Editor: Omer Rizwan

US, Philippines vow joint defense 'anywhere in the South China Sea'

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The U.S. and the Philippines unveiled guidance on Wednesday to modernize their alliance in the face of an increasingly assertive China, as President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. visits Washington this week. The Pentagon released the bilateral defense guidelines to modernize cooperation after Marcos' meeting with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. "Secretary Austin and President Marcos reaffirmed the United States and the Philippines' ironclad alliance commitments under the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty and their shared resolve to defend against armed attacks on their aircraft, public vessels, and armed forces - to include their respective Coast Guards - in the Pacific, including anywhere in the South China Sea," Pentagon spokesman Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder said. "The leaders discussed ways to coordinate more closely with like-minded nations-including Australia and Japan—to strengthen shared principles, including the rule of law, freedom of the seas and respect for territorial sovereignty," he said in a statement. The updated alli-

World food prices



sistance roadmap "to identify priority defense platforms and force packages that will bolster combined deterrence and capacity to resist coercion." It says the countries will prioritize interoperable platforms while expanding "investments in non-materiel defense capacity building including through education and training exchanges, exercises and other operation activities." It also vows to expand maritime security cooperation, "including but not limited to joint patrols." The countries updated the 2014 Enhanced Defense Security Cooperation Agreement earlier this year, giving U.S. patrols additional access to four additional

Philippine bases. Austin and Marcos discussed plans to "to swiftly operationalize" the four new basing sites in Northern Luzon and Palawan. Marcos' efforts to deepen the U.S.-Philippines alliance marks a significant departure from his predecessor, former President Rodrigo Duterte who at one time publicly threatened to expel American forces. China frequently accosts Philippine vessels in the disputed South China Sea, and President Joe Biden reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to defending its allies when he hosted Marcos at the White House Monday. The administration also announced that the U.S. would transfer three C-130H military transport aircraft to the Philippines as well as two Island-class patrol and two Protector-class patrol vessels. Congress needs to approve most U.S. arms transfers to foreign countries, and Marcos also met with Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Menendez, D-N.J., and top Republican James Risch of Idaho hosted a meeting with Marcos and other senators.

several lawmakers on Wednesday.

London reacts to claims weapons for Kiev being resold

rising again – UN There have been "isolated reports" NEW YORK (Agencies): The index that weapons sent to Ukraine have of global food costs rose in April for the first time in a year © Getty Images / Luis Alvarez. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations reported on Friday that global food prices grew in April for the first time in a year. The price index, which tracks the most globally traded food commodities, averaged 127.2 points last month, compared to 126.5 for March. "The slight rebound in the FFPI (FAO Food Price Index) in April was led by a steep increase in the sugar price index, along with an upturn in the meat price index, while the cereals, dairy and vegetable oil price indices continued to drop," the FAO said. According to the report, the sugar price index soared 17.6% from March, hitting its highest level since October 2011. The rise was reportedly linked to concerns over tighter supplies following downward revisions to production forecasts for India and China, along with low-

been diverted away from the front line, Armed Forces Minister James Heappey said. UK Armed Forces Minister James Heappey admitted on Thursday that some arms shipments supplied to Kiev by its Western backers could have changed hands before they reached the frontline. He did not clarify the exact amount or types of arms that have allegedly been rerouted. Last week, Scottish MP Kenny MacAskill asked the minister to estimate the proportion of British military aid sent to Ukraine that had been resold before reaching the nation's troops. On Thursday, Heappey replied that



the UK has "robust procedures" in place to ensure that all assistance going through the International Donor Coordination Centre is handed over to the Ukrainian army. However, he conceded that "there have been isolated reports" - although extremely rare - saying that equipment given to Ukraine had been diverted away from the front line. He stopped short of providing any further detail.

'No proof' US landed on moon – Ex-Russian space boss

of Russia's Roscosmos space agency, Dmitry Rogozin, has expressed doubt that the US Apollo 11 mission really landed on the Moon in 1969, saying he has yet to see conclusive proof. In a post on his Telegram channel on Sunday, Rogozin said he began his personal quest for the truth "about ten years ago" when he was still working in the Russian government, and that he grew skeptical about whether the Americans had actually set foot on the Moon when he compared how exhausted Soviet cosmogozin said he sent requests for evidence complicating international relations.

MOSCOW (Agencies): The former head to Roscosmos at the time. All he received in response was a book featuring Soviet Cosmonaut Aleksey Leonov's account of how he talked to the American astronauts and how they told him they had been on the Moon. The former official wrote that he continued with his efforts when he was appointed head of Roscosmos in 2018. However, according to Rogozin, no evidence was presented to him. Instead, several unnamed academics angrily criticized him for undermining the "sacred cooperation with he claimed. The former Rosnauts looked upon returning from their cosmos chief also said he had "received flights, and how seemingly unaffected an angry phone call from a top-ranking the Apollo 11 crew was by contrast. Ro- official" who supposedly accused him of

Syria back into its fold after 12 years

CAIRO (Agencies): Foreign ministers from Arab League member states have agreed to reinstate Syria's membership after its suspension more than 10 years ago, according to Iraqi state media. The ministers voted for Syria's return into the fold at the Arab League's headquarters in Cairo on Sunday. The decision was made in advance of the Arab League Summit in Saudi Arabia on May 19 and amid a flurry of regional normalisation of ties with Damascus in recent weeks. Syria's Arab League membership was revoked after President Bashar al-Assad ordered a crackdown on protesters in March 2011 that spiralled the country into a civil war that has since killed nearly half a million people and displaced another 23 million. As al-Assad solidified his control of Syrian territory, Arab states have been looking to normalise ties, working towards an "Arab-led political path" in solving the crisis, Jordan's top diplomat said, according to The Associated Press news agency.

er-than-expected output in Thailand

and the European Union. The meat

price index was up 1.3% from March,

while dairy prices fell 1.7%. Vegeta-

ble oil prices were also down 1.3%,

marking the fifth consecutive month-

Arab League brings

Canada's Alberta announces state of emergency over wildfires



ALBERTA (Agencies): Alberta has announced a state of emergency as wildfires flare across the Canadian province, forcing 25,000 people to flee their homes in what a top official said was an "unprecedented" crisis. Thousands more have been told to be prepared to leave on a moment's notice, as the number of fires - fanned by strong winds - jumped to 110. One-third of the blazes were listed as out of control. "We've de-

clared a provincial state of emergency to protect the safety, health and welfare of Albertans," the province's Premier Danielle Smith told a news conference on Saturday after a meeting of her government's emergency management committee. Earlier, she said the province - one of the world's largest oil-producing regions - "has been experiencing a hot, dry spring, and with so much kindling, all it takes is a few sparks to ignite some truly frightening wildfires". "These conditions have resulted in the unprecedented situation our province is facing today," she said. According to Smith, more than 20 communities have been evacuated and at least 122,000 hectares (301,000 acres) have burned so far.

India Weighs Lifting Ban On Foreign Investment In Nuclear Power

investment in its nuclear energy inquoting government sources. India has an Atomic Energy Act in place since 1962, under which the government develops, builds, and runs nuclear power stations. Indian private companies are allowed to take part in nuclear energy development as "junior partners" to government entities. The 1962 Atomic Energy Act prohibits private control of nuclear power generation, and 2016 amendments allowing public sector joint ventures do not extend to private sector companies, nor allow direct foreign investment in nuclear power, apart from the supply chain," the World Nuclear Association says. Now a panel set up by the govern-

NEW DELHI (Agencies): In a bid to ment is recommending overturning boost clean energy generation, India the ban on foreign investment and is weighing lifting a ban on foreign giving a greater role to local private companies, according to Reuters' dustry, Reuters reported on Friday, sources. Nuclear power generation currently accounts for around 3% of India's generation mix, which is dominated by coal at 72%, according to the World Nuclear Association. Last month, Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Science and Technology, said that India would have 9% of its electricity coming from nuclear power generation by 2047, with nuclear generation capacity set to triple by 2031. India's Department of Atomic Energy aims to have 20 gigawatts (GW) of nuclear power capacity by 2030, which would make the country the world's third-largest producer of electricity from nuclear energy after the United States and France, Indian media quoted the minister as saying.

Arab League re-admits Syria after 11-year absence

CAIRO (Agencies): The Arab League has re-admitted Syria after an 11-year absence, the organization said Sunday, following an extraordinary meeting at the Arab League's headquarters in Cairo, Egypt. The re-entry comes with immediate effect, after Syria was suspended during a violent crackdown on anti-government protests. The Arab League is an organization of Middle Eastern and African countries and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Its purpose is to promote closer political, economic, cultural and social relations among the members. Member states agreed during Sunday's meeting to "resume the participation of the delegations of the government of the Syrian Arab Republic in the meetings of the Council of the League of Arab States," according to an Arab League statement. The Arab League also tation, (Assad) stressed the need to take "practical to," Gheit said.



and effective steps" to resolve the Syrian crisis, the statement added. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad could participate in the upcoming Arab League summit in Saudi Arabia if he is invited and if he wants to attend, Arab League Secretary General Ahmed Aboul Gheit told journalists Sunday. "Syria, from tonight, is a full member of the Arab league, and starting tomorrow they have the right to participate in any meeting. When the host nation, in this case Saudi Arabia, sends the invitation, (Assad) can attend if he wishes

Kamala Harris to run Al taskforce



The US vice president will ask AI execs to evaluate the safety and fairness of their models. US Vice President Kamala Harris has been appointed to head a and other senior officials in the ad- of their capabilities by thousands of remind them of their "responsibility to

lic." The meeting is intended to keep the companies on track toward "driving responsible, trustworthy and ethical innovation with safeguards that mitigate risks and potential harms to individuals and our society," according to the White House, which referenced recent executive orders and official statements reminding tech companies that their products were subject to civil rights law and other protections new artificial intelligence initiative in against unlawful discrimination. The partnership with leading companies in four companies, along with Hugging the field, the White House announced Face, NVIDIA, and Stability AI, will in a press release on Thursday, Harris also submit to a public evaluation ministration of President Joe Biden industry experts and other curious will meet with the CEOs of Alphabet, members of the public at DEFCON 31, Anthropic, Microsoft, and OpenAI to the Las Vegas hacking convention that has repeatedly put the insecurity of make sure their products are safe be- the US' voting machines on display by fore they are deployed or made pub- giving children a chance to hack them.

Israeli company training Equatorial Guinea's special forces

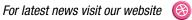
MONGOMO (Janes/Agencies): Israeli company Sparta Security Solutions is training special forces personnel in Equatorial Guinea. This was revealed when Vice-President Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue – President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo's son and heir apparent - visited their training facility. The vice-president's office released photographs and a video of the visit that clearly showed instructors at a training facility wearing apparel with the Sparta name and logo, as well as Israeli flag patches. The video's narrator said the vice-president visited the Okoheté Military Training Centre a few kilo-

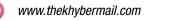


metres from Mongomo on 27 April, where he witnessed various demonstrations of the Special Corps' prowess. The video showed as many as 200 personnel and more than 12 instructors, some of them Africans, at what appeared to be a relatively new facility with a large parade ground and a small arms range.

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.













AKSSA demands Shuhada package for Parachinar martyr teachers

PESHAWAR (APP): All Khyber Pa- for the bereaved families and finan-(AKSSA) strongly condemned the brutal killing of seven schoolteachers in Parachinar and termed it an incident of terrorism and demanded of the government to bring the culprits and perpetrators to justice. In a statement issued here on Monday, AKSSA also demanded the announcement of Shuhada package ers was tantamount to depriving the would provide full support to them.

khtunkhwa Senior Staff Association cial support to their children and widows. AKSSA district president Bannu, Azmat Ullah Khan, school Officer Association President Dost Muhammad, President AKSSA Hari Pur Rizwan Awan and President and General Secretary AKSSA Swat Akhtar Hussain and Muhammad Ayub said that the killing of teach-

the government should conduct an impartial inquiry into the incident and give exemplary punishment to the culprits so that nobody would dare to commit such a crime in the future. They expressed solidarity with the bereaved families and said that AKSSA was equally saddened over the barbaric incident and

Miscreants target Mattni police station with hand-grenades

PESHAWAR (APP): Unknown miscreants during the wee hours of Monday morning attacked Adezai police Chowk in the jurisdiction of Mattni police station with hand-grenades however, escaped from the scene after retaliation by

district police spokesman, a few motorbikes parked inside the police chowk premises were destroyed and glass of windows were broken due to hand-grenades explosion. He said that luckily nobody was hurt in the attack, adding that the tion in the area to trace out the culthe police force. According to the police deployed on the spot gave a

befitting response to the miscreants who immediately fled from the scene while taking advantage of the dark. He said that the district police officers and DSP Mattni reached on the spot and started a search opera-

Dry and partly cloudy weather to prevail in most KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Monday predicted mainly dry and partly cloudy weather over most districts of the province. However, it said isolated rain-wind/ thunderstorm is likely to occur over Kohistan, Torghar, Battagram, Mansehra and Abbottabad districts. During the last 24 hours mainly partly cloudy weather prevailed

GOLD PRICE IN PAK

Gold Rate	24K Gold	22K Gold	21K Gold	18K Gold
Per Tola	Rs	Rs	Rs	Rs
Gold	223,600	204,966	195,650	167,700
Per 10	Rs	Rs	Rs	Rs
Gram	191,701	175,725	167,738	143,776
Per Gram Gold	Rs 19,170	Rs 17,573	Rs 16,774	Rs 14,378
Per	Rs	Rs	Rs	Rs
Ounce	543,465	498,173	475,531	407,598

FOREX RATES

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	285	288
China Yuan	41.06	41.46
Japanese Yen	2	2.05
Saudi Riyal	75.8	76.5
U.A.E Dirham	77.7	79
UK Pound	359	362
Euro	314	316.5
Australian Dollar	191	193
Canadian Dollar	212	214.5

Emergency Numbers

	T
Organization	Phone No
Rescue 1122 HQrs	091-2264224-25
Rescue 1122	0937-9230770
Mardan	
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
	1

over most districts of the province. However, rain-wind/thunderstorms Lower & Upper Dir, Bajaur, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Kohistan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Kohat, (recorded in mm): Bajaur (Pashat 25, Khaar 10), Pattan 22, Saidu Sharif 20, Malam Jabba 17, Balakot 14, Timergara 11, Kalam 09, Buner 07, Bannu 06, Kakul 05, Dir 03, Drosh 02, Chitral & Cherat 01 (each), D.I. Khan 34/20.

Mamad Gut (Mohmand) Trace. The maximum and minimum temoccurred in Swat, Chitral, Buner, peratures recorded in centigrade at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar City 29/16, Chitral 18/07, Timergara Mohmand and Khyber districts. Rain 25/14, Dir 19/06, Mirkhani 23/10, Kalam 13/00, Drosh 21/10, Saidu Sharif 22/09. Pattan 18/11. Malam Jabba 14/05, Takht Bhai 30/15, Kakul 23/09, Balakot 25/12, Parachinar 23/10. Bannu 34/14, Cherat 23/11,

World thalassemia day observed; pre -marriage diagnosis of disease stressed

PESHAWAR (APP): The speakers mia affects about 300 million people of a seminar on Monday called for pre-marriage diagnosis of thalassemia to avoid the potential risk of the disease in the children. The seminar was organised by the Alkhidmat Foundation in connection with the World Thalassemia Day observed here. Awami National Party (ANP) provincial spokesperson Samar Haroon Bilour was the chief guest on the occasion and called for creating awareness related to disease among the masses, especially youth. She said that a basic test can change the course of a family's future and urged the youth not to ignore it before marriage. On the occasion, it was informed that thalassae-

worldwide, with about 500,000 having a severe form of the disease. It was said that 80 per cent of these people live in low and middle-income countries and face many and multiple unmet needs and persisting challenges regarding the health, social and other care they receive. An official of Alkhidmat Health Foundation said that the foundation was currently running five blood banks across Pakistan, where blood is collected from donors, typed, separated into components, stored and prepared for transfusion to recipients including patients of leukaemia, cancer, sickle cell disease and thalas-

Surge in prices of chicken irks Peshawarties

PESHAWAR (APP): The recent surge in prices of chicken here on Monday irked the residents of Peshawar and demanded the provincial government to control its prices and ensure the availability of the commodity to consumers at the officially approved rate. The survey at the chickens and broilers market at Bacha Khan Chowk conducted by this scribe revealed that prices of chicken per kilo- talking to APP.

gram have increased to record Rs425 per kilogram today against yesterday's prices of Rs330KG in open markets that displeased customers. "I came to Peshawar with the hope to purchase 10 chickens for a party at home but was astonished to hear its prices soared to record Rs425kg today," said Professor Ehtisham Qasier of the Wapda Town Nowshera while

Center for water Informatics, climate resilience to be inaugurated in Peshawar

all Federal and provincial government departments, private sector and academia with a view to address water and climate change policies. The center is established by Institute of Management Sciences Peshawar (IMsciences) and would serve as at think thank on climate resilience and water management, says a press able manner.

PESHAWAR (APP): A Center for release issued here on Monday. In-Water Informatics and Climate Resilauguration of CWC is scheduled for ience (CWC) would be inaugurated May 10, 2023 to be performed by in Peshawar to develop links with Secretary Environment KP, adds the press release. The CWC will develop a network of universities for water and climate resilience and a mechanism for implementing relevant policies. It will also conduct research and develop links with all relevant departments to build their capacities in an institutionalized and sustain-

3-day int'l conference on Computing technologies at UoA from May 09

PESHAWAR (APP): A three-day in- closing ceremony on May 11. Justice ternational conference on "Computing Technologies, Tools and Applications (ICTAPP-23)" would start at the University of Agriculture, Peshawar from May 09. The moot was being organised by the Institute of Computer Sciences and Information Technology (ICS/IT), the Faculty of Management and Computer Sciences (FMCS), and the University of Agriculture. The opening ceremony of ICTAPP-23

(R) Irshad Qaiser, Provincial Minister for Higher education, Archives and Libraries, Law and Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights KP, Secretary Higher Education, Archives and libraries Department KP, Secretary Department of Agriculture KP, Additional Secretary sports and Youth Affairs Department KP, Chairman Pakistan Science Foundation Islamabad along with other national and international would be held on May 09 and the guests would attend the event.

Man shot dead in Kohat court

PESHAWAR (APP): A man who was dead by his opponent. The assailant in a local court of Kohat was shot dead was arrested at the scene and shifted by rivals, here on Monday. According to the police station for legal proceto a police spokesman, a man namely dure. The deceased and the killer had Daud Jan, a resident of Kurram who an old rivalry and the former was facwas in court for a hearing was shot ing a court trial, the spokesman added.

Mugam discusses flour crisis in KP with PM

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to Prime the concerns of the people of KP re-Minister for Political, Public Affairs, National Heritage and Culture Engr Amir Muqam, in a telephonic contact with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif who is in London, has discussed the flour crisis in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A Muqam informed the premier about the difficulties of the masses.

garding the flour crisis, adding that the prime minister ordered an immediate probe into the issue. The prime minister said that all the provinces including KP were of as much importance for him as the Punjab, adding that pragstatement issued on Monday said that matic steps would be taken to address

Passenger with fake ID offloaded from Belgium flight

PESHAWAR (APP): The Immigration ing a fake resident card in Belgium. section of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Monday offloaded a passenger with fake identity from a flight bound for Belgium. According to the FIA, a passenger namely Javed who was onboard the flight (QR601) for Belgium was offloaded for hav-

He was also having a fake Croatian passport, identity card and driving license. The passenger was taken into custody and shifted to Anti-Human Trafficking Circle Peshawar for further interrogation and legal pro-

Funeral of martyred Police Constable held with full honors in Charsadda

PESHAWAR (APP): The funeral gional Police Officer Muhammad Ali prayer of police constable Muzamil Khan, who was martyred in firing by unknown miscreants in Atmanzai, was performed at Police Line Charsadda with full official honors on Monday. The funeral prayer was attended by Regional Police Officer Mardan Muhammad Ali Khan Gandapur, DPO Charsadda Muhammad Arif, Deputy Commissioner Charsadda Adnan Fareed, and other senior police and army officers. During the funeral, the senior officials laid flowers on the body of the martyr and honoured him with prayers. Re-

Khan Gandapur met with the family of the martyr and paid tribute for his services to the police department. He assured them that the police department would provide all possible support to the family. The senior police officer said that the morale of the police force was high and that they were equipped with modern weapons to combat any challenge. He emphasized that the blood of the martyred constable would not go in vain and that the police would use all available resources to bring the accused involved in the incident to justice.

KP CM launches drug-free KP drive

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief for the rehabilitation of drug addicts Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan here on Monday launched an anti-narcotics campaign across the province as part of efforts to make KP drug-free. Under the drive, a walk was led by the chief minister from the Chief Minister House to the Civil Secretariat and was participated by the members of the provincial cabinet, government officials, representatives of private organizations and stu-CM congratulated the Excise and Narcotics Control Department on the implementation of the drug-free KP campaign. He said under the campaign, awareness walks would be arranged throughout the province to educate the public, especially youth about the destructive effects of drugs on health. Azam Khan said steps would be taken accused were arrested.

and to curb drug peddling and selling. Referring to a survey, the CM said that 6.7 million of Pakistan's population was addicted to drugs, including 22 percent of women, adding that 11 percent of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa population was suffering from drug addiction. Expressing concern over an increasing trend of drug use among youth, he emphasised conducting rigorous campaigns to save future gener dents. Speaking on the occasion, the ations from drug addiction. According to official data available with APP, the Excise and Narcotics Control department seized 2001.371 kg of hashish, 209.1025 kg of heroin, 304.915 kg of opium, 69.591kg of Ice drug and 2498.875kg of alcohol from July 2022 to April 18, 2023. During the period, 217 cases were registered while 239

PASTC-KP Lauds PM Fiscal Policy on tobacco taxation

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Alliance for Sustainable Tobacco Control Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (PASTC-KP) applauded Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's Fiscal Policy on Tobacco Taxation in accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations. "The move is a significant step towards curbing the use of tobacco products and promoting public health in Pakistan," the alliance members said in a press statement issued here on Monday. "The PASTC-KP has long been advocating for stronger measures to reduce tobacco consumption and its harmful consequences on public health." "This new fiscal policy is a testament to the government's commitment to prioritizing the health and well-being of its citizens," they added. The

Alliance members stated, "It is heartening to see the Pakistan Government's fiscal policy stance on raising taxes on tobacco products is in line with the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations." move exemplifies responsible governance and highlights the importance of prioritizing public health over short-term economic gains from the tobacco industry." "By adopting such measures, the government demonstrates its commitment to reducing tobacco consumption, preventing tobacco-related diseases, and promoting a healthier society. In a broader sense, this policy also aligns with global efforts to create a more equitable and sustainable world that values the well-being of all its inhabitants," they added. Manager of Blue

Veins Qamar Naseem Program said, "Pakistan's economic policies shall not be swayed by the misinformation campaign propagated by the tobacco industry." "It is essential for the government to continue making well-informed decisions that prioritize the health of its people." "By aligning the country's tobacco taxation policy with World Health Organization has demonstrated its dedication to combating the tobacco epidemic," Qamar added. Anti-tobacco activist Usman Afridi said, "The importance of the WHO's EMPOWER policy, which outlines key strategies for effective tobacco control. Raising taxes on tobacco products is a crucial comshown to be one of the most effective

ways to reduce consumption, particularly among vulnerable populations such as youth and low-income individuals." Sana Ahmad Coordinator of the Child Rights Movement said, "Implementation of the WHO EM-POWER policy, especially increasing taxes on tobacco products, is vital for Pakistan's public health landscape.' "We must protect our citizens from (WHO) recommendations, Pakistan the devastating health, social, and economic consequences of tobacco use." "By adopting a stronger fiscal policy on tobacco taxation, Pakistan is taking a crucial step towards a healthier future," Sana continued. "The PASTC-KP will continue to support the government in its efforts to combat the tobacco epidemic and ponent of this policy, as it has been create a sustainable, healthy environment for all," She added.

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Mardan incedent

Mob violence and blasphemy-related incidents have become a grim reality in Pakistan, with another tragic incident occurring in Mardan on Saturday. During a PTI rally, a local cleric was lynched by a frenzied mob over accusations of blasphemy, highlighting the failure of the state to address this issue while society becomes increasingly violent. The incident also underscores the fact that nobody is safe from this barbarity, regardless of their profile. This is not the first time that such an incident has occurred in Mardan, with the lynching of Mashal Khan five years ago serving as a reminder of the metastasizing problem of blasphemy-related violence. The misuse of blasphemy laws has been widely debated, with courts acknowledging that it is an unlawful act. Despite this, the frequency of such incidents continues to increase, and state officials, including politicians and law enforcement officials, must take responsibility for the bloodshed. It is time to put an end to the weaponization of blasphemy and to bring those responsible to justice.

King Charles coronation and our CW connections

- Is the Commonwealth relevant for Pakistan? I believe so By Andrew Dalgleish

Today witnesses a historic event opportunity and education, globin the UK: the Coronation of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla. Monarchs have been crowned in Westminster Abbey for almost a millennium, but it has been seventy years since the last Coronation when Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II ascended the throne. It is a day steeped in tradition but, in line with the King's wishes. It is also an occasion to look to the future. Commonwealth countries will be at the centre of events, as equal valued partners. The King will become the 'Defender of the Faiths' with Aliya Azam MBE, a Muslim representative, taking part in a Christian ceremony along with Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish and Hindu religious leaders representing the modern and diverse UK. I am delighted that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is attending the Coronation, and that a contingent from the Pakistan Army is taking part in the military parade amongst others from across the Commonwealth. It is clear that King Charles' attachment to the Commonwealth, a voluntary association of 56 countries united around the shared values of democracy, human rights and sovereignty, will shine through the Coronation. Humbled by the unanimous decision taken in 2018 expand. Recently, I had the pleaby Commonwealth leaders for him to succeed Her Late Majesty The Queen as Head of the Common- kistan Chapter in Lahore, which wealth, he noted that this association had been "a fundamental feature of my life for as long as I can remember". As Prince of Wales, he had plenty of time to prepare for his new duties, and is well acquainted with each Commonwealth country, including Pakistan. Having visited this country in 2006, shortly after the devastating earthquake, King Charles has maintained an interest in this region, becoming Chair of the British Asian Trust, which delivers development programmes across South Asia, and establishing a branch of The Prince's Trust International in Pakistan to foster young people's entrepreneurial skills. Most recently King Charles noted with sorrow the devastation caused by the Pakistan floods last year, donating to Islamic Relief to assist the most vulnerable. Driven by a deep sense of duty and commitment, we can expect King Charles to be highly active in promoting the shared values and work of the Commonwealth during his reign. His aspiration was made clear in his 2023 'Commonwealth Day' speech: "Whether on climate change and biodiversity loss, youth

al health, or economic co-operation, the Commonwealth can play an indispensable role in the most pressing issues of our time. Ours is an association not just of shared values, but of common purpose and joint action." Is the Commonwealth relevant for Pakistan? I believe so. Pakistan is the fifth largest 'young country' in the world with around 63% of the population aged between 15 and 33. The Commonwealth has a young population too: over 60%, some 1.5 billion people, of the Commonwealth's population are under 30. Through its 2023 'Year of Youth' campaign, the Commonwealth is getting more young people to engage with its Youth Programme' which aims to develop young people with practical support and networking opportunities. It also offers scholarship opportunities for the leaders of the next generation. How have the young people of Pakistan responded? Really rather impressively, to be honest. Some 1,341 Pakistanis have undertaken a Commonwealth Scholarship. This year alone 114 students from Pakistan are studying in the UK on Commonwealth Scholarships. The Commonwealth 'offer' in Pakistan is continuing to sure of attending the launch of the Queen's Commonwealth Trust Paprovides funding, practical tools and networks to assist young entrepreneurs across the areas of agriculture and food, education and employability, environment, health, and inclusion. There I met the inspirational Hassan Mujtaba Zaidi, who had been awarded a prestigious Queen's Young Leaders Award in 2018 for his work to help educate marginalised young people. He is now continuing to assist others through the Queen's Commonwealth Trust, displaying a selfless commitment to the development of others, very much in the Commonwealth spirit. If you choose to watch the Coronation today you will see the Commonwealth on full display - a voluntary association that is built on the desire to improve the outcomes of its 2.5 billion people. You will also see themes of duty, loyalty and commitment to others on show as King Charles promises to devote the rest of his life in service to others. That devotion to public service is something we should all applaud and strive to uphold across our shared

Commonwealth of Nations. Courtesy: The Express Tribune

The signs of de-dollarization are everywhere — By Dr. Radhika Desai

The major global economies are shifting and the clues are there for those who know where to look. De-dollarization is increasingly making headlines and you don't have to look too hard to find examples. New sources of non-dollar finance are emerging. There are new bilateral agreements to trade and lend in currencies other than the US dollar. Even more importantly, major oil trade buyers and sellers - Moscow and Riyadh as much as Beijing and New Delhi are agreeing to trade it in non-dollar currencies. These deals are destroying one of the main pillars of dollar dominance since OPEC quadrupled and then doubled oil prices in the 1970s, giving countries around the world a major reason to demand and hold dollars. However, many analysts continue to write as if the dollar's dominance remains intact. Of course, these arguments are based on all sorts of false assumptions. For instance, they claim the dollar will continue dominating until another country's currency replaces it or that this will only happen if other countries pursue forms of internationalization that mimic that of the US dollar today. In a sense, the discussion is a little like that depicted in The Big Short, a film about a small band of bankers who bet against the housing market and the securities resting on it in the 2000s. Having made their bets, they waited for the market to collapse. It did. However, for a time, while mortgage defaults increased, the securities they are based on continued to rise in value. Prices were buoyed by investors primed by Alan Greenspan's famous claim that there could not possibly be a housing market bubble. Nor were the securities downgraded. The rating agencies had not only given high scores to investment rubbish, they had come to believe their own lies. Only when the losses piled up and actually began to filter through the system in the form of payment shortfalls was the truth acknowledged. De-dollarization also has its equivalent of the losses and payment shortfalls. Consider the recent Financial Times story, 'China's 'men in black' step up scrutiny of foreign corporate sleuths'. It describes the Chinese Ministry of State

vestments. They cite the process of checking whether a supply chain involved "forced labor from Xinjiang" as an example, stating that such due diligence is critical for attracting US investment. The piece adds that earlier, "the due diligence groups felt they had ample space to operate and that authorities understood their importance," but now Beijing has stepped up scrutiny of these scrutineers on grounds of national securitv. They lament that "spy companies were the gatekeepers for money," but now, "[t]hat sense of a mutually beneficial relationship is gone." Now, the Chinese government has no shortage of reasons for stepping up its scrutiny of the information being gathered by foreign, particularly US entities. After all, it is the target of a US hybrid war whose fronts multiply daily. However, this is not the only significance of the story. It goes deeper than that and testifies to de-dollarization. Since 1971 the US currency's global role has rested on the claim that the dollar-denominated financial system was the world's most sophisticated, with the broadest and deepest pools of capital from which the rest of the world's investors could drink their fill. Certainly, the expansion of financial activity, also known as financialization, has been critical. By increasing financial demand for the dollar, it counteracted the Triffin Dilemma caused by the US deficits that provided the world with liquidity, meaning that the larger the US deficits, the greater the downward pressure on the dollar. Needless to say, claims about the attractions of US finance were exaggerated. As far as most of the world was concerned, rather than providing beneficial productive investment, the US dollar-denominated financial system only unleashed torrents of short-term 'hot' money that has only profited mostly Western speculative investors, while regularly wreaking havoc on the rest of the world's economies. Only China and a handful of other much smaller, favored, investment destinations benefited from a certain (easily overstated) amount of productive investment. Ironically, it was part of the hollowing out of US manufacturing through a little foreign direct investment and a lot of outsourcing. Now,

performing "due diligence" on in- however, the US dollar-denominated system's internal contradictions are mounting. While it is ceasing to provide its US and Western shortterm investors with opportunities for speculative profit and to furnish the modest productive investment it once did. The most fundamental of these mounting contradictions is the bind into which the rise of inflation puts the wizards at the Federal Reserve. On the one hand, the only way they can deal with inflation without eroding the power of capital is by raising interest rates, but that promises to crash the very financial structures of unproductive debt and speculation on which the wealth of the financial elite it serves relies. On the other hand, if the Fed does not raise interest rates, and permits inflation to run rampant, it will destroy the same system even more directly by undermining the value of the monetary unit, the US dollar, on which the entire system rests. What's the point of accumulating your wealth in dollars if they are losing value at a rate close to or even higher than the rate at which you are accumulating it? If the US financial system is losing its charm even for speculators, the very financialization over which it presides and on which the US dollar system rests has, over the last several decades, strangulated the alternative source of gain, the US productive economy. For decades, it was deprived of the long-term, patient investment that alone can make it dynamic. Today, therefore, neither the financial system nor the US productive economy will keep dollars flowing into the US dollar system. The former, which once yielded profits - via interest or speculation - by skimming off production incomes kept capital flowing into the US dollar system based on a reasonable expectation of gain. That situation has been eroded. It is no wonder that a recent Financial Times story comparing the US and European financial systems explained that, today the EU, with its proportionally larger base of productive corporations able to generate dividend income rather than merely uncertain and increasingly risky speculative gains, is likely to attract more money. And if Europe looks good compared to the US, China looks even better. Courtesv: RT

In light of ongoing conflict in Sudan, what is the fate of normalisation with Israel? - By Motasem A Dalloul

Since the start of the ongoing fierce dle East. Why does Israel want this? conflict between General Abdul Fattah Al Burhan, the Sudanese Army chief, and General Mohamad Hamdan Dagalo, also known as Hemedti, chief of the strong militia known as Rapid Support Forces (RSF), Israel has been opening eyes widely towards the situation in the African country. Last week, the Israeli government proposed to mediate between the two sides who, according to Israeli officials, had been in contact with their Israeli counterparts. Israeli Foreign Minister, Eli Cohen, said: "Israeli government is doing its best to stop the war" between the two Generals in Sudan. The Israeli occupation government, the Israeli online newspaper, Ynet news, said that "Israel is actively there in the reconciliation efforts." Stating that Israel is interested in a peaceful Sudan, Israel Hayom reported an Israeli official saying that "Israel wants a stable Sudan". There are many remarks by several senior Israeli officials and Israeli analysts reflecting the same feeling – that Israel wants a stable and peaceful Sudan. At the same time. Israel wants Sudan to remain controlled by the military or hand over power to a civilian authority under American custodianship, like most other countries in the Mid-

Security using "methods familiar to

spies and private detectives" to crack

down on "foreign corporate sleuths"

Since the ouster of former President Omar Al Bashir, Israel has been seeking to forge a peace agreement with Sudan for several reasons. The United States also pushed for good relations between the occupation state and Sudan, as former US President Donald Trump did his best to include Sudan with the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco "Abraham Accords signed in the White House in 2020. It is right that Sudan refused to join the Abraham Accords, but it agreed to make peace with Israel as Al Burhan, the de facto ruler of the African country, secretly met with Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, in 2020 in Uganda and the two countries have exchanged several visits of senior delegations since then. At the same time, Hemedti has met with Cohen and is maintaining direct contacts with Israeli Mossad. After a visit to Khartoum in February, Cohen said: "We returned with three yeses: yes for peace, yes for talks and yes for recognition," citing an opposite stance for Khartoum's three noes of the Arab League adopted in a meeting held following the 1967 occupation - "No peace with Israel, no negotiation with Israel, no recognition of Israel." The

reason behind Israel's interest in ending of ongoing fighting in Sudan is that the occupation state does not want the military commanders to leave the political state before signing a normalisation agreement with the African country, which Israel considers the gateway to the African continent. Walla, an Israeli news website, has reported: "Israel reached an end that signing a in the peace agreement, known as normalisation agreement with Sudan will not happen before the end of the ongoing conflict ... This came after giving up a previous thought that a deal could have happened even without handing over authority to a civilian power." Meanwhile, Israel Hayom reiterated that the occupation state wants a stable Sudan because it considers it the gateway to the African continent. Israel believes that its efforts to reach the depth of Africa could not bear fruit without Sudan's assistance. Walla also reported that Israeli officials were in contact with their Sudanese counterparts prior to the start of the conflict. and they advised both of them to sort out their differences peacefully ... "Israeli leaders had been persuaded that no such deal (normalisation of ties) could have taken place in light of such a war," the Israeli daily said. Courtesy: Middle East Monitor

Letters to the Editor

Balochistan's health sector problems is a severe shortage of life-saving As a responsible citizen and a studrugs and an alarming lack of meddent from Balochistan, I, Jeehand, ical staff. Many diseases remain unwould like to draw attention to the cured, and medical institutions lack increasing number of medical issues essential testing machines and hygiene standards. The health sector in our province, which is the largest in Pakistan. Despite its importance, is deprived of adequate funding, and the government seems to underes-

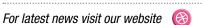
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timate its healthcare needs. There the available funds are often mis-

used or embezzled. As a result, patients have to travel long distances across the province, incurring high expenses that are often unbearable. I urge you to understand the gravity of our situation and to help us raise awareness about this critical issue.

- Jeehand Azeem

Karachi











Expert stressed to raise awareness, avoid cousin marriages to prevent thalassaemia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Health ex- control the spread of the disease the patients, adding, "We should pert on 'World thalassaemia' day in Pakistan, where at present the stressed the need for undertaking awareness campaigns to reduce the incidence of this genetic blood disorder and called for avoiding cousin marriages as these were a major cause of thalassaemia disease spread in the country. Talking to the ptv news channel, An expert on Thalassaemia Dr Prof Hassan Abbas Zaheer explained that it is necessary for families with a history of thalassaemia to screen their called upon philanthropists to play

annual 5000 infants born with this disease. The main objective of celebrating International Thalassaemia Day was to draw the attention of the general public, patient associations, public authorities, and healthcare professionals to promote actions on prevention, management, or treatment of the disease in a patient-centred manner. He said thalassaemia is a genetic blood disorder and children before marriage to help an active role in providing relief to

stand together as a nation to fight this disease for a healthier future for our country". Replying to a question about the control of thalassaemia, he said, it is a difficult task, it can easily be achieved via the assistance of prenatal diagnosis and prevention programmes only. "No doubt hundred per cent prevention is quite possible. For this, screening the blood of both partners should be ensured so that two thalassaemia minors should not get married", he mentioned.

First Minister of Scotland Humza Yousaf calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

LONDON (Agencies): First Minister of Scotland, Humza Yousaf called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. Felicitating the First Minister on his election to this important position, the Prime Minister observed that Mr. Yousaf's election underscored the important and positive contribution of the British Pakistani community to the progress and development of Scotland and across the UK. He wished him success in the discharge of his responsibilities. The two leaders agreed to further strengthen historic ties between Pakistan and Scotland, including in the domains of trade, investment, education, water management, wind & solar technology and people to people links. The two sides agreed to work collaboratively to



promote joint ventures in education, skills development and renewables. They also explored ways to leverage the Scottish Pakistani entrepreneurs to promote investment in Pakistan. They also agreed to work collaboratively to address the challenge of climate change. In this regard Pakistan suggested holding an Investment Conference in Scotland and separately arrange a road show to showcase Pakistan's renewable energy potential in Scotland.

Imran's popularity limited to social media: Uzma Bukhari

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Uzma Bukhari on Monday limited to social media as the public got to know that he was all talk and no action. Talking to a private news channel, she said in terms of negotiations with PTI, she believed that it was pointless to negotiate with a per-solely to the Punjab province.

son who lacked credibility, as Imran Khan was prone to making decisions but then reversing them due to his insaid Imran Khan's popularity was decisive mindset. The election should take place at its scheduled time in October 2023, neither earlier nor later, she added. As for the demand for elections within 90 days, Uzma questioned why this requirement applied

APHC leaders urge UN to take India to task for war crimes in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): In Indian ille- that India uses such evil tactics in the gally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, APHC leaders Mir Shahid Saleem, Israr Ahmed, Davinder Singh Behl, Narendra Singh Khalsa and Aqib Ahmed have strongly condemned the ongoing human rights violations in Pir Panjal, Poonch and Rajouri areas of Jammu region by the Indian forces personnel. According to Kashmir Media Service, APHC leaders in their statements issued in Jammu said that frequent raids on the houses of civilians are negatively impacting the mental health of the respective families, particularly women and children. They deplored as per its resolution.

occupied under a wicked agenda. The struggle for freedom, they added, cannot be suppressed by victimizing innocent Kashmiris, as it is happening in Poonch and Rajouri of the Pir Panjal region. The leaders said, the houses of Hurriyat leaders who are currently in Azad Jammu and Kashmir are being raided and their families are subjected to severe mental torture. The APHC leaders urged the United Nations to take India to task for committing war crimes in IIOJK and take practical steps to resolve the Kashmir dispute

Secretaries discuss water provision for cotton sowing

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Agriculture Punjab against its share of 45,000 water in canals for cotton sowing in south Punjab. According to official sources here, the irrigation secretary told the agriculture secretary that the department was already providing 53,000-cusec more water to south

Secretary Iftikhar Ali Sahoo met cusecs so that proper cotton sowing Punjab Irrigation Secretary Dr Wasif could be done. He said that the de-Khurshid on Monday and discussed partment was facing more than 27 matters pertaining to provision of per cent water shortage in the system, though canals in the region were being given water on priority basis. Dr Wasif Khurshid said that the Punjab government was taking special measures to achieve the cotton production target this year.

One more tests positive for fatal Coronavirus in Rwp

RAWALPINDI (APP): One more person was diagnosed with fatal Coronavirus during the last 24 hours, raising the district's tally of confirmed cases to 47,857. As per the latest data released by the District Health Authority here on Monday, the infected cases included 44.183 from Rawalpindi and 3,674 from other districts. The report added that the new case had arrived from the Rawalpindi Cantonment area while one confirmed patient was quarantined at home, and corded at 0.83 per cent.

no one was admitted to any district's health facility. The report further updated that 7.006.011 people, including 44,790 health workers, had received jabs against the lethal Coronavirus (COVID-19) across the district since the vaccination drive launched on March 10, 2021. District Health Authority added that during the last 24 hours, 120 samples were collected, out of which 119 were declared negative, while the positivity rate was re-

Fine imposed on 18 food points

Authority (PFA) imposed fine on 18 food points on Monday over violation of the rules. According to PFA officials, food safety teams, headed by Deputy Director (Operations) Shahbaz Sarwar checked various food units in the division, and imposed Rs 156,000 on tres of adulterated milk.

SARGODHA (APP): The Punjab Food food outlets. The food safety team also shut down production of a juice factory for making substandard and unhygienic juice in Sargodha and seized juice-filling machine, tanks and other equipment. The PFA teams discarded 21 litres of sub-par cold drinks, 50 li-

IRSA releases 141,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 141,200 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 138,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1437.99 feet and was 39.99 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 36,700 cusecs while outflow as 37,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1121.90 feet, 71.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded 42,200 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 70,000, 59,600. 42,200 and 9,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 37,500 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 12,700 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Mara-

Four illegal mini petrol pumps sealed

MULTAN (APP): District administration sealed four illegal mini-petrol pumps operating in different areas of the city, here on Monday. According to official sources, Assistant Commissioner Seemal Mushtaq along with officials of the Civil Defence Department visited different sites and sealed four mini petrol pumps. The assistant commissioner said that nobody would be allowed to play havoc with public lives by operating illegal petrol pumps or opening LPG shops. Strict action would be taken against hoarding of petrol and LPG illegal filling, she added.

Man killed in road mishap

FAISALABAD (APP): A man was killed in a road accident here in the area of Saddar police station. Rescue 1122 said here on Monday that 50-year-old Muhammad Ashraf, r/o Muhammadabad Satiana road was traveling on a motorcycle when a speeding dumper hit the two-wheeler near Fish Farm Gold City. Consequently,he received serious injuries and died on the spot. The body was shifted to District Headquarters (DHO) Hospital for postmortem while further investigation was under way, said rescue.

SSC exams begins amid strict security

SUKKUR (APP): The Secondary school Certificate (SSC Part I & II) examinations, under the Board of Intermediate and Secondary education Sukkur started here on Monday, in which 99,151 students of 9th and 10th classes are participating. According to the board management, all arrangements have been made for conducting the annual examinations in three districts including Sukkur while 190 examination centres were established in the region. Over 22, 114 students of (Class- IX) and 47,037 students of (Class- X) are taking part in the examinations which will remain continue till May 18, 2023 According to the Chairman BISE, Sukkur Rafique Ahmed Palh, 32 vigilance teams have been formed for the monitoring of the annual examinations. Meanwhile, the DIG Javed Sonharo Jiskani has issued special instructions to all SSPs for taking strict security measures out and inside the examination centres declared sensitive by the board in all the districts of the region for conducting the examinations peacefully.

Pakistani Truck Art exhibition attracts Chinese students

BEIJING (APP): The first Truck Art will continue till July 24, was orgaexhibition showcasing Pakistan's diverse cultural landscape in Langfang, China has attracted a large number of Chinese students. "A special Truck Art workshop conducted by artist Ali and his team in Silk mony held on April 28 was attended Road International Cultural Center. Dozens of Chinese students enthusiastically participated to learn about this dazzling and colorful Pakistani art," Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Hague said on Monday. The Truck Art exhibition was opened in Langfang, China to celebrate Pakistan's 83rd National Day and 2023 as the China-Pakistan Year of Tourism Phool Patti team for the exhibition

nized by Pakistan Embassy in Beijing, in collaboration with Silk Road International Art Center, Langfang and renowned truck artists enterprise 'Phool Patti'. The opening cereby more than 300 people including Chinese dignitaries, government officials, and members of the diplomatic corps, business executives, media representatives and Pakistani community. A specially-designed truck model and other items ranging from bicycles, murals, clothes, fans, and ceramic pots were designed by the Exchanges. The exhibition, which which would last for three months.

Vesak Day Event showcased Pakistan's rich Gandhara Heritage & Religious Tourism

WAH CANTT (APP): The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), in collaboration with the Gandhara Resource Center Pakistan (GRCP), Guangdong Guangji Foundation, Paper Miracle, Center for Culture and Development and the Department of Archeology and Tourism Punjab here on Sunday successfully organized a grand Vesak Day event. Distinguished participants, including the ambassadors, high commissioners of Sri Lanka and Nepal, as well as Federal and provincial government officials, scholars, and philanthropists, gathered to celebrate and honor the ancient Buddhist heritage of Gandhara. The event commenced at Taxila Museum, where the esteemed attendees were warmly welcomed by Rana Aftab, Managing Director of PTDC. Dr. Nadeem Omar Tarar, Gandhara Chair at the University of Wah, led the group to the Dharamrajika Stupa in Taxila, a site renowned for its relics of Lord Buddha, gra-



ciously deposited by King Ashoka. This standing ceremony served as a symbolic homage to the spiritual significance of the region. Following the ceremonial proceedings, the participants proceeded to the Gandhara Art Village Taxila, facilitated by the Punjab Small Industries Development Corporation, for an enlightening seminar titled "Gandhara: The Second Home of Buddhism".

Kundi lauds Bilawal for highlighting Kashmir issue at Int'l forum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi Monday lauded Young Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's visit to India "more successful than expectation" as he forcefully presented the case of Kashmiris at the international forum. "FM' insistence on implementation of the United Nations resolutions is encouraging", he said while talking to a private news channel. He further said that due to Pakistan's strong stand on the issue of the region, India's negative propa- and economy.

ganda has been exposed. Kundi said that the foreign minister not only adopted a firm stand on the key issues of conflict between India and Pakistan but also highlighted the centrality of the Kashmir dispute and his country's demand that the Modi government should revoke all the illegal actions it had taken after 5th August 2019. Replying to a question, Kundi regretted that the PTI is pursuing a particular agenda against the national interests, adding, Imran Khan's political agenda stood for ruining Pakistani society, institutions,

APHC leaders urge UN to take India to task for war crimes in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): In Indian ille- India uses such evil tactics in the ocin Pir Panjal, Poonch and Rajouri ar- houses of Hurriyat leaders who are eas of Jammu region by the Indian forces personnel. According to Kashmir Media Service, APHC leaders in their statements issued in Jammu said that frequent raids on the houses of civilians are negatively impacting the mental health of the respective families, particularly women and children. They deplored that

gally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, cupied under a wicked agenda. The APHC leaders Mir Shahid Saleem, struggle for freedom, they added, Israr Ahmed, Davinder Singh Behl, cannot be suppressed by victimizing Narendra Singh Khalsa and Aqib innocent Kashmiris, as it is happen-Ahmed have strongly condemned ing in Poonch and Rajouri of the Pir the ongoing human rights violations. Panial region. The leaders said, the currently in Azad Jammu and Kashmir are being raided and their families are subjected to severe mental torture. The APHC leaders urged the United Nations to take India to task for committing war crimes in IIOJK and take practical steps to resolve the Kashmir dispute as per its res-

Rangers arrest gangs involve in street crimes

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Rang- ly seen firing. While the other three ers Sindh and Police in a joint intelligence-based operation in Orangi Town, nabbed five suspects of two dacoit gangs allegedly involved in drug peddling, robberies and street crimes. The arrested accused were identified as Shahzeb, Naveed, Aamir, Saeed and Adil, said a news release on Monday. Illegal arms and ammunition used in the crimes and a stolen motorcycle were also recovered from their possession. According to details, in March, the accused Shahzeb and Naveed snatched mobile phones from more than 15 people in a day in different areas including Nazimabad Chowrangi, board Office, Orangi Town. The CCTV footage of an incident also made rounds over social media in which they could be easi-

accused of the robber's gang, Amir, Saeed and Adil, snatched dozens of mobile phones in a day in different areas of the megalopolis including Nazimabad, Board Office and Orangi Town. The accused were wanted to police in several cases. During initial interrogation, accused Shahzeb and Naveed confessed to snatching 200 mobile phones and more than Rs 0.5 million in over 100 street crimes committed in Orangi Town, Nazimabad, SITE and suburbs. While accused Aamir, Saeed and Adil confessed to snatching 300 mobile phones and cash in more than 150 street crimes in Orangi Town, Nazimabad, SITE and suburbs. Raids were being conducted to arrest other accomplices of the accused.

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Sherry Rehman felicitates PPP leadership, workers for winning Sindh local body by-polls

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Min-popularity and public confidence of ister for Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Monday felicitated the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leadership and party workers on the victory in the local body by-elections. In a series of tweets, the federal minister extended her congratulations for achieving a landslide victory in the local body polls. Senator Rehman said, "Once again in Karachi PPP's arrow bagged maximum votes." "I People's Party, elected candidates, voters and workers for the success in the local body by-elections." She added that success in 7 out of 11

the People's Party. She extended her gratitude to the voters for their trust. "The People's Party is engaged in public service throughout Sindh, that is the reason why the People's Party has emerged as the largest party in the provincial local elections," Sherry Rehman said. The credit for this success and popularity of PPP goes to Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Asif Ali Zardari and Faryal Talpur, congratulate the leadership of the she said, adding, "We are equally excited for the general elections." Under the leadership of Chairman Bilawal, the People's Party was ready to contest the general elections across Union Councils was proof of the the country, Sherry Rehman said.

President approves appointment of Justice Hilali as CJ Peshawar HC

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr ticle 175A (13) of the Constitution, Arif Alvi has accorded his approval President Secretariat Press Wing to the appointment of Justice Musarrat Hilali as the Chief Justice of Justice Musarrat Hilali has been Peshawar High Court. The president working as Acting Chief Justice of approved her appointment under Ar- Peshawar High Court.

said in a press release on Monday.

CEO WMC orders to opt cleaning measures prior to Eid- al- Azha

Management Company (WMC) ordered to opt measures for cleaning operation prior to upcoming Eid- ul-Adha here. Addressing to meeting, Shahid Yaqoob, directed to the subordinate staff to clear all filth depots and waste bins placed on streets at every nook and corner before Feast of Sacrifice. Numbers of bins along with collection points to be get doubled before the fast-approaching Eid.

MULTAN (APP): CEO of Waste holy Muslims festival, added CEO. He held satisfaction that tenders for dampers and loaders among operational machinery were issued. Meanwhile, senior manager operation, Faheem Lodhi paid visit to the company's workshop and parking yard on direction of CEO WMC, according to the statement. He took detailed briefing on machinery and loaders liable to be repaired before

Palwasha hopes for relief in fiscal year 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Peo- one has saw that how many people ples Party (PPP) central leader, Palwasha Khan on Monday expressed the hope that the incumbent government would control the inflation in the coming few months in the fiscal plan 2023-24. Addressing a press conference here, she said the coalition government was putting maximum efforts to control the price hike and provide all possible relief to the downtrodden segments of society. "The previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is fully responsible for the current economic challenges being faced by the country as it did nothing for the welfare of the masses," she added. Palwasha Khan categorically said that PPP would never sit with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in the upcoming general elections. "Every-

came out to participate in the PTI rally under its popular leader," she added. Commenting on a recent visit of Foreign Minister (FM) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to India, she said the nation witnessed the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) created fuss and became angry over his visit and they even put head-money of the PPP chairman. "Minorities have no rights in India. Bilawal Bhutto raised his voice not only for minorities' due rights but also the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), who are facing untold suppression at the hands of brutal Indian forces for decades," she added. Palwasha Khan regretted that the PTI government did nothing for the 'Kashmir cause' during its tenure.

Farmers warned against burning wheat crop remains

FAISALABAD (APP): The Agricul- cause of environmental pollution. He wheat growers to avoid burning remains of wheat crop was a major fertilize the land.

ture Department has warned the said the smoke caused by burning of remains cast hazards effects on huresidue of harvested wheat crop, man health. This act also destroyed otherwise they would have to face production elements in soil as well as a major penalty including criminal insects positive for the crops, he said. cases and up to Rs 200,000 fine. The smoke also caused road acci-Deputy Director Agriculture (Extendents on the roads. He advised farmsion) Chaudhry Khalid Mahmood ers to plough fields with machinery said here on Monday that burning of and mix the residues in soil as it will

BISP providing financial aid to 90 lakh poor families: Shazia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Min- with climate change and other criister and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program(BISP) Ms Shazia Marri on Monday said that the BISP was providing financial support to 90 lakh underprivileged families across the country. She said this while presiding over the opening session of the first annual three-day National Social Protection Conference (SPC) organized by the BISP. The conference was also attended by the Chairman NA-DRA, social protection experts, the World Bank and representatives of other international organizations. The conference was organized with the support of the German German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). The representative of the World Bank, the German Ambassador and others also addressed the conference through a video link. Shazia Marri while speaking at the opening session said, "This program is providing financial support to a successful and transparent social economically weak families to cope

ses." Chairperson BISP said, "The program is also working for better health and development of infants and their mothers of poor families." She said, "BISP is also providing educational scholarships to underprivileged children of the society, adding, scholarships have led to an increase in the enrollment of children in schools." Shazia said that "I am grateful to World Bank, GIZ, Engineering Development Board (EDB), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other development partners for their financial and technical support." She further informed, "At present 24 percent of people in the country are being helped by BISP." "However, a large number of people living in poverty are looking towards the government for help," she added. Chairman NA-DRA while speaking on the occasion said, "BISP has established itself as protection program in the world."

Upholding of Constitution vital for political stability, citizen rights: President

Arif Alvi on Monday said upholding the country's Constitution was the responsibility of all segments of society because the document not only guaranteed political stability but also ensured the citizens' fundamental rights. "In addition to the administrative authority, it is the duty of the State and its organs to bring improvement to the society through a system based on welfare," he said in his address at a ceremony

Seven farmers booked over water theft

SARGODHA (APP): The irrigation task force arrested seven farmers for stealing water from canals on Monday. According to the spokesperson here, during a crackdown against water theft, the task force raided Chak 55 SB and it's surrounding areas and nabbed seven farmers for stealing water from canals. A case was registered against them.

Man deprived of cash

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): Three armed robbers looted a citizen on gunpoint in limits of Alipur Saddar Police Station on Monday, According to police, the victim named Muhammad Faizan Araein, resident of Moza Gabbar Araein was on the way to his home via Khairpur Saadat road, Alipur when the robbers forced to stop him at Moza Baqir Shah. They snatched motorbike along with unidentified cash with him before fled to unidentified location. Police of the concerned jurisdiction reached out the crime scene after receiving call. However, accused couldn't get arrested till filing of this report. An FIR was registered on report of the

AIOU to conduct MA, MSc exams from May 22

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is conducting examinations of MA, M.Sc, M.Com, MBA/MPA (Commonwealth of Learning), MLIS, M.Ed, and Postgraduate diplomas offered in the autumn 2022 semester from May 22. The date sheet is available on the university website (www.aiou.edu. pk). Roll number slips have been uploaded to students' CMS portal and dispatched to the students at their addresses as well. According to Controller Examinations, Mian Muhammad Riaz, "Students can apply for a change of examination centers till May 17, university administration will process the applications as per eligibility, rules, and regulations. Moreover, admissions for the second phase of the semester of spring 2023 are open till May 25.

Admissions of Sweet Home ongoing

SARGODHA (APP): Assistant Direc-Asif Javed Shah said that the admissions of Sweet Home were going on under the management of Pakistan Bait-Mal. Talking to APP here on Monday, he said that the heirs of deserving orphans between the ages of five and seven should immediately contact In-charge Rana Sami-ul-Rehman at Sweet Home's Canal Park for getting admissions. He said that for admission, attested copy of date of birth certificate, NADRA "B" form, copy of identity card of mother, father or guardian with contact number, attested copy of death certificate of father, attested copy of national identity card of two witnesses, copies of contact numbers and four passport size photographs of the child would be required.

Two held.stolen motorcycles recovered

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested two members of a gang involved in the motorcycle theft and recovered ten stolen motorcycles from their possession during a crackdown launched here on Monday. According to a police spokesman, "Among the arrested accused are the ringleaders of the gang Sagheer alias Chinnu and Talal.

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr to recognize public contribution to- tion was vital as its pillars set out the wards social welfare, held here at Aiwan-e-Sadr. The event, organized by Network for Human and Social Development (NHSD), acknowledged the services of departments and individuals in the field of humanitarian vested its power in citizens which led to realizing a welfare State with a political system based on social justice. He said supremacy of the Constitu-

goals for basic rights in various areas including education, health, employment, and social and economic justice. "A Constitution does not belong to a politician or an institution, but to every individual of the country," service and philanthropy. President he said. The president emphasized Alvi stressed that the Constitution the importance of social welfare and philanthropy to address the problems amid the growing population, particularly in the shape of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment.

Faisal Karim Kundi for rising above political difference for Dera's uplift

eral Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Central Information Secretary of Pakistan People's Party(PPP) Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday underlined the need for putting aside differences to work together for ensuring the cio-economic development of the district's uplift. He expressed these views during his visit to Paharpur Bar Complex where he handed over a cheque of Rs0.8 million grant to its President Nazir Niazi Advocate. Referring to politicking at the local level, Faisal Kundi felt no problem in being in alliance with others to achieve the socio-economic development of the district, which was situated at the key geo-strategic location of the country. He also said that all state institutions should work within their respective domains by discharging their responsibilities according to the Constitution to ensure political residents.

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP):Fed- stability and promote democracy in the country. He said that visits of Chinese and Afghan foreign ministers to Pakistan at the invitation of the Foreign Minister and Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would have a positive impact as far as the soregion was concerned. He alleged that Indian media and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) were pursuing the same manifesto on the occasion of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and added their anti-Pakistan role was regrettable. He said that effective measures would be taken for the provision of facilities to the Paharpur Tehsil and added that he would play his role in establishing a sub-campus of Gomal University in the area which has been a long-standing demand of the

Rescue-1122 registering all private ambulances: DEO

SIALKOT (APP):District Emergen- hammad Asif to ensure the presence cy Officer (DEO) Engineer Naveed Iqbal has said that Rescue 1122 has launched a campaign to register all private ambulances across the district. He stated this during a meeting held here on Monday with the officials of private ambulances at the Central Rescue-1122 station. The DEO said the purpose of registering all private ambulances was preparations for any emergency. He said Rescue-1122 had registered 46 private ambulances in the first phase. He urged the In-charge Reg-

of essential life-saving equipment inside the ambulances. He said that Rescue-1122 would also impart basic life-saving training to the drivers, staff and owners of private ambulances to save patients' lives in any emergency during patient shifting. Regional Emergency Officer (REO) Gujranwala Syed Kamal Abid also appreciated all private ambulances for their cooperation with the rescue and said that this initiative is good for the safety of the community. Representatives of private ambuistration Private Ambulances Mu- lances also pledged full cooperation.

CM directs health dept to bear medical treatment expenses of famous artist Shabiran Channa

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Min- Channa is a best artist.' The Chief here on Monday. He said, 'Shabiran all best medical facilities to the artist.

ister Syed Murad Ali Shah has di- Minister said that all the medical exrected the Sindh Health Department penses of the artist would be borne to bear medical treatment expenses by the Sindh government. He directof famous artist Shabiran Channa ed the health department to provide

Three-member gang involved in robbery, street crimes busted

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police on Mon- ons used in the crimes. The accused the stolen motorcycle and the weap- erties of people, he added.

day arrested a three-member gang were being shifted to the jail for an involved in robbery and street crimes identification parade, SHO Rata in the jurisdiction of Rata Amral po- Amral said. SP Rawal appreciated lice station. According to the police the performance of the police team spokesman, police arrested the ac- and assured that actions against orcused identified as the leader of the ganized crimes were being sped up. gang, Ehsan ur Rehman, Abdul Wa- The prime responsibility of the pohid and Noor. They also recovered lice was to protect the lives and prop-

IMSciences and SCCI Peshawar signs MoU



Peshawar (Staff Report): Institute of Management Sciences (IMSciences) Peshawar and Sarhad Chamber of Commerce & Industries Peshawar (SCCIP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on May 08, 2023. The MoU establishes and promotes mutual understanding between IMSciences and SCCIP in this collaboration, and we believe their respective fields of expertise. It also aims to pave the way for providing internship opportunities to the students of IMSciences in local, national international industries. The MoU was signed by Prof. Dr. Usman our young students to gain practical Ghani, Director IMSciences and Mr. experience."

Muhammad Ishaq, President SCCIP. The signing ceremony was attended by Mr Ijaz Khan Afridi, Vice President SCCIP and Mr. Asad Ashfaq, Incharge CDC IMSciences Peshawar. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Muhammad Ishaq, President SCCIP, remarked, "We are excited about it will foster a cooperation between IMSciences and SCCIP. We look forward to exploring new opportunities for our industries, and this partnership will provide a great platform for

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Recession fears rise as German industrial output falls

BERLIN (Agencies): German industrial production fell more than expected in March, partly due to a weak performance by the automotive sector, spurring again recession fears in Europe's largest economy. Production decreased by 3.4% on the previous month following a slightly revised increase of 2.1% in February, the federal statistical office said on Monday. In a Reuters poll, analysts had pointed to a 1.3% fall. "After a buoyant performance by industrial



production at the beginning of the year, there was an unexpectedly sharp decline in March," the economics ministry said. The manufacture of motor vehicles and automotive parts fell by 6.5% on the previous

month. Production in machinery and equipment fell by 3.4% and output in the construction sector decreased by 4.6% on the month. In the first quarter, production was 2.5% higher than in the last quarter of 2022, according to the statistics office. In March, German industrial orders fell by 10.7% from the previous month on a seasonally and calendar-adjusted basis, posting the largest month-on-month decline since 2020 at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Abu Dhabi's ADGM to expand financial free zone area

DUBAI (Agencies): Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM) will expand its area of iurisdiction to ten times its current footprint, it said on Monday, part of Abu Dhabi's plans to diversify by making its financial sector a major contributor to the economy. ADGM, a financial free zone and the interna-



tional financial centre of the United Arab Emirates capital Abu Dhabi

will add al-Reem Island to its current location on al-Maryah Island. ADGM said the expansion would create one of the largest concentrated financial districts in the world, with an area of 1.438 hectares. Since its founding in October 2015, ADGM has 5,500 business licences operating within it, it

Bain Capital seeks US\$4bil for global special situations fund

NEW YORK (Agencies): Bain Capital is seeking to raise U\$4 billion for a new global "special situations fund" as the US firm sees an opportunity to snap up distressed investments, investment in a broad range of asset classes, two people familiar with the matter said. Bain Capital kicked off the fundraising at the start of the year and has already raised about US\$2 billion for the new fund, said the sources, who requested anonymity as these discussions are confiden-



of the fund by the end of the year, the sources added. Bain Capital declined to comment. In 2020, Bain Capital set up a previous global fund after securing US\$3.2 billion in commitments. assets, loan portfolios, corporate intial. The firm is targeting a final close The programme was previously

called Bain Capital Distressed and Special Situations Fund and used to sit within Bain Capital's credit business. Bain Capital's special situations strategy is now a standalone business, after being carved out with an independent team outside the umbrella of the credit unit. As part of the new strategy, Bain Capital has adopted more flexibility in deploying capital and is investing in a range of asset classes, including equity, distressed vestments, and real estate.

Australia's pension funds boost fossil fuel investments

(Agencies): Australia's 30 biggest pension funds increased their investments in key coal, oil and gas producers by 50% in 2022 despite the funds' long-term commitments to net zero carbon emissions, environmental activist group Market Forces said. Superannuation or retirement funds raised their investment to more than A\$34 billion (US\$23 billion) in companies most responsible for expanding fossil fuels, Market Forces said. "Super them get away with trashing our cli-



funds are making a mockery of their own commitments to net zero by buying up wholesale in companies expanding fossil fuels and letting

mate," Market Forces campaigner Brett Morgan said in a statement. Some funds have committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions in their investment portfolio by 2050. Commonwealth Super Corp, Australian Super, Australian Retirement Trust, Aware Super and AMP Ltd – operators of the five largest funds cumulatively managing more than A\$1 trillion (US\$675 billion) did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment.

EU plans sanctions for Chinese companies aiding Russia

BRUSSELS (Agencies): The European Union has proposed sanctions on Chinese companies accused of selling equipment that could be used in weapons to support Russia's war machine, the Financial Times reported on Sunday. Seven Chinese businesses have been listed in a new package of sanctions that will be discussed by EU member states this list includes two mainland Chinese week, the report said, citing a copy companies, 3HC Semiconductors supplier for multiple entities in R of the sanctions list seen by the FT. and King-Pai Technology, along sia's military-industrial complex.



According to the FT, the sanctions companies, 3HC Semiconductors

with five from Hong Kong including Sinno Electronics, Sigma Technology, Asia Pacific Links, Tordan Industry and Alpha Trading Investments. The European Commission did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Some companies like King-Pai Technology have already been placed under sanctions by the US, which said it was a China-based supplier for multiple entities in Rus-

Warren Buffet slams executives responsible for failed US banks

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Billionaire investor and philanthropist Warren Buffett slammed executives in charge of failed US lenders, saying they should be held accountable for the mismanagement that resulted in their collapse, Bloomberg reported on Saturday. Speaking at an annu- mortgages at fixed rates, and in al meeting of Berkshire Hathaway shareholders in Omaha, Nebraska, Buffet said First Republic was offering "crazy" non-government-backed US banks are full of bad commer-



some cases for ten years. Buffet's longtime business partner, Charlie Munger, previously said that

cial property loans, and warned of a brewing storm in America's real estate market. Last week. First Republic was seized by US financial | to a prolonged drought in Spain, the regulators and acquired by JPMorgan, the country's biggest bank. The San Francisco-based lender, which was ranked 14th in size among US commercial banks, had previously received a \$30-billion rescue shot from a group of Wall Street banks in the form of deposits.

Kiev retaliates against Moldova grain ban

KYIV (Agencies): Ukraine is planning to impose a complete ban on imports from neighboring Moldova, in a tit-for-tat response to restrictions introduced this week by Chisinau on Ukrainian grain. On Saturday, Moldova's agriculture minister, Vladimir Bolea, said that the nation had joined a month-long EU embargo on some Ukrainian grains, are under pressure from an influx of while allowing their transit. Bolea Ukrainian grain. "They are worried



claimed the country's warehouses are already full and local farmers

that they will not have spaces for the new harvest," he explained. Criticizing the move, Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture Taras Kachka said Kiev had "informed Chisinau that any restriction on the part of Moldova will be considered an extremely unfriendly step and will entail an immediate ban on all imports

from Moldova."

IMF issues grim warning about global economy

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned that the world is on the edge of geo-economic fragmentation, which she believes could add more "cold water" to already anemic global growth. Speaking by video-link at the Brussels Econom-



Georgieva called for cooperation at a time when growth across the globe is extremely weak by historiic Forum on Wednesday, Kristalina cal standards. "After decades of in-

creasing global integration, there is a growing risk that the world may split into rival economic blocs," the IMF chief said. "And that's a scenario that would be bad for everyone, including for people in Europe." She warned that growth prospects were increasingly bleak at a time when the global outlook is weak both in the near and medium term.

Baidu to unveil new phone in surprise AI move

BEIJING (Agencies): Baidu Inc is adding a phone to its portfolio of smart gadgets as it builds out a hardware ecosystem to complement its internet services. The Beijing-based firm's Xiaodu unit, similar to Amazon.com Inc.'s Alexa division, will next week, a spokesperson said Monday. Much like Amazon and US search leader Google, Baidu has developed smart speakers and displays for the home. The Chinese company calls its DuerOS software for those devices a conversational artificial intelligence system. Baidu was among the earliest to offer an alternative to Bot unveiled in March — following bitious the company's entry will be.



unveil its first smartphone product years of investment in AI. The company has said it plans to embed its AI tools into all major business lines, including in search, autonomous driving and smart gadgets. The introduction of a handset under the Baidu umbrella would mark the first major Chinese entrant in the congested mobile market in years - and the first from among the country's inter-OpenAI's ChatGPT — with its Ernie net giants. But it's unclear how am-

BYD to make EVs in Vietnam in SE Asia push

HANOI (Agencies): BYD Co plans to produce electric vehicles in Vietnam and expects support from the country's government to do so, the Southeast Asian nation said following a May 5 meeting between deputy premier Tran Hong Ha and the automaker's chairman and founder, Wang Chuanfu. Wang expects Vietnam to create "favourable conditions" for BYD to complete investment procedures so it can quickly start making EVs to be sold locally and in other parts of Southeast Asia, according to a report on a government website late Friday after the meeting in Hanoi. The company plans to form a local Asia plant, in addition to Vietnam.



supply chain. A BYD spokeswoman confirmed by email the plans to make EVs in Vietnam. She didn't provide any investment details. BYD, China's biggest EV brand, is building its first overseas production facility in Thailand. The Shenzhen-based company has been considering the Philippines and Indonesia for a new Southeast

S'pore's soaring rents are becoming a political problem

SINGAPORE (Agencies): Expats aren't the only ones feeling the pinch of rents in Singapore rising at the fastest pace in the world. The pain is trickling down to young singles like Sonam who are largely shut out of the nation's subsidised housing programme and starting to question the government's resolve to tackle the problem. The 33-year-old tech worker, a life-long supporter of the ruling People's Action Party, moved to Thailand after her landlord raised her rent by 70% for a two-year lease. She plans to support the opposition in the next election. "We're all moving out in our bizarre to me."



early '20s and now there's this: 'oh, just go back home" to your parents, Sonam said from Bangkok, declining to give her last name for fear of losing her job. "The fact that they're so unaware of what is really happening to millennials and what we need to be able to survive in Singapore — it's just

Binance pauses bitcoin withdrawals, citing large volumes

HONG KONG (Agencies): Cryptocurrency exchange Binance halted bitcoin withdrawals on Monday for the second time in a day, citing large volumes. "Our team is currently working on a fix and will reopen (bitcoin) withdrawals as soon as possible," the company said in a tweet. It said withdrawals were closed temporarily "due to the large volume of pending transactions." Earlier in the day it



hour. In March, Binance, the world's largest crypto exchange suspended deposits and withdrawals citing tech issues. Bitcoin was down about 1% to had paused withdrawals for about an US\$28,191, its lowest in nearly a week.

Olive oil prices hit 26-year high – data

MADRID (Agencies): Olive oil prices have surged to record levels due world's largest producer and exporter of the product. Prices have surged more than 60% since June, and experts warn that consumers will have to brace themselves for further increases. The severe drought that Spain has been experiencing since global olive oil supply, causing prices to spike around the world. Data Fund (IMF) showed that global ol-



ive oil prices have hit \$5,989.8 per metric ton, marking a 26-year high. "We are living in an unprecedented last summer is now threatening the situation," Juan Vilar, a strategic consultant for the sector, told Olive Oil Times. "There have never been olive from the International Monetary oil prices at origin like we are seeing now.'

Italy needs two years to quit Russian gas – media

ROME (Agencies): Italy will be able to completely end its dependence on Russian gas imports only in about as in Libya, where Eni has continued two years, Claudio Descalzi, the chief executive of Italy's Eni, has told La Stampa, as quoted by TASS. So far, Rome has managed to partially replace natural gas from Russia with fuel from other suppliers, Descalzi said, adding that some 30 million cubic meters out of 40 million cubic meters have currently been replaced. Completely eliminating imports of Russian gas is not an easy task, Descalzi believes, because Italy hasn't emphasized investment in domestic agreed to increase imports from Afriproduction for nearly eight years. He said that the partial progress in replacing Russian supplies has been now imports twice as much gas from

with such nations as Egypt, Angola, Algeria, Congo, Mozambique, as well operating and produces 70% of the gas for the domestic market. Italy relies on imports for nearly 75% of its energy. In early 2022, it was receiving 40% of its gas from Russia before imports subsequently plunged due to sanctions on Moscow and the sabotage of the Nord Stream 1 pipeline. In October, Eni reported that Russian gas accounted for only around 10% of Italy's imports. In order to diversify supplies, the government and Eni can countries. Official data released earlier this year showed that Italy

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attributable to Italy's historic ties Algeria than from Russia.

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Malaysia climbs to 7th spot with 4 gold medal haul

PHNOM PENH (Agencies): Malaysia climbed up two spots in the 2023 South East Asian (SEA) Games medal tally after picking up four gold medals at the end of the second day of the Games that began officially on Friday. Two gold medals came from karate, while pencak silat and petanque contributed one gold each, bringing Malaysia's overall total to six gold, 10 silver and 13 bronze. Hosts Cambodia remain at the top of the table with 29 gold, 21 silver and 22 bronze, followed by Thailand (16-17-26) and Indonesia (16-11-24).



The major disappointments of the day came from indoor hockey, where both the men's and women's teams lost out on the gold when they were defeated in their respective finals. Sports that

can offer potential gold medals today include karate, where the national team will try to defend their title in the men's team kumite event, as well as diving and athletics. The national dive team will definitely be the best bet for gold medals, especially since they made a clean sweep of the eight gold medals in the last edition in Hanoi, Vietnam, while athletics, with its target of 10 gold medals, will feature hammer throwers Jackie Wong and Grace Wong, both gold medalists in Hanoi, competing at Morodok Techo National Stadium today.

De Gea error gifts West Ham 1-0 win over United

LONDON (Agencies): A howler by Manchester United goalkeeper David De Gea gifted West Ham United three vital points in their battle against relegation as the Londoners snatched a 1-0 win in the Premier League at the London Stadium on Sunday. United are fourth on 63 points after 34 games, one ahead of Liverpool and with a game in hand over the Merseysiders, while West Ham are 15th on 37 points, seven ahead of third-from-bottom Notting-



better chances in the opening half but they went behind when De Gea somehow failed to keep out a tame bouncing shot from Said Benrahma ham Forest. The visitors enjoyed the that nestled in the bottom corner, de-

spite the Spaniard getting a strong hand to it. United were lucky not to concede a penalty when Victor Lindelof moved his arm into the path of a ball across the box from Benrahma, but the VAR decided not to award a penalty as the first half came to a close. De Gea redeemed himself somewhat early in the second half with a superb reaction save to deny Tomas Soucek, but he looked shaky again as Soucek scored with a header in the 73rd minute, only to see the goal chalked off for offside.

Thailand win International Crown LPGA match play event

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): Ariya Jutanugarn helped launch Thailand as an emerging power in women's golf when she won the British Women's Open in 2016. The victory inspired younger golfers in Thailand and the results were evident during a dominating performance at the International Crown team match play event. Ariya Jutanugarn won the MVP after teaming with her sister Moriya Jutanugarn to win all five matches and 20-year-



old Atthaya Thitikul capped a perfect weekend with a birdie on the 16th

for Thailand over Australia on Sunday. "I would say when I'm growing up, when I'm turning pro, I always want to inspire the kids back home, and right now I feel even better because not only me right now," Ariya Jutanugarn said. It was a total team effort. Thitikul beat Stephanie Kyriacou 4 and 2 to improve to 5-0 on the week and earn the clinching point in the final. Patty Tavatanakit had already beaten Hannah Green 4 hole that clinched the championship and 3 in the other singles match.

Glory for Shabab Al-Ahli with first UAE Pro League title win

DUBAI (Agencies): Elation abounded for Leonardo Jardim's long-term leaders Shabab Al-Ahli Dubai Club when they came from behind to wrap up their first ADNOC Pro League title in fittingly determined fashion. And Lourency's double put Al-Bataeh in pole position to edge a tense, final-day survival showdown during a memorable matchweek 25. The table-topping merged outfit were indebted to second-half strikes from Uzbekistan secure a 2-1 victory at Baniyas. Their



midfielder Aziz Ganiev and emerging UAE winger Yahya Al-Ghassani to

superior head-to-head record against now-dethroned champions Al-Ain, who beat Al-Wasl 3-2, and Al-Wahda, who downed 10-man Ajman 3-2, rendered this week's deciding round moot at the top. Much is still at stake, however, in the battle to avoid following bottom-placed Al-Dhafra - who thrashed Al-Jazira 4-1 in a dead-rubber contest begun by veteran Sultan Al-Ghaferi's 40-yard lob - into the First Division League.

Apologetic Messi returns to training with PSG

PARIS (Agencies): Lionel Messi returned to training with Paris Saint-Germain on Monday six days after Argentina's World Cup-winning captain was suspended for going on an unauthorized trip to Saudi Arabia. "Leo Messi returns to training Monday morning," tweeted the club along with a photo of the 35-year-old in action. His return makes it likely he will feature in PSG's home match with relega-



tion-threatened Ajaccio next Saturday. PSG hold the whip hand in defending their Ligue 1 title, a six point 458 million followers.

lead over Lens with four matches remaining. He was suspended by the Qatar-owned club after failing to turn up for training last Monday. Instead, the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner traveled to Saudi Arabia without PSG's permission to fulfil commitments as part of a contract with the country's tourist office. Messi subsequently apologized in a video posted on Instagram to his

Red Bull's Max Verstappen wins the Miami Grand Prix

MIAMI GARDENS (Agencies): World champion Max powered from ninth on the grid to beat Red Bull team-mate Sergio Perez and win the Miami Grand Prix on Sunday. The victory extends Verstappen's lead at the top of the standings and follows his triumph in the inaugural Miami race last year. The 1-2 for Red Bull is their fourth in five races so far this season as the team utterly dominate the sport Alonso took third for his fourth poleaving their rivals to battle for the dium in five races this season as he coming out 1.2 seconds behind.



third podium position. Aston Martin's Spanish veteran Fernando

continues to enjoy his late career re-Perez, starting on pole, made the perfect start, racing clear of his rivals but Verstappen, on hard tyres, quickly moved through the field and took just 15 laps to reach second place behind his team-mate. Perez pitted on lap 20 allowing Verstappen to take the lead but the Dutchman had to give that up when he went into the pits on lap 46, changing to the medium compound tyres and

Canelo Alvarez batters Ryder to retain undisputed super middleweight crown

MEXICO (Agencies): Saul Canelo Alvarez made a triumphant return to Mexico, punishing John Ryder on the way to a unanimous 12-round decision to retain his undisputed super middleweight world title. Ryder, whose face was already a bloody mess by the time Alvarez knocked him down in the fifth round, battled gamely in the later stages but Alvarez emerged a clear winner in his first fight in his native Mexico in nearly 12 years. Judge Jeremy Hayes scored the bout 120-107 for Alvarez while Joe Pasquale and Gerardo Martino both saw it 118-109 for the champion, who delighted a sellout crowd of some 50,000 at the open-air Akron Stadium in his ing a bevy of right hands that had



hometown. "It's a historic moment for me," Alvarez said. "I'm blessed to be here with my people who supported me from the beginning." Alvarez improved to 59-2-2 with 39 knockouts while Ryder, the mandatory challenger, fell to 38-6 with 18 wins inside the distance. After a tentative opening round, the 32-yearold Alvarez began to open up, land-

Ryder bleeding from the nose and mouth by the third round. A brutal left-right combination dropped Ryder in the fifth round. He beat the count and held on until the bell, but he was in trouble again in the sixth when another big right from Alvarez had the Briton's knees sagging. But Ryder, nicknamed "The Gorilla," kept coming. He was down again after a right from Alvarez late in the eighth, but that was ruled a slip and he had bounced back up moments before the bell. Shaken again in the ninth, Ryder nevertheless seemed to find a second wind. The 10th and 11th were closer and Alvarez was less effective but had more than enough to hang on.

Chinese premier urges IOC to oppose politicisation of sports

HONG KONG (Agencies): China wants to work with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to oppose the politicisation of sports, Premier Li Qiang said, amid demands on the sporting body to exclude athletes from Russia in the wake of its invasion of Ukraine. Premier Li made the comments at a meeting with IOC head Thomas Bach in Beijing over the weekend, according to the state-run Xinhua news agency. Li's comments come with the IOC under immense pressure from 35 governments, including the US, Britain and France, to exclude athletes from Russia and its ally Belarus because of the war. The IOC said in January it was open to including the athletes from the two countries in the Olympics as neutrals and sug- movement,"



gested Asia as a possible qualifying pathway to circumvent bans from European regional competitions. The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) has already offered to let Russian and Belarusian athletes compete at the Asian Games in China this year. "Li said that China is willing to work together with the IOC to oppose the politicisation of sports and to make greater contribution to the Olympic

Ittihad move close to title after Ronaldo and Al-Nassr falter

JEDDAH (Agencies): Just hours after Cristiano Ronaldo and his Al-Nassr teammates stumbled in their title challenge with a 1-1 draw at home to lowly Al-Khaleej on Monday, Al-Ittihad comfortably defeated Abha 4-0 to move five points clear at the top of the league with only four games left to play. The title race is not over just yet but surely few would be willing to bet against the Roshn Saudi League trophy heading to Jeddah. Al-Nassr needed to win to go level on points and put pressure on the Tigers. In the event, however, they delivered the latest in a series of uncertain performances that have cost them seven points in the last four games. In front of an expectant home crowd, the Yellows started brightly but found themselves be- the opposite corner.



hind after just three minutes. Fabio Martins has been in fine form of late for Al-Khaleej, and the Portuguese forward timed his run perfectly to latch onto a delightful reverse pass from Morato and slide his shot past Agustin Rossi. The lead did not last long, however. Abdulrahman Ghareeb floated over a free-kick from the left and Alvaro Gonzalez rose at the near post to nod his header into

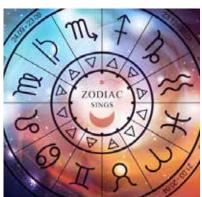
T10 cricket league set to take US by storm

RIYADH (Agencies): T-Ten Global Sports, organisers of the Abu Dhabi T10, have announced the inaugural season of the US Masters T10 League, to be held in Dallas, Texas. The league is being co-organised with the help of Ritesh Patel, who also owns a participating franchise SAMP Army. The league, based on the thrilling 10-over format, will have legendary cricketers who have recently retired from the international format along with young and upcoming stars. There will be six teams but, gauging the interest levels so far, the organisers are bracing for an eight-team cap. The dates are yet to be finalised. Patel, one of the soil.



main organisers of the American edition and league partner, said: "We are excited to bring this fast, explosive cricket format to the USA. Players participating in this tournament have huge following all over the globe, and this is a great opportunity for American fans to witness this for the first time on American

DAILY HOROSCOPE: MAY 9, 2023



- It's a general reading which may differ from person to person because of time date and year.

ARIES: Take it easy. You've got more going on than you realize, and it could all crumble if you don't slow down at some point! A steady pace is the only way for you to make it through the day. - TAURUS: You're feeling a little adrift, but not so much that you're worried. It could be a good thing because it opens

you up to new ideas. Someone new might be the one to change your mind about an idea. - GEMINI: You receive confusing di-

rections and clarity might take too long to arrive. This could be one of those times when you have to close your eyes and trust the Universe.

- CANCER: Other people are having a hard time reading you today, but it has nothing to do with your communication style! Sometimes there's just too much noise in the line for them to really get it.

 LEO: You're feeling extra helpful now, and there's at least one person who really needs what you have. It's a good time for you to step up before forcing anything they don't want to do.

you're asked. You get double points that way!

- VIRGO: Don't feel shy about voicing your concerns or making your ambitions plain. Now is a good time to effect change of all kinds, and you almost certainly have a plan laid out, at least in your mind.

: You're not in the greatest of moods right now thanks in some small part to old memories or weird behavior on the part of family members. You can ride it out, but things should be great tomorrow!

- SCORPIO: It's a great day for you to sign on with new business partners, make legal agreements, or move into a new home. Your ability to get the details lined up and to your liking has never been greater!

SAGITTARIUS: You're in an odd mood but not so odd that you're leaving your old life behind. If anything, you may be returning to an older way of doing things, more from practicality than nostalgia.

- CAPRICORN: You're seeing great results from your recent efforts, certainly good enough for you to redouble your investment. Friends and family are just as happy with your progress as you

ACQUARIUS: There's no need for you to fight the current of the day. In fact, that just makes things worse! If you don't like the direction things are moving, just wait until tomorrow and make it all right.

PISCES: Use your leadership skills when the time is right today. Just bump things along barely enough so that they settle into the right track without

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Ethiopian foreign minister to visit Pakistan on May 9, inaugurate direct flights, embassy in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ethiopian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Misganu Arega, is leading an official delegation to Pakistan from May 9 to 11. During the visit, the Ethiopian minister would open Embassy of Ethiopia in Islamabad inaugurating direct flights between Karachi and Addis Ababa by Ethiopian Airlines. The Ethiopian MoS for Foreign Affairs and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar, are scheduled to inaugurate the opening of the

Iraqi forces receive Super Mushshak aircrafts from Pakistan



BAGHDAD (Agencies): The spokesperson of the Commander-in-Chief of the Iraqi Armed Forces, Yahya Rasoul, announced on Sunday that the Iraqi forces received the first batch of the Pakistani aircraft, Super Mushshak, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported. "The tasks of the Air Force include non-combat missions," Rasoul told INA on the 92nd anniversary of the establishment of the Air Force Command in Iraq. "There was a key role in rebuilding the Air Force following 2003. F-16 fighter jets and Korean-made T50 aircrafts were brought to the Iraqi Air Force," Rasoul clarified. Rasoul emphasized that modernization is ongoing to complete building the capabilities of the Air Force. The Iraqi official explained that Iraqi fighter pilots and the Air Force Command participated in operations to assist other Iraqi ministries during the Corona pandemic, as they transported vaccines from China. Rasoul added that the Air Force also provided aid to neighboring Turkey and Syria following the devastating earthquake and helped in the evacuation of the Iraqi community from Sudan. During his speech on the 92nd anniversary of the establishment of the Air Force Command in Iraq, the Iraqi Minister of Defense, Thabet Al-Abbasi, confirmed that his ministry is working to develop the Air Force to include the most modern fighter jets, INA mentioned.

Israeli firm reveals unmanned submarine BlueWhale



TEL AVIV (Agencies): — Israel Aerospace Industries has developed a new unmanned submarine, the BlueWhale, designed for covert intelligence-gathering operations, the company said. The underwater vehicle is almost 11 meters long and just over 1 meter in diameter. Coming in at 5.5 tons (11,000 pounds), the platform can fit in a 40-foot shipping container for transport by land, sea or air. The size of the vessel is similar to deep-submergence vehicles or so-called crewed midget submarines. It can travel at up to 7 knots underwater, and using electrical power, the submarine can operate for two to four weeks, depending on the mission, the company said. Its range, at an average speed of 7 knots for 10 days, would be more than 1,600 nautical miles (1,841 miles). The platform can detect submarines and gather acoustic intelligence using radar and electro-optical technology, according to the company. It has a mast, like larger crewed submarines, and a telescope to help detect targets at sea and on the coast, the company added in a statement. "It is also equipped with dedicated sonars to enable the detection of both manned and unmanned submarines, and map mines on the seabed," IAI noted, as well as "a special sensor suite [that] ensures safe transit for the submarine both below and in the proximity of the sea surface.'



Embassy of Ethiopia in Islamabad, said a press release issued by the Foreign Office. The Chief Minister of Sindh and the Ethiopian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs will inaugurate the direct flight operations by between Ethiopia and Pakistan.

Ethiopian Airlines. The Ethiopian delegation comprises Ministers of State for Science & Innovation, Trade & Regional Integration and members of the business community. "During the visit, the two sides will discuss a range of bilateral issues of mutual interest, with a focus on trade and cooperation in science and technology," the press release added. The visit of the Ethiopian delegation is expected to provide fresh impetus to the friendly relations

Governor Punjab awards degrees at 19th convocation of IUB



BAHAWALPUR (Staff Report): Engr. Muhammad Baligh ur Rahman, Governor Punjab and Chancellor has said that universities play a key role in promoting a knowledge-based economy. Human resource development and advanced research are indispensable for national development. Governor Punjab expressed these views while addressing in the 19th Convocation of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. In this occasion, degrees were conferred to 1024 graduates, including 28 PhD. 66 MPhil. 79 gold and 68 silver medals. During his visit to the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, the Governor of Punjab distributed more than 6.13 million rupees scholarships to 48 students belonging to Balochistan under the Balochistan Education Endowment Fund. He inaugurated the Centre for Sustainable Development Goals at the university and inaugurated the annual degree show of the College of Art and Design. Governor Punjab said that our educational institutions should produce graduates who have high academic skills as well as excellent personal qualities. In the last few years, Islamia University Bahawalpur top 100 world universities.

has shown extraordinary progress in every department. The establishment of inter-university consortium, inter-cropping technology of maize and soybean crops, establishment of National Cotton Breeding Institute, initiation of pilot project in Cholistan on rain enhancement project with international cooperation to develop agroeconomic zone, establishment of first-of-its-kind nursing college in any university are exemplary steps Governor Punjab appreciated the organizing of the Bahawalpur Literary and Cultural Festival at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Bahawalpur Trade Fair to promote tourism. He said that the establishment of the Centre for Performing Arts and Digital Media Production is commendable. In his address on this occasion, Vice Chancellor Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob said that the Islamia University of Bahawalpur has been included in the top 800 universities of the world in the ranking of times higher education. The Islamia University of Bahawalpur is implementing teaching, administrative, and financial reforms to join the

JazzCash, CBA join hands to promote digital financial services

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): In a recent development, JazzCash and CBA (Community business agent) have formed a partnership to provide Cash-In and Cash-Out services to JazzCash customers through CBA's retail network. This collaboration is expected to have a significant impact on the digital financial services industry in Pakistan, making it more convenient and accessible for customers. JazzCash is a leading mobile wallet and branchless banking services provider with a significant market share in mobile money activity in Pakistan. jazzcash.com.pk Meanwhile, CBA is the country's largest digital distribution platform, promoting micro-entrepreneurship in the country. cba. com.pk The CEO of CBA, Ghazanfar Ali Khan, emphasized the company's commitment to elevating micro-entrepreneurship and helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to scale upwards and achieve financial



sustainability. He underscored CBA's dedication to continuous improvement, innovation, and collaboration to play a more significant and impactful role in the industry. This partnership is a significant step towards promoting financial inclusion in Pakistan. By joining forces, these two leading companies are making it easier for people to access and use digital financial services, which will positively impact their lives. Mr. Murtaza Ali, the Head of JazzCash, speaking at the occasion highlighted the importance of strategic partnerships in building new verticals and avenues that will result in building an ecosystem for payments.

PRCS marks World Red Cross Red Crescent Day

ISLAMABAD (Staff Report): The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) jointly organized an awareness walk at F-9 Park here on Monday in connection with Red Cross Red Crescent Day celebrations under the theme "Everything we do comes #fromtheheart". The walk was aimed at raising public awareness about the humanitarian work carried out by PRCS and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners in Pakistan. The event was attended by Secretary General PRCS Muhammad Abaidullah Khan, staff from PRCS, ICRC, IFRC and RCRC Movement partners in Pakistan including the Turkish Red Crescent, Norwegian Red Cross, and German Red Cross, as well as volunteers, students, and people from different walks of life. The participants walked through the



tracks in F-9 Park, carrying banners and placards with messages highlighting the importance of humanitarian work. A simple cake cutting ceremony was also held to mark the RCRC day celebrations. PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari expressed his pride in being part of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and praised the commitment and passion of the staff and volunteers who work selflessly to help those in need. He also thanked the partners in Pakistan and around the world for their collaboration and continued support to help the most vulnerable communities.

Two dead after MiG jet crashes in India: police



NEW DELHI (AFP/APP): Two people on the ground died after a Russian-made MiG-21 military aircraft crashed into a house in India on Monday, police said. "Pilot has been rescued safely. The MiG crashed on a house. Two people have died. Three people have been injured," police officer Sudhir Chaudhary told AFP after the crash in the western state of Rajasthan. The Indian Air Force (IAF) confirmed the crash and that the pilot ejected. "A MiG-21 aircraft of the IAF crashed near Suratgarh during a routine training sortie to-day morning," the IAF tweeted. "The pilot ejected safely, sustaining minor injuries. An inquiry has been constituted to ascertain the cause of the accident." In July 2022, two pilots were killed when a MiG-21 crashed in a training sortie in Rajasthan. That crash was the sixth MiG-21 aircraft to have gone down since January 2021, with five pilots killed. Russian-made MiG-21 jets first entered Indian service in the 1960s and for decades served as the backbone of the country's air force. Numerous crashes in the past few decades, however, have led to the planes being dubbed "flying coffins" because of their poor safety record. Last week, an army helicopter with three people on board crashed in Jammu and Kashmir region. Two Indian Air Force fighter jets crashed in January, killing one pilot and injuring two others, in an apparent mid-air collision while on exercises south of the capital New Delhi. It involved a Russian-made Sukhoi Su-30 and a French-built Mirage 2000. Five army soldiers were killed last October when their helicopter crashed in Arunachal Pradesh state, near the country's militarised and disputed border with China. It was the second military chopper crash in the state that month, coming weeks after a Cheetah helicopter came down near the town of Tawang, killing its pilot.

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Pakistan-Afghanistan ties are beyond the neighborhood: Amir Khan Muttaqi

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): "Pakistan-Afghanistan ties are beyond the neighborhood. Besides shared religious and cultural values, we are inter-related in economic issues as well." This was stated by H.E. Amir Khan Muttaqi, Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan during his Public Talk, organized by the Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad, today, under its Distinguished Lecture Series. Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA, moderated the event. She said that the visit of the Acting Foreign Minister was a continuation of Pakistan's political engagement process with Afghanistan and this event was held at CAMEA's efforts to reinforce bilateral relations. During his welcome remarks, Director General ISSI Amb. Sohail Mahmood underscored the importance of Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi's visit to Pakistan



and highlighted the uniqueness of the Pakistan-Afghanistan relationship in view of the indissoluble bonds between the two peoples. "There are no other two countries in the region that have so much in common as Pakistan and Afghanistan do", which "makes positive mutual engagement a matter not of choice, but of necessity", he said. Amb. Sohail Mahmood recalled the events since 15 August 2021and Pakistan's

steps bilaterally, regionally and internationally to support the fraternal people of Afghanistan including through humanitarian and economic support, facilitation of bilateral trade and transit trade, and regulated cross-border movement. He also highlighted the international community's expectations from the Interim authorities including inclusivity, human rights of all citizens of Afghanistan, and counter-terrorism actions.

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