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Attacks on Quran continue in Denmark

Attacks against the Holy Quran persist in Denmark's capital, Copenhagen, as members of the marginalised group, Danish Patriots, known for their anti-Islamic and ultra-nationalist stance, burned two copies of the Quran on Monday, Anadolu Agency reports. The incidents took place in front of the Iranian Embassy and, later, in front of the Iraqi Embassy in Copenhagen. The group's members chanted slogans insulting Islam and showed disrespect by stepping on the Iranian flag and the Quran, which they threw on the ground before setting them on fire. They live-streamed the offensive moments on their social media accounts. The Danish Patriots claimed that their actions were a response to Iran's announcement of arresting and prosecuting members of their group and supporters. The



group members then came in front of the Iraqi Embassy, where they burned the Iraqi flag and the Quran again. The group, which opened an anti-Islamic banner, continued its insulting rhetoric against Islam here, as well. The incidents were closely monitored by journalists and took place under heavy security

measures by the police. The group, which burned the Quran in front of the Iraqi Embassy in Copenhagen on Saturday, had previously insulted Islam by attacking the Turkish flag and the Quran in front of the Turkish Embassy in Copenhagen. Denmark condemned, on Saturday, the burning of Quran.

Ford launches 'hands-free' driving on UK motorways

London (AFP/APP): In a scene Ford hopes to see across Europe "soon", the first hands-free car model allowed on the UK's fastest roads zoomed down a motorway before slowing down as the back of a truck appeared. Travelling at 60 miles per hour (100 kilometres per hour), the small SUV remained within its lane as an AFP journalist took a ride in the driver's seat along the M11 motorway north of London. Ford activated the "BlueCruise" self-drive option on its electric flagship, the Mustang Mach-E, in the UK in April. After debuting in the United States in 2021, the option is now available on 6,000 kilometres (3,700 miles) of UK "blue zones" motorways -- equipped with four lanes and central dividers -- from Dover to Scotland. While the driver's hands are free, the car ensures that there is no fiddling with phones -- and that eyes are fixed on the road -- thanks to several cameras and infrared sensors. The on-board computer offers to take over driving duties when it enters the motorway, but when it detects that the driver has looked away for 10 seconds, a voice says: "Look at the road. Resume control". If the warning is not heeded, the car will slam on the brakes and sound warnings. Some 500 early adopters have joined the trial in Britain, paying £17.99 (21 euros) per month. In North America, the option is also available on the F-150 pickup truck and the Expedition SUV. Ford claims that 200,000 drivers use it, with no accidents. Competitor General Motors also offers hands-free driving, as does Mercedes on the German autobahn, but only in traffic jams with a maximum speed of 60 kmh imposed.

Poland Considering Sending Troops to Western Ukraine— Russian Foreign Intel Head

MOSCOW (Agencies): Poland is considering establishing control over the western part of Ukraine through the deployment of its troops there, Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) Director Sergei Naryshkin said. The SVR head believes that Warsaw is coming to realize that the defeat of Ukraine is a matter of time. "The Polish leadership is intensifying the mindset to introduce control in the western territories of Ukraine, the western regions by deploying their troops there," Naryshkin said at a meeting held by President Vladimir Putin with the permanent members of the Security Council. In this regard, Putin instructed the Russian foreign intelligence head to monitor Poland's plans for Ukraine.

Saudi Crown Prince MBS threatened to impose blockade on UAE 'worse than' that on Qatar

Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, privately threatened to journalists that he would impose sanctions on the United Arab Emirates (UAE) last year, the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) has revealed. According to the paper, bin Salman told journalists in an off-the-record briefing in December that he had sent the UAE a list of demands and warned the neighbouring country that he would impose measures on it if it continued to rival major Saudi policy positions within the region and in the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC+). "It will be worse than what I did with Qatar," the Crown Prince is reported to have said, referring to the 2017 embargo on Qatar that Riyadh led, along with other Gulf states such as the UAE and Bahrain, and which was only lifted

in 2021. Bin Salman reportedly told the Saudi journalists that the UAE had "stabbed us in the back", warning that Abu Dhabi "will see what I can do." The Saudi Crown Prince and the UAE's Mohammed bin Zayed have long been reported to rival one another in regards to foreign policy objectives within the region, notably in Yemen, where both had taken military action against the Houthis rebels but, at the same time, vied for leadership over the other. Riyadh and Abu Dhabi have also had their differences in OPEC+, in which both are members but Saudi Arabia takes the leading role in. Back in October last year, the UAE had accused its neighbour of forcing it to agree to an oil production cut at a major OPEC meeting, leading to the Emiratis threatening to withdraw from the organisation.

Jordan, Syria army, intelligence chiefs discuss combating of drug smuggling over border

Jordanian and Syrian army and intelligence chiefs met yesterday to discuss the ongoing smuggling of drugs over the Syria-Jordan border, in the first of a series of meetings to resolve the issue. In a statement by Jordan's Foreign Ministry, it said that a meeting headed by Jordanian Army chief, Lieutenant-General Yousef Hunaiti and Syrian Defence Minister, Ali Mahmoud Abbas, was held to discuss the trafficking of narcotics over their countries' common border, with the Jordanian and Syrian intelligence heads both present. "The meeting discussed cooperation

in confronting the danger of drugs, its sources of production and smuggling and the groups that are organising and supervising the smuggling operations across the border to Jordan", the statement said. It added that "They also discussed the necessary measures to combat smuggling operations and confront this escalating danger to the whole region." In recent years, the lucrative and addictive amphetamine, Captagon, has flooded the Middle East region and beyond, appearing in countries throughout North Africa, the Mediterranean and Europe.

New tensions in France after policeman jailed over violence

Paris (Agencies) :The remanding in custody of a French policeman in the city of Marseille sparked new controversy Monday weeks after violent riots, with a call from police chiefs for the officer to be freed prompting fury on the left and concern within the judiciary. France was rocked by over a week of riots that began last month over the killing of 17-year-old Nahel M. by a policeman during a traffic check outside Paris. The officer has been charged and jailed ahead of trial. In the incident in Marseille, a man named as Hedi, 21, says he was beaten by four or five men he identified as police during unrest in the city over the death of Nahel M. earlier this month. He says he was also hit in the head by a blast ball fired by police. He underwent operations and has now returned home but risks losing the sight in one eye, according to his lawyer. Four police were charged last week over the incident, one of whom was remanded



in custody ahead of trial. "Knowing that he is in prison is stopping me from sleeping," said France's national police chief Frederic Veaux in an interview with Le Parisien newspaper published on Monday. "In general, I believe that ahead of a possible trial, a police officer should not be in prison, even if he may have committed serious faults or errors in the course of his work," he added. Paris police chief Laurent Nunez tweeted that he shared the stance of Veaux. In an interview with French television, President Emmanuel Macron said on Monday that he understood the "emotion" of the police after the recent riots, while emphasising that "no one in the Republic is above the law".

China-Russia Joint Drills Conclude in Sea of Japan - Preparations Underway for Joint Patrols in Pacific Ocean

BEIJING (Agencies): After a successful four-day Northern/Interaction-2023 joint exercise in the Sea of Japan, China and Russia are gearing up for the next phase of joint naval and air patrols in the Pacific Ocean. Experts praised the highly combat-oriented and practical nature of the drills, showcasing the two nations' strong military cooperation in response to security threats. The closing ceremony took place on the Type 052D destroyer Qiqihar of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy, which served as the command ship for the exercises, as per the PLA Navy's press release on Monday. During the intense four-day drills, naval and air forces from both countries achieved multiple training objectives, including sea-air integrated escort and deterrence expulsion. They also practiced live fire surface-to-air shooting with ship-borne weapons systems. The PLA Navy stated that the exercises successfully deepened mutual trust, enhanced friendship, and strengthened capabilities. Rear Admiral Qiu Wensheng, the commander of the Northern/Interaction-2023 exercise, highlighted the significance of the

joint operation in safeguarding strategic maritime routes and promoting strategic cooperation between China and Russia, contributing to stability in Northeast Asia. The exercises focused on anti-sea mine, anti-aircraft, anti-ship, and anti-submarine operations, aligning with the theme of safeguarding strategic maritime routes in the Sea of Japan, which includes crucial strategic channels. While the drills were not aimed at any third party, they occurred amid growing security threats from major geopolitical powers in the region, showcasing the mutual trust between China and Russia. China deployed Type 052D guided missile destroyers Qiqihar and Guiyang, Type 054A guided missile frigates Zaozhuang and Rizhao, and the Type 903 comprehensive replenishment ship Taihu at sea. In the air, they utilized Y-20 large transport aircraft, KJ-500 early warning aircraft, J-16 fighter jets, and Z-20 helicopters. Russia, on the other hand, deployed large anti-submarine ships Admiral Tribunts and Admiral Panteleev, along with corvettes Gremyashy and Hero of the Russian Federation Aldar Tsydenzhapov, and various aircraft.

Lausanne Treaty: International recognition of Turkiye's independence marks 100 years

ANKARA (Agencies): A century ago, on July 24, countries around the world acknowledged Turkiye as an independent and sovereign nation with the historic signing of the Lausanne Peace Treaty at the Rumine Palace in the lakeside Swiss city, Anadolu Agency reports. Months of intense negotiations had led up to the momentous event under the Lausanne Peace Conference, held at the Beau-Rivage Palace Hotel, situated on the picturesque shores of Lake Lemman in Lausanne. In a book commemorating the hotel's 150 years of history, numerous details about the momentous conference are revealed, shedding light on why Switzerland was chosen as the venue, the intricacies of the negotiations, and the ultimate international recognition of a new nation. The Lausanne Peace Conference commenced in November 1922. The book, released by the hotel, explains that Lausanne was selected as the venue through a process of elimination. "The Turks wanted the conference to take place in Smyrna (Izmir), which they had just liberated from the Greek army, but this was out of the question. London and Paris were also excluded since Britain and France have widely diverging views on the issues to be discussed. Venice was ruled out as it would have given Italy's new dictator Mussolini a golden opportunity to act as chair," it explained. Geneva, despite being home to the League of Nations, the predecessor of the UN, was vetoed by the US and Soviet Union, "powerful political observers of the negotiations," according to the book. Eventually, Britain proposed



Lausanne, and it was preferred over the Turkish side's suggestion of another Swiss city, Lugano. During the conference, the Beau-Rivage Palace Hotel played host to the British, Japanese, Turkish, and American delegations. The French and Italians were accommodated at the Lausanne Palace, while the Greeks stayed at the Hotel Savoy. "While some of the participating nations came to Lausanne with the aim of dismantling the Ottoman Empire, and redrawing the map of Asia Minor, the conference had a quite different, and unexpected outcome: the birth, and international recognition of a new country, Turkey," the book said. The official delegates, numbering 184, were joined by numerous press correspondents, guest speakers, and support personnel involved in the conference's day-to-day operations. The hotel's records indicate that the American delegation comprised of eight delegates at the conference, while the British had 25 and the French 26. The Greek delegation had 15 members, the Italians numbered 18, and the Japanese group consisted of 14 members, while the Romanian delegation had seven people, the Kingdom of Serbia-Croatia-Slovenia sent six, and the Turkish delegation — the largest — had 39 members.

US CENTCOM Commander lauds Pakistan Army's successes in fight against terrorism

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commander United States (US) CENTCOM, General Michael Erik Kurilla called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir and lauded Pakistan Army's successes in the fight against terrorism. During the meeting matters of mutual interest, regional security situation and defence cooperation were discussed, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release received on Monday said. Both the dignitaries reiterated the desire to further en-



hance bilateral relations in all fields. The visiting dignitary also acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan's continued efforts for bringing peace and stability to the region.

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.

Heavy downpour struck life in Hazara and damaged KKH

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Three days of heavy rainfall in Hazara division Monday have paralyzed life in the upper parts of the region, with flooding rivers, streams, urban flash floods, and landslides affecting people and traffic. From district Abbotabad to Manshera, Battagram, and Kohistan, traffic has been disrupted on Karakoram Highway (KKH) at various places due to heavy rainfall and landslides. In Galyat, Thandiani, Naran, Kaghan, Battagram, and other rain-hit areas, electricity transmission lines have also been damaged, leading to power outages in some parts of Galyat, Kaghan, and Naran for the last two days. Continuous heavy downpour has washed away many roads in district Mansehra, including an eight-kilometer-long

stretch of KKH from Susal Gali Al-bora. Moreover, landslides have blocked KKH at several places, further exacerbating the traffic situation. The Provincial government, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) have issued alerts to the district administrations, warning people to avoid unnecessary travel during the current monsoon heavy rain spell. Urban flash floods have also affected many parts of Oghi city, including the main bazaar, bus terminal, residential, and commercial buildings, resulting in millions of rupees in losses. In Mansehra city, Tariq road has become unusable due to the flood triggered by the heavy rain, while the 60-year-old Nadeem

bridge has been damaged and obstructed. Unfortunately, the heavy downpour and flash floods have also damaged several dairy farms, leading to the loss of dozens of cows, goats, and other pets, and have turned roads into rivers. Flooded River Siran and other streams have brought destruction to Tehsil Baffa, where standing maize crops have been destroyed, and floodwater has entered residential areas of the city and surrounding villages. Similarly, in the district of Abbottabad, heavy rain has triggered flash floods and landslides in several areas, disconnecting many remote villages from Abbottabad and Havelian. Dozens of mud houses and walls have reportedly collapsed, but fortunately, no casualties have been reported.

PDMA dispatches another consignment of relief supplies to Lower Chitral: PDMA

PESHAWAR (APP): On the instructions of Secretary Relief and Rehabilitation department, the provincial disaster management authority (PDMA) on Monday dispatched another consignment of relief materials including edible items and medicines to flood hit Lower Chitral district. The spokesman Relief Department said that the relief supplies also include 200 family-size te-

nets, 5000 sandbags, 200 emergency searchlights, 500 kitchen sets and school tents. He said that the relief operation was already underway in the affected areas while PDMA's teams along with district administration and Rescue 1122 were evacuating the affected people to safer places, adding that PDMA's humanitarian response facility was fully operational in the affected areas.

Intermittent rainfall to continue till July 28 in KP: Met Office

PESHAWAR (APP): The Met Office on Monday predicted that the intermittent spell of rain would continue in most parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province till July 28. It said that scattered to widespread wind, thunderstorm-rain with isolated heavy falls is likely to occur over most districts of the province during next 24 to 48 hours. Heavy rain may cause urban flooding in low-lying areas of Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Charsadda, DI Khan, Bannu and may trigger landslides in the vulnerable areas of Swat, Chitral, Dir, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Torghar, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Kurram and Khyber districts, it

warned. Heavy rain may also cause flash flooding in Swat, Chitral, Dir, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Torghar, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Kurram and Khyber districts, the Meteorological Department added. During the last 24 hours, the highest rainfall was recorded 65mm in Timergara, 64 in Malamjabba, 61 in Kakul, 38 in Pattan, 37 in Balakot, 16 in Saidu Sharif, nine in Dir, three in Bannu, and two in Mirkhani. The PDMA said that due to heavy rains, 11 houses were partially damaged with two in Bajaur, three each in Buner, Malakand, and Shangla while one house was fully damaged in Swat.

Mardan, Peshawar Secure Wins in PM Youth Talent Hunt Women Football League

PESHAWAR (APP): Mardan and Peshawar recorded victories against their respective rivals in the ongoing Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Women Football League being played at Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex Charsadda on Monday. Pakistan Muslim League (N) Youth Coordination Engr. Arif Rawan was the chief guest on this occasion. Director Sports Bacha

Khan University Charsadda and Organizing Secretary International athlete Shahbana Khattak, District Sports Officer Charsadda Tahseen Ullah, former national athlete and selector Musawar Khan, national football selector Fahim Butt, Director Sports KUST Wajid Ali, officials and players were also present. Speaking on this occasion, Engr. Arif Rawan appreciated the Special Assistant of Prime Minister Sheza Fatima, Engr. Amir Muqam, Director General Sports Higher education Commission Javed Memon for their untiring efforts in holding the Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Program in which female players could take part in 10 dif-

ferent events while the male could be part of 12 different Games. He said through such a program more talented youth would come up at the grassroots level and after going through different games leagues, training and coaching under qualified coaches these players could reach national and international levels. He said the government was providing A-class facilities to the players during the league including the provision of complete kits, and shoes besides cash prizes after victory. He said the Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Program is vital in promoting different sports activities across Pakistan including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Adviser to Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Matiullah Khan takes Oath as Caretaker Minister

PESHAWAR (APP): Adviser to Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Matiullah Khan here on Monday took oath as caretaker Minister at Governor House. Governor Haji

Ghulam Ali administered an oath to the caretaker minister. Caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan and Provincial Ministers besides Chief Secretary were present and congratulated him.

Rehabilitation of flood affected roads in full-swing

PESHAWAR (APP): On the special directions of the provincial government, the rehabilitation of the flood-affected roads in Chitral is in full swing. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Upper Chitral, Khalid Zaman is supervising the restoration process. According to an official handout issued here on Monday, Pasom Goal Road has been

reopened for vehicular traffic. The road was closed due to the recent devastating floods and after restoration it has been reopened. Vigorous restoration work was also going on Mastuj Bridge Assistant Commissioner Mastuj, Shah Adnan is supervising the work and very soon the bridge will be restored for traffic.

Mourning procession ends peacefully

PESHAWAR (APP): The mourning procession of the fifth Muharram al-Haram in Mardan ended peacefully after entering the main Imam-bargah amid heavy police security. The security arrangements were supervised by District Police Chief Najibur Rehman along with SP Operation Rokhanez. Apart from the district police, Pak Army troops,

Rescue 1122, WSSCM and representatives of other administrative departments also performed their respective services on this occasion. DPO Mardan appreciated the services of Police officers and jawans for their good performance. He also lauded the services and role of other government departments in performing their duty.

Ombudsman vows to focus on capacity building of staff

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Ombudsman Syed Jamalud Din Shah on Monday vowed to focus on capacity building of staff particularly investigation officers for delivering better performance. He said this while presiding over the monthly review meeting of Provincial Ombudsman Secretariat here which was attended by the Director General, Advisors, Consultants and Administrative staff. The Assistant Director (IT) Akhunzada Kamran Ali gave a presentation on the performance of officers. On this occasion, participants were informed about the monthly progress of all officers as well as Regional Offices. The Provincial Ombudsman directed the Incharge of Regional Offices to

provide relief to the complainant and facilitate them at Regional Offices instead of coming to Peshawar Secretariat. He said that regional office's role is significant. He also said that grievance redressal facilities may be provided to common people while they lodge complaints against departments. The head of the Provincial Ombudsman Secretariat while appreciating the role of the media team and investigation officers asked them to work hard and keep delivering their input to strengthen the Ombudsman Secretariat. He also directed that training workshops may be arranged for investigation officers in order to enhance their investigation capabilities.

District admin Haripur bans entry of firebrand speakers, Zakireen under section 144

HARIPUR (APP): Deputy Commissioner of Haripur on Monday imposed a two-month ban on the entry of two Zakireen and firebrand speakers from Lahore, considering the potential threat to peace and security during Muharram ul Haram in the district. The Zakireen and speakers included in the order were Allama Jafar Jatoi and Hafiz Tasadduq

Hussain. This restriction has been imposed under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), and a formal notification has been issued. The order warns that if these mentioned Zakireen or other responsible individuals violate the ban, legal action will be taken against them under the provisions of PPC, Section 188.

Another injured of Bara terror attack died

PESHAWAR (APP): Another victim of the Bara terror blast on Monday succumbed to injuries. According to police constable Abdul Hadi was under treatment in Hayatabad Medical

Complex. The number of martyrs has now climbed to four. A total of eight people including a local were injured in the suicide attack on the Bara Tehsil compound last week.

KP Minister tenders resignation

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Transport Shahid Khattak on Tuesday resigned from his post due to personal commitments, said the resignation letter sent to the Chief

minister Secretariat. It is to be mentioned that Election Commission has taken notice of caretaker provincial minister Shahid Khattak's attendance and address at Awami National Party (ANP) rally.

Investigation Unearths Poaching as Reason Behind Killing of Female Black Bear in Masnhera

PESHAWAR (APP): Initial investigation into the death of a black bear which was found in critically injured condition due to bullet wounds in Bugermung area of Siren Valley of Manshera district has unearthed poaching as the reason that prompted a few locals to snatch her two cubs for selling. "After holding inquiry into the incident and discussions with locals, we have convinced that the bear is killed for snatching of her two cubs," shared DFO Wildlife Manshera, Sarmad. It is also established that the bear had two cubs out of which one escaped in the forest after firing bullets at her mother and the other one is grabbed by the killers, Sarmad told APP. He said raids are being conducted for the arrest of three nominated persons in the case and for recovery of the snatched bear cub from their possession. It

merits a mention here that a female black bear was found in critically injured condition at the Bugermung area of Masnhera on July 19, last. The locals and Wildlife Department officials shifted the injured bear to Dhodial Phesantary for treatment but the beast succumbed to her injuries. DFO Wildlife Manshera said the search is also in progress for the escaped bear cub and teams along with some locals are visiting nearby forest areas. He said after the recovery of the cub from the possession of killers, the baby bear would be shifted to a safe location including Peshawar Zoo for care and upbringing. If the cub is suckling, that would be kept in a safe facility for feeding by humans and if is grown up then the option of releasing it back into the wild would also be given consideration, Sarmad opined.

Governor denotifies minister for industries

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in the exercise of the powers conferred under clause 3 of Article 132 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Monday de-notified caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical education, Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa Adnan Jalil from his office. On his de-notification from his respective office, Adnan Jalil has ceased to hold the portfolio of Provincial Minister with immediate effect. It was notified by the Administration Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

KDA completely restores MNJ road till Babusar Top: Aimal Zaman

KAGHAN (APP): Chairman Kaghan Development Authority (KDA) Dr Aimal Zaman Khan on Monday said that the beautiful and captivating sights of Kaghan Valley attracted thousands of tourists daily. He expressed these views while talking to the media here. The Chairman KDA further mentioned that Mansehra Naran Jalkhad road (M.N.J) has been completely restored for traffic till Babusar Top and numerous small and large vehicles pass through it daily and a large number of tourists are heading to Naran. On this occasion, Director-General KDA Tariq Khan informed that the Kaghan Development Authority staff, along with machinery and equipment, is stationed at various locations due to potential flooding in monsoon season, ensuring

full assistance and guidance for tourists regardless of any circumstances. He also mentioned that the district administrative authorities, police, and other line departments are actively working together to provide maximum facilities to tourists through coordination efforts, furthermore, all staff leaves have been cancelled. Tariq Khan said that Naran Tourism Promotion Association's (NTPA) leaders, Sarwar Khan Swati, Farooq Khan, and Seth Matiullah, praised the role of the KDA in providing suitable guidance to the thousands of tourists who visit the bazaars with proper cleanliness and timely opening of Jheel Road. They appreciated the timely cleaning of streams and torrents to promote tourism through various initiatives.





Pakistan to host 3rd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism Cooperation on August 4-5

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan will host the 4th D-8 Senior Officials Meeting and 3rd D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Tourism Cooperation for the first time in the country on August 4-5 at Bhurbhan, Murree. The meeting, being organized by the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), will be followed by the technical visit to the Federal Capital on August 6. It was decided in the 2nd D-8 Ministerial Meeting held in Malaysia in 2019 that Pakistan will host the 3rd D-8 Ministerial Meeting preceded by 4th D-8 Senior Officials Meeting. However, the meet-

ing was postponed in 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Awn Chaudhry, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Tourism & sports / PTDC Chairman, called on the Secretary General of D-8 Secretariat in March and decided to organize the meeting later this year. The advisor, while chairing an inter-ministerial meeting here on Monday on the preparation and organization of the D-8 Ministerial Meeting, said it was aimed at promoting Pakistan's tourism potential and exploring tourism trade opportunities of the member states. The meeting could also open new avenues of

socio-economic development, he added. The objective of this meeting is to identify potential pathways (incentives and initiatives) to enhance intra D-8 tourism in line with the objectives and goals of D-8; to bring together tourism experts of member states to strengthen their capacities and develop effective strategies for the post COVID-19 tourism era; to provide a platform for member states to exchange knowledge and best practices to facilitate cooperation opportunities, and to explore possibilities to promote bilateral tourism among the member states.

Vehicle swept away with 6 tourists in river coming in Gilgit

GILGIT (APP): While coming from Skardu to Gilgit a tourist's vehicle has been swept away with 6 tourists by the river while taking a turn at Sasi Haramush area in Gilgit. According to Rescue 1122 Gilgit, two torches, smart mobiles, gas cylinders and four sleepers have been recovered from the spot. During the search operation, a dead body has

been recovered near Ansar camp. Rescue 1122, the second dead body has been found in Thalchi area Gilgit, but the process of identifying the name is going on. The tourists in the vehicle belong to Rajanpour South Punjab and their Names are Abdul Ghaffar, Muhammad Azad, Haq Nawaz, Muhammad Taimur, Sanaulah, Muhammad Talha.

Death anniversary of Qudrat Ullah Shahab observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 37th death anniversary of eminent urdu writer and civil servant Qudrat Ullah Shahab observed on July 24 (Monday). According to private news channel, Qudrat Ullah Shahab was born in Gilgit on February 26, 1920. He is

best known for his autobiography "Shahab Nama". He also contributed in English and Urdu languages for contemporary newspapers and magazines of Pakistan Writers Guild. He died on this day in 1986 in Islamabad.

Mock exercise held at Ejaz Shaheed police Line Dera

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district police and Pakistan Army personnel on Monday conducted a joint mock exercise here at Ejaz Shaheed Police Line to show preparedness and readiness to effectively respond in case of any untoward incident during Muharram. According to the police spokesman, the exercise was conducted on the directives of District Police Officer (DPO) Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani in view of Muharram to show preparedness for

efficiently dealing with situations in case of any emergency. Elite Force of police, Rapid Response Force (RFF), Pakistan Army and the district police personnel took part in the drill and demonstrated their professional skills to promptly and effectively tackle challenges during emergency like situations. Besides showing preparedness, the exercise also aimed at enhancing coordination among all relevant departments in case of any untoward incident.

DC expresses annoyance over poor cleanliness

MULTAN (APP): Deputy Commissioner Umar Jahangir expressed annoyance over poor cleanliness arrangements at Shehbaz Sharif Hospital on Sunday late at night. According to official sources, the deputy commissioner paid a surprise visit to Shehbaz Sharif Hospital. He expressed displeasure over poor cleanliness

arrangements. He also met with different patients and sought their feedback on service delivery. The patients, however, expressed satisfaction. He instructed the administration of the hospital to improve cleanliness arrangements at the earliest. He also warned of action in case of a lethargic attitude towards cleanliness.

DC visits Tench Bhatta area to inspect Muharram procession route

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema here on Monday visited Tench Bhatta to Chungi no 22 area and inspected the arrangements for the Muharram procession. Additional Deputy Commissioner General, Nosheen Israr, AC Cantt, Qandeel Fatima, ASP and the organizers of the procession were also present on the occasion. He directed the authorities to complete the cleanliness arrangements of the

entire route and fix dangling electricity and telephone wires. Garbage lying on the route of the procession should be removed immediately, Hasan Waqar added. Negligence on part of the officials concerned would not be tolerated, the DC said. The patchwork work on the procession route should be completed as soon as possible, he said adding, the installation of CCTV cameras to monitor the route should also be completed immediately.

80,300 cusecs Inflows of Jhelum river into Mangla dam

MIRPUR (APP): 80, 300 cusecs inflows of Jhelum river water emerged highest, recorded on Monday during the ongoing season so far into Mangla dam reservoir. The water level in Mangla dam was 1216.95 feet, with live storage of 5.468 MAF against maximum conservation level of 1242 feet on Monday, according to the official sources. The overall position of the river inflows and outflows at Tarbela, Mangla and Chashma along with the reservoir's levels and the barrages in the country was, Rivers: Indus at Tarbela: Inflows 370900 cusecs and Outflows 294200 cusecs, Kabul at Nowshera: Inflows 82000 cusecs and Outflows 82000 cusecs, Khairabad Bridge: Inflows 408800

cusecs and Outflow 408800, Jhelum at Mangla: Inflows 80300 cusecs and Outflows 10000 cusecs, Chenab at Marala: Inflows 108600 cusecs and Outflows 94800 cusecs, Barrages: Jinnah: Inflows 296000 cusecs and Outflows 288500 cusecs, Chashma: Inflows: 349000 cusecs and Outflows 352900 cusecs, Taunsa: Inflows 374500 cusecs and Outflows 362500 cusecs, Guddu: Inflows 194900 cusecs and Outflows 167800 cusecs Sukkur: Inflows 160100 cusecs and Outflows 129500 cusecs Kotri: Inflows 62800 cusecs and Outflows 33800 cusecs Trimmu: Inflows 107300 cusecs and Outflow 96800 cusecs Panjnad: Inflows 49200 cusecs and Outflows 39900 cusecs.

Father, son died killed in accident

FAISALABAD (APP): A youth and his father were killed in an accident in the precinct of Factory Area police station, here on Monday. Rescue 1122 spokesman said that Muhammad Saleh (24) along with his father Muhammad Akbar (65) was travelling on a motorcycle when a speeding truck hit their bike near Railway Phattak Sitara Colony. As a result, the both died on the spot. Rescue 1122 handed over the bodies to area police, while further investigation was underway.

ANF seizes 37 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in its operations against drug-traffickers managed to recover 37 kg narcotics and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman. He informed that in an operation, ANF recovered 1.5 kg Ice drug being sent to a foreign country through a parcel booked at International Mail Office Rawalpindi. Ice was concealed in Hot Pots. In another operation, one kg Ice drug was recovered from the possession of an accused resident of Peshawar, travelling in public transport. The accused was arrested near M-1 Motorway Toll Plaza. On the accused's information, the co-accused, a resident of Islamabad, was also arrested along with a vehicle from the Khanapul area in Islamabad.

Man hit to death by train

SARGODHA (APP): A train crushed a man to death at Chak No. 137-NB in the jurisdiction of Sillanwali Police station on Monday. Police said that Muhammad Arshad was travelling to Sillanwali on his bike. When he was crossing Railway crossing Sillanwali, Hazara Express train crushed him to death. Further investigation was under way.

SSP visits security routes in Khairpur city

SUKKUR (APP): The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Khairpur, Mir Rohail Khan Khoso on Monday visited security routes of the 8th Muharram-ul-Haram mourning processions. The SSP Khairpur visited routes of Katchehry Road and Mall Road to be taken out on 8th Muharram-ul-Haram and issued directives to all SHOs to ensure effective Security arrangements. Hyderabad Police under the supervision of SSP Khairpur ensured foolproof security arrangements to avert any untoward incident with monitoring of mourning processions through CCTV cameras.

PFA dumps 2000 kg spoiled food

DG Khan (APP): PFA dumps 2000 kg spoiled food Punjab Food Authority (PFA) recovered during different raids conducted here on Monday. According to the spokesman, multiple raids were continued against impure foods in different parts of Southern Punjab. In Layyah, checks were held at production units of jam and pickles working at Hira Minar and Lalazar Colony where preserved stuff of sweet and salted material were stored in large drums. Moreover, defective arrangements of cleanliness were found in the stores, it was said. The food authority teams fined collectively over Rs. 45,000 to owners concerned of manufacturing units of pickles and jam.

5,611 cops deployed for fifth of Muharram security

SARGODHA (APP): Regional Police Officer (RPO) Sharukh Kamal Siddiqui was providing foolproof security to 562 Majalis and 68 processions in the region on fifth of Muharram. While talking to APP here on Monday, the RPO said that to provide exemplary security on fifth of Muharram at Majalis and processions, 5611 policemen had been

deployed. 68 processions would be held on fifth of Muharram in the region including 46 in Sargodha, 12 in Khushab and 10 in Bhakkar, the RPO added. Sharukh further said that 562 Majalis would also be conducted on the fifth of Muharram including 247 in Sargodha, 91 in Khushab, 72 in Mianwali and 152 Majalis in Bhakkar.

Exclusive lanes urged to enhance cycling

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior Vice President of Islamabad Cycling Association (ISA), Haroon General has urged the government to set-up the exclusive cycling lanes for the promotion of healthy activity of cycling. Talking to APP here on Monday, he said the social behavior needs a shift as cycling is not a poor person's transport but a healthy lifestyle. Cycling is tagged with lower socio-economic status, he said adding that bike riders, cab drivers, and even citizens do not give way to the cyclist due to the shallow trend of bicycle lanes in the country. "Ten percent of societal behaviors cannot be overwhelmed by the majority and this social behavior needs to be changed", Haroon said. He said that roads are expanding but cycle lanes seem to be out of strategy. Talking about professional cycling, Haroon

said athletes are being trained on 73 years old velodrome and such practices would not bring medals to the countries. He said Pakistan has only one cycling velodrome which was built in 50s and has a 333 meters track, while international level velodrome are 250 meters long. "To train our athletes for international events we need to send them abroad which will equip them with modern techniques", Haroon said. He said that international bodies can help in building an updated velodrome here but a strong determination is required from concerned bodies. Talking about the 'Tour de Khunjerab' Cycling Race, he said that it was one of the most successful events in the country's cycling history. Foreign cyclist term it the most favorable area for cycling events, he added.

Staff to remain high alert on Ashura; says MS Sukkur Hospital

SUKKUR (APP): District headquarters hospital Sukkur will remain on high alert on Ashura days in compliance with the directions of the Sindh Government. A meeting under the chair of MS Dr Rafique Memon was held at his office to finalize the arrangements regarding 9th and 10th Muharram on Monday. Memon told the participants that foolproof arrangements would be ensured during Ashura. He directed to keep an ample quantity of life-saving drugs in the emergency ward during the Ashura. Medical

equipment should be completely functional and all the staff must be alert during these days, he said. He directed that separate beds would be fixed for wounded Azadars so that other patients coming to the emergency ward could be treated uninterrupted. All the generators installed at the hospital should be functional as well as ambulances must be kept on standby, he added. He said that the in-charges of all administrative staff to fulfill their duties with a sense of responsibility in order to maintain the sanctity of Muharram-ul-Haram.

Pakistan Air Chief Congratulates Hamza Khan on Winning World Junior Squash C'ship 2023

ISLAMABAD (Staff Report): Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, extended heartfelt congratulations to Hamza Khan for his victory in the World Junior Squash Championship 2023, held in Melbourne, Australia. The young and talented squash player, Hamza Khan, achieved this remarkable feat by defeating Mohamed Zakaria of Egypt with a score of 3-1 during an intense final match in the coastal city of Melbourne. The Air Chief expressed his joy and pride in witnessing Pakistan reclaim the World Junior Squash Championship title after a gap of 37 years. He likened this victory to the historic triumph of Jansher Khan in the 1986 World Squash Championship and saw it as a revival of Pakistan's glory in the sport of squash. He commended Hamza Khan for his exceptional performance, which has elevated the national flag and brought immense honor to the country. As the President of Pakistan Squash Federation, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu highlighted the Pakistan Air Force's significant role in promoting squash within the country. He pledged continued sup-



port and encouragement from both the Pakistan Air Force and the Pakistan Squash Federation to nurture young talents like Hamza Khan and secure more victories for the nation. The Air Chief also acknowledged the relentless dedication of Air Vice Marshal Kazim Hammad, the Senior Vice President of Pakistan Squash Federation, and Air Commodore (Retired) Aftab Sadiq Qureshi, the Contingent Manager, in providing quality training and support to young players.

Pak-US Education Alliance: Bridging Nations, Building Futures



Washington (Agencies): The strong and enduring bond between Pakistan and the United States has been fostered through education for several decades, affirmed Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States. Speaking at the Embassy of Pakistan in Washington DC during a meeting with 25 Pakistani students participating in the 'Study of the US Institutes' (SUSI) program, the Ambassador highlighted the importance of increasing the number of Pakistani students studying in the United States. The SUSI program, a 5-week educational initiative launched in 2010, serves as a platform for enhancing cross-cultural understanding and promoting education cooperation between Pakistan and the United States. It offers young minds a unique opportunity to im-

merse themselves in American society, history, and values. Congratulating the selected students on their achievement, the Ambassador stated that their participation in the SUSI program would enrich their experience and broaden their intellectual horizons. He emphasized that the knowledge and insights gained during their stay in the United States would be instrumental in contributing to the progress of both nations. Highlighting imitation, emulation, and innovation as vital stages for societal progress, the Ambassador expressed hope that the students would apply what they learned and observed in the United States to benefit their own communities and foster mutual understanding between the two nations.

Third Pakistan-China Think Tank Forum Focuses on the ‘Decade of CPEC’ in Beijing

BEIJING (Agencies): The Third Pakistan-China Think Tank Forum, held in Beijing on July 21, 2023, emphasized the significance of the transformative China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as the flagship project of President Xi Jinping’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General of the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), highlighted CPEC’s pivotal role in fostering the Pakistan-China relationship and driving Pakistan’s economic progress and prosperity. The forum, jointly organized by ISSI and the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) at the CICIR headquarters, welcomed a 15-member Pakistan delegation comprising diplomats, academics, researchers, and media representatives. The “Decade of CPEC: Review and Outlook” seminar, following the plenary session, featured separate sessions moderated by experts, including Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director of the China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) at ISSI; Dr. Hu Shisheng, Director of the Institute of South Asian Studies at CICIR; and Dr. Lou Chunhao, Executive Director of



the Institute of South Asian Studies at CICIR. Prominent speakers at the event included Ambassador Zhang Maoming, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Asian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of China; Ambassador Sohail Mahmood; Prof. Dr. Attaullah Shah, Vice Chancellor of Karakoram International University, Pakistan; Dr. Wang Xu, Executive Deputy Director of the Centre for South Asian Studies, Peking University; Ambassador Babar Amin, Former Ambassador of Pakistan to Norway and Australia; Dr. Mukesh Kumar Khatwani, Associate Professor at the University of Sindh; Dr. Wang Shida, Deputy Director of the Institute of South Asian Studies at CICIR; and Dr. Fouzia Hadi Ali, Associate Professor and Director of the Regional Integration Centre at the University of the Punjab.

Govt utilizing available resources for completion of projects, economic revival: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said the government was utilizing all public sector resources for ensuring the completion of projects in a given time frame under the plan for the revival of the economy. In a tweet on social media platform Twitter, he said, “Today I laid the foundation stone for construction of three new industrial zones near Sheikhpura.” He said Pakistan had a huge capacity for industrial progress which was unutilized, adding it

was a matter of satisfaction that the private sector of Pakistan was making progress and undertaking investments of billions of rupees to expand the industrial capacity of the country. He appreciated the captains of industry and trade for their resilience and hard work, saying they were playing a vital role in national progress despite difficulties. While speaking today, he said he stressed the need for the use of modern technology and value addition in export products.

Govt schools in GB achieve remarkable results in FBISE examination

GILGIT (APP): The government schools in Gilgit-Baltistan have achieved remarkable success in the FBISE Annual Examination 2023, showcasing a significant improvement in student performance compared to the previous year. In an official report from Chief Secretary Gilgit Baltistan office, it was revealed that “The overall passing percentage for grades 9th and 10th has witnessed an impressive surge, with grade 9th a 1% increase at 45%, and grade 10th soaring to 82% from 79% in 2022. “The positive trend is reflected across various schools, with an increase in the number of institutions delivering outstanding results, as per details of the report. In 2022, 29 schools attained a perfect 100% pass rate, while the number increased to 32 in 2023. Similarly, schools achieving 90% results rose from 28 to 37%, demonstrating a commitment to academic excellence. It further added in the report that Districts Gilgit, Hunza, Ghizer, and Diamer stand out as

shining examples of progress, exhibiting remarkable improvements in their students’ results. Although District Skardu, Astore, and Shiger displayed modest advancements, there remains room for further enhancement. Districts Kharmang, Ghanche, and Nagar, however, are urged to intensify efforts to bridge the gap. It was disclosed in the official report that “The government’s efforts in elevating the educational standard are clearly yielding positive outcomes. An impressive number of 454 students have achieved higher grades (A+, A, & B) this year, further cementing the region’s commitment to nurturing bright minds. The education authorities express their gratitude to teachers, parents, and students for their hard work and dedication in making this achievement possible. The government reaffirms its commitment to continue investing in education to unlock the potential of every young mind and ensure a brighter future for Gilgit-Baltistan.

FAPUASA & APUBTA agree with HEC on promotion policy

ISLAMABAD (APP): The representatives of APUBTA, All Public Universities BPS Teachers Association, and FAPUASA, Federation of All Pakistan Universities Staff Association, held a meeting with HEC officials here the other day and agreed on the submission of the circulated draft promotion statutes for the BPS university teachers. The statutes were jointly written by HEC, FAPUASA, and APUBTA and were shared with the stakeholders in December 2021. The meeting was attended by the HEC officer Mr Nasir Shah Khat-tak DG, QAD. The FAPUASA team was led by Prof Dr. Aamir Ali, President ASA QAU and FAPUASA Islamabad, Dr. Faiz ur Rahim, General Secretary ASA IIUI and FAPUASA Islamabad, Prof. Dr. Rizwan Kobab, Dr. Farooq Buzdar and Dr Zafar and APUBTA team led by President Dr. Sami ur Rahman and GS Dr. Imtiaz Ahmad, and attended by other members Prof Dr Asif Jan, Dr. M Iqbal, Dr. Akhtar Hus-sain and Mr Jawad. The FAPUASA Central President Prof. Dr. Kaleem

and all the members played a very positive role in supporting the BPS faculty and stressed for approval of draft statutes in its meeting with the HEC Chairman and Executive Director on July 14, 2023. APUBTA is also thankful to the Chairman HEC, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, and the Executive Director Dr Shaista Sohail for their sincere commitment to submit the draft statutes for approval by the commission in the forthcoming meeting. The APUBTA President and GD Nasir Shah jointly signed the agreement vetted by the HEC chairman and ED in this regard. Hopefully, the Chairman NASC, Mr Qadir Mandokhail shall direct the HEC for a meeting of the commission on one point agenda on short notice in the NASC meeting to be held on July 26, 2023, as today’s meeting has been postponed due to flight cancellation. It is worth mentioning here that Chairman Qadir Mandokhail has directed HEC to settle the issue in the morning and produce the same in the meeting at 04:00 pm positively.

10-Year Celebrations of CPEC Commenced with International Conference

ISLAMABAD (APP): A momentous two-day International Conference on “Decade of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) & Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) – From Vision to Reality” began today, marking the 10-year celebration of CPEC. The conference, organized by the Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of China, focuses on CPEC as a strategic component of BRI, emphasizing infrastructure development and socio-economic cooperation between China and Pakistan. Bringing together policymakers, scholars,

practitioners, and stakeholders, the conference aims to foster discussions on the economic, social, environmental, and geopolitical impacts of CPEC and BRI. Chinese Charge d’Affaires Ms. Pang Chunxue and Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal, will be the chief guests. The event will explore opportunities for enhanced cooperation, sustainable development, and inclusive growth in the next phase of CPEC. Various technical sessions will cover topics such as Socio-Economic impacts of CPEC, Regional Connectivity through

Gwadar Port, Industrial Relocation and Export Opportunities, Green Technologies and Development, Security and Geopolitical Implications, Innovation, Technology and Global Value Chains, Challenges to Regional Connectivity and Integration, and Artificial Intelligence and Labor Market Dynamics. Since coming into power in April 2022, the current government has revived CPEC projects that were previously shelved. Prime Minister Shahbaz has reaffirmed his commitment to completing these projects, and during his tenure, he visited China to strengthen ties.

1,131-kg spurious black pepper seized

FAISALABAD (APP): The Punjab food Authority (PFA) seized 1,131 kilograms of spurious black pepper and sealed its production unit in the area of Thikriwala police station. PFA Director General Raja Jahangir Anwar, said in a statement here on Monday that a team conducted raid near Sabzi Mandi Bypass Sadhar, where spurious black pepper was being manufactured with the help of plaster of Paris and other items. Besides spurious black pepper, 35-kg maida (flour powder), 15-kg plaster of Paris and 26-kg other items, in addition to huge quantity of oil and prohibited colours were seized by the raiding team. Later, the spurious pepper and other items were discarded. A criminal case was registered against the unit owner, he added.

HC of Pakistan presents credentials to President of Tanzania

ISLAMABAD (APP): High Commissioner of Pakistan to Tanzania Siraj Ahmad Khan on Monday presented credentials to Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania in Zanzibar. The High Commissioner later tweeted, “It was an honour to present my letters of credence as High Commissioner to the President of Tanzania, this morning in Zanzibar. The President fondly recalled her visit to Pakistan three decades ago.”

Int’l EPI mission launches WUENIC in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high level international joint Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) mission Monday disseminated WHO and UNICEF Estimates of National Immunization Coverage (WUENIC) in Pakistan. The WUENIC is a rule-based logical framework developed by WHO and UNICEF for estimating children’s immunization coverage in all countries and territories across the globe. “It is heartening indeed to welcome the high level international joint EPI mission to Pakistan,” stated Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination. The sentiments were shared by the Federal Health Secretary in response to the promising immunization data pertaining to Pakistan shared by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) estimates of National Immunization Coverage (WUENIC) during the dissemination event, organized by the Federal Directorate of Immunization (FDI). Shallwani stated that WHO and UNICEF had made annual estimates of national infant immunization coverage for selected vaccines for more than two decades now enabling countries across the world into informed decision making. Pakistan has benefited from WUENIC in a score of ways. The government of Pakistan has capitalized on these estimates to track progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal No. 3 of “Good Health & Well Being”. The secretary added that as per the estimates figures shared, the Expanded Programme on Immunization had committed this year to bolster collaboration and capacity among immunization professionals, researchers, health workers and journalists; to better understand and address barriers to vaccine delivery, acceptance and demand.

President for fostering trade and economic linkages with Ethiopia

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has asked Pakistan’s Ambassador-designate to Ethiopia to foster trade and economic linkages with Ethiopia by facilitating and enhancing interactions between the two countries’ business communities. He also urged the Ambassador to work towards increasing trade volume with Ethiopia by reaching out to Ethiopian businesspersons for the import of Pakistani products. The President made these remarks while talking to Pakistan’s Ambassador-designate to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Mian Atif Sharif, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Talking to the Ambassador, the President said that Pakistan-Ethiopia bilateral ties were marked by common history, interests, and support for each other on various international fora. He said that the bilateral relations between the two countries needed to be further



cemented by taking the mutual trade volume to its fullest potential. The President also called for enhancing cooperation in the field of education and people-to-people contacts, adding that students in Ethiopia could benefit from online/video educational materials/courses of the Virtual University of Pakistan and Allama Iqbal Open University to enhance their skill sets. He stated that Pakistan’s offer of training young Ethiopian Diplomats at the Foreign Service Academy and scholarships for banking courses would further help improve bilateral ties with Ethiopia.

Sherry exposes timber mafia’s role in illegal deforestation; urges action to protect Chitral’s environment, tourists

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Senator Sherry Rehman on Monday, addressed the pressing issue of floods caused by climate change, highlighting deforestation as a significant contributing factor. During the session, Pakistan Peoples Party’s Senator Rubina Khalid drew attention to the escalating deforestation in Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Senator Sherry Rehman acknowledged receiving reports from reliable non-government organizations, indicating illegal tree cutting in the affected areas. The minister exposed the involvement of a timber mafia operating in cahoots with certain government officials, engaging in the unlawful felling of trees. She stressed the urgent need to thoroughly investigate and halt this illegal activity, emphasizing the detrimental impacts of deforestation on the environment. To address this critical issue, she urged the formation of a fact-finding committee

to take decisive action against the ongoing illegal deforestation in the region. Furthermore, she expressed concern about certain tourist resorts located perilously close to the river in Chitral. “While these resorts attract visitors, they also pose significant risks to the lives of tourists.” Sherry firmly asserted that authorities must refrain from permitting any further constructions near the riverside, thereby ensuring the safety of tourists. In response to Senator Rubina Khalid’s concerns, she advocated for the improvement of infrastructure in the region and called for an inquiry into the department responsible for granting permissions for constructions perilously close to the river, spanning from Swat to Kalam. The government is now faced with the responsibility of taking immediate and appropriate measures to combat deforestation, protect the environment, and safeguard the lives of both the local populace and tourists in the picturesque region of Chitral.

ECC approves fixation of MPRs of 25 new drugs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on Monday approved the fixation of Maximum Retail Prices (MPRs) of Twenty-Five (25) new drugs. The cabinet committee meeting was chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, according to a press statement issued by the finance ministry. Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination submitted a summary regarding the fixation of MPRs of 26 new drugs. Ministry of National Food Security and Research submitted a summary for allocation of Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO’s) wheat amongst recipient agencies/provinces /areas for the year 2023-

24 and informed that the recipient agencies have made their demand of 2,488,000 MT for the food year 2023-24. The ECC after discussion allowed allocation of wheat amongst the recipients @ 50% local and 50% imported on the weighted average price of the stock. The ECC directed that all recipients would pay the full price of wheat and incidental charges of PASSCO as there would be no financial liability on the part of the federal governmentt for the supply of the wheat to the respective provinces/entities. The ECC directed the provincial governments to pay the pending liabilities of Rs. 149 billion of PASSCO before signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the procurement of wheat for the current year.

Woman killed, son, two granddaughter injured in road accident

ATTOCK (APP): One woman was killed while her son and two granddaughters got injured in a road accident near Rangli chowk in the limits of Jand Police station of Attock on Monday, police and hospital sources said. According to details, a 34 years old Muhammad Jameel along with his 56 years old mother and two minor daughters were going on

his motorcycle when he lost his control on motorcycle, resultantly, his mother died on the spot due to head injuries while he and his two minor daughters were injured. The injured were taken to tehsil headquarters hospital Jand from where they were shifted to different hospitals of the area. Jand police investigating the case.

Saudi Arabia issues 99 new industrial licenses in May

RIYADH (Agencies): Saudi Arabia's industrial sector is fast picking up steam, with the government issuing 99 new licenses in May to set up new factories, the latest official data showed. According to the Ministry of Industrial and Mineral Resources, the top economic activities receiving the licenses included food production at 16, carpentry at 10, and non-metallic mineral production at nine. It also issued nine new licenses for chemical production units, while formed metal manufacturing,



as well as rubber production units, received eight licenses each. The report indicated that the volume of investments these new licensees committed to make was SR20.1 billion (\$5.35 billion). The small en-

terprises acquired most of the new industrial licenses at 88.89. It was followed by medium enterprises which bagged 10.10 percent of licenses, alongside micro-enterprises which had a share of 1.01 percent. Saudi national factories recorded the largest share by acquiring 73.74 percent of the total licenses issued in terms of the type of investment. This was followed by foreign enterprises with 15.15 percent, while joint investment enterprises accounted for 11.11 percent.

Ryanair reports bumper €663mil quarterly profits

LONDON (Agencies): Irish no-frills airline Ryanair on Monday announced surging profits for its first quarter, recovering from disruption to traffic one year earlier in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Profit after tax soared to €663 million (US\$738 million) in the three months to the end of June from €170 million in the carrier's prior first quarter, a statement



said. Passenger traffic jumped 11% to 50.4 million customers. Revenue surged 40% to €3.65 billion. Ryanair, which flies mainly across Europe,

said it also benefitted from strong Easter trading and an extra public holiday in the UK marking the coronation of King Charles III. It added that full-year traffic would grow to approximately 183.5 million passengers, up 9% but slower than originally expected. Delays to deliveries of new Boeing planes had cut the forecast from 185 million passengers, Ryanair noted.

Australia to buy 20 new Hercules military aircraft

SYDNEY (Agencies): Australia said on Monday it would spend A\$9.8 billion (US\$6.60 billion) to buy 20 new Super Hercules military transport aircraft, ahead of a visit later this week by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. The US State Department in November approved the potential sale of the aircraft, manufactured by Lockheed Martin, and related equipment to Australia. The deal comes amid the largest



ever Australia-US joint military exercise, involving more than 30,000 troops and participants from 11 other countries, in a show of force and unity at a time when China has

emerged as an increasingly assertive power in the Indo-Pacific. The biennial Talisman Sabre war games began on Friday and will take place in various locations across Australia for two weeks. Australian defence minister Richard Marles and Austin will travel to north Queensland to watch the military exercise following the annual meeting of US and Australian defence and foreign ministers, known as AUSMIN, in Brisbane on July 28-29.

ECB set to hike again with inflation stubbornly high

FRANKFURT (Agencies): Another interest rate hike appears a near certainty when ECB policymakers meet Thursday as inflation remains high, but the central bank faces increasing discontent among countries scared high-interest rates will hurt growth. The Frankfurt-based institution has lifted borrowing costs at the fastest rate ever to combat red-hot inflation after Russia's war in Ukraine sent food and energy prices soaring. Key

rates have risen by four percentage points since July last year, with the ECB's deposit rate now sitting at 3.50% - its highest level since 2001. The sequence of rate hikes does not look like it will stop this week, despite moves by other central banks to slow the tempo of increases. At its last meeting in June, ECB President Christine Lagarde said it was "very likely" that the bank would raise rates again at its next meeting.

"Virtually everyone is anticipating a 0.25 percentage point increase," the head of the influential German central bank, Joachim Nagel, told the RND media group last week. But future increases are in doubt as inflation slowly eases and the eurozone economy looks weak. Consumer prices rose at a 5.5% pace in June - still well above the ECB's 2% target but down from its double-digit peak towards the end of last year.

E-commerce registrations in Saudi Arabia surge 21% in Q2

RIYADH (Agencies): As more and more Saudis are turning to online buying, the Kingdom is seeing unprecedented growth in e-commerce businesses, with the total number of registered firms in the country touching 35,314 in the second quarter of 2023. This is a growth of 21 percent over the 29,007 registered e-commerce firms in the corresponding period a year ago, the latest data released by the Minister of Commerce revealed. The ministry bulletin also



showed that Riyadh topped the list in issuing 14,026 registrations, followed by Makkah at 9,080 and the Eastern Province at 5,699. While

Madinah issued 1,756 registrations, followed by Qassim and Aseer at 1,204 and 1,080 respectively. This comes as the e-commerce sector in the Kingdom is increasingly playing a key role in bolstering the national economy, amid the Kingdom's push to strengthen the digital industry under the National Transformation Program. Saudi Arabia is one of the top 10 developing countries in the e-commerce sector, with an annual growth rate exceeding 32 percent.

Twitter challenger Threads struggles for traction

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): After a wildly successful first few days, Threads' popularity has waned in the weeks since Meta launched its challenge to Twitter, which lives on despite its problems. The average amount of time people spend on Threads daily has plummeted more than 75% since the platform made a rock star debut on July 6, according to data from Sensor Tower, a market analysis firm. Threads was quickly billed as a potential death knell for



Twitter, a platform that has tumbled into chaos under the leadership of mercurial tycoon Elon Musk. The launch saw sign-ups of more than

100 million users in less than five days, smashing the record of AI tool ChatGPT for fastest-growing consumer app, and creating relief and excitement amongst early adopters fleeing Twitter. "I actually closed down my Twitter account after starting Threads," said Brooklyn resident Lauren Brose, head of marketing at a tech start-up. "I used to love Twitter. After Elon Musk took over Twitter, I found that the entire environment just changed completely."

Bankman-Fried denies witness tampering, accepts gag order

NEW YORK (Agencies): Lawyers for FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried rejected prosecutors' claims that his discussions with a New York Times reporter amounted to witness tampering but agreed to accept a gag order, they said in a letter to the judge in the criminal fraud case. The letter, released yesterday, came after prosecutors sought to bar Bankman-Fried

and allies from making public statements that could interfere with the case. Cryptocurrency exchange FTX, once valued at US\$32 billion, filed for bankruptcy protection in November as it was unable to repay depositors. Bankman-Fried has pleaded not guilty to fraud. In the letter, Bankman-Fried's attorney confirmed he had spoken with and provided personal docu-

ments to the New York Times that included documents written by a former colleague, Caroline Ellison, who has cooperated with the US government. "Bankman-Fried did not violate the protective order in this case, nor did he violate his bail conditions, nor did he violate any law or rule governing his conduct," Bankman-Fried's lawyer Mark Cohen said in the letter.

Musk says Twitter to change logo, adieu to 'all the birds'

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): Elon Musk said he was looking to change Twitter's logo, tweeting: "And soon we shall bid adieu to the twitter brand and, gradually, all the birds". In a tweet at 12.06am on Sunday, the social media platform's billionaire owner added: "If a good enough X

logo is posted tonight, we'll make it go live worldwide tomorrow." Musk posted an image of a flickering "X" but did not give further details. The company did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Under Musk's tumultuous tenure since buying Twitter in October,

the company changed its business name to X Corp, reflecting the billionaire's vision to create a "super app," like China's WeChat. Twitter's website says its logo, depicting a blue bird, is "our most recognisable asset," adding "That's why we're so protective of it."

Eurozone downturn exceeds forecasts in July

LONDON (Agencies): A downturn in euro zone business activity deepened much more than expected in July as demand in the bloc's dominant services industry declined while factory output fell at the fastest pace since Covid-19 first took hold, a survey showed. HCOB's flash Composite Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for the bloc, compiled by S&P Global and seen as a good gauge of overall economic health, dropped to an eight-month low of 48.9 in July from June's 49.9. That was below the 50 mark separating growth from contraction and lower than all expectations in a Reuters poll which had predicted a mod-



est dip to 49.7. "Manufacturing continues to be the Achilles heel of the eurozone. Producers have cut their output again at an accelerated pace in July, while the services sector's activity is still expanding, though at a much slower rate than earlier in the year," said Cyrus de la Rubia, at Hamburg Commercial Bank.

Singapore's core inflation hits one-year low of 4.2%

SINGAPORE (Agencies): Singapore's core inflation rate cooled in June to its lowest level in 12 months amid a broader trend of declining import costs and easing tightness in the labour market. The core measure, which excludes housing and private transportation costs and is watched by the central bank to determine policy settings, came in at 4.2% from a year earlier, official data showed Monday. That matched the prediction in a Bloomberg survey of economists. The reading further supports expectations that monetary policymakers will likely stand pat at least for the near term to support the trade-reliant econo-



my which averted a technical recession in the second quarter but still showed signs of below-trend growth with exports contracting for nine straight months through June. The Monetary Authority of Singapore, which uses the exchange rate as its main policy tool, already paused tightening in April after five moves since October 2021.

Investors flock back to Chinese bonds on Fed pivot hope

BEIJING (Agencies): Global investors are returning to Chinese debt in full force, as expectations for US interest rates to soon peak and Beijing's monetary easing boost the appeal of the world's second-largest bond market. Overseas investors bought a net 90.6 billion yuan (US\$12.6 billion) of notes in China's interbank market last month, the most since January 2021, increasing their total holdings to 3.28 trillion yuan, according to Bloomberg calculations based on official local data. The interbank market is the country's main bond trading venue. June marked the second consecutive month of such inflows after foreign investors had continued to slash their exposure to Chinese debt following a record exodus last year. The outflows



have started easing in recent months after cooling US inflation prompted a rethink of the Federal Reserve's policy outlook and an ailing economy triggered a series of rate cuts by China's central bank. The inflows in June could be driven by expectations for further rate cuts in China as well as index-related demand, said Zhaopeng Xing, senior China strategist at Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd.

US soft landing hinges on Fed's inflation tolerance

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Rising hopes of a soft landing for the US economy likely hinge on the Federal Reserve's willingness to tolerate inflation markedly higher than it would prefer. After taking a break from tightening credit last month, Fed Chairman Jerome Powell and his colleagues look locked into raising interest rates by a quarter percentage point this week. The aim: To slow the economy enough to reduce inflation to its 2% target over time, without crashing the US into a recession - a proverbial soft landing. The big question facing policymakers and financial markets is what comes next. Former Fed Chair Ben Bernanke said that this week's rate increase may be the central bank's last in a



credit-tightening campaign that's already seen rates rise by five percentage points. But a lot will depend on how much inflation the Fed is willing to accept, and for how long. In the absence of a recession, the jobs market looks set to remain tight, with demand for workers continuing to outstrip supply. That will keep wages elevated, pressuring companies to raise prices to cover their added labour costs.

Saudi Arabia's sovereign fund launches company to promote Ajwa dates

RIYADH (Agencies): The quality and production of Ajwa dates in Madinah are expected to improve significantly, with Saudi Arabia's sovereign fund setting up a company to focus on the traditional crop. The Public Investment Fund announced the launch of Al Madinah Heritage Co., or MHC, on Monday to further develop the Saudi food and agriculture industry. The new firm cements the fund's commitment to fostering the Kingdom's food and agriculture sector and its goal of propelling economic diversification in line with the Saudi Vision 2030. "Saudi Arabia is one of the world's most prominent producers and exporters of dates, and its products have always been of the highest quality, catering to wide consumer demand," said Majed Al-Assaf, head of consumer goods and retail in the Middle East and North Africa investments division of PIF. He



added: "The dates industry is a key component of Saudi Arabia's food and agriculture sector and has an important role in the realization of Vision 2030." Not only will the new firm work on elevating production, but it will also work on promoting and distributing Ajwa dates in local and international markets. By adopting and utilizing the latest top-notch technologies, MHC aims to contribute to the broader development of sustainable agriculture in Madinah. Due to their high nutritional value and health benefits, Ajwa dates are considered to be among the finest dates worldwide.

Final day washout sees India wrap up series win over West Indies

Port of Spain (AFP/APP): India clinched a fifth consecutive series triumph in the West Indies on Monday when the second and final Test of their series ended as a draw with no play possible because of rain on the final day. West Indies closed day four at 76 for two having been set a daunting victory target of 365 to square the series at Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad. However early showers put paid to any prospect of play in the morning and when they returned with greater intensity in the afternoon, the umpires were left with no option but to abandon the day's play and the end of the Test match and the series. Mohammed Siraj, whose Test-best figures of five



for 60 in the West Indies first innings opened the door to victory for India on the fourth morning, was named "Player of the Match". "There was no help for fast bowlers on this wicket and when you get success like this in these conditions it gives you confidence," said Siraj via an interpreter on receiving the award. "I had simple plans and just execut-

ed them. The captain just asked me to keep on doing what I have been doing before." For his skipper, Rohit Sharma, the disappointment of not being able to push for victory on the last day to earn a 2-0 sweep was tempered by the satisfaction of seeing this team succeed without key performers in the bowling department. "It was really pleasing to see how Siraj has led the attack in the absence of (Jasprit) Bumrah and (Mohammed) Shami," he observed. "We have been playing really good Test cricket and I hope we can continue to do that. It's great to see how everyone has been ready to play their role, like yesterday when we needed quick runs."

Alex Telles bolsters Al-Nassr's defence ahead of friendly with PSG in Japan

RIYADH (AFP/APP): IAI-Nassr's pre-season preparations step up a level on Tuesday with a prestigious friendly against Paris Saint-Germain that should not only show how far they have come in recent months, but also how far there is still left to go. Just being invited to face the French powerhouse in the Japanese city of Osaka shows that the Riyadh club now have a global profile. The recent signings made by the club, runners-up to Al-Itihad in last season's Rohsn Saudi League, show that they are increasingly the match of such esteemed European opposition when it comes to affairs in the transfer market. Cristiano Ronaldo, one of the biggest names in the world, arrived in the winter but the club's



ambitions have been confirmed with summer signings, the latest being Alex Telles from Manchester United. The signing of the Brazilian shows that Al-Nassr, and indeed other top Saudi clubs, now can pick up players from some of Europe's top clubs. Marcelo Brozovic was last seen captaining Inter Milan in the final of the UEFA Champions League against Manchester City, just last month.

Now the Croatian, regarded as one of the best defensive midfielders in the world, is lining up for the Yellows who hope that he will prove to be a significant upgrade as the club look to return to the top of Saudi Arabian football as well as go all the way in the Asian Champions League later this year. Few, if any, continental rivals will have a player to match the 30-year-old. From the European runners-up to the French runners-up, Al-Nassr then knocked on the door of Lens who finished second to PSG last season. Seko Fofana knows all about Tuesday's opposition and the Ivory Coast international has been regarded as one of the best and most consistent performers in midfield in France in recent years.

Popp bags brace as Germany smash Morocco 6-0 to start title bid

Melbourne (AFP/APP): Talismanic striker Alexandra Popp scored twice as Germany thumped debutants Morocco 6-0 to launch their Women's World Cup title charge in ominous fashion on Monday. Popp's 12th-minute header set the Germans on their way in Melbourne and she collected another before the break as the two-time champions romped to the biggest win of the tournament so far. Klara Buehl added a third in Germany's first attack after the restart before own goals from Hanane Ait El Hajj and Zineb Redouani. A last-minute strike from substitute Lea Schueller completed the rout as Morocco's piece of history — the first Arab team to play at a Women's World Cup — ended in humiliation.



On paper it was the biggest mismatch of the group stage, with 70 places separating them in the world rankings, and the gulf was apparent from the off. The Atlas Lionesses showed glimpses of magic and had a goal disallowed. However, a fairytale win never looked likely in front of 27,256 fans at Melbourne Rectangular Stadium, a near full-house. Germany, who won the World Cup

in 2003 and 2007, went out in the quarter-finals four years ago. But since then coach Martina Voss-Tecklenburg has overseen impressive progress, shaping a dynamic, front-foot team which finished runners-up at last year's Euros to England. They are among the favorites to bag a third title and had their first look at goal when Buehl's low freekick fizzed wide. They kept pressing and opened their account when Wolfsburg's Popp climbed unmarked to head in her 63rd international goal from a pinpoint Kathrin Hendrich cross. Morocco were on the back foot but skipper Ghizlane Chebbak had a sniff midway through the half, only for her long-range strike to be comfortably collected.

Vingegaard completes Tour double as Meeus pips Philipsen on Champs Elysees

PARIS (AFP/APP): Jonas Vingegaard won back-to-back men's Tour de France titles after safely finishing Sunday's final stage, which was won by Belgian Jordi Meeus, while Tadej Pogacar again entertained the crowd. Slovenian Pogacar, who showed flair and panache as he attacked on the Champs Elysees, was second with his UAE Emirates team mate, Briton Adam Yates, taking third place. Belgian Jasper Philipsen won the green jersey for the points classification with Italian Giulio Ciccone taking the polka dot jersey for the mountains classification. Pogacar, the 2020 and 2021 Tour champion, won the white jersey for the best under-25 rider for the fourth year in a row. Vingegaard's Jumbo-Visma



won the teams classification, a logical end to a race mastered by the Dutch outfit in the third week. "It's been an amazing year, what a Tour de France for us," Vingegaard, who took the yellow jersey after the sixth stage and held it until Paris, said. "We started the plans early and once again I could not have done it without my team. It's been an amazing Tour for us and I'm so proud of every one of us. "Tonight we will celebrate, have a good dinner,

it will be a nice evening. Thanks to my opponents who have been amazing, it's been an amazing three weeks fighting with you guys."The 26-year-old built his success with a crushing victory in Tuesday's individual time trial, beating Pogacar by one minute and 38 seconds, a day before his rival cracked in the last Alpine stage. Pogacar, however, recovered to win the last mountain stage in the Vosges on Saturday but it as too late for the 24-year-old to turn the tables. He finished a massive 7:29 behind Vingegaard with Yates 10:56 off the pace. Sunday's 21st stage was, as usual, a largely processional ride from western Paris, with Vingegaard and his team mates celebrating with glasses of champagne.

Saudi driver Dania Akeel 'happy' after completing Spain rally, bagging extra points Previous

RIYADH (AFP/APP): Saudi racing driver Dania Akeel successfully finished the fourth round of the FIA World Cup for Cross-Country Bajas in Aragon, northern Spain, accompanied by her German navigator Tay Berry. Competing in the T3 category, the two-day race covered around 847 km including 546 special stages and took place in temperatures of more than 40 degrees Celsius. Akeel started the round in the show stage



against strong competition, but on day two dropped down the positions after her car experienced mechani-

cal problems and got a flat tire. However, she battled on to finish in 12th position and score five additional points. She said: "I am happy with this result despite the strong competition and technical problems we always expect in the stages, especially on the first day. "However, the car ran smoothly on the second day, and I, alongside Berry, managed to reduce the time differential and head to the finish line.

Borussia Dortmund sign Austria midfielder Marcel Sabitzer from league rival Bayern Munich

DORTMUND (AFP/APP): Borussia Dortmund signed Austria midfielder Marcel Sabitzer from Bundesliga rivals Bayern Munich on Monday, boosting their options following Jude Bellingham's departure for Real Madrid. The 29-year-old Sabitzer signed a contract through June 2027 and

will travel on Tuesday to the US to join his new teammates on Dortmund's summer tour. "He fits the profile that we were looking for exactly — a central midfielder who will strengthen us both defensively and offensively as a box-to-box player," Dortmund sporting director Sebas-

tian Kehl said. "Marcel is physically strong and also carries an immense goal threat. We're convinced that he will also become an important pillar of our team thanks to his personality and will help us to be even more effective, especially in hard-fought matches."

Wearry Djokovic withdraws from Toronto ATP Masters

TORONTO: World number two Novak Djokovic has withdrawn from the ATP Toronto Masters due to fatigue, Tennis Canada said on Sunday. The announcement comes a week after the 23-time Grand Slam champion from Serbia fell to Spain's Carlos Alcaraz in the final at Wimbledon. His withdrawal deprives the US Open tune-up tournament that starts on August 7 of a four-time champion. "I have always enjoyed my time in Canada, but after speaking with my team, we believe this is the right decision to take," Djokovic said in a statement released by Tennis Canada. "I would like to thank Karl Hale, the Tournament Director, for understanding this decision. I really hope I can return to Canada and Toronto in the coming years to

play in front of great fans there." Alcaraz denied Djokovic a record-equaling eighth Wimbledon title last week, handing him his first defeat on the All England Club's Centre Court in 10 years. The Spaniard's victory also ended 36-year-old Djokovic's chance of a calendar Grand Slam after his triumphs at the Australian Open and French Open took his tally of major titles to a men's record 23. Wimbledon quarter-finalist Christopher Eubanks will now gain automatic entry into the Toronto main draw. The American defeated fifth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas and 12th-seeded Cameron Norrie en route to the last eight at Wimbledon. Hale acknowledged that Djokovic, who won the Canadian title in 2007, 2011, 2012 and 2016, would be missed.

Max Verstappen delivers Red Bull winning-streak record in Hungary

BUDAPEST: Max Verstappen cruised to another majestic victory on Sunday, reeling off a record 12th straight win for Red Bull as he dominated the Hungarian Grand Prix with a textbook drive from lights to flag. McLaren's Lando Norris was runner-up for the second straight race, but 33.731 seconds behind at the chequered flag on a hot afternoon at the Hungaroring. Verstappen's team mate and closest title rival Sergio Perez had to settle for third after starting ninth and chasing Norris in the closing stages before the Briton built up more of a buffer. Verstappen grabbed the lead from pole-sitter Lewis Hamilton at the start and remained in control for his seventh successive victory, his ninth in 11 races this year and the 44th of his career. More significantly, it was Red Bull's 12th consecutive win, breaking



a 35-year-old record they had shared with McLaren, who won 11 straight races in 1988 with Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna as their driver pair. Verstappen's seventh straight win stretched the double world champion's lead over Perez to 110 points in the championship. Seven-time world champion Hamilton, who started the race from a record 104th pole position, was outpaced at the start and finished fourth for Mercedes ahead of Oscar Piastri in the second McLaren and the Ferrari of Charles Leclerc.

Riots add to Paris Olympics security worries one year from start

PARIS:As riots raged around France earlier this month, infrastructure for next year's Paris Olympics risked becoming engulfed in the violence, adding a fresh worry for organisers who face a head-spinning list of security challenges one year before the Games start. Surveillance was increased around the under-construction Olympic athletes' village, media centre and swimming complex which are in the deprived Seine-Saint-Denis area of northeast Paris, one of the hotspots of the rioting. In the end, a building which will house a training pool suffered minor damage to its facade when an adjacent bus depot went up in flames and

an attempted arson attack on the media centre was thwarted by two alert security guards. "We were very close to having a major problem," Nicolas Ferrand, head of the Solideoorganisation in charge of Olympics construction work, said afterwards. The chaotic street scenes were an unwelcome reminder of last year's Champions League final in Paris, which was held at the national stadium in Seine-Saint-Denis that will host the athletics events at the Olympics. Gangs of youths preyed on football fans attending the 2022 climax to the European football season, many of whom were assaulted and robbed as they made their way out of the stadium.

DAILY HOROSCOPE: JULY 25, 2023



– It's a general reading which may differ from person to person because of time date and year.
– **ARIES:** You're given a choice whether to sign on for more of what you've already got or not. You know all the pros and cons and most likely are more than willing to stick with what you know.
– **TAURUS:** You get some weird news early on that leaves you feeling kind of funky for most of the day, but it's not all bad! You know deep down that things are right where they're supposed to be.
– **GEMINI:** IThis is not the time for action. Instead, you need to just watch and wait. Someone reveals what they're really thinking, and you should be able to make a plan after that.
– **CANCER:** You're going through a lot of emotional business today, and you can tell that much of it is vital or even healing. It might not be comfortable, though, as you churn through old feelings.
– **LEO:** You've got an eye for bargains today, especially when it comes to collectibles. If you can go shopping, even

online, with some idea of what you're looking for, you're sure to find a deal.
– **VIRGO:** You're getting deeply interested in a new topic or person and should dig up as much information as you can. It's not that hard, and you might decide to make a change in your life as a result.
– **LIBRA:** Put yourself first today. Why not? You spend so much time catering to friends, family, and coworkers that you deserve some relaxation at the very least. Enjoy your downtime.
– **SCORPIO:** It's one of those days when you can suddenly see things more clearly, and you know exactly what to do next! Your moment of clarity is sharp and startling and quite exciting!
– **SAGITTARIUS:** Your energy feels a little odd today, especially when it comes to social matters. In fact, you may just want to be left alone! You're thinking about some heavy issues, so maybe it's all for the best.
– **CAPRICORN:** Someone questions your take on the day's big scandal (or surprise) and you let them have it, showing them in detail how you're right and they're not. It's not fun, but it has to be done.
– **ACQUARIUS:** You may or may not be a natural ham, but every now and then you do crave an audience. You get one today, and they should appreciate your efforts even if they don't totally understand them.
– **PISCES:** Big news comes your way soon after you get out of bed and has you a bit off-kilter for the rest of the day. It's not all bad (far from it), but you might find it difficult to absorb for a while longer.

Algeria fires fanned by winds, extreme heat kill 34

Algiers (AFP/APP): Wildfires raging across Algeria during a blistering heat wave have killed more than 30 people and forced mass evacuations, the government said on Monday. As temperatures hit 48 degrees Celsius (118 Fahrenheit) in parts of the North African country, it recorded 97 blazes across 16 provinces, fanned by strong winds, said the interior ministry. The fires killed at least 34 people, including 10 soldiers, as they raged through residential areas, the interior ministry said, revising an earlier toll of 15 dead. According to that initial toll, at least 26 people



were also injured. Some 1,500 people were evacuated from the Bejaia, Bouira and Jijel provinces east of the capital Algiers, according to the ministry. The three provinces in Algeria's Mediterranean coastal region have seen the worst of the fires. President Abdelmadjid Tebboune on Monday expressed his condolences to the families of the deceased. The interi-

or ministry said that 7,500 firefighters and 350 firetrucks were mobilized with aerial support to fight the flames. Operations were underway to extinguish fires in six provinces, it added, calling on citizens to "avoid areas affected by the fires" and to report new blazes on toll-free phone numbers. "Civil protection services remain mobilized until the fires are completely extinguished," the ministry said. The Bejaia prosecutor's office has ordered a preliminary probe to identify the causes of the blazes and potential perpetrators, it said in a statement.

Global food systems 'broken', UN chief says, as more people go hungry

UNITED NATIONS (APP): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Monday highlighted the need to address global hunger, promote cooperation between businesses and governments, and mitigate the damaging impact of continuing climate change on food production. Addressing the 'UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment', in Rome, the UN chief said that in a world of plenty, "it is outrageous that people continue to suffer and die from hunger." "Global food systems are broken - and billions of people are paying the price," he added. According to UN estimates, over 780 million people experience hunger, almost one-third of all food produced globally is lost or wasted and nearly three billion people cannot afford healthy diets. Developing countries face additional challenges, as limited resources and debt burdens prevent them from investing fully in food systems which can produce nutritious food across the social spectrum. Unsustainable food production, packaging and consumption are also contributing to the climate crisis, accounting for a third of all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, 70 per cent of the world's freshwater usage, and driving biodiversity loss. The recent termination of the Black Sea Initiative by Russia has further exacerbated the situation, Guterres said. It enabled the export of millions of metric tons of food from Ukrainian ports, and together with the UN's parallel accord with Russia on the export of food and fertilizer, had been vital for global food security and price stability. "With the termination of the Black Sea Initiative, the most vulnerable will pay

the highest price," he added, emphasizing that both Russia and Ukraine are crucial to global food security, urging Moscow to reverse course. The UN chief said he remains committed to enabling unimpeded access to global markets for food and fertilizers from both countries, "and to deliver the food security that every person deserves." In his address, the UN chief cited three key areas for action, starting with a "massive" investment in sustainable food systems. "Starving food systems of investment means, quite literally, starving people," he said, calling on governments to respond to UN's call for an SDG Stimulus, amounting to at least \$500 billion annually to support long-term financing for all countries in need. Second, Guterres called on governments and businesses to collaborate and "put people over profit" in building food systems. This involves exploring new ways to increase the availability of fresh, healthy food for all individuals, keeping food markets open, and removing trade barriers and export restrictions, he said. With food systems playing a key role in reducing carbon emissions and limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the Secretary-General called for food systems that reduce the carbon footprint of food processing, packaging, and transportation. Harnessing new technologies to reduce the unsustainable use of land, water, and other resources in food production and agriculture is vital, he said, urging "stronger and faster action" to tackle the climate crisis and commit to reaching net-zero emissions by 2040 for developed countries and 2050 for emerging economies.

Khanewal-like modern farms to benefit small farmers, spread scope of GPI across Pakistan: COAS

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Monday said the government of Pakistan in collaboration with the Army would create modern farms like Khanewal model farm that would benefit the small farmers and spread the scope of Green Pakistan Initiative (GPI) across the country. On the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Khanewal Model Agriculture Farm, the Chief of Army Staff gave an important speech to the participants. The inauguration ceremony of Khanewal Model Agriculture Farm, a flagship project of Green Pakistan Initiative was attended by the Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research as the Chief Guest whereas the COAS attended the event as Guest of Honour. The Ceremony was also attended by Chief Minister Punjab, Government officials, agricultural experts, notable farmers and Senior Army Officials. The Army Chief vowed to pull out Pakistan of the current crisis. "Pakistanis are a proud, zealous and talented nation. All Pakistanis have rejected the beggar's bowl. Allah Almighty has bestowed Pakistan with all blessings. No power in the world can stop us from progressing. Agricultural revolution shall come in Pakistan, Inshallah," the Army Chief said. He said a state was like a mother, and the relationship between the people and the state was that of love and respect. The COAS underscored that security and economy go hand in hand, whereas there was no concept of economy without security and vice versa. Addressing the participants of the ceremony, the Army Chief read Allama Iqbal's poetic verses and emphasized on the importance of every member of the society in the development of nation. "The destiny of nations is in

the hands of individuals. Every individual is the star of nation's destiny," he remarked. According to details, subsequent to the establishment of 'Land Information Management System - Centre of Excellence', Launching of 'Green Pakistan Initiative at National Seminar on Food Security, today's inauguration of flagship farm was undertaken to ensure that Pakistan not only becomes food secure, it also produces enough surplus for exports, thereby contributing towards the national economy. Agriculture experts including those from field crops, orchard, speciality crops, textile and livestock sectors appreciated the Government's wholeheartedness and Pak Army's assistance towards revolutionizing the agriculture sector. This is being done by promoting contemporary technology, collaboration of public and private sectors and trickling down dividends to the local farmers. The participants hailed the event and the presence of experts, government representatives, academia, industry and potential investors at the event. The participants appreciated the efforts of setting up a state-of-the-art farm in a short time and introducing a new level of agriculture in Pakistan. While interacting with the participants, COAS vowed to extend all out support to the Government of Pakistan for 'Green Pakistan Initiative' and bringing about Agricultural reforms. On behalf of the Prime Minister, Federal Minister for Food Security Tariq Bashir Cheema also addressed the ceremony and later inaugurated the Model Farm and appreciated the efforts made by the FonGrow Management towards the establishment of mechanized and technological advanced farm which will be a role model for others to follow.

Death toll rises to 37 in Cameroon building collapse

Yaoundé (AFP/APP): The death toll from a building collapse in Cameroon's business hub Douala rose to 37 on Monday, as neighbours recalled the structure's "failings" and "cracks", fearing more bodies lie under the ruins. The four-storey block of flats collapsed onto another residential building in the north of the city overnight on Saturday. One of the worst such tragedies in the country's history, it left 37 people dead and 21 injured, five in critical condition, a senior fire officer and the regional governor told AFP on Monday, warning that the toll could rise. Cameroon's urban development minister Celestine Ketcha-Courtes, who visited the scene of the tragedy on Monday, told reporters that the ill-fated building "did not have planning permission". Rescuers were still trying to clear the rubble with a dig-

ger after seeking survivors throughout Sunday and Monday, a resident told AFP. Douala's Laquintinie hospital on Sunday said it had taken in 13 patients, two of whom -- a three-year-old girl and a woman aged 19 -- had died. "The toll could still go up," said computer scientist Prosper Tchinda, who was one of the first on the scene on Sunday. "There was one survivor who got out with just scratches and we found a baby safe and sound," he told AFP by telephone. The 42-year-old lives a few minutes' walk from the block and said there had been "some sort of event with music going on when it happened". Nathalie, who also lives in the area but did not want to give her full name, said the building had "failings" and was in a poor state. "There were cracks in the wall and we felt it could collapse at any time," she said.

N.Korea fires possible ballistic missile: Japan defence ministry



Seoul: North Korea launched a possible ballistic missile, Japan's defence ministry said on Monday. The projectile is believed to have fallen outside Japan's exclusive economic zone, according to public broadcaster NHK citing government officials. South Korea's military also said Pyongyang fired a ballistic missile toward the Sea of Japan, Kyodo news agency reported. Pyongyang routinely conducts weapons tests, and the incident comes days after leader Kim Jong Un personally oversaw the firing of the country's newest intercontinental ballistic missile, the solid-fuel Hwasong-18. Relations between the two Koreas are currently at one of their lowest historical points, as diplomacy between Pyongyang and Seoul has stalled and Kim has called for ramping up weapons development, including tactical nukes. In response, Seoul and Washington have staged joint military exercises with advanced stealth jets and US strategic assets. The launch also comes ahead of celebrations in North Korea this week marking the 70th anniversary of the end of the Korean War. A Chinese delegation will travel to the North in what is the first known visit by a foreign delegation since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the state-run Korean Central News Agency reported.

At least 20,000 people drown in Europe each year: WHO official

UNITED NATIONS (APP): The World Health Organization (WHO), a Geneva-based UN agency, has said that 20,000 drowning deaths every year in the European region are "entirely preventable". Most recently, the catastrophic loss of hundreds of lives, including Pakistanis, in the capsizing of a fishing vessel off the Greek coast has brought this into sharp focus, it was pointed out. "In that one single catastrophe, more than 600 people huddled in desperation and drowned together; most bodies will never be recovered," Dr. Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO's regional European director, said in a statement issued in Copenhagen on Monday. "Most of us rarely, if ever, think about drowning as a public health hazard with significant impact," he said. According to the WHO, the majority of victims tragically drown alone in varied circumstances, from unsupervised pools to deadly rip currents. Europe is home to the world's heaviest alcohol drinkers per capita, and this also adds to the crisis. "Alcohol is causally associated with 26 percent of all drowning deaths in the European region," Kluge said. The migration crisis further aggravates the issue. "According to the International Organization for Migration, about 34,000 people have drowned in the course of migration since 2014," Kluge said, underscoring the urgency to act. "This represents 60 percent of all migration-associated deaths recorded, and of these, almost four out of five -- have occurred in the Mediterranean and the English Channel, both within the WHO European Region," the director said.

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