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Armed forces not to tolerate violation of its sanctity, security of its installations: COAS



RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Saturday said that the Armed Forces would not tolerate any further attempt of violating the sanctity and security of its installations or vandalism and resolved to bring to justice all the planners, abettors, instigators and executors of vandalism on the Black Day of 9th May. The Army Chief visited Corps Headquarters Peshawar, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release

said. The COAS was given a detailed briefing on the prevailing security situation and ongoing counter-terrorism efforts. He appreciated the professional competence, performance and achievements of Law Enforcement Agencies in the ongoing fight against terrorism. The Army Chief also addressed the officers of the Corps and emphasized on the evolving threats to national security. He said, "We shall continue with our endeavors of peace and stability and

there will be no room for spoilers of the process". The Army Chief also sensitized about challenges of information warfare and efforts to create misperceptions. He highlighted that a concerted effort was being made maliciously by inimical elements to target the armed forces. He pledged that such nefarious attempts would be foiled through the support of the people of Pakistan. Earlier on arrival, the COAS was received by Corps Commander Peshawar.

Italian embassy in China denies rumor of suspending visa applications

BEIJING (Agencies): Rumors about visa suspension for Chinese tour groups are "groundless," the Italian embassy in Beijing said in a statement Saturday afternoon. The embassy has so far been receiving regular visa applications from Chinese nationals, both individually and in groups, it said. The Italian embassy also said in their notice posted via its official WeChat account that ADS group tourism visa applications will resume soon and that the registration of accredited Chinese travel agencies is underway. Public information showed that ADS group visa, short for approved destination status visa, is for residents from certain areas visiting a destination country on a tour organized by an accredited travel agent. Italy has been one of the main destinations for Chinese tourists in Europe before the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Italian National Institute of Statistics, Italy received a total of 5,356,000 Chinese tourists in 2019. Italy was one of the most visited European countries by Chinese tourists that year.

11 killed in west DR Congo militia clashes, curfew declared

Bandundu, DR Congo (AFP/APP): At least 11 people have been killed in militia clashes in western Democratic Republic of Congo, officials said Saturday, as a province in the restive region declared a curfew to respond to the violence. "Mobondo" militants attacked the village of Batshongo, in Kwango province, late on Friday, said provincial government spokesman Adelar Nkisi, referring to a militia from the Yaka community. Two soldiers, one police officer and two civilians were killed in the attack, Nkisi told AFP, adding that the soldiers had been "practically chopped to pieces". But later on Saturday, the spokesman said the death toll had risen to 11 people. Clashes had occurred on in Batshongo on Friday night and continued the following day in Mongata, a village about 8 kilometres (5 miles) further west, in the capital province of Kinshasa. Nkisi added that Kwango's government had set a curfew from 8 p.m. until the early hours Sunday morning to the respond to the emergency. Details of the clashes remain hazy and AFP was unable to independently confirm the death toll.

A massive new US embassy in a tiny Middle East nation is raising eyebrows

BEIRUT (Agencies): A massive new US embassy complex in Lebanon is causing controversy for its sheer size and opulence in a country where nearly 80% of the population is under the poverty line. Located some 13 kilometres (about 8 miles) from the center of Beirut, the US' new embassy compound in Lebanon looks like a city of its own. Sprawling over a 43-acre site, the complex in the Beirut suburb of Awkar is almost two-and-a-half times the size of the land the White House sits on and more than 21 soccer fields. Many Lebanese on Twitter questioned why the US needs such a large embassy in their capital. Lebanon is smaller than Connecticut and has a population of just six million. Few American tourists go to the country as the State Department has placed it on the third highest travel advisory level, but it does have a sizeable population of Lebanese American residents. "Did the US move to Lebanon?" tweeted Sandy, a social media activist. "Maybe you'll have enough room to work on all those pending visa applications," tweeted Abed A. Ayoub, national executive director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, responding to the grandiosity of the new complex. Computer-generated images published by the embassy show an ultra-modern compound, hosting multi-story buildings with high glass windows, recre-

ational areas, and a swimming pool surrounded by greenery and views of the Lebanese capital. The compound includes a chancery, representational and staff housing, facilities for the community and associated support facilities, according to the project's website. From the pandemic to the 2020 Beirut blast, Lebanon has been assailed by a number of crises that have left its economy in ruins. Many Lebanese are unable to afford basic commodities, including food, medicine and electricity. "Let them eat concrete," another user tweeted. Plans for the embassy complex were announced in 2015 and it is reported to have cost \$1 billion. Its construction is overseen by the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO), which supervised the building of a number of other US embassies around the world. The US embassy in Lebanon did not respond to CNN's request for comment. The US has had a turbulent history with Lebanon. It is the home of Iran-backed Hezbollah, the most powerful group in the country, but has nonetheless enjoyed friendly relations with the US. Last month marked 40 years since the 1983 bombing of the American embassy in Beirut, which killed 63 people, including 52 Lebanese and embassy employees. In October that year, a bomb struck barracks in Beirut housing American and French peacekeepers, killing 299 people.

India to demand return of UK crown jewel

LONDON (Agencies): India is set to embark on a major diplomatic campaign to retrieve thousands of artifacts, including one of the largest cut diamonds in the world, which had been removed from the country by Britain during the colonial period, The Telegraph reported on Friday, citing sources. The push to reclaim the treasures lost back in the day of the British Empire is said to "come from the top" echelons of Indian officials. The campaign is also reportedly on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's priority list, with one Telegraph source describing the initiative as "reckoning with the past." The effort to return the items will be led by Indian ministerial and diplomatic staff, with Telegraph sources alleging that some officials deem the artifacts taken during British colonial rule as basically stolen due to being "unethically" removed in a state of "colonial coercion." The campaign to retrieve the artifacts may mar relations between the



UK and India, which was described as Britain's 'Jewel in the Crown' during the colonial era due to its vast resources and strategic location, the report says. Indian diplomats in London are expected to file formal requests with individuals and institutions currently holding the items, with the process set to begin this year. The campaign will reportedly specifically seek to repatriate the 105-carat Koh-i-Noor diamond. The precious gem, which was once held by Indian rulers, but was acquired by the British during the annexation of the Punjab province in 1849, is currently set in the crown of the late mother of Queen Elizabeth II.

PM orders those involved in violence tracked down and arrested

KARACHI (Reuters): Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif on Saturday gave authorities 72 hours to identify and arrest all those involved in violent acts after former Prime Minister Imran Khan's arrest this week sparked deadly unrest. Sharif said the cases would be tried by anti-terrorism courts. "All available resources including technological aid and intelligence are being deployed to chase down these elements. Bringing these people to justice is a test case for the government," said the premier. Khan departed court premises late Friday night and headed towards his hometown Lahore amid high security, after a court granted him bail. His arrest in a land fraud case on Tuesday, which the Supreme Court ruled "invalid and unlawful" on Thursday, sparked violent protests by his supporters. They stormed military establishments, set ablaze a state broadcaster building, smashed buses, ransacked a top army official's house and attacked other assets, re-



sulting in the army being deployed in multiple cities. More than 2,800 arrests were made, while 152 police officers were injured, 74 police vehicles vandalised and set on fire, and 22 government buildings, including police stations and offices, were damaged, said the police of Pakistan's most populous province, Punjab. At least eight people were killed in the violence, a spasm of unrest in a country that is facing economic crisis, with record inflation, anaemic growth and delayed IMF funding. Following Sharif's announcement, Punjab's government released pictures of unidentified protesters involved in an attack on a military official's residence on Wednesday.

Islamic Jihad says agrees Gaza truce with Israel

GAZA/JERUSALEM (Reuters): Israel and the militant Islamic Jihad group in Gaza have agreed a truce that will go into effect at 10 p.m. (1900 GMT), Palestinian officials said, signalling an end to the worst episode of cross-border fire since a 10-day war in 2021. Egypt, which brokered the ceasefire, called on all sides to adhere to the agreement, Egypt's Al-Qahera News television channel reported. "In the light of the agreement of the Palestinian and the Israeli side, Egypt announces a ceasefire between the Palestinian and the Israeli side has been reached," a text of the agreement seen by Reuters read, and added the truce

will begin at 10 p.m. "The two sides will abide by the ceasefire which will include an end to targeting civilians, house demolition, an end to targeting individuals immediately when the ceasefire goes into effect," it said. Islamic Jihad confirmed a truce had been reached. "We declare our acceptance of the Egyptian announcement and we will abide by it as long as the occupation (Israel) abides by it," the group's spokesman Dawoud Shehab said. There was no immediate confirmation from Israel, which rarely acknowledges such agreements with Palestinian militant groups it designates as terrorist organisations.

Nepali climbers kick off Everest summits

Everest Base Camp, Nepal: (AFP/APP): Nine Nepalis reached the summit of Mount Everest on Saturday, opening the route for hundreds of climbers expected to scale the world's highest mountain in the coming weeks. Weather cleared for the nine to fix ropes to the top of the 8,849-metre (29,032-foot) mountain, which will be used by Everest hopefuls. Every year, the first summit of Everest is by a team from one of Nepal's expedition organising companies, who prepare the way for hundreds of paying customers to follow. "The team safely reached the summit of Everest today," coordinator Mingma Gyalje Sherpa of Imagine Nepal Trek and Expeditions told AFP. The team was led by mountain guide Dawa Gyalje Sherpa, who already had 12 Everest summits to his name. Early Friday, a trail of headlights snaked up Everest's Khumbu icefall as hundreds followed the footsteps of the rope-fixing team to try to reach the summit in the coming days. "Climbers are going up as the weather is expected to be favourable for a summit for a few days,"



Tashi Sherpa of expedition organiser Seven Summit Treks said from base camp. Nepal has issued at least 466 permits to foreign climbers this year, the \$11,000 fee part of total costs for a summit ranging from \$45,000 to \$200,000. Since most will need a guide, more than 900 people -- a record -- will try to summit this season, which runs until early June. This could result in heavy traffic and bottlenecks en route to the summit, especially if there is a shorter climbing window because of unfavourable weather. Everest guide Abiral Rai said he was excited for the season, but also worried. "A high number of permits have been issued this year, many people have come to climb Everest. Coupling that with challenging weather, there might be traffic jams," Rai said.

US Navy declares its mine countermeasures suite ready for operations

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The U.S. Navy declared initial operational capability on its entire mine countermeasures mission package, which will operate off littoral combat ships and other potential motherships. The mission package includes four primary systems to find, identify and destroy sea mines: the Airborne Laser Mine Detection System and the Airborne Mine Neutralization System, both of which are operated from MH-60 helicopters; and the

Unmanned Influence Sweep System and the AN/AQS-20C mine-hunting sonar, both of which are towed behind the Mine Countermeasures Unmanned Surface Vessel. Each of these systems underwent individual testing and IOC declarations, and the Navy on May 2 conferred that readiness grade on the entire family of systems. The Navy has also been developing the KnifeFish unmanned underwater vehicle as part of the mission package.

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.

First three-day international conference on Computing Technologies, Tools, Applications held

PESHAWAR (APP): First three-day international conference on Computer Technologies and Tools Applications under the aegis of Agriculture University Peshawar was concluded here Friday. Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Jahan Bakht was the chief guest while the chief organizer was Pro Vice Chancellor. Dean Professor Dr. Daud Jan, Focal Person Dr. Asfandiar Khan and Secretary Dr. Javed Iqbal Bangash were also present on the occasion. Chief organizer Prof. Dr. Daud Jan while welcoming the chief guest Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Jahan Bakht and other participants, said that the purpose of this conference was to provide a platform to computer researchers, scholars and experts to come together and share their knowledge, experiments and take advantage from the inventions jointly. The conference also provided opportunities to network, collaborate

and learn about the latest research and trends in their respective fields, present research findings and get valuable feedback from researchers and experts in the field. Overall, the conference aimed to facilitate the exchange of ideas, encourage critical thinking and promote intellectual development. He added that this conference is the first international conference titled “Computing Technologies, Tools and Applications” in public sector Universities and Institute of Computer Sciences and Information Technology. University of Agriculture Peshawar will organize such conferences every year. He also thanked his team and paid tribute to their tireless efforts. Chief guest Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Jahan Bakht while congratulating the organizing committee including chief organizer Prof. Dr. Daud Jan, Focal Person Dr. Isfandiar Khan, Secretary Dr. Javed Iqbal Bangash for organizing a suc-

cessful international conference said that the current era of computers and Information technology is an excellent platform for positive information such as new experiences, inventions, research and countless other curricular and co-curricular activities. Therefore, the University employees should convey the curricular and co-curricular studies of the university to the public through print, electronic and social media. In the conference, internationally renowned experts and researchers in the field of computer and information technology, Professor Dr. Marco Martalo of the University of Cagliari, Italy, Nazri bin Muhammad Nawi of the University of Tan Hussein Malaysia, Professor Dr. Kashif Naseer Qureshi of the University of Limerick, Ireland, University of VIT South Australia Dr Kashif Nisar and University of Oulu Fenland Dr Arif Ali Khan gave online lectures.

Tank police committed to protect citizens’ life, property: DPO

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): District Police Officer (DPO) Tank Waqar Ahmed Friday said that district police were committed to ensuring the protection of life and property of citizens. He expressed these views during a meeting with an outgoing Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Rural Tank Sagheer Gilani at his office. On this occasion, he presented an honorary shield to DSP Gilani and praised his contribution towards strengthening the district police, which, he added, always combated crimes in the area in an

effective manner. The DPO said the DSP had always endeavored to live up to the expectations of the people and ensure the rule of law and discharge duties with honesty, dedication and courage. Besides other officials, DSP Headquarters Tank Ashgar Ali Shah and DSP Sub-division Jandola Sye Marjan Shah were also present on the occasion highlighting services of Sagheer Gilani. They said that services he made for the interest of police jawans and the masses would always be remembered.

QWP calls for uplifting backward provinces

PESHAWAR (APP): Qaumi Watan Party (QWP), provincial chairman Sikandar Hayat Khan Sherpao has called for maximum focus on the development of backward federating units to bring them at par with developed ones. Addressing a public meeting at Tehsil Tangi on Friday, he urged the government to give priority to backward provinces in development schemes to put them on the track of

progress and development. He expressed reservations over the statistics of the recent digital census, saying that it not only decreases provincial share in the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, but also creates a difference in representation in the National Assembly. Sikandar Sherpao held the leadership of Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaaf responsible for current political instability in the country.

SSC annual exam, postponed papers to start from May 15: BISE Kohat

PESHAWAR (APP): Kohat board of Intermediate and Secondary education (BISE) on Friday issued a revised date sheet for the SSC Annual-I examination 2023 and notified papers from May 15. According to the controller of examination, the papers of Biology, Computer Science and food and Nutrition, class 10th would be held on May 15 at 9 a.m. and art and model drawing practical of class 9th in evening at 1400 hours. Similarly, the papers of Biology, Computer Science and Food and Nutrition, Class 9 would be

held on May 16 at 9 a.m. and art and model drawing practical of Class 10 in the evening at 1400 hours. On May 17 and 18 the examination of Pakistan Studies (compulsory) of Class 10 and Class 9 would be held respectively. He said that the postponed papers of the SSC annual-I examination would start from May 19, adding that according to the revised date sheet, the Math (Science subjects) and General Science of Class 10th would be held on May 19, morning and Civic, Economics and Geography of Class 9 in the evening.

91-member KP contingents leaves for 34th National Games Quetta

PESHAWAR (APP): The five Games 91-members Khyber Pakhtunkhwa contingent left for Quetta, Balochistan via buses and were seen off by the office-bearers of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Olympic Association at Peshawar sports Complex on Friday. The squad left from the Peshawar Sports Complex by buses to Quetta. Chef de Mission Ilyas Afridi along with Deputy Chef de Mission Miss Sumayyah are going with male and female teams to Quetta. General Secretary KP Olympic Association

Zulfiqar Ali Butt, Director Operation Aziz Ullah Khan, Muhammad Amjad Khan, Khalid Waqar, Nasir Mohmand and other officials and a large number of male and female athletes were also present. The Games including Kabaddi (13 players), Volleyball 27 (male and female players), Badminton 12 (male female players), Rugby 27 male and female players are going to Quetta while 08 members male and female players left for Lahore with three members of the committee, totally 91-members.

Pollen allergy grips Hazara division

ABBOTTABAD (APP): In the wake of the summer season pollen allergy Friday knocked most parts of the Hazara division while Abbottabad city is amongst the worst hit by the pollen. The Primary cause of the allergy is an accumulation of Poplar Tree, which results in white, fluffy clouds that resemble cotton and cause allergies to people. The residents of various areas including, Mandian, Supply, Link Road and Sir Syed Colony were affected most. A thick layer of pollen can be seen easily everywhere on the roads, streets and buildings where

inhabitants were helpless as it accumulated in drinking water and food items. The Poplar is the earliest pollen producer, starts releasing their pollen in February in the Hazara division and northern areas of Pakistan and reaches its peak in May. The trees aggravate allergy symptoms, even if they were not nearby houses but released large amounts of pollen that can be distributed miles away from the original source. Dr. Qazi Nasir told APP that pollen allergies primarily include burning, itching, and swelling in the mouth, lips, and throat.

Progress of KPCIP ongoing projects in Abbottabad reviewed

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad, Khalid Iqbal Friday chaired a review meeting regarding the progress of ongoing projects under the KP City Improvement Project (KPCIP). The meeting discussed the performance of ongoing projects under the KPCIP while Additional Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad, Jibran Raza, Chief Executive

Officer WSSCA, Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Abbottabad, KPK Police team, and other officials attended the meeting. Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad also directed to ensure the provision of NOCs and all arrangements regarding PESCO-related matters. A briefing was given by the KP team regarding the ongoing work on Sherwan Adventure Park.

First wheelchair bound lawyer wins slot of Executive member PHCBA election in the history

PESHAWAR (Staff Report): Malgaree Wakeelan Forum also known as National Lawyers Forum (NLF) awarded ticket to differently abled and wheelchair bound lawyer Muhammad Waqas Munir in Peshawar High Court Bar Association election held on 6th May 2023. History was made by KPK lawyers as never before a wheelchair bound differently abled lawyer has contested any bar association election in Pakistan. Total three candidates contested for the 2 slots



of Executive member, Muhammad Waqas Munir received highest votes 652 among the three contestants and created history by becoming first ever wheelchair bound member of high court bar association cabinet.

Corps Commander directs for speedy rehabilitation of Radio Pakistan building

PESHAWAR (APP): Corps Commander Peshawar Lieutenant General Hassan Azhar Hayat on Friday visited the building of Radio Pakistan, which was ransacked and torched by a violent mob of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on

May 10. He was given a detailed briefing about the incident in which the decades-old historic building was burnt. The Corps Commander took a round of various sections of the building, including the office of Associated Press of Pakistan on the fourth floor, and directed the Pakistan Army personnel busy in the rehabilitation and cleanliness work,

for early completion of the task, besides providing other needed assistance. He also offered the installation of a transmitter on behalf of the Pakistan Army for Radio Pakistan. The Corps Commander said those injured in the incident would be provided the best possible treatment at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH), Peshawar.

Governor administers oath to Musarat Hilali as CJ PHC

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali Friday administered oath to Acting Chief Justice Musarat Hilali as the permanent Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court. Justice Musarat Hilali took the oath of office as the Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court in a ceremony held at the Governor House. In the ceremony, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Law Secretary read out presidential order on behalf of the President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi regarding appointment of the CJ on a permanent basis. The governor congratulated the chief justice and expressed good wishes. Caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan, judges

of Peshawar High Court, lawyers, caretaker provincial ministers Fazal Elahi, Firoz Jamal Shah Kakakhel, Adnan Jalil, Hamid Shah, Pir Haroon Shah, Justice (R) Irshad Qaiser, Bakht Nawaz Thakot, Sawal Nazir Advocate, Muhammad Ali Shah, Salma Begum, Mayor Peshawar Zubair Ali, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Inspector General Police Akhtar Hayat Khan, Accountant General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Heads of Administrative Departments, Principal Secretary to Governor Mazhar Irshad, Registrar Peshawar High Court Inamullah Khan, PSO Chief Justice, Principal Officers High Court attended the oath taking ceremony.

Four of family killed in Karak

PESHAWAR (APP): At least four members of a family were shot dead on Saturday by unidentified armed men in Makori area of Karak district. The shooting took place in the vicinity of Banda Dawood Shah. According to police, the firing incident claimed the lives of four members of a family including a local leader of Makori, his father, and two nephews. The reason behind the incident

was stated money dispute. The Bandah Dawood Shah Police Station has initiated a thorough investigation into the matter to uncover the motives behind the shooting and bring the culprits to justice. The entire region of Bandah Dawood Shah is in mourning, with the community coming together to offer condolences and support to the bereaved families.

JUI urges party workers to join PDM’s protest in Islamabad

PESHAWAR (Agencies): Provincial Chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Maulana Ataur Rahman urged the party workers to join Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) protest in Islamabad on Monday. Addressing a press conference at Muf-ti Mahmood Markaz here Saturday, Maulana Ataur Rehman directed the district level party heads to join them at Hakla interchange along with party’s flags at 10am. Strongly condemning the damages of public and private properties by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf workers during protest on May 10, Maulana Ataur Rehman said that we had done 15 million marches, Independent March even breaking a pot cannot prove it. He said that PTI has spread hatred against the military leadership in the protest. Our leadership had earlier said that this is a sedition which cannot

be called a political party, said Maulana Ataur Rehman. Maulana raised a question that if Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan can be banned then they should be banned too. He said that our leadership had appealed to the people to reach Islamabad on May 15 at 11am, adding preparation is going on in this regard. Jamiat’s volunteer force Ansar-u-Islam, Jamiat Lawyers Forum and other subsidiary organizations have also been instructed to participate in an organized manner. District organizations have been directed to bring workers in a systematic manner to remove the fear of mischief, said Maulana Ataur Rehman. The workers have also been instructed to bring goods and edibles according to the weather. Ataur Rahman said and added, they will stay there till the final order and direction by the party leadership during protest.

KP Governor visits burnt building of Radio Pakistan, expresses solidarity with staff

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali and Provincial Caretaker Minister for Information, Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah here on Saturday visited the building of Radio Pakistan that was set to fire by PTI workers during a protest against arrest of Imran Khan. The governor inspected each and every section of the historic building to assess damages caused by fire during the violent protest of PTI.

He was also briefed by Superintendent Operations, Haroon Rashid about the whole episode of violence that left the historic building of Radio Pakistan into ruins. He met with the Station Director of Radio Pakistan, Muhammad Ejaz and other staff members and expressed solidarity with them. Condemning the violent incident, he prayed courage of Radio Pakistan workers to resist the onslaught of PTI hooligans.

GOLD PRICE IN PAK

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

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



er assets are available to provide top-quality hygiene. Government hospitals receive a lot of funding, so why aren't they providing adequate conditions and hygiene? The government should pay attention to this problem so that sick patients do not get sicker due to poor hospital hygiene.

- Maham Aslam
- Karachi

PM condemns allegations of Imran Niazi against army chief

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the allegations of Imran Khan against the army chief. In a statement here on Friday, he said the statement of Imran Niazi against the Pakistan army was proof of his low-minded mentality. This statement was a confession of the mastermind of the tragic incidents of May 9, he added. The PM said this was the same mentality which levelled false allegations of his murder against the patriotic army officers and concocted false stories of cy-

pher and foreign conspiracy. “This is expression of real intentions of the anti state mastermind of the terrorists. This is confession that what ever happened on May 9 was done on the directions of Imran Niazi,” he added. The prime minister said this statement was proof that Imran Niazi was behind the plan to desecrate the monuments of martyrs and ghazis and attacks on sensitive installations and buildings. His anger against General Syed Asim Munir was that he as Director General ISI was aware about the worst corrup-

tion of Imran Niazi, his wife, Farah Gogi and senior leadership of PTI, he said adding allegations against the highly decorated General Syed Asim Munir who was very admired in the rank and file and was appointed on merit, was nothing but ill-intentioned, he stressed. The PM said Imran Niazi was afraid of the winner of the sword of honour, Hafiz e Quran and honest army chief. He said this kind of cheap talk against the chief of the brave army which was fighting against terrorism was akin to support of terrorists.

Iranian Ambassador calls on Speaker Sindh Assembly

KARACHI (APP): The Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Mohammad Ali Hosseini along with a delegation called on Speaker Sindh Assembly Agha Siraj Khan Durrani here on Friday. The matters of mutual interest, better diplomatic relations between the two countries were discussed during the meeting, said a statement. On this

occasion, the Iranian Ambassador and the other delegation members also visited different sections of the Sindh Assembly. The Ambassador of Iran thanked the Speaker Sindh Assembly and appreciated the good relations between the two countries. Agha Siraj Durrani also presented traditional Sindhi Ajrak and a gift of cap.

British MPs, Dar discuss bilateral relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Members of British Parliament (House of Commons) Friday called on Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and discussed bilateral relations as well as issues of regional importance. The Members Parliament comprised of Khalid Mahmood, Tahir Ali, and Mohammad Yaseen, said a press release. The minister and Members of Parliament UK- House of Commons exchanged views on Pak- UK bilateral relations. Ishaq Dar expressed satisfaction at the level of friendship between both countries and hoped that the existing cooperation between both countries will further strengthen in the future.

Four labourers die of suffocation

MULTAN (APP): Four labourers died after falling into an old well of an oil mills, near Laeq Rafique Hospital here late night. According to Rescue-1122, a labourer was cleaning a well at an oil mill when he became unconscious due to some sorts of gases because of soup and oil therein. Another one labourer tried to rescue him but he also became unconscious. Another two labourers also struggled to help their colleagues and they could not succeed but also trapped. Rescue-1122 officials rushed to the site and recovered four dead bodies. The deceased are identified as Chand Ashraf, Irfan Lateef, Amanat and Arshid Nazeer. Police concerned is investigating the mishap.

Lawyers boycott court proceedings

HYDERABAD (APP): The legal community boycotted proceedings of the courts of law here on Friday to commemorate the May 12 killings of lawyers in 2007 in Karachi. In a statement, the office bearers of Sindh High Court Bar Association (SHCBA) Hyderabad said they fully endorsed the statement of the Sindh Bar Council which said May 12 would be remembered as a black day in country's history.

HEC team visits SALU regarding performance

SUKKUR (APP): On the directives of Quality Assurance Agency of Higher Education Commission (HEC), Islamabad regarding Institutional Performance Evaluation (IPE)-2021-22 a team of HEC on Friday visited Shah Abdul Latif University (SALU), Khairpur, for three days. The team was led by Vice Chancellor, Prof Dr Saeed-ul-Hassan Chishti, Muslim Youth University, Islamabad. Munir Ahmed Mirjat, Director Quality Assurance Division HEC, Islamabad, Dr. Abdul Qudoos and others members of IPE. They called on the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Khalil Ahmed Ibupoto at Vice Chancellor Secretariat and discussed on the academic, research and development. On this occasion, Prof Dr Khalil Ahmed Ibupoto shared with the team regarding academic development, research and governance of the University. He said that Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur is the prime academic institution having significant geographic location providing conducive, congenial and peaceful environment to the students and staff. He said various drastic measures have been taken on different sides for its betterment. He said our undergraduates and graduates are rendering their services for the welfare of the state and community at large.

Continued house detention of Mirwaiz in IIOJK strongly denounced

ISLAMABAD (APP): Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir has strongly denounced the continued house detention of its chief, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq. According to Kashmir Media Service, Mirwaiz has been under house arrest since August 05, 2019. The Anjuman in a statement in Srinagar said Saturday was the 194th consecutive Friday when Mirwaiz Umar Farooq was neither allowed to offer Friday prayer nor carry out other religious obligations which is extremely sad and condemnable. It said people from all walks of life are unable to understand why the top re-

ligious and public leader of occupied Kashmir has been kept under continuous detention. They questioned why Mirwaiz is not allowed to carry out his peaceful activities? it added. Meanwhile, the Anjuman paid rich tribute to Khwaja Abdul Salam Dalal, the long-time associate of Mu-faisr-e-Qur'an Mirwaiz Maulana Muhammad Yousuf Shah (RA), on his death anniversary. It also expressed grief over the demise of Mohammad Aslam Fazili, who was a very compassionate person and a well-wisher of the Anjuman and had a deep association with the Mirwaiz family. The deceased passed away in America.

NADRA introduces new platform to identify sex offenders of child, woman

ISLAMABAD (APP):The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) introduced a new platform National Sex Offenders Registry (NSOR), coupled with an SMS verification for citizens to identify sex offenders of child and woman. The NSOR service helped citizens and institutions across the country to identify and track individuals who have been convicted of sex crimes against chil-

dren and women. It is a dynamic database of sexual convicts, said a news release issued here on Saturday. The links are established with various law enforcement departments and provincial governments so that updates are made in real time. This move is aimed at making the service more dynamic and responsive to the needs of the institutions and people at large in preventing sexual violence and abuse.

Two-day training workshop for economic reporters concluded in PID

ISLAMABAD (APP): A two-day training workshop organized by Pakistan Information Center under Press Information Department (PID) for economic reporters was concluded here on Friday. In first session of the workshop, Senior Journalist Mehtab Haider gave presentation to the participants regarding the budget preparation, role of Finance Division and Federal board of Revenue (FBR) in it, loan and deficit. He taught the participants about the technical points to prepare a news item related to the budget. In

second session of the workshop, renowned journalist Afzal Bajwa brief the participants about the investment in the market, trade activities, IPOs commerce and economics reporting in the field. During the workshop, the participants were also told about the importance of reporting techniques to cover energy, foods, demand and supply in the market. The workshop was attended by the economic reporters of the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Public Relations Officers and women journalists as well.

Rescue operation underway to ascertain miners even after eight days

DUKI (APP): Rescue operation has been underway since the last eight consecutive days for the recovery of trapped coal miners in Balochistan's Dukki district. The coalminers have been making efforts on their own to ensure the unhurt recovery of their companions who have been trapped inside a coal mine. The operation is underway from over a week which was unescorted by department concerns to recover the trapped the miners. At least two coal miners were trapped when a coal mine was suddenly filled with rainwater in the Duki

mines area. The mine workers demanded the deployment of trained rescue workers to recover the miners safely. The coal miners have not better equipped to recover the trapped miners, Abdullah Kakar a relative of the victims said. He added that hundreds of coal miners from nearby mines gathered outside the affected mine and made efforts for the recovery of the trapped miners. Family members of the trapped coal miners have been suffering through dumb agony as they are extremely concerned about the lives of their loved ones.

Promotion of officials of Fingerprint Bureau & Police Band approved

LAHORE (Agencies): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has signed and approved summary for promotions of officials of Fingerprint Bureau & Police Band of Punjab Police. In his message, he said that the promotions of Fingerprint Bureau and Band Staff officials were stopped for the past several years, but now the officials eligible for promotion would get their departmental right soon. Likewise, from next week, promotions of officials of Fingerprint

Bureau Branch would commence. He said that the promotion of 580 Sub-Inspectors and 450 ASIs would be approved this week. The IGP said that thousands of new promotions had been approved in the police, adding that all officials should complete their ACRs and records as soon as possible. He said that in return of these promotions, department simply required the officials to serve and protect the citizens conscientiously and spare no effort in protecting Pakistan.

Covid vax, booster dose immunity to decline rapidly in obese people: Study

ISLAMABAD (APP): The protection offered by Covid-19 vaccination declines more rapidly in people with severe obesity than in those with normal weight, scientists have found. People with obesity were more likely to be hospitalised, require ventilators and die from Covid, but vaccines proved effective for them. But, the study, led by a team from the Universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh, suggested that people with obesity are likely to need more frequent booster doses to maintain their immunity. However, even the booster antibodies likely decrease in 15 weeks time, revealed the study, published in the journal Nature Medicine. A team from the University of Edinburgh looked at real-time data tracking the health of 3.5 million people. They

looked at hospitalisation and mortality from Covid in adults who received two doses of Covid-19 vaccine (either Pfizer-BioNTech or AstraZeneca). They found that people with severe obesity (a body mass index greater than 40 kg/m2) had a 76 per cent higher risk of severe Covid-19 outcomes, compared to those with a normal BMI, Medical Daily reported. A modest increase in risk was also seen in people with obesity (30-39.9kg/m2), and those who were underweight. Break-through infections after the second vaccine dose also led to hospitalisation and death sooner (from 10 weeks) among people with severe obesity, and among people with obesity (after 15 weeks), than among individuals with normal weight (after 20 weeks).

Administrator inspects installation of bulk line of sewerage

KARACHI (APP): Administrator DMC East Syed Shakeel Ahmed on Friday inspected installation of bulk line of sewerage in block-13/D2 Gulshan Iqbal and reviewed the pace of work. He thanked Managing Director Karachi Water and Sewerage board Syed Salahuddin Ahmed for his cooperation and said that after the installation

of sewerage line, the long standing problem of 13D 2 Gulshan-e-Iqbal will be resolved, said a statement. He said that all out efforts are also being made to resolve the long standing problems of district East and if problems related to other institutions, we are also trying to resolve these by taking on-board the concerned institutions.

CS inaugurates Digital Media Cell at DGPR Office in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): Chief Secretary (CS) Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili on Friday said that the purpose of digital media cell was not only to answer the negative criticism against the government but also to convey the government's performance to the people. He expressed these views while inaugurating the Digital Media Cell established in the Department of Public Relations with the support of the World Bank. Secretary Information Muhammad Hamza Shafaqat, Provincial Coordinator GPP Rashid Razak, Director General Public Relations Kamran Asad, Director Muhammad Noor Khetrani and other officers

of the department were also present on this occasion. The Chief Secretary said that effective response to criticism from the government on social media would be given immediately by digital media cell government performance. Not only will there be improvement, but the public relations department of Balochistan will show better performance than other provinces, he said adding that despite the limited budget, the Information Department was doing better by improving efficiency. He said that the performance of the Information Department was commendable and the credit went to the Secretary DGPR and the officers and staff.

Zhao Leji felicitates NA Speaker on 50th anniversary of implementation of Constitution of Pakistan

BELJING (APP): Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, the national legislature, Zhao Leji, congratulated Speaker National Assembly, Raja Pervez Ashraf on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the implementation of the Constitution of Pakistan. In his message, Zhao Leji said that in past 50 years, under the guidance of the constitution, the people of Pakistan had fought steadfastly to overcome difficulties and achieved remarkable achievements in the construction and economic and social

development of the country, the effective protection of national sovereignty and national dignity, China Radio International (CRI) reported on Friday. He expressed the confidence that the Pakistani brothers would unite by strengthening their confidence and overcome the challenges on the way forward and start a new bright future for the country and the nation. Zhao Leji emphasized that as partners of the four seasons strategic cooperation, China and Pakistan always trust and support each other and promote the unique "iron" friendship.

Islamabad Police so far arrest 493 people over violence, lawlessness

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Police have so far arrested a total of 493 people on charges of damaging government and public properties in reaction to the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan from May 9 till date. On Twitter the Islamabad Police said that as many as five PTI protesters who were involved in violence and vandalizing the public properties were also released so far due to lack of evidence while three

violent protesters got bail. The Islamabad Police have also urged all citizens to respect the law as Section 144 was in force in the Federal capital for the safety of life and property of the masses as well as the security of the government institutions. “No protest is allowed in the Red Zone. The law is equal for all. No rally is allowed in federal capital and legal action will be taken against the violators,” the Islamabad Police added.

RDA demolishes illegal constructions in illegal 'Ittehad Heights' housing scheme

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General (DG) Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa here on Friday conducted an operation against an illegal housing scheme 'Ittehad Heights' and thus demolished illegal constructions. According to RDA spokesman, the Enforcement Squad of RDA while carrying out an operation demolished road infrastructure and other constructions of an illegal housing scheme namely Ittehad Heights at Mouza Jattal, Girja

road. He said that the Enforcement Squad was taking strict action against illegal housing schemes. Notice was also issued to the owner of the illegal housing scheme namely Salahuddin for violating the rules, illegal advertisements and development work. The Enforcement Squad including Incharge/Assistant Director Building Control, Superintendent Scheme and others carried out the operation as the owner of the property was running illegal housing scheme's booking office in violation of the rules.

CEO RCB directs to complete census task before May 15

RAWALPINDI (APP): Cantonment Executive Officer (CEO) Rawalpindi Cantonment board (RCB) Imran Gulzar here on Friday chaired a meeting and directed the authorities concerned to complete the census task before May 15, deadline. The meeting was attended by the officers of the Statistics Department, Divisional Census Co-ordinator Syed Hasan Raza, and the area Supervisors. Imran Gulzar directed the authorities concerned to com-

plete the task by Saturday evening. He also instructed the officers concerned to give a target to those working in the field so that the census work could be completed quickly. The teams were directed to complete the field verification/coverage of the population and housing census by Saturday evening. The meeting was informed that the field operation of the population and housing-2023, the first-ever digital census had been extended till May 15.

Census commissioner says, Balochistan population exceeds 20.6 mln

QUETTA (APP): The population of Balochistan has crossed 20.6 million, said census commissioner Noor Ahmad Perkani on Friday. Talking to a private news channel, he said 99 per cent of the digital census work has already finished at the province whereas the rest of it was underway in several blocks of Pashin, Lasbela and Quetta, besides municipal areas

including hostels and police stations. The registration of religious seminars and prisons was also underway and expected to complete by May 15. Perkani said if the results of the census are accepted, it may increase 10 seats in the National Assembly from the province, while the percentage of youth in the province has reached 60 per cent.

Emergency ambulance service for mothers & children started in Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Health Minister Syed Ehsan Shah on Friday said that for the first time in Balochistan, the emergency ambulance service for mothers and children under Merck 1122 was launched with the support of Balochistan Human Investment Project. He expressed these views while addressing at a ceremony as the chief guest, Environment Secretary Asfandiyar Kakar, Project Director Balochistan Human Investment Project Saqib Kakar, Public Health Specialist Balochistan Human Investment Project Dr. Ali Nasir Bugti, Staff Officer of Health Minister Zakir Ali, DG Mark Mohammad Asfar, Director Operation Merk Operation Riyaz Ahmed, Director Technical Dr. Amir

Bakhsh, education and Nutritionist Haroon Kasi, IT Officer Shiraz Khan were present on the occasion. The Health Minister appreciated the provision of 24 ambulances for mother and child by Merck 1122 on behalf of Director Balochistan Human Capital Project Saqib Kakar. Safe transfer to the hospital was an important step. The monitoring system of emergency medical equipment should be activated in the ambulance, he said. Earlier, Director Operation Merk Riaz Ahmed informed the participants of the event that under the Balochistan Human Investment Project, 24 ambulances equipped with modern medical equipment have been handed over to Merk 1122.

HEC conducts capacity building workshop for teachers in Punjab affiliated colleges

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan on Friday conducted the second cohort of capacity building training programme for faculty of Affiliated Colleges (ACs) of Lahore Division in collaboration with HED Punjab under the Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project. A three-day capacity building workshop was conducted by the HEDP team at the University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, for the faculty of 50 Affiliated Colleges (ACs) of Lahore Division. The batch comprising 91 participants included more than 60 percent women. These included teachers from Lahore, Shah-

dara, Kasur, Pattoki, Phool Nagar, Chunian, Kot Rada Kishen, Mustafaabad, Kanganpur, Khudian Khas, Changa Manga, Muridke, Nankana Sahib, Narang Mandi, Shahkot, Sangla Hill, Bucheki and Sheikhpura. The training was comprised of ten modules: a) Transition to Semester System; b) Semester System Planning and Management c) Academic Advisement and Career Progression; d) Use of Technology in Teaching e) Use of Technology in assessment f) Learning Assessment and Feedback; g) Quality in Learning h) Curriculum development i) Course Development; and j) Teaching Methodology: Andragogy and Pedagogy.

NHMP,religious congregation matters resolved

ISLAMABAD (APP): The matters between the National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) and a religious congregation have been resolved and it was decided that commuters would not allowed to sit of the roof of buses. According to NHMP, a meeting was held between the Motorway Police and members of the religious congregation of the Abdul Qasim Motorway Link Road Islamabad Mosque. The meeting was attended by DIG Motorway Muhammad Yousuf Malik, SP Traffic Abid Hussain and leaders of

the religious congregation. It was decided in the meeting that passengers would not be picked or dropped on the motorway and they would not be accommodated in trucks. The vehicles will not be overloaded and their parking and pedestrian crossing will not be allowed on Link Road Motorway while luggage will also be stored safely during travelling. Meanwhile fuel, tire air pressure, tire changing equipment, extra water and vehicle lights etc would be checked before travelling on the motorway.

‘Pir Sipahi’– a historical account of Multan history launched

MULTAN (APP): ‘Pir Sipahi’– a historical account of Multan history authored by noted poet and writer Raziuddin Razi was launched in the form of a book at a ceremony held here Friday. Zaheer Kamal, a journalist known for his literary work for children, presided over the ceremony at the Literary Sitting “Adbi Baihak” at Multan Arts Council. The book also highlights columns contributed by the author that depict his love for Multan city, says Zaheer Kamal. He added that the literary work by Razi must be appreciated as a credible effort to compile Multan history that would be helpful for the generations to come. Noted poet and educationist Dr Muhammad Amin, best known for his work on Haiku, a three-line poetry originated in Japanese, said that the author’s literary work was

gaining popularity among modern-day literature enthusiasts and added that he never hesitated in describing bitter truths in his own artistic way. Noted columnist Khalid Masud Khan, better known for his humorous or fun poetry, described Raziuddin Razi’s personality as an embodiment of love. Shakir Hussain Shakir hailed ‘Pir Sipahi’ as a work of literature unveiling hidden corners of Multan history. Director Multan Arts Council, Saleem Qaisar, expressed good wishes for the author and described 8 books he authored on Multan history as a big service to the city. Other poets and authors Qamar Raza Shahzad, Azhar Saleem Majoka, Nawazish Ali Nadeem, Suhail Abdi, former station director Radio Multan Asif Khaitran, Israr Ahmad and others also spoke.

AJK police to have its e-magazine on professional skills, services to masses on latest lines

MIRPUR (APP): Under the spirit to highlight the initiatives of AJK police for services delivery harmonious to the need of the modern age besides the welfare of constabulary along with the focus on the perspective of general public towards police. This was disclosed in a detailed meeting of Editorial board of AJK Police

E-Magazine held at Central Police Office (CPO) in the State capital city of Muzaffarabad on Friday with SSP, Project Incharge Kamran Ali in the chair. Later, SSP Kamran Ali told APP that the meeting, held on special directives of Inspector General of Police AJK Amir Ahmed Sheikh, discussed and reviewed the draft

devised for finalization of the first edition of AJK police E-Magazine, scheduled to be appeared on 1st of June this year. “It will be first of its own kind of publication, the official organ of AJK police to highlight the due services and achievements of the force to the masses in Azad Jammu Kashmir”, Kamran Ali said.

Islamic calligraphy exhibition held at PAC

RAWALPINDI (APP): An exhibition of Islamic calligraphy works was organized at the Punjab Arts Council(PAC) here on Friday. The chief guest of the opening ceremony was Director General Khana Farhang of Islamic Republic of Iran Rahmanzad Framerz. More than 50 works of various calligraphers including Khawaja Muhammad Hussain, Muhammad Azim Iqbal, and Muhammad Yunus Rumi were placed in the exhibition. Addressing the ceremony, Rahmanzad Framerz said that calligraphy was an Islamic cultural heritage. At the beginning of the Islamic civilization, the art of calligraphy gained extraordinary importance and the word acquired same aesthetic value and status as a picture, he added. Director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmad said on the occasion that Islamic calligraphy was the legacy of Muslims.

Three illegal oil agencies sealed,two held

MULTAN (APP): District administration launched a crackdown on illegal depots and oil agencies and sealed three illegal oil agencies. The police and civil defense team took action against 3 oil agencies set up in Sher Shah area and also arrested two outlaws. The accused Aqib Ali and Muhammad Asif were involved in the storage and illegal delivery of Iranian oil. The case was got registered against the accused and further legal action was launched. Deputy Commissioner Umer Jehangir said that the crackdown against oil agencies and depots will continue.

Three-day polio drive to start from May 15

MULTAN (APP): A three-day polio drive would start from 15th of the month in the city of saints here. DC Umar Jahangir tasked departments concerned of the district governments to run the drive through all-out efforts with up-to-mark pre-requisite arrangements. About a million children would be administered the vaccine through door-to-door campaign to protect children of five and below of the age from the lifelong crippling disease, DC said in a meeting of the departments concerned belonged to the district governments. The meeting also reviewed measures being adopted to root-out dengue larvae after a recent rainy spell, with the rising temperatures now likely causing several health problems in parts of the district.

Bangladesh Celebrated it’s 52nd National Day in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (Adnan Hameed): The High Commission of Bangladesh in Pakistan organized a prestigious ceremony of the 52nd Anniversary of the Independence and National Day of Bangladesh in the federal capital Islamabad on May 4, 2023. The ceremony was attended by a large number of diplomatic community, Pakistani Govt officials, civil society and media outlets. Senator Muhammad Talha Mehmood, Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony was the chief guest of the event who also cut the cake of the 52nd anniversary of the Independence and National Day with Shah Zain Bugti, Federal Minister for Narcotics and Control alongwith High Commissioner of Bangladesh,



Maldives, Sri Lanka, India, Ambassador of Bangladesh, Dean of Diplomatic Missions. The High Commissioner of Bangladesh Mr. MD Rahul Alam Siddiqui warmly welcomed the guests. During his opening remarks, MD Rahul Alam Siddique elaborated the progress made by Bangladesh since its establishment from 1971 and talked about the



economy and the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Birth anniversary of Saadat Hasan Manto observed

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The birth anniversary of renowned Urdu story, film, radio scriptwriter and journalist Saadat Hasan Manto was observed on Thursday. Manto was born in Paproudi village in the Ludhiana district of the eastern Punjab, in a Muslim family on May 11,

1912. He belonged to a Kashmiri trading family that had settled in Amritsar in the early 19th century and took up legal profession. His father, Khwaja Ghulam Hasan, was a session judge of a local court. After partition, his family migrated to Lahore. Manto wrote 250 short stories,

a novel, five collections of radio plays, three collections of essays and two collections of personal sketches. Some of his publications are, Atishpare, Manto Ke Afsane, Dhuan, Afsane Aur Drame, Laazat-e-Sang, Thanda Gosht, Baghair Ijazat, Burque, Ratti, Masha, Tolah.

Asia region's synergy to achieve sustainable development sans great power contestation imperative: Speakers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speakers at the 3rd Islamabad Security Dialogue (ISD) 2023 – an initiative of the National Security Division – on Thursday underlined the need that synergy among the countries of Asia to achieve sustainable development and enduring peace in the region abstaining from great power contestation was imperative in the prevailing testing times. It was the key highlight of the opening session of the “National Security Advisers Forum Reimagining Security Cooperation in Asia” on the concluding day of the

two-day Islamabad Security Dialogue 2023. Former National Security Advisor (NSA) Lieutenant General (R) Nasser Khan Janjua delivered the keynote address in the session followed by the recorded statements of the NSAs of the Asian countries, including China, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. General (R) Janjua said the 21st century belonged to the Asia region that was home to 59.36 percent of the global population, with consumer markets, human resource, natural resources, development scope and

connectivity potential. He mentioned that as per global reports, by 2030 the United States' economy would lag behind China which would be leading the world. “China is the second largest economy of the world and possesses maximum foreign currency reserves with the largest trade volume in the world.” The US, he said, in that situation had to meet a triple crisis comprising its economy buildup and maintenance against China, mitigating all its challenges and retaining a reliable superpower status.

BOG meeting of Syed Abdullah Shah Institute of Medical Science held under the chair of Dr. Azra Pechohu

KARACHI (Staff Report): A meeting of the Board of Governors of Syed Abdullah Shah Institute of Medical Sciences was held under the chairmanship of the Provincial Minister of Health and Population Department, Dr. Azra Pechuho. Syed Abdullah Shah Institute of Medical Sciences Director Dr. Moinuddin Siddiqui, Dr. Manzoor Brohi, Ghambat Institute of Medical Sciences Director Dr. Rahim Bakhsh Bhatti, Medical Practitioner Dr. Ahsan Siddiqui, Physiotherapist and Businessman Manzoor Ahmed Soomro, Deputy Secretary Health Hanif Memon and others were also present. In the meeting, The performance of Syed Abdullah Shah



Institute of Medical Sciences was reviewed. The director of Syed Abdullah Shah Institute of Medical Sciences, Dr. Moinuddin Siddiqui gave a detailed briefing about the health facilities and suggested that the institute has all the facilities like a teaching hospital, so the institute should be given the status of a medical college.

Leading American company to invest \$200 million in Pink Salt industry in Pakistan



WASHINGTON (Agencies): A leading American company in import, manufacture and supply of sea salt plans to invest nearly \$200 million in curating, processing, distributing and importing Pink Himalayan Salt, which is mined in Pakistan's Khewra Salt Mine located in Jhelum district of Punjab, a press release of the Pakistani embassy said on Saturday. The investment, it said, would be made in preparing feasibility, reserve report, upgradation of mining procedures and processes, construction of world-class processing and packaging facility and community development programs. Pink salt has been used as remedies for a variety of health issues and is used by health professionals. During a briefing by top leadership Miracle Saltworks Collective Inc. (MSCI), Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, was informed that Pakistan, with its geographical monopoly of the resource, has huge reserves of Pink Salt with a potential earning of \$12 billion annually. According to an estimate, the country possesses approximately 22.22 billion tons of natural resources, concentrated mostly in Salt Range areas of Kala Bagh, Warcha, Khewra and Bahadur Khel, with an immense potential of kick-starting massive economic activity. The delegation included President and CEO Ahmed N. Khan; Vice President Tad M. Ballantyne; CCO/Board Member Muhammad M. Khan; Director & Board Member Jeffery Meilander; M. Shamsher Khan; Martyn Element (Vancouver Canada); Nasim Tyab (Vancouver Canada); Dan Terret (Vancouver Canada); Rana Rehan Anwar (Saint Louis); Tony Garson (London England) and Attiq Rana (Saint Louis). The Ambassador was informed

that currently Pakistan was retaining \$70 million only in lieu of export of this unique natural resource due to a lack of policy framework and adequate facilities for processing, packaging and worldwide distribution, the press release said. Briefing the Ambassador, President MSCI Ahmed N. Khan informed that a multi-pronged solution featuring public-private partnership under a clearly defined policy was being worked out to assist the government in regulating and encouraging the private sector to take a lead role in exploiting the existing potential. The company was undertaking a joint venture with Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation, it was pointed out. The company plans to raise market awareness globally and reach 10 million tons of verified extraction by 2030. Two world-class processing and distribution facilities would be established in Doha and China to fulfill global demand for Pakistani product. Ambassador Masood Khan welcomed MSCI's interest in making investment and promoting the Pink Salt industry in the country. He said that the government was committed to provide every possible facilitation to international investors and the business community intending to invest in traditional and non-traditional sectors of the economy. Highlighting various steps taken for promoting ease of doing business and restoring the confidence of the investors, the Ambassador said that Pakistan due to its unique geo-strategic location was poised to serve a vast market of Central and West Asia, Middle East and North Africa. He said that there was a huge market for Pink Salt not only in the region but across the world which guaranteed profitable business venture in the sector.

Chinese delegation visit SAU Tandojam, discussed prospect of importing mangoes from Sindh

HYDERABAD (APP): A Chinese delegation of importers visited Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam, here on Saturday and discussed the prospect of importing mangoes from Sindh to their country. The delegation met the variety's Vice Chancellor Dr Fateh Muammad Mari and other academicians as well as representatives of the farmers to exchange views on the subject. The delegation said they

were planning to import 6,000 tons of mangoes from Sindh and Punjab. According to them, the import of 6,000 tons of mangoes would be done in the initial phase for the processes of procurement and processing would be started. They said that they were looking for mangoes which were rich in pulp. The delegation added that they wanted to import such mangoes which could be grown from the

months of May to September. The SAU's Prof Dr Ismail Kumbhar informed the delegation that Pakistan produced 1.8 million tons of mangoes but only a fraction of the net production, 50,000 tons, were exported. The Sindh Abadgar Board's Vice President Dr Zulfiqar Yousfani said the exports to China would open new avenues for export-based income to the local farmers.

Bahauddin Zakariya Express to be resumed from June 1

MULTAN (Agencies): 25 Up/ 26 Dn Bahauddin Zakariya Express will start chugging again on Multan-Karachi-Multan route from June 1. A spokesperson for Pakistan Railways (PR) Multan Division said on Thursday that the authorities had taken the decision to facilitate the passengers.

He said the train would follow the PR summertime table adding that it runs between Multan Cantt and Karachi city and vice versa. It may be mentioned here that the operations of Bahauddin Zakariya Express were halted like several other trains after rain-induced floods in Sindh last year.

China Exhibition & Trading Center completed within six months at Gwadar Port

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The China Exhibition and Trading Center has been completed in a record time of six months at Gwadar Port worth twelve million dollars. This announcement was made by Ministry of Planning in a statement on Friday. The project was launched in November 2022 on the direction of Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal for promoting business and related activities at Gwadar. Following the direction of the Planning Minister, China Offshore Ports Handling Company (COPHCL) started construction of the project which has been completed. The Planning Minister has further directed to conduct the third International Expo Gwadar in the newly established EXPO center in June this year, coinciding with the ten-year celebrations of CPEC in July this year. It is noted that Gwadar holds immense significance as a key component of the CPEC and



the broader Belt and Road Initiative. Located strategically on the Arabian Sea, Gwadar serves as Pakistan's premier deep-water port, offering a gateway to the Arabian Gulf, Middle East, and Central Asia. The development under CPEC aims to transform Gwadar into a major trade and economic hub, facilitating regional connectivity and enhancing Pakistan's maritime trade. Gwadar's potential as an energy and transport corridor, coupled with its strategic location, makes it a focal point for international investment and economic cooperation, driving economic growth and regional integration.

ANF recovers over 101 kg drugs; arrests eight

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), in six operations, managed to recover over 101 kg drugs, and 5500 intoxicated tablets and arrested eight accused including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Saturday. He said in an operation at International Mail Office, Rawalpindi, 5,500 intoxicated tablets were recovered from a parcel being sent to America. In the second operation at Karachi International Container Terminal, 30 kg of ice drug concealed in a salt container was recovered, and after a preliminary investigation, ANF arrested an accused resident of Karachi. In the third operation near Karachi Gadap Town Northern Bypass Toll Plaza, 43.2 kg of charras was recovered from a truck while two accused, residents of Mastung and Kalat, were rounded up during the operation.

Court issues written order regarding Imran Khan's marriage case

ISLAMABAD (APP): A local court of Islamabad on Saturday issued a written order regarding the termination of a petition pertaining the marriage of former prime minister Imran Khan with Bushra Bibi. The court declared the petition as non-maintainable and beyond its jurisdiction. Civil Judge Nasar-un-minallah Baloch issued the three-page written order in the case. The order said that it was essential to view the jurisdiction of the court before going into the depth of any case. The petitioner had stated that Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi settled in Islamabad after their 'nikah'. He stated that the 'nikah' ceremony was held in Lahore, the order said. The court said that the complaint should have been registered in Lahore if the crime was committed there. The order said that this court had no jurisdiction to hear the complaint beyond its limits. It may be mentioned here that the petitioner in his plea that stated that Imran Khan had done marriage with Bushra Bibi without completion of her 'iddat'.

Public beating heat with sugarcane juice ahead of Summer

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the summer season approaches across the country, roadside vendors and shopkeepers selling 'fresh sugarcane juice' have been making brisk business where motorists, as well as pedestrians, throng stalls in large numbers throughout the day. "Sugarcane juice is undoubtedly one of the best ways to quench your thirst and beat the summer heat," said a report aired by a private news channel. The stall holders are witnessing an increased rush of customers as the rising temperature has forced people to look for chilled

drinks for relief in the sweltering hot season. "Juices made of sugarcane are regarded as effective in beating the heat," said a pedestrian, Imran while having a glass of juice at a vendor in G-9 Markaz. "Several families take parcels as this is the drink which kills the thirst," said a vendor selling juice at F-10 Markaz. "No doubt this traditional drink of fresh sugarcane juice is cheaper than most other fresh fruit juices, said Iqra, a student buying juice at the cart. Another vendor also claimed that he expected good business in the coming days.

NDMA's NIDM Conducted 3- Days Training & Simulation Exercise (SimEx) on Summer Contingencies in District Ghizer (GB)



ISLAMABAD (Agencies): NDMA's think tank National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) conducted a three-day training and simulation exercise (SimEx) for summer contingencies in Gahkuch, District Ghizer. The event was held from May 10 to May 12, 2023, and was attended by over 55 participants from various fields, including academia, district authorities, rescue services, and related departments. The main focus of the SimEx was to prepare district-level stakeholders for potential disasters that may occur during the summer season. Air Commodore (Rtd) Tanveer Paracha, Chief Coordinator of NIDM, em-

phasized the importance of disaster preparedness and training exercises like the SimEx, as they can significantly improve the response to an emergency situation. Multiple scenarios for potential summer contingencies were simulated during the SimEx, including flash floods, landslides, and GLOFs. Syndicates were formed to represent specific roles like the GBDMA, DDMA, media, humanitarian support, and the local community. The first day of the event covered basic disaster management (DM) concepts, climate science, hazard mapping, quantification, and group-based activities on hazard analysis.

Empowering women pivotal to ensure sustainable development: experts



ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The speakers here on Friday emphasised women's empowerment to ensure prosperity and sustainable development in the country. "Women's role in practical life can accelerate the process of progress in a constructive manner," they said while addressing the event organized under the theme of Diversity4Tech. The event was aimed at fostering inclusivity and encouraging diversity within the technology sector, promoting equal opportunities for all, a news release

said. Additional Secretary Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT) Aisha Humera Chaudhry said she was delighted to be a part of a community that recognized the transformative power of diversity in the technology sector and welcomed the talents of individuals from diverse backgrounds. She congratulated the teams of the Universal Service Fund (USF) and Global System for Mobile Communications (GSMA) for organizing tech conferences successfully.

Stocks mixed as traders weigh inflation, US debt ceiling uncertainty

NEW YORK (Agencies): Stock markets were mixed on Friday as traders weighed a range of issues, including US debt-ceiling hopes, expected central bank calculations and more signs of a slowing economy. Investors hoping the US Federal Reserve will finally take a breather from its long-running campaign of interest rate hikes have been left feeling a little more confident this week after data showed US inflation on both a consumer and wholesale level continued to ease in April. Their hopes



were given a further boost on Thursday by news that jobless claims last week hit their highest since October 2021, suggesting the labor market was showing some slack. The Fed has long said it needed to see a softening in employment as well as a

drop in inflation before it could consider ending its rate hike drive and look at a potential cut in borrowing costs. "US economic data... continued the theme of tentative signs of a softening labor market and room for optimism about the inflation outlook," said National Australia Bank's Taylor Nugent. Major European markets finished up on Friday, capping off a week where global stocks have oscillated. But Wall Street stocks fell into negative territory after climbing at the open.

G7 finance chiefs to warn of global uncertainty as US debt crisis looms

NIIGATA (Agencies): Finance leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) rich nations are expected to warn of more global economic uncertainty as they wrap up a three-day meet on Saturday overshadowed by a US debt ceiling stalemate and fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The gathering in the Japanese city of Niigata came as worries over a US default fueled uncertainty over the global outlook, already clouded by stubbornly high inflation and US bank failures. "The global economy has shown resilience against multi-



ple shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and associated inflationary pressures," the leaders will say in a final draft of a communique seen by Reuters. "We need to remain vigilant and stay agile and

flexible in our macroeconomic policy amid heightened uncertainty about the global economic outlook." The communique is unlikely to mention the US debt ceiling stalemate, which hits markets at a time when borrowing costs are rising because of aggressive monetary tightening by US and European central banks. US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said on Friday she would meet senior Wall Street bankers next week about the possibility that Washington could default on its debt for the first time since 1789.

Tesla owners sue over software update's impact on EV batteries

WASHINGTON (Agencies): A group of US Tesla Model S and Model X owners filed a proposed class-action lawsuit against the electric vehicle maker in California yesterday over automatic software updates that reportedly decreased driving range or cause battery failures. The lawsuit claims Tesla's updates and their effects violate state and federal laws because they can cut driving range by up to 20% and can require some owners to replace batteries at a cost of US\$15,000. Tesla did not immediately respond to a request for



comment. The lawsuit, filed in the US district court in San Francisco, argues impacted Tesla vehicles are "protected computers" under the definition outlined in the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, and that automatic updates violate consum-

ers' rights under the law. "Tesla owners and lessors are uniquely at the mercy of the maker of their cars, and Tesla imposes software updates without consent whenever their vehicle is connected to Wi-Fi," said Steve Berman, an attorney with Hagens Berman representing Tesla owners and lessors in the lawsuit. Attorneys for the owners say automakers generally notify customers when it wants to perform a software update but Tesla can issue automatic updates whenever the vehicle is connected to Wi-Fi.

Drinks group Pernod Ricard announces Russia pullout

PARIS (Agencies): French drinks giant Pernod Ricard said yesterday it had stopped exporting all its brands to Russia and would no longer distribute them following public pressure over its business activities there. The group, which owns a host of premium drinks brands including Havana Club rum, Jameson whiskey and Mumm champagne, stopped exporting to Russia at the end of April, it said. "We are assessing how to adapt our local organization in light of these decisions, while fully com-



plying with all local legal regulations," it said in a statement, adding that ending distribution would "take some months to complete". Ignoring moves from other western companies to pull out after the Kremlin

ordered an invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Pernod Ricard has continued to trade in Russia, leading to calls for a boycott. Campaigners have focused on its Swedish vodka brand Absolut, exports of which were suspended after the invasion but then resumed. After an outcry on social media in Sweden and criticism from the country's prime minister, the company announced last month that it was again suspending the exports but would continue to sell its other drinks.

Ex-NBCUniversal ad chief Yaccarino named new Twitter CEO

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): Former NBCUniversal advertising chief Linda Yaccarino will become Twitter's new CEO, current chief executive Elon Musk said on Friday in a tweet. "I am excited to welcome Linda Yaccarino as the new CEO of Twitter!" Musk said. "@LindaYacc will focus primarily on business operations, while I focus on product design & new technology." Yaccarino modernised the Comcast Corp entertainment and media division's advertising business and had been in talks



for the job before NBC announced her departure Friday morning. Since Musk acquired Twitter in October, advertisers have fled the platform, worried that their ads could appear next to inappropriate content after

the company lost nearly 80% of staff. Musk earlier this year acknowledged that Twitter suffered a massive decline in ad revenue. Twitter's "trajectory will immediately take a 180-degree turn" under her leadership, said Lou Paskalis, a long-time ad industry executive and CEO of AJL Advisory, a marketing consultancy. Musk axed thousands of employees, rushed the launch of a subscription product that allowed scammers to impersonate major brands and suspended users with whom he disagreed.

Rising food prices a priority concern for UK – Bloomberg

PARIS (Agencies): Rising grocery prices in the UK have replaced energy as the main inflationary concern for the Bank of England (BoE), Bloomberg reported on Thursday, after the bank made a 12th consecutive hike to the base interest rate. Although energy prices have slightly declined, British families are facing a tight squeeze on their finances due to double-digit inflation. Low- and middle-income families are being hit the hardest, given that they spend the bulk of their income on essen-



tials and are now seeing a dramatic increase in their shopping bills. Food inflation has been "particularly high," reaching 19.1% in March, according to the BoE. Over the past year, grocery price growth in the UK

has been at its highest level since records began. It has now replaced energy costs as the most important financial issue for the public, the Bloomberg article states. "We are acutely aware of how difficult this rise in food prices is for people, especially for those on lower incomes," Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey told reporters on Thursday. He said he expects food price inflation to start slowing down soon but admits that it is taking "longer than we previously thought."

Baltic states race to disconnect from Russian power grid

MOSCOW (Agencies): Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are aiming to speed up a long-standing plan to disconnect electricity supplies from Russia's grid, Reuters reported on Friday. The Baltic nations, which are all members of NATO and the EU, remain part of the Soviet-era BRELL circuit along with Russia and Belarus. In 2018, they agreed to decouple from BRELL and join the European power grid, known as ENTSO-E, by late

2025, via a link with Poland. "We are all in agreement that we need to move as quickly as is feasible on the technical level," Latvian Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins was quoted as saying at a news conference in Tallinn with his Estonian and Lithuanian counterparts. "Certainly, the political will and determination are there from all of us," he added. According to Reuters, Lithuania already no longer buys electricity from Russia and suc-

cessfully tested its ability to cut itself off from the Russian grid in April. It had said it would decide by August 6 whether to quit BRELL unilaterally. The country's energy officials claim this could happen as early as 2024. "We cannot ignore even the slightest possibility that Russia could exploit our dependence on its electricity networks at the most critical moment," Lithuanian Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte was quoted as saying.

Weekly inflation up by 0.27 percent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.27 per cent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on May 11, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 255.53 points as compared to 254.84 points during the past week, according to the PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 48.02 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-

16 = 100 is covering 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs17,732 witnessed a 0.38 percent increase and went up to 261.53 points from last week's 260.54 points. Meanwhile, the SPI for the consumption group from Rs 17,732-22-888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175; and above Rs 44,175 witnessed an increase of 0.38 per cent, 0.36 per cent, 0.33 per cent, and 0.20 per cent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 23 (45.09%) items increased, 07 (13.73%) items decreased and 21 (41.18%) items remained stable.

US demands recall of 67 million airbag inflators

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) demanded the recall of 67 million air bag inflators because it believes there is a safety defect, but auto supplier ARC Automotive Inc rejected the US regulator's request, documents released yesterday show. The auto safety agency said the inflators pose an unreasonable risk of death or injury. Even as ruptures mount, "ARC has not made a defect determination that would require a recall of this population", NHTSA said in its demand letter to the Tennessee-based company. "Air bag inflators that project metal fragments into vehicle occupants, rather than



properly inflating the attached airbag, create an unreasonable risk of death and injury." ARC air bag inflators are in General Motors, Chrysler-parent Stellantis, BMW, Hyundai Motor, Kia Corp and other vehicles. GM yesterday agreed to recall nearly one million vehicles with ARC air bag inflators after a rupture in March resulted in facial injuries to a driver.

UBS chief pledges 'comprehensive' probe into Credit Suisse

ZURICH (Agencies): The boss of Swiss bank UBS promised a "360° investigation" into its stricken domestic rival Credit Suisse, ahead of the two merging into a new megabank. The Swiss government strongarmed UBS into buying its rival for US\$3.25 billion after the collapse of three US lenders in March raised concerns about Credit Suisse's own financial health, following a series of scandals in recent years. UBS CEO Sergio Ermotti, who returned to Switzerland's biggest bank last month to handle the merger, said it was "crystal clear, the situation hasn't developed in the last six weeks, but in the last six or seven years". "This comprehensive, 360° investigation must go back a



long way", Ermotti told the Swiss Media Forum in Lucerne, reported the Swiss news agency ATS. A full review into the causes of the troubles at Credit Suisse is important because of the speed with which it was agreed that UBS would take over the troubled bank, he said. "A lot of things happening now would take a year in normal circumstances," Ermotti said.

Brazilian judge orders probe of Google, Telegram

BRASILIA (Agencies): A Supreme Court judge in Brazil ordered an investigation yesterday of Google and Telegram over what he called the tech companies' "abusive campaign" against a controversial bill seeking to stem disinformation online. Justice Alexandre de Moraes ordered federal police to open a probe of the two companies and their executives in Brazil, which has been embroiled in a divisive debate over what critics call the "censorship bill". The legislation, introduced in 2020 to deal with a flood of disinformation online, is currently awaiting a vote in the lower house of Congress. It shot to prominence earlier this year, after supporters of far-right ex-president Jair



Bolsonaro ran riot in Brasilia on Jan 8, allegedly incited by social media disinformation claiming their candidate's 2022 election loss to leftist successor Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was fraudulent. Supporters call the bill a badly needed defense against disinformation and online extremism. But Bolsonaro supporters allege it would create an Orwellian "Truth Ministry" to censor citizens' views.

US debt ceiling deadlock 'devastating' – London

LONDON (Agencies): A failure to reach an agreement on raising the debt ceiling would have a serious impact on both the US and the global economy, UK Finance Minister Jeremy Hunt told reporters after the G7 meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors in Japan on Saturday. US President Joe Biden and the Republican-controlled House of Representatives are currently at an impasse over raising the country's \$31.4 trillion borrowing limit. Republicans are calling for government spending cuts before they approve a higher lim-

it, while Biden insists on a "clean" increase without linking the two issues. The failure to reach an agreement has raised the threat of the US defaulting on its debt, which Hunt called a "very serious threat to the global economy." "It would be absolutely devastating if America, which is one of the biggest motors of the global economy, was to have its GDP knocked off track by not reaching agreement," he warned. Hunt said he hopes the sides will eventually come to an agreement, though "it's not for us to say how that issue should be resolved."

Last call for popular Western spirits in Russia

MOSCOW (Agencies): French drinks company Pernod Ricard, the owner of Absolut vodka and Jameson whisky brands, has halted all exports to Russia, the company said in a statement on its website on Friday. According to the statement, the company plans to run down existing inventories and then completely stop the distribution

of its brands in the sanctioned country in the coming months. "Pernod Ricard can confirm that it has stopped all exports of its international brands to Russia at the end of April 2023. We will also cease the distribution of our portfolio in Russia, a process that we anticipate will take some months to complete," the statement read.

Chelsea aim to halt Man Utd uprising in Women’s FA Cup final

LONDON (Agencies): Chelsea’s role as the dominant force in women’s football in England faces a stern test from emerging challengers Manchester United in Sunday’s FA Cup final at Wembley. Well established as the pre-eminent power in the Women’s Super League after winning the last three top-flight titles, Chelsea have come under sustained pressure from United this season. United sit top of the WSL table, but have only a one-point lead over second placed Chelsea, who hold a game in hand. The title race



pauses for this weekend as United bid to win the first major trophy in their short history, while Emma Hayes’s Chelsea aim to make it three successive FA Cup triumphs. Underlining the surge in popularity enjoyed by the women’s game in recent years, an ex-

pected 90,000 crowd -- a record for a women’s domestic club match -- will flock to Wembley to witness the latest instalment of the growing rivalry between Chelsea and United. The Blues came from behind for a title-clinching 4-2 win against United on the final day of last season and have won both league meetings this term. Having spent the last five years battling with Manchester City and Arsenal for supremacy in the domestic women’s game, Chelsea could be facing their greatest threat yet.

Cricket clash of elite British schools endures in modern times

LONDON (Agencies): Change is in the air in Britain. The country has a new king and a prime minister of Indian descent. Yet on cricket’s most hallowed ground, two elite schools on Friday played out the latest act in a 200-year-old drama. The famous “hush” that descends on Lord’s during Test matches was replaced by raucous chanting from knots of pupils supporting Eton and Harrow, two centuries-old all-boys schools. “No noise from the strawberry boys,” shouted Harrow pupils



in the upper tier of the Tavern stand, a reference to the blazers worn by pupils of their rival school. Eton boys in the nearby Mound Stand replied: “Twenty Prime Ministers”, bragging about the number of lead-

ers they have produced, including recent British PMs David Cameron and Boris Johnson. The school also counts Prince William and Prince Harry among its former pupils. The boisterous chanting made way for polite applause as Harrow’s Charlie Nelson completed a hundred under heavy skies at the “Home of Cricket”. But a rain delay meant the most traditional of fixtures could not escape a modern innovation -- a Duckworth-Lewis-Stern recalculation in the second innings of the match.

Barcelona mayor eyes re-election as Spain campaign starts

BARCELONA (Agencies): After eight years running City Hall, Barcelona’s left-wing mayor, Ada Colau, is eyeing a third mandate on May 28, when Spain votes in local and regional elections whose outcome is unclear. A total of 36 million people will cast their ballots to elect local mayors on that day, as well as leaders in 12 of Spain’s 17 regions, with the election campaign for both formally starting on Friday. The polls are widely seen as a trial run ahead of a year-end general election, which is expected to



be a tight race for the left-wing government of Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez. In Barcelona, where Catalan separatists staged a failed independence bid in 2017, polls put Colau neck-and-neck with her two

closest rivals -- Socialist candidate Jaume Collboni and Xavier Trias, a conservative nationalist and her predecessor as Barcelona mayor. In 2015, after four years in office, Trias lost his seat to Colau, a former housing rights activist. She was elected at the head of a citizens’ platform backed by the hard-left Podemos, the junior partner in Sanchez’s coalition. The pair are once again set to face off in the polls, but much has changed since 2015 in this city of 1.6 million inhabitants.

PbOA President hands over torch of 34th National Games to Secretary Sports Punjab By Sohail Ali

LAHORE (Agencies): Punjab Olympic Association President Amir Jan handed over the torch of 34th National Games to Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Shahid Zaman and Director General Sports Dr Asif Tufail here at a ceremony held at Punjab Stadium on Friday. Secretary Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) Mohammad Khalid Mehmood, Secretary Punjab Olympic Association (PbOA) Idris Haider Khawaja, President Punjab Swimming Association Women Wing Mubashra Raza, Secretary Sports Balochistan



Ishaq Jamali, Olympian Shabana Akhtar, International athlete Shajar Abbas, former kabaddi captain Shafiq Chishti, Olympian Kh Junaid, Administrator Punjab Stadium Rehmatullah, Chief Sports consultant SBP Hafeez Bhatti, and a large number of sports

enthusiasts were also present on the occasion. Earlier, Olympian Shabana Akhtar, International athlete Shajar Abbas and former kabaddi captain Shafiq Chishti carried the torch of 34th National Games to Punjab Stadium and handed it over to President Punjab Olympic Association. Addressing the ceremony, Secretary Sports Punjab said that Punjab’s sports contingent of around 450 athletes will offer brilliant performance in National Games scheduled to be held at Quetta from May 22.

Cycling training camp from May 15

ISLAMABAD (APP): The national training camp in preparation for the Asian Road Cycling Championship would kick off from May 15 to June 8, in Karachi. According to President Pakistan Cycling Federation Syed Azhar Ali Shah all preparations

have been completed for the training camp to be held in support with Pakistan Sports Board in Karachi. The selection of players was made on performance basis from the National Road Championship. A total of 15 cyclists have been selected for

the camp. He said that International Cycling Federation (UCI) qualified coaches would train the cyclists who would represent the Pakistan team in the Asian Road Cycling Championship scheduled to be held in Thailand in June.

Al-Mayouf’s heroics gives Al-Hilal the King’s Cup

JEDDAH (Agencies): Al-Hilal have lost two finals already this year, in the FIFA Club World Cup and the Asian Champions League, and came within moments of losing a third on Friday in Jeddah. But with his team a goal down to Al-Wehda in the King’s Cup final and 98 minutes on the clock, Ali Al-Bulaihi scored to send the game into extra-time. After that failed to produce any goals, the Riyadh giants triumphed 7-6 in the penalty shootout, with goalkeeper



Abdullah Al-Mayouf making some vital saves before stepping up to convert the decisive kick. Nothing, though, should be taken away from Al-Wehda, who came within minutes of taking the trophy back to Mak-

kah for the first time since 1966. The Red Giants shocked Al-Nassr in the semi-final and were certainly not scared of the men in blue either. They attacked whenever the opportunity presented itself and almost took an early lead with a fierce shot from Anselmo that hit the top of the bar. On the 20th minute mark, Alaa Hejji received the ball near the penalty spot but his shot was weak and went straight into the arms of a grateful Al-Mayouf.

Branden Grace shoots record 61, Stingers lead by 6 at LIV Golf Tulsa

BROKEN ARROW (Agencies): Branden Grace holds the record for lowest single-round score in a men’s major. Now he holds the record for lowest score shot in a LIV Golf tournament. The Stinger GC star posted a bogey-free 9-under 61 in Friday’s opening round at LIV Golf Tulsa, breaking the previous



low of 62 shared by five players. The record-breaking score gave Grace a two-shot lead over 4 Aces

GC Captain Dustin Johnson and HyFlyers GC’s Brendan Steele, who each shot 64 at Cedar Ridge Country Club. Grace holds the major record of 62 shot at the 2017 Open Championship at Royal Birkdale. Grace played in two majors last year but is not scheduled to compete in any of the majors this season.

From terraces to the pitch, Man City prodigy Rico Lewis targeting treble glory

As Rico Lewis began his journey to a career with Manchester City at the age of eight, it coincided with the club’s rise to heights from which they have rarely fallen. When he joined, City were Premier League champions for the first time in 2012 and would soon displace

their neighbors United as not only masters of Manchester, but as the leading lights in English football with five more titles since. For a 10th consecutive season -- since United last won the league in 2013 -- City will also finish above them in the division once dominated by

the Red Devils under Sir Alex Ferguson. Pep Guardiola’s side also have the chance emulate United’s feat of winning the treble of the Premier League, FA Cup and Champions League in the same season, cementing their status as one of football’s greatest teams.

Sluggish Djokovic battles to Rome win, Swiatek in perfect star

ROME (Agencies): Novak Djokovic fought his way into the third round of the Italian Open on Friday, beating Tomas Etcheverry 7-5 (7/6), 6-2 in a surprisingly tight encounter. A six-time winner in Rome, the world number one was made to work by the 61st-ranked Argentine, prevailing in one hour, 51 minutes to set up a third round clash with Grigor Dimitrov who beat Stan Wawrinka. Djokovic, a 22-time Grand Slam title winner, has not been knocked out of an ATP Tour event at the first attempt since the Monte Carlo Masters last year. Still nursing an injury to his right elbow he had to battle his way past Etcheverry, winning the first set via a tie-break before finally ensuring passage into the next round. “I’ve said before that this sur-



face requires more time for me than maybe for other players to get myself to a good level, move well and hit the ball well. Rome has always been a tournament that I need for Roland Garros,” said Djokovic who was plagued by 21 unforced errors in the opener. Djokovic appeared unwell at 5-5 in the first set and took a tablet in the changeover. “You act like you’re 100 per cent,” Djokovic said.

Carrick on the rise as Middlesbrough eye Premier League return

LONDON (Agencies): Former Manchester United star Michael Carrick is aiming to cap his remarkable first season as a manager by leading Middlesbrough into the Premier League. Carrick’s side travel to Coventry for the first leg of the Championship play-off semi-finals on Sunday. Reaching the play-offs as a managerial novice is an impressive achievement for the understated Carrick, who retired as a player in 2018 and worked as Manchester United’s assistant manager before accepting the Middlesbrough job in October. When Carrick was hired following Chris Wilder’s sacking, Middlesbrough were languishing one point above the relegation zone after a poor start to the season. But



the 41-year-old has made such a positive impact during his seven months at the Riverside Stadium that former United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer believes he is certain to manage the Old Trafford club in the future. “Michael is a proper human being, a proper man who you want to be successful,” Solskjaer told The Athletic. “I am 100 percent sure that Michael will be the manager of Manchester United if he wants to be.”

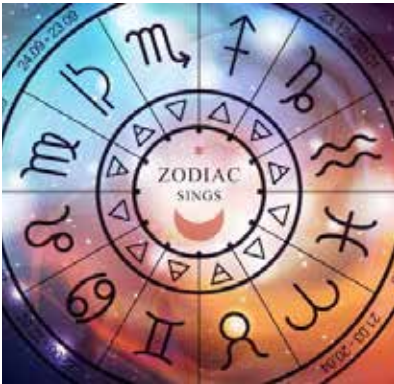
Outsider Bais wins Giro stage on snow-capped Apennine peak

ITALY (Agencies): With snow piled high on the roadsides, Italian outsider Davide Bais won stage seven of the Giro d’Italia from a breakaway on the highest peak in the Apennines on Friday. Andreas Leknessund retained the overall lead against expectations on a testing and relentless climb above the treeline after which there was no change in the general classification. Leknessund leads ahead of favorite Remco Evenepoel and Aurelien Paret-Peintre, while Damiano Caruso and Joao Almeida kept pace and Ineos pair Geraint Thomas and Tao Geoghegan Hart failed to launch an expected attack. “The conditions weren’t right,



we were put off by the head wind,” said Thomas. Evenepoel appears to have no lasting after-effects from his falls Thursday. “That was the longest stage of the Giro in terms of hours,” said the Vuelta and world champion. “We managed it pretty well.” The Norwegian overall leader Leknessund went as far as describing the stage as “boring.”

DAILY HOROSCOPE: MAY 14, 2023



surprised if family members erupt over trivialities. Do your best to assuage their feelings and keep the peace.

- **VIRGO**: Listen carefully to people, especially around the house. There are some great creative ideas floating around out there, and at least a few of them should be fun or even profitable.
- **LIBRA**: It’s not an especially good time to start new things. You’re at your best just puttering around or engaging in your default activities. You can branch out soon if you want.
- **SCORPIO**: You might get frustrated at some point in the day, but soon you find that you’re able to move ahead through some previously unsuspected knack or forgotten bit of knowledge. It feels great!
- **SAGITTARIUS**: You’re a little muddled today, but that’s not such a bad thing. In fact, you might find that it makes opening new doors even easier! You should end the day in a significantly better position.
- **CAPRICORN**: You need to explore your artistic side today, and you ought to have time to do it. If not, you can work some magic with whatever you’ve got in front of you. Surprise your family!
- **ACQUARIUS**: Friends and family may be clamoring for attention, but you need to put yourself first for now. It may feel awkward for a time, but if you keep going you should find that it works out for the best.
- **PISCES**: You and your friends should have a great time thanks to your positive energy! It’s one of those days when you can’t believe how awesome life is. You should find everything working out perfectly.
- It’s a general reading which may differ from person to person because of time date and year.
- **ARIES**: It’s not the best day to sign anything or enter into any kind of long-term agreement. You may want to just spend time quietly at home and wait for things to improve. It should come really soon!
- **TAURUS**: You need to work together with family on something you all want to do. It may be travel or home improvement or just spending time together. Whatever it is, involve everyone in the decision.
- **GEMINI**: Everything seems like a blur today. Details aren’t popping out like they usually do. That’s okay. Every now and then you need to give your brain a rest and just enjoy life’s little pleasures.
- **CANCER**: You could experience a shift in your philosophy, but not so much that people can’t recognize you. It’s just your deepest mind coming more in line with the situation you see around you
- **LEO**: It may be a day of larger-than-life emotions, and you shouldn’t be too

Bahrain schools ordered by King to remove lessons teaching about Israel, normalisation deals

MANAMA (Agencies): Bahrain’s educational institutions have been ordered by King Salman Al Khalifa not to implement any changes to the curriculum that are “not compatible with Bahrain’s national values designed to protect religion and its core pillars.” According to Alarabiya News, the announcement came on Tuesday following issues raised by critics regarding the inclusion of Israel and changes to the maps of the contested Israeli-Palestinian territories. A statement from the govern-

ment, shared online, said, “His Royal Highness ordered the Minister of Education to ensure educational curricula adhere to Islamic teachings, in line with the National Action Charter and the Constitution.” “His Royal Highness reiterated that the Islamic religion is inviolable and should be respected and protected at all costs,” it added. The amendment made to subjects in primary schools included a lesson on the normalisation of ties between the Gulf State and Israel and removal of lessons on the Jews,

reported BBC Arabic. The changes provoked preachers and scholars, issuing statements calling on the Ministry of Education to reconsider the amendments, which resulted in the order from the Crown Prince to suspend lessons teaching about Israel and the normalisation deals. Bahrain and Israel signed a normalisation of a US-brokered Abraham Accords deal in Washington in September 2020 and, since then, they have exchanged diplomats and signed agreements in security and commerce.

Around 200,000 people have fled from Sudan in month of fighting: UN

GENEVA (Agencies): Some 200,000 people have now fled Sudan to escape fighting that erupted in mid-April, in addition to hundreds of thousands who have been displaced inside the country, the UN said Friday. “As violence in Sudan continues for a fourth week, nearly 200,000 refugees and returnees have been forced to flee the country, with more crossing borders daily seeking safety,” UN refugee agency spokeswoman Olga Sarrado told reporters in Geneva. The UN migration agency said earlier this week that more than 700,000 people have also been displaced within Sudan by the fighting that erupted on April 15, which has left more than 750 people dead and

injured 5,000 others. Speaking of the people fleeing the country, Sarrado warned that “the humanitarian response is challenging and costly,” pointing out that “refugees and returnees are arriving in remote border areas where services and infrastructure are scarce or non-existent and the host population was already suffering due to climate change and food scarcity.” “The coming rainy season will make logistics even harder as many roads will become impassable,” she said. For neighbouring Chad, she said some 30,000 refugees had arrived in just recent days, bringing the total number who have arrived from Sudan in recent weeks to 60,000.

Woman Found Dead In Arby’s Restaurant Freezer; Probe Underway

LOUISIANA (Agencies): Authorities from the New Iberia Police Department will now be investigating what they believe is a suspicious death, but will not determine the death as having involved foul play. A woman’s body was found in the freezer of an Arby’s restaurant in New Iberia, Louisiana, on Thursday at around 6:20 p.m. local time. According to New Iberia Police officers who were called to the scene, an employee of the restaurant discovered the woman, who is believed to be the manager of the Arby’s restaurant, which



is located on Admiral Doyle Drive. “We are aware of the incident that took place at our franchised location in New Iberia, LA. The franchisee is cooperating fully with local authorities as they conduct their investigation,” said the American fast food chain in a statement. “Due to this being an active investigation, we de-

fer any further comment to the police department.” New Iberia Police Captain Leland Laseter has stated the incident occurred during regular business hours. It was further explained that while the woman’s death is not being ruled as a homicide, the captain has suggested the situation is “unusual.” “Nothing is set in stone yet,” Laseter said of the investigation. Criminal authorities are now waiting for the results of a coroner’s autopsy in order to identify the victim, and determine her cause of death.

China issues 1st large-scale earthquake early warning book ahead of Wenchuan anniversary

BEIJING (Agencies): China issued first large-scale earthquake early warning system book in Chengdu, capital of Southwest China’s Sichuan Province on Thursday, a day before the 15th anniversary of the catastrophic Wenchuan earthquake, as well as the 15th Disaster Prevention and Reduction Day, to raise public awareness of disaster prevention. This book is the first of its kind that systematically introduces China’s earthquake early warning technology, policies, regulations, services and practical effects. It introduces



the process of developing the early warning technology and application as well as the history of the technology, services and mode innovation from research to application, reflecting the country’s practical achievements in the field, according to a press release the Chengdu-based Institute of Care-life sent to

the Global Times on Thursday. China is one of the countries experiencing the worst natural disasters, and the damage from earthquakes is particularly significant. The magnitude 8.0 earthquake that hit Wenchuan in Sichuan killed more than 69,000 people and left nearly 18,000 missing. After Wenchuan earthquake, the core technical index - including the response time and reliability and application service scale of earthquake warnings have been leading the world, said Wang Tun, director of the institute and lead author of the book.

Senators eye defense bill for classified intelligence reform

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The head of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is hopeful at least some of the reforms proposed by a bipartisan group of lawmakers to improve the U.S. government process for classifying information could make its way into forthcoming defense and intelligence policy bills. The group, led by Sen. Mark Warner, D-VA, announced two bills on May 10 designed to centralize classification decisions, impose disincentives for overclassification and protect against insider threats. In a May 11 briefing on

Capitol Hill, Warner said that while achieving true reform may be “a bit of a slog,” he’s working to make progress on some of the recommendations during this legislative session. “We’ve not done a major socialization with the House yet, but we know there are a lot of people who are interested in this issue,” he said. “Whether it got in-total attached or whether we have pieces of this that went into the [National Defense Authorization Act] or the Intelligence Authorization Act, we’re actively working that.” Secrecy within the defense and intelligence

communities is not a new obstacle. Officials have for years warned that overclassification hinders work with allies and industry and makes it harder to communicate with the public. At the same time, several recent events — including alleged misuse of classified documents by the Trump and Biden administrations and the leak of classified Pentagon documents by a member of the Massachusetts Air National Guard — renew concerns by some that access and handling of secret information is not subject to enough oversight.

Shell Suspends Production At The World’s Largest Floating LNG Facility

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Shell has halted production at Prelude LNG – the world’s largest floating liquefied natural gas facility offshore Australia – due to a trip, a spokesperson for the supermajor said on Friday without giving details when production could resume. “Production on the Shell-operated Prelude FLNG facility has been temporarily suspended due to a trip,” a spokeswoman for Shell told Reuters on Friday. “We are working

methodically through the stages in the restart process with safety and stability foremost in mind,” the spokeswoman added. The Prelude floating LNG production facility offshore northwestern Australia has an annual capacity of 3.6 million tons. Friday’s incident is the latest issue that Shell has faced at Prelude LNG in the past year. Between July and September last year, production and exports at Prelude LNG were disrupted due to industrial action at the

facility as trade unions demanded higher wages. Trade unions in Australia extended their strike several times between July and September, also extending the period in which the operator Shell was not able to ship LNG from the facility. Shell exported some LNG cargoes from Prelude during the strike, but production was taking place at reduced rates to match storage capacity amid the disruption of the tanker berthing process for vessels to pick LNG.

South Africa says US ambassador apologised for alleging country supplied arms to Russia

CAPE TOWN (Agencies): South Africa’s foreign ministry says the US ambassador has “apologised unreservedly” for claiming the country sold weapons to Russia. On Thursday Reuben Brigety alleged a Russian ship was loaded with ammunition and weapons in Cape Town last December. South Africa says it has no record of an arms sale and President Cyril Ramaphosa

has ordered an inquiry. On Friday the White House national security spokesman would not be drawn on details of the allegations. But John Kirby said it was a “serious issue” and the US had consistently urged countries not to provide support for Russia’s war in Ukraine. Writing on social media after meeting the foreign ministry, Mr Brigety said he was “grateful for the

opportunity to... correct any misimpressions left by my public remarks”. He said in the conversation he “re-affirmed the strong partnership between our two countries and the important agenda our presidents have given us”. Meanwhile a South African cabinet minister hit out at such “megaphone diplomacy”, saying South Africa could not be “bullied by the US”.

Wildfire smoke from Alberta and British Columbia reaches US

TORONTO (Agencies): Much of Canada and parts of the US are blanketed by smoke as wildfires in the province of Alberta continue to rage. As of Thursday, there are 75 active wildfires in Alberta, 23 of which are considered out of control. Early May is typically the start of wildfire season in the region, but experts have said that this level activity is unusual. Temperatures are expected to rise sharply in the coming



days, fuelling concern of more fires to come. Images taken by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) show the smoke from the Alberta wildfires

has travelled far to the eastern portion of Canada, reaching Quebec and Ontario down to the US-Canada border. “Canada’s wildfire season is off to an unusually active start,” NOAA said on Twitter on Thursday. NOAA’s fire and smoke map showed much of Canada covered in light to medium smoke as of Thursday evening. The map also shows light smoke hanging over much of the US northeast and mid-Atlantic regions.

Justice For NordStream Attack? Highly Unlikely

GENEVA (Agencies): The chances of finding and bringing the Nord Stream attack perpetrators to justice are negligible, according to Russian Security Council Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev, who added that Russia would nevertheless continue to work towards holding them accountable. “Of course, we will continue to employ all available legal tools to hold those responsible to account, but the chances of doing this in international judicial institutions are negligible,” Medvedev said at the International Legal Forum today. At the same time, Medvedev blasted Europe for its lack of progress in the investigation. “The European countries, as if by design, have forgotten about their obligations under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings,” Medvedev charged. In March, Russia said it expected to mothball the Nord Stream natural gas pipelines that were damaged in an act of sabotage last fall, because there were no plans to use or



repair them anytime soon due to its sour relations with the West. Originally, Germany’s Uniper had said the pipeline could be repaired in a year, although it is unclear whether Germany is even interested in purchasing Russian gas at this point. The Nord Stream pipelines were sabotaged in late September in still unexplained circumstances. Nord Stream 1 was carrying gas from Russia to Germany via the Baltic Sea, while Nord Stream 2 was never put into operation after Germany axed the certification process following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russia, for its part, shut down Nord Stream 1 indefinitely in early September, claiming an inability to repair gas turbines because of the Western sanctions.

US looks to improve Ugandan peacekeeping

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The US Department of State (DoS) is looking for contractors to train Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF) personnel deploying on peacekeeping missions as well as build a new training facility, according to recent notices published via the System for Award Management website. A request for information (RFI) released by the US DoS on 9 May noted that the UPDF currently contributes more than seven combined arms battalions (6,070 personnel) to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) as well as a small guard battalion to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM). It said it was seeking contractors that can “build the UPDF’s capacity to prepare, deploy, and sustain effective peacekeeping forces in support of UN-mandated



tasks” under its Global Peace Operations Initiative. The contractor would be expected to develop and deliver high-quality training informed by the latest UN and African Union policy, doctrine, and guidance that will include classroom, practical, and field training exercises. It would also have to provide strategic mentoring to improve the UPDF’s operational readiness and self-sufficiency, as well as provide the necessary equipment for pre-deployment training for the Peace Operations Training Centre (POTC).

Cyclone Mocha: Major evacuations as cyclone threatens Bangladesh

DHAKA (Agencies):About half a million people are being evacuated to safer areas in south-eastern Bangladesh, ahead of a cyclone that could be extremely dangerous. Mocha is predicted to make landfall on Sunday, with 170kph (106mph) winds and storm surges of up to 3.6m (12ft). There are concerns the cyclone could hit the world’s largest refugee camp, Cox’s Bazar, where close to a million people live in makeshift homes. Rains are already falling on the camp and red warning flags have been raised. Cyclone Mocha could be the most powerful storm seen in Bangladesh in nearly two decades. As the weather system heads towards the Bangladesh-Myanmar coast, nearby airports have been shut, fishermen have been told to suspend their work and 1,500 shelters have been set up, as the process of moving people from vulnerable areas begins. Officials in Cox’s Bazar said 1,000 people had already been evacuated from one area, with plans to move a further 8,000 people from a ward near the beach if the situation worsened. “We are ready to face any hazards... we don’t want to lose a single life,” Vibhushan Kanti Das,



additional deputy commissioner at Cox’s Bazar, told the BBC. Tourists staying in beachside hotels will be safe, so emergency workers will move locals such as fishermen and families who live in more vulnerable homes, the official said. Close to a million Rohingya refugees who have fled neighbouring Myanmar (also known as Burma) remain at risk, living in flimsy bamboo shelters with tarpaulin covers. The UN says it is doing what it can to protect these areas. Bangladesh’s government does not allow refugees to leave their camps, so many say they are frightened and unsure of what will happen if their shelters are hit by the storm. Mohammad Rafique, 40, and his family live in one of the small bamboo shelters built for refugees. Such shelters with tarpaulin roofing are unlikely to provide much protection from strong winds and heavy rains.

Biden nominates Philip Jefferson to number 2 spot at the Fed

WASHINGTON (Agencies): US President Joe Biden nominated Philip Jefferson to the number two job at the Federal Reserve Friday, a position left vacant since Lael Brainard left for the White House in February. If confirmed, he would take over as vice chair at a crucial time for the Fed, which has raised interest rates 10 times since last year as it looks to tackle above-target inflation. Biden also tapped current World Bank executive director Adriana Kugler to serve as a Federal Reserve governor,



and renominated Lisa Cook to serve a full 14-year term as a governor at the bank, the White House said in a statement. "These nominees understand that this job is not a partisan

one, but one that plays a critical role in pursuing maximum employment, maintaining price stability, and supervising many of our nation's financial institutions," Biden said. "I am confident these nominees will help build upon the historically strong economic recovery we have had under my Administration," he added. If confirmed, Kugler will become the first Hispanic-American to serve on the Fed's governing body, and would have a key role to play in setting the interest rate.

Meteorologists targeted in climate misinfo surge

PARIS (Agencies): Once trusted faces on the news, meteorologists now brave threats, insults and slander online from conspiracy theorists and climate change deniers who accuse them of faking or even fixing the weather. Users on Twitter and other social media falsely accused Spain's weather agency of engineering a drought, Australia's of doctoring its thermometers and France's of exaggerating global warming through misplaced weather stations. "The coronavirus is no longer a trend. Conspiracy theorists and deniers who used to talk about that are now spreading disinformation about climate change," Alexandre Lopez-Borrull, lecturer in Information and Communication Sciences at the Open University of Catalonia, told AFP. "These scientific bodies are seen as part of the establishment, so anything they say may get disputed on social networks. "They are providing evidence against what the climate



deniers claim, so the latter try to discredit them." In a harsh drought and with local elections looming, Spain's State Meteorological Agency (AE-MET) spoke out after its members were threatened in Twitter messages, phone calls and emails. "Murderers," "Criminals," "You'll pay for this," "We're watching you," the messages shouted. They came from people who believe the widely debunked theory that aeroplane condensation trails are really "chemtrails" sprayed by the authorities to poison people or create weather disasters. Some referred to the "2030 agenda," a debunked theory that global elites are plotting to subjugate people through Covid and climate policies.

Belgium learns to share its beaches with sleepy seals

OSTEND (Agencies): Visitors to Belgium's coast are having to get used to North Sea visitors not seen for a while – dozens of seals that are using the short sandy coastline as a resting place. The reason? During the long period of Covid restrictions between early 2020 and early 2022, the sea mammals found the sandy stretches to be calm, without the usual crowds of people. Now with people returning, and ahead of what could be a bumper summer season, the challenge for Belgian animal protection groups is to educate the public on how to coexist with dozens of seals getting some downtime. The exact number of the seals using the coast is hard to pin down but is probably between 100 and 200, according to Kelle Moreau, a marine biologist who is spokesman for the

Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences. The two species that waddle up here are grey seals, whose adults can weigh 300 kilogrammes (660 pounds), and common or harbour seals, a smaller mammal that weighs up to 165 kilogrammes. The beaches, though, are essential for seal pups, which hang back in relative safety on land until they get hungry enough that instinct pushes them to go into the sea to find food. That is why, Moreau explained, it is vital that humans do not feed them. "At the start of the lives, the pups have to spend a few days on the beach until they get hungry. If someone feeds them, they won't go into the sea and learn how to hunt," he said. To keep beachgoers at bay, volunteers rope off areas that seals are using.

Ghana gives assurances for IMF board to consider approving loan deal: IMF

ACCRA (Agencies): Ghana has given sufficient assurances to enable the International Monetary Fund (IMF) board to consider approving a \$3 billion loan agreement, the lender said in a statement on Friday. Facing its worst economic crisis in decades, Ghana in December agreed to a three-year credit programme with the IMF to strengthen the country's finances and restore confidence. Since then, talks had focussed on assurances from a committee of Ghana's creditors over whether a proposed debt exchange programme would be enough to secure the IMF agreement. "I welcome the statement from the Official Creditor Committee for Ghana on the importance of an IMF-supported economic program, to-

gether with its commitment to negotiate debt restructuring terms accordingly," IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva said. "This statement provides the necessary financing assurances for the IMF Executive Board to consider the proposed Fund-supported program and unlock much needed financing." A major cocoa and gold producer, Ghana also has oil and gas reserves. But its debt load has grown and like other sub-Saharan African nations it has struggled with fallout from the Covid pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. The economic crisis forced President Nana Akufo-Ado's government to reverse its position earlier this year and seek IMF help as economists warned of a default on debt payments.

US to confront Iran with new naval deployments



Panama and the Marshall Islands, drawing condemnation from the US Navy. "Iran's unwarranted, irresponsible and unlawful seizure and harassment of merchant vessels must stop," Vice Admiral Brad Cooper, who leads the 5th Fleet naval forces, said in a statement on Friday. US Central Command (CENTCOM), which oversees operations in the Middle East, added that it is now "working with regional allies and partners to increase the rotation of ships and aircraft patrolling in and around the Strait of Hormuz."

Thousands of migrants face tough new US border rules



EL PASO (Agencies): The United States bolted tough new immigration policies into place Friday, setting up an uncertain future for desperate migrants reaching its southern border as a top official expressed confidence the system will hold. Thousands of people remained in Mexico hoping to enter the United States, as it remained to be seen how tough new rules for people crossing the border illegally would be enforced. In Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, some 200 migrants were blocked by US troops from accessing Gate 42, the entry point to El Paso, Texas where hundreds crossed on Thursday. Agustin Sortomi said he, his wife and two children had tried to surrender to US authorities but had been turned away. "I don't know what to do," he told AFP. "We haven't realized our dream. Only God knows when we will." In Browns-

ville, Texas, migrants who crossed before Friday were being taken to detention centers for processing, with many hoping to register their names and be released into the country. Meanwhile US officials reported the death of an unaccompanied migrant child in the custody of Health and Human Services, which takes care of children entering the country unaccompanied. The department gave no details, but Honduras Minister of Foreign Affairs Enrique Reina said a 17-year-old Honduran boy had died in an HHS facility in Florida.

Musk picks ad exec Linda Yaccarino as Twitter CEO



SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): Elon Musk has chosen top ad executive Linda Yaccarino to take the day-to-day reins of Twitter as he fights to reverse the tide at the struggling platform he bought for \$44 billion last year. Yaccarino is a highly respected advertising executive who stepped down from NBCUniversal "effectively immediately" on Friday as rumours swirled that she would replace the mercurial tycoon as Twitter CEO. Twitter is struggling to find its footing after Musk's controversial takeover that saw him fire thousands of staff and welcome back far-right and controversial figures on the platform, spooking away its highest paying advertisers. Musk on Thursday teased Yaccarino's hiring saying in a tweet that he had hired a woman to replace him as boss of Twitter and its newly named X Corporation parent, but without revealing the name. Yaccarino's departure from the company that owns NBC, Universal and Telemundo – where she has been since 2011 – came a few weeks after she interviewed Musk at a marketing conference in Miami.

Battery makers turn northern French region into 'electric valley'



DUNKIRK (Agencies): Global battery makers are turning a formerly depressed northern French region into a 21st-century manufacturing hub and a key European source of new energy technology. Taiwanese battery maker Prologium became the latest group on Friday to announce a plant in the Hauts de France region, home to many struggling towns that have spent decades in the doldrums after the collapse of the local steel and mining industries. The 5.2-billion-euros (\$5.7-billion) investment in the port of Dunkirk follows similar moves from rival power cell producers in the area, which borders Belgium and boasts good road and port connectivity. European producer ACC—a tie up between Stellantis, TotalEnergies and Mercedes—has chosen the town of Billy-Berclau for its plant, while Chinese-Japanese group Envision opted for Douai, around 30 kilometers (20 miles) to the south of regional hub Lille. France-based Verkor also picked Dunkirk, a deep-sea port famous for being the scene of a chaotic Allied retreat in the early stages of World War II. "It's fair to say that there is a developing ecosystem for batteries in northern France," the vice president for international development at Prologium said in a statement announcing the new factory on Friday. News of the investment led French President Emmanuel Macron to travel to Dunkirk on Friday, giving him an opportunity to stress his ambitions to re-industrialize France after decades of the country shedding jobs to China and other lower cost countries. The pro-business former investment banker, 45, has cut taxes, loosened labor law and offered investment incentives since coming to power in 2017 in a bid to cut unemployment and attract companies.

Sudan's warring generals agree to civilian-protection pact: UN welcomes



UNITED NATIONS (APP): A declaration by Sudan's warring parties committing to protect civilians was an "important first step", after more than three weeks of heavy fighting, the UN's top official in the African nation said on Friday. Volker Perthes, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan and Head of the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the country (UNITAMS), underscored that the rival military leaderships had agreed to respect international humanitarian and human rights law, and withdraw fighters from hospitals and medical facilities. Perthes also noted that the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) had committed to continue their talks in the Saudi city of Jeddah on a potential ceasefire. In a statement released by his spokesperson, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the Declaration of Commitment to protect civilians and guarantee the safe passage of humanitarian aid. "While humanitarian workers, most notably local partners, have continued to deliver in very difficult circumstances, the Secretary-General hopes this Declaration will ensure that the relief operation can scale up swiftly and safely to meet the needs of millions of people in Sudan", it said. "He reiterates his call for an immediate ceasefire and expanded discussions to achieve a permanent cessation of hostilities." Speaking to reporters in Geneva, via Zoom from Port Sudan where the UN and partners have established a coastal humanitarian hub, Perthes said building on the first mutually signed declaration, the aim was to reach a ceasefire which would also be "mutually agreed", contrary to previous, unilaterally announced ceasefires. He hoped that "within the next couple of days", the discussions in Jeddah under the auspices of Saudi and United States mediators would lead to such an agreement.

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