



UN sends aid for drought in Africa

Nearly \$1.4 billion will go toward helping people in the Horn of Africa, the United Nations (UN, a group of 193 nations working for peace and cooperation) said. The aid comes in response to the region's worst drought in nearly 40 years. Up to 20 million people in the region are at risk of famine (extreme lack of food), according to a report released by the World Food Program on May 11.

Below-average rainfall has led to the drought and affected the countries of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia the most. Households that raise crops or animals have been hardest hit. The situation has been made worse by the war in Ukraine, which has raised the price of essentials such as fuel and fertilizer around the world.

The UN funding will be used for urgent food, cash, and medical care, but unless the drought ends, more money will be required in the near future. "We must all step up," said UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths. "There is no place for famine in the 21st century."



Handing out meals in Ethiopia



DID YOU KNOW?
Finland's population is about 5.5 million people, and Sweden's is about 10.4 million people.

Finland's Prime Minister Sanna Marin, left, and Sweden's Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson

Two nations move to end neutrality

On May 15, Finland and Sweden said they will apply for membership to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, a military alliance of 30 countries, mostly in Europe) to protect themselves from Russian aggression. The move comes as Russia's war in Ukraine enters its third month.

Finland is located between Sweden and Russia, and the countries have a complex history. Both Sweden and Russia have controlled Finland at different points in time. Finland became independent in 1917, but Russia attacked it in 1939 and took land that it still holds today.

NATO was created in 1949 to prevent this kind of move. At the time, Russia was part of the Soviet Union (USSR, a group of 15 countries that were run as one state, with Moscow, in Russia, as the capital). NATO's purpose was to prevent

the USSR from getting too powerful. Finland and Sweden have never sided with NATO or the USSR, however. Finland has not wanted to strain relations with Russia, and Sweden has remained neutral in European conflicts for more than 200 years.

The leaders of the two nations began to rethink their positions after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Many citizens agree with the idea of joining NATO. In Finland, public support for joining has jumped from about 30% to almost 80%.

NATO's 30 member countries must all vote to accept Finland and Sweden, which could take up to a year. Russia, which sees NATO as a threat, reacted angrily to the news. "Finland and Sweden...become part of the enemy and they bear all the risks," said Dmitry Polyanskiy, a Russian representative to the United Nations.



IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

FINDING A FURREVER HOME

PetSmart Charities has marked its 10 millionth pet adoption. The lucky pet was Balto, a Siberian husky, who went home with Vanessa and Ezri De La Rosa and their kids from an adoption event in Texas. "He is a 1-in-10-million dog!" Vanessa said.



Balto and his new family



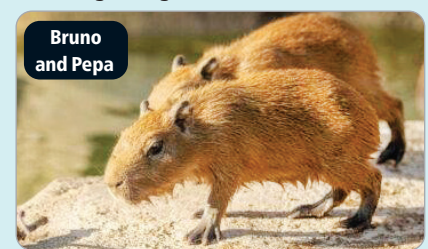
Lhakpa Sherpa

RECORD HEIGHTS

As a young woman in Nepal, Lhakpa Sherpa set out to become a mountaineer even though she was told it was a man's job. On May 12, at age 48, she became the first woman to climb to the top of Mount Everest, the world's tallest peak, 10 times. "I will never give up," she said.

TALKING ABOUT BRUNO

The Houston Zoo has given clever names to two newborn capybaras, giant rodents native to Central and South America. The pups were named Bruno and Pepa after characters from the award-winning film *Encanto*, which takes place in Colombia. A birth announcement said the siblings brought "double the cuteness."



Bruno and Pepa