



ENERGY

France, Germany to provide each other with gas, electricity, to weather crisis: France offered to send gas to Germany in exchange for electricity, according to a statement by Macron on Monday after a phone call with Scholz. This announcement comes as a showcase of European solidarity in response to the current energy crisis. Moreover, the European Commission has avoided openly supporting the construction of the MidCat gas pipeline, backed by Spain and Germany but rejected by France, noting that its future depends on the discussions between the states involved.

HEALTH

Push for fairer pharma rules hits brick wall of business interests: The EU's quality-control panel has rejected a proposal to level access to medicines across the EU over concerns that the cost to the pharmaceutical industry could be excessive. The goal of the delayed policy is to help eastern members like Romania, where patients typically have to wait more than two years before medicine is reimbursed by the health system. The text now has to be fixed to satisfy the panel's objections.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Pakistan: EU helps coordinate incoming assistance for flood victims: The EU is coordinating aid offers to help the country face the ongoing emergency of extensive flooding, following the request of assistance from the Pakistani government. Aid includes family tents, mobile water pumps, kitchen and hygiene kits and a bailey bridge. The assistance comes on top of €2.15 million in EU humanitarian funding released over the past weeks and the activation of the EU's Copernicus satellite service for collecting data.

The chips are down: Putin scrambles for high-tech parts as his arsenal goes up in smoke: Six months into its invasion of Ukraine, Russia is being affected by a severe technology deficit inflicted by sanctions. To maintain its weaponry arsenal, Moscow needs to find a way to regain access to high-tech chips and other components, which are mostly made in the US, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Taiwan and Japan, among others. Hence, Ukraine is sending out international warnings not to fuel the Kremlin's war efforts.

ECONOMY

IMF: EU must balance the books, create a rainy-day fund: The EU needs deficit rules that force high-debt countries to balance their budgets within three to five years, according to the International Monetary Fund. The IMF calls for a rainy-day fund that can guard EU countries against sudden economic shocks, such as a pandemic, and help finance initiatives that fight climate change. EU Member States agree that the rules need reform, but there is division as to what needs to be done.

SECURITY & DEFENCE

EU countries are running out of weapons: Borrell has warned that EU countries' stocks of weapons are severely reduced after sending arms to Ukraine. The High Representative urges Member States to refill their arsenals as a Union, while an EU-level military training mission for Ukrainian troops and a better pooling of military equipment and resources have been discussed at an informal meeting of European defense ministers in Prague.