

Quote of the day



“Shut your mouth! You are creeps! You practice rogue journalism, which doesn't help at all.”

BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT JAIR BOLSONARO SLAMS PRESS FOR QUESTIONING HIS FREQUENT REFUSAL TO WEAR A MASK



“You can choose: you get the vaccine or I will send you to jail.”

PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT RODRIGO DUTERTE TELLS PEOPLE WHO REFUSES TO TAKE JABS



“It's not a problem to criticise the Hong Kong government, but if there is an intent to organise activities to incite the subversion of the government then that is, of course, a different thing.”

HONG KONG CHIEF EXECUTIVE CARRIE LAM REPLIES WHEN ASKED ABOUT PRESS FREEDOM IN THE CITY



Aymara indigenous people take part in the celebration of the Aymara New Year in Tiwanaku, Bolivia on Monday. Bolivia resumed celebrations of the Andean New Year on the winter solstice marking the year 5529. PHOTO: AFP

POST-COUP MYANMAR Army, militia clashes kill 6

AFP, Yangon
Four protesters and at least two officers were killed as Myanmar soldiers battled an anti-junta civilian militia with small arms and grenades in the country's second city yesterday, military sources said. Fighting has flared across Myanmar since the February coup as people form "defence forces" to battle a brutal military crackdown on dissent, but clashes have largely been restricted to rural areas. Acting on a tip-off, security forces raided a house in Mandalay's Chan Mya Tharsi township in the morning, the junta's information team said in a statement, and were met with small arms fire and grenades. Two officers were killed during the raid, military sources told AFP, and at least ten were wounded. Four "terrorists" were killed and eight arrested, it added. Since the mass uprising against the military putsch, a brutal crackdown has killed more than 870 civilians, according to reports.

SECURITY CHAOS AFTER WESTERN TROOPS WITHDRAWAL Taliban capture key port

UN warns of regional threat as insurgents seize 87 districts since May

AGENCIES
The UN yesterday warned of regional chaos as the Taliban captured Afghanistan's main border crossing with Tajikistan, with security forces abandoning their posts and some fleeing across the frontier. The seizure of Shir Khan Bandar, in the far north of Afghanistan, about 50 kilometres (30 miles) from Kunduz city, is the most significant gain for the Taliban since the US began the final stage of its troop withdrawal in May. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed the insurgents had seized the crossing, across the Pyanj River. The crossing is marked by a 700-metre US-funded bridge that opened in 2007 with the aim of boosting trade between the central Asian neighbours. It is a sprawling dry port capable of handling up to 1,000 vehicles a day. The loss of the port would be a huge financial blow to Kabul. Since early May, the Taliban have launched major offensives targeting government forces across the rugged countryside, and claim to have seized at least 87 of the country's 421 districts. Fierce fighting between the Taliban and Afghan government forces has taken place on the outskirts of three provincial capitals in the northern provinces of Faryab, Balkh and Kunduz provinces in recent days, officials said. Many of their claims are disputed by the government, and independent verification is difficult -- especially in areas that frequently change hands. Afghan government forces, however, said they would soon launch a massive offensive to retake lost territory. Peace talks in Doha have largely stalled, officials say, though there have

been meetings in recent days and the Taliban say they are committed to talks. The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan Deborah Lyons urged the Security Council to do all it could to push the parties back to the negotiating table. "Increased conflict in Afghanistan means increased insecurity for many other countries, near and far," she said. The United States began withdrawing troops on May 1 and has handed some bases over to the Afghan government, which has since given up some areas to the Taliban without a fight. The government admits the Taliban have captured a number of districts and security forces have made "tactical retreats". "Fighting has fiercely increased in recent weeks and now our main focus is to hold strategic areas and not to further stretch our forces," he said.

NEWS
IN brief

Catalan separatists pardoned
Spain cabinet yesterday pardoned nine jailed Catalan separatists behind a failed 2017 independence bid in a bid to break the deadlock over the political crisis in this wealthy northeastern region. The separatists were convicted over a banned referendum in October 2017 that was marred by police violence and followed by a short-lived declaration of independence, sparking Spain's worst political crisis in decades. Several fled abroad but 12 others were tried and convicted, with three-quarters of them handed prison terms of nine to 13 years.

Grave concerns raised about China at UN rights council
More than 40 countries led by Canada yesterday voiced grave concerns at the UN Human Rights Council about China's actions in Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Tibet -- triggering a fierce backlash from Beijing. The widely anticipated joint statement had been in the pipeline for several days and was delivered on day two of the 47th session of the council in Geneva. China denies mistreating the. In a move that was bound to further enrage Beijing, which decries what it says is the interference by foreign powers in its internal affairs, the statement added the group's concerns over the deterioration of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong and the human rights situation in Tibet. The representative of Belarus read another joint statement on behalf of 64 countries, supporting China and stressing that Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet were Chinese internal affairs.



More than 8,500 children used as soldiers in 2020
More than 8,500 children were used as soldiers last year in various conflicts across the world and nearly 2,700 others were killed, the United Nations said on Monday. UN chief Antonio Guterres' annual report to the Security Council on children and armed conflict covers the killing, maiming and sexual abuse of children, abduction or recruitment, denial of aid access and targeting of schools and hospitals. The report verified that violations had been committed against 19,379 children in 21 conflicts. The most violations in 2020 were committed in Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, Syria and Yemen. It verified that 8,521 children were used as soldiers last year, while another 2,674 children were killed and 5,748 injured in various conflicts.



Russian President Vladimir Putin lays flowers at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to mark 80th anniversary of German invasion into the Soviet Union, in Moscow, Russia yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

US has 'wrong' expectation for dialogue: Kim's sister

AFP, Seoul
The influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un yesterday said that Washington had "wrong" expectations for dialogue with Pyongyang and was facing "greater disappointment", state media reported. Kim Yo Jong's comments came after US national security advisor Jake Sullivan described her brother's first reaction to Washington's recent review of its approach to the North as an "interesting signal". The Biden administration has promised a practical, calibrated approach, including diplomatic efforts, to persuade the impoverished North to give up its banned nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes. In response, the North's leader Kim last week said Pyongyang must prepare for both dialogue and confrontation. Washington considered his comments as interesting, Sullivan told ABC News, adding the administration "will wait to see whether they are followed up with any kind of more direct communication to us about a potential path forward". But Kim Yo Jong -- a key adviser to her brother -- appeared to dismiss the prospects

for an early resumption of negotiations. The US seemed to be seeking "comfort for itself", she said in a statement reported by Pyongyang's official KCNA news agency. It harboured expectations "the wrong way", she added, which would "plunge them into a greater disappointment". Kim's comments came with the top US diplomat in charge of North Korea negotiations on a five-day visit to Seoul, where he said Monday that Washington was ready to meet with Pyongyang "anywhere, anytime, without preconditions". Just hours before Pyongyang released Kim's statement, US envoy Sung Kim met with the South's unification minister, reiterating Washington's willingness to talk with the North. The North at the weekend admitted it was tackling a food crisis, sounding the alarm in a country with a moribund agricultural sector that has long struggled to feed itself. It is now under self-imposed isolation to protect itself against the coronavirus pandemic, and as a result trade with Beijing -- its economic lifeline -- has slowed to a trickle while all international aid work faces tight restrictions.



- JUNE 23**
- 1956 - Gamal Abdel Nasser was elected president of Egypt.
 - 1995 - Jonas Salk, who developed the first vaccine against polio, died.
 - 2001 - The fugitive Peruvian spy chief Vladimiro Montesinos, Latin America's most wanted man, was captured in Venezuela.
 - 2013 - Full moon, also referred to as a "Super Moon" rises.
 - 2016 - Britain votes to leave EU in historic referendum.

#MeToo movement rocks Sri Lanka press

AFP, Colombo
Sri Lanka's government yesterday ordered an investigation into sexual harassment in the media after a string of #MeToo allegations from female newsroom staff. The flood of claims began after journalist Sarah Kellapatha tweeted last week that a male colleague had threatened to rape her while working at an unnamed newspaper from 2010-17. Other women journalists have since taken to Twitter in a campaign reminiscent of the #MeToo movement that began in the United States in 2017. One was journalist Sahla Ilham who said she was sexually abused by a "famous editor" at a now-defunct paper who had pressured her family to keep quiet. US journalist Jordana Narin, who had been an intern at a Sri Lankan newspaper, said a senior colleague had subjected her to a campaign of sexual harassment before the chief editor forced him to resign. Another, Kavindya Thennakoon described how a senior colleague tried to kiss her against her will. Government spokesman and Minister of Mass Media, Keheliya Rambukwella said he had asked the Government Information Department to investigate and ensure women journalists could work in a safe environment.

WORLD'S COSTLIEST CITIES' INDEX Ashgabat tops Hong Kong

AFP, Paris
Turkmenistan's capital Ashgabat has overtaken Hong Kong as the world's most expensive city for foreign workers, a survey showed on Tuesday. Beirut jumped to third place in the 2021 Mercer survey from 45th a year earlier owing to a "severe and extensive economic depression" resulting from multiple crises, including the country's financial trouble, Covid-19 and a deadly blast in the Lebanese port. Ashgabat rose from second in the previous survey to the first spot due to "high local inflation", Mercer France global mobility practice leader Jean-Philippe Sarra told AFP. Turkmenistan is almost wholly dependent on natural gas exports and has struggled to recover from



the global energy price slump in 2014 that battered the local manat currency and plunged many citizens into poverty. Despite the long-running economic crisis, authorities broke ground on a major expansion of Ashgabat in May, with autocrat leader Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov pledging to turn it into "one of the most prosperous cities in the world". While Hong Kong, with its

notoriously expensive housing, dropped to second place, Tokyo also fell one spot to fourth. Zurich dropped to fifth and is among three Swiss cities in the top 10 along with Geneva (8) and Bern (10). Two other Chinese cities are among the most expensive in the world for expatriates: Shanghai climbed one spot to number six while Beijing rose to ninth. Singapore took seventh place. US cities fell in this year's ranking mostly because of currency fluctuations, according to Mercer. New York dropped eight spots but was the most expensive in the country at number 14. The world's least expensive city for foreign employees is Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek at 209, according to the survey.

BAW 16 SEATS LIGHT BUS 2019 MODEL
Office/ School/ Other Commercial Transportation

Official design from TOYOTA Motor Co. Japan, Engine 2.7 Gasoline / Petrol, G4BA/3RZ Toyota EFI Engine Luxurious Interior with many features.

INTEGRATED BUSINESS CORPORATION
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Hotline: 01711 523280, 01796 258463
www.facebook.com/BAW-BD, email: intgbizco@gmail.com