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Chief Editor: Rizwan Inayat



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Editor: Omer Rizwan

Afghan Nationals' Involvement in Terror Incidents Undermines Regional Peace: COAS Munir:

PESHAWAR (Agencies): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir stated on Monday that the engagement of Afghan nationals in acts of terrorism within Pakistan is a significant threat to regional peace and stability. These comments by the army chief came in the aftermath of the confirmation by the Foreign Office regarding the participation of Afghan terrorists in the recent attack on Zhob cantonment. During his visit to the Martyrs' Memorial at Bala Hisar Fort in Peshawar, Gen Munir engaged with tribal elders from the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and distinguished figures from various sectors. He voiced his concerns, saying, "The involvement of Afghan nationals in terrorist incidents in Pakistan jeopardizes regional peace, stability, and contravenes the Doha Peace Agreement established by the interim Afghan government." The Doha Peace Agreement, signed between the US and Afghan Taliban in February 2020, aimed to conclude the 2001-2021 Afghan conflict. This agreement ultimately led to the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan on August 15, 2021, marking the end of a two-decade-long occupation. In his tribute to the courageous and resilient tribespeople of Pakistan, the army chief laid a wreath and acknowledged their unwavering commitment to standing alongside the security forces in

defeating the menace of terrorism. Expressing concerns about the sanctuaries provided to banned groups and their unrestricted activities on Afghan soil, Gen Munir pledged, "Pakistan is fully committed to dismantling terrorist networks and safeguarding its citizens, whatever the cost." The COAS statement further emphasized, "With the nation's unwavering resolve, Pakistan is effectively countering terrorism to foster a stable and peaceful environment conducive to socio-economic development in the region." Tribal elders assured the armed forces of their opposition to the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its ideology, vowing continued support for the state through thick and thin. Gen Munir highlighted the potential of the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) and ongoing efforts to enhance socio-economic growth through the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). The army chief also underscored the substantial mineral resources and scenic attractions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which hold the promise of transforming the region's destiny for the betterment of its people. "Pak Army stands by our tribal brethren and will stand with them as they have steadfastly sacrificed for the nation's peace and prosperity over the years. It's time to develop all tribal areas and focus on the youth," remarked the COAS. Gen Munir reiterated the determina-

tion of the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps, and other Law Enforcement Agencies in the fight against terrorism until its complete eradication from the country. He addressed the recent surge in terrorism as a futile attempt by terrorists to reopen negotiations, emphasizing that these elements must submit to the authority of Pakistan before being eliminated if they persist in their misguided path. The COAS restated that any "propaganda by hostile forces" against the armed forces of Pakistan will be addressed in accordance with the law. Paying homage to the valiant tribesmen, officers, and soldiers of the Pak Army, FC, Levies, Khasadars, and Police, Gen Munir assured that the sacrifices of the fallen heroes will not be in vain, and a lasting peace will be restored to Pakistan, InshaAllah. The COAS' statements coincide with a warning from Afghanistan's supreme leader to Taliban members against conducting attacks abroad, as reported by Afghan Defence Minister Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid. Pakistan has frequently expressed concerns about the exploitation of Afghan territory by militants for cross-border terrorism. The nation has experienced an increase in terror activities, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, following the termination of the government's ceasefire with the outlawed TTP in November of the previous year.

Philippines summons Chinese ambassador over South China Sea incident

MANILA (Agencies): The Philippine government summoned the Chinese ambassador on Monday to convey a diplomatic protest over the Chinese coast guard's use of a water cannon against a Filipino supply boat in the disputed South China Sea, a Philippine official says. The Philippine military on Sunday condemned the Chinese coast guard ship's "excessive and offensive" use of a water cannon to block a Filipino supply boat from delivering a new batch of troops, food, water and fuel to the Philippine-occupied Second Thomas Shoal in the disputed waters. The United States, the European Union and their key allies including Australia and Japan expressed support to the Philippines and concern over the Chinese ship's actions. Washington renewed a warning that it is obliged to defend its longtime treaty ally if Filipino public vessels and forces come under an armed attack including in the South China Sea. The tense confrontation on Saturday was the latest flare-up in the long-seething territorial conflicts involving China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei. One of several top Philip-



pine officials dealing with the incident told The Associated Press that the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila summoned Chinese ambassador Huang Xilian on Monday morning to convey a strongly worded diplomatic protest. The protest would underscore how the Chinese coast guard ship's action violated international regulations aimed at avoiding collisions at sea and the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to discuss the government's actions before they are publicly disclosed. The disputes in the South China Sea, one of the world's busiest sea lanes, have long been regarded as an Asian flashpoint and a delicate faultline in the rivalry between the United States and China in the region.

Iran opens registration for candidates in next year's parliament election, the first since protests

DUBAI: Iran on Monday began registering candidates for parliamentary elections in March, which will be the first since nationwide protests rocked the country last year. Iran has held regular presidential and parliamentary elections since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. But a clerical body vets candidates — disqualifying any seen as disloyal to the Islamic Republic — and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has the final say on all major policies. Iran saw months of nationwide protests sparked by the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman who was being held by the morality police for allegedly violating the country's strict dress code. The protests escalated into calls for the overthrow of the ruling clerics, marking one of the biggest challenges to their four-decade rule. The protests largely died down after authorities launched a fierce crackdown in which more than 500 protesters were killed and nearly 20,000 were detained. Last month, the morality police returned to the streets in a renewed campaign to force women to wear the mandatory



headscarf, known as the hijab. Candidates for the 290-seat parliament have a week to pre-register online, the first step in a monthslong process. But each will eventually have to be approved by the Guardian Council, a 12-member clerical body, half of whom are directly appointed by the supreme leader. Over 7,000 candidates were disqualified ahead of the last elections in 2020 — about half of those who had tried to run. The turnout for that election was the lowest since 1979, with just over 42 percent of eligible voters casting ballots. Iran has been mired in a severe economic crisis since then-President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from a nuclear deal with world powers and restored crushing sanctions.

Saudi woman goes back to school at 110

MAKKAH: A Saudi woman has proven the old adage "better late than never" by going back to school — at the age of 110. Nawda Al-Qahtani returned to her studies with the help of Al-Rahwa Center in the Umwah governorate in the Kingdom's southwest. The mother-of-four — her oldest child is 80 and the youngest is in his 50s — told Arab News that learning to read and write has transformed her life. Since joining an illiteracy eradication program at the center several weeks ago, she has attended school every day along with more than 50 others. The students of all ages are taught the basics of the alphabet and some verses of the Qur'an. Al-Qahtani said she enjoys the lessons and makes sure she completes her homework by the end of each day. The Ministry of Education's branch in Bisha shared a post on X about Al-Qahtani in which the 110-year-old expresses her gratitude toward the Kingdom's leaders for their efforts to eradicate illiteracy. Contemplating a return to study "was a difficult matter, especially for someone over 100 years of



age," she told Arab News. However, she said the move was long overdue and she should have completed her schooling many years ago. Al-Qahtani expressed regret over the years that have passed without improving her education, adding that it "certainly would have changed a lot in my life and the lives of others." The delay was not due to an individual issue in her life, she said, but was common for hundreds of girls from the region's rural areas and villages, who were unable to complete their studies because of the geographical isolation. Al-Qahtani's four children support her studies and are optimistic about the new development in her life. They also believe that it is long overdue, but was delayed by God's will.

UNICEF: Urgent Action Needed as South Asian Children Face Extreme Heat

UNITED NATIONS (APP): In a recent report, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) has highlighted the alarming impact of extreme high temperatures on children in South Asia. An estimated 76% of children in the region, totaling 460 million, endure prolonged exposure to extreme heat, experiencing over 83 days each year with temperatures surpassing 35°C. This stark reality is exacerbated by the fact that three-quarters of South Asian children face these extreme conditions, compared to one in three globally. In Pakistan's Sindh province, particularly in the scorching city of Jacobabad, temperatures exceeding 40°C in June exposed 1.8 million individuals to severe health risks. This oppressive heatwave follows devastating floods that submerged large parts of southern Sindh just a year prior. UNICEF emphasizes that even during the rainy season, high temperatures can worsen the situation for children. Due to their limited ability to adapt to temperature shifts, children struggle to dissipate excess heat from their bodies. This places them at risk for symptoms such as higher body temperature, rapid heartbeat, severe headaches, dehydration, and even organ failure. Tragically, the ongoing effects of climate change mean that children in South Asia, particularly in countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, and Pakistan, are at "extremely high risk" of climate-related impacts. Babies, toddlers, malnourished children, and pregnant women are especially vulnerable to heat-related illnesses and complications, such as developmental setbacks, neurological dysfunction, and cardiovascular diseases. To address this pressing issue, UNICEF calls upon frontline workers, parents, families, caregivers, and local authorities to take proactive steps to safeguard children during high temperatures.

Indian opposition leader Rahul Gandhi restored to parliament

NEW DELHI (Agencies): India's main opposition leader Rahul Gandhi was restored to parliament on Monday after the supreme court last week suspended his defamation conviction over political comments on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Gandhi's disqualification "has ceased to operate subject to further judicial pronouncements," Utpal Kumar Singh, secretary general of the lower parliament house said in a statement. The 53-year-old Congress party leader was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in March in a case that critics flagged as an effort to stifle political opposition in the world's largest democracy. The conviction stemmed from a remark made during the 2019 election campaign when Gandhi had asked why "all thieves have Modi as (their)



common surname". His comments were portrayed as a slur against the Indian prime minister and against all those with the same surname, which is associated with the lower rungs of India's caste hierarchy. Anyone sentenced to a custodial term of two years or more is ineligible to sit in India's parliament, forcing Gandhi's expulsion from the body in March. He was turfed out of the legislature as a result but stayed out of jail while appealing the case at the Supreme Court in New Delhi.

Glacial Break Triggers Flood in Alaska, Emergency Declared as Homes Collapse

Juneau - Alaska (Agencies): The city of Juneau is now mobilizing response efforts to assist affected residents and assess the full extent of the damage caused by the glacial break and subsequent flooding. Juneau, Alaska, has been hit by a catastrophic glacier lake outburst flood, leading city officials to declare a state of emergency. The flooding, caused by a rupture in Suicide Basin, located on the Mendenhall Glacier, has resulted in the destruction of several structures along the Mendenhall River. Disturbing footage shared on the social media site X (formerly Twitter) shows a multi-story structure collapsing into the river, leaving residents feeling helpless. Debris and trees were seen floating in the Mendenhall River near Juneau International Airport, exacerbating the damage caused by the flood. The National Weather Service reported that two homes

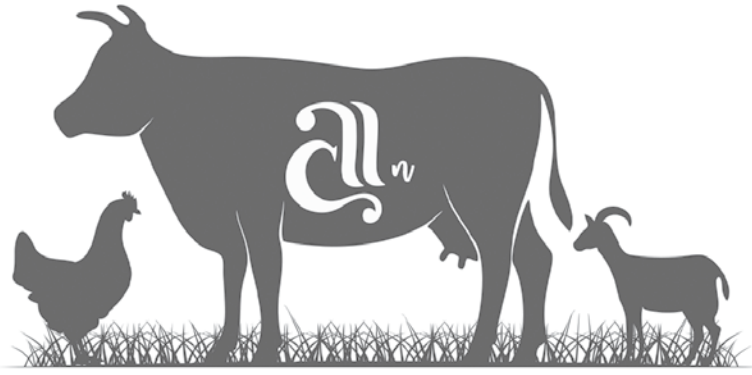
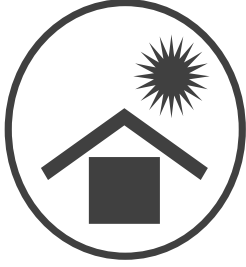


have been lost, while another was partially damaged and swept away. Several other residences, including a condo building, are now at significant risk due to undermining caused by the flood. The scale of the flooding was so extreme that experts estimated less than a 1% chance of it occurring, catching authorities by surprise. Officials have urged residents to stay away from the river during this ongoing flood event to ensure their safety. Suicide Basin has been causing glacier lake outburst floods since 2011, but the extent of the recent devastation has been unprecedented.

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.

ESTB: 2020

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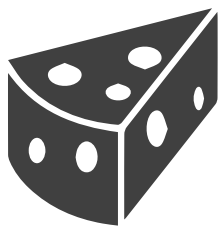
2020

- 100% ORGANIC FOOD -

MILK

- 100% Pure and Farm Fresh Whole Milk
- Freshly packed pollution and dust free
- No preservatives and no harmful medications

Also provide:



Cheese



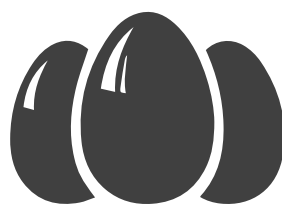
Desi Ghee



Yogurt



Pure Honey



Desi Eggs



Mutton/Beef



Chicken

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Cabinet Committee on Privatization (CCoP) adds Pakistan International Airlines Co. Ltd (PIACL) to privatization list



ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Cabinet Committee on Privatization (CCoP) meeting, chaired by Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, discussed the proposal from the Privatisation Commission to include Pakistan International Airlines Co. Ltd (PIACL) in the ongoing privatization program. The CCoP decided to add

PIACL to the list of active privatization projects after parliamentary amendment. The meeting, attended by Federal Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mehmood, SAPM on Finance Mr. Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Revenue Mr. Tariq Mehmood Pasha, federal secretaries, and senior gov-

ernment officials, also addressed the privatization progress of Roosevelt Hotel. After thorough discussion, the CCoP provided approval to the Privatization Commission for hiring a Financial Adviser to structure the transaction for Roosevelt Hotel, New York. The hotel is an asset of PIA Investment Limited (PIA-IL).

- Registrations Now Open for WISE Bootcamps -

Jazz and UNDP Collaborate to Empower Women-Led Social Innovation in Pakistan

Islamabad (Staff Report): Jazz, Pakistan's largest digital operator, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have joined forces to launch the Women Initiative in Social Entrepreneurship (WISE), aimed at promoting women-led social innovation in Pakistan. Open for registrations, the WISE Bootcamps intend to empower 400 women social entrepreneurs across 12 cities in Pakistan by equipping them with vital business knowledge and skills to manage sustainable social enterprises. Building upon their successful 2020 partnership to promote social innovation and entrepreneurship among youth through SDG Bootcamps, Jazz and UNDP continue their collaboration. The SDG Bootcamps involved 401 participants, including 40% women entrepreneurs, addressing issues such as climate action, health, and digital transformation. Implemented through the School of Leadership Foundation (SoLF), the WISE Bootcamps aim to strengthen the ecosystem for women social entrepreneurs in Pakistan. Aamir Ibrahim, CEO Jazz, expressed the initiative's objective: "WISE is aimed at empow-



ering Pakistani women by creating opportunities for financial and digital inclusion for women and youth. This aligns with Jazz's mission to improve the lives and livelihoods of women in Pakistan through technology. We hope that WISE women-led businesses will offer innovative solutions to unique challenges, making a positive impact on their communities and beyond." Samuel Rizk, UNDP's Resident Representative to Pakistan, emphasized the importance of gender equality and inclusion in the digital space: "Knowledge and skills of technology and innovative entrepreneurship are all part

of this ecosystem. If we get it right, development indicators of inclusion and gender equality will achieve their positive trajectory." WISE seeks enterprises that address Pakistan's development challenges and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. Aspiring social entrepreneurs across the nation can apply for registrations through this link: <http://bitly.ws/KIDR>. For further information, please contact: - Tabindah Anwar at tabindah.anwar@undp.org or +92 (51) 835 5650. - Khayyam Siddiqi at khayyam.siddiqi@jazz.com.pk or +92 300 111 5855

National Taskforce on SDGs appoints first ever sub-group on GDI

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Parliamentary Taskforce on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on Monday appointed the first ever special sub-group on Global Development Initiatives (GDI) of the Taskforce. According to the notification, Convener, National Taskforce on SDGs and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Romina Khurshid Alam under the patronship of the Speaker National Assembly. The GDI comprised of

Convener, MNAs Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Romina Khurshid Alam, Dr. Nisar Cheema, Syeda Nausheen Iftikhar, Syed Mustafa Mehmood, Raza Rabbani Khar, Dr. Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro, James Iqbal, Shahida Akhtar Ali, Engr. Sabir Hussain Qaimkhani, Senator Kamran Micheal, Senator Keshoo Bai, and Senator Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti. Moreover, the advisers of the Special Group on Global Development Initiatives were Major General

(R) Raza Muhammad and Shakeel Ahmad Ramay. Political Economist and expert, Shakeel Ahmad Ramay told APP that it was a privilege to share that he was appointed as an Adviser to the Parliament of Pakistan, SDGs Secretariate group on "Global Development Initiative". "Thank you to parliament, especially to Ms. Romina Khurshid for trusting me to assist the GDI group. It is the first ever parliament group on GDI," Ramay said.

Early smoking cessation may boost survival in lung cancer patients

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Quitting smoking early was associated with higher survival rates following a lung cancer diagnosis, according to a study. The study, led by researchers at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, showed that compared to those who never smoked and were being treated for non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), current smokers had 68 per cent higher mortality and former smokers had 26 per cent higher mortality. "Our participants' smoking histories varied, with some having stopped smoking a few years before their diagnosis and others having stopped several decades before," said senior author David Christiani, Professor of Environmental Genetics. "This wide range gave us confi-

dence in our results -- that the benefit of pre-diagnosis smoking cessation persists even after lung cancer is diagnosed." The study, published online in JAMA Network Open, followed 5,594 patients with NSCLC -- which accounts for 85 per cent of all lung cancer cases -- enrolled between 1992 and 2022. Of these participants, 795 had never smoked; 3,308 were former smokers; and 1,491 were current smokers, Medical Daily reported. During the study period, 3,842 of the participants died: 79.3 per cent of the current smokers, 66.8 per cent of the former smokers, and 59.6 per cent of the never smokers. While never smoking was associated with the best odds of survival after a lung cancer diagnosis, the findings showed sig-

nificant associations between lower mortality and having quit smoking pre-diagnosis. The longer a patient went without smoking, the more health benefits they accrued: For former smokers, doubling the years of smoking cessation before their lung cancer diagnosis was significantly associated with prolonged survival. Conversely, doubling smoking-pack years was associated with shorter survival among current and former smokers diagnosed with NSCLC. The researchers noted that associations between survival and smoking history may vary depending on the clinical stage at which lung cancer was diagnosed, and that the study did not account for the different kinds of treatment participants were receiving.

Sir Syed University Honors Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan with Peace Award

KARACHI (Agencies): In a grand ceremony jointly hosted by Aligarh Muslim University Old Boys' Association (AMUOBA) and Sir Syed University of Engineering & Technology (SSUET), late Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, the renowned nuclear scientist, was posthumously awarded "The Sir Syed Ahmed Khan Peace Award." The event, held at a local hotel, also marked the launch of a book titled "The Sir Syed Ahmed Khan Peace Award presented to Dr. A.Q. Khan," showcasing his family and social contributions. Dr. Khan's daughter, Dr. Dina Khan, accepted the award and a gold medal on behalf of her father and mother, Lady Hendrina Khan. The ceremony celebrated Dr. Khan's pivotal role in empow-



ering Pakistan with nuclear energy and his lasting impact on the nation. Highlighting the occasion, Chancellor SSUET and President AMUOBA, Jawaid Anwar, emphasized Dr. Qadeer Khan's contributions to Pakistan's defense capabilities, his role as a national hero, and his recognition as a remarkable figure in the Islamic world. Vice Chancellor SSUET, Prof. Dr. Wali Uddin, announced the establishment of the "Dr. Abdul Qa-

deer Khan Chair" at the university, dedicated to promoting research and innovation in science and technology. The chair aims to foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and capacity building. Various dignitaries and speakers, including Lt. Gen. (R) Moinuddin Haider and former Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan, lauded Dr. Qadeer Khan's historical impact and unwavering dedication to Pakistan's advancement. They highlighted his role in making the nation's defense unbeatable. The event showcased the importance of education, innovation, and patriotism in building a prosperous future for Pakistan, and attendees expressed their gratitude for Dr. Qadeer Khan's indelible contributions.

Prominent Women Leaders and Journalists Champion Democracy and Inclusivity - NA Speaker



Islamabad (Staff Report): Emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between politics and journalism, Speaker of the National Assembly, Raja Pervez Ashraf, underscored the essential role played by intertwined politics and journalism in fostering progressive and developed societies. Speaking at the "The Women Parliamentarians in Strengthening Democracy" event, organized by the Women Parliamentary Caucus at the National Press Club in Islamabad, Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf hailed the dynamic contributions of women in both spheres. In his address, Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf highlighted the indispensable nature of women's involvement in every facet of society for genuine development to take place. He commended the proactive engagement of women parliamentarians in legislative matters, noting their pivotal role in shaping the nation's legislative landscape. Notably, he drew attention to the synergy between Pakistani women parliamentarians and women journalists, both instrumental in driving positive change. The Speaker paid tribute to the formidable legacy of the late Shaheed Mohtrama Benazir Bhutto, his political mentor, acknowledging her profound impact on his political journey. He acknowledged the media's indispensable contribution to advancing the cause of democracy in Paki-

stan, recognizing its significant role in shaping public discourse. Secretary of the Women Parliamentary Caucus, Ms. Shahida Rehmani, expressed gratitude for the unwavering support extended by Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf to the caucus. She highlighted the caucus's achievements, including prioritizing gender budgeting and championing legislation aimed at promoting women-friendly policies. Ms. Mehnaz Akbar Aziz, Convener of the 1st Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights, provided a glimpse into the remarkable achievements of the Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR) within a short span of time. Mr. Afzal Butt, President of the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), commended the historic achievements of the current parliament in reclaiming its supremacy. He attributed this milestone to the political foresight of Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf, noting that the parliament has successfully regained its lost authority. Mr. Butt also highlighted the PFUJ's commitment to elevating women journalists and media representatives to equal status. The event garnered the attendance of women parliamentarians and prominent women journalists from various regions of the country, serving as a testament to the collective drive towards strengthening democracy and fostering inclusivity.

Oman's Chief of Staff Visits Pakistan Air Headquarters to Strengthen Military Ties



Islamabad (Agencies): Vice Admiral Abdullah Bin Khamis-Al-Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan's Armed Forces of Oman, conducted a significant visit to the Pakistan Air Headquarters, where he engaged in talks with Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force. The meeting centered on key areas of shared interest, the geopolitical landscape, and ongoing regional developments. Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu provided a comprehensive overview of the Pakistan Air Force's (PAF) modernization endeavors, highlighting strategic advancements through intelligent procurements, integration of cutting-edge technologies, and a revitalized training framework aligned with contemporary trends. The Air Chief reiterated the commitment to fostering deeper military cooperation and training, particularly in fields like cyber warfare, electronic warfare, space operations, and computing. He underlined the strong diplomatic, economic, and defense ties between Pakistan and Oman, firmly rooted in shared principles of regional peace, security, and stability. Air Chief Marshal Sidhu also reaffirmed PAF's unwavering support and training assistance to the Royal Air

Force of Oman. Vice Admiral Abdullah Bin Khamis-Al-Raisi praised the exceptional professionalism of Pakistan Air Force personnel and acknowledged their commendable progress in advancing indigenous capabilities within the aviation industry. He expressed confidence in the potential for further collaboration across various domains for the mutual benefit of both nations. Both sides affirmed their commitment to exploring new avenues of cooperation, with a special emphasis on training and knowledge exchange. The meeting resulted in an agreement to investigate the possibility of conducting joint air exercises while operating from respective home bases. This endeavor is set to enhance interoperability and strengthen military ties between the two nations. The encounter between Vice Admiral Abdullah Bin Khamis-Al-Raisi and Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu underscores the shared commitment of both armed forces to address common challenges and opportunities in the realm of defense and military cooperation. This dynamic partnership seeks to contribute positively to regional security and stability, further cementing the enduring bond between Pakistan and Oman.

Pakistan Navy war game Shamsheere-Bahr-IX commences at Karachi



RAWALPINDI (Agencies): The Pakistan Navy War game SHAMSHEERE-BAHR-IX commenced on Monday at Karachi, where Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Sahir Shamsad Mirza attended the session

as the Chief Guest. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi along with senior military officers from all services were present at the occasion.

Islamia University Bahawalpur Community Rallies to Uphold Institution's Sanctity and Honor



Female teachers, employees and students of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur took out a rally from Abbasia Campus to University Chowk to highlight the identity and sanctity of Jamia Islamia.

Bahawalpur (Staff Report): In a remarkable display of unity and determination, thousands of faculty members, employees, and students from Islamia University Bahawalpur convened today for a spirited rally. The procession, stretching from Abbasia Campus to University Chowk, was organized to underscore the identity and sanctity of Jamia Islamia, the institution's revered foundation. The rally, led by resolute female teachers and students, showcased the collective commitment to upholding the integrity and prestige of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Naveed Akhtar addressed the enthusiastic participants, expressing his gratification at the robust support exhibited by the university's dedicated staff and students. He especially lauded the involvement of women, noting that their resolute stance sends a resounding message to the global community affirming the university's stature as a distinguished center of learning. Prof. Dr. Naveed Akhtar emphasized that the Islamia University of Bahawalpur is internationally recognized for its excellence in education. Thousands of graduates have emerged from its esteemed halls, equipped to make significant contributions across diverse sectors. The university's commitment to providing quality education and nurturing future leaders remains unwavering. During

the rally, participants brandished an array of banners and placards, each bearing powerful messages. Among the slogans were inspiring reminders, such as the Quranic verse: "If a wicked person gives you news, then investigate it thoroughly (1), lest a nation be deceived by ignorance." The university's uncompromising stance on critical issues was also highlighted, with slogans affirming a zero tolerance policy on drugs and sexual harassment. The crowd passionately advocated for equal access to education, rallying behind the proclamation: "Those who take away the right to education from daughters of the soil should be exposed." Participants recognized that safeguarding the sanctity and respect of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur is a shared responsibility, transcending all segments of society. Amidst the sea of spirited voices, another slogan resonated profoundly: "Fake news and baseless allegations are painful for all of us." As the participants stood united against misinformation, it was evident that their collective dedication was a testament to the enduring strength of the university's community. The rally's resounding success not only bolstered the Islamia University of Bahawalpur's reputation as a beacon of knowledge and integrity but also underscored the power of unity in championing noble causes.

Parliament's Sustained Focus on Marginalized Communities Highlighted by NA Speaker

Islamabad (Agencies): In an unwavering commitment to the well-being of women, children, and marginalized segments of society, the National Assembly of Pakistan has maintained a steadfast focus on these vital aspects over the past year and a half, according to National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf. The Parliament's dedication to enacting public-friendly legislation for a pluralistic and inclusive society has remained paramount, with concerted efforts aimed at uplifting the most vulnerable. These sentiments were underscored by Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf during the official launch of the Rules for Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR) at the Parliament House today. Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf affirmed that securing the fundamental rights of children is a collective responsibility, echoing the sentiment that children represent a nation's future, and ensuring their well-being is an imperative shared by all. He hailed Pakistan's Parliament as one of only five across the globe to have established a dedicated Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights, showcasing the nation's proactive stance in safeguarding its young citizens. Furthermore, he stressed that the Parliament stands as the singular platform to address the challenges



faced by the general populace, acting as a conduit to bridge the gap between citizens and their representatives. During the launch ceremony of the Rules for Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights, Ms. Mehnaz Akbar Aziz, Convenor of the PCCR and Parliamentary Secretary for Law and Justice, conveyed her heartfelt gratitude to Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf for his unwavering support. She lauded the significance of the day, marking a historic milestone in Pakistan's 75-year history by establishing robust rules to fortify the Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights. These rules, she emphasized, serve as the cornerstone of

the Parliament's commitment to safeguarding and upholding the rights of children. Ms. Mehnaz Akbar Aziz further highlighted the Parliament's transformation into a platform that advocates for the marginalized sectors of society. She underscored that championing children's rights remains pivotal for the nation's progress and development. The unveiling of the Rules for Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights underscores Pakistan's dedication to securing a brighter and more equitable future for its youngest citizens, emphasizing the nation's resolve to ensure the well-being and rights of all segments of society.

Daughter of Incarcerated Kashmiri Leader Appeals to UN Chief to Prevent Possible Cold-Blooded Murder

Muzaffarabad (Agencies): Raziyah Sultan, daughter of senior incarcerated Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik, has made a heartfelt appeal to António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to prevent the potential cold-blooded murder of her father. The plea comes as a Delhi court is set to hear Yasin Malik's capital punishment case on Tuesday. Joined by her mother, Mushaah Hussain Mullick, Chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organization, Raziyah Sultan led a rally in Muzaffarabad to protest against the perceived threat to her father's life due to what she considers a fake, fabricated, and politically motivated case. In a poignant letter submitted to the UN office in Muzaffarabad, Raziyah Sultan wrote, "I am writing to you at a time when words fail me, yet with great hope in the office you hold and the principles you represent." She expressed her struggle to articulate the distress her



mother and she are experiencing as her father faces a death sentence for advocating for the rights mandated by the UN. She questioned whether justice is truly alive or if it has died. Yasin Malik has been imprisoned in the notorious Tihar Jail in India since May 7th, 2019. Raziyah Sultan highlighted his inhumane treatment,

lack of fair trial rights, and years of incarceration in multiple Indian jails. She questioned if the world was waiting for him to die before recognizing him as "Kashmir's Mandela." Raziyah expressed the emotional toll of being separated from her father for nearly a decade and painted a grim picture of his current situation - perpetual mental and physical torture, solitary confinement in a death cell, and multiple health issues. She appealed to the UN Secretary-General's sense of basic human dignity, seeking intervention for her father's release on medical and humanitarian grounds and his transfer to a life care facility. With impending Indian General Elections, she fears for her father's life and beseeches the UN's mercy. Raziyah Sultan's impassioned plea sheds light on the dire circumstances faced by her father and the urgency for international intervention to ensure his well-being and just treatment.

LHC stops Cane Commissioner from making final decision on sugar prices till Sep 5

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) has stopped Cane Commissioner Punjab from making a final decision on fixing the sugar prices till September 5. However, the court allowed the cane commissioner to continue the process of hearing reservations of the millers about sugar prices. Justice Anwaar Hussain passed the interim order on petitions

filed by sugar mills against the step of fixing sugar prices, says an order of previous hearing issued here on Monday. The court also sought a reply from the attorney general for Pakistan and advocate general Punjab on powers of the caretaker government. The millers had approached the court against the fixing of sugar prices by the cane commissioner. It is pertinent

to mention here that the Caretaker Punjab government through an order on July 28, 2023, had authorized the cane commissioner to fix the price of sugar, regulate its storage, and take other steps. As per the directives, the cane commissioner may fix the ex-mill price of sugar after giving the representative body of sugar factories an opportunity of being heard.

May-9 vandalism: ATC extends judicial remand of Dr Yasmin Rashid in 4 cases

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday extended the judicial remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Dr Yasmin Rashid for another 14-day in four cases related to May-9 vandalism. Earlier, the police produced Dr Yasmin

Rashid before ATC Judge Abher Gul Khan on expiry of her judicial remand term. The police apprised the court about preparations of the challan and requested to extend the judicial remand. At this, the court extended the judicial remand of the PTI leader for

another 14-day and ordered for producing her on August 21. Dr Yasmin Rashid was nominated in cases of attacking Jinnah House, Askari Tower, Shadman Police Station and PML-N office in Model Town, during the May-9 vandalism.

ISRA university observe world Hepatitis Day

Hyderabad (Agencies): Isra University, in collaboration with the Health Department's Hepatitis Prevention and Control Programme, observed World Hepatitis Day with a walk, seminar, and the launch of a hepatitis treatment and research center. Isra University hosted a walk, led by Zaid Ahmed Laghari, Managing Director, to raise awareness about Hepatitis. The university has operated a Hepatitis B Vaccination Centre since 2014 and signed an MOU for a Hepatitis C Treatment and Research Center, offering free medicine to positive cases. Experts highlighted vaccina-



tion's importance during a seminar. Attendees received free Hepatitis B vaccination and screenings at

Isra University Hospital. The event aimed to raise awareness about viral hepatitis, responsible for 1.34 million annual deaths globally. Hepatitis B and C contribute to 80% of liver cancer cases. The need for awareness, affordable diagnostics, and accessible treatment was emphasized. With viral hepatitis included in Sustainable Development Goals and a global strategy in place, political commitment is vital to prevent further deaths and curb the epidemic. The event saw esteemed guests, uniting efforts in the fight against viral hepatitis and safeguarding public health.

NA Committee Challenges Cabinet Decision on Parliamentarians' Salaries



Islamabad (Agencies): The Standing Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges labeled the Federal Cabinet's decision to withhold a salary increase for Parliament members in 2021 as lacking legal basis. The committee directed the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to seek a Cabinet reversal and amend the Members of Parliament (Salaries and Allowances) Act, 1974. Chaired by Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon, MNA, the committee discussed these matters during its session at Parliament House. The committee also discussed a Question of Privilege raised by Pir Syed Fazal Ali Shah Jilani, MNA, concerning the alleged violation of section 14-B of the Members of Parliament (Salaries and Allowances) Act, 1974. It recommended prompt compliance by the Parliamentary Affairs Division, asserting that non-adherence to legal provisions constitutes a breach of parliamentary norms. Addressing another Question of Privilege by Maulana Abdul Akbar Chirtali,

MNA, the committee called for the annulment of recent appointments within the Department of Post Office, suspecting the involvement of regional Post Master Generals in corrupt practices. The committee also called for inquiries into appointments in various districts. Regarding a separate Question of Privilege by Mr. Qadir Khan Mandokhel, MNA, the committee disposed of the matter after receiving assurance from the Director General Legal that Utility Stores Corporation would regularize the services of daily/contractual employees. Throughout the meeting, the committee emphasized the importance of respectful behavior by government officials toward the public and their representatives. It directed provincial governments to ensure adherence to this principle by line departments. The session was attended by committee members, movers of the Questions of Privilege, relevant officials from the Parliamentary Affairs Division and Power Division, among others.

Serious concerns voiced by ECP on LG amendment delay

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has raised serious concerns regarding the delay in approving the amendment to Section 17 of the local government act and the allocation of reserved seats. The ECP has urged the Interior Secretary to expedite the approval process and ensure the necessary amendment to the local government act. The Commission, led by distinguished member Nisar Ahmed Durrani, convened to discuss setting a date for local government elections. During the meeting, which included Commission members, the Election Commission's Secretary, Special Secretary, and other senior officials, the urgency of a written update from the Min-

istry of Interior was emphasized. While preparations for local government elections in Islamabad are complete, the ECP requires a formal notification outlining the reserved seat count and an amendment to Section 17 of the Local Government Act. The Interior Secretary informed the briefing that election expense limits for candidates have been established, and a summary for reserved seat allocation has been prepared. However, the necessary amendment to Section 17 was submitted to the cabinet on July 26th. Expressing dissatisfaction, the Election Commission stressed the importance of swift legislative action, underlining that the responsibility to enact necessary laws lies with Parliament.

Compiling 209-year laws - a big achievement of Balochistan's govt: Rubaba

QUETTA (Agencies): Parliamentary Secretary Law and Parliamentary Affairs Science and IT Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi on Monday said that it is a big achievement of the incumbent government to consolidate the 209-year laws of Balochistan's history. She

expressed these views while addressing a ceremony of awarding excellence certificates to the officers of law and parliamentary affairs on Monday. Secretary Law and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Saboor Kakar and senior officers of the department were

also present. Dr Rubaba said that compiling the laws in a written form was not less than a challenge, but with the hard work of all the officers and personnel of the Codification Branch, this difficult task was completed in a short period of time.

German industry output plunges further in June

BERLIN (Agencies): German industrial output plunged in June, official data showed Monday, with the economy ministry warning of a gloomy outlook as high energy prices and interest rates took their toll. Output fell for the second consecutive month, but the drop of 1.5% from a month ago was wider than the 0.1% slip in May, according to data published by the Federal Statistics Office Destatis. It was also a bigger fall than expected by analysts polled by Factset, who forecasted a 0.5% decline. Germa-



ny's industrial heavyweight automobile sector showed a significant fall of 3.5%. "The outlook for the industrial economy remains gloomy despite the rising demand, because these are strongly affected by fluctuations of

big orders," said the economy ministry. "Given the subdued business and export expectations of companies, there is currently no sign of a noticeable recovery." ING analyst Carsten Brzeski said the latest poor data was "another illustration of the country's ongoing stagnation" and warned that it could also be a harbinger of further bad news. "With today's numbers, the risk has increased that the flash estimate of stagnating GDP growth in the second quarter could still be revised downwards," he said.

Saudi Aramco Q2 profits drop 38% on lower prices

RIYADH (Agencies): Oil firm Saudi Aramco on Monday announced profits of US\$30.08 billion for the second quarter, a sharp fall from the same period last year when prices surged after Russia invaded Ukraine. The 38% year-on-year decline "mainly reflected the impact of lower crude oil prices and weakening refining and chemicals margins", the largely state-owned company said in a statement published on the Saudi stock exchange. The decline followed a drop of 19.25% in the first quarter. "Our strong results



reflect our resilience and ability to adapt through market cycles," CEO Amin Nasser said. "We continue to demonstrate our long-standing ability to meet the needs of customers around the world with high levels

of reliability. For our shareholders, we intend to start distributing our first performance-linked dividend in the third quarter." Production from the world's biggest crude exporter was down after Riyadh in April announced cuts of 500,000 barrels per day, part of a coordinated move with other oil powers to slash supply by more than one million bpd in a bid to prop up prices. In June, the Saudi energy ministry announced a further voluntary cut of one million bpd which took effect in July and has been extended through September.

India's rice export ban sparks sugar concern

NEW DELHI (Agencies): After India banned some rice exports to control domestic prices, traders are worried another food staple could be vulnerable: sugar. The world has become increasingly dependent on sugar exports from the South Asian nation as global supplies tighten. Uneven rainfall across India's agricultural belts has stoked concern that sugar production will fall short, potentially dropping for a second straight year in the season starting October. This may limit the country's ability to export. The government has already restricted overseas sale of wheat and some rice



varieties to protect domestic supplies and cool prices, adding to stresses on global food markets that have already been roiled by bad weather and the worsening conflict in Ukraine. The rice export ban is a clear signal the government is concerned about food security

and inflation, said Henrique Akamine, head of sugar and ethanol at Tropical Research Services. "The worry now is that the government will probably follow suit and do something similar regarding sugar," he added. Sugar cane fields in the main producing regions of Maharashtra and Karnataka didn't get adequate rain in June, leading to crop stress, according to Aditya Jhunjhunwala, president of the Indian Sugar Mills Association. The group expects sugar output to drop 3.4% from a year ago to 31.7 million tons in 2023-24. Still, Jhunjhunwala said supplies can meet domestic demand.

UAE's Al Ansari Financial Services eyes majority stake in Omani money exchange firm

RIYADH (Agencies): In a bid to tap Oman's booming economy, UAE-based currency exchange company Al Ansari Financial Services has made a formal proposal to acquire a majority stake in an Omani exchange company. According to a statement to Dubai Financial Market, the proposal is aligned with the company's plans to expand its market share in the wider Gulf Cooperation Council region. The statement, however, did not reveal the name of the Omani company or the financial terms of the potential transaction.



"The Omani market is very attractive and one that we believe will support our goal of expanding our footprint in countries with a significant expat population and a resilient economy," said Rashed Al-Ansari, group CEO of Al Ansari Financial Services. He added: "We are confi-

dent that this expansion will contribute to further broadening our customer base. The planned acquisition of a prominent exchange in Oman will provide us with the opportunity to bring the best of Al Ansari Financial Services to a new and exciting market given our deep expertise and market experience." The statement added that the acquisition is still in its early stages and is subject to the necessary regulatory approvals. The schedule for the acquisition is set for the first quarter of 2024, said the exchange house.

Philippine call centres face AI, talent shortage

MANILA (Agencies): The Philippines is racing to defend its share of the nearly US\$300 billion global business process outsourcing market as it battles deteriorating talent, highlighting the perils of competition especially from a rapidly evolving artificial intelligence. The Southeast Asian nation, the world's second-largest provider of outsourcing services, is producing a "low ratio" of graduates with the required level of communication and technical skills, potentially losing an

opportunity to add 800,000 jobs in the next five years, according to industry group IT & Business Process Association of the Philippines. "The most common challenge I hear is comprehension," Jack Madrid, who heads the country's main BPO trade group, said in an interview in his office in Manila on Aug 2. "I think they fail at a more basic level." The Philippines is losing its edge in an industry that accounts for around 8% of the nation's gross domestic product and a major source of foreign ex-

change inflows at a time of intensifying competition from other countries where new entrants are bidding for a share of the pie. AI-powered bots have been taking away an increasing number of outsourcing jobs since the Covid-19 pandemic. A longstanding advantage of English-speaking proficiency for natives of the former US colony — a key component of its rise as a call centre nation that helped expand its middle class since the dawn of the industry in the 1990s — is diminishing.

SoftBank eyes profit after Vision Fund's US\$48bil losses

TOKYO (Agencies): SoftBank Group Corp's Vision Fund is likely to return to profitability after five quarters of losses, thanks to an artificial-intelligence-fuelled rebound that's lifting startup valuations. The Japanese conglomerate is fighting to regain its footing after losing ¥6.9 trillion (US\$48 billion) at the Vision Fund investment unit in the

last two fiscal years. Analysts expect a modest profit at the fund for the three months ended June, while SoftBank as a whole will likely report a profit of around ¥73 billion on Tuesday, according to the average of analyst estimates. Whether SoftBank founder Masayoshi Son will now be able to go on the offensive and hunt for new deals hinges

on the initial public offering of Arm Ltd. His chip designer is seeking to raise as much as US\$10 billion in a market debut as soon as September, at a valuation of between US\$60 billion and US\$70 billion. At the high end of its fundraising target, Arm would be the largest tech debut on record after Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and Meta Platforms Inc.

Oil Updates — crude prices hold steady near 4-month high on OPEC+ cuts

RIYADH (Agencies): Oil prices edged down on Monday, but were still near their highest levels since mid-April after top producers Saudi Arabia and Russia pledged to keep supplies down for another month to tighten global markets further and support prices. Brent crude futures slipped 15 cents, or 0.2 percent, to \$86.09 a barrel by 9:40 a.m. Saudi time, while US West Texas Intermediate crude was at \$82.67 a barrel, down 15 cents, or

0.2 percent. Both contracts notched their sixth consecutive weekly gains last week, the longest winning streak from December 2021 to January 2022. "The bullishness is in line with our expectations of a stronger second half for oil compared to the first half," said Suvro Sarkar, lead energy analyst at DBS Bank. "But we think further upside may be limited, and oil prices could consolidate around the \$85 a barrel level (Brent) for a

while, capped by ongoing concerns about the pace of China's recovery and doubts about how long Saudi and Russia will continue to curb production and exports, respectively, given the spare capacity on hand." Oil prices have in recent weeks been underpinned by expectations of US interest rate hikes tapering off, a reduction in supplies of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies.

Saudi Aramco's Q2 profit touches \$30.07bn

RIYADH (Agencies): Global energy giant Saudi Arabian Oil Co. has posted a net profit of SR112.81 billion (\$30.07 billion) in the second quarter of 2023, the company said in a bourse filing. In a statement to Tadawul, Saudi Aramco noted that the profit of the three months to the end of June was down 5.67 percent compared to the previous quarter when the company clocked a gain of SR119.54 billion. According to the statement, the drop in profit was due to lower crude oil prices and weakening refining and chemicals margins. Saudi Aramco's net profit for the first half also dropped 29.52 percent to SR323.35 billion, compared to SR329.67 billion in the same period a year ago, the statement added.



"Our strong results reflect our resilience and ability to adapt through market cycles. We continue to demonstrate our long-standing ability to meet the needs of customers around the world with high levels of reliability. For our shareholders, we intend to start distributing our first performance-linked dividend in the third quarter," said Aramco's President and CEO Amin Nasser in the statement.

UK house prices fall again, but market shows resilient

LONDON (Agencies): British house prices fell in July for the fourth time in a row in month-on-month terms but the market is showing some signs of resilience in the face of the climb in borrowing costs, mortgage lender Halifax said on Monday. Prices fell by 0.3% from June and in year-on-year terms they were down by 2.4%, a slightly smaller drop than June's 2.6% decline which was the largest such fall since June 2011. Halifax said demand from first-time buyers was holding up with some of them searching for smaller homes to offset the Bank of England's rise in borrowing costs to fight high inflation. But the buy-to-let sector appeared to be under pressure, possibly pointing to more homes being put up for sale which could ease



the long-standing shortage of properties on the market, a factor behind the high valuations. Kim Kinnaird, director of Halifax Mortgages, said house prices were likely to continue falling into next year. "Based on our current economic assumptions, we anticipate that being a gradual rather than a precipitous decline, and one that is unlikely to fully reverse the house price growth recorded over recent years," Kinnaird said.

Indonesia's Q2 GDP grows 5.17%, beats estimates

JAKARTA (Agencies): Indonesia's economic growth accelerated last quarter, defying the impact of higher interest rates, elevated prices and a commodity slowdown. Gross domestic product rose 5.17% in the three months through June compared to a year ago, the nation's statistics office said on Monday. That beats the 5% median forecast in a Bloomberg survey of economists and the growth print notched in the previous two quarters. On a quarterly basis, the economy expanded 3.86% compared to the January-March period, faster than the 3.7% estimate. Last quarter's performance underlines the resilience of Southeast Asia's largest economy at a time when its typical engines of growth have struggled to fire on all cylinders. Elevated prices and



borrowing costs at a four-year high have crimped consumption and investment, while exports are dragged down by the global commodities slump. It also puts the nation in good stead to post full-year GDP growth of 5%-5.3%, as finance minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati forecast last week. Spending ahead of the February 2024 elections, as well as increased manufacturing activity should help offset weak demand from China and other export markets, she said earlier.

UK job recruiters see jump in people looking for work

LONDON (Agencies): Britain's red-hot labour market showed signs of loosening with recruiters reporting a strong jump in the number of people looking for work and a drop in demand for staff. The Recruitment and Employment Confederation said Monday its measure of total staff availability rose to 61.4 last month. That was the strongest it's been since 2009, except for the period around the pandemic. Demand for permanent staff fell to the lowest in almost three years. The figures add to evidence that a slowdown in the econ-

omy may be starting to cool upward pressure on prices coming from the labor market. The Bank of England is concerned that soaring wages are feeding inflation after workers dropped out of the jobs market in the pandemic. REC said those trends are starting to reverse. "Recruiters told us that their clients aren't yet confident enough in the economic outlook to commit to permanent hires," said Claire Warnes, a partner at KPMG, which contributed to the survey. "Businesses are also freezing hiring, with some redundancies."

Chinese maker of 1,000km EV battery plans IPO by 2025

SHANGHAI (Agencies): A Chinese maker of long-range electric vehicle batteries — including one capable of going 1,000km on a single charge — plans to go public as soon as 2025 as it banks on automakers embracing next-generation cells in the race to overcome range anxiety. Beijing WeLion New Energy Technology Co, which supplies the 1,000km range semi-solid state cell to Chinese EV upstart Nio Inc is targeting a 20-fold surge in revenue to 10 billion yuan (US\$1.4 billion) by 2025 to fuel its aspirations, founder Li Hong said in a recent interview. The company, better known as WeLion, was valued at 15.7 billion yuan in its most recent funding round, said Li, who also holds the title of chief scientist. Solid-state batteries are a potential game changer for the EV industry because they enable high-voltage, high-capacity cathodes that provide a substantial boost to battery capacity and performance, according to BloombergNEF.



While no one has yet succeeded in the commercialisation of solid-state batteries, WeLion's semi-solid state cell is being used in Nio's all-new ES6 sport utility vehicle unveiled in May, becoming one of few next-generation battery makers in the world to start mass production and commercialization. WeLion's battery for Nio has a 150 kilowatt hour pack, and the 1,000km range compares favourably with the Lucid Air Dream Edition R (840km) and Tesla Inc's Model S (640km). The cell has an energy density of 360Wh per kilogramme, Li said. That's higher than the estimated 300Wh per kilogramme of Tesla's 4680 battery, according to Shinyoung Securities in Seoul.

Ronaldo sends clinical Al-Nassr past Raja into semis of King Salman Cup

Cristiano Ronaldo rolled back the years as he steered Al-Nassr to a 3-1 win over Raja Casablanca on Sunday and into the semifinals of the King Salman Club Cup. The 38-year-old opened the scoring for the Saudi Arabian side in spectacular style, his third strike in successive games in the 16-team tournament formerly known as the Arab Club Champions Cup. The result also keeps alive the prospect of a potential final against bitter Riyadh rivals Al-Hilal. In this form, it could be a blockbuster, as Al-Nassr were just too good for the Moroccan powerhouse in the crucial period when they scored three in 20 minutes following Ronaldo's special after 19 minutes. Soon after,



Sultan Al-Ghannam added a second and Seko Fofana headed a third, his first since arriving from Lens this summer. An Abdullah Madu own goal before the break gave Casablanca, who won all three of their group games, hope. But it was not enough, as they could not match the Saudi Arabian side's ruthlessness in front of goal. This may come as

little surprise as Al-Nassr's starting 11 was a formidable one. As well as the five-time Ballon d'Or winner, Sadio Mane made his first start for the club since signing from Bayern Munich, and there was Marcelo Brozovic and Fofana in midfield. Add domestic stars, such as Al-Ghannam, Abdullah Al-Khaibari and Nawaf Al-Aqidi in goal, and it was always going to be a tough ask for the North Africans and defending champions. Yet it was last season's stars who made the opener after 19 minutes. Anderson Talisca was causing problems on the right side of the area and pulled the ball back for Ronaldo, who fired a beautiful shot home from the edge of the box.

Dutch cycling star Van der Poel gets up from crash, goes on to win world road race title

GLASGOW, SCOTLAND: Mathieu van der Poel crashed while leading the road race at the world championships, breaking his shoe and tearing his jersey, yet the Dutch cyclist maintained his poise, quickly remounted and pulled away for a remarkable victory Sunday. Van der Poel had been riding with two-time Tour de France winner Tadej Pogacar, one-day specialist Wout van Aert and Mads Pedersen, a former world champion. They pulled back Alberto Bettiol's solo breakaway, then van der Poel headed off on his own, flying through the rain and over the wet roads to victory in downtown Glasgow, Scotland. "It



was one of the biggest goals I had left, and to win it today is amazing," he said. "I almost completed my career, in my opinion, so for me it's maybe the biggest victory on the road. I cannot imagine yet riding in the rainbow (jersey) for the next year." That includes the Paris Olympics, where van der Poel will be

among the favorites next summer. Not even a mistake Sunday, when Van der Poel slid his bike into a barrier on a tight right-hand turn, could stop him. By the time he reached the finish line, the grandson of Raymond Poulidor had accomplished what the French icon never did — he finished on the podium four times at the world championships but never on the top step. Van Aert, one of the pre-race favorites, pulled away down the final stretch to take the silver medal for Belgium, and Pogaar beat Pedersen in a head-to-head sprint by less than the length of his front tire to claim bronze for Slovenia.

Sweden send holders US spinning out of World Cup after penalty drama

MELBOURNE: The United States' long reign as Women's World Cup holders was brought to an end in the most dramatic fashion as they were dumped out on penalties by Sweden, who joined the Netherlands in reaching the quarter-finals on Sunday. Sweden face Japan in the last eight as the drama and shocks just kept coming at the tournament in Australia and New Zealand. The Netherlands beat South Africa 2-0 and meet Spain. Their last-16 defeat after the game ended 0-0 after 120 minutes was the United States' earliest exit in their Women's World Cup history and leaves European champions England now the firm favourites. "Just devastated, feels like



a bad dream," veteran striker Alex Morgan, for so many years one of the faces of the all-conquering Americans, told Fox Sports. The USA have long been the dominant force in international women's football: they have won the World Cup four times and were chasing an unprecedented third title in a row. Vlatko Andonovski's side

were the better team against Sweden in Melbourne but they could not beat goalkeeper Zecira Musovic and then lost their nerve in the penalty shootout. Megan Rapinoe, a two-time World Cup winner who was desperate to end her career with another title, missed her spot-kick before the Swedes sealed the deal 5-4 on sudden-death penalties. Even then the end was excruciatingly tense. US goalkeeper Alyssa Naehar thought she had saved Lina Hurtig's kick but VAR ruled it had just crossed the line. Cue belated pandemonium among the Sweden squad and tears for the Americans who, despite dominating large periods of the game, just never got going at this World Cup.

Coach Lorne Donaldson says Jamaica are prepared for a "boxing match" with Colombia in Tuesday's Women's World Cup last-16 tie in Melbourne

Coach Lorne Donaldson says Jamaica are prepared for a "boxing match" with Colombia in Tuesday's Women's World Cup last-16 tie in Melbourne. Both sides were among the biggest surprises from the group stages, with Jamaica progressing at the expense of Brazil, while Colombia won Group H. Donaldson wants his side to give their all as they aim to book a quarter-final against England or Nigeria. "We won't change much, but we will give it a good shot," he said. "This is like a boxing match, someone will go down. We want to be standing when the game is over." Jamaica's passage to the knock-out stages was built on



defence, as they are the only team yet to concede a goal at the World Cup. They have only scored once, through defender Allyson Swaby in their 1-0 victory over Panama, between goalless draws against France and Brazil which secured second place in Group F. "A lack of goals is not a major con-

cern," added Donaldson. "We have played some good teams, two of the top teams, we were supposed to lose by six or seven. "We so have to try to score to win this game, so we will put our best foot forward." Colombia are set to start 18-year-old defender Ana Maria Guzman in place of the suspended Manuela Vanegas. She will be the second 18-year-old is Colombia's likely XI, alongside Linda Caicedo. "This is a great opportunity," Guzman said. "To be in such a national team is a blessing, to give my best for national team and team mates. "Yes, we are the youngest players, but on the pitch we are very skilled."

Cricket World Cup 2023: Pakistan confirm they will send team to India

Pakistan will send a team to India for October and November's 50-over World Cup, ending months of uncertainty about their participation. The two sides have only played in World Cups and neutral venues since 2013 because of political tensions. "Pakistan has consistently maintained that sports should not be mixed with politics," a Pakistan foreign office statement said. They will meet in the Asia Cup on 2 September in Kandy, Sri Lanka. "Pakistan believes that the state of bilateral relations with India should



not stand in the way of fulfilling its international sports-related obligations," the statement added. The neighbours have fought three wars and have had a number of military clashes in recent years. The two both

control parts of the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir but claim it in full. The statement did not confirm, though, whether Pakistan are content to play India in Ahmedabad on 15 October as planned or whether they will ask for a change of venue. It did say Pakistan has "deep concerns" about security, adding: "We are conveying these concerns to the International Cricket Council and the Indian authorities. "We expect that the full safety and security of the Pakistan cricket team will be ensured during its visit to India."

Former quarterback Johnny Manziel talks drug abuse, suicide attempt in new documentary

Former National Football League quarterback Johnny Manziel reveals in a new documentary his drug usage during his playing career and a suicide attempt following his release from the Cleveland Browns in 2016. In Netflix's upcoming documentary "Untold: Johnny Football," Manziel — who became the first redshirt freshman

to win the Heisman Trophy while playing at Texas A&M in 2012 — said that he began using OxyContin and cocaine every day following the 2015 season, which led to his weight dropping from 215 pounds that January to 175 pounds in September. Poor play and legal troubles soon followed Manziel. A Texas grand jury indicted Manziel on a

misdemeanor assault charge of his former girlfriend, Colleen Crowley. Manziel denied hitting Crowley at the time and the charges were later dropped after he met the court's terms for a dismissal agreement. The Browns would release Manziel in March 2016, which he said he was later diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

Team Abu Dhabi duo set sights on world title

ABU DHABI: Team Abu Dhabi duo Rashed Al-Qemzi and Mansoor Al-Mansoori head into the opening round of the 2023 UIM F2 World Championship in Lithuania next weekend with their focus on delivering another drivers' title to the UAE capital. The two Emirati drivers join forces again at the start of the new season that they hope will underline all the best qualities of F2 World Championship powerboat racing and ultimately see one of them crowned champion. "We all know what happened last season, but as far as we're concerned, that's in the past, and we're just concentrating on working together to get the best results for ourselves as drivers and for the team as a whole," said three-time F2 champion Al-Qemzi. "Mansoor wants to win the title just as much as I do, but we also work very well together as teammates to



push each other and make sure we get the best out of ourselves." The Grand Prix of Lithuania switches this time to the port city of Klaipeda, where the Baltic Sea meets the Dane River. The country has been a happy hunting ground for Al-Qemzi, with victories in Kaunas, both in 2017 and 2019, propelling him toward his first two world titles. Al-Mansoori is in an equally positive frame of mind on his return to Lithuania where he followed up his first pole position in the series in Kupiskis last year with a maiden F2 race victory.

Record medal haul for UAE as IMMAF Youth World Championships wraps up in Abu Dhabi

ABU DHABI: The fourth IMMAF Youth World Championships at Abu Dhabi's Mubadala Arena ended on Saturday with the UAE national team claiming a record 12 medals. The Emirati athletes' historic run throughout the championship included four gold, four silver and four bronze, compared to a tally of four medals last year. The competition in Youth A (16 to 17-years-old) was held on the final day of the four-day event. The Ukraine topped the overall medal table followed by the US in second place and Tajikistan in third. The championship saw UAE



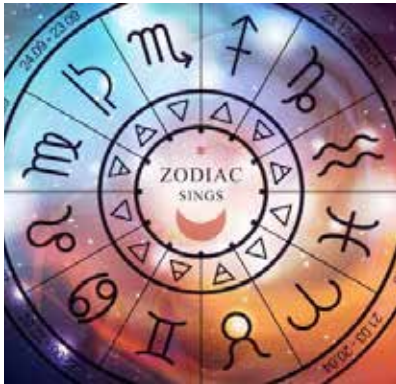
athletes Fahad Al-Hammadi (Youth A/70.3 kg division), Ghala Al-Hammadi (Youth B/40 kg division), Saif Alblooshi (Youth C/40 kg division), and Zamzam Al-Hammadi (Youth B/52 kg division) winning gold medals.

Community Shield: Arsenal 'make statement' with victory over Manchester City

It rarely sets the tone for the season ahead and it may not be considered a major trophy by many but, in the context of how last season ended for Arsenal, the psychological impact of their Community Shield win against Manchester City on Sunday should not be underestimated. After Cole Palmer's stunning goal, the Gunners battled back through Leandro Trossard's last-gasp equaliser before Kevin de Bruyne and Rodri missed spot-kicks in the shootout and Arsenal converted all of theirs to secure the first piece of silverware of the season. Arsenal led the Premier League for 248 days last season - no side has spent as long at the summit of the English top flight and failed to win it - but as Mikel Arteta's side

capitulated, City charged to stage a successful defence of the title. On top of that they appeared to have no answer to City throughout last season. They faced them three times - twice in the Premier League and once in the FA Cup - and they lost all three by an aggregate scoreline of 8-2. In fact, the Gunners had lost their last nine matches against the champions. To finally get one over their rivals, no matter the competition, was critical for Arsenal to ensure they are not mentally beaten before they even take to the pitch against Guardiola's side. "It's a statement," Arsenal goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale told ITV. "It's a marker to know we can go and beat Manchester City in a big game when it matters.

DAILY HOROSCOPE: AUGUST 8, 2023



love, or something else. Try to pull back before you overcommit yourself. – **VIRGO**: Your adventurous spirit is fully active now, though you may only have the energy to try somewhere new for dinner or explore a new section of town. Take baby steps! – **LIBRA**: You can easily skate by any challenges that come your way today, but only if you're able to give up a claim to something that seems like it might rightfully be yours. You can take the high road! – **SCORPIO**: Sometimes you really want things to be done your way, and at other times you'd rather see what other options are available. Your ability to change to match circumstances is powerful! – **SAGITTARIUS**: You're torn between blowing off responsibilities and pleasing the most important people in your life. Of course, you're practically guaranteed to do what's right, but it may take a while. – **CAPRICORN**: Life is far more fun than it should be today, but you're not going crazy! If anything, you're feeling the right emotions at the right times and just making the most of what you've got. – **ACQUARIUS**: You're starting to see the aftermath of recent changes that you were enthusiastic about. There shouldn't be any huge disasters, but it might be hard to engage the same level of cheerleading. – **PISCES**: You have an artist's temperament, no matter what your occupation may be. You bring your refined aesthetic sense and raw emotional power to bear on whatever issue is most pressing.

Iraq seeks Interpol alerts for former officials over \$2.5bln graft

BAGHDAD (Agencies): Iraq plans to ask Interpol to issue international alerts seeking the arrest of former senior officials including an ex-finance minister and an ex-intelligence chief over the alleged theft of more than \$2.5 billion from the country's Tax Commission, Reuters reports. The scandal centres on suspected illegitimate cash withdrawals from the Commission between 2021 and 2022 totalling around \$2.5 billion, according to Iraqi officials – a staggering amount even in a country that regularly ranks among the world's most corrupt. Iraq's top anti-corruption official,



cial, Integrity Commission chief Judge Haider Hanoun, announced the move to seek so-called Interpol Red Notices on Sunday. Hanoun said the judiciary would also ask for notices to be issued for the private secretary and a political adviser to former prime minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi. Kadhimi and former finance minister Ali Allawi have both denied involvement in the alleged cor-

ruption, which came to light late last year after a new government came to power. Allawi resigned from the government in August 2022 citing political interference in government work and graft. He has since said that he took steps to prevent theft from occurring at the Tax Commission but that his decisions were ignored by other officials. Current Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani has said one of his priorities is fighting the rampant corruption that pervades the Iraqi state and has led to the pilfering of untold billions of the country's oil wealth dollars over the years.

Kuwait raises army enlistment age to 55

Kuwait yesterday raised the age of army enlistment to 55, while lifting limits of those wishing to re-volunteer in the military, KUNA reports. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Sheikh Ahmad Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah issued the decision in accordance with the controls decided by the Presidency of the General Staff of the Army, the official news agency reported. According to a statement from the Ministry of Defence, the decision comes to provide an opportunity for the largest number of people to re-volunteer in the military, with the aim of benefiting from their scientific and



field expertise to improve the level of readiness in all sectors of the Kuwaiti army. Earlier this year, the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah instructed military personnel to keep vigilant and execute drills to upgrade their preparedness.

Iraq blocks Telegram app, cites personal data violations

BAGHDAD (Agencies): Iraq's telecoms ministry said it has blocked the Telegram messaging app over national security concerns and in order to preserve the integrity of users' personal data, which it said the app had mishandled, Reuters reports. The app is widely used in Iraq for messaging but also as a source of news and for sharing content. Some channels contain large amounts of personal data including the names, addresses and family ties of Iraqis. The ministry said in a statement it had asked the app to close down "platforms that leak the data of the official state institutions and the personal data of citizens... but the company did not respond



and did not interact with any of these requests." "The Ministry of Communications affirms its respect for citizens' rights to freedom of expression and communication, without prejudice to the security of the state and its institutions," the statement said. Telegram did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment.

Turkish FM, Ukrainian counterpart discuss Black Sea grain deal

Turkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba on Saturday spoke over the phone and discussed steps that can be taken for the revival of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, according to Turkish diplomatic sources, Anadolu reports. On July 17, Russia suspended its participation in the Black Sea grain deal, saying the Russian part of the agreement was not implemented. It sought the loosening of banking restrictions and the ability to ship its fertilizer before returning to the agreement. The agreement, signed in July 2022 in Istanbul by Turkiye,



the UN, Russia, and Ukraine, was aimed at resuming grain exports from Ukrainian ports halted due to the Russia-Ukraine war, which began in February 2022. Turkiye has said that Western countries should try to address Russia's complaints and that it hopes Russia returns to the deal.

France to supply Ukraine with long-range cruise missiles

KIEV (Agencies): France will join Britain in supplying Ukraine with long-range cruise missiles, which can travel 250 km (155 miles), a move that allows Ukrainian forces to hit Russian troops and supplies deep behind front lines, French officials said on Tuesday. Emmanuel Macron said he had decided to boost military aid to Ukraine to help its counteroffensive as the French President arrived at a summit of the 31-member NATO alliance in Lithuania. "I have decided to increase deliveries of weapons and equipment to enable the Ukrainians to have the capacity to strike deeply," Macron said, while declining to say how many missiles would be sent. A French diplomatic source said they were talking about 50 SCALP missiles produced by European manufacturer MBDA. The missiles would come from existing French military stocks, a French military source told reporters, adding that it would be a "significant number". Paris has previously supplied Mistral shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles to Ukraine and Crotales short-range anti-air missiles, which are used to intercept low-flying mis-



siles and aircraft. Ukraine has been asking for months for longer-range missiles but the United States, its main supplier, has yet to agree to supply them. Britain said in May it was supplying the Franco-British missile, produced by MBDA, that it calls the Storm Shadow. The French version, known as SCALP, has a range of about 250 km, three times as far as Ukraine's existing missile capacities. The missiles were being integrated into Ukrainian Russian-made warplanes, the French military source said. The source dismissed suggestions that the missiles were an escalation, saying their use was proportional and noting that Russia was using cruise missiles launched from thousands of kilometres away. "It rebalances things and enables Ukraine to hit deep into Russian lines and can penetrate tougher targets," he said.

Turkish Coast Guard saves 130 migrants pushed back by Greece

ANKARA (Agencies): The Turkish coast guard came to the rescue of dozens of irregular migrants in western Türkiye after they suffered another instance of Greece's notorious "pushback" practice. A total of 130 irregular migrants pushed back into Turkish territorial waters by Greek forces were rescued Saturday by the Turkish coast guard off the coasts of western Izmir province's Menderes, Karaburun, Foça and Çeme districts. Meanwhile, 265 irregular migrants and a migrant smuggler were caught off the coasts of Karaburun and Dikili. The irregular migrants were handed to the

Provincial Directorate of Migration Management after procedures. The coast guard also intercepted 170 irregular migrants in rubber boats off the coast of western Çanakkale province's Ayvacık district. Teams from the Coast Guard Northern Aegean Group Command detected four rubber boats transporting irregular migrants off the coast of Ayvacık. During the operations, 170 irregular migrants from Afghanistan, Sudan, Syria, Yemen, Palestine and Somalia were caught and taken to shore. The foreign nationals were sent to the Ayvacık Foreigners Removal Center after being processed.

Multiple Syrian soldiers killed in 'Israeli air strike'

Damascus (Agencies): Syrian air defenses were activated overnight to intercept a volley of "hostile" projectiles in the vicinity of the country's capital Damascus, SANA news agency reported early on Monday. Multiple explosions were heard in the Syrian capital shortly after 2:20am, as at least one bright flash illuminated the skies, according to unverified video posted online.

"The Israeli enemy carried out an air attack from the direction of the occupied Golan Heights, targeting some points in the vicinity of the city of Damascus," a military source told SANA. Syrian air defenses allegedly brought down most of the projectiles, but the attack still "led to the death of four soldiers and the wounding of four others," in addition to "limited material losses."

Pakistan Honors Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed, Nishan-e-Haider, on his 65th Shahadat Anniversary

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Today marks the 65th Shahadat Anniversary of Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed, Nishan-e-Haider, a true hero and symbol of courage for Pakistan. The Armed Forces of Pakistan, along with the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) and Services Chiefs, join together to pay a heartfelt tribute to this remarkable individual. Major Tufail Muhammad, the valiant recipient of Nishan-e-Haider, demonstrated unparalleled bravery during his service. He made the ultimate sacrifice while courageously fighting in the Lakshmipur sector of East Pakistan in 1958. As the nation commemorates Major Tufail Muhammad's martyrdom anniversary, it serves as a poignant reminder of the unwavering dedication and sacrifices made by the



Armed Forces of Pakistan to safeguard our beloved motherland. Let us unite in honoring the memory of these selfless heroes who have laid down their lives in defense of our nation. Their valor and sacrifice fill us with immense pride, and their legacy continues to inspire generations to come.

Niger closes airspace amid invasion threat

- The African country's junta has ignored the ultimatum from Western-backed neighbors -
Niamey (Agencies): Niger's coup-imposed government has promised "a vigorous and instantaneous response" to any violation of the country's airspace. Niamey is bracing for a potential military intervention after a deadline, set by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to reinstate President Mohamed Bazoum to power, expired on Sunday. "Faced with the threat of intervention which is becoming clearer from neighboring countries, Niger's airspace is closed from this day on Sunday... until further notice," the military government announced. The statement, as cited by AFP, warned that "any attempt to violate the airspace" will result in a "vigorous and instantaneous response." The National Council for the Safeguarding of the Homeland, which assumed power in a military coup last month, claimed that hostile regional forces have already conducted "pre-deployment in preparation for the intervention" in two unnamed countries of Central Africa. "Any state involved will be considered co-belligerent," it added. ECOWAS imposed harsh sanctions and issued a one-week ultimatum to the military leaders last week, threatening to send troops into Niger unless General Abdourahamane Tchiani and his cabinet of generals step down and reinstate President Bazoum. The deadline, however, passed unheeded. Although the militaries of several ECOWAS members agreed on a plan for potential military intervention at a meeting on Friday, the bloc needs "more time" to prepare for the invasion, according to the Wall Street Journal.

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