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New US Marine unit prepares for major role in the Philippines

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The 3rd MLR, a unit crafted as part of the ongoing Force Design 2030 modernization effort, is meant to carry out the new Stand-In Forces operating concept, which calls for small U.S. Marine Corps units to pair with allies in the first island chain, which stretches from Japan's East China Sea islands through the Philippines. This would allow the units to operate there on a regular basis as well as provide sensing and shooting capabilities while remaining stealthy. When the unit first attended the 2022 Balikatan exercise, it had recently been redesignated and did not have all its subordinate commands in place. Col. Tim Brady, the regiment's commanding officer, said that year's drill marked 3rd MLR's first chance to leave its Hawaii home base with a skeleton crew of a couple hundred Marines and operate in the South China Sea.



"It was our inaugural deployment: beginning to get into the first island chain, develop our relationship with the Coastal Defense Regiment of the Philippine Marine Corps, and begin our development of our tactics, techniques and procedures," he said in a May 22 interview. This year, however, 1,300 Marines from a fully established 3rd MLR showed up at the exercise in April and sought to demonstrate their intended multidomain role in a joint and combined fight. After an initial live-fire training phase, the littoral regiment conducted a series of air assaults in

the Luzon Strait to take control of three islands — Fuga, Calayan and Basco — and then use them as expeditionary advanced bases for sensing and shooting. During the coastal defense live-fire phase and then the littoral live-fire phase, during which forces sank an old Philippine amphibious ship, the regiment's littoral anti-air defense battalion provided air defense and air domain awareness, working as an enabler for the rest of the force to find targets and synchronize fires. Col. Darryl Ayers, the operations officer for 3rd Marine Division, which commanded the forces at Balikatan, said the exercise demonstrated the role 3rd MLR was meant to fulfill: operating inside China's weapons engagement zone; conducting sea control and sea denial operations if conflict begins; and setting the conditions for larger, follow-on actions by the joint and coalition force.

Indian Army upgrades Konkurs-M ATGW with thermal imagers

NEW DELHI (Agencies): The Indian Army has upgraded its 9K111M KonkursM anti-tank guided weapon (ATGW) systems with Bangalore-based Tonbo Imaging's cooled, longwave Infrared (LWIR) thermal imagers known as Sarisa, a source at Tonbo told Janes. According to Tonbo, Sarisa is a thermal imaging camera used for detection, recognition, and identification of threats at long ranges during day and night and in adverse weather conditions. It can lock onto a stationary or moving target before launching the missile. Sarisa is equipped with mounting brackets that allow it to be installed in the front of the optics channel of the Konkurs-M ATGW launcher. It is deployed in clip-on configuration with inbuilt collimat-

ed optics "enabling the user to engage with the targets using the same sight channel of direct-view optics of the Konkurs launcher", according to Tonbo. The thermal imager is designed in accordance with MIL-STD-810G and MIL-STD-461F standards. According to Janes Weapons: Infantry, the 9K111M KonkursM is an improved model of the 9K111 Konkurs ATGW system. The 9K111M KonkursM was developed to counter explosive reactive armour (ERA) protected targets. The system includes the 9P135M1 ground launch system (GLS) and the 9M113M missile. The Konkurs-M system was developed by then TsKB14 (now KBP Instrument Design Bureau) situated in Tula, Russia.

UAE Corporate Tax: What businesses can expect as 9% regime becomes official on June 1

Dubai (Agencies): Starting June 1, the UAE, its businesses and entrepreneurs will be stepping into a brand new space – of a uniform 9 per cent corporate tax. Even then, the tax regime will come at 'zero-rated' for many businesses, while offering tax 'relief' for small businesses. Or, as the Ministry of Finance confirmed today (May 31), for those businesses opting for 'restructuring relief'. Over the last month, the Ministry and the Federal Tax Authority have been providing updates and guidelines on what businesses must do while they register - and starting June 1 - come under the tax net. "The UAE now has the lowest rate among the 182 countries utilizing corporate tax systems globally," said Wassim Chahine – Partner, Head of Corporate Tax at KPMG operations here. The bottom-line for businesses? Those making more than Dh375,000 a year (or during the taxable period) will be taxed at 9 per cent. That still makes it among the lower rates on corporate tax in the world, and reinforce the UAE's credentials as offering a lower cost of operation and accompanying tax regime. (Its Gulf peers, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, have corporate tax rates that are at 20 and 15 per cent, respectively.) At all points, what the UAE has made it clear is that this is not a tax on personal income, while investments in real estate, stocks and on dividends too are exempt. The UAE with the rollout of the tax is seeking two sets of results, according to the Ministry of Finance:

- A competitive corporate tax regime based on international best practices is expected to cement the UAE's position as a leading global hub for business and investment. And accelerate the UAE's development and

transformation to achieve its strategic objectives.

- A corporate tax regime also reaffirms the UAE's commitment to meeting international standards for tax transparency and preventing harmful tax practices. Incidentally, the UAE has had a corporate tax in place in select sectors, such as the local operations of global banks, and on such entities in the energy sector. For all other business, "The Ministry of Finance has been providing directions to entities in the weeks leading up to June 1 to make the transition smoother," said Bal Krishen, Chairman and CEO of Century Financial. Registering for Corporate Tax Just about every business or those engaging in a business activity should be registering for tax purposes. There are notable exceptions, in the form of entities involved in the extraction of natural resources, public enterprises, and those involved in charity/humanitarian activity. As for the rest, "The announcements to date indicate that each 'taxable person' should obtain individual registrations at the outset," said Raju Menon, Chairman and Group Managing Partner at Kreston Menon, the consultancy. "Then, 'qualifying group' of entities would apply to form a 'Tax Group' at a later date.

Registration is free of charge For companies signing up for corporate tax compliance, the registration comes free. The tax authorities have named 'tax agents' to help speed up the process for businesses, or to give insights into the various provisions that cover the scope of their activity. But make sure to be quite clear what details are being placed into the system – and how. Once done, it will be difficult to 'claw' it back.

Biden Bans Oil And Gas Leasing Near New Mexico Cultural Site

The U.S. Administration has banned new oil and gas leasing near the Chaco Culture National Historic Park in New Mexico as part of a plan to protect the area and a larger portion of federal land from drilling. The Chaco Canyon, a major center of ancestral Pueblo culture between 850 and 1250, is a World Heritage site on the list of the UN's cultural agency, UNESCO. In addition to the Chaco Culture National Historical Park, the World Heritage property includes the Aztec Ruins National Monument and several smaller Chaco sites managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Now the U.S. Department of the Interior bans for 20 years new leasing on federal land within 10 miles of the Chaco Culture National Historic Park. The suspension of leases does not include private, tribal, or state lands. "Today marks an important step in fulfilling President Biden's commitments to Indian Country, by protecting Chaco Canyon, a sacred place that holds deep meaning for the Indigenous peoples whose ancestors have called this place home since time immemorial," Interior Department Secretary Deb Haaland, who is a New Mexican and a member of the Pueblo of Laguna tribe, said in a statement carried by Reuters. Last month, the Navajo Nation voted to reject any buffer around the Chaco Culture Historical National Park, saying that "If the buffer zone is adopted.

Venice's Grand Canal turns bright green due to fluorescein

ROME (Agencies): The spectacular transformation of a stretch of Venice's Grand Canal to fluorescent green was due to fluorescein, a non-toxic substance used for testing wastewater networks, local authorities said on Monday. Residents noticed a stretch of Venice's Grand Canal turned bright green Sunday, prompting police to investigate amid speculation it could be a stunt by environmentalists. But analysis showed "the presence of fluorescein in samples taken", said the Regional Agency for Environmental Prevention and Protection of Veneto (Arpav). The results "have not shown the presence of toxic elements in the samples analyzed", the statement said, without specifying the origin of the substance. The change in color noticed by residents raised eyebrows, with police looking into whether Sunday's development could be a protest by climate change activists, according to local daily La Nuova Venezia.

Pentagon Buying Musk's Starlink for Ukraine

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The Pentagon is buying SpaceX's satellite communications for Ukraine, despite Elon Musk's erratic relationship with the Pentagon. The Defense Department confirmed the contract award Thursday, saying in a statement that satellite communications are a "vital layer in Ukraine's overall communications network and the department contracts with Starlink for services of this type." But the Pentagon would not disclose additional information about the cost or scope of the contract for "operational security reasons and due to the critical nature of these systems." Bloomberg first reported the contract with SpaceX. "We continue to work with a range of global partners to ensure Ukraine has the satellite and communication capabilities they need," the department said. SpaceX's Starlink con-



stellation is made up of 4,000 small satellites that reside in low Earth orbit. Musk's company donated 20,000 of its satellite internet terminals and millions of dollars' worth of service to the Ukrainian military in the months that followed Russia's invasion. However, in October, SpaceX said it would stop those donations and asked the Pentagon to pay for the services instead. Three months after that, Starlink officials said they had taken steps to prevent Ukraine's use of the terminals on the battlefield; Musk declared, in apparent contradiction of Starlink's work for the Pentagon, that the service was "never intended to be weaponized."

Tax the wealthiest to avoid IMF, says Tunisia's president

Tunisia's President Kais Saied has proposed taxing the country's wealthiest citizens to avoid the "foreign diktats" of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Despite reaching an agreement in principle last October on a bailout package worth nearly \$2bn, talks with the IMF have stalled for months over demands to restructure public bodies and lift subsidies on basic goods. During a meeting with Prime Minister Najla Bouden on Thursday, Saied floated the idea of "taking surplus money from the rich to give to the poor", citing a quote attributed to Omar Ibn Al-Khattab, Islam's second caliph. "Instead of lifting subsidies in

the name of rationalisation, it would be possible to introduce additional taxes on those who benefit from them without needing them," Saied said, adding that he believed such a mechanism would mean the country would not have to bow down to foreign lenders. Tunisian Finance Minister Siham Nemsieh warned that failure to repay the loans would lead to the "bankruptcy of the state". Meanwhile, Tunisia's parliament on Thursday announced it had approved an agreement for the country to obtain a loan worth half a billion dollars from the African Export-Import Bank. The deal was approved with 126 votes in favour out of 154.

Treason trial of Russian hypersonic missile scientist begins

MOSCOW (CNN): A prominent Russian scientist involved in the country's hypersonic missile programme has gone on trial accused of state treason amid tight secrecy and concerns over the health of the elderly defendant. Anatoly Maslov's trial opened in St Petersburg on Thursday, the first case against three hypersonic missile scientists who worked at an institute in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk and who are now facing what the Kremlin has said are "very serious accusations". The trial, marked as "top secret", is closed to the media and public, the St Petersburg court has said. Maslov's lawyer could not be reached for comment on the open-

ing of proceedings. A source close to Maslov, 76, told the Reuters news agency that the missile scientist had suffered two heart attacks and spent time in hospital since his arrest last June in Novosibirsk. Doctors in the pre-trial detention centre have not given Maslov access to all the medication prescribed by his normal physician, the source said, adding: "He's holding on, but of course, his condition isn't very good." Reuters could not independently verify the accusation regarding the denial of medication. Maslov was a professor and researcher at the Khristianovich Institute of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics, one of Russia's top scientific centres.

Italian government lifts restrictions on export of military weapons to Saudi Arabia

ROME (Agencies): The Italian government on Wednesday lifted restrictions on the export of military weapons to Saudi Arabia, ending an embargo which began in 2019. The move was announced in a communique at the end of a Council of Ministers presided over by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. The decision was made "in accordance with the foreign and defense policy of Italy," the official communique said. Restrictions on the export of weapons from Italy to Saudi Arabia were imposed by the Italian government to prevent their use in the conflict in Yemen. The Italian government added: "Today there is no more reason to keep those restrictions standing any longer. "The regional context in Yemen has changed, and since April 2022,



partly thanks to the truce, military activities have been sensibly circumscribed." Italy now believes that the reduction in military operations "significantly also mitigates the risk of misuse of bombs and missiles, particularly against civilian targets." Rome also acknowledged that the Kingdom "has pursued intensive diplomatic activity in support of UN mediation and was also active in a decisive manner on the economic and humanitarian assistance front."

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.

City School Hayatabad Junior Branch Peshawar Campus hold Graduation ceremony

PESHAWAR (APP): Head of the City School Hayatabad Junior Branch Mehwish Shoukat has said that no nation can develop without education and appreciated Headmistress Zainab Ali Akhbar for holding different activities for the personal development of the students. She was addressing the graduation ceremony organized in The City School Hayatabad Junior Branch Peshawar. The ceremony started with the recitation of the Holy Quran. The chief guest of the event, Mehwish Shaukat, Cluster Head of the City School, took a special part in

the event. The headmistress Zainab Ali Akbar, teachers of the school and the parents of the children participated in large numbers. Miss Mehwish Shaukat, in her address said that no nation can develop without education. She said that the youth will play a key role in taking over the future of the country. Zainab Ali Akbar, Head of The City School also addressed the purpose of organizing such activities was not only regarding the academic achievements of the students rather it was also for personal development. It is very important to hold such events

to increase the confidence of the students so that students could face the issues in the future life. “We are feeling proud of the excellent performances and hopefully it will be repeated in the near future as well,” she added. Mehwish Shaukat, Zainab Ali Akbar awarded certificates and medals to the students in the graduation ceremony and the children were grouped with their parents. On this occasion, the parents of the students paid tribute to the school administration for organizing this event and appreciated their efforts.

Businessmen mention noticeable decline in Pak-Afghan trade volume, demand removal of hindrances

PESHAWAR (APP): Businessmen dealing in bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan while mentioning noticeable decline in trade volume and Afghan Transit Trade have demanded resolution of problems faced by trading community from both sides of the border on urgent basis. If the demands of businessmen were not given due heed, the problems will aggravate and cause drastic decline in commerce and trade in the region, they warned. These views were expressed by businessmen from Pakistan and Afghanistan during their

meeting at border point of Torkhem in the conference room of Customs Department. According to a press statement issued here on Friday, the meeting was held under the directives of Collector Customs Appraisement Peshawar, Muhammad Ashfaq and chaired by Additional Collector Appraisement Torkhem, Muhammad Rizwan. The objective behind holding of this meeting at border point is to arrange discussion of businessmen from both the countries along with government officials for resolution of problem and for removal of hindrances in bilateral trade. Those who attended the meeting included Di-

rector Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, SVP PAJCCI, Khalid Shezad, Former President SCCI, Faiz Muhammad Faizi, Superintendent Torkhem, Haleem Ullah, President Transport Torkhem, Haji Azeemullah. From Afghanistan side, the meeting was attended by Director Gumrag Torkhem, Engr Muslim Khaksar, Qari Abdul Samad, Qari Zahid, Haji Asmat Ullah, Maulvi Muhammad Yasir, Haji Ziaullah and others. Speaking on the occasion, Zia Sarhadi mentioned different problems being faced by business community of Pakistan.

Female youth sensitized about quality research work

CHITRAL (APP): District Youth Office Department of Youth Affairs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in collaboration with district administration of lower Chitral, on Friday held a one-day session on importance of quality research work for female youth of Government Girls Degree College Danin Lower Chitral. The main purpose of this session was to illuminate and enlighten the understanding of the students about the research and the steps involved so that they could take steps to produce quality research work. District Youth Officer Jabbar Ghani was chief guest on the occasion while the college’s principal and assistant commissioner

Lower Chitral Mohammad Atif and Additional Assistant Commissioner Adnan Haider Maloki delivered lectures on the subject. The college students were guided on different steps and aspects on far -reaching information on quality research. Addressing the quality research session, AC Chitral Muhammad Atif said that today’s era is a period of information technology and it cannot be analyzed on assumptions or stereotypes rather analysis on the bases of more standard research would be acceptable. He emphasized on the students carefully select the topic of their research put utmost efforts in it get optimum results.

Police department conduct typing test for children of police employees

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Following the instructions of the Inspector General Police (IGP), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Akhtar Hayat Khan, police department Abbottabad Friday conducted a typing test for the children of police officers who passed away during the service or retired from service

on medical grounds, to recruit them as junior clerks. According to the details, 94 candidates from all eight districts of the Hazara region participated in the computer typing test. Candidates who passed the test will be recruited into the police department as junior clerks.

Pesco notifies power suspension on various KP feeders

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) on Friday notified that d due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Haripur Grid Station on 3rd and 4th June from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. consequently the consumers of 132 KV Special Economic Zone 1, 2 grid connected with 11 KV feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Hattar Grid Station on 4th June from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. resultantly consumers sof 11 KV Hattar 1, Shadi and Surajgali feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Mardan Grid Station on 5th, 7th and 12th June from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. due to which consumers of 11 KV Shahdhandh, Rural 2, Zandu, Ghari Daudzai, Col Jawad Khan, Sha-

heed Tawas Babini, Lason Tambako Factory, New Toru, Ahmad Abad feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 220 KV Mardan Grid Station 3rd, 8th, 10th May from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Muhabatabad, Sheikh Maltoon, Express, Industrial, Bacha Khan Med College, Bank Road, Nissata Road, Misri Khan, Rural 1, PRC, Bagh Iram, New Toru, Eidghah feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Mardan Grid Station 3rd, 8th and 10th May from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. consequently consumers of 11 KV SIDPB, Janabad, Pakistan Chowk, Canal Road, New Charsadda Road, New Manga, Saleem Khan, Gujar Garhi, Town , Muslim Abad, New Saleem Khan feeders will face inconvenience.

ATC granted three-day physical remand of two PTI local leaders

PESHAWAR (APP): PTI Peshawar Youth President Meena Khan Afridi and his colleagues arrested in connection with the incidents of May 9 and 10 and appeared in the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC). The ATC Court has referred the two alleged accused to the Police on three-day physical remand for investigation. The alleged accused Meena Khan Afridi and Jalal Mohmand are involved in the burning incidents of May 9 and 10, said the Investigating Officer. A case has been registered against

both alleged accused in Khan Raziq Shaheed Police Station, the Investigating Officer informed the Court. Both the accused were absconding, said the Investigating Officer. The alleged accused Meena Khan Afridi has been arrested from Buner and Jalal from Peshawar, informed the Investigating Officer. Both the alleged accused need to be investigated, said the Investigating Officer. The ATC Court referred the two alleged accused to the Police on three-day physical remand for investigation.

KP govt moves PHC for cancellation of bails of May 9 accused

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Prosecution Department has filed an application in the Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Friday for cancellation of the bail of the accused involved in vandalism and arson on May 9 and 10. It said that the Anti-Terrorism Court has granted bail to 310 accused arrested in different cases including vandalism and ransacking in buildings of Ra-

dio Pakistan and Election Commission office and arrested red-handed from the spot. The accused also damaged the private properties, it said, adding that it was feared that the accused who had been released on bail might commit these crimes again. The government requested the PHC to annul the orders of the ATC Peshawar and allow the arrest of the accused on bail.

DG Rescue 1122 Academy condoles over death of rescue worker

PESHAWAR (APP): Director General (DG) of Recue academy Dr Ayaz Khan on Friday visited the residence of a deceased rescue worker, Sayyed Mamoor Shah in Sadozai Gul, Hazar Khwani to condole over his demise with the bereaved family members. He was accompanied by a couple of rescue workers. According to Rescue 1122 sources, Dr Ayaz Khan ex-

pressed sympathy and solidarity with the bereaved family members of the deceased rescue worker. He offered Fateha and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul of the rescue worker. He said, “The staff of Rescue 1122 equally shares the grief of the bereaved family.”He also assured complete support on part of the Rescue 1122 to the bereaved family members.

PHC disposes of 1,945 cases in April; 42,132 pending

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar High Court (PHC) in its monthly performance report released here on Friday said that during the month of April some 1,950 new cases were filed in the court while 1,945 were disposed of. The spokesman of PHC said that at present there was a pendency of 42,132 cases in the high court for which the Chief Justices Justice Musarat Hilali has given special directives to decide these cases expeditiously. The spokesman said that during the month of April some 34,186 new cas-

es were filed in the District Judiciary while the courts decided a total 35,028 cases in the month, adding that the number of pending cases in the District Judiciary is 266,288. He said that the CJ PHC Peshawar has ordered constitutions of the special benches to expedite the disposal of the cases. The Chief Justice while expressing her satisfaction about the over the performance of the District Judiciary issued instructions to the District Judges and Family Court Judges to dispose of the cases at earliest.

Nanbai association agrees to sell ‘Roti’ on Rs 20

PESHAWAR (APP): Nanbai association after a successful negotiation with the food Department and District administration, reduced the price of 120 gram “Roti” by 12 rupees in the provincial capital and agreed to sell it for Rs 20. According to a notification issued here on Friday after the negotiation, the Nanbai association had been asked to sell the bread at Rs 20 per 120 grams and warned of strict action against profiteers. The meeting among

the stakeholders was held on the directives of Provincial Advisor Shiraz Akram Bacha and Commissioner Muhammad Zubair who formed a committee over the issue. Food Department Rationing Controller Jamshed Afridi and Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sania Safi held a meeting with the Nanbai Association for the fixation of a new price of 120 grams roti after a decrease in wheat and flour prices in the market.

Dry weather with chances of wind, thunderstorm in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Friday predicted mainly hot and dry weather over most districts of the province. However, it said that cloudy weather conditions with chance of isolated rain-wind/thunderstorm is likely to occur over Abbottabad, Mansehra, Battagram, Torgarh, Kohistan, Shangla, Swat, Buner, Lower & Upper Dir, Chitral, Bannu, North Waziristan, Kurram and Khyber districts. Dust raising wind is also expected in some plain areas of the province. During the last 24 hours mainly cloudy weather prevailed over most districts of the province. However, Rain-wind/thunderstorm

also occurred over a number of places in the province. Rain recorded (in mm): Cherat 33, Mamad Gut 30, Bajaur (Pashat 14, Khaar Trace), Malamjaba & Landi Kotal 10 (each), Buner 09, Kakul 08, Peshawar (A/P 06, City 04), Saidu Sharif 05, Dir & Takht Bhai 04 (each), Kalam, Balakot Ghalani-Mohmand 03 (each), Timergara 02, Pattan-Kohistan 01, D. I. Khan A/P and Tirah-Khyber Trace (each). The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar City 24/18, Chitral 25/14, Timergara 22/18, Dir 20/08, Mirkhani 23/11, Kalam 15/04.

CM’s aides on Youth Affairs, Health notified

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Administration department on Friday notified the appointment of Matiullah as Special Assistant to the Caretaker Chief Minister on sports and Youth Affairs and Dr Riaz Anwar as Advi-

sor on Health. A notification issued here said, “Matiullah has replaced Dr Riaz Anwar, who has been appointed as Advisor to the CM on Health.”It said that the Governor KP on the advice of the KP CM had appointed the two aides.



Prof. Dr. Sahar Noor, Dean Mechanical Engg, UET Peshawar presenting shield to Prof. Dr. Taza Gul, DG DoST at the closing ceremony of the Final Year Project Exhibition



Courtesy: DAWN

Courtesy: RT

– Aniqā Ashfaq,
– Islamabad

National Central Bureau (NCB) of INTERPOL arranged a one-day seminar

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): National Central Bureau (NCB) of INTERPOL in Islamabad-Pakistan arranged a one-day seminar in connection with INTERPOL's Centenary upon completion of 100 years of its existence this year. The seminar was chaired by Mohsin Hassan Butt (PSP), Director General/FIA as Head of NCB-Pakistan, ADGs and Directors of FIA attended the seminar. The seminar brought together representatives from various law enforcement agencies, including Provincial police forces, ANF, NAB, FBR-Customs, NACTA, Directorate General of Immigration & Passport and Assistant Superintendents of Police under training from National Police Academy also attended the seminar. Briefing was taken place about the achievements and challenges of international police



cooperation in the past century and the future prospects for enhancing security and justice in a globalized world. Deputy Head of NCB, Malik Sikandar Hayat (PSP), Nawaz-ul-Haq Nadeem, ex-ADG FIA, Tariq Nawaz Malik (PSP) ex-ADG FIA and Tariq Khosa (PSP) ex-ADG FIA were the speakers. The speakers highlighted the role of NCB-Pakistan in fighting the crime nationally and internationally and making the world a safer place. Apart from achievements of INTERPOL, challenges ahead were



also discussed. It was emphasized that all law enforcement agencies need to seek and extend international cooperation in order to enhance effectiveness of INTERPOL in fighting crimes.

Government, WWF-Pakistan and ILO unite to boost interprovincial coordination for effective environmental compliance

ISLAMABAD (Adnan Hameed): WWF-Pakistan and the International Labour Organization (ILO) conducted a dialogue on improving environmental governance and fostering inter-provincial coordination for improving compliance with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and sustainable development goals (SDGs) across the textile and leather sector. This initiative is being undertaken as part of European Union-funded program 'International Labour and Environmental Standards (ILES) Application in Pakistan's SMEs' which aims to foster sustainable and inclusive growth in Pakistan by facilitating its economic integration into the global and regional markets. This will be achieved through the enhancement of compliance with labor and environmental



standards, as well as by reinforcing competitiveness. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Asif Shaibzada, Director General Ministry of Climate Change, appreciated the European Union in promoting compliance with national and international standards in the textile and leather SMEs of Pakistan through ILES. He said, they are looking forward to the EU for continuing this support in the coming years in order to promote compliance with the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) Plus status of Pakistan.

Kachhi Canal Extension Project likely to be completed in next two months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Rapid construction work is going on Kachhi Canal Extension Project and is likely to be completed in the next few months. Upon completion, the project would irrigate another 30,000 acres of land in district Dera Bugti, sources told APP here. WAPDA is executing the project and after the completion of the extension, the command area of Kachhi Canal Phase-I will extend to 102,000 acres.

They said construction work on 40-km main lined canal, allied structures and 32-Km water distribution system has already been completed except at a couple of sites, which was likely to be completed soon. Kachhi Canal is a significant project to alleviate poverty from backward and remote areas of Balochistan by developing irrigated agriculture and agro-based economy in the province.

PPP supports extension in FATA/PATA tax exemption period: Kundi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi Friday advocated the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) stance of supporting extension in the FATA/PATA tax exemption period considering the prevailing economic situation. "PPP has a very clear stance with the government, federal cabinet and Finance Minister as a coalition partner to support the demand of the people of former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) for extension in the tax exemption period", he said. Speaking during a press conference along with PPP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provin-

cial President, Syed Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha, the SAPM said that tax exemption was given to FATA/PATA at the time of merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa keeping in view the economic situation, which is extendable. Faisal Kundi said that the PPP delegation, under the leadership of the provincial president, has visited the Radio Pakistan building in Peshawar which was attacked and burnt by the PTI workers. He condemned the workers of PTI who ransacked and set on fire the public and private properties including Radio Pakistan's building and stolen computers, electronic appliances, furniture, sound system, vehicles engines and other expensive items.

Initiatives implemented to promote IT industry : Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information Technology (IT) and Telecommunication Syed Amin ul Haque on Friday said the initiatives implemented to promote the IT sector, freelancers, and start-ups had made Pakistan a digital hub. He said this in an address as keynote speaker in a Panel Discussion at Digital Summit, GITEX-23 Morocco in Marrakech the Historic City of Morocco, said a press release. Syed Amin ul Haque said, "To achieve the target of Digital Pakistan his ministry is working round the clock, and it will drive entrepreneurial innovation, productivity, and economic growth." The minister said, "The Ministry of IT is working on different projects keeping 2050 in vision." "The purpose of the conference is to inform about initiatives and various policies including Cyber Security, Freelancers Policy, and Personal Data Protection Bill." "Pakistan is emerging as an im-

portant center of IT where wide opportunities and incentives are available for international investors," he added. Highlighted the significance of start-ups in Pakistan, the minister said; "It is very well said that the entrepreneur always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity. Since start-ups are centers of novel innovations, they generate jobs, which implies more career opportunities." "More employment leads to a stronger economy, and a healthier economy has a direct bearing on the growth of cities where the start-ups locate." "Pakistan is filled with talented professionals in different fields and start-ups provide them with the right platform to showcase their talent and this ultimately attracts multinational companies to invest in Pakistan." "National Incubation Center (NIC) across Pakistan are working to boost start-ups and facilitate youth to have their own businesses," he added.

IRSA releases 169,500 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 169,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 198,600 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1426.15 feet and was 28.15 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 61,300 cusecs and 60,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1128.20 feet, which was 78.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 62,800 cusecs and 35,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 96,200, 81,900, 55,200 and 16,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 36,400 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 21,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala

First transgender school set up in Sargodha

SARGODHA (APP): The first transgender school has been set up in the district at Government High School for Boys No. 1, Block 12, here. Talking to APP on Friday, Chief Executive Officer Education Akhtar Abbas Baloch said the eunuchs would be provided with free books, transport facility and monthly stipend as well. He said that on the directions of the Punjab government, a transgender school had been established in Sargodha, where more than 25 transgenders had been enrolled and they had started getting their education. He said the teachers of the schools would also belong to the transgender community, while two consultants were deputed to help the community understand their problems. The CEO education said the duration of the class would be from 1:30 to 4:30 pm, which would be 3 days a week i.e. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The enrolled transgender students would be given Rs 5,000 as monthly stipend, Rs 5000 for summer uniform, Rs 2,000 for winter uniform, Rs 5,000 for transport and Rs 2,000 for stationary and books, he said. He said that the government would also give Rs 30,000 per month salary to the transgender teachers. Persons from the transgender community appreciated the government initiative and said it was a very good initiative for welfare of the community.

Domestic employees, tenants' registration in full swing

ISLAMABAD (APP): The police campaign titled 'Knock the Door' is in full swing to register the tenants as well as domestic servants. According to the police spokesman on Friday, "The police teams are conducting door-to-door visits to ensure their registration." "The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) visited 286 houses in the Karachi company police area during the last 24 hours and registered 183 domestic servants." "The purpose of the campaign is to avoid any untoward incident by maintaining law and order in the Federal capital," the spokesman added. He said this exercise would help to keep a vigilant eye on miscreants and suspects.

PIMS adopts special measures to serve dengue patients

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has made all necessary arrangements to manage dengue cases keeping in view the prevailing high-risk season of disease spread. According to PIMS ED spokesperson Dr Mubashir Mushtaq Doha, the Executive Director of PIMS Prof. Dr Rana Imran Sikandar directed the hospital staff to ensure the implementation of the plan prepared to handle the dengue

patients at the hospital. Dr Rana said the hospital staff was put on high alert and he will personally supervise all preparations to prevent patients from any inconvenience in treatment. Dr Rana assured that like in previous years, the hospital would provide the best medical care to dengue patients this year. "The hospital is committed to serving the patients with full care and special steps have been taken in this regard," the spokesperson added.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) & Pakistan House

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) and the Pakistan House, Islamabad on 26 May 23 at NIMA Head Office at Bahria University, Islamabad. The documents were duly endorsed with the signatures of Vice Admiral (Retd) Ahmed Saeed HI(M), DG NIMA, and Muhammad Athar Javed, DG Pakistan House, Islamabad. By signing the MoU, the two parties agreed to establish a formal mechanism of collaboration and cooperation for new initiatives, i.e., establishing Green Ship Recycling Industry in



Pakistan. The purpose of the agreement is to improve the research and academic activities between the two institutions and to promote quality research. The agreement will not only foster bilateral collaboration but will also help in synergizing joint activities related to maritime affairs of Pakistan.

The ILO Better Work Programme organise Textile and Ready Made Garment Industry Forum

KARACHI (Staff Report): The ILO and its Better Work programme held the Textile and Ready Made Garment Industry Forum in Karachi, attended by over 200 of relevant key stakeholders. The event was opened by the ILO's Country Director, Mr Geir Tonstel and the IFC's Principal Investment Officer, Ms Zunee Muhtashim. Key note addresses were given by Zulfikar Haider, Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development and Mr Mudassar Raza Siddiqi, Director General (Textiles), Ministry of Commerce, who both emphasised the commitment of the Government to supporting growth of the textile and ready made garments. The issues of trade agreements and standards compliance were addressed by panelist from the European Union Delegation to Pakistan, the Sindh Human Rights Commission, representatives of the Better Work programme in Pakistan, and International Accord. The



discussion focussed upon the needs to ensure that Pakistan continues to benefit from opportunities provided by international trade agreements and that its industries ensure compliance with international labour standards and local legislation at ground level. The discussion was led by Mr Colin Fenwick, Better Work's Head in Asia.

Hajj flight operation to directly transport intending pilgrims to Makkah to commence from June 5

ISLAMABAD (APP): The hajj flight operation to transport intending hujjaj directly to Makkah will commence on June 5, following the successful completion of bringing pilgrims to Madinah Munawara. The operation of flights to Makkah will commence from 10 cities in Pakistan, with the last flight departing for Makkah on June 21. The inaugural flight from Rahim Yar Khan is set to depart for Jeddah on June 6, followed by another flight from Sukkur

on June 7. However, the post-hajj flight operation will commence on July 4. After completing their Hajj pilgrimage, the pilgrims will travel to Madinah to fulfill their eight-day stay before directly returning to Pakistan from Madinah. A dedicated team of over 137 doctors and paramedics will be available round-the-clock for providing medical facilities to the pilgrims.

MUET team clinches second position in computer networking int'l competition

HYDERABAD (APP): A three-member team of students of the Department of Telecommunication Engineering, Mehran University of Engineering and Technology Jamsoro has clinched second position in the recently concluded Huawei ICT Competition 2022-2023 in Shenzhen City of China. The university spokesman informed here on Friday that the Mariyam, Muhammad Faiz and Asad Anwar students of the 18th batch of the Department

of Telecommunication Engineering participated in the networking track of the competition from May 24 to 28, 2023. The spokesman informed that a total of 146 teams of male and female students from 2,000 higher learning institutions of the world participated in the last leg of the international competition, among them the students' team of Mehran University clinched second position under the supervision of Dr Fahim Yar Khuhawar.

International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression to be marked on June 4

ISLAMABAD (APP): International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression will be marked on June 4 (Sunday) across the globe including Pakistan, purpose of the day is to acknowledge the pain suffered by children throughout the world who are the victims of physical, mental and emotional abuse. This day affirms the UN's commitment to protect the rights of children. The International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression celebrates the millions of individuals and organizations working to protect and preserve the

rights of children. For example, the Global Movement for Children, with leadership from Nelson Mandela and Graca Machel, is an inspiring force for change that involves ordinary people and families worldwide. The "Say Yes for Children" campaign, endorsed by more than 94 million people, calls for 10 positive actions to be taken to improve the lives of children. This day is a time for individuals and organizations all over the world to become aware of the impact of monstrosity of abuse, in all its forms, against children.

Police to deploy additional traffic staff at under construction roads

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad Dr Syed Mustafa Tanveer on Friday conducted a special inspection at under-construction Margalla Road and directed to deploy additional staff at construction sites as well as rush areas for smooth traffic flow. Following directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad Dr Syed Mustafa Tanveer reviewed the traffic diversions imposed due to the ongoing construction work on Margalla Road. On this occasion, he directed the removal of bottlenecks creating hindrances in the smooth flow of traffic and asked Zonal DSPs to ensure deployment of the additional traffic staff at rush areas and road construction points for the

convenience of citizens. Dr Mustafa Tanveer said that traffic flow was affected during office hours especially and it should be maintained during these times. He said Islamabad Capital Police had prepared a modern scientific revolutionary plan to deal with traffic problems and the road users would benefit from the fruits of these measures very soon. He said the new strategy would be helpful to make the traffic system in the Federal capital more smooth, especially during rush hours. Chief Traffic Officer said, "Our first duty is to ensure a safe road environment with smooth traffic flow in the city and it would be ensured at every cost." He directed that citizens should be provided with all possible awareness about traffic rules as well as road safety.

Pakistan, Georgia affirm desire to explore cooperation in multiple areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Georgia affirmed their desire to explore mutually beneficial areas of cooperation with a special focus on trade and investment, tourism, education and information technology. The bilateral relations were discussed in the inaugural session of Pakistan-Georgia Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) held in Tbilisi on Thursday. Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Alexander Khvtisiashvili, led the respective sides. Ambassador of Pakistan to Georgia and Azerbaijan and senior officials from both sides

were also present. The two sides exchanged views on the state of play of bilateral relations. Both sides termed the inaugural session as a stepping stone for diversified cooperation. Noting the investor friendly policies of both countries, the foreign secretary highlighted immense potential for bilateral trade and investment between Pakistan and Georgia. The two sides also formalized the bilateral political consultation mechanism with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding. It was agreed that the second session of the BPC will be held in Islamabad on mutually agreed dates.

96.6pc wheat procurement target achieved in Faisalabad division

FAISALABAD (APP): The food Department has procured 542,000 metric tonnes of wheat against the total target of 560,938 metric tonnes, showing 96.6 per cent achievement. The wheat procurement targets of 277,000 metric tonnes in two districts Jhang and Chiniot have been achieved while procurement in Faisalabad and Toba Tek Singh is continuing. The details were shared at the deputy commissioner's monthly conference, held in connection with good governance with the divisional commissioner in the chair, here on Friday. It was told during the meet-

ing that farmers were now bringing wheat at procurement centers voluntarily and the remaining target will be achieved soon. It was also told that the Food Department teams conducted 3,144 raids so far, registered 18 cases over hoarding /smuggling of wheat and seized 55,181 bags of wheat transported through 3,154 vehicles. The commissioner ordered for controlling smuggling of wheat during the procurement campaign in the district. She also ordered for providing follow-up of cases registered against accused involved in smuggling of commodity.

Actor Rafi Khawar known as 'Nanha' remembered on his death anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 36th death anniversary of the famous film, tv actor, and comedian Rafi Khawar known as 'Nanha' was observed on Friday. Born on August 3, 1942, Rafi Khawar started his career in 1966 by featuring in the urdu film 'Watan Ka Sipahi.' He played a lead role in the film 'Tehka Pehlwan' in 1979, and in the same year his film 'Dubai Chal-o' went well at the box office. He

worked in many super hit films and TV dramas including 'Alif Noon'. His ptv drama 'Alif Noon' ran for more than two decades in the early '80s. He rose to fame with the character 'Nanha' in the drama. He got two Nigar Awards for Best Supporting Actor and Best Comedian in 1977 and 1983. He died on June 2 in 1986 in Lahore. His services to the film industry and TV would always be remembered.

Health activists appreciate PM's measures to curb illegal tobacco trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): The health activists Friday appreciated Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's directives to curb down illegal trade of tobacco products in the country. In a press release of Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), they mentioned that Federal board of Revenue's Track and Trace system controlled illicit trade from going above 15% level. The health activist suggested to implement the system in all companies to achieve further benefits. They also mentioned that during pre-budget seasons, tobacco industry used blown up percentage of illicit trade to influence the policymakers from raising taxation according to the rate of inflation. Malik Imran, country head, Campaign for tobacco-free kids (CTFK), mentioned that tobacco induced disease caused an annual economic burden of Rs 615 billion which is 1.6% of Pakistan's GDP. He said that an industry which was causing such unprecedented level of damage to public health and economy, brazenly claimed that any damage control move was against Pakistan's interest. Imran mentioned that every budget season, tobacco

industry used the illicit trade excuse to ensure that tobacco taxes were not increased. This is a cover used by tobacco industry to divert people from the underreporting. These companies under-report their production and then sell their non-reported products in the illicit market, causing billions of loss to the national exchequer. He quoted findings of a latest research on illicit cigarette Pakistan which revealed the percentage of illicit packs of cigarette was around 15 percent. Imran said that tobacco industry should not have any problems paying additional taxes as it never paid them from its own coffers. Tobacco companies have increased their net-of-tax prices. Due to over-shifting, the excise tax share in retail price remains at 51.6%, lower than the widely-accepted benchmark of 70%. Dr. Ziauddin islam, Former Technical Head, Tobacco Control Cell, Ministry of Health, said that tobacco was the largest silent killer in the country as above 170,000 people died due to its use each year. He explained that increased prices bring a decrease to production and consumption of tobacco which decrease the health cost burden.

President urges insurance companies to expand services in health, agriculture sectors



KARACHI (APP):President Dr. Arif Alvi, on Friday urged insurance companies to expand their services in health and agriculture sectors and utilise modern technologies for enhancing outreach to masses. The quantum of insurance sector in national economy was much less than its potential and in comparison to other countries of the region, he noted and stressed upon all the stakeholders to work hard for creating their good will among the public besides imparting awareness to masses for achieving exponential growth. The president was addressing a seminar, titled "Role of ombudsman in development of insurance

sector" organised by Federal Insurance Ombudsman secretariat here here at Sindh Governor House. Dr. Arif Alvi said that government was providing social safety and assistance through its social safety net, public health services and in shape of compensation in case of natural calamities and accidents but more initiatives were required to cov-

IESCO issues 2-day power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday issued a 2-day power suspension programme for Saturday and Sunday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to an IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Saturday From 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Khan-na Road, River Garden 1 & 2, Swan Garden 2, Navel 1 & 2 Feeders From 06:00 AM to 05:00 PM Birut Gala, Durbat Mai Toti, Khoi Rata City, Churohi Express, Dana Bhal, Churohi Dongi, Sri, City, Karijala, Jandrot Dabsi, Datot, Majajan, City-II, Charohi Feeders. On Sunday From 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM Park View, Pindi board, Jail Park-1, car Chowk, Mahboob Shaheed feeders and suburbs.

174 cops promoted to next ranks

SARGODHA (APP): Regional Police Officer Shariq Kamal Siddiqui promoted 174 police officials to the next grades on Friday. According to a spokesman for the police, the fourth promotion board meeting was held for the first time in the history of Sargodha police in just two months, in which 174 police officers were promoted. A ceremony was held at Zakaullah Shaheed Police Lines while the RPO was the chief guest at the ceremony. Fifty-three sub-inspectors were promoted as inspectors, 46 assistant sub-inspectors as sub-inspector and 75 Head Constables were given the rank of assistant sub-inspectors.

4 drug pushers among two women held in DI Khan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district police on Friday claimed to have arrested four drug pushers including two women and recovered drugs and sold money from them in the limits of Cantt Police station. According to a police spokesman, the police received secret information that the people involved in drug dealing were handing over their heinous businesses to their women after the police have tightened a noose around them. SDPO City Circle Hafiz Muhammad Adnan along with Cantt police, taking action on a tip-off, raided in Hafiz Kheir Ahmad area near Eidgah-Kalan and arrested four drug dealers including two women recovering 475-gram heroin and Rs 4000 sale cash from them. During the checking, 180-gram of heroin and Rs 1900 sale cash was recovered from accused Tariq Mehmood son of Habib ur Rehman while 115 gram heroin and Rs 1000 sale cash was recovered from Farid Ullah son of Billi Khan.

Industrialists welcome subsidy on gas

KARACHI (APP): President of the Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI), Faraz-ur-Rehman welcomed the government's announcement of gas subsidy, stating that the industrial sector had been facing challenges due to the economic situation and rising production costs. Reducing the price of 13 MMBTU to 9 MMBTU by the government's side will alleviate the challenges through the provision of cheaper gas, said a statement on Friday.

Delegation of Punjab Bar Council calls on Law Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of lawyers from the Punjab Bar Council on Friday called on Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar.The delegation led by Basharat Ullah khan (Vice Chairman of Punjab Bar Council) and Tahir Shabbir Chaudhry (Chairman Executive Committee of Punjab Bar Council) along with members of the Punjab Bar Council discussed issues of mutual interests and the matters regarding grants in aid.The minister shared his views regarding the importance of Bar Councils stating that the Bar Councils were an inte-

gral part of our legal justice system. The delegation informed the minister about various issues faced by the Bar and the minister assured his utmost support to address these issues. The minister expressed that it was important to have a liaison between Government and Bars and that there should not be a disconnection which was why the Lawyers Protection Act had great importance. The participants of the meeting hailed the efforts of the Law Minister for the passage of the Lawyer's Protection Act which was a long-standing demand of lawyers across Pakistan.

Martyrs,Ghazi personnel valuable assets of police:DPO

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): District Police Officer Dera Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani on Friday said the martyrs and Ghazi personnel who rendered their lives or got injured while protecting the life and property of the citizens were the valuable assets of the department. The DPO stated this during a meeting with Constable Sabir Hussain, who was injured in a terrorist attack on a police van in the limits of Daraban police station, at his

office. Earlier, the district police chief warmly welcomed the injured policeman on his arrival at his office. The DPO lauded the constable for fighting terrorism and enquired about his health and ongoing treatment. He also assured him of all kinds of support from the police department and himself. The injured policeman was under treatment in District Headquarters Hospital Dera and later was referred to Peshawar.

Agriculture revolution imperative to tackle future challenges :Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday stressed the need for adopting the latest techniques and technology in the agriculture sector to boost the economy. Chairing a meeting on the government's key initiative "Agricultural Revolution 2.0," the minister highlighted the importance of increased production of crops, saying a revolution in the sector was needed to meet future challenges, said a press release issued here. He said, "Agriculture is the backbone of the national economy." He said prompt measures were being taken to prevent the agriculture sector affected from the negative impacts of climate change,

besides promoting research and introducing modern technology for getting better production. The minister said the country had immense potential to further progress in the agriculture sector for which research was being promoted to increase the productivity of crops. Ahsan Iqbal said there existed bright prospects for exporting agricultural commodities and livestock to China and Middle East countries. "New projects are being launched to promote research and modern technology," he added. Under the Agriculture Revolution 2.0 initiative, he said the government had planned to achieve self-sufficiency in the agriculture sector and promote exports of its products.

Prof Butt stresses for Kashmir settlement through dialogue process

ISLAMABAD (APP): In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), senior leader of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), Professor Abdul Ghani Butt has said that the Kashmir dispute was the main cause of tension between Pakistan and India and the two countries should resolve it through a peaceful dialogue process. According to Kashmir media service, Professor Abdul Ghani Butt in a statement issued in Srinagar on Friday said, war is no option which only brings destruction and which should never happen but in the presence of con-

flicts and tense situations, anything can happen. The APHC leader said everything can be achieved peacefully through the dialogue process. He maintained that the leaderships of Pakistan and India have to act wisely for a better future of the people of South Asia in particular and for the whole world in general, as there is a desire for peace but peace cannot be achieved in a vacuum and in the presence of conflicts. So, he added, the leaderships of Pakistan and India should sit together and find an amicable solution to the lingering Kashmir dispute.

Rescue 1122 responds to 521 emergencies in May

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district emergency service Rescue 1122 under the leadership of District Emergency Officer Owais Babar responded to 521 emergencies in May and provided first medical aid to about 528 patients. While sharing the monthly performance report, the Rescue 1122 spokesman said the rescue emergency teams promptly tackled all these emergencies, and the emergency response time was recorded at seven minutes. Giving details, the spokesman said the rescue service responded to different kinds of emergencies during May which included 375 medical, 100 road traffic accidents, 30 fire eruptions, 11 bullet injuries or fights, one blast, three

drowning incidents, and nine others. During these emergencies, a total of 528 injured were provided with first medical aid and subsequently shifted to different hospitals. He said a total of 90828 calls were received by the emergency service, but 72507 of them were fake or irrelevant ones. During this period, Rescue 1122 handled a total of 79 referral-related emergencies, of which 66 patients shifted within the district. In 13 emergency cases, patients were taken from DHQ hospital to Islamabad, Multan, and Peshawar. The spokesman said the rescue 1122 teams were fully equipped with all necessary equipment and they had been efficiently rendering their services during emergencies.

Netflix shareholders rejects pay bonanza for top execs

NEW YORK (Agencies): Netflix Inc shareholders voted to reject pay packages for the company's leadership, including co-chief executive officers Ted Sarandos and Greg Peters, in a non-binding protest against lavish pay for top media executives. Sarandos is supposed to make as much as US\$40 million between his salary, bonus, and stock options while Peters, who was named co-CEO in January, is supposed to make US\$34.6 million. Reed Hastings



ings, the company's co-founder and executive chairman, will earn US\$3 million. Netflix Inc shareholders voted to reject pay packages for the com-

pany's leadership, including co-chief executive officers Ted Sarandos and Greg Peters, in a non-binding protest against lavish pay for top media executives. Sarandos is supposed to make as much as US\$40 million between his salary, bonus, and stock options while Peters, who was named co-CEO in January, is supposed to make US\$34.6 million. Reed Hastings, the company's co-founder and executive chairman, will earn US\$3 million.

UK petcare firm Dechra agrees \$4.5bil takeover

LONDON (Agencies): UK petcare firm Dechra Pharmaceuticals has agreed to a £4.5-billion (US\$5.6-billion) takeover by Swedish private equity firm EQT and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, they announced Friday. The groups in a statement said they "have reached an agreement on the terms and conditions of a recommended cash acquisition". The announcement sent Dechra's share price soaring 8% to £36.44 in



early deals on London's rising stock market. The offer was pitched at £38.75 per share – a 44% premium from April 12 – before Dechra first

revealed it was holding bid talks. Dechra is a "leading company operating in the attractive animal health pharmaceuticals market", the statement noted. The sector is "expected to benefit from numerous long-term growth drivers including... increasing pet ownership (and) medical innovation", it added. Under the terms of the deal, EQT will own 74% of Dechra, and the Abu Dhabi sovereign wealth fund the remainder.

Galaxy, MGM eye Thailand for casino expansion

LAS VEGAS (Agencies): Two of the world's top casino operators are laying the groundwork to potentially establish gambling facilities in Thailand as the industry looks to hedge against a deteriorating outlook in Macau. Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd and MGM Resorts International are studying the potential of opening casino resorts in the country, according to the people, who asked not to be identified because the matter



is private. Galaxy, the gaming, retail and hospitality group controlled by billionaire Lui Che-woo, is also exploring starting gaming operations

in the United Arab Emirates, some of the people said. A representative for Galaxy didn't comment on its plans. MGM didn't immediately respond to a request for comment sent outside of business hours. The early efforts to enter new markets reflect casino operators' anxiety over a deteriorating outlook for Macau, which once pulled in six times the gaming revenue of Las Vegas and delivered historically high returns.

Ferrari joins South Korea's luxury brand influx

SEOUL (Agencies): Italian supercar maker Ferrari NV has opened its first public event in Asia in Seoul, joining a growing list of luxury brands flocking to South Korea. The event, dubbed Universo Ferrari, showcases 22 models, including the recently released Ferrari Roma Spider. Several iconic models, including a Formula 1 racing car, are also on display at the event, which opened Thursday. South Korea has become a magnet for glob-



al luxury brands seeking to capitalise on the nation's growing cultural cache. LVMH's largest label Louis Vuitton held its pre-fall fashion show in Seoul in April, followed by Kering

SA's Gucci, which hosted a show last month. Mercedes-Benz Group AG posted record sales in Korea in 2022, led by "super luxury brands" like Mercedes-Maybach GLS. "Korea is a very important market for Ferrari, and holding this special exhibition in Seoul is our way of thanking all our owners and fans for their passion and support," Enrico Galliera, chief marketing and commercial officer at the automaker said in a statement.

Meta clamps down on Canada over online news bill

MONTREAL (Agencies): Meta Platforms Inc on Thursday said it will begin tests on its social media websites Facebook and Instagram that will limit some users and publishers from viewing or sharing some news content in Canada. The testing period will run for several weeks, the social media giant said, adding that a minor percentage of Canadian users enrolled in testing will be notified if they attempt to share news content. The test comes in re-



sponse to Canada's proposed "Online News Act". Introduced in April last year, the legislation would force platforms like Meta and Google parent Alphabet Inc to negotiate commercial

deals and pay Canadian news publishers for their content. Meta had, in March, warned it would end the availability of news content for Canadians on its platforms if the proposed bill was passed in its current form. Canadian Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez, who introduced the bill last year, called the tests "unacceptable". "When a big tech company... tells us, 'If you don't do this or that, then I'm pulling the plug' – that's a threat.

Dollar weakens as June Fed bets fade

TOKYO (Agencies): The US dollar wallowed near a one-week low versus major peers on Friday, on course for its worst week since late March, amid strengthening views that the Federal Reserve will forgo an interest rate hike this month. Signs that a bill to suspend the US debt ceiling and avert a disastrous default would soon become law also removed a pillar of support for the dollar, which had paradoxically



been a key beneficiary because of its safe-haven status. The US dollar index, which measures the greenback against a basket of six rivals, was little

changed at 103.57 in early Asian trading, after sliding 0.62% on Thursday, its worst day in almost a month. For the week, the index is on course to lose 0.63%, which would be its poorest performance since the period ended March 26. Philadelphia Fed President Patrick Harker said on Thursday that "it's time to at least hit the stop button for one meeting and see how it goes," referring to the June 13-14 meeting.

Twitter's head of trust and safety resigns

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): Twitter's head of trust and safety Ella Irwin told Reuters on Thursday that she has resigned from the social media company. In the role, Irwin oversaw content moderation, but the company has faced criticism for lax protections against harmful content since billionaire Elon Musk acquired it in October.



Irwin's departure also comes as the platform has struggled to keep ad-

vertisers on it, mainly as brands have been wary of appearing next to unsuitable content. Musk announced earlier this month that he hired Linda Yaccarino, former NBCUniversal advertising chief, to become Twitter's new CEO. Fortune earlier reported that Irwin's internal Slack account appeared to be deactivated.

US fines British Airways US\$1.1mil over delayed refunds

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The US Transportation Department (USDOT) said on Thursday it is fining British Airways US\$1.1 million for failing to provide timely refunds to passengers for flights to and from the United States during the Covid-19 pandemic. Since March 2020, USDOT received over 1,200 complaints alleging British Airways failed to provide timely refunds. British Airways, which is owned by IAG, denied the allegations. USDOT said it would credit British Airways US\$550,000 toward the penalty because



the airline in 2020 and 2021 issued more than US\$40 million in refunds to customers with nonrefundable tickets. USDOT said the fine "establishes a strong deterrent to future similar unlawful practices by British Airways and other carriers." British Airways said it acted lawfully at all times and offered customers flexibility to rebook travel or

claim refunds if flights were canceled. USDOT said consumers were unable to get through to customer service agents when calling the carrier for several months because British Airways failed to maintain adequate customer service phone lines. The airline said Thursday that "at the height of the unprecedented pandemic – when we were unfortunately forced to cancel thousands of flights and close some call centers due to government restrictions – our customers experienced slightly longer wait times to reach customer service teams."

Vietnam's economy has yet to bottom out: HSBC

HANOI (Agencies): Vietnam's economy has yet to bottom out despite a series of stimulus measures to bolster business confidence, Vietnam News reported on Friday. Vietnam's exports in May extended the decline by a further 5.86 percent from a year ago, though at a slower pace than an annual contraction of 17.2 percent in April, according to the General Statistics Office (GSO). The Southeast Asian country's exports have tumbled since last November, with a brief rebound in February, in the face of weaker demand abroad, adding urgency for support measures

from the government, analysts said. "There is no clear sign that Vietnam has bottomed out amid intensifying headwinds to growth," HSBC said in a report. "Indeed, sluggish external data remains the biggest downside risk to growth." The data showed Vietnam's trade surplus with the U.S., its largest export market, narrowed 22 percent to 31.2 billion U.S. dollars in the first five months from a year ago. Steep falls in exports included furniture, seafood, clothing, footwear and smartphones, which are the biggest foreign currency earners for the country.

Pound sets for biggest weekly gain in 6 months

LONDON (Agencies): Sterling headed for its biggest one-week rally against the dollar in six months on Friday, as US interest rates looked increasingly likely to plateau sooner than UK rates. With the all-important monthly US employment report due later in the day, activity in the currency market was subdued. "From a cable perspective, this release may extend the rally (NFP miss or in line with estimates) or cap upside should the report come in stronger than expected," IG analyst Warren Venketas said. The pound has gained 1.5% against the dollar this week, the most since



early December, and nearly 1.1% against the euro – which would be its largest weekly increase in nearly four months. The main driver has been a redirection of investor capital out of the safe-haven dollar, now that lawmakers in Washington have passed a bill that would suspend the US government's borrowing limit.

Japan warns ChatGPT-maker OpenAI on user data

TOKYO (Agencies): Japan's privacy watchdog said on Friday it has warned OpenAI, the Microsoft-backed startup behind the ChatGPT chatbot, not to collect sensitive data without people's permission. OpenAI should minimise the sensitive data it collects for machine learning, the Personal Information Protection Commission said in a statement, adding it may take further action if it has more concerns. Regulators around the world are scrambling to draw up rules governing the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI), which can



create text and images, the impact of which proponents compare to the arrival of the internet. While Japan has been on the backfoot with some recent technology trends, it is seen as having greater incentive to keep pace with advances in AI and robotics to maintain productivity as its population shrinks.

Slower US job, wage gains expected in May

WASHINGTON (Agencies): US job growth likely slowed in May, with wages coming off the boil, potentially allowing the Federal Reserve to skip an interest rate hike this month for the first time since embarking on its aggressive policy-tightening campaign more than a year ago. Nevertheless, the Labor Department's closely watched employment report on Friday is expected to still show the labour market remaining tight. The unemployment rate is forecast to climb to 3.5% from 3.4% in April but the report will confirm that the economy remained far away from

a dreaded recession, though more pockets of weakness are emerging. "The jobs report is likely to show another step down in the pace of growth, but still a very strong labour market," said Bill Adams, chief economist at Comerica Bank in Dallas. "The Fed is under less pressure to raise interest rates at its meeting this month, than at any time over the last year and a half." The survey of establishments is likely to show nonfarm payrolls increased by 190,000 jobs last month after rising 253,000 in April, according to a Reuters survey of economists.

PwC contracts frozen by US\$191bil Aussie pension fund

SYDNEY (Agencies): Australia's largest pension fund AustralianSuper has frozen all future contracts with PricewaterhouseCoopers as it assesses the fallout of the embattled accounting firm's tax advice scandal. The A\$290 billion (US\$191 billion) fund's management has expressed its concerns to PwC about the disclosures "at the highest level", a spokesman for the fund told Bloomberg on Friday. It was paying the firm more than A\$2 million a year for services including the audit of its annual financial report, the document shows. "AustralianSuper is concerned with the ongoing revelations around PwC and as a result has frozen any new contracts

with PwC," the spokesman said in an emailed statement. One auditing contract with PwC is currently underway and will run its course, the spokesman said. It will be reviewed later this year in line with annual processes, he said. A spokesman for PwC declined to comment. The Australian arm of the global consulting giant has faced intense scrutiny following revelations that a former senior partner obtained confidential tax policy information while advising the government. PwC then leaked the advice to colleagues who used it to advise global clients. The firm is now under pressure over how many employees were aware the information was being leaked.

Rivian may lose Nasdaq spot after 90% selloff

NEW YORK (Agencies): Shares of Rivian Automotive Inc, the money-losing electric vehicle startup, may get pushed out of the Nasdaq 100 Index as early as this month after plunging more than 90% from their record high, according to JP Morgan Securities. The index typically removes the smallest members of the Nasdaq 100 if the company is weighted at less than 0.1% of the gauge for two consecutive months, JPMorgan analyst Min Moon writes in a note on Thursday. As Rivian was below 0.1% as of April 28 and May 31, Moon expects the carmaker to be excluded from the index on the

third Friday of June. ON Semiconductor is ranked at the top of the eligible companies to replace the EV maker, Moon added. A removal from the index would deal another blow to a stock that's been pummeled since soon after its November 2021 initial public offering. After briefly riding the frenzy for all things related to electric cars, Rivian's shares started unraveling. Investors soured on risky growth names, correctly anticipating the Federal Reserve would raise rates to arrest inflation, in turn slowing the economy and making sales of an expensive electric pickup truck less likely.

Stuttgart hammer 10-man Hamburg to take relegation playoff advantage

BERLIN (Agencies): Stuttgart took a major step towards securing Bundesliga status for another season on Thursday by thrashing 10-man Hamburg 3-0 at home in the first leg of the relegation playoff. Fresh from an impressive end to the season with only one loss in their last eight matches, Stuttgart broke the visitors' resolve early, former Arsenal defender Konstantinos Mavropanos heading in after just 44 seconds. The home side added two goals in three minutes early in the second half, before Hamburg



were reduced to 10 men when Anssi Suhonen saw red for a high kick just nine minutes after coming off the bench. Stuttgart defender Waldemar Anton called on his side to "bring the

same hunger" to Monday's return leg. "The season is close to the end. We've got one final step to take and if we play like we did today, I think we'll make it." Hamburg, who narrowly lost in last year's relegation playoff to Hertha Berlin, now need a major turnaround in Monday's return leg at home to have any hope of first division action next season. "We've still got a second leg" said Hamburg captain Sebastian Schonlau. "The chance hasn't increased, but it is still there," he added.

Organisers pray for trouble-free Derby, Dettori for fairytale last ride

LONDON (Agencies): The Jockey Club, which runs Epsom Racecourse, will play the injunction which a judge granted them to "prohibit acts intended to disrupt the Derby Festival" will deter protests from the Animal Rising group. The activists have already caused delays to the Grand National and the Scottish National this year. On the track, Irish trainer Aidan O'Brien bids for a record-extending ninth winner with Auguste Rodin and Charlie Appleby seeks a third winner in the last six editions with Military Order. Those two are the bookies favourites but AFP Sport picks out three horses who could provide a crowd-pleasing fairytale: Dettori won't mind being



Arrest-ed in final Derby Frankie Dettori's trademark flying dismounts will be a thing of the past come season's end but the exuberant Italian hopes for a third and final one in the Derby with Arrest, his 28th ride in the race. The 52-year-old's last Derby victory came on Golden Horn in 2015 for trainer John Gosden. Gosden saddles Arrest though he now shares the

training duties with his son Thady. "I have been fortunate enough to win The Derby twice and it is still the most famous race in the world for us," said Dettori. "At least I am going into my last Derby with a great chance." Dettori, who won the English 2000 Guineas on Chaldean, is sweet on Arrest's chances after winning the Derby trial, the Chester Vase. "He is growing up and getting stronger," said Dettori. The Foxes in Derby hunt The late owner of Leicester City, Vi-chai Srivaddhanaprabha, also poured money into race horses and should The Foxes win on Saturday "it would be a fitting tribute to a great man", said trainer Andrew Balding.

WSF World Jr Squash C'ships teams announced

ISLAMABAD (APP): Young squash stars from 33 national federations would descend on Melbourne, Australia, for next month's WSF World Junior Championships from July 18 to 29, following the confirmation of squads. Athletes from all over the world would compete in the WSF World Junior Championships, which will take place at Melbourne sports Centres (MSAC) and include junior men's and women's individual championships, as well as the junior women's team championship, said a press release. Across the two individual events and the women's team event, there have been 245 entries. Hosts Australia, winners of three women's world junior team championships, as

well as boasting five individual winners (three women and two men) would be hoping for a repeat of the last time they hosted the event, in Sydney 1995, when Rachael Grinham, Emma Major, Kate Major and Narelle Tippet lifted the women's team trophy. Standing in their way would be formidable opponents, though, with likely top seeds Egypt winners of the last seven women's junior team championships, which have not been held since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the individuals, the North African nation would be hoping to reclaim the men's title, with Netherlands' Rowan Damming ending a run of three consecutive wins for Egypt last year in France, while Amina Orfi

will look to secure an 11th consecutive championship for her country by defending her women's individual title. Elsewhere, Scotland return to the team event for the first time since 2005. The Competing National Federations, 2023 WSF World Junior Squash Championships- Men's Individual Championship: Australia, Canada, Chinese Taipei, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, China, India, Ireland, Japan, Kuwait, Lithuania, Macau-China. Women's Individual Championship: Australia, Canada, Chinese Taipei, Egypt, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong-China, India, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Macau-China, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand.

NCA to host national players for specialised camps By Sohail Ali

LAHORE (APP): Thirteen spinners and 11 fast bowlers will undergo specialised men's camps at the National Cricket academy (NCA) here this month in a bid to develop a deep and strong core ahead of an exciting and challenging season. Fourteen batters will also be involved in the two camps that will run from 10 to 15 June for spinners, and 16 to 21 June for fast bowlers. The men's national selection committee has invited players from the Pakistan men's, Shaheens and U19 sides and they will train under the guidance of national team's and NCA's coaches. These camps will

help the selectors in jotting the best possible squad for Pakistan's two-Test series in Sri Lanka in July, which will be national side's first assignment in the third cycle of the World Test Championship. Separate camps for spin and fast bowlers will help the bowlers to bowl longer spells in specially tailored sessions that along with enhancing their skill level will test their fitness under tough weather conditions. Similarly, the batters will get to bat for extended periods, a requisite for the upcoming tour. Having players from across the rungs together will also help in inculcating

'The Pakistan Way' in the upcoming players, so they are aware of the expectations of the national side as they continue their journey. This will also help the youngsters to benefit from the experience of the senior side's players. The players who have been granted no-objection certificates to participate in County cricket or other leagues will continue to feature in them. Mohammad Nawaz (rehabilitation for finger injury), Sarfaraz Ahmed (personal commitments), Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan (both are traveling for Hajj) have been exempted from the camp.

Nuggets dominate Heat 104-93 in NBA Finals Game 1

DENVER (Agencies): The Denver Nuggets launched their first NBA Finals campaign in franchise history with a dominant 104-93 victory over the Miami Heat on Thursday, propelled by yet another Nikola Jokic triple double. Two-time Most Valuable Player Jokic scored 27 points with 10 rebounds and 14 assists to lead the Nuggets, who will try to double their advantage in the best-of-seven series when they host Game 2 on Sunday. Jamal Murray scored 26 points, handed out 10 assists and grabbed six rebounds for the Nuggets, who led by 24 points in the third quarter and repelled the resilient Heat's fourth quarter challenge.



"We respect their team a lot," Jokic said. "We just wanted to get the first punch. "In the first three rounds they won their first game when they traveled on the road and we didn't want to have that to happen. I think we did a good job." Bam Adebayo scored 26 points to lead Miami. Gabe Vincent added 19 and Haywood Highsmith scored 18 off the bench, but Heat

star Jimmy Butler was limited to 13. Trailing by 21 entering the fourth quarter, Miami used an 11-0 run to cut the deficit to 10. Highsmith's three-pointer got the gap to nine points with 2:34 to play. But as they had all night, the Nuggets seamlessly pulled away. Jokic fed Kentavious Caldwell-Pope for a jump shot, Caldwell-Pope came up with a steal and Aaron Gordon made two free throws as the Nuggets rebuilt the lead. Jokic added a pair of free throws and a turnaround jump shot and the ecstatic crowd of 19,528 at Ball Arena in Denver could start the celebrations. "Everybody contributed," Jokic said. "It's a great win for us."

Fritz gets a taste of French Open crowd's brutality

PARIS (Agencies): Taylor Fritz got a reminder of how brutal the Roland Garros crowd can be when he was booed for minutes after ending the run of the last local man standing at the French Open on Thursday. Sustained boos and whistles rained down from the Court Philippe Chatrier stands after the American shushed the fans repeatedly, having beaten Arthur Rinderknech in four sets under the lights. As he was preparing to do his post-match interview, Fritz kept his cool as he came under fire, barely able to ex-



change words with court-side interviewer Marion Bartoli. "I'm sorry I actually can't hear you," he told the former Wimbledon champion. "The crowd was so great honestly ... that I had to let it fire me up. They

cheered so well for me I wanted to make sure I won," he added, having ended the French presence in the singles draws at Roland Garros by beating the last home favourite. The crowd is fickle, corporate seats are often empty at lunchtime but when a French player needs support spectators turn the usually quiet courts into a wild arena and the claycourt Grand Slam provides an atmosphere unmatched at other majors. This is exactly what Fritz experienced in his match against Rinderknech, like others before him.

Ruediger and Gundogan return to Flick's Germany squad

BERLIN (Agencies): Germany coach Hansi Flick named a 26-man squad for this summer's friendlies on Friday, with Antonio Ruediger, Leroy Sane and Ilkay Gundogan among eight returnees. Thomas Mueller, Serge Gnabry, Niklas Suele and Mario Goetze, all of whom made the trip to the Qatar World Cup in 2023, were left out of the squad. Germany will play three friendlies in June this summer, having automatically qualified for the 2024 European Championships as host nation. "All the players are enormously motivated to give everything for the team and our fans in the next three international matches on the way to the home European Championship," Flick said in a statement released on Friday. "We want to put our upcoming opponents under pressure with a lot of attacking power through



the wingers and at the same time be compact defensively with the back three. We are very well positioned for this with our selected squad." Sane, Ruediger and Gundogan all missed Germany's friendlies in March. They lost 3-2 to Belgium in Cologne and won 2-0 against Peru in Mainz. Prior to the announcement, Manchester City midfielder Gundogan told AFP subsidiary SID "the national team is and remains something special. I definitely want to be there in June."

Denver Nuggets beat Miami Heat to take 1-0 series lead in NBA Finals

ISTANBUL (Agencies): Denver Nuggets defeated Miami Heat 103-94 to take a 1-0 lead in Game 1 of the NBA Finals on Thursday. Nikola Jokic's triple-double led the Nuggets to victory as Michael Porter and Jamal Murray made a double-double in the home win at Ball Arena. He scored 27 points, 14 assists, and 10 rebounds, while Porter produced 14 points and 13 rebounds and Murray finished with 26 points and 10 assists. "The most important thing is to win a game," Jokic said after his ninth triple-double of this year's playoffs and sixth in his last seven games. "I'm trying to win a game in any possible way." The 28-year-old from Serbia became the second player in NBA history to score a triple-double in his Finals debut, join-



ing Hall of Famer Jason Kidd. "We have so many different weapons and so many different looks. You've got to guard everybody ... Free-flowing and it's a lot of fun," Murray said after the win. Aaron Gordon also played with 16 points and six rebounds for the winning side. Bam Adebayo made a double-double with 26 points and 13 rebounds, while Jimmy Butler scored 13 points, and notched seven assists, and seven rebounds.

Slow Women's World Cup ticket sales prompt concern in New Zealand

WELLINGTON (Agencies): FIFA on Friday announced the release of about 250,000 more tickets for the Women's World Cup, amid concerns about sales for matches in New Zealand. A fresh batch of tickets will be released Tuesday for all 64 matches in Australia and New Zealand, days after one tournament official admitted having sleepless nights about their take-up. The World Cup kicks off on July 20 when New Zealand host Norway in Auckland, the same day Australia play the Republic of Ireland in Sydney. New Zealand will stage a total of 29 matches, including all pool games of de-

fending champions the United States. Despite almost half the games being in New Zealand, of the 930,000 tickets sold so far, only 220,000 have been sold in New Zealand, FIFA told AFP earlier this week. "If anything is keeping me awake at night, it's ensuring that New Zealanders maximise this opportunity," the tournament's chief operating officer in New Zealand, Jane Patterson, told local media. Patterson has described the World Cup as a chance for "New Zealanders to get out and see the best in the world, from all over the world, do what they do in their own backyard".

DAILY HOROSCOPE: JUNE 3, 2023



– It's a general reading which may differ from person to person because of time date and year.
– **ARIES**: You're the first to try something new today, from an exotic food to a way of thinking that might be quite foreign to you. Once you've had your taste, the floodgates open and others feel safe to try.
– **TAURUS**: It's not a good time to expose yourself to risk, financial, emotional, or any other kind. It's not that you're courting disaster, but playing it safe is just the better option for you right now.
– **GEMINI**: Things are moving quickly today, and you can see that you're moving on to a deeper level in some way. It may be romantic or intellectual, but you feel the good energy and are ready for more!
– **CANCER**: You can feel your personal energy backing up a bit today, because the flow is somewhat sluggish. Don't despair. Things are moving under the surface. You should be back in business in no time!
– **LEO**: You're feeling a good flow of energy and find it easy to share with others. If they deserve it, that is! You may

want to try something a little crazy in order to get them to see the bright side.
– **VIRGO**: The situation at home or work has become untenable, and it's up to you to break the ice and get people talking again. It's not all that hard, though you may need to step back from the brink a bit.
– **LIBRA**: You need to keep everything in balance today, which is generally pretty easy for you. Watch out for folks who are shooting off in different directions, though. They might tip it all over!
– **SCORPIO**: It's a good time for taking risks with money or emotions. You aren't able to control yourself anyway typically, so you may as well go all in! It might not pay off, but the ride is worth the admission price!
– **SAGITTARIUS**: People can see that you're honest and open about your feelings, and that creates tremendous goodwill, so keep it up! You may win over that last person who's been keeping you back.
– **CAPRICORN**: You surprise yourself or your family with how much progress you make on a home project today. You might not even be paying attention to the time because you're so deep in the flow of things.
– **ACQUARIUS**: Your brain power is required to get your friends or family motivated for whatever big plan you've cooked up. It may take a lot of energy, but you've got all you need, so don't worry about the time.
– **PISCES**: You need to do something about your attitude today, or you might end up in trouble.. Authority figures are extra grumpy! If you smile and nod, you should be able to get past it without trouble.

Lin Songtian conferred upon with Sitara e Pakistan

BEIJING (Agencies): On behalf of the President of Pakistan, Pakistan's Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque conferred Pakistan's civil award "Sitara-e-Pakistan" upon Lin Songtian, the President of Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) in a special investiture ceremony held on Friday at the Embassy of Pakistan, Beijing. The event was attended by senior officials of CPAFFC, representatives of media organizations and officers of the Pakistani Embassy in China. President Lin is a seasoned diplomat who has served with distinction at several important positions as the Vice Foreign Minister and the Chinese Ambassador to Liberia, Malawi and South Africa. President Lin is an ardent advocate of China-Pakistan friendship, espe-



cially in the realm of people-to-people exchanges and cultural cooperation, CEN reported. Speaking at the occasion, Ambassador Moin ul Haque paid tributes to President Lin Songtian for his endeavors for strengthening China-Pakistan friendship and his role in arranging high level events, especially the grand Reception at Diaoyutai State Guest House on 21st May 2021 to celebrate 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan. In the same year, under the guidance of Mr. Lin, a to-

tal of 21 new sister city and province MOUs were signed along with a sister city and province forum was jointly organized by the Pakistani Embassy and CPAFFC. Ambassador Haque also appreciated the role and efforts of President Lin Songtian to galvanize Chinese public and institutional support to assist Pakistan in times of natural calamities and environmental disasters, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic and last year's floods. In his remarks, Lin Songtian expressed his gratitude to the government and people of Pakistan for the conferment of civil award. He underlined that as All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and Iron Brothers, CPAFFC would continue to deepen China's ties with Pakistan and promote people-to-people and cultural cooperation.

Vietnam detains climate activist on tax evasion accusation

HANOI (Agencies): Vietnamese authorities have detained a prominent climate activist for alleged tax evasion, her husband said on Friday, adding to a list of environmentalists facing the accusation. Hoang Thi Minh Hong, the founder of now-defunct NGO Change, which aimed to tackle some of the country's most urgent environmental issues, was taken into custody in Ho Chi Minh City on Wednesday. "I can confirm Hong has been under temporary detention since May 31 with the accusation of tax evasion," Hoang Vinh Nam said. Hong founded Change in 2013, focusing on mobilising Vietnamese, particularly young people, to take action against pressing environmental issues including climate

change, the illegal wildlife trade, and pollution. She announced last year that Change would close after Vietnam's authoritarian government handed down prison terms for tax evasion to four environmental human rights defenders, Nguy Thi Khanh, Mai Phan Loi, Bach Hung Duong, and Dang Dinh Bach. "Vietnam's selective use of its vague and flawed tax law to target environmentalists and climate change activists with politically motivated prosecutions is a new, extremely troubling development," said Phil Robertson, the Deputy Asia Director of Human Rights Watch. "Leading environmental activist Hoang Thi Minh Hong is the latest victim in this accelerating crackdown."

China launches Asia's largest carbon capture project for coal-fired power sector

NANJING (Agencies): China Energy Investment Corporation (China Energy) on Friday announced that it has put Asia's largest carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS) facility for the coal-fired power generation sector into operation in east China's Jiangsu Province. The facility, attached to a generation unit at China Energy's Taizhou coal-fired power plant, will capture 500,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2) every year, China Energy said. "During the project's trial run, the CCUS system demonstrated reliable performance and high safety standards, and the energy efficiency indicators and product quality

are at or above their designed levels," said Ji Mingbin, president of China Energy Jiangsu Branch. He revealed that all CO2 produced and captured can be utilized, as the company has already secured contracts with eight firms. Primary applications for the captured CO2 include dry-ice manufacturing and the production of shielding gases for welding, according to Ji. China Energy, a coal-fired power generation giant, is one of the leading companies building pilot carbon capture and storage projects in China. These projects are among the country's endeavors to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

Meeting of Senate Standing Committee on Power was held here at Parliament House on Friday with Senator Saifullah Abro in Chair.



The Senate Committee was briefed about the Construction and tendering process of 765kV Dasu Hydro Power Station. MD NTDC apprised the Committee that Dasu Hydro Power Station is the first of its kind, who has 765kV capacity and comprises of two grid stations situating at Mansehra and Islamabad. The project is being funded by World Bank with an accumulative cost of around 700 Million USD, he

added. While reviewing the tendering process, Senator Saifullah Abro inquired as to why five years of experience is required for hiring of consultant who had previously worked in 765kV projects in the region whereas 12 years' experience in 380kV projects has been fixed for hiring of Contractor. He pointed out that why the same criteria of 765kV was not required for construction companies.

In distorted Buenos Aires rental market, it's dollar vs. peso

BUENOS AIRES (Agencies): Dollar-wielding foreigners living it up in Buenos Aires while locals scrape by; Argentina's sky-high inflation and weakening currency has yielded a schizophrenic rental market -- a bargain for some, a curse for others. Ordinarily, a middle-class couple like anthropologist Martina Campos Lopez, 33 and her computer technician husband Bruno Suarez, 43, would top rental agents' lists of eligible tenants. But they earn in pesos -- a currency trading at 488 to the dollar on the black market, where most people do their trading. More than a year ago, the couple had to give up their apartment in anticipation of a price hike. They have been unable to find another, and were forced to move in with Lopez's mother. With their toddler. "The most difficult is this feeling of being like a child

again, without independence," Lopez said as she showed AFP around the small house. "Our life is on pause. A temporary measure has become permanent. It is discouraging," she said. A room the couple uses as a bedroom is packed to the brim with household items from a former life: a coffee maker, microwave, a fan, a fridge. Boxes are stacked high in the bathroom. People such as Lopez are falling ever further behind as Argentina contends with inflation topping 100 percent year-on-year, and a fast-devaluing peso. Previously, Lopez and her husband spent half their income on rent. But today, "even with 70 percent, we cannot find anything." Property owners are not interested in receiving rent in pesos, never knowing what the rate will be in just a week, never mind a year. Property agent Fernanda

Morocco slams EU official for describing cities of Ceuta, Melilla as 'European'



Morocco yesterday criticised Margaritis Schinas, vice president of the European Commission, for describing the disputed cities of Ceuta and Melilla as "European", Anadolu news agency reported. On Wednesday, Spanish media said, the Spanish government submitted an official complaint to Rabat for describing the two cities as "Moroccan". Responding to journalists' question on the issue, Moroccan government spokesman Mustapha Baitas said: "It was necessary to stand

up to the slip that occurred, and we are proud of the very great partnership that brings us together with the Spanish neighbour." "Our partnership with Spain is based on trust and joint involvement in addressing various challenges, whether economic or social," he added. The cities of Melilla and Ceuta in northern Morocco, in addition to the Jaafari and other rocky islands in the Mediterranean, are under Spanish administration while Rabat considers them "occupied Moroccan outposts".

British Muslims oppose UK gov't appointment to lead inquiry into Leicester riots

LONDON (Agencies): The UK government's appointment of Lord Ian Austin to lead an independent review into last year's Leicester riots has been met with strong criticism. Mainstream British Muslim organisations, local councillors and activists have raised serious concerns over the suitability of the former Labour MP. Austin's impartiality and ability to conduct such a sensitive review in a fair manner has been questioned due to the 58-year-old's "divisive record and the serious allegations of Islamophobia." Communities Secretary Michael Gove announced last month that he had appointed Austin to lead the review. A panel of experts appointed by the government will investigate the causes of the violence and vandalism seen across the east of Leicester following a cricket match between Pakistan and India. Citing British intelligence, the Mail on Sunday reported days prior to Austin's appointment that elements close to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) incited British Hindus to confront Muslim youths in last summer's explosive riots. Expressing "deep concern" at the appointment of Austin, umbrella group the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) said that "it is crucial to have an independent reviewer who is impartial, fair, and capable of gaining the trust and confidence of all stakeholders." Urging Gove to reconsider, the MCB said: The appointment of Lord Austin, given his divisive record and the serious allegations of Islamophobia against him, has created deep apprehension among Muslims and other communities in Leicester. This casts doubts on his suitability to oversee a review aimed at building trust and harmony within our communities. Any such review led by Lord Austin will face questions about its credibility and legitimacy." In an open letter to the UK Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, the Federation of Muslim Organisations (FMO), which has 150 affiliates, also expressed "grave concern" at Austin's appointment.

US to build regional CIA hub in Lebanon, report says

The US is working on building a new regional hub for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Lebanon, within a huge embassy complex with an area of 93,000 square meters on a 27-hectares (about 64 acres) site in the capital, Beirut, intelligence sources reported yesterday. The complex, which is estimated to cost \$1 billion, will also include an arts centre, a hospital, a swimming pool, residential towers and a data collection centre, according to the French Intelligence Online website. The sources added that the US intelligence sees Lebanon as a safe and strategic location for the deployment of intelligence agents. Washington also intends to benefit from its excellent intelligence partnership with the Lebanese army's B2 military intelligence unit, according to the sources. The French website learned that US funding for the Lebanese army includes a guarantee that allows the US Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) unlimited access to its intelligence information.

Lebanon army on high alert following Israeli threats



The Lebanese army has declared a state of "maximum alert" on the country's southern border after the Israeli army threatened to dismantle a tent it uses along the Israeli-Lebanese border in the Bastra-Shebaa Farms area, the state-run National News Agency reported. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) operating in southern Lebanon quoted the Israeli patrol saying: "The tent is concentrated inside Israeli territory and it must be removed by the concerned authorities." The Lebanese army contested this. According to reports, the Israeli army has deployed dozens of armoured vehicles and tanks along the entire border. Meanwhile, the UNIFIL forces are making contact between the two parties to curb the state of tension.

IAEA deals blow to Israel, closes nuclear investigation into Iran site

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Wednesday announced the closure of the investigation into the "suspected" nuclear facility in Iran, which Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke about in a speech delivered in September 2019. In a new report distributed to the organisation's members, the agency stated that Iran: "Gave possible explanations for the uranium particles found at the suspicious Marivan site in Abadeh county... the matter is no longer outstanding at this stage." This report was issued a few days before the scheduled meeting of the IAEA's board of governors. Commenting on the announcement, Israeli journalist Barak Ravid tweeted: "The decision by the IAEA is a harsh blow to Israel because the information it provided led to the opening of the investigation, and the decision closes one of the most important investigations opened against Iran in recent years." According to Israel's allegations, the facility known as Marivan was linked to Iran's nuclear weapons programme.

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