significant changes" to the rulebook, including replacing standard and premium listing segments with one single category for equity shares in commercial firms.

Dyson to build next-gen battery plant in Singapore

SINGAPORE (Agencies): Consumer electronics giant Dyson Ltd will open a new plant in Singapore to manufacture next-generation batteries for new products as it ramps up software, artificial intelligence and product development globally. The new facility, spanning the size of 53 basketball courts, is expected to be fully operational by 2025. It is part of Dyson's ongoing £2.75 billion (US\$3.4 billion) five-year investment plan, the Singapore-headquartered company said in a statement Wednesday. Dyson will also open research and development campuses in the Philippines and the UK as part of the plan. The three new sites will boost the



company's engineering and manufacturing capability to bring technology to market more quickly, it said. In March last year, Dyson opened its new global headquarters in Singapore and announced plans to invest US\$1.1 billion in expanding its research and engineering capabilities in the city-state.

Tesla resumes US orders for Model 3 at lower price

NEW YORK (Agencies): Tesla Inc has resumed taking orders for its Model 3 long-range version in the US, the company's website showed late on Tuesday, after a temporary halt last year due to delivery backlogs. The long-range version of the entry-level Model 3 is priced at US\$47,240 currently, about 18.5% less than the US\$57,990 it was priced at last August when Tesla halted taking orders in the US and Canada. "Waitlist is too long. Will enable again as we ramp production," Chief executive officer Elon Musk tweeted at that time in response to a user's inquiry about the discontinuation of orders. Tesla expects to resume delivery of the



long-range Model 3 electric sedan in June, according to the website. However, it is still not accepting orders in Canada, the website showed. The long-range version of the entry-level Model 3 has a range of more than 523km on a single charge. To boost sales, Tesla has been regularly modifying the prices of its vehicles since the start of this year.

India's services activity hits 13-year high

NEW DELHI (Agencies): India's services activity accelerated at the quickest pace in almost 13 years in April, signalling that stronger demand for everything from technology to finance will keep Asia's third-largest economy firmly on the path to world-beating growth. The S&P Global India services purchasing managers' index rose to 62 last month, the strongest level since June 2010, according to a statement Wednesday. The gauge was at 57.8 in March. A reading above 50 indicates expansion in activity, while a number below that denotes contraction.



The strength in the services sector which contributes to more than 50% of gross domestic product shows the economy is in relatively good shape, unlike some manufacturing-reliant economies that have seen factory activity disappoint amid a darkening global trade outlook.

Banking fears may prompt another Fed rate hike

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The US Federal Reserve is widely expected to raise its benchmark lending rate for a 10th – and possibly final – time on Wednesday, as it looks to bring down inflation while aiming to prevent fresh banking concerns from spreading. The Fed has been on an aggressive campaign of interest-rate hikes since March last year, rapidly raising rates nine times in a row to help target high inflation, which remains stubborn-

ly above its long-term target of 2%. "Getting inflation back down to 2% has a long way to go and is likely to be bumpy," Fed Chair Jerome Powell said during a press conference after the March rate decision. With the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) widely expected to raise its base rate by a quarter-point on Wednesday, analysts and traders are instead keeping a keen eye out for any change to the Fed's forward guidance on interest-rates.

More to come from record-breaking Haaland,says Guardiola

MANCHESTER (Agencies): Manchester City striker Erling Haaland has broken several records this season but the Norway international still wants to improve his game, manager Pep Guardiola said. Haaland on Sunday became the first player in England's top flight to score 50 goals in all competitions in a season since Tom Waring did so for Aston Villa in 1931. The 22-year-old is level with Alan Shearer and Andy Cole for a record-equalling haul of 34 goals in a Premier League campaign and Guardiola said there is more to come



from the former Borussia Dortmund striker. "Always I said many times with Erling the future will be tough because you compare what he's done," Guar-

diola told reporters on Tuesday. "If he doesn't score the goals like he's scoring the people will say he's in a bad situation but he can still improve. A lot. "We spoke about that, in the movement and the game itself he can improve. I think he has that. I have the feeling he has a desire to get better as a football player. He can do it." Reigning champions City host West Ham United later on Wednesday as they look to regain the top spot from Arsenal. Guardiola's side are two points behind with two games in hand.

Talor Gooch and Co.set for LIV Golf Tulsa May 12-14

LONDON/WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA (Agencies): Fresh off a successful stretch of tournaments in Australia and Singapore that featured massive crowds, multiple holes-in-one, a playoff finish and the first back-to-back individual winner in league history, LIV Golf will bring its star-studded lineup to Cedar Ridge Country Club in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma for LIV Golf Tulsa, May 12-14. Showcasing many of the sport's biggest names, LIV Golf's 12 teams are led by the likes of four-time major winner Brooks Koepka, reigning Open cham-



pion Cameron Smith, World Golf Hall of Famer Phil Mickelson, two-time major winner Dustin Johnson, 2017 Masters champion Sergio Garcia and 2020 US Open champion Bryson DeChambeau. More than a quarter (13)

of the league's global field are major champions, with 24 major victories among them. The field of 48 players represents 16 different nations, includes 18 Olympians, and has made 125 combined appearances in the Ryder Cup and Presidents Cup, with more than half of the league having competed in the biennial team events. In total, LIV Golf League players have amassed 533 worldwide wins across multiple tours, and four players have held the title of world No. 1. Local fans will welcome many familiar faces when the players tee off on May 12.

Knicks top Heat 111-105,even Eastern Conference semifinal series

NEW YORK (Agencies): Jalen Brunson scored 30 points and keyed the run the New York Knicks needed just in time to get by a Miami Heat team playing without Jimmy Butler, evening the Eastern Conference semifinals at a game apiece with a 111-105 victory Tuesday night. Julius Randle returned from a sprained left ankle that sidelined him in Game 1 with 25 points, 12 rebounds and eight assists, and RJ Barrett scored 24 points for



the No. 5-seeded Knicks. Josh Hart finished with 14 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists. But it was Brunson,

who pointed the blame at himself and said he had to be better after going 0 for 7 from 3-point range in the opener, who made the biggest plays in a game the Knicks trailed much of the way. Caleb Martin scored 22 points in place of Butler for the Heat, who host Game 3 on Saturday afternoon. They will hope to have Butler, the leading scorer in the playoffs who sat out after spraining his right ankle late in their 108-101 victory in the opener.

Alcaraz gets revenge over Zverev,Medvedev out of Madrid Open

MADRID (Agencies): World No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz breezed past Alexander Zverev 6-1, 6-2 to reach the Madrid Open quarterfinals on Tuesday. Third-ranked Daniil Medvedev crashed out against Russian compatriot Aslan Karatsev, 7-6 (7/1), 6-4, while Stefanos Tsitsipas eased through against Bernabe Zapata Miralles 6-3, 6-1. In the women's competition world No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka was forced to sweat by Mayar Sherif but eventually came through 2-6, 6-2,



6-1 to reach the semifinals. Top-seeded Spaniard Alcaraz, who also beat Zverev in last season's Madrid final, gained re-

venge for the German's triumph when they met later in the 2022 French Open quarterfinals. Two-time Madrid winner Zverev, 26, was blown away in the opening set. He improved a little in the second but not sufficiently to trouble Alcaraz, who moved his opponent around at will. "I played at a great level, I didn't let him dominate, I went on the attack the whole time, and above all, I returned really well," said Alcaraz, who won in one hour 22 minutes.

Cambodia poised for SEA Games with Chinese flavour

PHNOM PENH (Agencies): Cambodia will welcome thousands of athletes from across the region when the Southeast Asian Games begin on Friday with an opening ceremony at a new stadium built and paid for by China. The capital Phnom Penh will stage the 32nd edition of the biennial SEA Games, the first time Cambodia plays host. More than 11,000 athletes, coaches and delegates from 10 other countries will descend on the country



for the Games, which run until May 17. Regional glory is up for grabs but competitors will also have one eye

on the Asian Games in China in September-October and next year's Paris Olympics. Southeast Asia's finest will take part in a host of competitions including athletics, swimming, badminton and football, as well as more obscure sports such as Kun Bokator, an ancient Cambodian martial art. The Games will welcome world-class athletes such as pole-vaulter Ernest John Obiena and weightlifter Vanessa Sarno, both from the Philippines.

Outstanding Olmo steers ten-man Leipzig to German Cup final

BERLIN (Agencies): RB Leipzig forward Dani Olmo scored one and set up three more first-half goals as the German Cup holders returned to the final, with a 5-1 win at Freiburg on Tuesday. In a rematch of last year's final, which Leipzig won on penalties, Freiburg started brightly but two goals in 90 seconds put them squarely on the back foot. Olmo headed Leipzig in front from a Dominik Szoboszlai cross after 13 minutes and assisted Benjamin Henrichs



shortly after. The Spain forward teed up Szoboszlai and France winger Christopher Nkunku to give the visitors a commanding 4-0 lead at half

time. Leipzig were reduced to ten men with more than 30 minutes remaining when Josko Gvardiol pulled down Roland Sallai outside the box but Freiburg were unable to mount a comeback. Freiburg scored a late goal through Michael Gregoritsch, but Szoboszlai scored again from the spot in injury time for a dominant win. Promoted to the first-division for the first time in 2016, Leipzig have now appeared in four of the past five German Cup finals.

World-class athletes to legends: stars to watch at SEA Games

PHNOM PENH (AFP/APP): The Southeast Asian Games begin in Phnom Penh on Friday with the Cambodian capital welcoming thousands of athletes from the region. AFP Sport picks out some of the stars hoping to light up the event. - Vanessa Sarno (Philippines) - With Olympic champion Hidilyn Diaz skipping Phnom Penh to focus on qualifying for Paris 2024, heir apparent Sarno will carry Philippine weightlifting hopes. The 19-year-old should be up to the challenge, having won an SEA Games gold last year in Hanoi, where she set a new Games record in the women's 71kg. - Puripol Boonson (Thailand) - The region's teenage sprint king is also the world's fastest-ever under-18



100m runner with a time of 10.09sec last year. He won gold in the 100m, 200m and 4x100m relay at the last SEA Games, while still only 16, but just missed out on a bronze months later at the World Athletics U20 Championships. - Nguyen Thi Oanh (Vietnam) - The 27-year-old runner won three Games golds on home soil last time, in the 1500m, 5000m and

3000m steeplechase. She will defend all three this time, across two grueling days. - Carlos Yulo (Philippines) - Because of rules limiting the number of events athletes can compete in, the star gymnast will only take part in four events, on bars and all-around. The former floor and vault world champion will be confident of adding to his seven gold and seven silver SEA Games medals, but may have slight fitness worries. He pulled out of a meet in Egypt in late April after reportedly suffering an ankle injury during training. - Shanti Pereira (Singapore) - The sprinter is in the form of her life, clocking new national women's records in the 100m (11.37sec) and 200m (22.89sec) last month.

No substitute for experience as Sabalenka rallies past Sherif

MADRID (Agencies): Aryna Sabalenka said her experience playing at the top level of women's tennis was key to helping her pull through difficult matches after the world number two fought back from a set down to beat unseeded Egyptian Mayar Sherif at the Madrid Open. Sabalenka, who stopped consulting a psychologist in pre-season and took the mental aspect of her game into her own hands, said that earlier in her career she lacked the composure to win matches that were not going her way. "I'd get crazy and I would keep screaming, keep throwing the racket probably and keep giving her so many chances to win," the Belarusian, who won the quarterfinal 2-6, 6-2, 6-1, told



reporters. Sabalenka, who won her first Grand Slam title at the Australian Open this year, said the top players were able to take their opportunities by staying focused while younger players tended to overthink things. "You can play with more passion. You're not going over-crazy about things. When you see an opportunity, you take it," she added.

McIlroy takes aim at remaining majors after Masters disappointment



ORLANDO (Agencies): Rory McIlroy's disappointing performance at the Masters left the Northern Irishman needing to take a break from the game but the world number three said he is ready to return to the Tour with renewed focus on the remaining three majors of the year. McIlroy, who won the last of his four majors in 2014, was looking to become the sixth player to complete the men's career Grand Slam at Augusta National but missed the cut by two shots. He then withdrew from the

RBC Heritage at Hilton Head Island in South Carolina, a decision which cost him US\$3 million and drew plenty of criticism from his fellow professionals. McIlroy told Golf Channel on Tuesday he needed the time away. "Obviously, after the disappointment of Augusta, and it's been a pretty taxing 12 months mentally, so it was nice to just try to disconnect and get away from it," he said. "I think for me it was a nice reset because I still had to realise that there's three more majors this year, there's a ton left to play for," added the 33-year-old, who will return at this week's Wells Fargo Championship in North Carolina. The PGA Championship, the second major of the year, will be held later in May followed by the US Open in June and The Open Championship in July.

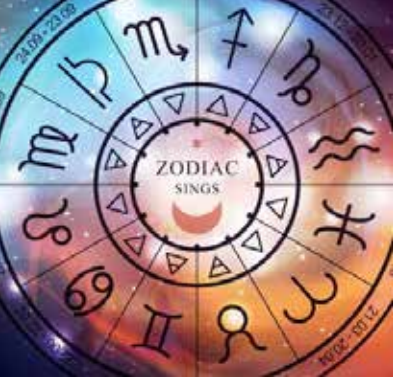
Zhang makes history for China by reaching Madrid last eight

MADRID (Agence): Zhang Zhizhen made history at the Madrid Open as he stunned American Taylor Fritz on Tuesday to become the first Chinese player to reach an ATP Masters 1000 quarterfinal. The 26-year-old continued his dream run with a 3-6, 7-6(5), 7-6(8) defeat of the eighth seed. Women's world number two Aryna Sabalenka survived a scare against unseeded Egyptian Mayar Sherif, losing the opening set before powering back to win 2-6, 6-2, 6-1. The Belarusian was not at her best and made 37 unforced errors in the match, but the Australian Open champion bounced back midway through the second set to win 10 games in a row. Sherif, who has won one WTA 250 title in her career, was gifted the first



game, winning all her points through unforced errors from Sabalenka to break before building a 3-1 lead. The second seed saved a set point at 5-1 but Sherif, playing in her first WTA 1000 quarterfinal after beating three seeded players, served out to take the opening set. The Egyptian took the lead in the second set too before Sabalenka, who was a break down, finally found her groove to break four times and force a decider.

DAILY HOROSCOPE: MAY 4, 2023



a while, maybe not an antique, exactly, but something you see in an auction or thrift store or online that's irresistible!

- **VIRGO**: Your heart is stronger than your head right now, and you should let it win every battle! It's one of those days when you need to try to do what you feel is right no matter what the cost.
- **LIBRA**: Don't feel too bad if you need to do things your way today. Sometimes that's all you can do. If other folks get all riled up, that's their problem. See if you can push them off for one more day.
- **SCORPIO**: Someone you might not expect gives you the respect you know you deserve. It's a good time for you to take bold steps and assert yourself in places you may have been submissive in the past.
- **SAGITTARIUS**: Try to spend some time on your own today. It shouldn't be all that hard, and you're feeling a little moody so it should all work out. Someone needs to get through to you, but they can wait.
- **CAPRICORN**: If things look dire, turn to friends for help. More than one of them is concerned enough to drop what they're doing to give you what you need. It should all end up working out quite well for you.
- **ACQUARIUS**: If you need to shut the door, make sure you have the option. Things are going to be weird and noisy and distracting today, and probably the best you can do is cloister yourself away for a bit.
- **PISCES**: You most likely need to sign something, or at least agree to it in principle, and now is the time for that kind of decision. It might not feel exactly right, but it's certainly the right thing to do.
- **LEO**: You may feel the urge to purchase something that's been around for

Global polycrisis creating uphill battle to end child marriage – UNICEF

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Despite a steady decline in child marriage in the last decade, multiple crises including conflict, climate shocks, and the ongoing fallout from COVID-19 are threatening to reverse hard-earned gains, a new report issued by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) said. Currently, one in five young women aged 20 to 24, were married as children, versus nearly one in four a decade ago, according to the report, which is entitled, Is an End to



Child Marriage within Reach? Latest trends and future prospects. "The world is engulfed by crises on top of crises that are crushing the hopes and

dreams of vulnerable children, especially girls who should be students, not brides," UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell said in a statement. "Health and economic crises, escalating armed conflicts, and the ravaging effects of climate change are forcing families to seek a false sense of refuge in child marriage. We need to do everything in our power to ensure that their rights to an education and empowered lives are secured."

Greece bans party linked to neo-Nazi group from May vote

ATHENS (AFP/APP): Greece's Supreme Court on Tuesday banned a party founded by a jailed member of the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn group from contesting the May 21 general election. The far-right Hellenes party of Ilias Kasidiaris, a convicted leader of the now disbanded Golden Dawn, will not be able to field candidates, the court's assembly ruled by a majority of nine to one, a legal source said. The small nationalist party Hellenes was formed in 2020 by Kasidiaris, the former spokesman and lawmaker of Golden Dawn, a few months before he was sent to prison. He was among several top Golden Dawn members handed heavy prison sentences in October 2020 by a court that labelled the neo-Nazi



party a criminal organisation. The judges deemed Hellenes to be a "continuation of Golden Dawn", the legal source said. Greek government spokesman Akis Skertsos welcomed what he called a "historic decision" that would prevent "the enemies of democracy" from sitting in parliament. "It's our common duty to protect democracy," he added.

Loneliness as Deadly as Smoking – US Surgeon General



WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Widespread loneliness in the U.S. poses health risks as deadly as smoking up to 15 cigarettes daily, costing the health industry billions of dollars annually, the U.S. surgeon general said Tuesday in declaring the latest public health epidemic. About half of U.S. adults say they've experienced loneliness, Dr. Vivek Murthy said in an 81-page report from his office. "We now know that loneliness is a common feeling that many people experience. It's like hunger or thirst. It's a feeling the body sends us when something we need for survival is missing,"

Murthy told The Associated Press in an interview. "Millions of people in America are struggling in the shadows, and that's not right. That's why I issued this advisory to pull back the curtain on a struggle that too many people are experiencing." The declaration is intended to raise awareness around loneliness but won't unlock federal funding or programming devoted to combatting the issue. Research shows that Americans, who have become less engaged with worship houses, community organizations and even their own family members in recent decades, have steadily reported an increase in feelings of loneliness. The number of single households has also doubled over the last 60 years. But the crisis deeply worsened when COVID-19 spread, prompting schools and workplaces to shut their doors and sending millions of Americans to isolate at home away from relatives or friends.

Death toll increases to 95 after Rwanda flash floods

KIGALI (Agencies): At least 95 people have been killed in western Rwanda in flooding triggered by heavy rains. "Flooding and landslides caused by heavy rains last night in Western Province has caused over 55 deaths," government spokesperson Yolande Makolo initially told reporters. But François Habitegeko, governor of Rwanda's Western Province, later told Reuters news agency that the death toll stood at 95. A video clip posted on the state-run Rwanda Broadcasting Agency's Twitter account showed muddy water running along a road and houses that had been destroyed. "It rained heavily all night, causing immense suffering in the districts of Ngororero, Rubavu, Nyabihu, Rutiro, and Karongi," Habitegeko said. The hardest-hit districts in his prov-



ince were Rutiro, with 26 dead, Nyabihu with 19, and 18 each in Rubavu and Ngororero, he added. "The soil was already soaked from the previous days of rain, which caused landslides that closed roads," added the governor. Habitegeko said the rain started at about 6pm (16:00 GMT) on Tuesday and the River Sebeya burst its banks. The Rwanda Meteorology Agency had said the East African nation is expected to receive above-average rainfall in May.

Part-Arab models Imaan Hammam, Gigi Hadid shut down Met Gala carpet



NEW YORK (Agencies): Dutch Moroccan Egyptian model Imaan Hammam shut down the Met Gala carpet this week wearing a white dress by Irish designer Michael Stewart's label Standing Ground. The form-fitting, long sleeved dress had cream-colored fringe detailing at the waist. US Palestinian Dutch model Gigi Hadid was also in attendance. She wore a Givenchy ensemble in black with feathers, a drop waist and sheer train in tulle. It took more than 300 hours to make. Meanwhile, Rihanna turned heads encased in white camellias on a jacket with a long train

gown. In the spirit of Lagerfeld himself, Rihanna and her Valentino couture had the carpet to themselves save her partner, A\$AP Rocky, who wore a red tartan skirt over crystal-studded jeans with a train of his own. Around her neck was a short Bulgari necklace in Akoya cultured pearls and pearl-shaped diamonds. Lagerfeld was the honoree at the A-list gala with many in the crowd of about 400 dressed in vintage looks from the fashion houses where he worked during a career of more than 60 years. Dua Lipa walked in a white Chanel ballgown from the fashion house's archive and Nicole Kidman chose a look Lagerfeld himself made for her 20 years ago. Lipa, a gala co-chair, wore a Tiffany & Co. diamond around her neck. She called her cream-colored dress, by Chanel from 1992, "very, very special" as it has been on her mood boards.

BP pays \$1 Billion in UK windfall taxes



LONDON (Agencies): BP has paid around \$1 billion in taxes on its UK North Sea profits since the so-called windfall tax was introduced in May 2022, according to estimates from Bloomberg. During the first quarter of 2023, BP paid around \$300 million for the Energy Profits Levy (EPL), as the windfall tax is formally known, the supermajor's CFO Murray Auchincloss told Bloomberg in an interview on Tuesday, when BP announced its first-quarter profits. The tax paid in the first quarter brings the total taxes paid for the EPL to some \$1 billion, according to Bloomberg. Despite falling oil and gas prices, BP on Tuesday reported \$5 billion in profits for the first quarter, higher than the earnings for the fourth quarter of 2022 and above consensus estimates, thanks to what it described as "exceptional" gas trading and "a very strong oil trading result." Excluding ad-

justing items, the underlying effective tax rate (ETR) for the first quarter was 39%, compared with 33% for the same period a year ago, BP said. "The higher underlying ETR for the first quarter reflects the UK Energy Profits Levy on North Sea profits and other items," it noted. Last week, another supermajor operating in the UK, TotalEnergies, said that its average tax rate of 41.4% in the first quarter of 2023 compares with 38.7% in the first quarter of 2022, mainly as a result of the higher tax rate for Exploration & Production, related notably to the Energy Profits Levy in the UK.

Myanmar junta pardons 2,153 prisoners jailed for dissent against military



YANGON (Agencies): Myanmar's junta on Wednesday announced it had pardoned more than 2,000 prisoners jailed under a law that criminalises encouraging dissent against the military. The military pardoned "2,153 prisoners serving sentences under Penal Code 505 (a) to mark Kasone Full Moon Day", a Buddhist festival, the junta said in a statement. The law -- which carries a maximum three-year jail term -- has been widely used in the junta's crackdown on dissent since it seized power in February 2021. The military ordered the pardons "for the peaceful mind of the people and on humanitarian grounds," the statement said. Those who re-offend will have to serve the remainder of their sentence with an additional penalty, it added. More than 21,000 people have been arrested since the military ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's government and plunged the country into turmoil, according to a local monitoring group. At least 170 journalists have been arrested since the putsch, according to the United Nations. The country typically grants amnesties to thousands of prisoners to mark national holidays or Buddhist festivals.

Kosovo, Serbia vow to work together to identify war missing



BRUSSELS (AFP/APP): The leaders of Kosovo and Serbia promised to work together to urgently identify the remains of people still missing following the 1990s conflict, the EU's foreign policy chief said Tuesday. Of the 6,065 cases of people who have gone missing following the 1998-99 war, 1,621 remain unresolved, Josep Borrell said. The pledge came after Kosovo's Prime Minister Albin Kurti and Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic held talks in Brussels mediated by the European Union to normalise ties between the two countries. The fate of the missing is one of many hot-button issues thwarting the normalisation. Kurti and Vucic "reaffirmed the importance of resolving the fate of the remaining missing persons, to bring closure to the suffering of their loved ones and to foster lasting reconciliation and peace", Borrell said in a statement. They also "noted the urgent need for additional joint efforts to alleviate the situation of the affected families and the wider community", he added. The "operational details" will be agreed at the next meeting of the EU-facilitated talks at the chief negotiators' level. "Resolving the issue of missing persons is not only a humanitarian obligation. It is also a crucial enabler for reconciliation and trust between people," Borrell said.

Remains of missing Australian man found in crocodiles



SYDNEY (AFP/APP): The remains of an Australian man who went missing on a fishing trip in crocodile-infested waters have been found inside two of the reptiles, police said Wednesday. The 65-year-old victim, named in Australian media as Kevin Darmody, had gone fishing on Saturday in far north Queensland as part of a group, that shooed away a crocodile so they could start fishing, police said. People fishing with the pub manager heard him "yell, scream very loudly, followed by a large splashing of water", said Cairns police inspector Mark Henderson. Rangers later used rifles to shoot and kill two crocodiles -- one measuring about 4.2 metres (14 feet) and the other 2.8 metres (nine feet) -- found upstream from where the group was fishing within Lakefield National Park. Examinations found human remains in both of the predators, police said. Henderson described it as a "tragic, tragic ending". The man was "a very nice fellow" from the rural north Queensland town of Laura, which has a population of about 130 people, Henderson said. Queensland state wildlife official Michael Joyce urged people to be wary.

Police detain man after 'shotgun cartridges' thrown into Buckingham Palace



LONDON (Agencies): Police in London on Tuesday arrested a man allegedly armed with a knife and accused of throwing suspected shotgun cartridges into the grounds of Buckingham Palace. The arrest, at about 7:00 pm (1800 GMT), comes just days before King Charles III's coronation, which will be attended by global royalty and world leaders amid a massive security operation. The Metropolitan Police said officers also conducted a controlled explosion on a suspicious bag the man was carrying "as a precaution". It later added that it was not treating the matter as terrorism-related at this time. The man has been arrested on suspicion of possession of an offensive weapon after he was searched and a knife was found, the London force said in an update some three hours after the incident.

Suspect in Texas neighbor slayings arrested



Washington (AFP/APP): A man accused of massacring five neighbors after they asked him to stop firing his rifle in his yard was captured Tuesday after a days-long manhunt, Texas law enforcement said. Francisco Oropesa had eluded authorities since the shooting Friday in the small town of Cleveland in southeastern Texas. "We now have this man in custody," San Jacinto County Sheriff Greg Capers told reporters at a press conference Tuesday night.

CLASSIFIED

COMMANDER ESTATES

Property Consultants

Lt Cdr (R)

Asmat Ullah Tariq
CEO

Authorized Dealer for

- DHA Peshawar

- New Peshawar Valley

0345-8282666

0336-8282666



UG-356 Deans Trade
Center, Peshawar Cantt.



commanderestates@gmail.com

ESTB: 2020



MILK

- 100% Pure and Farm Fresh Whole Milk
- Freshly packed pollution and dust free
- No preservatives and no harmful medications

Also provide:



0336-9036364

This Newspaper has been
digitally printed at



Khyber Prints

- Instant Digital Printing Solutions -

First Floor, Town Heights, Old Bara Road,
University Town - Peshawar
Cell/Whatsapp: 0309-0055000
E-mail: khyberprints@gmail.com

