

MUSTREAD

5 killed in southern Peru fire

Lima: At least five people, including three children, lost their lives in a large fire that broke out Monday night in a community in the southern Peruvian region of Arequipa, local authorities said Tuesday. The fire started around 11:00 p.m. local time Monday (0400 GMT Tuesday) in the Carlos Portocarrero Dongo settlement in Secocha, Camana province. It was brought under control by early Tuesday morning, leaving at least 10 homes damaged and over 100 people homeless. Jose Barrezueta, head of the Regional Emergency Operations Center of Arequipa, told the private broadcaster Radio Programas del Peru that five fatalities had been confirmed so far. "Another person injured in the fire is being treated at a local hospital," according to the National Emergency Operations Center.

China adds 7 U.S. companies to unreliable entity list

Beijing: China's Ministry of Commerce (MOC) said Tuesday that seven U.S. companies have been added to the unreliable entity list for selling arms to China's Taiwan region. The decision was made by the unreliable entity list work mechanism in accordance with laws and regulations, the ministry said, adding that a series of restrictive measures targeting these U.S. companies have also been unveiled. The companies in question are Inter-Coastal Electronics, System Studies & Simulation, Iron-Mountain Solutions, Applied Technologies Group, Axiem, Anduril Industries and Maritime Tactical Systems. They are prohibited from engaging in China-related import or export activities, and from making new investments within China, according to the MOC.

Japanese encephalitis warning issued in Australian state

Sydney: Health authorities in the Australian state of Victoria have advised people to be cautious of mosquitoes after detecting cases of Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV). The Department of Health in Victoria, Australia's second-most populous state, on Wednesday said that its early warning program identified JEV in two mosquito traps in the state's north, marking the first detections of the potentially deadly disease in the current summer. In response to the detections, the department warned tourists and locals in northern Victoria to be vigilant against mosquito bites. JEV is a type of flavivirus related to dengue and yellow fever. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one in 250 human infections result in severe clinical illness.

Pakistani military kills 4 terrorists in northwest

Islamabad: Pakistani security forces killed four terrorists during an intelligence-based operation in the North Waziristan district of northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, according to a statement released by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Wednesday. The ISPR, the media wing of Pakistan Army, said that the operation was launched late Tuesday night following credible intelligence reports about the presence of terrorists in the Spinwam area of the district. "During the conduct of the operation, our troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location. After an intense exchange of fire, four terrorists were killed," said the ISPR. Security forces also recovered weapons and ammunition from the killed terrorists, said the military, adding that the slain individuals had been actively involved in numerous terrorist activities, including attacks on security forces and targeted killing of innocent civilians.

Indonesia to prevent housing developments on rice paddies

Jakarta: The Indonesian government is planning to prohibit developers from building houses on rice paddies across the archipelago, said a senior official at the Public Housing and Settlements Ministry. "The president has banned us from using rice fields to build housing," the ministry's deputy minister Fahri Hamzah said in a seminar here on Tuesday. He also called on developers not to interfere with President Prabowo Subianto's vision for food self-sufficiency.

Death toll rises to 22 in jade mine collapse



Yangon (UNI)

A total of 22 bodies have been recovered as of Tuesday from the collapse of a jade mine in northern Myanmar's Kachin state, a police official told Xinhua on Wednesday. Thirteen bodies were recovered on Jan. 13, and nine more bodies were found on Jan 14, the police official said, adding that rescue efforts were ongoing on Wednesday.

The fatal accident occurred on Monday after a mud pond in the mining area in Hpakant township collapsed. A total of 57 houses were also buried under the earth due to the accident, the official said.

Nearly 2 mln children in Cambodia live in areas with high climate risk: Report



Phnom Penh (UNI)

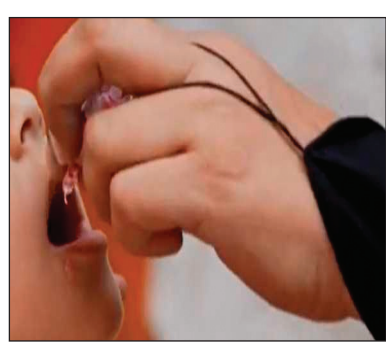
Nearly two million children lived in areas with a high or very high climate risk, primarily in rural areas, said a report launched on Tuesday. Titled the Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI), the report found that about one-third of children in Cambodia faced high exposure to drought conditions, and over half of children are highly exposed to heat, vector-borne diseases, and high wind speeds.

It added that nearly half of the children in the Southeast Asian country are vulnerable to riverine floods, and half of the children in the kingdom are highly exposed to levels of air pollution that exceed World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines. The report said Cambodia ranks among the top third of countries where children are at high risk from climate and environmental hazards. Cambodian Minister of Environment Eang Sophalleth said the CCRI was crucial in providing additional roadmaps for the Ministry of Environment and other relevant ministries and institutions to prioritize actions that consider the well-being and protection of the most vulnerable children.

High tech equipment including Exoskeleton and Robot Dog deployed in PLA drills

Beijing: Various intelligent technologies, including exoskeleton, robot dog and drone in combination with high-power lasers were utilized in recent drills conducted by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). In a recent logistics support exercise organized by a regiment under the PLA Xinjiang Military Command in an undisclosed plateau region, the regiment employed a manned-unmanned collaborative model to enhance combat unit support, the PLA Army said in a release posted on its official WeChat account on Monday. Faced with terrain obstacles that hindered the convoy's advance, the troops used all-terrain vehicles and unmanned vehicles to push forward mission.

Pakistan reports 71 polio cases in 2024



Islamabad (UNI)

Pakistan has reported 71 cases of wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) in 2024, the National Institute of Health (NIH) said on Tuesday. The 71st case was confirmed on Tuesday and involved a boy from Jacobabad district in the country's southern Sindh province, with symptoms first appearing on Dec. 27, 2024, the Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the NIH said.

The institute said that the distribution of cases includes 27 from Balochistan, 21 each from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, and one each from Punjab and Islamabad. The Pakistan Polio Eradication Program has intensified its efforts to combat the resurgence of WPV1. According to the NIH, the program conducts multiple vaccination drives annually, delivering vaccines directly to households. To bolster these efforts, Pakistan will launch its first nationwide polio vaccination campaign of 2025 from Feb. 3 to Feb. 9, the NIH said, urging parents to ensure that all children under five receive the vaccine during the campaign.

Strike action causes major disruption to Sydney trains

Sydney (UNI)

Hundreds of train services across Sydney, the capital city of Australia's state of New South Wales (NSW), have been delayed or cancelled as workers struck on Wednesday. Commuters into the city were told to expect major delays on Wednesday as work bans put in place by the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) and Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) took effect. Australia's 9News network reported that 200 train services had been cancelled across the network by 8 a.m. local time while hundreds more trains were delayed. Every line has been impacted by the disruption, with waits of almost 50 minutes between trains at some stations. The work bans represented an escalation in a long-running pay dispute between the combined rail unions and the NSW state government. The RTBU has asked for a 32-percent pay increase over four years for Sydney Trains employees.



During negotiations on Tuesday, the government offered a 15-percent pay rise over four years and gave the union until Thursday to respond to the proposal. Under the work bans, train drivers have reduced speeds by 23 km per hour on sections of track where trains can usually travel faster than 80 km per hour. "We always try and do things that ensure that people can still get from A to B, but have at least some impact to open the government's eyes up," RTBU secretary Toby Warnes told Australian Broadcasting Corporation radio. Additionally, the ETU refused to carry out critical maintenance work overnight. Sydney Trains chief executive Matt Longland said that the lack of maintenance work had caused the worst of the delays. Government agency Transport for NSW said that some buses were being organized to replace trains but asked commuters to avoid travel and stay home if possible.

82 miners rescued, 36 dead in South Africa mine operation

Johannesburg: A total of 118 illegal miners were brought to the surface during rescue operations at an abandoned gold mine on Monday and Tuesday in Stilfontein in South Africa's North West Province, with 36 confirmed dead, according to the police. As rescue operations entered the second day, "a total of 118 illegal miners have been extracted as of 4:00 p.m. (1400 GMT) on Tuesday," said South African Police Service national spokesperson Athlenda Mathe.



Mathe said that the first day of operations, which began on Monday, saw 35 illegal miners rescued, with nine confirmed dead. And on the second day, "a total of 83 illegal miners have been extracted: 56 alive and 27 certified dead." "All 82 individuals arrested are facing charges of illegal mining, trespassing and contravention of the Immigration Act," she said. Also on Tuesday, South African Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources Gwede Mantashe and Police Minister Senzo Mchunu visited the mine to assess the progress of the rescue operations. Mantashe described the situation in Stilfontein as criminal, calling it "an attack by foreigners." The crisis at Stilfontein has been ongoing for months, with more than 1,500 illegal miners surfacing so far. In late 2024, at least eight bodies were retrieved. Many of the illegal miners are believed to be from neighboring countries.

Slovak PM Fico not to visit Kiev: Deputy house speaker

Bratislava: Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico doesn't plan to visit Kiev to discuss the halt in Russian gas transit through Ukraine, Deputy Speaker of the Slovak National Council Tibor Gaspar said on Tuesday. Gaspar, who is visiting Moscow with a Slovak parliamentary delegation, told the News Agency of the Slovak Republic that a meeting in the Ukrainian capital will probably not take place due to security concerns for the Slovak prime minister. Fico proposed on Monday holding talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to discuss gas transit through Ukraine which was halted recently. In an open letter posted on social media, Fico extended the invitation to Zelensky for a joint meeting on Slovak territory near the border between Slovakia and Ukraine "preferably as soon as possible."

Bangladesh: Consignment of 2,450 tons of Indian rice arrives at Darshana Port

Dhaka (UNI)

A consignment of 2,450 tons of rice imported from India has arrived in Bangladesh via Chaudanga's Darshana Land Port. The rice, transported by rail, arrived at the Darshana port yard around 9pm on Tuesday in 42 wagons from India's Gede Port, authorities said, the Daily Star reported on Wednesday. Atiar Rahman Habu, general secretary of the C&F Agents Association at Darshana Port, said the rice has been imported by M/S Majumdar Agrotech International Limited of Dhaka's Purana Paltan. The invoice price for each ton of rice is \$490. The rice was exported by Saubhik Export Limited, located in Kolkata. According to reports, Mirza Kamrul Haque, manager of the Darshana International Railway Station, informed that after customs inspection and clearance, the rice will be booked for delivery to Ishwardi and Sirajganj. From there, it will be transported by truck to the importer. Bangladesh will import a total of 159,000 tons of rice from India and this has been the first shipment arriving through Darshana Port, the report added.



6 Palestinians killed in Israeli airstrike in West Bank

Ramallah: At least six Palestinians were killed and several others injured in an Israeli airstrike targeting the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank, the Palestinian Ministry of Health announced on Tuesday. In a press statement, the ministry said that six bodies were brought to Jenin Governmental Hospital following the Israeli strike on the camp. The identities of the deceased have not yet been identified. Meanwhile, Israeli army spokesperson Avichay Adraee said in a statement, "In a joint operation by the Israel Defence Forces and the Shin Bet, an Air Force drone recently targeted a site in the Jenin area," without providing further details. Local Palestinian sources reported that an Israeli drone struck one of the neighborhoods in the camp with three missiles.

South Korean Prez Yoon Suk arrested by anti-corruption investigators



Seoul (UNI) South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has been arrested for questioning, according to the country's anti-corruption agency, in the latest chapter of a weeklong political saga that began with the embattled president's shock martial law decree last month. Yoon left his residential compound with investigators in a motorcade Wednesday morning and was taken into custody – the first time such an action has been taken against a sitting president in South Korea, CNN reported. Yoon is wanted for questioning in multiple investigations related to his short-lived declaration, including over accusations of leading an insurrection – a crime punishable by life imprisonment or even the death penalty. The embattled president has been holed up in his fortified residence for weeks surrounded by his Presidential Security Service team, evading arrest as he faces several probes and an impeachment trial, according to a CNN report.

Russia downs 14 ATACMS, storm shadow missiles

Moscow: Russia's Zapad Battle-group has eliminated up to 600 Ukrainian soldiers and taken control of the settlement of Terny in the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), the Russian Defence Ministry said on Tuesday. "The enemy's losses amounted to up to 600 soldiers, a tank, eight armored fighting vehicles, including two US-made M113s and a Turkish-made Kirpi, 13 motor vehicles and five artillery pieces, including two produced by NATO countries. Three ammunition depots and four electronic warfare stations were destroyed," the statement read, adding that the group has taken control of the settlement of Terny in the DPR. The Corruption Investigation Office (CIO), which is working with police and the defense ministry to investigate Yoon, first attempted to detain him earlier this month, but it failed after an hours-long showdown in which soldiers and members of the presidential security detail blocked some 80 police and investigators from approaching the presidential compound.

getting vital targets in Tel Aviv city with several bomb-laden drones. He vowed that his group's attacks against Israel "will not stop until Israel stops war in Gaza and lifts its siege." The attacks against the power station in Eilat and targets in Tel Aviv came a few hours after the Houthi group took responsibility for launching a ballistic rocket attack against the Israeli Defence Ministry. Earlier in the day, Israeli media said the Houthi rocket attack was intercepted by the Israeli air defence system. Since November 2023, the Houthi group has been carrying out rocket and drone attacks on Israel and disrupting "Israeli-linked" shipping in the Red Sea in solidarity with Palestinians amid their ongoing conflict with Israelis.

Yemen: Houthis claim missile attack on power plant in Israel



Sanaa (UNI)

Yemen's Houthi group said in a statement on Tuesday that it targeted a power plant in the southern Israeli port city of Eilat, using a "winged missile." "The attack achieved its goal successfully," Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Sarea said in the statement aired by Houthi-run al-Masirah TV. Also, Sarea said his group carried out another attack against Israel, targeting vital targets in Tel Aviv city with several bomb-laden drones. He vowed that his group's attacks against Israel "will not stop until Israel stops war in Gaza and lifts its siege." The attacks against the power station in Eilat and targets in Tel Aviv came a few hours after the Houthi group took responsibility for launching a ballistic rocket attack against the Israeli Defence Ministry. Earlier in the day, Israeli media said the Houthi rocket attack was intercepted by the Israeli air defence system. Since November 2023, the Houthi group has been carrying out rocket and drone attacks on Israel and disrupting "Israeli-linked" shipping in the Red Sea in solidarity with Palestinians amid their ongoing conflict with Israelis.

Eight killed in suspected Marburg virus disease outbreak in Tanzania: WHO

Dar es Salaam: Eight people have been killed in a suspected outbreak of Marburg virus disease in Tanzania's north-western region of Kagera, the World Health Organization (WHO) has said. In a statement Tuesday, the WHO warned that the risk of further spread of the deadly disease in the country and the region is high. The Tanzanian government has not yet commented on the WHO statement. The United Nations health agency said it had informed its member states on Monday of an outbreak of suspected Marburg virus disease in Tanzania's Kagera Region. "We are aware of nine cases so far, including eight people who have died. We would expect further cases in coming days as disease surveillance improves," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a post on social media.