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## ‘Radioactive cloud’ moving toward Europe – Russian security chief

**- Russia bans Greenpeace - Orders arrest of ICC prosecutor - Volkswagen completes Russia exit - 'Conflict is coming,' UK defense secretary - Hungary ready to host Russia-Ukraine talks: FM**  
MOSCOW (Agencies): The hazard was produced by depleted uranium munitions destroyed in Ukraine, Nikolay Patrushev has claimed. The destruction of depleted uranium shells in Ukraine has produced a radioactive cloud which has been blown toward Western Europe, the secretary of the Russian Security Council, Nikolay Patrushev, has claimed. The UK supplied the munitions to Ukraine to be fired from British-made Challenger tanks. The senior official revealed the purported threat during a government meeting on Friday, in which he accused the US of providing “help” to other nations that results in harm being done to the recipients. “They ‘helped’ Ukraine this way too, applied pressure to its satellites to supply depleted uranium munitions. Their destruction resulted in a radioactive cloud moving towards Western Europe. They have detected an increase in radiation in Poland,” Patrushev stated. Unconfirmed reports have circulated in Ukraine regarding the target of a Russian strike last Saturday, which Moscow said destroyed an armaments depot in the city of Khmelnytsky. According

to the claims, the military facility was used to store British-provided depleted uranium shells. It has been suggested that the material may have been turned into dust by powerful explosions at the depot. Russia previously warned that the use of depleted uranium munitions poses a long-term environmental and public health threat, based on studies in nations such as Serbia and Iraq, where the weapons were previously used. London has denied such a risk. While it is mildly radioactive, depleted uranium is mainly considered a health risk because the material is a toxic heavy metal. Particles of uranium or uranium oxide produced in an explosion could be inhaled by anyone exposed to them, or contaminate the environment.

- Russia has designated Greenpeace an “undesirable organization,” citing the eco-activist group’s record of pushing a political agenda and meddling in domestic affairs with the goal of causing economic damage. The decision by the office of the Prosecutor General was announced on Friday. Its statement accused Greenpeace of trying to undermine infrastructure and energy projects

beneficial to Russia by inciting protests against them. The office stated that the Dutch-headquartered NGO was also involved in funding foreign agents on Russian soil and has been advocating economic isolation of the country since the conflict in Ukraine escalated in February 2022. “The efforts of the foundation are aimed at destabilizing the social-political situation and towards an attempt to change the power in the country through unconstitutional means,” the statement declared.

- The Russian Interior Ministry on Friday issued an arrest warrant for Karim Asad Ahmad Khan, the British lawyer currently acting as chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. In March, Khan sought the arrest of Russian President Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova, the children’s rights commissioner, for the alleged war crime of “unlawful deportation and transfer” of children from “occupied areas of Ukraine” to Russia. The ICC had acted on claims by the government in Kiev that Russia’s evacuation of children from civilian areas that were under fire from Ukrainian forces

amounted to forcible transfer of population, which was defined as a crime under the Fourth Geneva Convention. Moscow has dismissed the ICC warrants against Putin and Lvova-Belova as null and void, as Russia is not a party to the Rome Statute that created the court. Neither are the US, China, India and several dozen other countries.

- The world’s second largest car manufacturer, the Volkswagen Group, has completed the sale of its business in Russia to local auto dealer group Avilon, as part of its exit from the country, VW said in a statement on Friday. The deal has been approved by the Russian government, the company added. The sale includes the flagship Kaluga production plant southwest of Moscow, which employs around 4,000 people and has the capacity to assemble 225,000 vehicles per year. As part of the deal, VW has also sold its distribution and after-sales business. The warehousing and financial services units will also be transferred to the new owner, the company said.

- Defence Secretary Ben Wallace has warned that the UK could enter a direct

conflict with Russia and China in the next seven years and has called for an increase in military spending to counter the potential threat. Speaking to the Financial Times on Friday, the official claimed that the world will be “a more dangerous, unstable place” by the end of the decade and that “defense will be more critical in our lives.” He explained that the world is seeing “the end of the abnormal period [of peace] post-cold war” and that “a conflict is coming with a range of adversaries around the world.”

- Budapest is prepared to facilitate peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine, Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto has announced. “At the very beginning of this conflict, I suggested to both sides... that Hungary is ready to provide a venue for peace talks at any time. This offer still stands,” Szijjarto told RIA Novosti on Friday, on the sidelines of the EU-Central Asia Economic Forum in Almaty, Kazakhstan. “Whenever Russia and Ukraine express their readiness [to negotiate], we’re prepared to create all the necessary conditions for this,” he added.

## Australian grandmother, 95, with dementia Tasered by police

CANBERRA (Agencies): Australian police Tasered a 95-year-old woman as she approached them with a steak knife and a walker in a nursing home. She is now fighting for her life. Clare Nowland, who suffers from dementia, was reportedly in critical condition after the incident in the town of Cooma in New South Wales state. A high-level internal police investigation has been launched. Two police officers went to Yallambee Lodge, a nursing home that specialises in residents with higher care needs including dementia, after staff reported the great-grandmother had taken a knife from the kitchen. Paramedics and police had urged Nowland to drop the serrated knife in a conversation lasting “a number of minutes” before she moved towards them, prompting one officer to fire his Taser at her. She then fell backwards and struck her head on the ground, according to police. Nowland’s case also sparked debate about the New South Wales state police’s use of Taser-brand conducted energy devices, or stun guns. While they are a less lethal option than using guns, they have occasionally proved more dangerous than other policing options.

## Egypt businessmen boycott US dollar

CAIRO (Agencies): Multiple commercial sectors in Egypt yesterday launched a campaign to boycott the purchase of the US dollar from the black market after the exchange rate recently exceeded 41 Egyptian pounds as opposed to the official price of 30.90 Egyptian pounds in the Central Bank of Egypt to the, the news website Arabi21 reported. The campaign, which comes after an unprecedented surge in the dollar exchange rate, has gone viral on social media, and signals the central bank’s lack of control over the currency traders on the black market. Arabi21 cited sources as saying that the campaign was initiated by car dealers who called on all merchants and businessmen to refrain from buying dollars from the black market, and to freeze the import of vehicles from 15 May to 15 June until the national currency stabilises. The sources pointed out that the dollar had stood at 42-43 Egyptian pounds on the black market for two consecutive days before it retreated to 38 pounds.

## David’s Sling scores first two operational intercepts

TEL AVIV (Agencies): The David’s Sling air-defence system made its first two successful operational interceptions during the five-day escalation between Israel and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) militant group in the Gaza Strip from 9 to 13 May. In the first interception on 10 May, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) took the opportunity to test the system’s capability, while the second was linked to an operational requirement during a rocket attack, with David’s Sling being the best option for intercepting the threat, Janes has learnt. The date of the second interception has not been revealed. The PIJ launched 1,469 rockets during the escalation, 1,139 of which crossed into Israel, according

to the Israeli military. It credited the Iron Dome air-defence system with intercepting 437 rockets, which it said represented a 95.6% success rate as rockets heading for unpopulated areas are ignored. However, two civilians were killed in Israel, while another three were killed in the Gaza Strip by rockets that fell short. David’s Sling is designed to intercept threats that have a higher altitude and longer range than those covered by Iron Dome. It uses Stunner interceptors with multipulse rocket motors and active radar seekers. The system is operated by the IAF’s 66th Battalion, which was established in 2016 and is currently commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Revital Barzani.

## Half of world’s largest lakes, reservoirs losing water: Study

LONDON (Agencies): New study finds unsustainable human use has led to more than half of the largest lakes drying up around the world. More than half of the world’s large lakes and reservoirs have shrunk since the early 1990s, chiefly because of climate change, intensifying concerns about water for agriculture, hydropower and human consumption, a new study has found. A team of international researchers reported on Thursday that some of the world’s most important freshwater sources – from the Caspian Sea between Europe and Asia to South America’s Lake Titicaca – lost water at a cumulative rate of approximately 22 gigatonnes per year for nearly

three decades. That is about 17 times the volume of the largest reservoir in the United States – Lake Mead. The study published in the journal Science found unsustainable human use dried up lakes, such as the Aral Sea in Central Asia and the Dead Sea in the Middle East, while lakes in Afghanistan, Egypt and Mongolia were hit by rising temperatures, which can increase water loss to the atmosphere. Water levels rose in a quarter of the lakes too, often as a result of dam construction in remote areas such as the Inner Tibetan Plateau. Natural lakes and dams store about 87 percent of the Earth’s freshwater, although they cover just 3 percent of the planet’s surface.

## Iraq: Designs ready to build rail, road network to Turkiye



BAGHDAD (Agencies): Director General of the Public Company for Rail in Iraq, Younus Khalid, announced on Tuesday the competition of designs for building a rail and road network with Turkiye. The project, which will link south Iraq with Turkiye, could cost nearly \$17 billion, Khalid said. On 21 March, Iraq and Turkiye agreed on a number of economic deals, in-

cluding the rail and road network. The network will start from Faw Port, which is under construction in south Iraq, and will pass through ten Iraqi governorates, Khalid said. It will involve electric high speed trains for freight and passengers and is expected to cost around \$10.5 billion while the 1,200 kilometre (725 mile) motorway will cost \$6.5 billion. “This is a giant and strategic project, the largest in Iraq and one of the largest projects of its kind in the region...It will complement the Faw Port project and will turn Iraq into a major logistics hub,” he added. The project is expected to be completed in 2028 and will largely boost Iraq’s trade with Europe via Turkiye, Khalid said.

## Electricity Prices Plunge By 75% As Finland Opens New Nuclear Power Plan

HELSINKI (Agencies): The commencement of regular output from a much-delayed Finnish nuclear reactor in April saw electricity prices in the country decrease by more than 75 percent. The Olkiluoto 3 (OL3) nuclear plant completed the transition from testing to regular output last month to become Finland’s first new nuclear plant in more than four decades. It is expected to produce up to 15 percent of the country’s power demand. And while the plant’s production is still in its early days, its launch has had a considerable effect on Finland’s energy prices, lowering the electricity spot

price in the country from €245.98 per megawatt-hour (MWh) in December to €60.55 per MWh in April, a reduction of more than 75 percent, according to physical electricity exchange, Nord Pool. Energy prices had risen sharply in the Scandinavian country after the Finnish government banned electricity imports from neighboring Russia last year due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. The utilization of nuclear power will be welcomed by Finnish consumers, particularly given the fact that Finland has the highest per-capita electricity consumption in the European Union.

## Chinese researchers discover evidence of ancient ocean on Mars

BEIJING (Agencies): An international team of researchers led by Chinese scholars has made another groundbreaking discovery on the surface of Mars. By analyzing data obtained from the multi-spectral camera onboard the Zhurong rover, they have found evidence of marine sedimentary deposits, providing the first geological proof of the existence of an ancient ocean in the northern region of the Red Planet. The discovery has opened up new possibilities for unraveling the planet’s past and its potential for hosting life. The research, titled “Evidence of Oceanic Sedimentary Rocks in Utopia Planitia: Observations from the Zhurong Rover,” led by Long Xiao, professor from the School of Earth Sciences at China Uni-



versity of Geosciences, was published on Thursday in the prestigious scientific journal, National Science Review. Mars is now known for its cold and arid conditions. However, the latest discovery suggests that the Martian environment might have been significantly different billions of years ago, Science and Technology Daily reported on Friday. Previous studies have confirmed the presence of abundant liquid water on early Mars, and the hypothesis of a primordial ocean has been proposed.

## New York representative introduces bill to ban funding for illegal Israeli settlements

NEW YORK (Agencies): Legislation has been put forward at New York’s state assembly which would prevent registered charities from sending tens of millions of dollars per year to help fund illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and Palestinian Territories. Zohran Mamdani, a member of News York’s state assembly, this week introduced the bill titled ‘Not on our dime!: Ending New York funding of Israeli settler violence’, which aims to prohibit tax-deductible donations from being used to fund illegal Israeli settlements and expel Palestinians from their native land. Speaking to the Guardian newspaper, Mamdani stated that “This legislation makes it clear that New York will no longer effectively subsidise war crimes and the flout-



ing of international law”, referring to the fact that the building of Jewish-only and Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem is illegal under international law. “What we have is a number of New York state-registered charities that are sending at least \$60m a year to Israeli settlement organisations which then use that funding to continue the history of expulsion and dispossession of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories that has been going on for decades,” he said.

**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.



## Power suspension in Peshawar,Mansehra notified

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) on Friday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Jamrud Grid Station on 21st and 28th May from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11KV BSI Steel and Mohmand Steel feeders will face inconvenience. It said that power supply will also remain suspended from 132 KV Sheikh Muhammadi-Rehman Baba Transmission Lineon20th May from 8:00 AM to 2:00PM, resultantly consumers of 132 KV Rehman Baba and Peshawar

war City grid connected with 11 KV feeders will face inconvenience. The Power Supply will remain suspended from132 KV Peshawar University Grid Station on 20th, 23rd, 27th and 30th May from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV University Campus, Cnal Town, Malakandher, Engineering, Regi, Taj Abad, Taj Abad 2, Agriculture , MeraAchini, HMC, Ring Road, Danish Abad, Ghrib Abad, Rahatabad 1, CMB and Abdara feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Mardan Grid Station on 20th, 24th

and 29th May from 9:00 a.m.to 3:00 p.m. due to which consumers of 11 KV Shamsi Road and Canal Road feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Mansehra Grid Station on 22th, 24th, 25th and 30th May from 9:00 a.m.to 3:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Gazikot, AhsanShaheed, City 1,2, Qalandar Abad, Attar Sheesha, Shaheed, LassanNawab, City 3, MuradPur, Khaki, Shankiyari, Balakot, BOI, GhariHabibUllah, Banda Pir Khan, APS , Jinnah Abad feeders will face inconvenience.

## PM visiting is part of national unity agenda: PML-N spokesperson

PESHAWAR (APP): Spokesman of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Akhtiyar Wali Khan said that Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif’s visit to Peshawar was part of the national unity agenda. While talking to media men here Friday, he said that Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was coming to Peshawar on a one-day visit to Radio Pakistan

and Associated Press of Pakistan Office Peshawar Bureau which were burnt down by PTI miscreants. The building of the national broadcaster came under attack on May 9, 2023 where Chagai mountains model was destroyed in its premises and later put on fire the entire building on May 10, 2023. The Prime Minister will be briefed on the losses to the building, record, transmission and

rehabilitation efforts, he said. He said that the Prime Minister would also visit Governor House Peshawar where he would be given briefing on the law and order situation and would also meet political leadership of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He disclosed that the Prime Minister was also going to meet the Party leadership and PDM leaders at Governor House.

## Two cops among 21 injured in hand-grenade attack on police van

TANK (APP): At least 21 people were injured, including two cops after a police van was attacked by unidentified armed men with a hand grenade in

Marwat market here on Friday, said District Police Officer Waqar Ahmad. The DPO said that the armed assailants first attacked the police van with a hand grenade, in which 19 civilians and two policemen identified as Jameel and Abdul Ghaffar received critical injuries. They then resorted to indiscriminate firing in a bid to escape which was retaliated by the

injured police officials and one of the accused was arrested on the spot in injured condition. The district police and Rescue 1122 rushed to the site of the incident and shifted the injured to the district headquarters hospital. The police have cordoned off the area and started a search operation for the arrest of the perpetrators of the attack.

## Call for community preparedness to deal with heat-wave, monsoon rains

PESHAWAR (APP): The Secretary of Relief, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Abdul Basit on Friday directed all the district administrations, PDMA, Rescue-1122, and other line departments to ensure better strategies and quick response for sizzling summer and rainy monsoon seasons. He called for the involvement of the local population in the preparations so that a comprehensive and cooperative plan could be formed to deal with all kinds of

natural calamities and mitigate the negative effects during the two seasons. He directed all the district administrations and line departments to immediately start mock practices besides creating awareness among the masses about the heat wave and heavy rains in monsoon season this year. He said, “Coming summer season has been predicted very hot while heavy rainfall is expected in the monsoon season and prompt action is required to keep the losses minimum.”

## University approves academic curriculum for various programme

PESHAWAR (APP): Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women’s University (SBBWU) approved academia and curriculum for various programme in its 11th meeting of the board of Faculties (BoF) of Sciences and Social Sciences on Friday. The BoF meeting, chaired by Vice Chancellor SBBWU Prof Dr Safia Ahmed discussed matters related to academia and curriculum for urdu, Islamic Studies, Physics and Pakistan Studies, education, Bioinformatics, Biochemistry, and Economics. They

made recommendations to be placed in the Academic Council meeting of the varsity. Those who attended the BoF include Vice-Chancellor Sarhad University Prof Dr Salim-ur-Rehman, VC City University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar Prof Dr Syed Minhaj-ul-Hasan, Prof Dr Fida Younis Khattak (R) Professor of Physics and Artificial Intelligence, Pak-Austria Technical University, Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology, Haripur, and other members.

## Hero of Muslim Bagh cleanup operation: Capt Behram (14 AK) 2 Cdo S/O Maj Umar Farooq

- By: Sajid Latif Khan Niazi:  
It was on 16th May 23, that I was fortunate enough that I could talk to the brave and Lion – Hearted young officer of Pakistan Army Capt Behram 2 Cdo, who happens to be among our second generation as he is son of our dear coursemate Major Umar Farooq. Initially, I was little apprehensive as Behram after the Compound clearance op in Muslim Bagh was himself injured and I thought he may not receive or take my call well. But what a spirited and motivated young boy he was. Just talking to him made my day. Besides, being injured and still admitted at CMH, he was so energetic, cheerful and lovely to talk. As narrated by him and whatever I could understand, six terrorists were hiding in the Compound which Behram and his wingman had to clear. Immediately, after entry into the room, they both killed three terrorists hiding in the room. But fourth terrorist hiding in an adjacent store/ small room, threw hand grenade at them, which Blasted right close to them. Which resulted in serious injuries of the wingman and Behram. Behram not only brought the wingman out of the room but he single handedly made entry into the room again and killed remaining terrorists



hiding in the small room/store. Immediately, after clearing the Compound, he informed his CO/ Comd whereas he was himself profusely bleeding, that the Compound has been cleared and that all Ts have been taken care of. It was only after that he was given First-Aid etc. And later moved to ITC and then to CMH. Really, it was a treat to talk to such a Lion – Hearted young officer, such Heroic deeds we not see very often or read only in fiction. My humble salute to the proud parents and the young officer. May ALLAH Almighty bless him with exemplary health and quick recovery so as to serve the Nation and his Unit like this once again and forever. Aameen.

## Imran Khan misleading PTI workers through hateful speeches: Amjad Khan Afridi

PESHAWAR (APP): Secretary Information Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of Pakistan People’s Party Amjad Afridi has said that Imran Khan and the new leaders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf misled their workers by making hateful statements and speeches on social media. While talking to media men here on Friday, he claimed that as a result, the PTI workers damaged hospitals, schools and military and civil installations, adding that they did not even spare the ambulances and set them on fire. The PTT’s armed workers also dam-

aged Radio Pakistan, the APP Office in Peshawar, which comes under the category of rebellion, Amjad Afridi added. He said that there were no political people in the PTI, adding that when it came to accountability and jail, everyone started leaving PTI. The PTI-led government had left no stone unturned to bring the country to default, Afridi alleged, adding that Imran Khan and his incompetent team must be held accountable and sent to jail. He said the people of the province and the whole nation stood by the armed forces.

## DC for joint efforts to eradicate polio

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shah Fahad on Friday chaired an important meeting regarding the anti-polio campaign. The meeting was attended by various officials including Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) (Relief) Muhammad Imran Khan, District Health Officer (DHO) Dr Muhammad Idris, and Deputy District Polio Officers (DPOs) Dr Naveed Khurshid and Dr Saifullah. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the performance and

coverage of the previous anti-polio campaign and plan for the upcoming campaign. During the meeting, DC urged parents to ensure that their children receive the polio vaccine. He emphasized the importance of cooperation with the anti-polio teams in order to protect children from permanent disability and eradicate the polio virus from the city. He stressed that the joint efforts of the community were crucial for the successful eradication of polio.

## Former KP Minister Iqbal Wazir quits PTI

PESHAWAR (APP): Former provincial minister and Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf leader from North Waziristan Muhammad Iqbal Wazir on Friday announced quitting the basic membership of his party. Addressing a press conference here on Friday, Iqbal Wazir Said he was part of the PTI government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and president of PTI North Waziristan. He said he remained loyal to the party in every situation, however he added he was much hurt to see incidents against the state institution on May 9-10. Some of the imprudent and misguided

ed workers of PTI, he said attacked the institutions, responsible for state security and integrity. He said loyalty to the motherland was above political affairs and his mind would never allow him to be a part of the political party that was confronting with state institutions. He announced that without any pressure and favor, he was quitting the basic membership of his party and part ways with PTI. He thanked the people of his constituency for showing confidence in his political services adding that he would decide his future course of action with the consultation of his people.

## Police arrested alleged accused in Radio Pakistan incident

PESHAWAR (APP): Police on Friday claimed to have arrested the alleged accused who broke the main gate of Radio Pakistan. The accused identified as Muhammad Umar. He managed to sell out the broken gate in the market, said an official of the Police while briefing the media. The partner of the accused has already been detained by the police, the official said. The main gate of Radio Pakistan was also recovered. The accused had sold it for Rs. 9000 in a junk shop in the Gate area of H-shangari, police said. The process of

identifying those who stormed the main gate of Radio Pakistan is going on, a police official said. He said Peshawar Police will identify all the alleged accused involved in damaging the public and private properties. He said all the miscreants will soon be brought under the law. The official said that Police are searching for other accomplices of the alleged accused as 12 to 13 people are involved in breaking the gate of Radio Pakistan. The process of identifying other protesters who stormed the Peshawar main gate is also going on.

## AC arrests seven milk sellers involved in adulteration

PESHAWAR (APP): Assistant Commissioner Peshawar, Sayyeda Zainab Naqvi on Friday carried out an operation against milk sellers involved in adulteration in Shaheen Town of University Road and arrested seven milk sellers. According to the district administration spokesman, complaints were received regarding the sale of adulterated milk in Jahangir Abad and Shaheen Town of University Town. The assistant commissioner while taking prompt action on the complaints paid a surprise visit to the areas and arrested seven milk sellers for selling water-mixed milk. The AC

accompanied by Veterinary Supervisor of Livestock, Dr Naem ul Hassan inspected the quality of the milk and found that water and ice were being mixed with it. Some of the milk sellers were also found selling milk at exorbitant prices. Seven milk sellers were arrested from the markets while the milk was distributed among people present on the occasion. AC Zainab Naqvi assured that the district administrations would take all possible measures to provide maximum relief to the people, adding that no one would be allowed to fleece the citizens.

## Two killed,one injured in Lakki firing

PESHAWAR (APP): Two people were killed and another sustained serious injuries in a firing incident in Lakki Marwat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday. Police said the incident occurred in Shah Hassain Khel area of the district where assailants opened fire

at the rivals. Two people were killed on the spot while another sustained bullet injuries. Those killed were identified as Matiullah and Farmanullah while the injured as Karamatullah. The dead bodies and injured were shifted to Government City Hospital.

## By-elections of Hazara division to be held on May 30

ABBOTTABAD (APP): The by-elections on the vacant seats of the Village Chairman in the Hazara division would be held on May 30. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has issued the schedule for elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, the seats became vacant owing to the concerned village chairman’s death or resignation. According to the ECP schedule for

Local Government (LG) by-polls on May 30, the bye-elections for the Village Chairmen would be held where members of the concerned Village Councils (VC) would exercise their right to vote. Polling would start in each VC at 2:30 pm and would continue without any disruption till 5 pm, the elections would be held under an open division system.





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## Chairman NDMA Addresses at Midterm Review of Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction at UN Headquarters

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lt Gen Inam Haider Malik, participated as delegation leader in an event on Accelerating implementation of DRR & resilience in infrastructure at United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA. The event was part of the High-Level Meeting of Midterm Review for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR, a news release said. The Chairman NDMA highlighted crucial role of Disaster Risks Reduction for developing



economies & laid stress on innovative DRR approaches based on local needs. He added that SDGs need to be met through unified global efforts. He said that Pakistan's demonstrated resolve is an act of brilliance amidst economic odds but still facing risks of

multiple hazards with simultaneous coded disasters whereby still under recovery mode after floods in 2022. He emphasized conducting a resilience audit of existing infrastructure and resilience NOC needs to be embedded into the planning phase of future infrastructure projects. He also mentioned about NDMA's national think tank NIDM which besides global connectivity, aims to collate academia with all DM responders of respective areas for developing local communities' centric projects.

## “Health Minister Abdul Qadir Patel Holds Fruitful Meeting with Officials of US FDA at Maryland”

MARYLAND (Agencies): Federal Health Minister Abdul Qadir Patel recently concluded a highly productive meeting with officials from the United States Food and Drug Administration (US FDA) at their headquarters in Maryland. Mr. Asim Rauf, Chief Executive Officer of Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) accompanied Mr. Patel on this occasion. The meeting aimed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the field of pharmaceutical regulation and foster collaborative efforts between the two nations in ensuring the safe-

ty and quality of medicinal products especially curtailing the menace of spurious and sub-standard medicines and capacity building of DRAP. During the meeting, Minister Patel expressed his gratitude for the warm welcome extended by the FDA officials and highlighted the importance of international partnerships in promoting public health and ensuring the availability of safe and effective medicines. He emphasized Pakistan's commitment to aligning its regulatory practices with global standards and the need for

mutual cooperation in this regard. The discussions revolved around various key areas, including the regulatory framework, drug approval processes, post-marketing surveillance, and quality control measures. Minister Patel shared Pakistan's initiatives and reforms undertaken by the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) to enhance its regulatory capacity and improve patient access to high-quality medicines. He acknowledged the FDA's vast expertise and expressed a desire to benefit from their best practices and technical assistance.

## Interactive session on ‘Global and Regional Environment and Pakistan’s Position in the Region’ held

ISLAMABAD (APP):The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) on Thursday held an interactive session at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI) to discuss the features of the evolving global and regional environment and the dynamics shaping Pakistan's foreign policy. The session titled “Global and Regional Environment and Pakistan's Position in the Region” hosted the participants of Human Resource Development Programme (HRDP)



for Professionals at the International Islamic University (IIU). CAMEA Director Amina Khan, in her introductory remarks, briefed the group about the working of ISSI. ISSI Director General Sohail Mahmood highlight-

ed the key features of the evolving global and regional environment and the dynamics shaping Pakistan's foreign policy. Among other things, he outlined key determinants of states' foreign policy — including geography, identity, history, resource endowment, leadership, economic imperatives, overarching strategic concepts, and role of national institutions. He also underscored the vital linkage between states' internal strength and their external influence.

## Regional CCIs to be taken on board for setting up new industrial estate

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of Industry and Commerce of Punjab S.M.Tanveer on Friday said that Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Chakwal Chambers of Commerce and Industry would be taken on board to set up a new industrial estate in the region. He said that the establishment of the zone would help in promoting industrialization and providing employment opportunities to the youth of those areas as well as other parts of the country, said a press release. Tanveer was addressing a reception organized by the Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Kallar Kahar. He said that the Punjab government had already identified four sites for setting up a new

industrial estate in the region on the demand of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, so the three Chambers should soon reach a consensus on site to execute this important project. Speaking on the occasion, Bilal Afzal, Punjab's Excise and Communications Minister said that 10 km Bhawan Road had been completed in Chakwal district while Kallar Kahar Chowah Saidan Shah Road would be completed soon. He said that Chakwal-Tala Gang road and other roads in the district would also be rehabilitated. Afzal said that the Punjab government was focusing on roads as the improved road network would facilitate the people and promote business activities.

## Chairman NDMA reaffirms Pakistan’s commitment to enabling success of SFDRR-driven recovery plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik on Friday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to enabling the success of Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR)-driven balance recovery plan for the region and world. The Chairman NDMA was addressing at Mid-term Review of Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction at UN Headquarters, where he led Pakistan's delegation, a news release said. He acknowledged the need for conducting a realistic review of Sendai Framework and identifying measures to be taken in course corrections. He emphasized the importance of learning from successfully shared templates and making technical inputs for early

warning and climate projections available to all without boundaries. He underlined the digital divide and capacity gaps that exist in different regions and economies, which present barriers to the full implementation of DRR efforts. The Chairman NDMA presented Pakistan's proposal for establishment of a dedicated Global DRR Fund under the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) to finance global and regional initiatives separate from climate-focused financing windows. He noted that Pakistan remained fully committed to meeting Sendai Framework expectations, replicating successful templates in disaster risk reduction and taking proactive measures to mitigate risks and build resilience to potential disasters.

## LHC sets aside notification of 72 PTI MNAs’ resignations acceptance

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday set aside the acceptance of resignations of 72 MNAs of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) by the National Assembly speaker and their subsequent de-notification by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The court ordered the PTI MNAs to appear before the speaker for withdrawing their resignations, besides ordering the speaker to decide the resignations' matter after

re-hearing the law makers. The single bench comprising Justice Shahid Karim announced the verdict while allowing petitions filed by Riaz Fatyana, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Shafqat Mehmood and other MNAs, belonging to the extent of the Punjab province. The petitioners had challenged acceptance of their resignations by the National Assembly speaker and subsequent action of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

## DPO commends police on recovering stolen gold, 2 held

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): DPO Syed Husnain Haider on Friday commended SHO city Muzaffargarh for recovering stolen gold worth Rs 1.5 million and cash within a day after the theft was reported to 15 police. Police spokesman said, after receiving report of theft of gold and cash through 15 emergency complaint, DPO assigned the task to Station Head Officer Iftikhar Malkani, who, employing best investigative techniques, found out a nephew of the complainant and a neighbour had colluded to steal the valuables. Both the accused Nasir and Fayyaz were arrested and stolen valuables recovered. DPO said that police would continue to extend services to the people to enable them live in peace with protection to their life and property.

## Brother of Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar injured in Quetta firing

QUETTA (APP): Two people including a brother of Senator Manzoor Khan Kakar were injured in firing incident by unknown gunmen at Western Bypass area of Quetta on Friday. According to police sources, the victim identified as Naseer Khan Kakar was on way home in a vehicle when armed assailants opened fire at him and fled from the scene. As a result, Naseer Khan Kakar and one passerby received injuries on the spot. The injured were rushed to nearby hospital for medical aid. The Naseer Khan is reported to be brother of Senator Manzoor Khan Kakar. Police have registered a case and started investigation.

## DC approves transgenders’ nomination in committee

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): Deputy Commissioner Salman Lodhi on Friday approved the nomination from the transgender community to Disaster Relief and Flood Response Committee. According to the district administration spokesman, the measure was taken to accommodate the marginalised section of society.

## K-Electrical signs MoU with Power China for potential development of 2x660 MW coal-fired power project

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): K-Electric (KE) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with PowerChina, Oracle Power, and the Government of Sindh (GOS) for the potential development of a 2x660 MW coal-fired power project based on Thar coal. The aim is to increase reliance on indigenous sources of energy production and provide affordable energy access to clients. The signing ceremony was attended by KE representative CEO Moonis Alvi, Cheng Qiang from PowerChina, Secretary Energy Abu Bakar Ahmed from the Government of Sindh, and CEO Naheed Memon from Oracle Power. Speaking on the occasion, Sindh Minister for Energy Imtiaz

Shaikh stated, “Electricity is a fundamental driver of development and progress, and this collaboration is a big step in this direction. Once operational, this project will immensely benefit the entire province.” The main objective of the MoU is to provide a collaborative framework for the partnering parties, setting the stage for the establishment of this ambitious power plant. CEO of KE, Moonis Alvi, also expressed his excitement, stating, “As a company, our ambition and initiatives are towards achieving net zero and addressing the energy trilemma, which balances reliability, affordability, and sustainability of energy supply.”

## Senate body seeks details of universities being funded by HEC

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Senate's Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training Thursday sought the details of universities being funded by the Higher education Commission (HEC) and the measures being taken for their financial independence. The committee which met here at the Parliament House with its Chairman Irfan ul Haque in the chair, was briefed on the current status of 14 Pakistan's Chairs in different academic institutions abroad, which have been lying vacant for the last 14 years. Secretary Federal Edu-

cation and Professional Training Waseem Ajmal Chaudhary apprised the committee that the revised memorandum of understanding (MoU), approved by the Federal Cabinet, had been sent to nine foreign universities for their rectification. As the MoU had been rectified by the universities of Iran and Kazakhstan, therefore, the vacant chairs in the said countries would be advertised soon, he added. The committee chairman directed the ministry to devise a comprehensive plan to fill up the vacant chairs in other countries also.

## Sanjrani constitutes committee to rename Parliament House

ISLAMABAD (APP):Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Thursday constituted a Parliamentary Committee with the crucial task of renaming Parliament House. The new name will be a reflection of our rich cultural heritage, a testament to our national values, and a symbol of the unity of our great nation. The new name will reflect the rich cultural heritage, uphold the national values, and symbolize the unity of the great nation. In a letter addressed to the Speaker of the National Assembly, Raja Pervez Ashraf, the Senate Chairman emphasized that the recent Golden Jubilee cele-

brations of the Senate and the Constitution have presented us with a timely occasion to contemplate our collective achievements as a nation. Sadiq Sanjrani urged the Speaker to promptly nominate members for the committee with the aim of expediting the process. The Senate Chairman has appointed Senators Irfan Siddiqui, Taj Haider, Shibli Faraz, and Manzoor Kakar as members of the Committee representing the upper house. He stressed that the Committee's composition has been thoughtfully selected, ensuring an equal representation of four members from each house.

## S&P Global Pakistan signs Memorandum of Understanding with Team Up

S&P Global has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Team up Pakistan. The initiative aims to establish a sustainable, and mutually beneficial collaboration to provide employment to the youth and help facilitate, train and upskill young and upcoming entrepreneurs in Pakistan. Mujeeb Zahur, Managing Director at S&P Global said, “Partnership is a core pillar of our values and this MoU is a great example of working collaboratively with communities we operate in. We are certain this partnership will lead to many joint initiatives that produce new synergies, add strategic insights for upskilling talent, and will ultimately foster economic growth and development in Pakistan. This is aligned with our people-first strategy and vision to power markets around the world.” Under the agreement, S&P Global Pakistan will facilitate and upskill entrepreneurs and students who are part of the Career Launch Pad program of



Team Up. Team Up is located in the National Incubation Centre. This Centre is powered by Jazz and Teamup under the umbrella of the Ministry of IT and Telecom nurturing and growing talent across Pakistan. Zouhair Khaliq, Co-Founder of Teamup said, “I am thrilled to announce our collaboration with S&P Global as it is a powerful combination that will unlock the potential of entrepreneurship and innovation. With their shared vision and expertise, we will pave the way for a brighter future of economic growth and development. This partnership is a testament to our commitment to nurture the next generation of entrepreneurs and provide them with the resources and support they need to succeed.”

## Amb M Saleem & Sonja Hyland, DSG at Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland co-chaired 4th round of Pakistan-Ireland BPC



AFS (Europe) Amb M Saleem & Sonja Hyland, DSG at Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland co-chaired 4th round of Pakistan-Ireland BPC held in Islamabad today. They reviewed entire spectrum of #Pakistan #Ireland relations & agreed to further strengthen them.





## ICT trains 650 applicants of driving license in last week

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police (Traffic Wing) conducted training classes on road safety for 650 applicants who applied for driving licenses during the last week. A total of 21 classes and workshops were conducted at traffic police headquarters in Faizabad and 650 citizens were educated about traffic rules who obtained driving learner permits along with 17 other persons involved in violation of traffic laws. Following the directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, a special awareness campaign has been launched for drivers and applicants for driving licenses. A total of 1,042 driving learner permits were issued last week while 275 persons applied for driving licenses

in categories of LTV/HTV and PSV. Around 39 HTV, 135 LTV, and 13 PSV licenses were issued to the persons who qualified for driving tests while 88 citizens were declared unsuccessful in their driving attempts. The spokesman said, “The education wing of the traffic police is educating the citizens about traffic rules through arranging various workshops and seminars.” He said, “Pamphlets and brochures are being distributed and citizens have appreciated the efforts of traffic police in creating awareness about rules.” Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Dr Syed Mustafa Tanveer has appealed to citizens to follow traffic rules and cooperate with police in its education campaign for a safe road environment.

## PM orders lowering eatables prices, transport fares to pass on impact of oil prices reduction

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the authorities concerned to ensure that the impact of a reduction in petroleum prices was shifted to the masses in the form of decreased transport fares and prices of eatables. The prime minister, chairing the meeting of the Federal Cabinet, asked the Interior Ministry and the district administrations across the country to ensure the reduction in commodities’ prices. Calling for strict action against the profiteers, he said the transport fares and eatables’

prices should be reduced in proportion to the 11 percent decrease in the petroleum prices announced by the government. Apprising the Federal Cabinet about his visit to Iran on Thursday, the prime minister said Pakistan desired to enhance cooperation with the neighbouring country in multiple sectors. He told the meeting that the two sides had agreed to improve the security along the 900-kilometer Pak-Iran border. Both sides had emphasised the joint efforts to counter cross-border terrorism, he added.

## CDA all set to auction commercial plots in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is all set to auction commercial plots in Blue Area and other developed sectors of the federal capital, beginning on May 29, aiming to generate more revenue for the city and attract investors to participate in the auction. Talking to APP, an official in the authority urged interested investors to participate in the auction, which will take place at the Jinnah Convention Centre in Islamabad. The development is expected to have a significant impact on the commercial estate market in the capital city. He said the auction in various sectors of the Islamabad capital territory would continue till May 31, adding that the authority has already publicized the auction schedule of

various plots in different newspapers. The official said that the real estate experts have announced it as a must-avail investment opportunity for investors nationwide and overseas. The participants investing in the public sale can possess commercial plots with ‘legal protection.’ The details about the commercial plots located in the developed sectors of the federal capital included various centres, agro farms, petrol pumps, E-11 northern strip, Class-III shopping centre, Park Enclave commercial and Blue Area E-11/F-11, Canopy side, he added. The participant, the official said that whoever submits full payment within 30 days of the bid acceptance letter would be offered a 10 percent rebate on the remaining amount.

## Facial Recognition System goes functional at Multan Airport

MULTAN (APP): Facial Recognition System, a technology capable of matching a human face from a digital image or a video frame against a database of faces, has been made functional at Multan International Airport (MIAP). A spokesperson for Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) on Friday said, “After Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore, Multan was the fourth airport where this system has gone operational.” He informed that the system would be of great help to bordering agencies adding that these would check illegal international transportation through the system.

Japan International Cooperation System (JICS) imparted training to Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and Civil Aviation Authority officials at MIAP in this regard, he maintained. “The cooperation between Japanese and Pakistani governments for strengthening the security system at our airports is a continuous process,” the spokesperson concluded. It is worth mentioning here that Facial Recognition System is typically employed to authenticate users through ID verification services, and works by pinpointing and measuring facial features from a given image.

## NDRMF to fund over Rs 3billion for rehab, reconstruction of Flood Schemes in Sindh

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) will fund over Rs3 billion to the Irrigation Department, Government of Sindh, for its project titled Building Resilience of Damaged Flood Mitigation Structures Along River Indus in Sindh Resilience and Adaptive Population in Disaster (RAPID). The funding cost of Rs. 3,011,460,076/- (Rs. three billion eleven million four hundred sixty thousand seventy-six only) would help the provincial government to ensure its rehabilitation and reconstruction of Flood Schemes in Sindh, a news release said. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) NDRMF, Bilal Anwar and Abdullah Bhurgri, Project Director of Flood Emergency and Reconstruction Projects Sindh Irrigation Department signed the contract. On the occasion, they said financial support would be extended to the respective entities as grant financing. However, the Grant Implementation Agreement between NDRMF and the

Irrigation Department, Government of Sindh, was signed in this regard. The Project is designed for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of four schemes that received major damages and losses during the monsoon floods in 2022 in districts Shaheed Benazirabad, Naushero Feroze, Sujawal and Matiari and needed rehabilitation on an urgent basis as any flooding of similar nature may cause damages to life and property. The details of the scheme included Stone Apron and Stone Pitching Along SM Bund from Mile 70/7 to 72/0 in Moro Bund Sub Division, Rehabilitation/ Reconstruction of Stud/Apron along SM Bund at Mile 12/0 to 12/7 and Bakhri Loop Bund Mile 0/0 to 0/1 in Kandiaro Bund Sub Division, Rehabilitation, Raising and Strengthening of Spurs Along Surjani Complex Bund Sujawal of Pinyari Circle Hyderabad Kotri Barrage Region Hyderabad, Recouping of Stone Spurs Mile 142/3 and Stone Studs Mile 136/1 Along S.

## Education World Forum discusses education system challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Education World Forum in London on Friday discussed education system challenges and sustainable solutions with education ministers, experts and civil society members from the world over. Led by the Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Rana Tanveer Hussain, the Pakistani delegation included ministers for education and office-holders from Sindh, Baluchistan and Gilgit Baltistan. Representatives of the British High Commission, Pakistan and British Council, Pakistan accompanied the delegation Titled

‘New Beginnings: Nurturing Learning Culture, Building Resilience, Promoting Sustainability’, the forum was focused on global challenges in education and the lessons learnt from recent disruptions, and sustainable solutions to build resilience in communities, organizations and education systems. Around 140 education ministers from different countries including Pakistan attended the Education World Forum 2023, said a news release issued by the High Commission in Pakistan Federal minister Tanveer Hussain met the UK’s Minister of State for Devel-

opment and Africa Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP, and addressed the plenary session on the importance of balance between compliance and creativity among learners and students. The delegation attended multiple sessions including a session on higher education with Mark Eastwood – UK’s Trade Envoy for Pakistan and Sir Steve Smith – UK Government’s International Education Champion. The delegation also met with Scott McDonald – CEO of the British Council, and Nick Gibbs – UK’s Minister of State (Education).

## Rupee sheds 21 paisas against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee witnessed 21 paisas devaluation against US Dollar (USD) in the inter-bank trading on Friday and closed at Rs 285.82 against the previous day’s closing of Rs 285.61. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of Dollars in the open market were recorded at Rs 297.5 and Rs 300, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by 78 paisas to close at Rs 308.11 against the last day’s closing of Rs. 308.89, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen came down by 01 paisa and closed at Rs 2.06, whereas a decrease of 80 paisas was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 354.76 as compared to its last day’s closing of Rs 355.56. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal went up by 05 paisas and 06 paisas to close at Rs. 77.83 and Rs.76.21, respectively.

## IGP Sindh launches plantation drive in police department

KARACHI (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon on Friday launched a plantation drive in Sindh Police department by planting a sapling at the Central Police Office, Karachi. He also instructed the Deputy IGPs of all ranges and senior superintendents of police (SSPs) of all districts to plant trees to minimize extreme heat waves caused by the affects of climate change, according to spokesman for Sindh Police. IGP Sindh said the need for trees had been there in all eras and their main beneficial effect was protection from severe heat waves, so plant more trees and make the environment pleasant.

## Thalassemia camp held in Bahawalpur

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Civil Society organized a Thalassemia camp at Milad Chowk in Chani Goth area of Bahawalpur district to donate blood for children suffering from Thalassemia disease. According to a press release issued here, medical team comprising doctors and paramedics from Bahawal Victoria Hospital (One of largest civil hospitals of the country) arrived in the camp and collected blood for the children suffering from Thalassemia. The press release concluded that a large number of people donated their blood. A number of children suffering from Thalassemia and anemia diseases have been registered with Thalassemia Center established at BVH Bahawalpur who were provided with blood from the blood bank free of cost.

## Canal breach inundated surrounding areas

FAISALABAD (APP): A 35-feet breach in Barala canal near Kayianwala bungalow inundated the surrounding areas on Friday. The canal water damaged several acres of cultivated land in Chak no 461-GB and 88-GB. The rescue teams including Rescue 1122, irrigation department, local government, civil defense reached the site and started work to fill the breach. According to rescue sources, the width of canal was 100 feet, depth was 12 feet while the flow of water in the canal was about 70000 cusec. The locals and animals were being shifted to a safe place, they said.

## SEF,RDF collaborate to promote environmental education assisted schools

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Education Foundation (SEF) and the Research Development Foundation (RDF) have signed a Letter of Understanding (LoU) to promote environmental education foundation assisted schools at a local hotel here Friday. The LoU was signed between Mukhtiar Ali,Deputy Director Programs at SEF and Ashfaque Ahmad Somroo, Executive Director of RDF, according to a communique on Friday. The main objective of this collaboration is to promote environmental education and establish an avenue of learning in SEF-assisted schools of Tando Allahyar, Sanghar, and Sujawal districts. The SEF, established under the Sindh Education Foundation Act of 1992, is a statutory organization with a mandate to support education in the province through predominantly public-private partnerships. The RDF, a PCP certified non-profit and non-governmental organization for action research and

community development, is registered under the Societies Act XXI of 1860. It focuses on quality education, children’s wellbeing, sustainable livelihoods, and climate change in Sindh, Pakistan. The LoU, effective for a period of three years, aims to promote environmental education through a robust learning framework and the Green school Concept. The project will focus on the education and empowerment of teachers and students. It will involve various activities, including the establishment of Youth Clubs, encouraging discourse on environmental issues, dissemination of information material in the local language for Green Projects, and capacity building of teachers. It will also pilot Green spaces with effective underground irrigation in schools, install LED lights and solar systems, provide adequate sanitation facilities, and promote waste management through the provision of waste bins.

## World Bee Day to be marked today

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Bee Day will be marked on May 20 (Saturday) across the globe including Pakistan under the theme “Bee engaged in pollinator-friendly agricultural production”, world Bee Day 2023 calls for global action to support pollinator-friendly agricultural production and highlights the importance of protecting bees and other pollinators, particularly through evidence-based agricultural production practices. Bees and other pollinators are fundamental for the health of ecosystems and food security. They help maintain biodiversity and ensure the production of nutritious food. How-

ever, intensive monoculture production and improper use of pesticides pose serious threats to pollinators by reducing their access to food and nesting sites, exposing them to harmful chemicals, and weakening their immune systems. The global World Bee Day ceremony, which will be held in hybrid format at the FAO headquarters on Friday, 19 May, will be an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of adopting pollinator-friendly agricultural production practices to protect bees and other pollinators, while contributing to the resilience, sustainability and efficiency of agrofood system.

## HSSC annual exams 2023 to start on May 20

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Board of Intermediate and Secondary education (RBISE) has finalized all the arrangements for Higher Secondary school Certificate (HSSC) annual exams 2023 which would start in Rawalpindi division on May 20, Saturday. According to Chairman RBISE, Muhammad Adnan Khan, foolproof arrangements have been made for the HSSC annual exams. Controller Examinations RBISE Prof. Sajid Mehmood Farooqi informed that the roll number slips of regular students had already been sent to the concerned institutions and those of the private students were uploaded on the board’s website /http://www.biserawalpindi.edu.pk besides dispatched at the addresses mentioned in their ad-

mission forms. He informed that the board on the directives of Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chatha, had made best possible arrangements for the exams. The date sheets of the exams, lists of the examiners and the examination centers and other officials had been sent to all the Deputy Commissioners of the division, District Police Officers and to the special branch. Apart from the board’s office at Morgah near Attock Oil Refinery Rawalpindi, the students could also contact at phone number 051-5450917-18, Assistant Controller Inter Branch Rana Ilyas on cell phone 0333-5464775, focal person Inter Branch, Riasat Abbasi on 0332-8500846 and 051-5450920 in case of any problem, he added.

## US companies’ successful ventures affirms Pakistan’s great business potential: Masood Khan

WASHINGTON (APP): Pakistan Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, has urged American investors to take advantage of a growing Pakistani market of 240 million and also use the country’s strategic location for serving huge markets of Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, “An enterprising middle class and the growing needs of a developing economy have created big opportunities for the business community to establish as well as expand their businesses and to reap dividends by fulfilling the existing unmet demand,” he said during a meeting with senior executives of PepsiCo at the Pakistani embassy on Thursday, according to a press release. PepsiCo senior directors -- Moham-

mad Khosa and Caroline Berson -- while noting the success of their company in Pakistan in beverages and food sectors, said that the country was serving as an export hub for its manufactured products to regional countries like Afghanistan. The finished food products, made in Pakistan, were also being exported to Qatar, Malaysia, and the Philippines, they said. Khosa informed the ambassador that PepsiCo was making a yearly investment of \$ 80-90 million in Pakistan, adding that it would be enhanced and diversified. Ambassador Khan said that there was a need for better coordination among stakeholders to showcase the success stories of the business community in the two countries.



## Electric trucks pick up speed despite bumpy road

GOTHENBURG (Agencies): Using a motorised arm, a worker at Volvo's factory near Gothenburg slowly guides massive black blocks alongside a chassis, the three tonnes of batteries soon to power an electric truck. "This is where the difference lies," explains Sandra Finer, vice president of operations at the Swedish site. On the assembly line, "we use the same people, the same equipment and the same process,



(but)... when we build the electric truck we dock the electric module instead of an engine for the diesel trucks." Electric heavy trucks

are now mass-produced in Europe, North America and China and have been rolled out faster than expected – though it will still be a while before they overtake polluting diesel trucks in number. "It is a really exciting moment we're living in regarding electric trucks," Felipe Rodriguez, an independent expert at the analysis group International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT), told AFP.

## OpenAI to introduce ChatGPT app for iOS

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): OpenAI, the company behind the ChatGPT chatbot, said on Thursday it is introducing the ChatGPT app for Apple's iOS. The ChatGPT app is free to use and would sync history across devices, OpenAI said. "ChatGPT Plus subscribers get exclusive access to GPT-4's capabilities, early access to features and faster response times, all on iOS," the company added. GPT-4 is a pow-



erful artificial intelligence model that succeeds the technology behind the wildly popular ChatGPT. Earlier in February, OpenAI launched a pi-

lot subscription plan for its popular AI-powered chatbot, called ChatGPT Plus, for US\$20 per month. The company said it was starting the roll-out for iOS in the US and will expand to additional countries in the coming weeks. The public battle to dominate the AI technology space kicked off late last year with the launch of ChatGPT and prompted tech heavyweights from Alphabet Inc to Meta to trumpet their own offerings.

## Hyundai, Kia agree to US\$200mil settlement over US car thefts

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Hyundai Motor and Kia Corp agreed to a consumer class-action lawsuit settlement worth US\$200 million over rampant car thefts of the Korean automakers' vehicles, lawyers for the owners and the automakers said on Thursday. In February, the Korean automakers said they would offer software upgrades to 8.3 million US vehicles without anti-theft immobilisers to



help curb increasing car thefts using a method popularised on TikTok and other social media channels. The

settlement covers about 9 million US owners and includes up to US\$145 million for out-of-pocket losses for consumers who had cars stolen, lawyers for the owners said. Hyundai and Kia said they will compensate owners "who incurred theft-related vehicle losses or damage in addition to reimbursement for insurance deductibles, increased insurance premiums, and other theft related losses."

## Disney cancels plans for US\$1bil campus, 2,000 jobs in Florida

LOS ANGELES (Agencies): Walt Disney Co is scrapping plans to build a nearly US\$1 billion corporate campus in central Florida that would have housed 2,000 employees, according to an e-mail to employees on Thursday, against the backdrop of its ongoing legal battle with Florida governor Ron DeSantis. Disney parks chief Josh D'Amaro said "changing business conditions" prompted Disney to reconsid-



er its 2021 plan to relocate employees, including its Imagineers who design theme park rides, to a new campus in Lake Nona. The company was ex-

pected to spend as much as US\$864 million on the project, according to the Orlando Sentinel, on a campus that would have served as a base for Walt Disney Imagineering and the Disney Parks, Experiences and Products division. Disney's decision to move the California-based Imagineering staffers across the country drew complaints from employees, many of whom said they did not want to move to Florida.

## UK sanctions target Russia's theft of Ukrainian grain

LONDON (Agencies): Britain announced a new wave of sanctions against Russia on Friday, targeting companies connected to the theft of Ukrainian grain and those involved in the shipment of Russian energy. Along with the US, Britain and the rest of the Group of Seven major economies are set to unveil sanctions and export controls targeting Russia over its war against Ukraine, at the G7 summit in Japan



this weekend. Britain said in a statement that it was sanctioning 86 individuals and entities as part of a new crackdown on what it called "shady individuals and entities" connected

to the theft and resale of Ukrainian grain. The sanctions would also target Russia's major energy and arms shipping companies, including those connected to Russia's state-owned nuclear energy company Rosatom, and the owner of the Russian Copper Company, Igor Altushkin. The designations came after Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced new import bans on Russian diamonds and copper, aluminium and nickel.

## Twitter claims Microsoft misuses data for AI training

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): Twitter on Thursday accused Microsoft of breaking the social network's rules for developers who access the platform's data, according to a copy of a letter seen by AFP. "Microsoft may have been in violation of multiple provisions of the Agreement for an extended period of time," read the letter signed by Musk attorney Alex Spiro and sent to Microsoft chief executive Satya Nadella. Microsoft stopped accessing Twitter



data in April, opting not to pay fees Musk demanded developers pay for APIs (application programming interfaces) that engage with the platform, according to the letter. Twitter

called on Microsoft to identify all Twitter content that has been in its control during the past two years; how it is stored and what has been done with it, according to the letter sent to Nadella. Microsoft confirmed receiving a letter from a law firm representing Twitter with some questions about its previous use of the free Twitter API. "We will review these questions and respond appropriately," a Microsoft spokesperson said in response to an AFP inquiry.

## UK unveils £1bil semiconductor strategy

LONDON (Agencies): The British government on Friday unveiled a new £1 billion semiconductor strategy to invest in infrastructure, research and security as the UK tries to diversify its chip supply chain. The plan would "safeguard supply chains from disruption and protect tech against national security risks", the UK government's department for business, energy and industrial strategy said in a statement. The in-



vestment over the next decade would include up to £200 million (US\$215 million) between now and 2025. The new 20-year strategy would "boost

the UK's strengths and skills in design, R&D and compound semiconductors while helping to grow domestic chip firms across the UK", the department added. It comes as European carmaker Stellantis has warned it could close some UK factories should the British government fail to tweak Brexit trade rules to ease the supply of batteries for electric vehicles, for which semiconductor technology is a key part.

## Dollar buoyed by hawkish Fed expectations

SINGAPORE (Agencies): The dollar firmed to near a six-month peak against the yen on Friday on the back of rising US Treasury yields, as optimism over debt ceiling talks in Washington raised expectations of higher-for-longer interest rates. President Joe Biden and top US congressional Republican Kevin McCarthy earlier this week underscored their determination to strike a deal soon to raise

the government's US\$31.4 trillion debt ceiling, with hopes of finalising a deal after Biden returns from the Group of Seven meeting in Japan on Sunday. The news helped calm fears of an unprecedented and economically catastrophic American debt default, leading markets to revise their expectations of where US interest rates could go. At the same time, data pointing to a still-tight labour market,

with the number of Americans filing new claims for unemployment benefits falling more than expected last week, also reinforced expectations that the Federal Reserve could deliver another rate hike next month in a bid to tame inflation. Two Fed policymakers also said on Thursday that US inflation does not look like it is cooling fast enough to allow the Fed to pause its interest-rate hike campaign.

## UK's £1bil chip support plan gets cool response

LONDON (Agencies): Britain will invest £1 billion (US\$1.3 billion) in its semiconductor sector over the next decade as part of a long-awaited strategy that was immediately criticised by the industry for being too little to make a difference. Chipmakers around the world have poured billions of dollars into the sector in recent years, with the US and Europe backing the development of new plants after the Covid-19 pandemic showed the risk of relying on Taiwan and China. Britain's plan, which has been in the works for around two years, is dwarfed by the US\$52.7 billion of US chip subsidies and €43



billion (US\$47 billion) of proposed EU investment. But it focuses on the area where Britain excels, the design of semiconductors, used in everything from cars to smartphones and washing machines. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said it would help Britain build a "competitive edge on the global stage".

## Adani foreign links probe 'draws a blank'

MUMBAI (Agencies): India's markets watchdog has "drawn a blank" in investigations into suspected violations by overseas entities allegedly linked to the Adani group, said a court-appointed panel after a short-seller report in January sank Adani stocks. The coal-to-airports conglomerate controlled by billionaire Gautam Adani lost more than US\$100 billion in market value earlier this year after US-based Hindenburg Research raised several governance concerns. The group has denied wrongdoing. Following this, the Supreme Court asked SEBI to

probe some of the allegations made and submit its findings to a panel formed in March. "The foundation of SEBI's (Securities and Exchange Board of India's) suspicion that led to investigations into the overseas entities' ownership is that they have 'opaque' structures," said the panel in a report dated May 6 and seen by Reuters on Friday. "The ultimate chain of ownership above the 13 overseas entities is not clear." But despite involving various Indian and overseas agencies in the investigation across multiple countries, "SEBI has drawn a blank", the report said.

## Debt default could trigger recession, warn Harris and Brainard

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Vice-president Kamala Harris and top White House economic adviser Lael Brainard said on Thursday that a default on the US debt of US\$31.4 trillion would throw the American economy into a recession. In a conference call for Democratic activists, Harris and Brainard urged them to contact lawmakers to express opposition to a debt default that could be less than two weeks away. Harris used the call to keep the focus on the looming default as President Joe Biden spends the next few days in Japan attending

a Group of Seven summit of world leaders. "A debt default could trigger a recession," she said. Negotiators for the White House and congressional Republicans met again on Capitol Hill to discuss their search for common ground on lifting the US\$31.4 trillion debt ceiling, and plan to meet again today, a White House official said. US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said lawmakers from his chamber should be ready to return to Washington on 24 hours' notice from their recess next week in case they are needed for a vote.

## TikTok users file lawsuit to block Montana ban

HELENA (Agencies): Five TikTok users in Montana who create content posted on the short-video app filed a lawsuit in federal court seeking to block the state's new ban on the Chinese-owned platform. Montana governor Greg Gianforte on Wednesday signed legislation to ban TikTok in the state, effective Jan 1. The five users seek to block the law, which makes it unlawful for the app stores of Alphabet Inc's Google and Apple Inc to offer TikTok within the state. The lawsuit, filed in US district court in Montana late on Wednesday,

names the state's attorney-general, Austin Knudsen, who is charged with enforcing the law. The TikTok users argue the state seeks to "exercise powers over national security that Montana does not have and to ban speech Montana may not suppress." The suit said users believe the law violates their First Amendment rights. "Montana can no more ban its residents from viewing or posting to TikTok than it could ban the Wall Street Journal because of who owns it or the ideas it publishes," the lawsuit said.

## US, Taiwan agree on first part of '21st Century' trade pact

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The US and Taiwan reached agreement on the first part of their '21st Century' trade initiative, covering customs and border procedures, regulatory practices and small business, the US trade representative's office said on Thursday. After the initial agreement of the US-Taiwan Initiative on 21st Century Trade is signed, negotiations will commence on other, more complicated trade areas including agriculture, digital trade, labour and environmental standards, state-owned enterprises, and non-market policies and practices, USTR said. US trade representative Katherine Tai said in a statement that the deal

strengthens US-Taiwan relations and demonstrates they can work together to advance trade priorities for their populations. "We look forward to continuing these negotiations and finalising a robust and high-standard trade agreement that tackles 21st Century economic challenges," Tai said. US trade representative Katherine Tai said in a statement that the deal strengthens US-Taiwan relations and demonstrates they can work together to advance trade priorities for their populations. "We look forward to continuing these negotiations and finalising a robust and high-standard trade agreement that tackles 21st Century economic challenges," Tai said.

## India's credit card tax raises overseas travel costs

NEW DELHI (Agencies): India has decided to levy a higher tax on international card spends from July as the government aims to clampdown on the under-reporting of income by the rich, potentially making overseas travel costlier. Foreign currency payments made through credit cards will attract a 20% tax collected at source from 5% earlier, according to a notification from the ministry of finance. The amount collected at source can be claimed by individuals as refunds after filing income tax returns for the year. Many citizens took to social media to seek clarity on how their international travel budgets would be impacted by this move and criticize the hassle of extra paperwork while claiming refunds for

the tax deducted. The new amendment brings such international payments under the Liberalized Remittance Scheme or LRS, which allows all resident individuals to freely transact up to US\$250,000 per financial year. "Instances have come to notice where the LRS payments are disproportionately high when compared to the disclosed incomes," the ministry said in a statement. The move is part of the government's efforts to strengthen the tax collection system in the world's most populous nation and it will bring the levies on credit cards at par with those on overseas usage of debit cards, forex cards and bank transfers. Education and medical expenses will continue to be taxed at 5%.



Newcastle on brink of Champions League after beating Brighton

London (Agencies): Callum Wilson scored late on and then laid on another goal as Newcastle won 4-1 at home to Brighton on Thursday to move within sight of Champions League qualification. Kieran Trippier's dead-ball skills paved the way for Newcastle to go 2-0 up before half-time at St James' Park, his crosses leading to an own-goal from Deniz Undav and a headed goal by Dan Burn. Undav, however, pulled a goal back for Brighton early in the second half. But with the Seagulls pushing for an equaliser,



Wilson scored on the counter-attack a minute from full-time before setting up Bruno Guimaraes as the Magpies made it 4-1. Victory left Newcastle

third in the Premier League table and needing just one win from their remaining two league games this season, at home to Leicester on Monday and away to Chelsea, to secure a place among Europe's elite. And they will be assured of a top-four finish without having to kick a ball if Liverpool lose to Aston Villa on Saturday. Brighton remained sixth despite this defeat and still in contention for Europa League football next season. "I think we were excellent in the first half," Newcastle manager Eddie Howe told the BBC.

Rubio takes maiden win in shortened Giro stage 13

Crans Montana, Switzerland (AFP/APP): Colombian Einer Rubio came through in the final kilometre to overtake Thibault Pinot and Jefferson Cepeda and claim a maiden grand tour win in a shortened stage 13 of the Giro d'Italia on Friday. The Movistar rider, who was part of an early breakaway, was dropped multiple times on the final climb but dug deep and then found a late burst to snap the tape six seconds in front of Pinot. Cepeda came in another six seconds behind with the leader's group rolling in 1 min 35 sec behind



Rubio. British rider Geraint Thomas finished ninth to keep the leader's pink jersey for a fifth day, two seconds ahead of Slovenian Primož Roglič. "Fi-

nally, my big day," said the 25-year-old Rubio at the finish. "I was looking for it and I've worked really hard for this. I really wanted to prepare for this Giro. "I've struggled in the bad weather but I knew that I didn't have to give up. "I wanted to keep looking for my own opportunities and thanks to God and everyone who helps me, my dream came true today." Rubio admitted that he had allowed Pinot and Cepeda to wear each other down as they bickered at the front of the breakaway, apparently ignoring the threat of the Colombian.

AZ slam supporters who attacked West Ham fans

ALKMAAR (AFP/APP): The coach and players of Dutch club AZ Alkmaar condemned sections of their own support who attacked family and friends of the West Ham United squad celebrating its success in today's Europa Conference League semifinal. Home supporters broke through a fence and attacked the West Ham contingent seated in a reserved section behind their own team's dugout at the AZ Stadium. A brawl ensued in which West Ham players, including captain Declan Rice, attempted



to intervene, with several running to the aid of relatives. "It's annoying, it doesn't belong in our stadium. Preferably in no stadium," said coach Pascal Jansen, whose side lost 1-0

today as West Ham completed a 3-1 aggregate triumph to reach the final against Fiorentina in Prague on June 7. "I feel shame. You have to control your emotions, even on a night with a defeat." Defender Pantelis Hatzidiakos was among several AZ players who spoke out against the violence in post-match interviews. "I think it's sad what happened. My family was up there. I have been in contact with them and my girlfriend said they were shaking," he told Dutch television.

Swiatek retires from Rome quarterfinal due to thigh issue

ROME (AFP/APP): Iga Swiatek said she was taking no chances with her fitness ahead of her French Open title defence later this month after the world No 1 retired from her Italian Open quarterfinal due to a thigh issue. Top seed and two-time defending champion in Rome, Swiatek was tied 2-2 with Elena Rybakina in the deciding set on Wednesday when she

decided she could not continue. The Pole had attempted to carry on playing with her leg strapped up after a medical timeout but said she felt pain while stretching on court. "For me, the most important thing is to kind of play it safe and not exploit my body so much in such a difficult conditions, after having to play few matches in night session and after midnight," Swiatek

said in a statement on Thursday. "To be ready for Roland Garros I need to recover right now. I'm going to take a couple of days off. With my quarterfinal loss, I have also time to then practice right before the tournament. "I'm happy right now to have few days off because since Stuttgart I wasn't really able to recover with that tight schedule that we have on the WTA."

Legendary Cleveland Browns running back Jim Brown dies at 87

Los Angeles (AFP/APP): Jim Brown, the legendary Cleveland Browns running back who was one of the NFL's most prolific players and a civil rights icon has died at the age of 87, his family and the team confirmed on Friday. Brown's wife, Monique, had announced on Instagram that Brown "passed peacefully" on Thursday night at their home in Los Angeles. "To the world he was an activist, actor, and football star," said the post, which did not disclose a precise cause of death. "To our family he was a loving and wonderful husband, father, and grandfather. Our hearts are broken..." Browns owners Jimmy and Dee Haslem issued a statement calling Brown "a true icon of not just the Cleveland Browns but the entire NFL. "He was certainly the greatest to ever put on a Browns uniform and



arguably one of the greatest players in NFL history," the Haslems said. Brown, who was named the greatest football player ever by the Sporting News in 2002, was taken in the first round of the 1957 draft and played for the Browns from 1957-65. He led the NFL in rushing eight of those seasons and finished his career with 12,312 rushing yards and 5.2 carries per game. He was named to the Pro Bowl every season he played and led Cleveland to the NFL championship game three times, winning the title in 1964.

Scheffler, Hovland charge at PGA as DeChambeau tees off

Rochester, United States (AFP/APP): Second-ranked Scottie Scheffler and Norway's Viktor Hovland made birdie-birdie starts to leap atop the leaderboard as Bryson DeChambeau teed off in Friday's second round of the PGA Championship. Scheffler, last year's Masters winner, dropped his approach inches from the hole at the first and sank a nine-foot birdie putt at the second to seize the lead at Oak Hill on five-under par after four holes. Fellow American DeChambeau, the 2020 US Open champion who has made the break to the Saudi-backed LIV golf circuit, fired a four-under par 66 in Thursday's opening round to grab the 18-hole lead but was among the last to begin his second round on the formidable layout in windy and rainy conditions. World number 11 Hovland, seeking his first major title, made birdie putts from just outside 10 feet at the first and just inside 20 feet at the second to match DeChambeau on four-under before falling back with a bogey at the third. Canada's Corey Connors was also on three-under, one stroke ahead of 2011 PGA Championship winner Keegan Bradley with England's Justin Rose and Canada's Taylor Pendrith in the clubhouse on one-under 139 for 36 holes. "Best putting day I've had in a long time," Pendrith said of shooting



opened with a 76, made a six-foot birdie putt at the second to reach five-over, right on the projected cut line. Reigning US Open champion Matthew Fitzpatrick of England, who also opened on 76, was just over the expected cut line. Four-time major winner Rory McIlroy, chasing his first major victory since 2014, shot a first-round 71 and began his second round with three pars. Jordan Spieth, a three-time major winner trying to complete a career Grand Slam by winning this week, made a four-foot birdie putt at the second to stand on two-over for the tournament. The American is battling a left wrist injury. Cameron Smith, the reigning British Open champion, fired a 72 Thursday and sank a 20-foot birdie putt at the second to stand one-over overall.

Haney puts undisputed lightweight title on line against Lomachenko

LOS ANGELES (Agencies): Unbeaten Devin Haney puts his undisputed lightweight world title on the line against former three-division Vasilii Lomachenko of Ukraine on Saturday in Las Vegas. It's a bout the 24-year-old American champion believes is overdue, and now he says he has the tools to make even this tough test look easy. "I feel like he should have fought me four years ago," Haney said this week. "But now the time has come. "It's going to be worse for him than it would have been had we fought back then," he added. "On paper, this is my toughest test. But I look to make it an easy night. I look to make it as easy as possible and come out victorious." Four years ago Lomachenko was a lightweight world champion and seen by many as the best pound-for-pound fighter in boxing. Now the 29-0 Haney, with 15 knockouts, holds the World Boxing Association, World Boxing Council, International Boxing Fed-



eration and World Boxing Organization belts. He became the first undisputed lightweight world champion since Pernell Whitaker in 1990 with a lopsided decision over George Kambosos in Melbourne in June 2022. He battered Kambosos with his thunderous right hand in the rematch last October on the way to another unanimous decision victory. Lomachenko, whose camp wanted him to fight Kambosos, instead spent time away from the ring after enrolling in a territorial defense unit for Ukraine after the invasion of the country by Russia.

Egypt and Oman to meet in Arab Beach Football Championship final

RIYADH (AFP/APP): Egypt and Oman have qualified to the 2023 Arab Beach Football Championship final on Saturday. A brace from Al-Husseini Ali and goals from Mustafa Shaaban and Hassan Hussein helped the Egyptians edge past Palestine with a 4-3 victory. The Omanis booked their place in the final with a 4-2 win over Morocco. Yahya Al-Mreiki, Sami Al-Blushi, Abdullah Al-Souti were on the scoresheet for the Gulf side. The competition,



which began on May 11, has been organized by the Arab Football Association and hosted by the Saudi Arabian Football Federation in Jeddah, and ends on May 20.

Malaysia down Denmark to reach Sudirman Cup semis

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP/APP): The national shuttlers continued to thrill fans after defeating Denmark 3-1 to qualify for the semifinals of the Sudirman Cup mixed team championships in Suzhou, China, today. The Malaysians, who put on a gutsy display, also enjoyed some good fortune when men's world No 1 Viktor Axelsen had to concede due to an injury. Malaysia, who are facing Denmark for the first time in the prestigious tournament, began in style when Orleans Masters mixed doubles champions Chen Tang Jie and Toh Ee Wei fought back from a first game loss to overcome Mathias Christiansen and Alexandra Boje 15-21, 21-14, 21-7. The men's singles clash between Lee Zii Jia and Axelsen was expected to be a thrilling affair but it ended tamely when the Dane had to



withdraw after suffering an injury early in the game. With Malaysia leading 2-0, it was left to women's singles ace Goh Jin Wei to deliver the winning point but she went down 14-21, 21-15, 19-21 to Mia Blichfeldt in a titanic one hour and nine minute clash in the third match. Undaunted, the national team went on to clinch the winning point through world men's doubles champions Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik, who defeated Kim Astrup and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen 21-17, 21-16.

DAILY HOROSCOPE: MAY 20, 2023



- It's a general reading which may differ from person to person because of time date and year.  
- **ARIES**: It's a great time for you to try a new mode of transportation or simply a new way of getting things done. You can move a lot faster without sacrificing quality or anything else  
- **TAURUS**: You may throw more money than you can afford at something that immediately seems not worth it. Sometimes you need to give in to your impulses so you can remember what it's like!  
- **GEMINI**: Your great energy is perfect for generating new ideas, especially with friends and family involved. You may find that your pace slows a bit by evening, but that might be for the best!  
- **CANCER**: You're feeling a little crazy today, but in a good way. It's one of those days when it's just more fun to get wild and play around with people's minds than meet their expectations.  
- **LEO**: Try to make sure that everyone is working together. There's plenty to do, and if everyone does their part,

you'll find that it all goes smoothly. Your leadership can make it all come together.  
- **VIRGO**: You should try to focus on the small stuff today. It's more important than anyone else realizes! Check on the tasks that need attention and get help from others if you need it.  
- **LIBRA**: Someone needs to hear from the real you, not just the day-to-day persona you wear. It's easier for you than ever right now thanks to the energy in your social and emotional centers.  
- **SCORPIO**: Financial issues are on your mind now, and you might need to take responsibility for other people's money, maybe that of your kids, parents, or people you don't know all that well!  
- **SAGITTARIUS**: Even if your schedule seems full enough as it is, don't be shy about adding new activities. You need to stay as busy as possible. Your ability to multitask should certainly come in handy.  
- **CAPRICORN**: Step up and help someone who needs it: friend, kid, or total stranger. You've got time and energy to spare, and the karma you earn from your actions should come in handy later.  
- **ACQUARIUS**: A unique opportunity comes your way, and you should definitely jump on it! You may find that it's easier to go it alone, but friends and family won't hold you back too much.  
- **PISCES**: Something you were absolutely sure about turns out to be a lie or at least a pipe dream. That could be a good thing, because you now have the mental space and freedom to think even bigger!



## Taiwan could pay ‘unthinkable’ price for US weapons – ex-defense chief

A former Taipei official urges caution over the Pentagon’s plan to give “significant security assistance” free of charge Taiwanese soldiers demonstrate their combat skills during a visit by Taiwan’s President Tsai Ing-wen at a military base in Chiayi. Taiwan could face dire ramifications if it accepts free weapons from the US amid a stand-off with Beijing, a former defense minister of the self-governing island warned on Thursday. Speaking to reporters, Feng Shih-kuan, who served as Taiwan’s defense minister from 2016 to 2018, was asked to comment on a statement by US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, who confirmed this week that Washington would “soon provide significant additional security assistance to Taiwan” as part of the same emergency pro-



gram used to support Ukraine in its conflict with Russia. “If you suddenly receive such free aid, you need to pay a certain unthinkable price,” the ex-minister said, without elaborating. When pressed to explain whether he meant war between Taiwan and Beijing, Feng said he believed “we would not be that stupid, and that there should be some choices.” On Monday, Taiwan’s Defense Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng stated that the island was negotiating with the Pentagon on receiving weapons worth

\$500 million, which would be free of charge and “not deducted from the purchase list which has been delayed by the US”. He also clarified that the arms package would “include missiles and some logistic services to help train our soldiers.” Meanwhile, an unnamed Taiwanese military source told the South China Morning Post that the US military aid would include Stinger portable air defense systems, TOW 2B Aero and Javelin anti-tank missiles. In addition to this, in recent years Washington has signed a number of weapons deals with Taipei, including a 2019 agreement worth \$8 billion to provide the self-governing island with 66 F-16V fighters, which was delayed due to supply chain disruptions, according to Taiwan’s defense ministry.

## Pentagon made \$3 billion ‘error’ in Ukraine aid – Reuters

Officials told the news agency that accounting confusion meant the value of stockpiles sent to Kiev has been “overestimated”. The US Department of Defense has discovered an accounting error that could result in more weapons, ammunition and equipment being available for Ukraine than was previously expected, Reuters reported on Thursday. The agency cited a Senate aide and a Pentagon official – both anonymous – who said that the US military had “overestimated the value” of some of its hardware that was sent to Kiev by “around \$3 billion,” implying that less money has been spent on arming Ukraine than was previously calculated. The Pentagon used the current replacement costs for



equipment taken from its stocks, rather than factoring in the original purchase price and depreciation, according to the agency’s source. The DOD is reportedly taking steps to notify Congress of the “accounting adjustment.” Senator Roger Wicker, the ranking Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, told Reuters that the Pentagon made a “major mistake” that could underestimate future needs of NATO allies.

## LA strippers to unionize

Topless dancers at a bar in North Hollywood will be represented by the Actors’ Equity Association. Exotic dancers at a bar in Los Angeles are set to become the only unionized strippers in the United States, after their employer at the Star Garden Topless Dive Bar in North Hollywood agreed to recognize their organization this week, following a protracted 15-month battle. The drive to unionize the dancers, which comes following months of late-night picketing outside the LA venue, is expected to be formalized in a Thursday vote. It marks the first time in the century-old history of the Actors’ Equity Association that it will represent strip club workers, after predominantly protecting the employment rights of singers, dancers and Broadway performers

in the past. “The sacrifices we made were definitely sacrifices, but it was for something bigger than us,” said Charlie, a 23-year-old Star Garden exotic dancer who had been demonstrating outside the venue for much of the past eight months, according to the Guardian on Thursday. She explained that she was fighting for “a future where unionization exists for strippers who want it. That’s bigger than struggling to pay rent.” The campaign to arrange collective bargaining on behalf of the Star Garden dancers began in March 2022 after some complained to management of unsafe working conditions. It was also alleged that some strippers had their employment terminated after they highlighted improper behavior from customers.

## Twitter blocks official Turkish accounts ahead of election

Wikipedia’s founder Jimmy Wales yesterday slammed Twitter over its recent decision to block certain Turkish content a day before the country’s presidential election. Wales told BBC that his organisation has been banned in Türkiye for almost three years after it refused to delete articles that criticised the government. He stressed that the tech sector must collaborate in defending free access to information. Twitter’s owner Elon Musk recently said that the Turkish authorities had threatened to ban the platform, noting that a Turkish court ordered the ban of four accounts and deletion of 409 tweets, which Twitter banned for users in Türkiye but kept avail-

able outside of the country. Twitter said that it would continue to challenge the ban in courts. Wales criticised Twitter’s actions on the grounds that it would set a bad precedent for other companies to give in to similar demands in the future, according to BBC. “I think people in the industry should really stand up and vigorously say no – actually an open internet, a free internet, the free sharing of ideas and knowledge is really crucially important,” Wales said. In 2014, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan banned Twitter and vowed to “wipe out” the platform after corruption allegations about his administration were shared on it.

## Wildfire ravages 3,700 acres in western Spain, 550 people evacuated

MADRID (Agencies): A wildfire in the western Spanish region of Extremadura has ravaged up to 3,700 acres and forced 550 people from their homes with windy weather complicating efforts to bring it under control, emergency services said on Friday. “The are very strong gusts of wind generating a speed and progress that make efforts to extinguish it difficult,” a commander of the Military Emergency Unit, David Barona, told state TV channel 24H. “The smoke plume is spreading at a low altitude making it difficult for air assets to access the area.” Up to 250 firefighters are fighting the blaze in an area called Pinofranqueado, in Caceres province, near the border with Portugal. Authorities have ordered the evacuation of as many as 550 people in the villages of Cadalso, Descargamaria and Robledillo



de Gata. Authorities believe the fire was started deliberately. “It’s a very large attack on vegetation and the area,” the head of Extremadura emergency services Nieves Villar told reporters. An unusually dry winter across parts of southern Eu-

## Zelensky to attend Arab League summit – media

The visit as planned brings Ukraine’s leader together with Syrian President Bashar Assad, a key Russian ally in the Middle East FILE PHOTO. The gathering in Jeddah will also feature another high-profile guest, Syrian President Bashar Assad, whose nation’s membership in the 22-strong organization was recently reinstated after a 12-year suspension. The Syrian leader arrived in Saudi Arabia on Thursday, while the Ukrainian head of state is reportedly scheduled to fly in later in the day. Geopolitically, the two politicians can be no further apart. Zelensky is supported by the US and its allies as his nation fights a war against Russia. Assad’s government asked for and received Moscow’s military aid against jihadist forces that rose in his country after a Western-backed opposition attempt to oust him. Saudi Arabia has been



working with Russia in managing the global oil supply through production quotas under the OPEC+ mechanism. Riyadh also played a role as a mediator to facilitate an exchange of prisoners between Russia and Ukraine. Meanwhile the US, a long-time supplier of arms to the Arab kingdom, has pushed other nations to slap economic sanctions on Russian international trade. G7 members have introduced a price cap on Russian crude, which they try to enforce by applying pressure on maritime insurance companies and financial institutions.

## Africa to send six presidents to Moscow and Kiev

The leaders will go to Russia and Ukraine hoping to create conditions for peace negotiations, South Africa’s Foreign Ministry said. South Africa’s foreign ministry has announced that six African presidents are soon expected to jointly travel to Moscow and Kiev in hopes of facilitating negotiations between the two countries. Details of the endeavor are still being finalized but their mission could take place in early June, Bloomberg reported. “The six heads of state will be shuttling between the two capitals to engage in the facilitating of peace talks, to at least get toward a cease-fire,” said Department of International Relations and Cooperation Director-General Zane Dangor. In a virtual meeting with lawmakers on Wednesday, Dangor stated that the initiative has already been shared with the UN secretary-general, who is supporting it. “We have also engaged with other actors, including the US. There is general support for this initiative that President Ramaphosa announced,” he said. Dangor also noted that Naledi Pandor, South Africa’s foreign minister, will meet her Ukrainian counterpart in Portugal in the coming days to discuss the African initiative. The official’s statement comes after South African President Cyril Ramaphosa announced on Tuesday that the leaders of Egypt, Uganda, Zambia, Senegal and the Republic of the Congo had expressed their willingness to take part in the peace initiative and that Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian leader Vladimir Zelensky had agreed to host the mission. South Africa – a member of the BRICS group along with Brazil, Russia, India and China – is among the countries that have refused to take part in the US-led campaign to sanction Moscow over the ongoing situation in Ukraine. Ramaphosa has repeatedly stressed that his country has a tradition of non-alignment and insisted that South Africa “has not been, and will not be, drawn into a contest between global powers.” Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has stated that Moscow is prepared to consider proposals put forth by African and Latin American nations.

## Indian police told to lose weight or quit



The weight-loss directive comes amid an official drive to “cut the deadwood out of the police force”. A police official in the Indian state of Assam has told overweight police officers that their body mass index (BMI) is to be “professionally recorded” from mid-August and that officers in the “obese” category must reduce their BMI before November or retire from the force. “We plan to give three months’ time to all Assam police personnel [before tests begin],” read a Tuesday tweet from GP Singh, director-general of Assam’s police force. “All those who are in the obese range (BMI 30+) category would be offered another three months’ time to reduce weight.” Singh indicated that he would be the first officer to have his BMI measured and that any colleagues who have legitimate medical ailments such as hyperthyroidism will be exempt from the measures. This follows a statement in recent weeks made by Assam’s chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, that approximately 300 police officers deemed to be “habitual drinkers” and “physically unfit” would be asked to take early retirement, amid what he said was a drive to “cut the deadwood out of the police force.”

## Concern over rising disappearance of refugee children in Europe



A new report by the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor (Euro-Med Monitor) has revealed a significant disparity in the treatment of unaccompanied minors of asylum seekers compared to the accompanied ones in Europe. This included depriving the unaccompanied minors of legal protections, detaining them, and the insufficiency of services provided to them in several European countries. On Thursday, the Euro-Med Monitor released a comprehensive report titled “Happiness, Love and Understanding: The Protection of Unaccompanied Minors in the 27 EU Member States.” A copy of this report was forwarded to the Arabi21 website, and it highlighted various shortcomings in reception procedures and protection offered to unaccompanied minor asylum seekers across the 27 member states of the European Union (EU). The report evaluates the policies and practices of each European country to shed light on the condition of human rights for minor asylum seekers in the states under international human rights law and European law. The report revealed that there is often a significant difference in treatment between accompanied and unaccompanied minors. Accompanied minors enjoy, in a fully supportive family environment, more safety guarantees provided by the state than their unaccompanied counterparts. In Malta, for instance, the detention of unaccompanied asylum-seeker children is frequent, while the detention of accompanied asylum-seeker children is rare.

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