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NATO chief says no timetable for Ukraine's membership; Zelensky calls that 'absurd'

VILNIUS, Lithuania (Agencies) - The issue of Ukraine's potential membership in NATO has created tensions at the annual NATO summit, as leaders grapple with differing perspectives on the matter. While NATO leaders stated that Ukraine would join the alliance "when allies agree and conditions are met," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky criticized the organization for not setting a specific timetable, labeling the situation as "absurd." NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg affirmed the commitment to Ukraine's membership and announced the removal of the membership action plan requirement, streamlining the path for Ukraine to join the alliance. However, despite some NATO members providing military support to Ukraine, there is no consensus among the 31 allies regarding Ukraine's admission into NATO. Instead, leaders decided to remove obstacles hin-

dering Ukraine's membership process, allowing for a swift integration once the conflict with Russia concludes. Zelensky strongly contested this decision, expressing his disappointment in the absence of a clear time frame for invitation or membership. He criticized the vague language regarding "conditions" for inviting Ukraine and questioned the readiness of NATO to extend an invitation. Zelensky stressed the importance of certainty, asserting that "uncertainty is weakness" and vowed to openly discuss this matter at the summit. NATO membership holds significant implications for Ukraine's security, particularly in countering the threat posed by Russia, which annexed Crimea and seized parts of eastern and southern Ukraine. Joining NATO would also necessitate reforms in Ukraine's security institutions, governance, and anti-corruption efforts, facilitating its path

towards European Union integration. Stoltenberg responded to Zelensky's concerns by emphasizing the importance of Ukraine's successful resolution of the ongoing conflict. He stated that without Ukraine prevailing in the war, membership discussions would be futile. The Ukrainian President is expected to hold discussions with US President Joe Biden and other NATO leaders during the summit. Deep divisions exist within the alliance regarding Ukraine's aspirations for NATO membership, with promises made in 2008 yet to materialize. While the Baltic states, including Lithuania hosting the summit, advocate for a clear pathway towards membership, the United States and Germany urge caution. Biden recently stated that Ukraine is not yet ready to join NATO, emphasizing the need for aspirant countries to fulfill democratic and governance qualifications.

Israel, US plan trade corridor connecting Israel with Gulf States

TEL AVIV (Agencies): Israel and the US have been working on a secret plan to build a trade land bridge connecting the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Israel, Israel's Ynet News revealed on Friday. This land bridge will lead from Dubai to Israel's seaports in Haifa, Ynet News disclosed, noting it is intended to export goods from the East to Europe through Israel and later for tourist movement. According to Israeli newspaper The Jerusalem Post, the plan was drafted by Shira Greenberg, the chief economist of the Finance Ministry during the former government of Yair Lapid. Trucks will be able to transport goods through this trade corridor, significantly reducing transportation costs and time. The idea is to enable the arrival of a single truck and driver from Dubai to the port of Haifa, for example, without changing drivers and trucks at border crossings between countries, Ynet News explained, pointing out that the plan was presented to US Special Envoy Amos Hochstein. According to senior Israeli officials, the US was enthusiastic about the plan and began promoting it with the involved countries: the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. This infrastructure project crosses borders that will start in the UAE, pass through Saudi Arabia and end at the seaports of Israel, later expanding to Bahrain and Oman. Ynet

News reported that the plan is expected to advance even before Israel and Saudi Arabia establish formal ties because all parties will benefit from shorter transit times and low shipping costs, bridging the gap between the Far East and Europe. The plan will require all countries to agree on standardising the trucks so they can move between all countries and agree on driver's licenses for the drivers authorised to travel smoothly and without delays along the route. According to the Israeli newspaper, the project will promote connectivity between Israel and regional countries in transportation, infrastructure and information. Sources familiar with the plan's details confirmed that the project was made possible thanks to the signing of the Abraham Accords and the US commitment to promoting peace in the region. A Foreign Ministry document obtained by Ynet News and Yedioth Ahronoth stated: "The Abraham Accords have changed the political reality in our region and opened up new transportation routes. A regional land connectivity project between the Gulf states and Israel will be a game-changer that will upgrade global trade in the Middle East, improve Israel's position as a hub for transporting goods from the Far East to the Western world and highlight the role of the United States in the region."

Algeria's energy giant Sonatrach exports 21 bln USD worth of hydrocarbons in Jan-May

ALGIERS (Xinhua): Algeria's state-owned energy company Sonatrach announced on Monday that it had exported hydrocarbons with a total worth of 21 billion U.S. dollars from January to May. According to a report released by Sonatrach, the company sold 68 million tonnes of oil equivalent in the first five months of this year, registering a year-on-year increase of 2 percent. The company exported 38 million tonnes of oil equivalent from January to May, compared with the 37 million tonnes of oil equivalent exported during the same period of last year. Sonatrach's export revenue hit 60 billion U.S. dollars in 2022, according to the report.

Volcano erupts in Iceland

HELSINKI (APP): A volcano has erupted in Iceland after several days of earthquakes, Icelandic broadcaster RUV reported on Monday. The eruption on the Reykjanes Peninsula near the capital Reykjavik began at around 16:40 local time on Monday, according to the Icelandic Meteorological Office. Geophysics professor Magnus Tumi Gudmundsson told RUV that the eruption is small so far, but it is too early to say how it will develop. The lava flow on Monday evening was 200 meters long. The Icelandic Meteorological Office compared this to the start of volcanic activity in the area in 2021 and 2022.

France to send Ukraine SCALP long-range missiles: Macron

France will provide Ukraine with SCALP long-range cruise missiles to help Kyiv's forces strike targets deep behind Russian lines, President Emmanuel Macron said Tuesday. Arriving at a NATO summit focused on Kyiv's battle against Moscow's invasion, Macron said Paris would send the SCALP missile, already supplied by London under the name "Storm Shadow". Macron said the new missile delivery was designed to allow Ukraine to strike at Russian occupation forces "in depth" during its counteroffensive to liberate its territory. The SCALP/Storm Shadow is an Anglo-French weapon with a range of 250 kilometres (155 miles) -- the longest of any Western weapon supplied to Ukraine so far -- and Britain announced in May that it would supply a batch of the advanced weapons. Russia reacted with fury, warning that London risked being dragged directly into the conflict, and even some Western allies were concerned that Kyiv might conduct strikes into Russia itself.

Saudi Arabia deposits \$2bln with SBP

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar said here on Tuesday that the brotherly country Saudi Arabia has deposited \$2 billion with State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), increasing the total foreign exchange reserves to around \$11.7 billion. "Our brotherly country Saudi Arabia had made an announcement recently that it would deposit its \$2 billion with State Bank of Pakistan. They have placed the deposits and the amount has been credited to SBP," the minister said at a press conference. He said, this would be a straight away increase in the country's foreign exchange reserves that stood at around \$9.7 billion on last Friday he said, however added the new position of exchange reserves would be reflected from coming Friday. The Minister on behalf of Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Chief of Army Staff, Asim Munir, and the nation thanked Saudi Leadership particularly King Salman, Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman for this support. He said Saudi Arabia



has been playing role of a brother for Pakistan and stands with it at every occasion. The minister said that some more good developments would follow and lead the economy towards growth, adding that the economy of the country has already been stabilized with the efforts of the incumbent government. It is pertinent to mention here that on Monday the Fitch Ratings has upgraded Pakistan's Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) to 'CCC' from 'CCC', indicating a positive development towards the betterment of the country's economy. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar in a tweet said it was another positive development towards current economic revival journey.

Six dead in Nepal tourist helicopter crash

All six people aboard a tourist helicopter in Nepal were killed when it crashed soon after take-off near Mount Everest on Tuesday, aviation authorities said. The Manang Air chopper was heading for the capital Kathmandu from near Lukla, the gateway for climbing expeditions to the world's highest peak, but lost contact about 10 minutes after taking off at 10:04 am (0419 GMT). "Six bodies have been found at the crash site,"

Gyanendra Bhul of the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal told AFP. Nepal is notorious for its poor aviation safety, and the latest incident comes six months after a plane crash in the country's west that killed all 72 people on board. The Himalayan republic has some of the world's most remote and tricky runways, flanked by snow-capped peaks with approaches that pose a challenge even for accomplished pilots.

ASEAN top diplomats gather in Indonesia for regional summit

ANKARA (APP): The 56th meeting of the foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) began on Tuesday in Indonesia. The top diplomats of ASEAN countries are likely to discuss the ongoing crisis in Myanmar and tensions in the South China Sea. The bloc's Secretary General Kao Kim Hourn early Tuesday briefed the foreign ministers on the implementation of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty Plan of Action (2023-2027), a brief statement by the grouping said on Twitter. The summit will be attended by some 29 countries, along with the ASEAN Secretariat and the European Union, and more than 1,100 delegates, according to the Indonesian Foreign Ministry. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov



are also expected to attend the summit which will continue till July 14. Indonesia is the chair of ASEAN for 2023, which groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. ASEAN is a political and economic union of 10 member states in Southeast Asia, which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic, political, and sociocultural integration between its members in Asia-Pacific.

China renews orange alert for high temperatures

BEIJING (Xinhua): China's national observatory on Tuesday renewed an orange alert, the second-highest alert level for high temperatures, as heatwaves scorch vast swathes of the country. During daylight hours on Tuesday, temperatures in parts of north China, regions between the Yellow River and the Huaihe River, the Jiangnan Plain, regions south of the Yangtze River, south China, Sichuan Basin and Shaanxi Province are forecast to top 35 degrees

Celsius, according to the National Meteorological Center. In some areas of Hebei, Henan, Zhejiang and Yunnan, temperatures may surpass 40 degrees Celsius. People are advised to avoid outdoor activities during high-temperature periods, and workers should shorten their duration of exposure to heat, according to the meteorological center. Local governments have been asked to adopt appropriate measures to prevent fires triggered by electrical overloads.

Elderly man hospitalized after crocodile attack in northern Australia

CANBERRA (Xinhua): An elderly man is in hospital after being attacked by a crocodile in Australia's Northern Territory (NT). The 67-year-old was swimming at Wangi Falls, a popular spot in the Litchfield National Park south of Darwin, on Monday when he was mauled by a saltwater crocodile estimated to be two meters long. He was given first aid at the scene by Taneka Starr, an off-duty police offi-

cer, and a nurse before being rushed to the nearby Batchelor medical center to be treated for non-life-threatening injuries to his arm and back. He was later transferred to the Royal Darwin Hospital. Dean McAdam, head of Northern Australian Parks at the Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security, said access to Wangi Falls would be closed until authorities could guarantee the public's safety.

Taliban halt Sweden activities in Afghanistan after Quran burning

KABUL (Agencies): The Taliban administration halted all activities by Sweden in Afghanistan on Tuesday in response to the burning of a Quran in Stockholm last month, and a major Swedish aid group said it was seeking clarification about the impact on its programmes, Reuters reports. "After the insulting of the holy Quran and granting of permission for insulting of Muslim beliefs ... The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is ordering the stopping of all activities of Sweden in Afghanistan," said Zabihullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the Taliban administration, in a statement. An Iraqi immigrant to Sweden burned a Quran outside a Stockholm mosque last month, causing outrage in the Muslim world. Swedish officials have deplored the act but said they could not prevent it because of free speech rules. Sweden no longer has an embassy in Afghanistan since the Taliban took over in 2021. The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) aid organisation said it was seeking clarification with

Taliban authorities on whether its operations would be affected. "SCA is not a Swedish government entity, SCA is independent and impartial in relation to all political stakeholders and states, and strongly condemns all desecration of the Holy Quran," the NGO said in a statement. "For over 40 years, SCA has been working in close collaboration with the rural population and in deep respect of both Islam and local traditions in Afghanistan," it said. Thousands of Afghan staff work for the organisation throughout the country in health, education and rural development, and treated 2.5 million patients in its health clinics last year. The Taliban administration did not provide details on which organisations would be affected by its ban. Afghanistan's aid sector has already been severely hampered by a series of restrictions, including on female aid workers. Funding reductions for a United Nations-led annual humanitarian plan suggests donor countries are pulling back on financial support.

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.

E-Hujra Technical Wing Collaborates with Mandan Girls College to Enhance IT Education

PESHAWAR (Khyber Mail): A highly productive online Zoom meeting was held on Sunday, July 9, 2023, at 10:00 am PST, between the esteemed International IT Professionals of e-Hujra Technical Wing and IT teachers and students from Mandan Girls College, Bannu. The meeting aimed to address critical issues, discuss available facilities, and provide valuable suggestions to enhance the educational experience of IT students. The following are the key highlights from the meeting:

Issues:
Students' dependency on administrative intervention for productivity was identified as a concern. Students lacked project proposals despite having project titles. The reliance on external assistance and the use of ready-made solutions for projects



were noted. Insufficient education on project requirements and expectations was acknowledged. The need for course revision and a logical order in the curriculum was emphasized. Power issues and the absence of a solar system were identified as challenges. Limited online usage by students was discussed. The absence of courses on cloud computing and other areas was raised. Inadequate availability of servers was highlighted.

Facilities:
The computer lab at Mandan Girls

College currently consists of 9 PCs loaded with required Windows-based software, out of a maximum of 25 PCs. The student population ranges from 35 to 45 during any given semester on average. Essential software taught includes project management systems, operating systems, databases, programming languages, web development tools, networking software, open-source software, mobile/Android development tools, data structures tools, and system analysis tools. The college has a team of four dedicated computer science teachers.

NIH doubles anti-venom stock to tackle snakebite envenomation during monsoon season

PESHAWAR (APP): The National Institute of Health (NIH), one of the most prestigious institution involved in multi-disciplinary public health-related activities, has increased its stock of anti-venom to tackle the growing threat of snakebite envenomation in the country during the monsoon season. In a video advisory issued by

NIH for the awareness of the public about the treatment of snakebites, NIH warns that in flood-hit areas and those receiving much rains there are risks of an increase in incidents of snake bites. "Snakebite is a significant, but often neglected health issue affecting millions of people in developing countries," adds the video message. World Health Organization (WHO) has declared snake bite as a neglected tropical disease which is affecting around 30,000 people in Pa-

kistan on an annual basis. The main reason behind death due to snakebites is a lack of awareness among people who instead of forthwith rushing patients to hospital, prefer for traditional way of treatment. In the health advisory, NIH team members apprised people to tackle snakebites for proper treatment of victims. Apart from the video message, NIH also prepared a pictorial display for educating the public about better treatment of snake bite victims.

Marriyum vows to take country out of quagmire

PESHAWAR (Agencies): Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb on Tuesday vowed to take the country out of the quagmire. Speaking to media, Aurangzeb took a swipe at the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), saying, "The police and Rangers' vehicles were set to fire at Zaman Park. Through the use of the vote, the PTI chief was removed from his position as prime minister". "During the PTI's tenure, nothing has been done to promote the growth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The people of KP will no longer vote for the PTI chief", she maintained. Aurangzeb praised her party, saying, "The PML-N has a history of advancing the country.

Before we leave the government, we will solve every issue that the masses are facing". Aurangzeb on Monday assailed the PTI chief over the foreign funding case. Addressing a press conference, Aurangzeb chided the embattled party, saying, "Today the PTI is having no spokesperson. But only Twitter is the spokesperson for the party these days." She spoke about the "torture" the leaders of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) endured while the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was in power. "Khawaja Asif, Khawaja Saad Rafique, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and Hamza Shahbaz had to face jail and were given no facility," she said.

Girls From Ranra Child Welfare Foundation Meet AC

PESHAWAR (APP): The girls from Ranra Child Welfare Foundation on Tuesday met with Assistant Commissioner (AC) Sayyeda Zainab Naqvi here at the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) office. On their arrival, Assistant Commissioner Sayyeda Zainab Naqvi welcomed the children at the DC office and informed them regarding facilities being provided by the district administration to its people. On the occasion, she emphasized upon the children to take extra inter-

est in their education as they could also become an officer after acquiring higher education. She told the children that hard work was a must to achieve success in life. The Chairman Ranra Child Welfare Foundation, Mehwish Ali thanked the AC and said these children would be taken on visits to the offices of various female officers for motivation. She said the children would be told that our women fork was second to none in different fields of life.

CEIF IMSciences Hosts Successful Three-Day Islamic Finance Summer School in Nathiagali



PESHAWAR (Agencies): CEIF IMSciences, the Center for Excellence in Islamic Finance at the Institute of Management Sciences (IMSciences), organized a highly informative and engaging three-day summer school focused on advancing concepts in Islamic finance. The summer school aimed to deepen participants' understanding of Islamic finance through immersive concept-retreat sessions and intellectual walks. Esteemed professionals from the field of Islamic finance were brought together to stimulate innovative ideas and foster progress in the industry. The event was graced by the presence of Ghulam Muhammad Abbasi, Director of the Islamic Finance Policy Department at the State Bank of Pakistan, who served as the Chief Guest. Participants and speakers from prominent institutions including the State Bank of Pakistan, The Bank of Punjab (Taqla Islamic Banking), Bank Alfalah Islamic, Meezan Bank, Faysal Bank, The Bank of Khyber, National Bank of Pakistan (Aitemaad Islamic Banking), Bank Islami, Riphah International University, U-Microfinance Bank, and Dubai

Islamic Bank attended the summer school. The diverse range of participants and speakers added significant value to the discussions and allowed for a holistic exploration of Islamic finance concepts. CEIF IMSciences is committed to promoting excellence in Islamic finance education, research, and the adoption of best industry practices. The regular summer school is one of the initiatives undertaken by CEIF IMSciences to drive knowledge-sharing and facilitate advancements in the field. Dr. Usman Ghani, Director of IMSciences, expressed gratitude to all the participants and institutions for their valuable support and contribution to the success of the summer school. The three-day Islamic Finance Summer School at Nathiagali served as a platform for robust discussions, idea exchange, and networking among professionals in the Islamic finance industry. It is expected to have a positive impact on the future of Islamic finance education and practice in Pakistan. CEIF IMSciences remains dedicated to its mission of nurturing talent and promoting excellence in Islamic finance.

37th MCMC delegation visits divisional headquarters Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD (APP): The 37th Mid-Career Management Course (MCMC), National Institute of Management Islamabad Participants Officers Tuesday visited Divisional Headquarters Abbottabad during Inland Study Tour. Commissioner Hazara Division Amir Sultan Tareen welcomed the participants and briefed the visiting delegation. At the same time, Additional Deputy Commissioner Jibril Raza gave a detailed briefing regarding Hazara Division and Divisional Headquarters Abbottabad. During the briefing, the ADC discussed the geographical features of the region, health, education, provision of services to the citizens, revenue services, one window operation, computerization of land records, major hydropower projects including Dasu Hydropower Project (DHPP), Diamir Bhasha Dam, Suki Kanari and Balakot Hydropower

Project and highlighted various issues regarding the challenges faced by the administration. While talking about the city improvement project, Commissioner Hazara said that under-construction developmental schemes include a complete change of clean drinking water system, solid waste management, construction of pedestrian paths inside the market, the uplifting, establishment of Shirwan Park, conversion of dumping site in Salhad into Park would bring a change. The Amir Sultan informed the participants in detail about the opening of Thandiani Road and new opportunities for tourism in the region, he reiterated that the district administration is taking all possible steps for the development of tourism and the construction of Havelian Langra Bypass Road which has improved tourism as well as traffic control within the city.

Election to be held on time: Fazlur Rehman

PESHAWAR (Agencies): Pakistan Democratic Movement head Maulana Fazlur Rehman said on Sunday elections would be held on time. He said hopefully, the nation would not put the country to any test again by electing unpopular leaders. Talking to senior journalists, the PDM chief said after one month the term of the central government would be completed and the prime minister made it clear that the PDM would dissolve the assemblies after the completion

of term. He further said that help from friendly countries and IMF had also been received mentioning that the country was very weak economically and highlighted that the investment of friendly countries in Pakistan would be the second big step to improve the economy. He said PTI chief tried to halt CPEC and there was a contradiction in his words and actions and it was essential to remove him from the government.

Kohat Police arrest 11 suspects in search and strike operation

Kohat (APP): Kohat Shakardara Police on Sunday arrested 11 suspected during a Search and strike operation against anti-social elements at various places was carried out. During the operation, police recovered weapons and drugs from their possession, including 1 Kalashnikov, 1 pistol, 4 chargers, dozens of cartridges and 1030 grams of hash-

ish. The search operation was carried out under and led by DSP Lachi Aqiq Hussain and SHO Shakardara Amjad Khan. A heavy contingent of police and elite force participated in the search operation at the targeted places. Various cases have been registered in Shakardara police station against the suspects and further investigation has been initiated.

Governor visits MMC, inquires after injured DSP,CTD personnel

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali on Sunday visited Maradan Medical Complex and inquired after the injured DSP Farooq Zaman and CTD personnel who were injured in a terrorist attack. The Governor was accompanied by Provincial Minister for Irrigation Fazle Elahi, former members of the Provincial Assembly Amanat Shah, Taj-ul-Amin Jabal, Maulana Israr-ul-Haq, and President of Maradan Chamber of Commerce Zahir Shah. The Governor was informed about the facilities and treatment being provided to the injured in the hospital. He directed the hospital administration to ensure the provision of all possible medical facilities to the injured police officers and CTD personnel. The Governor asked if there is a shortage of medical facilities here, the injured can be shifted to another hospital for better treatment. The hospital administration assured the Governor that the best possible treatment is being provided to the injured and they will recover soon.

During the visit, the Governor also toured various wards of the hospital and inquired about the treatment of patients suffering from different ailments. The Governor was informed by the hospital administration about the difficulties they are facing in providing treatment due to the lack of necessary machinery. The Governor assured the hospital administration that the lack of required machinery will be addressed on a priority basis. Talking to the media representatives on this occasion, the Governor said that terrorism is a sore that Federal and provincial governments are continuously trying to eradicate. However, he urged the public to play their role as responsible citizens in establishing peace and eliminating terrorism. Later, during his visit to Maradan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Governor Ghulam Ali visited the residence of Chamber's President, Zahir Shah, where he congratulated him on performing Hajj and also held meetings with the business community.

Police traced out missing Christian Women in Rawalpindi

PESHAWAR (APP): The drop scene of the mysterious disappearance of two Christian women was solved as both traced out by the police and recovered them from Rawalpindi from their relative house, an official of the police said here Sunday. He said two Christian women traced out from a house of their relative in Rawalpindi as both of them, deaf and dumb, went to their relative's house due to the violence of one's husband. Police traced Christian women on a tip-off. The of-

ficial said that a few days ago women went missing from Zargarabad and both the women are deprived of hearing and speech. After the report of missing the women, the Police started an investigation on modern lines and traced both Women from Rawalpindi from one of the relative's houses. The report of disappearance was filed in Yeka Tut Police Station and since then the Police started search operations through modern lines and succeeded in tracing them at Rawalpindi.

PML-N Women wing stage protest against Sweden incident

PESHAWAR (APP): Muslim Women's League protested outside the Press Club against the Sweden incident with a large number of Children also participating in the protest demonstration. Protesters raised slogans against the Swedish government and said that the Holy Quran

is our red line, its desecration is not acceptable under any circumstances. Those who desecrate the Holy Quran should be made a lesson, the protestors said. The government raised its voice against this incident at the international level, the protestors said.



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Gandhara Symposium 2023: Revitalizing Pakistan's Gandhara Civilization and Buddhist Heritage

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Gandhara Symposium 2023, themed "Cultural Diplomacy: Reviving Gandhara Civilization and Buddhist Heritage in Pakistan," is set to take place in Islamabad from July 11-13, 2023. Organized by the PM Task Force on Gandhara Tourism, the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), and the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the three-day symposium will encompass various sessions, a round table, museum visits, and a cultural evening. The symposium will commence with an inaugural session featuring the esteemed presence of His Excellency Dr. Arif Alvi, the President of Pakistan, as the Chief Guest. Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, Minister of State

and Chairman of the PM Task Force on Gandhara Tourism, will serve as the Guest of Honour. The concluding session will include an address by Senator Talha Mahmood, Federal Minister for Religious Affairs & Inter-Faith Harmony. Distinguished speakers from Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, Nepal, Sri Lanka, China, and Pakistan will participate in the Gandhara Symposium. Faith leaders, archaeologists, curators, experts, religious scholars, and academics will engage in discussions highlighting the profound significance of the Gandhara civilization and its Buddhist heritage. Representatives from Pakistan's tourism industry will also contribute their perspectives during the symposium. The Gandhara civilization, predomi-

nantly located in what is now modern-day Pakistan, flourished as a cultural hub along ancient trade routes. Notably, its artistic creativity was unparalleled. Through paintings, sculptures, coins, pottery, and their association with Buddhism, the excavated cities of the Gandhara civilization showcased a well-structured and contemporary way of life. Preserving and promoting Pakistan's Buddhist Gandhara heritage is of utmost importance. Modern platforms, including digital and social media, offer powerful tools for showcasing the Buddhist Gandhara heritage to the world. The sacred sites, sculptures, and artifacts of Gandhara not only serve as relics of the past but also inspire believers and attract tourists from across the globe.

Serena Hotels Organizes Panel Discussion to Address Access to Higher Education

ISLAMABAD (Adnan Hameed): Serena Hotels, as part of its Public Diplomacy initiative Raabta, hosted a thought-provoking panel discussion focused on the challenges and opportunities surrounding access to higher education in Pakistan. Recognizing that limited access and lack of awareness among talented students hinder social mobility, perpetuate inequality, and constrain the country's progress, the event aimed to explore these barriers and propose actionable recommendations to enhance educational opportunities. The panel discussion, moderated by Sidra Iqbal, an influential advocate for gender inclusion and diversity, brought together a diverse group of experts, policymakers, educators, and stakeholders. Representatives



from academia, non-profit organizations dedicated to education outreach, members of diplomatic missions, government officials, and students from various colleges and universities participated in the event. The panel comprised eminent educators and policymakers, including Dr. Osman Hasan, Pro-rector Academics NUST, Mr. Saleem Abdul Razaque, Programme Director USEFP, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman Higher Education Commission Pakistan, and Ms. Sarah Pervez, Head of Education, British Council.

Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan inaugurates Directorate of Parliamentary Forums

Islamabad (KhyberMail): National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf has said Parliament is the only platform that promotes public friendly legislation. He said that Parliamentary forums like Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR), Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs, Young Parliamentary Forum (YPF) provide unparalleled assistance to parliamentarians for furthering the cause of effective legislation. He expressed these views while inaugurating Directorate of Parliamentary Forums at



Parliament House Islamabad, today. While appreciating the efforts of Special Initiatives Wing to create Directorate of Parliamentary Forum, he said Directorate aims to create a platform that facilitates the active engagement of citizens in shaping policies, legislation, and



governance. He further stated that Directorate of Parliamentary Forums would also serve as a bridge connecting the public with their elected representatives, empowering them to contribute their ideas, concerns, and suggestions effectively.

PM thanks Saudi Arabia for US\$2 billion deposit to State Bank

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday extended his "deep gratitude" to the leadership and brotherly people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the US\$2 billion deposit with the State Bank of Pakistan. "I would like to especially thank my brother Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman for ensuring this financial support to Pakistan," he wrote on Twitter. The prime minister hoped

that the deposit would strengthen Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves and reflected the growing confidence of the brotherly countries and the international community in the country's economic turnaround. "We remain committed to making all necessary efforts to improve Pakistan's economy," he said. He lauded Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and army chief General Syed Asim Munir for the valuable efforts they made in this regard.

Recharge Pakistan project gets approval of US\$77.8 mln funding: Sherry Rehman

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Sherry Rehman Tuesday announced a breakthrough update on securing an approval of US\$ 77.8 million funding for the Recharge Pakistan project. The minister took to Twitter inform the masses on the important development and termed it a good news for Pakistan. Senator Rehman said the Recharge Pakistan initiative would be implemented in next 7 years which included green climate finance resources of US\$ 66 million and co-financing of approximately US\$ 11.8 million.

The project, she said aimed to initiate ecosystem-based adaptation measures namely flood water harvesting, flood risk management, establishment of green infrastructure in several priority areas and capacity building of communities affected by climate change. The project also included capacity building of the government of Pakistan, including all provinces and stakeholders, to implement projects related to climate change, she added. Sherry Rehman said the approval of the Recharge Pakistan project was a major achievement of the government.

NHMP making dedicated efforts to control accidents on motorways, highways

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Highway and Motorway Police (NHMP) have been making dedicated efforts to control accidents on motorways and federalized highways by ensuring strict enforcement of traffic laws. An official of NHMP told APP on Tuesday that strict enforcement of law under National Highways Safety Ordinance 2000 and imposition of fines under section 79 of NHSP, 2000 against violators specially involved in careless driving, over speeding, lane violation etc were among the steps taken to control accidents. He said that FIRs under section 279 and other relevant sections of Pakistan Penal Code were also lodged against the violators found in rash or negligent driving. The official said that extensive use of day and night speed checking cameras was being done to avoid accidents due to over speeding. Moreover, he said that checking of tyres with treads and air pressure gauges were also being done at toll plazas to prevent tyre burst accidents. He said that anti-doing points were established to avoid accidents due to dozing at the wheel. In addition to that surprise and random checking of vehicles at night time to check the physical status of drivers was being done, he added.

He said that road safety seminars and walks at the beat and sector level were arranged on road side hotel/pumps and truck stations to inform drivers regarding road safety. The NHMP official said that seminars, walks/counselling and briefing sessions were also conducted for the drivers regarding mechanical fitness of the vehicles. He said that briefings were given regarding road safety to the road users at toll plazas as well as through mobile Education Unit. Surprise checking and patrolling by the sector commander was being done and strict action taken against lane violators, he added. Briefings were given and education imparted at different institutes/school/ colleges as the youngsters were the major users of bikes, he said adding special emphasis was given on enforcement against underage riding and overloading on motor bikes. The official said that strict action was being taken against motorcyclists for not wearing a helmet, dangerous riding, one wheeling, triple riding, without black/ side view mirror, one way violation etc. He said that a record of vehicles had been compiled under Public Service Vehicle Management (PSVM) and a record of change of tires of vehicles had been compiled.

Senate Standing Committee on Interior



Islamabad (Agencies): The Senate Standing Committee on Interior met under the Chair of Senator Mohsin Aziz. At the outset of the meeting, the committee expressed its displeasure over the delayed provision of working papers and the lack of preparation related to the agenda items. This lack of readiness led the committee to defer several agenda items for future consideration. The deferred items included important legislative and non legislative business including the briefing by the secretary interior and DG FIA on the recent incident of capsizing of boat in Greece which resulted into loss of many young Pakistanis who were trying to settle abroad for better sources of livelihood. The committee expressed serious reservations on the fact that the Ministry sought deferments on all the bills that too just 30 minutes before the commencement of the meeting. The committee observed that, the ministry's response has always been the same however it was observed that now it has become more persistence and non professional. The chairman committee said that he has tried every possible way to redress this issue but to no avail and said that the last option left is to move a privilege motion against the ministry. The committee regrettfully deferred the meeting up till next week. The meeting was attended by Senator Samina Mumtaz Gilani, Rana Maqbool Ahmed, Shahadat Awan, Fauzia Arshad, Kamil Ali Agha, Denesh Kumar, Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti and Senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan. Officials of some relevant departments were also in attendance.

Taking a Stand Against Land Encroachment

KARACHI (Staff Report): The alarming rise of land encroachment, particularly in the Sindh province, calls for comprehensive reforms and the urgent need for incorruptible law enforcement officials. The pervasive presence of the land mafia has infiltrated various sectors, exemplified by the recent clash between the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) and Saima Builders, an unscrupulous housing construction company. Despite the Sindh government's support, the PCAA successfully thwarted the company's attempts to encroach upon their rightful land. However, in response, the company resorted to harassing PCAA officials who were defending their organization's lawful property.

Colorful Ceremony Marks the Start of Shandur Polo Festival

Shandur (Khyber Mail): The highly anticipated Shandur Polo Festival commenced on Friday with a vibrant ceremony at the renowned Shandur polo ground, situated at the highest altitude in the world. The festival attracted thousands of enthusiastic local and foreign tourists, adding to the festive atmosphere. Commissioner Malakand Division, Shahidullah Khan, inaugurated the event by throwing the ball in the inaugural match, officially marking the beginning of the festival. The ceremony witnessed the presence of distinguished guests, including Mohammad Bakhtiar Khan, Director General of Culture and Tourism Authority, Brigadier Imran Khan from the Pakistan Army, and officials from the district administration. The festival kicked off with an exciting match between Sub-Division Mastuj and Yasin Gilgit-Baltistan, in which Sub-Division Mastuj emerged victorious with a score of five goals against four. Over the course of three days, five teams from Chitral and Gilgit-Baltistan, organized under the auspices of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tourism and Culture Authority, will compete against each other. The matches take place in the breathtaking setting of the Shandur Polo



Ground, nestled amidst the forest at an astounding altitude of 12,500 feet. The festival's dedicated camp offers tourists and polo enthusiasts a stunning view of the natural lake of Shandur and the majestic mountains that serve as a backdrop. Chitral and Gilgit-Baltistan are particularly renowned for their polo prowess, making the matches a must-watch spectacle for visitors.

Speaker National Assembly meets two youngest Interns of NA of Pakistan

Islamabad (Khyber Mail): The Speaker of the National Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Raja Pervez Ashraf meets Sarish Durrani and Ghulam Qadir Khan; two of the youngest Interns of the National Assembly of Pakistan. During the meeting Raja Pervez Ashraf appreciated their passion and commitment



to learn and play an active part in see the development of beloved Pakistan.

ANF seizes over 3400 kg of drugs worth \$86 mln in 26 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): In a series of 26 counter-narcotics operations conducted throughout Pakistan, the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) successfully seized a staggering 3400.491 kilograms of drugs with an estimated international value of \$86.324 million. The operations resulted in the arrest of 28 individuals, including five women, and the impoundment of 10 vehicles. According to a spokesperson from the ANF Headquarters, the confiscated drugs consisted of various substances. The largest quantity seized was 3248 kilograms of opium, followed by 2,569 kilograms of heroin, 108.795 kilograms of hashish, 762 grams of cocaine, 40.291 kilograms of methamphetamine (commonly known as Ice), 50 grams of weed, and 24

grams of ecstasy tablets (50 tablets). ANF Balochistan, in its five operations, played a significant role by recovering 3282 kilograms of drugs. The operations led to the arrest of five individuals involved in drug smuggling, and three vehicles were impounded. The drugs seized in Balochistan included 3224 kilograms of opium, 20 kilograms of hashish, and 38 kilograms of methamphetamine (Ice). In four operations conducted by ANF Punjab, a total of 74.066 kilograms of drugs were recovered. The operations resulted in the arrest of nine individuals, including four women, and the impoundment of two vehicles. The seized drugs in Punjab comprised 24 kilograms of opium, 0.131 kilograms of heroin, and 49.935 kilograms of hashish.

Zong, Sehat Kahani join hands to empower Pakistan through digital health

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading telecommunications operator announced a partnership with Sehat Kahani, a pioneering telemedicine platform to extend the reach of telemedicine services across Pakistan. The new collaboration was launched during a contract signing ceremony held here, said a news release on Tuesday. The contract signing between Zong 4G and Sehat Kahani marks an important milestone in their partnership. The ceremony was attended by the presence of Dr.

Sara Saeed Khurram, CEO of Sehat Kahani, and representatives from Zong 4G. Through this collaboration, Zong 4G and Sehat Kahani aim to extend the reach of telemedicine services across Pakistan. Telemedicine has emerged as a game-changer in healthcare, allowing patients to consult healthcare professionals remotely, thereby reducing the barriers of distance and time. By harnessing Zong 4G's robust network infrastructure and Sehat Kahani's innovative telemedicine platform.

World Youth Skills Day to be marked on July 15

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Youth Skills Day will be marked on July 15 (Saturday) across the globe including Pakistan which aimed to encourage youth to celebrate the value of acquiring skills like building, making, and creating as a way to achieve personal success and fulfillment. By empowering young people, they can better advance the broader mission of the United Nations (UN) for lasting peace, sustainable development, and human rights for all, according to UN Secretary-General Antnio Guterres. A UN resolution to establish a World Youth Skills Day was adopted by the General Assembly on December 18, 2014. On the UN’s website, they state that education and training are the keys to success

in the workforce. However, unfortunately, existing systems are failing to address the learning needs of many young people. A large number of youths have low levels of achievement in basic literacy and numeracy, according to surveys. Skills and jobs for youth feature prominently in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Both the resolution and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) quote an International Labour Organization (ILO) publication which states that 73.4 million young people were estimated to be unemployed in 2015, which equated to a 13.1% youth unemployment rate. The figure was expected to increase in most regions by 2017.

Unleashing power of gender equality for a prosperous Pakistan: UNFPA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan is among the eight countries to account for half of the projected global population growth by 2050 with the country’s population currently estimated at 240.5 million and is projected to reach a staggering 403 million by 2050, said UNFPA Pakistan Representative Dr. Luay Shabaneh. According to a press statement issued here on World Population Day by UNFPA, he said the country, as home to almost 3 percent of the global population, holds a significant role in shaping the future and well-being of humanity. He said the rapid population growth in Pakistan poses multifaceted challenges and opportunities adding while it presents immense human capital

potential, harnessing this potential requires concerted efforts in ensuring gender equality, women empowerment, and access to quality education and healthcare. Women and girls must be at the heart of all efforts. He said that investing in women’s health and education, addressing gender disparities, and providing economic opportunities are critical steps toward paving a path for a sustainable and prosperous future. He advised that empowering women through employment opportunities can harness their potential, with a rise in their participation in the labour market adding that this can further increase the labour absorption needs that is requiring for a substantial rise in economic growth.

Bahawalpur youth bags world record

BAHAWALPUR (APP): The Names of two youths hailing from Bahawalpur have been inducted into Guinness Book of World Record 2023 for planting the largest saplings in the world. A press release issued here said that two youths belonging to Bahawalpur identified as Abdullah Tanseer and Haider Mustafa Qureshi participated in the word formation spelled “TAKMEEL” which was created from 3,296 saplings over an area of 1,200 square feet here in Bahawalpur. The local youth in collaboration with Takmeel Square officials and Paksarzameen collected 3,300 saplings of native species with

the consultation of the Department of Forestry if they were suitable for the specified region. The event started with a white chalk outline of the word and proceeded with members cohesively digging, planting, and watering these plants as time went by. For the recording process to be completely transparent, independent personnel were seen examining and verifying every aspect throughout the process. Local tv channels have also given coverage to the event and it was declared as the world’s largest saplings word after induction in the Guinness Book of World Records, the press release concluded.

Preparation of Pakistan Street Child Footballers for Norway Cup at peak

MIRPUR (APP): Final training camp for Pakistan Street Child Football Team, hailing from various parts of the country including AJK - mostly belonging to the illustrious UK-based NGO Muslim Hands International, for the upcoming Norway Cup tournament, continued in the Federal metropolis for the second consecutive day on Sunday. The regional head media wing of the Muslim Hands AJK Raja Qamar Atta told APP here Sunday evening that the training camp of the National Street Child Football Team had begun on July 8, Saturday,2023 at the Islamabad sports Complex. According to

the declaration unveiled by the Pakistan Street Child Football Team the selection of the squad for participation in the World Youth Football Cup “Norway Cup” scheduled to be held in Norway from July 27, 2023, will be finalized in the training camp”, Atta said quoting an official announcement made by the Pakistan Street Child Football Team on Sunday. Earlier, the management of the Pakistan Street Child Football Team had organized trials for Norway Cup across the country last month in which thousands of youths participated, the Muslim Hands media head in AJK said.

Saints Mazars to be renovated

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday chaired a meeting at CM Office in which mega decisions were made for making renovation, extension and bringing improvements in the administrative affairs of the Mazars of Religious Saints and Aulia Karam. Online donation portal will be established to donate attiyat, sadkaat and nazrana. Punjab Information Technology board (PITB) had been assigned the task to set up online donation portal. Facilities to give nazranas, sadkaat, langar within the country and abroad will be provided through the online donation portal. Online payment facility will be provided for giving langar, laying Chaddar and wreath on the mazars from abroad. The caretaker CM Mohsin Naqvi has ordered to widen entry and exit passages of mazars to provide comfort in the transportation of devotees and pilgrims visiting mazars. It was principally decided during the meeting to establish a li-

brary attached with every mazar and other essential facilities like sarai, langar khaney and wash rooms will be provided with the mazars. A waiting place and parking will be established on the mela ground attached with the mazar of Baba Bulleh Shah. Naqvi directed to immediately start renovation and extension work of the mazar of Shah Shams Tabrez in Multan. He ordered to prepare a plan of the renovation and restoration of Chiniot Shahi Masjid. He ordered to maintain historical significance and original condition of the mazars. The proposal to restore the (Kholi) of Ustad Daman in the walled city keeping in view its historical and literary importance was reviewed. Provincial ministers Mansoor Qadir, Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, Senior Member Board of Revenue, secretaries of Finance, Communication & Works, Auqaf, DG Lahore Walled City Authority, Chairman PITB, Architect Nayyar Ali Dada and officials concerned attended the meeting.

NDMA cautions departments concerned after India releases water in Ravi River

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Tuesday issued an advisory alert to the departments concerned for taking preparedness and precautionary measures after India released water into Ravi River. The NDMA in its advisory mentioned that the Pakistan Commissioner for Indus Waters (PCIW) and Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) have reported medium-level flows on Eastern River-Sutlej from Harike India with a time lag at Ganda Singh Wala Pakistan was 24 hours. However, low-level flows reported from Feroz-

pur India with a time lag at Ganda Singh Wala of six hours. The impacts to be incurred by the prevailing situation may be as: Likely the flows will persist over the next 48 hours and will be recorded at Sulemanki in the next 36 to 48 hours, the NDMA said. Moreover, inundation of low-lying areas, flooding of crops astride the Sutlej River, over-topping of roads and inundation of villages may also occur in the due course of time. The NDMA is sharing regular updates with all disaster management responders for taking necessary precautionary measures. It underlined

that the quarters concerned should move people and at-risk communities from low-lying areas, preplace flood fighting equipment and machinery, develop adequate stocks of food and medicine in the impacted area and coordinate for restoration of roads and communication links in the region. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA-Punjab) was requested to coordinate and direct Press Information Department (PID) for taking appropriate regulation of flood water through canals as the matter warrants immediate actions and monitoring.

More rains from Wednesday

LAHORE (APP): The Met office has predicted another monsoon spell in most parts of the country, including the provincial capital, from Wednesday to Monday. According to a spokesman for the Pakistan Meteorological department, monsoon currents from Arabian sea are likely to penetrate in upper and central parts of the country from 12th of July (evening) which are likely to intensify on July 14. A westerly wave is also expected to enter upper parts on 14th (evening/night) and under the influence of these weather systems, rain/wind-thundershower (with few heavy falls) is expected in most parts of the country, including Mandi Bahauddin, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Kasur, Okara, Attock, Chakwal and Jhelum from the 12th (evening/night) to 17th July with occasional gaps.

WASA launches campaign to clean drains of underpasses

RAWALPINDI (APP): Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) has launched a campaign to clean drains of the underpasses. According to Managing Director (MD) WASA, in view of the fear of water filling in the underpasses during Monsoon rains, the agency decided to clean the drains of the underpasses. On Monday night, the operation to clean the Committee Chowk underpass was started, he informed. Cleaning was being done with the help of modern machinery, the MD said. During the Monsoon rains, the WASA staff was working round the clock to ensure the smooth flow of water in the Committee Chowk underpass, he added.

22nd death anniversary of Qateel Shifai observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 22nd death anniversary of renowned urdu poet Qateel Shifai observed on . According to a private news channel,Qateel Shifai was born on 24 December 1919 in Haripur. His real name was Muhammad Aurangzeb but he adopted Qateel Shifai as his pen name. His work includes 20 collections of verse and over 2500 songs for film. He was decorated with Pride of Performance Award, Adamjee Award, Naqoosh Award and Abasin Arts Council Award for his contribution in literature. Qateel Shifai died on this day in 2001 in Lahore.

Muhammad Sohail posted as DG HDA

KARACHI (APP): Muhammad Sohail, an officer of BS-20 Malir Development Authority was posted as Director General Hyderabad Development Authority (HDA) with immediate effect. According to a notification issued by the chief secretary, Muhammad Sohail has been posted as DG HDA relieving the DC Hyderabad Fuad Ghaffar Soomro, an officer of PAS (BS-19) of the additional charge.

Father,son killed in bike snatching incident

QUETTA (APP): A father and his son were shot dead by armed robbers during a motor-bike snatching incident occurred on the wee hours of the day on Qambrani Road of Quetta, police officials confirmed. The deceased identified as Abdul Karim and Ejaz Ahmed resident of Noshki were on their way home when armed robbers intercepted their motorbike and opened fire on resistance.

Akbar Chowk flyover project to be inaugurated on August 14

LAHORE (APP): Akbar Chowk flyover project is likely to be inaugurated on August 14, 2023, sources in CM office told APP on Sunday. In this connection, the Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi had already directed to complete the project as early as possible. Meanwhile, thousands of citizens of Johar Town, Faisal Town, Model Town and Township, Quaid-e-Azam Industrial Estate, PECO Road and Canal Road would benefit with the construction of Akbar Chowk flyover. Moreover, the

Punjab caretaker CM while presiding over a meeting had strictly ordered to not cut even a single tree during the construction of Akbar Chowk flyover and Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) would buy latest machinery for safe relocation of trees, the sources told. It is important to mention here that protected U-turns are also being constructed at Akbar Chowk, Model Town Link Road and Madar-e-Millat roads. Flyovers at both sides would be constructed from Jinnah Hospital up to PECO Morr.

Two died after falling into main hole in industrial sector: Police

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Two persons were killed after falling into a main hole (gutter) of an industrial sector, Islamabad city, Police and TV channels reported on Tuesday. According to details, the father was trying to rescue his son when he fell into the main hole (Gutter), found open at the I-10/4 industrial sector of

Islamabad city. Both the ill-fated persons died due to heavy suffocation observed inside the main hole (gutter) of the industrial sector. Police and locals managed to drag out the bodies after hectic efforts. Those killed in the incident were identified as Abdul Rehman (15) and Rashid. The investigation was underway.

Pakistan offers attractive investment incentive Chinese businessmen: Ahsan Iqbal

BEIJING (Agencies): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, highlighted Pakistan’s attractive investment incentives and welcomed Chinese businessmen to invest in various sectors, including Information Technology, agriculture, dairy farming, housing, mining, and manufacturing. Speaking at the Pakistan China Business Forum titled Exploring Trade and Investment Opportunities in Pakistan, he emphasized the government’s efforts to facilitate foreign investors through the establishment

of a special investment facilitation council. Minister Iqbal also highlighted the advantages Pakistan offers, such as a young population with technical skills and education, cost-effective production, and opportunities for real estate development, manufacturing, renewable energy, and mining. The Commercial Counselor, Ghulam Qadir, and representatives from the National Bank of Pakistan and Habib Bank Limited also encouraged Chinese investors to take advantage of the attractive policies and incentives available in Pakistan.

Five killed, four injured in Kohistan Jeep accident: Police

KOHISTAN (Agencies): At least five persons were killed and four others sustained injuries in a jeep accident that took place near the Kolai Palace area of Kohistan district, police and TV channels reported on Tuesday. According to details, a jeep carrying a few persons was heading towards

the Bar-para area from Kolai Palace of Kohistan district, when suddenly, it fell into a deep ditch at the crossing point. As a result, two women, a child and driver died on the spot. The four injured were taken to a nearby hospital for necessary treatment. The investigation was underway.

With unearthing of anti-state conspiracies, ‘power hungry’ PTI chief stands fully exposed: Marriyum

PESHAWAR (Agencies): Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Marriyum Aurangzeb, criticized the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman for engaging in anti-state activities and seeking personal gain and power. Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the renovated Radio Pakistan Peshawar building, she highlighted the PTI’s failure to fulfill its promises, including the construction of dams and accountability measures. She also condemned the PTI for the attack on Radio Pakistan and

emphasized the importance of preserving national archives. Minister Aurangzeb praised the efforts of the engineers who restored the transmission immediately after the attack. She announced plans to build cinemas in Radio Pakistan buildings nationwide to provide affordable entertainment to the public. The minister expressed gratitude to the officials involved in the restoration of Radio Pakistan Peshawar and urged the digitalization of regional culture and heritage for their preservation.

KSA, U.A.E keen to explore Pakistan’s agri, IT, mine sector: Musadiq

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Minister of State for Petroleum, Dr. Musadiq Malik, announced that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E) are interested in exploring investment opportunities in Pakistan’s agriculture, information technology, and mining sectors. KSA has expressed a desire to invest \$24 billion, while U.A.E is considering investing over \$20 billion in various fields. Additionally, several other foreign countries have shown inter-

est in investing \$40-50 billion in Pakistan’s markets and sectors, offering loans for investment purposes. Regarding the arrest of the PTI chief for working against national institutions, Dr. Musadiq stated that solid evidence is being collected for the trial in court, ensuring that nobody is above the law. He also criticized the PTI regime for registering false cases against PML-N leaders and emphasized that the PML-N would not engage in a negative agenda like the PTI.

Saudi Arabia’s manufacturing activity rises by 10% in May despite fall in IPI

RIYADH (Agencies): Manufacturing activity in Saudi Arabia increased by 10 percent in May compared to the same month of the previous year despite a slight fall in the Kingdom’s Industrial Production Index, official data showed. According to the latest report released by the General Authority for Statistics, the Kingdom’s IPI in May 2023 decreased by 1.2 percent compared to April. “Although the activity of the manufacturing industry and the activity of



electricity and gas supply continued to rise, the decline in the mining and quarrying activity during May 2023 led to the decrease in the general index, given its high weight in the

index,” said GASTAT in the report. The relative weights of the mining and quarrying, manufacturing and electricity and gas supply sectors in the IPI are 74.5 percent, 22.6 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively. As a result, trends of IPI were heavily dependent on mining activities, it said. The report added that mining activities in Saudi Arabia decreased by 5.5 percent in May as the Kingdom reduced its oil production to 9.9 million barrels per day.

UK mortgage rates hit 15-year high of 6.66%

LONDON (Agencies): A key British mortgage rate hit a 15-year high on Tuesday when it rose above the levels reached in the aftermath of last year’s “mini-budget” crisis. The average two-year fixed residential mortgage rate hit 6.66%, narrowly exceeding the 6.65% touched on Oct 20 and the highest since August 2008 when it stood at 6.94%.

Britain’s housing market activity staged a recovery in early 2023 from the turmoil triggered by the unfunded tax-cutting plans of former Prime Minister Liz Truss. But homeowners and buyers have faced renewed mortgage pain in recent months. Fixed mortgage deal rates have risen rapidly in recent weeks as stickier-than-expected consumer

price inflation, which held at 8.7% in May, pushed up bond yields and increased market bets on the BOE’s benchmark rate peaking at 6.5%, up from 5% now. Swap rates, a key measure lenders use to determine the cost of mortgage borrowing, have also soared. Two-year swaps jumped by 0.89 percentage points over the course of June.

Foxconn scraps US\$19bil India semiconductor deal

TAIPEI (Agencies): Taiwanese electronics giant Foxconn withdrew from a US\$19.4 billion deal with India’s Vedanta to make semiconductors in the South Asian nation owing to “challenging gaps”, it announced Tuesday. The world’s top iPhone assembler signed an agreement in September with Vedanta to set up a chip factory – which would also produce display screens for phones and tablets – in India’s Gujarat state. The plan was to boost New Delhi’s self-reliance in the technology sup-



ply chain, given that semiconductors are an essential component of nearly all modern electronics – powering everything from coffee machines to electric cars. But Foxconn on Thursday said “both parties mutual-

ly agreed to part ways”. “There was recognition on both sides that the project was not moving fast enough, there were challenging gaps we were not able to smoothly overcome, as well as external issues unrelated to the project,” Hon Hai Technology Group – Foxconn’s official name – said in a statement. The deal would have seen Vedanta – one of India’s biggest mining companies – take a 60% share in the joint venture, while Foxconn would have the minority stake.

Dubai’s non-oil sector shows strongest growth in 10 months as PMI hits 56.9

RIYADH (Agencies): Dubai’s non-oil business activities witnessed its strongest growth in 10 months, driven by robust progress in the construction and tourism sector, an economy tracker showed. According to the seasonally adjusted S&P Global UAE Purchasing Managers’ Index, Dubai’s PMI rose to 56.9 in June after easing to 55.3 in May. “Dubai’s non-oil private sector economy enjoyed accelerating growth of new business in June, supporting another marked rise in overall output. All three of the key



sectors monitored — construction, wholesale and retail and travel and tourism — registered faster increases in new work midway through the year,” said Trevor Balchin, economics director at S&P Global Market Intel-

ligence. According to the index, any reading above 50 indicates growth in the non-oil private sector, while readings below 50 signal contraction. The S&P Global report revealed that the headline index remained well above its long-run trend level of 54.6, and the month-on-month rise at 1.6 percent is the highest since October 2021. The report noted that employment also rose in June compared to previous months as companies steadily built their inventories and supply chains improved further.

Rice at 2-year high in Asia on El Nino drought risks

BANGKOK (Agencies): Rice prices in Asia have surged to the highest level in more than two years as importers build up stockpiles on fears that the onset of El Nino will parch plantations and damage crops. A benchmark grade in the region, Thai white rice 5% broken, has climbed about 15% in the past four months to US\$535 a tonne, the strongest since early March 2021, according to data from the Thai Rice Exporters Asso-

ciation. El Nino conditions have developed in the tropical Pacific for the first time in seven years, according to the World Meteorological Organization, threatening to bring drought to Southeast Asia. That comes just as three days of record global temperatures last week increased concerns over the pace of climate change. While monsoon rains have brought relief to rice fields in parts of India, the top exporter, dry weather is

threatening crops in No 2 shipper Thailand, with the country facing widespread drought conditions from early 2024. The government has already asked farmers to restrict their planting to just one crop this year. “With El Nino, we’ll start to clearly see the effects of dry weather later around September and October,” said Chookiat Ophaswongse, honorary president of the Thai Rice Exporters Association.

China’s gallium ban sparks next-gen EV chip concern

LONDON (Agencies): China’s looming gallium export controls leave automakers with a dilemma over whether they can continue to rely on a metal which had been seen as a game changer for electric vehicles. Gallium is currently used in a wide variety of applications, from LEDs to smaller mobile phone adaptors. Little known to most people, gallium in pure form can melt in your hand – but in a couple of compounds has become sought after for semiconductors. Automakers are hungry



for anything that boosts EV efficiency and reduces weight, helping them to cut costs. Gallium Nitride does both and is far cheaper than other semiconductor materials like platinum or palladium. Gallium is

found in trace amounts in zinc ores and in bauxite, and gallium metal is produced when processing bauxite to make aluminium. Around 80% is produced in China, according to the European industry association Critical Raw Materials Alliance (CRMA). For EVs, the compound gallium nitride can handle a lot of power without generating heat – making it ideal for on-board chargers and possibly inverters, which help control the flow of electricity to and from the battery pack.

Clean tech minerals market surges to US\$320bil

PARIS (Agencies): The market for the minerals key to the clean energy transition soared to US\$320 billion last year but faces challenges including volatile prices, supply chain snarls and geopolitical tensions, the International Energy Agency said Tuesday. The market for minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel and copper doubled be-

tween 2017 and 2022, fuelled by the record deployment of clean technologies such as solar panels and electric car batteries, according to the IEA. “Rapid growth in demand is providing new opportunities for the industry,” the Paris-based agency said in its first annual IEA Critical Minerals Market Review. “But a combination of volatile price move-

ments, supply chain bottlenecks and geopolitical concerns has created a potent mix of risks for secure and rapid energy transitions,” it added. The IEA, which advises developed nations on energy policies, said the “affordability and speed of energy transitions” will depend on the availability of critical mineral supplies.

Oil Updates — crude prices rise on OPEC+ cuts, weaker dollar

RIYADH (Agencies): Oil prices edged higher on Tuesday, recouping some of the losses from the previous session, as traders focused on supply cuts by the world’s biggest oil exporters, Saudi Arabia and Russia, and a weaker dollar. Brent crude fu-

tures rose 38 cents, or 0.49 percent, to \$78.07 a barrel at 8:38 a.m. Saudi time, while US West Texas Intermediate crude was up 40 cents, or 0.55 percent, at \$73.39. Prices had eased 1 percent on Monday on higher expectations that further US interest

rate hikes are coming and as investors booked profits after last week’s 4.5 percent rise. Supply cuts by Saudi Arabia and Russia set for August helped to lift the benchmark prices, which were also supported as the US dollar fell to a two-month low.

New York Times shuts sports dept in major shakeup

LOS ANGELES (Agencies): In another sign of a challenged media landscape, the New York Times announced Monday it is disbanding the newspaper’s sports department, leaving the bulk of its sports coverage to its digital site The Athletic, reported a German news agency. Under the change, stories from The Athletic, which the New York Times purchased in January 2022 for US\$550 million, will be fully integrated into the newspaper’s operation, providing content to the print newspaper. Online access to The Athletic is already available to New York Times



digital subscribers. The Times says The Athletic has 400 journalists covering 200 professional teams around the world. The 35 editors and reporters currently working for the Times sports desks will be retained. Some will be assigned to new sports-related beats elsewhere at the newspaper by the fall. There are no planned layoffs, the company said.

Big Tech’s lead hits breakpoint for Nasdaq 100

NEW YORK (Agencies): America’s biggest tech companies have become too large even for the stock index tracking America’s biggest tech companies. Now the benchmark’s overseer is taking action to pare back their influence. The seemingly unstoppable growth of megacaps like Apple Inc and Microsoft Corp mean they have breached an upper limit imposed on stocks in the Nasdaq 100. As a result, Nasdaq Inc has announced a “special rebalance” — the first ever of its kind — will be carried out to redistribute the weight of the index’s members. The index provid-



er says the July 24 adjustment will “address overconcentration in the index by redistributing the weights”, according to a statement from the firm on Friday, with more details due later this week. Nasdaq’s extraordinary action is a result of the relentless rally that has accounted for almost all the broader market’s gains in 2023.

Kuwait draft budget estimates \$22.2bn deficit, Al-Dustor reports

RIYADH (Agencies): Kuwait’s draft budget for 2023-2024 estimates a deficit of 6.8 billion dinars (\$22.2 billion), hit by lower oil prices and volumes, a local paper reported, citing a member of parliament. The draft budget for the year from April 1 estimates oil revenue of 17 billion dinars, down 19.5 percent from 2022-2023, according to the report by Al-Dustor shared by parliament’s Twitter account, citing MP Osama Al-Zaid. The draft budget was based on an oil price of \$70 a barrel, Aal-Zaid told Al-Dustor. Brent crude was trading at \$78.44 at 1600 GMT on Monday. Kuwait has had to comply with production cuts by the Organization of



the Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies led by Russia while making slow progress on diversifying revenue sources compared with its Gulf neighbors. Feuding between successive appointed governments and elected parliaments in the OPEC member state has hampered fiscal reform for years, including a debt law that would allow Kuwait to tap international markets and address its heavy reliance on oil.

US consumer borrowing pace slows to 2020 levels

NEW YORK (Agencies): US consumer borrowing slowed to a more than two-year low in May, reflecting the first decline in non-revolving credit since the onset of the pandemic. Total credit rose US\$7.2 billion, the smallest advance since November 2020, Federal Reserve data showed Monday. The figure, which isn’t adjusted for inflation, was lower than all forecasts in a Bloomberg survey of economists. Non-revolving credit, such as loans for school tuition and vehicle purchases, decreased US\$1.3 billion, the first decline since April 2020. Five-year lending rates for new-vehicle purchases reached 7.81% in May,



the highest since 2006, the Fed data showed. Auto sales cooled during the month, according to industry figures. Revolving credit outstanding, which includes credit cards, rose US\$8.5 billion — representing a slowdown after sharp gains in the previous two months. Credit cards issued by commercial banks carried a 20.68% rate in May, a record in Fed data back to 1972.

Dollar slips as Fed hike cycle nears end

SINGAPORE (Agencies): The dollar weakened on Tuesday after Federal Reserve officials signalled that the central bank was nearing the end of its tightening cycle, though it traded in a tight range ahead of a key US inflation report. Several Fed officials said on Monday the central bank will likely need to raise interest rates further to bring down still-high inflation, but that the end to its current monetary policy tightening cycle is getting close. The comments knocked the greenback to a two-month low of 101.88 against a basket of currencies in early Asia trade, as traders pared back their expectations of how much further US interest rates have to rise. US interest rate expectations



have been a key driver of the dollar since the Fed began its tightening cycle last year. Sterling meanwhile hit a fresh 15-month high of US\$1.2869, while the euro tacked on 0.03% to US\$1.1004. “The FOMC speak was the main focus of yesterday and officials who spoke reiterated the recent message that a couple more rate hikes are likely in coming months, so not really a surprise there,” said Carol Kong, a currency strategist at Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

Threads nets 100 million sign-ups in 5 days

PARIS (Agencies): The Threads app launched by Instagram as a rival to Twitter has signed up more than 100 million users in less than five days, data tracking websites said on Monday, smashing the record of AI tool ChatGPT for the fastest-growing consumer app. While ChatGPT took two months to hit the 100 million user mark and video-sharing app TikTok took nine months, Instagram itself took two and a half years to reach that mark after its

2010 launch. Threads went live on Apple and Android app stores in 100 countries late on Wednesday, though it is not available in Europe because parent company Meta is unsure how to navigate the European Union’s data privacy legislation. Twitter is thought to have around 200 million regular users but it has suffered repeated technical failures since Elon Musk bought the platform last year and sacked thousands of staff.

Caster Semenya wins European Court of Human Rights appeal over ‘discriminatory’ testosterone limit

Caster Semenya, the South African Olympic champion runner, has won her appeal which she had submitted to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) to end “discriminatory” testosterone limits imposed on female athletes, the ECHR said on Tuesday. Semenya is hyperandrogenous – meaning she has naturally high levels of testosterone – and has been fighting against rules introduced in 2019 by World Athletics – track and field’s governing body – which regulates levels of the hormone in female athletes. In its ruling, the ECHR said there had been a “violation of the prohibition of discrimination taken together with the right to respect for



private life as well as a violation of the right to an effective remedy.” Semenya won the 800m gold medal at both the 2012 and 2016 Olympics Games but the new rules meant she would need to take testosterone-reducing medication in order to compete internationally over distances between

400m and one mile – something she has declined to do. She was unable to defend her 800m crown in Tokyo in 2021 because of the rule changes. A three-time 800m world champion, Semenya lost an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in April 2019. In September 2020, she then lost an appeal made to Switzerland’s Federal Supreme Court but vowed to continue to “fight for the human rights of female athletes.” Semenya submitted an appeal to the ECHR in February 2021, saying that, in its dismissal of the South African athlete’s appeal, Switzerland’s Federal Supreme Court “failed” in its obligations to uphold her human rights.

Gordon wins European Under-21 Championship Player of the Tournament

Newcastle’s Anthony Gordon has been named Player of the Tournament for the European Under-21 Championship by Uefa. The 22-year-old played all six games in Georgia as England won the competition for the first time in 39 years. He scored in the Young Lions’ Group C win against Israel and their quarter-final victory over Portugal, as well as providing an assist in their tournament opener against the Czech Republic. After winning the award, Gordon said: “I’m absolutely delighted. “I feel I have had a good tournament, but me with the individual trophy is down to my team-mates



and the staff. The squad is really unselfish. “Six or seven of us might have won it, that shows how good we’ve been.” Previous winners of the award include Fabio Vieira, Fabian Ruiz and Dani Ceballos.

American Christopher Eubanks upsets Stefanos Tsitsipas to keep Wimbledon dream run alive

Not too long ago, Christopher Eubanks had doubts about his professional tennis career, taking a job as a commentator for Tennis Channel while he continued to pursue playing. Now, the 27-year-old American is heading to the Wimbledon quarterfinals, upsetting world No. 5 Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece 3-6 7-6(4) 3-6 6-4 6-4. Eubanks, who is from Atlanta and played college tennis at Georgia Tech, already was in the midst of the best year of his career. It keeps getting better with his Wimbledon run – and it’s coming on a surface he said he used to hate: grass. “The grass and I, we’ve had a very strenuous, I would say, relationship over the years,” Eubanks said in a post-match interview on



court. “But right now, I think it’s my best friend.” Right before Wimbledon started, he won his first ATP Tour title, winning the grass court event in Mallorca, jumping from No. 77 in the world to a career-high No. 43. He broke into the top 100 in the singles world rankings in April. On Saturday, Eubanks told ESPN in an interview that going straight from

Mallorca to Wimbledon helped him, “not allowing to kind of sit back and take it all in just yet,” he said. “I’m going to hopefully wait until after Wimbledon to do that.” When asked by ESPN on Saturday if he ever doubted himself, Eubanks replied, “A thousand percent. That was part of the reason I got into commentary.” “At the US Open 2021, I said (to my agent) if I’m still ranked around 200 at the end of next year and injuries haven’t played a part, there has got to be something else I can do with my time,” Eubanks continued. “Because the Challenger circuit is not that glamorous. I felt like I would have these ups and downs throughout my career, and it was getting to be very, very frustrating.”

Pakistan trio celebrates ‘life changing’ Tekken 7 Nations Cup glory at Gamers8

RIYADH: The triumphant trio of Arslan Ash, Khan and Atif have expressed their delight at winning the Tekken 7 Nations Cup at Gamers8: The Land of Heroes, after they led Pakistan to a 3-2 victory over South Korea in Sunday’s final. Pakistan claimed the trophy and top prize of \$500,000 from the \$1 million prize pool after their exploits in the four-day, 3v3 tournament between 16 nations, which helped kickstart eight weeks of elite gaming action at Boulevard Riyadh City. The victorious Ash revealed how proud he was of his teammates. “When the three of us were kids, we used to play Tekken and we never thought we would win such a big tournament — or even travel to such places as this,” he said. “This is huge and I am thankful to



Gamers8 for inviting us — this is life changing for us. It’s literally changed our lives because the money and the reputation we have earned is so big. Pakistan has become the best country in the Tekken 7 Nations Cup, and we are so proud. Thank you to Gamers8 for organizing such a wonderful tournament.” Khan said: “It’s a dream come true. We want more tournaments like Gamers8.

MLB two-way superstar Shohei Ohtani entering ‘uncharted waters’ on brink of record-breaking contract

Shohei Ohtani has always bet on himself – and it’s about to reap huge rewards. From an 18-year-old filled with aspirations to becoming one of the best two-way players baseball has ever seen, his journey has been one of confidence and commitment. And now, Ohtani is set to cash in on that success – according to multiple media reports, he’s being tipped to receive a huge payday by signing a new contract which will make him the highest paid baseball player of all time. “These are uncharted waters as far as assessing the value of this unique talent,” University of Southern California sports journalism professor Jeffrey Fellenzer told CNN Sport. “The figures you hear mentioned, whether that be \$50 million, \$60 mil-



lion, he will set a new standard. It will be a gold standard for compensation in baseball.” In 2017, with a Japanese Series championship win and a Pacific League MVP award under his belt, the 23-year-old Ohtani was at a crossroads: head to America and sign with a Major League Baseball (MLB) squad for a \$3.5 million signing bonus, or put his lifelong dream on hold for two

years, enter unrestricted free agency and potentially earn a \$200 million contract, according to the LA Times who spoke to several league executives. At the time, MLB’s international signing rules limited Ohtani to a rookie salary, but the coveted prospect valued American competition over an immediate massive payday. Ohtani bet on himself to climb the ranks of baseball’s best and translate his Japanese success to American fields, signing with the Los Angeles Angels for a \$2.3 million bonus in 2017, per Spotrac. Now, the 28-year old is set to cash in at the season’s close: Ohtani is projected to earn over \$500 million — approximately \$50 million per year — in his next contract per the New York Post.

Saudi AI firm to sponsor Al-Ahli football club

RIYADH: Al-Ahli Saudi Football Club and the Saudi Company for Artificial Intelligence, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Public Investment Fund, have announced a new three-year strategic partnership. The agreement, extending until the 2025-2026 season, was signed by Tarek Khalifah, acting CEO of Al-Ahli Club Investment Co., and Abdulaziz Al-Muammar, COO of the PIF-owned SCAI. “Our mutual agreement will open up new avenues for success and the scaling of Saudi Arabia’s sports sectors,” said Khalifah. “Furthermore, it will strengthen SCAI’s position as a leading artificial intelligence company and play a key role in the sports sector’s local and global development.” Khalifah said the collaboration would enhance Al-Ahli’s connections with other sectors, and is in line with the Kingdom’s efforts



to develop local talent and enhance the experience of the club’s fans. Al-Muammar said: “The collaboration between SCAI and Al-Ahli Club affirms our commitment to promoting innovation in the sports sector in line with the Kingdom’s Vision 2030. We at SCAI seek to leverage AI and modern technologies to create value across various sectors, helping our partners achieve their goals in addition to enhancing the well-being and quality of life of individuals throughout Saudi Arabia.”

Presidents, billionaires, Olympians: Allisen Corpuz continues Hawaii private school’s illustrious reputation with US Women’s Open win

With alumni spanning the Oval Office, Hollywood, the Olympics, and even outer space, there have been countless landmark days for graduates of Punahou School in Hawaii. Thanks to Allisen Corpuz, Sunday was yet another. The 25-year-old became the second US Women’s Open champion to emerge from the Honolulu private school with her maiden major and LPGA Tour triumph at Pebble Beach in California on Sunday, following on from Michelle Wie West. With a tearful West – champion at Pinehurst in 2014 – bidding an emotional farewell to the sport after missing the cut Friday, it marked a poignant full-circle moment for Hawaii’s only two women’s major winners. “I never really thought I’d get



this far,” Corpuz told reporters Sunday. “Just watching Michelle, she’s been such a huge role model to me ... But I’ve never really compared myself to her. “I’ve always wanted to make my own name. She’s just served as a really big inspiration.” Corpuz’s triumph, the first by an American in the country’s national championship since Brittany Lang

in 2016, did not go unnoticed by Punahou’s most famous alumnus: former US President Barack Obama. Obama, who graduated from the school in 1979, took to Twitter to congratulate Corpuz on her victory and arrange a match at Kapolei Golf Club, one of the state’s most prestigious clubs and – a stone’s throw from the seventh hole – the location of her parents’ house. “You make us all proud – and look forward to a round at Kapolei!” Obama said. Punahou’s star-studded list of alumni includes AOL co-founder Steve Case, eBay founder Pierre Omidyar, actress Kelly Preston, NASA astronaut Charles Veatch, and Olympic gold medalist surfer Carissa Moore, yet two names stand out for Corpuz.

Sex offender Larry Nassar repeatedly stabbed in prison fight

Former US national gymnastics team doctor Larry Nassar has been stabbed at least 10 times at a Florida prison. Nassar, serving up to 175 years for molesting gymnasts, was attacked by another inmate on Sunday. He is reportedly in hospital in a stable condition and is said to have suffered a collapsed lung. The 59-year-old was jailed for sexually assaulting athletes, and possession of child pornography. Hundreds of accusers have come forward. During the assault, Nassar was stabbed twice in the neck, twice in the back and six times in the chest, a prison union leader told CBS News, the BBC’s US partner. The Federal Bureau of Prisons confirmed an inmate was assaulted at 14:35 EST (18:35 GMT) on Sunday at United States Penitentiary Coleman in



Florida, where the former doctor is serving time. “Responding staff immediately initiated life-saving measures,” the agency told BBC News. The inmate was taken to a local hospital “for further treatment and evaluation”. An internal investigation has been launched, and no staff or other inmates were injured in the incident, the statement said. Nassar admitted to sexually assaulting athletes while

he worked with the USA Gymnastics programme and Michigan State University, where he ran a clinic. More than 330 women and girls at USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University have accused Nassar of sexual abuse. Olympic gold medalists Simone Biles, Aly Raisman and McKayla Maroney all testified about surviving Nassar’s abuse. Some of the young athletes said they had come forward about the abuse to adults, including coaches and doctors, but were dismissed. An investigation into the FBI’s handling of the scandal, published in 2021, found the agency made a series of missteps, including delays and cover-ups, which allowed Nassar’s abuse to continue for several more months after the case was first opened.

DAILY HOROSCOPE: JULY 12, 2023



– It’s a general reading which may differ from person to person because of time date and year.
– **ARIES:** Your diplomatic side is out for all the world to see, and you ought to be able to get folks to see your point of view even if they don’t agree with you completely. It’s a great day for long talks!
– **TAURUS:** Your social energy is strong and vibrant and you should be able to get folks together without making too much fuss about it. Try not to get involved in any conflicts for the time being, though.
– **GEMINI:** If you find yourself lost in thought, don’t bother trying to find your way back to reality. You’ve got a lot to ponder! It’s a sure bet that you’ll come up with at least a few great ideas too!
– **CANCER:** Focus on domestic issues for now. You’ve got more going on than you can take care of all at once, but you ought to be able to get it all organized so it’s easier for you going forward.
– **LEO:** You’re gushing over someone or something that really deserves your attention and might actually embarrass

them with your lavish affection. Don’t let that stop you. It’s time to go nuts!
– **VIRGO:** You’ve got depths that hardly anyone realizes, and today they’re making themselves known. You might react strongly to a bit of morning news, or you could pop up with a great answer later on.
– **LIBRA:** Your sweet nature is on display now, and you should cultivate it with single-minded focus. Everything you do today will come back to you in the near future, and karma can be great!
– **SCORPIO:** You can usually bide your time and wait for the perfect moment to make your move, but today sees you champing at the bit. Go ahead and take action. It’s better than living with the stress!
– **SAGITTARIUS:** You need to make sure that you’re not just accepting other people’s explanations at face value. Think through everything for yourself and you should be able to see through to the truth.
– **CAPRICORN:** Whether you’re looking for love or quite satisfied with what you’ve got, today brings a new vibration to your romantic energy. It’s a good time for long walks and some flirty talks.
– **ACQUARIUS:** Your education never ends, and today sends you some new and interesting course materials! You may stumble over them online or a new instructor could pop up in your life.
– **PISCES:** Your communication style is always a bit poetic, and today it’s even more so. You may have a harder time speaking with people who are too literal minded, but fortunately there aren’t many.

Pakistan, China hold 12th JCC Special Meeting in Beijing

BEIJING (APP): The meeting of 12th (Special) Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was held here on Tuesday. Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal and Vice Chairman, National Development & Reform Commission (NDRC), China Mr, Cong Liang co-chaired the meeting. Senior officials and representatives of various Ministries and departments dealing with CPEC matters from both sides were also present. In his remarks, the Minister noted that CPEC is a



remarkable endeavour that symbolizes the deep-rooted ties between China and Pakistan. He recalled that this monumental project, initiated under the visionary leadership of President Xi and then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif, had been instrumental in transforming the economic landscape of the re-

gion. It has fostered connectivity, enhanced trade, and opened up new avenues for shared prosperity. The Minister emphasized that CPEC is the topmost national priority of the Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and these avenues provided an opportunity to consolidate successes and further enhance potential future co-operation. He also noted that while numerous milestones had already been achieved, there was a massive potential for expanding and developing in agriculture, industry, technology, and mining sectors.

British and Italian hikers killed in French Alps falls

Dijon, France (AFP/APP): A British man and an Italian died in separate falls Sunday while hiking in the French Alps, emergency responders said Monday. The Briton in his 50s was killed near the foot of France's tallest mountain Mont Blanc, police in the Chamonix region said. The hiker was taking a difficult track near the Bionnassay glacier, the smallest on the French side of the Mont-Blanc massif, at a spot known as Nid d'Aigle (Eagle's Nest). He fell around 50 metres (160 feet) and was killed instantly, emergency responders said. The Italian man, aged 67, was hiking with his wife



at around 3,000 metres above sea level near Lake Mont-Cenis in the Savoy region. He slipped and fell around 150 metres, mountain rescuers in Albertville said. Although the man's wife called emergency services when she lost sight of him, he was already dead by the time they arrived.

Six killed in Chinese kindergarten stabbing

- The knife-wielding assailant has been detained by police
BEIJING (Agencies): A knifeman killed six people and injured another in a kindergarten in southern China on Monday, Chinese media reported, citing police. The suspect, a 25-year-old local man, has been detained. His motives are so far unknown. The attack took place in Lianjiang County, Guangdong Province. Although police are still identifying the victims, witnesses said that a teacher, two parents and three children are among them. Unconfirmed reports on social media claimed that the assailant was seeking "revenge" because one of the adults had hit his child with a car



and not offered any compensation. China has seen a wave of stabbing attacks at kindergartens and schools in recent years. In 2021, a man armed with a knife killed two children and injured 16 people at a kindergarten in the southern Guangxi Province. A similar incident occurred in 2022, and left three dead and six wounded.

Russian submarine commander killed by gunman on morning run

- Online news outlets claim that sub commander Stanislav Rzhitsky was involved in missile attack on Ukraine that killed 23 civilians.
MOSCOW (Agencies): A Russian submarine commander and deputy chief in charge of military mobilisation in Russia's southern city of Krasnodar has been shot dead, Russia's state TASS news agency reported, citing law enforcement bodies. According to TASS, the official, Stanislav Rzhitsky, was killed by a gunman on Monday morning and a criminal case into the killing has been opened. The slain official was also the commander of a Russian Black Sea Fleet submarine that local online news outlets in Ukraine claimed was responsible for launching Kalibr cruise missiles at Ukrainian targets. Rzhitsky had commanded the Krasnodar submarine, named after the city, in the Russian Navy, TASS reported. It was unclear whether he was the captain



of the submarine at the time of his killing. According to the Russian defence ministry, the Krasnodar is a diesel-electric submarine built for the Black Sea Fleet and designed "to fight surface ships and submarines, lay mines and conduct reconnaissance". Online media covering Russia and Ukraine claimed that Rzhitsky was shot four times during a morning run near a sports complex, and that he had been involved in a submarine-launched missile attack on the Ukrainian city of Vinnytsia in July 2022 that killed 23 civilians, including three children.

Libyan court jails dozens for human trafficking

TRIPOLI (Agencies): A court in eastern Libya has jailed 37 people for human trafficking, following the deaths of 11 migrants whose boat sank in the Mediterranean Sea en route to Europe. The Al-Bayda court of appeals handed down life sentences to five of the defendants, while nine received 15 years behind bars. The rest received one-year sentences. The defendants were part of a network smuggling migrants from Libya to Europe, local media reported on Tuesday, citing a statement from the public prosecutor's office. They were accused of organizing an Italy-bound migrant crossing in a dilapidated vessel, resulting in the 11 deaths. Details of when the deadly incident were not provided. The North African country, a major transit point for human trafficking since the Western-backed overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, has become one of the most dangerous starting points

for people trying to reach Europe by sea, according to the UN's International Organisation for Migration (IOM). According to the IOM Missing Migrants Project data, nearly 3,800 people died on migration routes from and within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, which includes Libya, in 2022 alone. Last month, hundreds of migrants were presumed dead after a boat that reportedly originated in Egypt but loaded passengers in Libya, capsized in the Mediterranean Sea near the coast of Greece. In April, the European maritime-humanitarian organization SOS Mediterranean said 92 migrants were rescued off the Libyan coast while attempting to reach Europe. Apart from deaths at sea, Libya had the highest number of fatalities on land routes in North Africa, with 117 people dying in 2022, the UN migration agency reported.

Putin met Wagner chief after mutiny – Kremlin

MOSCOW (Agencies): Russian President Vladimir Putin met with the head of the Wagner private military company, Evgeny Prigozhin, several days after the group aborted a mutiny as part of a Belarus-mediated deal, Kremlin Press Secretary Dmitry Peskov said on Monday. Speaking to reporters, Peskov confirmed a report by French newspaper Liberation, which claimed that the Russian leader had met with the Wagner chief. "The president had such a meeting. Thirty-five people were invited to it – all unit commanders and the company's management, including Prigozhin himself," he said. According to the spokesman, the gathering took place in the Kremlin on June 29 and lasted almost three hours. Peskov added that the president had given "an evaluation of the company's actions" during the conflict with Ukraine, and

had spoken about his assessment of the events of June 24, the day Wagner troops marched on Moscow. "Putin listened to the commanders' explanations and offered further employment and combat deployment options," Peskov stated. He added that Wagner commanders had provided their account of the mutiny, while "emphasizing that they are staunch supporters and soldiers of the head of state," and are "ready to fight for the motherland going forward." On June 23, Prigozhin vowed retaliation after accusing the Russian Defense Ministry of staging a fatal missile strike on a Wagner camp. In the following hours, the company's troops captured several military installations in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don, with some forces marching on Moscow. A criminal case was opened against Prigozhin.

Iraqi Airways to operate flights to 4 new destinations

Baghdad (Agencies) The successive arrival of new modern planes as part of a deal between Iraqi Airways and Boeing will allow the national carrier of Iraq to reach new destinations. Iraqi Airways indicated that there is a contract signed with Boeing to purchase 26 planes, including 10 787 Dreamliners, noting that it will operate flights to four new destinations, according to the Iraqi News Agency (INA). The Director General of Iraqi Airways, Manaf Abdel-Monem, told INA that the successive arrival of the new planes during the coming five years will be accompanied by the operation of flights to new destinations to cover the world. Abdel-Monem explained that the company plans to operate flights to Oman, Indonesia, Malaysia and China. Iraqi Airways celebrated last month the delivery of the airline's first Boeing 787 Dreamliner with a special event in Baghdad to welcome the flag carrier's first new-technology widebody aircraft in many years, Business Traveller News reported. With this delivery, Iraqi Airways received the first of 10 planes ordered from the aircraft industry company to profitably develop its network and connect Iraq to more international destinations. Additional Dreamliners are expected to arrive in Iraq in the coming months, according to a statement issued by the US embassy in Baghdad. Iraqi Airways currently serves more than 50 destinations from Baghdad and is expanding and renewing its fleet to support the anticipated increase in international business and leisure travel to and from the country, according to Business Traveller News.

Weight-loss drugs probed over 'suicidal thoughts'



- The EU's health watchdog is investigating Danish company Novo Nordisk over reported side effects from its products
Amsterdam (Agencies): The European Medicines Agency (EMA) is reviewing several weight-loss jabs for reported risks of inducing suicidal thoughts and self-harm among users. A potential problem with the drugs was first flagged by Iceland's health watchdog, which reported at least three cases of such behavior. The issue is reportedly connected with multiple jabs containing liraglutide which is produced by Danish pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk, namely Wegovy and Saxenda, as well as a similar Ozempic type 2 diabetes jab. The matter is being reviewed by the EMA's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee (PRAC). While the probe focuses on only on compounds that contain liraglutide, it may end up being expanded to other similar treatments in the same category of drugs, an EMA official told British state broadcaster BBC on Monday.

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