



Islamabad POST

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British PM Liz Truss announces resignation

Detailed News On Page-08

NATO blames Iran providing Russia drones

Detailed News On Page-07



Gauff makes history in WTA finals

Detailed News On Page-06



Launches Youth Initiatives

Ready to talk to anyone for country's sake

PM Shehbaz Sharif says Imran Khan and company destroyed economy. MS & PhD Scholarships for 25 Top-ranked Int'l Universities: Ahsan Iqbal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Thursday he was even ready to talk to PTI leadership in the larger interest of the country adding his sole aim was to turn Pakistan into develop country. The Prime Minister made these remarks while speaking on the launching youth initiatives. Federal Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal also spoke on the occasion. The Prime Minister added, Imran Khan during his tenure did a great damage to the country. He said when the coalition government came into being after departure of the PTI regime, the country was literally in a mess. The economy was in shatters. However the country was saved from default by the hard work of his economic team. Prime Minister Shahbaz

Sharif launched a number of special initiatives for youth, aiming at empowering country's young population. The five programmes include 75 MS and PhD Scholarships for 25 top-ranked international universities, 20,000 Internships for Young Engineers, 20 Under-Developed Districts Transformation Programme, 250 Mini Sports Complexes Initiatives and Pakistan Innovation Fund. Speaking at the occasion, the Prime Minister highlighted the crucial role of young people in the society and assured that his Government will continue to strengthen the initiatives for youth and will broaden its scope to benefit young generation across the country. "Increase in number of young population is a great opportunity for our nation, we only need to provide them with right skills and enabling environment." Addressing the youth, the

Prime Minister said that education is the biggest weapon that you need to excel in life. "I would like our young generation to promote tolerance in the society and stand out in their chosen fields. I assure you resources will follow when you have a clear vision, commitment for your cause and passion for hard work." He said that though situation caused by floods has caused great economic disturbance but still the Government will continue to put in more and more resources aimed at empowering our young minds. Earlier, in his welcome address, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Mr. Ahsan Iqbal said that no stone will be left unturned to make sure that Pakistani youth gets best possible chances to shine in their chosen fields and serves

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif offering dua after the inauguration of Initiatives by Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Innovative, HEC and PIDE.

Pak rejects malicious Indian campaign

ISLAMABAD: Responding to media questions on various news items published by Indian media ahead of FATF Plenary meeting, the Spokesperson stated, "We categorically reject the orchestrated malevolent campaign against Pakistan by Indian media ahead of the FATF Plenary meeting. This is not the first time the Indian media has been fed through official leaks to promote misleading, baseless and fabricated propaganda against Pakistan, just before the official FATF meetings. The FATF and the wider international community has repeatedly acknowledged the steps taken by Pakistan to improve its AML/CFT regime. Despite India's feverish attempts to politicize the process and cast doubts on Pakistan's efforts and accomplishments, FATF agreed in its June 2022 Plenary meeting that Pakistan had fully completed all substantive and procedural requirements of both its 2018 and 2021 Action Plans.—DNA

Tosha Khana case verdict today

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan will today (Friday) announce verdict of Tosha Khana case against former prime minister and PTI chairman Imran Khan. On September 20, the ECP had reserved its verdict in the Toshakhana case moved by Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), seeking disqualification of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan for alleged foul play related to Toshakhana gifts.

Azadi march a 'jihad to get real freedom'

Imran says we do not need enemies when looters are in power

STAFF REPORT

SARGODHA: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan on Thursday dubbed the long march as 'jihad' to get actual freedom, saying that he will announce the long march within a few days. Addressing an event at the University of Sargodha, the former premier berated Punjab Governor Baligh ur Rehman and said, "Who gave him the permission to stop the political leaders from addressing the students. I ask the Punjab governor to not follow the advice of the rulers as the students are the future of the country".

At the outset of his speech, the former premier [Imran] said, "On three occasions, I had an opportunity to address the students of Oxford University. How could students become politically enlightened if leaders were not permitted to speak at the university? This is the place even for the PDM chief and JUI-F supremo, Maulana Fazl ur Rehman to come, but if the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will make his way to the university, then he will ask for the money." Taking a dig at Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the PTI chairman said that he [Bilawal] gives contradictory statements. "Some of the politicians come into power by first pretending that they think about the masses and after that, they plunder the nation's wealth", said the PTI chief. Recalling his take on society's decline, the PTI chief said that when the principles of honesty and truth are ignored, then this leads to

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SC rejects plea to bar PTI's long march

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Thursday rejected the government's plea to issue an interim order against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan to bar him from holding the long march and directed the government to tackle the same in accordance with the law. A five-member larger bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi and Justice Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi heard the Federal Government's contempt of court petition against PTI chairman for violating its May 25 order wherein the party was restricted from holding its "Azadi March" near Peshawar Mor, Islamabad. During the proceedings, the chief justice quoted the government's stance that Imran Khan had violated his earlier assurance given to the court and his party was again planning a long march and sit-in in the capital. Still there were only speeches, and the government could deal with the situation in accordance with the law and take action in urban areas where there were threats, he added. The CJP said the law enforcement agencies had submitted their separate reports on the court's previous order. Some 31 civilians were injured in the clash on May 25, while Imran Khan announced to end the long march the next morning. He said there was no crowd at present, however, the government might approach the court if there was a crowd of people (in Islamabad).

Briefs

President wants relief for flood victims

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has stressed the need for the government, public representatives, NGOs and other stakeholders to complement each other's efforts in providing relief to the flood victims.

Talking to President of Islamic Relief USA Muhammad Anwar Khan Country Director of Islamic Relief Pakistan Asif Ali Sherazi and Advocacy Specialist at Islamic Relief Pakistan Raza Hussain Qazi in Islamabad today, he appreciated the program launched by Islamic Relief International in Pakistan to empower the widows by imparting them with skills.

Mariyum in Turkiye to attend OIC moot

DNA

ISTANBUL: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb has arrived in Turkiye to participate in the 12th Conference of the Information Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) being held here on October 21-22. Mariyum will represent Pakistan at the conference which will be focusing on the OIC's role in different areas of information sector, said a news release on Thursday. Secretary General of the OIC Houssein Ibrahim Taha will address the inaugural session of the conference titled "Combating Disinformation and Islamophobia in the Post-Truth Era".

Belgian envoy grieved over losses by floods

Army Chief meets Ambassadors of Belgium and UAE separately



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa has said that Pakistan values the United Arab Emirates' role in global and regional affairs, the military said in a statement. "We look forward to enhance our bilateral relationship," the army chief said during a meeting with the Ambassador of UAE Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Alzaabi at the GHQ in Rawalpindi on Thursday. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), matters of mutual interest, bilateral defence and security cooperation and regional security situation came under

discussion during the meeting. "We look forward to enhance our bilateral relationship," Gen Bajwa was quoted as saying by the ISPR. Both sides agreed to further enhance cordial relations and enduring strategic partnership, it further said. The official statement also said that the visiting dignitary expressed his grief over the devastation caused by floods in Pakistan, offered sincere condolence to families of victims and hoped for early rehabilitation of affectees. The COAS appreciated

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Euro village fun gala on Saturday at PNCA

All European missions to set up stalls; people invited to take part in the festivities; live music to add color to the event

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Living up to its traditions the European Union has decided to hold the Euro Village family gala on Saturday October 29, 2022 at the National Art Gallery. The event will start at 3 pm. According to details all the European countries shall organize stalls featuring products of their respective countries. The last such activity was done before the Covid pandemic, which had drawn huge interest from the general public. Heads of various countries have already recorded their messages and released them on their Twitter handles. The diplomats told this newspaper that the purpose of the activity is to provide Islamabad people with an opportunity



Alfred Grannas, Ambassador of Germany

of not only enjoying the European cuisines but also to enable people to inter-



Ms. Irena, Ambassador of Bulgaria

act with foreigners. The Ambassador of Bulgaria in her message invited the



Riina Kionka, Ambassador of European Union

people to come to the Euro village and enjoy the unique fragrance of Bulgaria

flowers. The German ambassador also issued a statement on Twitter in which he also invited people to take part in the Euro Village festivities. He said this year 166 Pakistani students will go to Europe to pursue higher studies under the Erasmus program. Dr. Riina Kionka, the Ambassador of the European Union also posted her message on Twitter. She said people should come with their families to enjoy an event packed with fun and thrill. She said we are celebrating 60 years of relationship with Pakistan. The concept of Euro Village is unique in the sense that it puts together all countries under one roof. The first Euro Village was organized in 2017 in Lok Virsa, however the venue then was shifted to the PNCA for future events since the PNCA provides with a wide space as compared with Lok Virsa.

Encroachments in Attock go unchecked

QAZI SHOAB KHAN

ATTOCK: The mushrooming growth of encroachments along the National Highways at GT road Gondal Mandi Attock left unchecked causing hurdles in vehicular flow on the Punjab- KPK inter provincial route besides colossal loss to the national exchequer. While, the law enforcement authorities kept mum despite repeated directives of the Federal and Provincial Governments to deal with these encroachments on state lands with iron hands irrespective of their political affiliation. The socio-political circles of the locality told this scribe that all relevant authorities are fully aware that in pursuance of orders 2018 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of Pakistan, active campaign against the encroachments was launched by the district management of Attock to get the state lands vacated from the clutches of the influential land grabbers throughout the district in line with the other parts of the country. But, with grave concern the encroachers along the National Highways at GT road Gondal Mandi Attock left unchecked causing hurdles in vehicular flow on the Punjab- KPK inter provincial route besides colossal loss to the national exchequer being genuine issues of public importance. They further said that the Gondal Man-

di being a trade hub having population of more than 10 thousands is also a focal inter-linked point with more than 84 villages of Tehsil Hazro and Attock is situated along the inter provincial bordering route of the KPK-Punjab contributing more than Rs.200 millions per annum to the budget. Unfortunately, the state land within the prescribed limits of National Highways Authority is being frequently grabbed by the "Qabza Mafia" for unlawful and authorized construction of plazas, filling stations, car washing service decks, restaurants, tea stalls, shops, car parkings, adjacent with the Graveyard, Rural Health Centre, Cattle lock up, Govt Boys School, Police Chowki, Service road, up to Nallah Chail Bridge with the blessings of their abettors. The flow of traffic usually remains blocked specially during the weekly cattle market on every Monday whereas the mobile squad of local police and motor police on duty seems helpless due to mushrooming growth of encroachments. Even, the Bus Bays and foot paths of both sides are occupied by the illegal parking of public transports causing public nuisance besides fatal accidents of the senior citizens, women, children and general public at large. On the other hands, life threats of Dengue virus are also hovering on the drainage system near foot path of Bus

Bay choked by the encroachers leading towards Nallah Chail resulting the redundant raining water spread over the link roads of the main National Highways. The socio-political figure of the area Qazi BadarManzur while highlighting the salient features of the menace told that the encroachments in this area reached at the alarming situation within a few months with the connivance of an influential racket while the situation was also reported to all the relevant authorities through written, media, and other forums but nothing could be heard till to date with the obvious reasons. The socio-political and general public of the area demanded of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chief Minister of the Punjab and other helm of affairs of the country with the humble request to kindly look into the consideration the entire agonized situation besides taking strict action against the delinquents posing life threats to common people as and financial loss to the national exchequer since long in particular. While, getting the updated version of National High Authority, the dealing officer NHA Rawalpindi Raja Obaid replied that letters were written to the District Administration Attock to expedite the demarcation process before initiating a joint anti-encroachment operation without further loss of time, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Adviser on Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan addressing on the occasion of Judicial Conference on Thursday. DNA

Incumbent govt raises Kashmir dispute at all global appropriate forums

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira said that the current government had raised the Kashmir dispute in every forum in a vigorous manner. He said this while addressing "Judicial Consultative Conference on Kashmir issue - The current situation in IIOJK - Legal options and way forward" organized by the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan at Kashmir Council Secretariat on Thursday. Qamar Zaman Kaira said that conflict might delay the solution of Kashmir but could not keep the Kashmiris subdued for long time. He said that the purpose of the Judicial Consultative Conference on the Kashmir

dispute was to obtain legal guidance on the case of Kashmiris as the division of Kashmir remained an incomplete agenda of the sub-continent. He said Pakistan was determined to resolve the Kashmir dispute but India continued to refuse to implement the resolutions of the United Nations. He said India was trying to divert attention from the United Nations resolutions and the UN Convention. The recent amendments were another attempt to change the proportion of the population there to non-state residents, he added. He said the right to vote was being given to Indian nationals and India was taking the lead from Israel's experience in Palestine. He said that the suggestions in Kashmir had kept

this issue alive with their sacrifices. He said that the entire nation stood with Kashmiris. He said that Pakistan People's Party was founded on the issue of Kashmir, freedom of Kashmir was, is and will remain our ultimate goal. Wherever Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari go they raise the Kashmir issue with world leaders, he added. He said that earlier the political leadership of Azad Kashmir was invited in which the current and former presidents and prime ministers were consulted. Now, for a legal opinion on it ex-judges and senior lawyers have been invited to further improve our understanding on this issue. He said the suggestions coming from this con-

ference will be forwarded to the Foreign Office and other circles. He said that there was a need for dialogue in educational institutions and awareness among the youth about this major issue. He said that various steps were being taken to establish a Kashmir desk in the universities. It is our responsibility to make the next generation aware of the sensitivity of the Kashmir conflict, he added. Former Chief Justice of Azad Kashmir Syed Manzoor Gilani said that the Kashmir issue could only be resolved diplomatically and for that political stability in Pakistan was necessary. Ex. Chief Justice Azam Khan said that the special status of Kashmir was abolished by the amendment of Article 370 which was condemnable.

Abaid new SG PRCS

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Abaid Ullah Khan has been notified as Acting Secretary General, Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS). He has formally taken the charge of his office. Muhammad Abaid Ullah Khan has been managing and supervising all the operations of PRCS as Joint Director Operations for the last 6 years. He is the senior most and highly experienced professional in PRCS National Headquarters, having more than 20 years of affiliation with the National Society. He has been through all the headways of the organization. His areas of expertise revolve around Disaster Management, Project Management, Capacity Building, Youth and Volunteers Management and stakeholders' coordination. He also has a vast experience of international and national field deployments. —APP

SCCI for strengthening of Pakistan-Iran trade

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: President, Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Muhammad Ishaq underlined the importance of signing free trade agreement to further strengthen bilateral economic and trade relations between Pakistan and Iran. Islamabad and Tehran should take pragmatic steps to rationalize tariff regime to improve the current mutual trade volume between the two brotherly Islamic countries, SCCI chief stressed while talking to Mr Hamid Reza Ghomi, Iranian Consul General in Peshawar during a meeting here at the chamber's house on Thursday. The meeting was attended by the chamber's senior vice president Shahid Hussain, vice president Ejaz Khan Afridi, First consul/Commercial Attaché Iranian Consulate Peshawar Hossein Maliki, and other

relevant officials of the Iranian consulate Peshawar. Muhammad Ishaq said there is vast opportunities to enhance mutual economic cooperation between Pakistan and Iran. In order to take benefits from these trade avenues, the SCCI chief stressed both countries should take initiatives to bring close business communities to each other by holding joint trade expos, Business to Business meetings, promotion of barter trade and easy access to manufacturing products of the both countries in local markets. Hamid Reza Ghomi congratulated the newly cabinet of SCCI, saying that his country is taking serious steps to further strengthen economic and trade relations with Pakistan, and holding a business meeting/program in Karachi and Lahore is a part of these efforts. The diplomat disclosed that a memorandum of understanding (MoU) would be soon signed between

Mashhad Chamber and Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which could be cooperative to enhance mutual trade relations between the two brotherly Islamic countries. Iran has finalized a free trade policy for Pakistan, which would be implemented very shortly, Mr Ghomi revealed. He said Iran-Pak bilateral relations would be further boosted up in an effluent manner under the policy. The diplomat went on to say that participation of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry in business meeting/program that were scheduled in Karachi and Lahore is very important and expressed desire the proposed MoU between Mashhad Chamber and SCCI would be signed in these meetings, which significance is very high, as new chapter of mutual trade between Iran and Pakistan will be opened through them.

Zong honors its workers who helped flood victims

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's leading mobile telecommunications network, held an event on October 20th, 2022 at its headquarters to demonstrate the network's excellence during recent times and to honor those who made significant contributions towards fulfilling this agenda. More than one-third of the nation has been impacted by the recent floods. The country's telecommunications industry has also suffered as the dire consequences of flood. This is on top of the industry's already vulnerable position in relation to the country's



broader macroeconomic status. Floods in Pakistan disrupted over 12% of CMPAK's network. As a result, the company has spent most of the last few months working fervently

to ensure that its customers have continuous connectivity. Zong realizes its customers' critical need to stay connected with their family and loved ones during such

uncertain times. Therefore, despite operating in difficult, often dangerous, flood-stricken locations, Zong's network crew has worked tirelessly to ensure that zong's customers continue to enjoy world-class network services. Incredible teamwork has always been at the heart of Zong's network team, and this has been proved in recent days. While a section of Zong's technical network team was involved in network restoration activities on the ground, another part of the team was dedicated to continuously enhancing the quality of the network to make it the best.

PUC urges SC to review verdict of Jatoi's acquittal

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ulama Council (PUC) Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has appealed to the Supreme Court to review its decision acquitting Shahruckh Jatoi from the murder case. He held this particular case, which was initiated when a young-twenty old Shahzeb Khan was gunned down a decade ago in Karachi, pertained to 'corruption on earth' and 'might is right'. Ashrafi who is also the Prime Minister's Special Representative for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East, in an appeal on his Twitter handle, said the decision in this particular case was generating a negative impression in the society that the law could not take its course against any powerful. —APP

Efforts for emerging technologies' peaceful use necessary

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Muhammad Zahid Mahmood on Thursday said it was necessary for the nations to work for peaceful use of emerging technologies and international legislation ensuring betterment of mankind rather than destruction of humanity. Addressing the concluding session of Centre for Aerospace and Strategic Studies (CASS) flagship Global Strategic Threat and Response (GSTAR) 2022 international conference on 'Evolving Global Order: Challenges and Opportunities' as guest of honour, the Vice Chief of Air Staff said the international moot would help create awareness among all the facets of societies especially the practitioners on geoeconomics in national security calculus. Air Marshal Zahid Mahmood said unfortunately the world organisations had never contained the fast developing space warfare capabilities that caused power imbalances as the prevailing global order did not support efforts to stop any nation its pursuits. He added that the GSTAR 2022 depicted that geoeconomics held a key role in the

geostrategic calculus and helped cover many nuances that remained under the snow of geoeconomics. The PAF Vice Chief mentioned that the selective showing of the emerging technologies in conflicts owing to the military innovations was creating imbalance in the South Asia region. During the second day of the GSTAR 2022, the third working session was moderated by Director Emerging Technologies CASS, Air Marshal (R) M. Ashfaq Arain who was also advisor to the Chief of Air Staff on CASS Affairs. Advisor National Command Authority and Former Director General, Strategic Plans Division, Lieutenant General (R) Khalid A. Kidwai delivered his keynote address on Militarisation of Emerging Technologies: Implications on Strategic Stability in South Asia. He emphasised the fact that emergence of new technologies was not a new phenomenon but a constant historical fact which was likely to continue in the future as well. "A spectacular technology, when introduced in a weapon system, tends to affect stability for a while but soon a counter

technology or antidote is developed which acts to restore the stability." In the context of South Asia, Lt. General Kidwai said the West in its attempt to strengthen India as a counterweight to China was violating international rules and norms by arming and selectively sharing technologies with it which has put strategic stability in the region under stress. "India, on the other hand has always been careful to follow its interests rather than completely playing to one side." Lt. General Kidwai at the end reiterated that Pakistan like always would respond to restore stability in the region. Among the panelists, Senior Colonel Yang Jun from China discussed how future warfare could only be won by grasping the laws and characteristics of modern warfare, jumping out of the box of traditional thinking and stereotypes and taking into consideration systems, data and algorithms, exploring new operation concepts, designing new approaches to victory, strengthening the integration of war-fighting. —APP

Govt committed to support performing arts: Muqam

KARACHI, Oct 20 (APP): Adviser to Prime Minister for National Heritage and Culture Engineer Amir Muqam said that the government was keen to promote the education of performing arts in the country owing to its vast potential for career development. He was presiding over a meeting, held here at the National Academy of Performing Arts (NAPA), on Thursday to take an account of overall performance, future endeavors, and heard out the issues of the academy. The meeting was attended by Secretary of National Heritage and Culture Fareena Mazhar, veteran broadcaster and founder of NAPA Zia Mohiuddin, CEO NAPA Junaid Zubairi, officials of NHC division and others. The adviser said that PM Shehbaz Shareef led federal government believes in performance and was committed with the development and promotion of all the sectors of life via better service delivery by all the institutions. —APP

KP CM approves action, model of ease of doing business

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan approved the proposed action plan and model regarding implementation of the phase-II of the Ease of Doing Business initiative and directed that all pre-requisites and interventions be completed well in time to ensure timely launching of the project. He said that the basic objective of the project was to simplify and streamline the

overall business process as per contemporary needs in order to take advantage of the investment opportunities in various sectors. Addressing the 10th board meeting of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment & Trade (BOIT) here on Thursday, the Chief Minister expressed his satisfaction over the performance of the BOIT and said that the steps taken in the first phase of the Ease of Doing Business had yielded positive results in attracting investors and promoting industrial activities in the province. However, he added, that keeping in view the expectations of investors and to meet with the differential needs of industrialization in

the province, the immediate launching of the phase-II of Ease of Doing Business Project was of paramount importance for which all the necessary steps should be completed on a fast track basis. He directed for the capacity building and strengthening of PPP modes in the Tourism, Agriculture, Energy & Power and Mines & Minerals Departments by replicating PPP Mode of the P&D Department. He also directed them to constitute a committee for effective coordination among relevant provincial departments in addition to laying special focus on the marketing of reform initiatives taken by his government.

'ToshaKhana case exposed Imran Khan'

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik on Thursday said he was hopeful that law will prevail in ToshaKhana case against Imran Khan. The misdeclaration [if any] must be treated like the previous cases, he said while talking to a private news channel. Criticizing PTI's chief, the minister said ToshaKhana case exposed Imran Khan's contradictory behavior. "Imran Khan considered his every act as 'JAAIZ' but



charged on not withdraw imaginary salary from his son's company. He further added Imran Khan gifted \$250 million to Malik Riaz in return received 450 kanals land for Al-Qadir University Trust which was registered in the name of Imran Khan and his wife. Imran Khan during his regime waived off \$1 billion investment to be made by K-Electric in Dattang Coal Project through a deal for £300 million with Arif Naqvi, he said.

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**National
Days and
Armed
Forces Days****OCTOBER**

Oct 01 / China	National Day
Oct 01 / Cyprus	National Day
Oct 01 / Republic of Korea	Armed Forces Day
Oct 01 / Nigeria	Armed Forces Day
Sept 09 / DPR Korea	National Day
Oct 02 / Guinea	National Day
Oct 03 / Germany	Unification Day
Oct 03 / Republic of Korea	National Foundation Day
Oct 05 / Indonesia	Armed Forces Day
Oct 06 / Egypt	Armed Forces Day
Oct 09 / Uganda	Independence Day
Oct 12 / Spain	National Day
Oct 23 / Hungary	National Day
Oct 24 / UN	United Nations Day
Oct 25 / Romania	Armed Forces Day
Oct 26 / Austria	National Day
Oct 27 / Turkmenistan	Independence Day
Oct 28 / Czech Republic	National Day
Oct 29 / Turkey	Republic Day

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Monal.....	0334-5421812

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Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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**Islamabad
Metropolitan**

Corporation.....	9209224
Potohar Town.....	9209224
Rawal Town.....	5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
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Pakistan to further strengthen cooperation with Mauritius

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheik, President Federation of FPCCI said that the bilateral trade between the two countries was still far less than their actual potential

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Mauritius was keen to promote bilateral trade with Pakistan as both countries have good potential to do business in many areas. H.E. Rashidally Soobadar, High Commissioner of Mauritius while talking to Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheik President in a meeting at FPCCI Capital Office, Islamabad which was also attended by Mr. Umar Masood ur Rehman Vice President FPCCI, Sohail Altaf Group Leader Rawalpindi CCI, Riaz Khattak former VP FPCCI, Abdul Razaq Sheikh EC Member FPCCI, Saqib Rafiq President, Asad Mashadi Former President RCCI, Shokat Hayyat, President Rahimyar Khan Chamber and others at Capital Office, Islamabad. H.E. Rashidally Soobadar, said that Mauritius was importing many products from India and Chi-

na while Pakistan could promote its exports to his country by ensuring the high quality of its products and skilled human resources. He said both countries could also increase cooperation in the tourism sector to achieve mutually beneficial results. He said that Mauritius is a stepping-stone for Pakistan to enter into the markets of Southern and Eastern Africa and Pakistan should further strengthen its cooperation with Mauritius to get better access to African markets. He further said that The Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) was signed in 2007 between the two countries but no efforts were made to enhance the bilateral trade relations, but unfortunately, it was dumped. He assured that he would facilitate the Pakistani private sector for further enhancing bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Mauritius. The high commissioner said

that Mauritius wants to enhance trade relations with Pakistan. Business communities of both sides must interact with each other to boost trade volume between the two countries. "We would like to share the knowledge and expertise with the Pakistani business community", he added.

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheik, President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) said that the bilateral trade between the two countries was still far less than their actual potential. He stressed that both countries must encourage their private sectors to explore new avenues for improving trade volume. He said many Pakistani products including meat, fruits, food, textiles products, and others could find good markets in Mauritius at competitive prices and urged that Mauritius should focus on enhancing its imports from Pakistan. He

said both countries should make efforts to establish direct air links that would help in improving people-to-people contacts and bilateral trade as well. He said that Pakistan intends to have a more engaging and active relationship with all African countries. Mauritius is a gateway to African countries therefore; it offers huge opportunities to Pakistani businesspersons desirous of winning those markets. Mauritius has a huge scope for Pakistani products, especially textiles; cosmetics, cotton, cereals, pharmaceutical, and plastic, and these marvelous opportunities must be tapped.

Mr. Umar Masood Ur Rehman Vice President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) observed that Mauritius and Pakistan have longstanding historical relations while sharing almost the same tradition, culture and roots. He expressed

hope that, bilateral relations between the two countries will be further strengthened. VP FPCCI said that there is a huge scope for expansion in trade and the private sector has the responsibility to become front-runner in creating new avenues for establishing trade and investment relations. He said that sustainable efforts are required to give a quick boost to bilateral trade that is much below the respective potential of the two countries.

Speaking the occasion, Mr. Sohail Altaf, Riaz Khattak, Abdul Razaq Sheikh, Saqib Rafiq and Asad Mashadi shared their views that Pakistani products are the best in the world and have the potential to get a suitable share in the Mauritius market. It is need of the hour to strengthen bilateral trade relations through effective communication, connectivity between the two countries.



ISLAMABAD: Bela Fazekas, ambassador of Hungary to Pakistan calling on Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at Parliament House. —DNA

Committee on "cyber threats & challenges" to be formed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In response to President Dr Arif Alvi's letter to the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister's Office has directed the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (M/o IT&T) to constitute a high-level committee of experts headed by the Federal Minister for M/o IT&T to analyse the "Cyber Threats and Challenges" to the state institutions and submit its recommendations to Prime Minister's Office to proceed further in the matter. In his letter, the President had observed that this communication was in continuation of

his constant beseeching the opinion makers, decision-makers, politicians and strategists in Pakistan that "Cyber Power", being the effective deployment of cyber capabilities by a state to achieve its national objectives", was an important area where Pakistan needed to work hard and become a significant player.

The President emphasised that it was important for Pakistan to deliberate on how to develop and leverage its policy by adopting a multifactorial holistic national approach to harness the Cyber power with the objective to reduce the national attack surface and attaining effective reaction and defence capabilities against any possible intrusions capable of par-

alysing all institutions, utilities, defence, business, digital supply chain, finance, public services and information control and communication. While dilating, the President identified eight strategic areas which needed to be seriously deliberated upon as a national concern to safeguard the country against possible Cyber Threats which include: strengthening and enhancing national cyber defences; controlling and manipulating the Information Environment for disseminating the country's point of view in the world and removing extremist material from social media; foreign intelligence collection on national security matters; harnessing national cyber.

PM orders cutting reliance on imported fuel

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed the authorities concerned to take steps to reduce power load-shedding during the winter in order to provide maximum relief to electricity consumers. He directed to cut reliance on imported fuel for power generation and utilize local resources instead to produce cheaper electricity. Chairing a meeting to discuss various proposals to overcome load-shedding in winter, the prime minister ordered taking every possible measure to ensure the supply of electricity. The briefing by the Ministry of Energy focused on the demand and supply of electricity as well as estimates of fuel required for power generation. The meeting was attended by former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Energy Minister Engineer Khurram Dastagir, PM's Adviser Ahad Cheema, State Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik, Special Assistants Dr Jahanzeb Khan, Junaid Anwar Chaudhry and senior officials.—APP

People to reject Imran's call

ISLAMABAD: Senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) Nihal Hashmi on Wednesday said the people would reject the long march call given by Imran Khan in a bid to regain power in an unconstitutional manner. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan had damaged the economic sector during the period of last four years, he said while talking to a private news channel. The people were suffering today due to the weak policies of former PTI regime, he added. He made it clear that the government would conduct the next elections in 2023. He hoped the PML-N, would sweep the general elections with a resounding victory.—APP

Flood aid from Xingjiang reaches Gwadar

ISLAMABAD: Gwadar becomes the recipient of fresh flood donation as the first truck of donation sent by China's Xingjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region has reached Gwadar offering congenial vibes of Pakistan-China friendship that stands tall in the face of all-natural calamity including flash flood and numerous testing times.

According to Gwadar Pro on Thursday, the government of Karamay, a city in the north of Xinjiang, China, sent a truck of aid materials worth RMB 200,000 including sleeping bags, tents and other winter-proof items. The relief items were transported to Gwadar and would be taken to the flood-hit areas. This batch of aid materials departed from Khunjerab in Xinjiang on October 5 and passed through Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan. It took 13 days covering 3,150 kilometres to reach Gwadar port in Pakistan safely. Officials of Karamay City believe that the Pakistani people will soon overcome the disaster and rebuild their beautiful homeland. Relief items were received by China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) and were handed over to Local Government Chief Officer Ayaz Gorgej. Official of the local government told Gwadar Pro that governments of Balochistan and other provinces have been seeking details of flood victims in a bid to distribute the aid as per requirements.—APP

1,880,205 new electricity consumers added

ISLAMABAD: As many as 1,880,205 new electricity consumers have been added to the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) and K-Electric Systems during the last fiscal year 2021-22. Out of the total, some 1,660,205 consumers have been added to the CPA while 220,000 consumers in K-Electric systems during the said period, sources told APP here. They said with the addition of new consumers, the total number of consumers of the CPA system has surged to 33,189,794 from 31,529,589 during the last financial year 2021-22. Similarly, the number of consumers of KE also jumped to 3,405,332 from 3,185,332 during the said period. APP

Teachers dissatisfied over excellence award criteria

ISLAMABAD: The teachers working at the federal government colleges have expressed dissatisfaction over the criteria set by the concerned authorities in choosing the best teachers and best institutions on the eve of World Teachers Day. According to an official source, the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) arranged the Academic Excellence Award Ceremony on October 5 at Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG) F-7/4 in connection with the World Teachers Day to present awards to the best teachers. The awards were given to the best teachers and top performing institutions in the form of certificates, shields etc in four categories of teachers i.e. Primary, Middle, Secondary and

Higher secondary ignoring the fifth category of teachers who were teaching BS classes. Joint secretary of Federal Government College Teachers Association (FGCTA) Anum Kaleem said, "while selecting the best teachers and best institutions, the result of the students was considered as the only indicator to gauge the performance of teachers and institutions while the other key variables for academic performance were ignored which is unfair". teachers perform extra duties in the colleges to facilitate students, for example, teachers are given the assignment of Drawing and Disbursing officer, Incharges of Students Affairs offices, Proctors to maintain discipline, Incharges

of extracurricular activities of students, Controller of examinations and Incharges of various college committees. "The teachers contribute in compilation of the results of students and institutions and work for long hours but their valuable services were not considered while selecting best teacher awards", she said. General Secretary of FGCTA, Dr. Nazir Ahmed Butta also raised objections over the criteria adopted to declare best teachers and best institutions. He said that federal government colleges and their teachers, imparting higher education in the capital, were treated differently. These colleges run the four years Bachelor of Science (BS) and two years Associate Degree

Programs (ADP) but unfortunately the teachers teaching BS/ADP classes were not given any award beside doing laborious connected work of these classes. Criticizing the criteria, he said, "a teacher teaching smaller size of classes is in a position to give individual attention to each and every student according to his or her abilities. He or she gets good result of his or her students with minimal efforts. Contrary to that a teacher teaching huge size of classes cannot give individual attention to every student due to more disruptive environment of classroom. He or she faces more stress, burnout and exhaustion in delivering lecture than a teacher teaching smaller classes." The efforts of teachers teaching

huge classes are more painstaking than a teacher teaching few students. There should be different standard to weigh the performance of teachers on the basis of number of students in the class and their performance should not be measured by the same yardstick, he suggested. President of FGCTA, Dr. Rahima Rehman pointed out that Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG) Jagot got the award with only 26 students while IMCG Bhara Kahu and IMCG Humak functioning in rural areas of the federal capital with around 1,200 students failed to get excellence awards. There were only three regular teachers at IMCG Bhara Kahu and twelve regular teachers at IMCG Humak who used their

energies to uplift the standard of their institutions and students but were unsuccessful in getting any recognition. Some teachers of IMCG Humak performed excellently and got over 5 GPA of their classes but they were not awarded, she added. She further said, "the higher education set up of F.G colleges has been ignored because the dealing director is hardly found in his office due to his multiple assignments/portfolios. The authorities must give importance to the BS/ADP programs of F.G colleges to boost the enthusiasm and vitality of teachers." She demanded the appointment of a separate director for F.G. colleges who has a skill and experience in managing the higher education institutions.

Briefs

Police arrest
four POs
wanted in
different
cases

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Police here on Thursday arrested four proclaimed offenders (POs) wanted in different cases registered in Saddar Wah, Civil Lines, Airport and R.A. Bazar Police Stations. According to a police spokesman, four POs namely Qayyum, Haris, Saqib and Sheraz were sent behind the bars. He said that Rawalpindi district police were taking stern action in accordance with the law against the lawbreakers, adding, the operations would continue against POs. —APP

Minister
stresses
rooting out
hate culture
from society

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal Thursday said that the biggest challenge of the country today was to get united and to subside the culture of hate from the society as without eliminating this culture, extremism could not be rooted out. He said Pakistan had paid huge price of extremism during last few decades, so it was necessary to root out the culture of hate. Addressing a seminar titled "Growing Intolerance in Pakistan - Responsibilities of Civil Society, Media & Other Stakeholders" here, the minister said hate and intolerance negate the ideology of Pakistan as Pakistan was created on the basis of inclusive governance. "The governance must be an inclusive governance, if it is not inclusive and based on hate and discrimination, then we are negating the Ideology of Pakistan", he added. He said hate was injected among the people from a certain group or organization, and once the hate was injected in the people, they started acting like robots or animals who did not have their own thinking and choice. —APP

Police arrest
19 gamblers;
recover Rs
52,400 stake
money

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district Police have arrested 19 gamblers and recovered Rs 52,400 stake money, 20 mobile phones and valuables from their possession here on Thursday, a police spokesman said. He informed that Dhamial police conducted a raid and arrested 19 gamblers namely Fawad, Usama, Hamza, Numan, Waleed, Ajmal, Adnan, Abdul Rehman, Abdullah, Akhtar and others. A case has been registered against all of them while further investigation is under process. Superintendent of Police, Saddar Ahmed Zaneer Cheema said that operations against gamblers would continue as it is the root cause of other evils and those involved in such crimes do not deserve any concession. —APP

ANF recovers
over 27 kg
narcotics;
arrests four

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting raids in different areas managed to recover over 27 kg of narcotics and 9300 ecstasy tablets besides netting four drug smugglers. According to an ANF spokesman, ANF and Airport Security Force in a joint operation conducted at Bacha Khan International Airport, Peshawar recovered 9300 ecstasy tablets from the possession of a passenger, resident of Bannu, going to Sharjah. In another operation conducted at Bacha Khan International Airport, ANF recovered 1521 grams of Ice drug from the trolley bag of a passenger, resident of Khyber, who was going to Doha. ANF and FC in a joint operation conducted a raid in Orakzai Agency area and recovered 20 kg of charas. —APP



RAWALPINDI: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani and Deputy Chairman Senate, Mirza Muhammad Afridi in a group photo with the delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) led by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari President (ICCI) at Parliament House. —DNA

Sanjrani assures to support
ICCI in exploring new markets

He assured that ICCI would cooperate with the Senate of Pakistan in celebrating its golden jubilee celebrations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, Chairman Senate said that the business community is playing a key role in the economic development of the country and ICCI members would be included in the Senate's foreign delegations so that they could explore new markets of promoting Pakistan's exports. He further said that the business community should focus on Africa, ASEAN and other potential regions to improve Pakistan's trade and exports. He said that the business community should focus on

non-traditional items to enhance exports of the country. He said this while exchanging views with a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry that called on him led by President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari. Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Deputy Chairman Senate was also present at the occasion. Chairman Senate said that flourishing business and investment would enable the economy to grow strong and reiterated that he would cooperate with ICCI in resolving the key issues of the business community. Talking about the closure of Centaurus Mall, he said that he fully

supports its opening and said that he would soon talk to the Federal Minister for Interior to resolve this issue amicably. He said that ICCI should cooperate with the Senate of Pakistan in celebrating its golden jubilee celebrations in a befitting manner. Speaking at the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that being upper house of the parliament, Senate has key role in legislation and requested that ICCI should be given representation in business related Standing Committees of Senate including Commerce, Finance, Planning & Development, Indus-

tries & Production. It would help to make business friendly laws in consultation with the business community to make Pakistan an attractive destination for business and investment activities. He said that ICCI members should also be included in Senate Chairman's foreign delegations to explore new avenues of promoting Pakistan's exports. He requested that the Senate Chairman should cooperate in resolving the key issues of the business community to promote ease of doing business. He said that many foreign delegations often visit the Senate of Pakistan and ICCI members should

be connected with them to explore new prospects of promoting Pakistan's business and economic interests. He assured that ICCI would cooperate with the Senate of Pakistan in celebrating its golden jubilee celebrations. Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI, Zubair Ahmed Malik, Zafar Bakhtawari, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Rana Qaiser Shehzad, Muhammad Yahya, Khalid Chaudhry and others also spoke at the occasion and stressed for the need of close cooperation between Senate of Pakistan and ICCI to facilitate the private sector in promotion of business and investment activities in the country.

PM Office directs to form a
committee on cyber threats

ISLAMABAD: In response to President Dr Arif Alvi's letter to the prime minister, the PM Office has directed the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication to constitute a high-level committee of experts to analyse the "Cyber Threats and Challenges" to the state institutions. The committee, to be headed by the Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication would submit its recommendations to Prime Minister's Office to proceed further in the matter, according to a President House press release. In his letter, the president had observed that this com-

munication was in continuation of his constant beseeching of the opinion makers, decision-makers, politicians and strategists in Pakistan that "cyber power", being the effective deployment of cyber capabilities by a state to achieve its national objectives, was an important area where Pakistan needed to work hard and become a significant player. The president emphasised that it was important for Pakistan to deliberate on how to develop and leverage its policy by adopting a multi-factorial holistic national approach to harness the cyber power with the objective to reduce the national attack surface.

He said it was also essential to attain effective reaction and defence capabilities against any possible intrusions capable of paralysing all institutions, utilities, defence, business, digital supply chain, finance, public services and information control and communication. While dilating, the president identified eight strategic areas which needed to be seriously deliberated upon as a national concern to safeguard the country against possible cyber threats which include: strengthening and enhancing national cyber defences; controlling and manipulating the information environment for disseminating the country's

point of view in the world and removing extremist material from social media; foreign intelligence collection on national security matters; harnessing national cyber and commercial technologies; destroying or disabling an adversary's infrastructure in case of attack; defining international and national cyber norms and technical standards; understanding wealth movements in the cyber world, including cryptocurrencies and data breaches and surveillance and monitoring of domestic Groups (Criminal Organizations, Terrorists) through internet traffic and disrupting foreign interferences.

Food
commodities
valuing
\$2.723 bln
imported

ISLAMABAD: Food group imports into the country during first quarter of current financial year recorded 15.21 percent increase as compared the imports of corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-September, 2022, food commodities costing \$2.723 billion imported in order to tackle with the domestic requirements as against the imports of \$2.346 billion of

same period last year. During the period under review, the imports of the commodities including wheat unmilled witnessed about 311.19 percent growth, soyabean oil 265.68 percent and palm oil grew by 27.45 percent respectively as compared the imports of the same period last year. On the other hand, the imports of commodities including tea reduced by 10 percent, spices 45.39 percent, dry fruits and nuts 24.97 percent respectively, according the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. In first quarter of current fiscal year, about 856.813 metric tons of wheat costing \$408.653 million imported as against the imports of 338,036 metric tons valuing \$99.383 million of period last

year, it added. Meanwhile, 763,724 metric tons of palm oil costing \$1.135 billion imported to tackle with the local consumption of edible oil as compared the imports of 794,469 metric tons valuing \$891.155 million of same period last year. During the period under review, 47,025 metric tons of soyabean oil valuing \$77.745 million imported as well as against the imports of 18,102 metric tons worth \$21.260 million of same period last year. It is worth mentioning here that food group exports from the country increased by 5.70 percent during the first three months of current fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the exports of corresponding period of last year. —APP

Rupee loses
08 paise
against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan rupee on Thursday depreciated by 08 paise against the US dollar in the inter-bank trading to close at Rs 220.95 against the previous day's closing of Rs 220.87. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 223.2 and Rs 225.45 respectively. The price of Euro depreciated by Rs 1.05 and closed at Rs 216.24 against the last day's closing of Rs 217.29. —APP

NHA holds
E-KACHEHRI

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Highway Authority's Member Planning Mr. Asim Amin held E-Kachehri at headoffice of the Authority through NHA official Facebook Page today and answered the questions raised by the people all over the country. Mr. Asim Amin said that National Highway Authority Executive Board and National Highway Council has approved award of Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway (M-6) project and that Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif has ordered to start the construction work on this project as soon as possible. This mega project will be completed in 30 months according to international standards, 15 interchanges, 01 major bridge over

the Indus River, 19 over-pass bridges, 82 bridges over canals, 6 flyovers and 10 service areas will be constructed on this 306 km long motorway. This motorway will cost more than 307 billion rupees. Service areas and rest areas will also be provided on both sides of this motorway at a distance of every 50 km. This motorway will pass through the districts of Jamshoro, Hyderabad, Matiari, Benazirabad, Nowshero Feroze, Khairpur and Sukkur which will bring about economic and social development there as well as new livelihood opportunities will be generated in these areas. Answering to the questions related to Maintenance of roads, CPEC projects, collection of toll tax, and axle load, he said that the relevant Members of NHA will personally contact those who give better suggestions in the construction process and will get guidance from them.

Need urged for
strengthening local
construction industry

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis on Thursday urged the need for providing special incentives to local construction industry, which was currently over burdened due to increasing inflation and soaring prices of construction material. Talking to a delegation of builders and developers led by Afaq Shoukat Mokal Kasuri, he said that development of construction industry was prerequisite for achieving sustainable economic growth and survival of the industry in the country. He said that during fiscal year 2021, the construction sector has contributed to Rs1,231 billion and next year it has gone upto Rs1,409 billion, adding that by the start of current fiscal year there was a significant growth of about 7 percent year on year basis. —APP

AIOU RC
Gwadar to be
inaugurated
today

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is expanding its regional network to meet the educational needs of people in remote areas of the country where formal education facilities are lacking. AIOU has completed the construction work of Regional Campus Gwadar, and it will be inaugurated by Minister for Federal Education, Rana Tanveer Hussain today (Friday, October 21). Vice-Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, Registrar, Raja Umar Yunis, Director General, Regional Services, Dr. Malik Toqeer Ahmad Khan, Majid Hussain, Deputy Regional Director Gwadar Campus, Syed Qamaruddin, Regional Director Quetta, dignitaries of the area, educational and social experts will participate in the event. Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum said that the educational needs of the remote areas are being met according to modern requirements. The newly constructed building has a state-of-the-art computer laboratory which is equipped with the latest technology. Moreover, it has a library well stocked with invaluable educational resources and reference books in addition to conference halls and lecture rooms. It is pertinent to mention here that Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, after taking charge as vice chancellor of AIOU, focused on providing educational facilities to the remote areas of the country, including Azad Jammu and Kashmir and the northern regions. Buildings are being constructed to give permanent identity to the campuses. Dr. Zia personally met with government officials and philanthropists from different areas to acquire land at suitable locations for campus buildings. In a short period of four years, the number of regional offices of the university has increased from 43 to 54 across the country, most of which have moved to their own buildings. Regional campuses and model study centers have been established in Moro, Mithi, and Sukkur in Sindh, Kalat and Kharan in Balochistan, Attock, Chakwal, Jhang and Sheikhupura in Punjab and in remote areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Northern Areas and Azad Kashmir.

Women
Chamber
President's
Conference a
great success

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI) with CARE International Pakistan, through its Ignite Financial Inclusion Project funded by the MasterCard Center for Inclusive Growth, to co-host the 3rd All Pakistan Women Chamber of Commerce President's Conference in Islamabad. The conference was designed to empower women entrepreneurs and foster dialogue with key stakeholders on addressing the challenges they face in Pakistan. Currently, only 1% of women in Pakistan are engaged in entrepreneurship. The event saw the participation of 20 women chambers from across the country and was attended by government officials, diplomats, financial institutes, professionals, community leaders, and business owners. Discussions surrounded gender equality, financial inclusivity, international connectivity, women's engagement in different disciplines, future challenges, and opportunities, businesses, and health concerns. During the conference, founder President IWCCI, Samina Fazil called for a collective effort to address the disparity. Participating Presidents prepared a roadmap to increase numbers and tackle the barriers to entry for all female entrepreneurs in Pakistan. Country Director of CARE International in Pakistan, Adil Sheraz, said: "With women constituting nearly 50% of Pakistan's population, gender equality in all its interventions is a key focus area for CARE. Through this collaboration conference with the IWCCI we were able to work with key stakeholders in the entrepreneurship ecosystem."

Alvi for concerted efforts to provide relief

President said this while talking to Mr Muhammad Anwar Khan, President of Islamic Relief USA, Mr Asif Ali Sherazi, Country Director of Islamic Relief Pakistan and Mr Raza Hussain Qazi, Advocacy Specialist at Islamic Relief Pakistan (IRP), who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has stressed the need for the government, public representatives, NGOs and other stakeholders to complement each other's efforts in providing relief to the flood victims, restoring their livelihoods and rebuilding their houses and physical infrastructure in the flood-hit areas. The President said this while talking to Mr Muhammad Anwar Khan, President of Islamic Relief USA, Mr Asif Ali Sherazi, Country Director of Islamic Relief Pakistan and Mr Raza Hussain Qazi, Advocacy Specialist at Islamic Relief Pakistan

(IRP), who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The President appreciated the program launched by Islamic Relief International in Pakistan to empower the widows by imparting them with skills to earn their livelihood, educating the street children in various parts of the country and improving the skills level of underprivileged persons. The President said that Islamic Relief International may also launch a program for providing digital skills, through physical and online modes of education, to enable the youth bulge to gain market-based skills

and earn a reasonable livelihood. He also proposed that the Mosques, which remain available from Fajr to Zohar, may be considered for providing education to the street children and out-of-school children by providing appropriate training and education to Pesh Imams to be used as teachers. He appreciated Islamic Relief International for the philanthropic and charity works in distressed societies in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries, which, he said, would improve the image of Muslims and would help in spreading the universal values of Islam.

The President also appreciated the work of Islamic Relief Pakistan for involving communities to help themselves in terms of earning a livelihood, creating education opportunities, providing health and nutrition, improving water resources, providing sanitation and making the communities resilient to natural and manmade disasters and negative fallouts of climate change and global warming. The President appreciated the charity work undertaken by Islamic Relief International and Islamic Relief Pakistan to provide flood

affecteds with shelter, water, food, cash grants and hygiene items. He stressed the need for better coordination between the Government of Pakistan and Islamic Relief International and other stakeholders to increase their reach to the flood-affected people across Pakistan to ensure their early recovery and long-term rehabilitation. Mr Muhammad Anwar Khan, President of Islamic Relief USA informed the President that Islamic Relief International with its headquarters in Birmingham, UK was work-

ing across 44 countries, including Pakistan to help the downtrodden communities since 1992. Mr Asif Ali Sherazi, Country Director of Islamic Relief Pakistan, briefed the President of Pakistan on its philanthropic work and said that Islamic Relief Pakistan had made 341 interventions in the sectors of food security and sustainable livelihoods, education, health and nutrition, child and women development, water resource management in KPK, AJK, Sindh and Balochistan, which was helping the community to increase their potential. —APP

Liz Truss: it's time to go

LIZ Truss is finished. Her authority as prime minister is spent. The government she formed six weeks ago no longer exists and Britain needs a general election to choose a new one. Last week, the chancellor was sacked for enacting the prime minister's will in a "mini-budget" that destroyed the UK's credibility on global markets. On Wednesday, Suella Braverman, the home secretary, left the cabinet too, ostensibly over a security breach, although the departure suggests more profound clashes over policy and personnel at the heart of government. Some Tory MPs have been reluctant to act, fearing that a mishandled transition could precipitate a general election that would cost the Conservatives dozens of seats. Another factor is the need to avoid a leadership contest that might put the choice of a replacement prime minister back in the hands of grassroots Tory members. They elected Ms Truss over the summer, and so their judgment on such matters is deemed unsound.

In other words, Britain is expected to endure dysfunctional and negligent government in order that a regime with no authority and a threadbare mandate can think of some way to reinforce its failing grip on power. Inaction is a symptom of weakness that also expresses an arrogance with power.

Ms Truss's ideas are responsible for making almost everyone in the UK poorer, but she did not keep them secret over the summer. It is the whole Conservative party that bears responsibility now for trashing the UK's credentials as a creditworthy nation, heaping financial pain on struggling households, undermining the fiscal foundations of public services, and pushing already vulnerable people deeper into poverty. Ms Truss has already packed a lot of misrule into a short time. She must not be given any longer to do worse.

There is no prospect of the prime minister's performance improving. In parliament on Wednesday she sowed confusion over pensions policy, confirming the triple lock spending commitment that the chancellor had suggested might be abandoned. Whatever stability has been gained by shredding the plans that Ms Truss carried with her into Downing Street is jeopardised for as long as the author of the calamity is still in residence there.

What must not be allowed is a long period of chaos and paralysis as the last drops of authority are wrung out of this ragged government. There is no justification for keeping Ms Truss in Downing Street, and a Tory replacement would not stop the rot. She is the immediate problem, but the party that put her in power has forfeited the right to name a successor. That choice should be made by the British people.

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Abortion ban sign of times in US

US President Joe Biden delivers remarks on abortion rights in a speech hosted by the Democratic National Committee at the Howard Theatre in Washington, US, October 18, 2022. [Photo/Agencies] At a national event of the Democratic Party on Tuesday, US President Joe Biden pledged that if the Democrats do well enough in the midterm elections to get it through Congress, the first bill that he signs into law will be to codify the Roe vs Wade decision allowing women the fundamental right to choose whether to terminate a pregnancy or not.

Abortion has emerged as the key issue in the midterm elections after the Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution does not confer a right to abortion and overruled the 1973 Roe vs Wade ruling that had given women the right to choose. As the Supreme Court said in its ruling, until the latter part of the 20th century, there was no support in US law for a constitutional right to seek or have an abortion. No state constitutional provision had recognized such a right. It was not until 1973, after four years of struggle, that the Roe vs Wade case finally gained US women the right to have an abortion. Subsequent legal developments until the Supreme Court's decision in June had reinforced that.

Since that decision, the constitutional guarantee of women's abortion rights has been officially abolished, and it is left to the individual states to decide. In just four months, abortion bans have gone into effect in 16 states, where 26.5 million women of reproductive age are subject to these bans.

The abortion right that stood for 50 years has shaped the lives of women, influencing their choices about relationships and work, and supporting their social and economic equality. The removal of that right marks a reversal in the struggle for women's rights and the reversal of social progress in the US.

Karl Marx famously said that "Social progress can be measured by the social position of the female sex."

While French philosopher Charles Fourier observed that "The extension of women's rights is the basic principle of all social progress." Both quotes date back to the 19th century. It is now the 22nd year of the 21st century. But the Supreme Court's decision is a sign of the times in the US, which is now firmly under the sway of the past and where human rights are regressing rather than progressing.

Xi Jinping is stronger than ever, but China's future is uncertain

Chen Gang

This time Xi has set the stage to break with that pattern. In September, the CCP published new regulations on the promotion and demotion of leading party cadres, which removed the mandatory retirement ages and term limits for the appointment of senior officials. The new rules play down the importance of age limits significantly and open the door to the promotion and retention of leaders older than 67 in the Politburo.

This has added more uncertainties to the final line-up of top leaders on the eve of the CCP Congress as all the seven incumbent Politburo Standing Committee members could, in theory, stay on.

However, a new set of promotion criteria is in play to reshape the leadership...

THE 20th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will start on Sunday, October 16, 2022, in Beijing. CCP General Secretary and China's President Xi Jinping is all but guaranteed to stay at the helm for a third term after the congress. Yet while he will emerge from the congress more powerful than ever by placing more loyalists in the party's apex bodies, the Politburo and its Standing Committee, both Xi and the CCP face difficult questions that have no answers at the moment.

The extent to which Xi is able to reshape the CCP's leadership group and bring major changes to policy directions depends on how much support he has among the 2,296 delegates attending. What is clear is that no heir apparent to Xi will be identified at the congress. Such a succession void may increase uncertainties for a future power transition — an issue central to the power play that guides Chinese elite politics. Ahead of the congress, China has tightened travel restrictions and information flow around Beijing. However, the outcomes of the summit, held once every five years, will resonate far beyond the capital city.

At the 19th CCP Congress in 2017, Xi successfully had his political vision, officially worded as Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, written into the CCP's constitution. That made him only the third leader — after Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping — to have his political doctrine incorporated in the party charter. Over the next few days, Xi's effort to further consolidate power and set up what he has described as a "new normal" for China's economy and politics will determine the future path of the world's second-largest economy in his "new era".

Since coming to power at the 18th CCP Congress in 2012, Xi has shaken up China's politics, including through a relentless anti-corruption campaign, stern ideological control and crackdowns on tech and property gurus. Still, though Xi Jinping Thought was included in the CCP's fundamental documents at the 19th congress in 2017, he at that time appeared to have made compromises with other party elders. Among those accommodations was the continued strict adherence to an informal age criterion, which required new members of the Politburo and Standing Committee to be younger than 68 when the congress is convened.

As a result, the new Standing Committee in 2017

was filled with leaders from diverse political backgrounds — including the Communist Youth League, coastal regions and inland provinces — not all of whom owed their political rise to Xi.

This time Xi has set the stage to break with that pattern. In September, the CCP published new regulations on the promotion and demotion of leading party cadres, which removed the mandatory retirement ages and term limits for the appointment of senior officials. The new rules play down the importance of age limits significantly and open the door to the promotion and retention of leaders older than 67 in the Politburo. This has added more uncertainties to the final line-up of top leaders on the eve of the CCP Congress as all the seven incumbent Politburo Standing Committee members could, in theory, stay on.

However, a new set of promotion criteria is in play to reshape the leadership team and avoid disruptive power struggles, with the following apparent order of priority — loyalty to Xi, performance, technocratic backgrounds and age. Under this approach, Xi's loyalists will gain in numbers in the Politburo and its Standing Committee. However, no clear successor to Xi will be anointed. That could set the stage for future uncertainties — and potential tensions.

The issue of successions has affected the country's political stability since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. In particular, power succession in the 1980s did not go smoothly, as evidenced by the ousting of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, leaders who were seen by the party orthodoxy as being too politically liberal in the face of a rising tide of student protests.

Since then, the party leadership has made enormous efforts to institutionalise elite politics. Many formal institutions have been established, but informal rules continue to play a role in handling power succession. By breaking with those rules, Xi now must use his personal authority to eventually set up a "new normal" for the selection of his successor. That won't necessarily be a smooth process and might be challenged by intense intra-party competition. In the meantime, the CCP will not totally dismantle its collective leadership model at the top, despite Xi's ever-growing power.

Economically liberal candidates who are not linked to Xi may still join the Politburo Standing Committee. Vice Premier Hu Chunhua, a Politburo mem-

ber with a Communist Youth League background, is well-positioned to be a candidate for next premier, with incumbent Li Keqiang already making clear that he does not expect to stay on. Hu may favour further marketisation and the opening up of the economy. Another vice premier, Liu He, trusted by Xi and supportive of market reforms and opening up, also has the chance to become the next premier. While the party will continue to exercise its strict ideological control after the congress, the crackdown on businesses might subside for a while to urgently boost and stimulate a sagging economy. Some restrictions over the property, finance and tech sectors may be relaxed.

Although there are few signs to suggest that China will ease its draconian zero-COVID policy soon, the conclusion of the CCP Congress will make the leadership more confident about cross-border travel. Xi and his colleagues will go abroad more often to seek international influence, while lower-level visits to other countries may gradually resume after the composition of the State Council, China's cabinet, is approved by the annual parliamentary sessions in March 2023. Xi's signature diplomatic strategy, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), will continue unabated. However, in recent years, China has emphasised the improvement of people's livelihoods more than the scale of infrastructure projects in participating countries.

Xi himself has highlighted issues like climate change, sustainable development and digital connectivity along the Belt and Road. New slogans such as "green silk road" and "digital silk road" will likely emerge for the promotion of the BRI after the party congress. Despite Xi's unprecedented power at the 20th CCP Congress, the "road" ahead for China might be more than green, silky or digital — it might also be uncertain as its once-institutionalised politics and economy have entered uncharted waters. The new rules on promotion and demotion of cadres have made leadership reshuffling less predictable, while the unabated anti-corruption campaign in the name of "self-revolution" is paralysing millions of bureaucrats to risk aversion and may dampen their enthusiasm for economic growth. Xi can't afford that in his third term. If enough officials opt for "lying flat" — or tangping — they could send China's development drive into a similar state of stupor.

— Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Yunnan – Transforming South and Southeast Asia

Li Ping

Yunnan's governor Wang Yubo rightly asserted at a press conference in July this year: "We will have a big trading market by seizing opportunities, making good use of transportation channels, cultivating logistics, developing industries, promoting opening up and accelerating the construction of an international hub for comprehensive transportation, energy, and digital logistics." Yunnan has continually strived to provide producers and sellers from regional nations find greater share in the province's...

THE broader region of South and Southeast Asia is in the midst of a revolution; trade, commerce and connectivity are being revolutionized. Yunnan province of China is spearheading this revolution.

Just after nine months of starting its operations, the freight value of China Laos Railway exceeded 10 billion Yuan, around \$ 1.5 billion, in early September 2022. Over 7 million tons of cargo were transported by this railway linkage in the same period, in initial around 9 months.

This indeed is a great leap forward for the international commerce of a country like Laos. No surprises why international institutions such as the World Bank are forecasting up to 21 per cent increase in income of Laos due to this railway linkage.

And the benefits of this project — symbolizing high quality infrastructure, connectivity cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) — are not limited to Yunnan only. Over half a dozen other countries of the region are recipients of benefits of enhanced connectivity through this railway. The portfolio of trade has also grown quickly from initial rubber, fertilizer and daily use items to a whole range of some 2000 products and items. The project was constructed at a cost of \$ 6 billion.

But this railway linkage is only one example of how Yunnan is facilitating the wider region of South and Southeast Asia come together and prosper, collectively. In year 2021, Yunnan's international trade exceeded 314 Yuan bn., just less than \$ 50 bn. Members of Association of

South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) get a lion's share in this international trade of Yunnan province, that comes over \$ 124 billion Yuan. Although Yunnan has significant trade ties with countries as far and wide as the US, Saudi Arabia and Brazil — much of its foreign commerce is conducted within the region.

Let us not forget to share here that on the soil of Yunnan, work on China Myanmar Railway is also progressing ahead and 133 kms segment was completed this July, which will eventually extend to Myanmar in years ahead. Not difficult to ascertain the flow of goods, services and human resources it promises.

Yunnan's governor Wang Yubo rightly asserted at a press conference in July this year: "We will have a big trading market by seizing opportunities, making good use of transportation channels, cultivating logistics, developing industries, promoting opening up and accelerating the construction of an international hub for comprehensive transportation, energy, and digital logistics."

Yunnan has continually strived to provide producers and sellers from regional nations find greater share in the province's and beyond that China's massive, fast growing, consumption driven markets. Annual exhibitions and regular fairs for producers and traders of South and Southeast Asia in provincial capital are now a well-known feature of the province's commercial scene and have created mutually win-win bonds. Mega initiatives such as Pilot Free Trade Zone — one of six such zones being built across China

— are all set to further heighten this momentum. Further, Yunnan offers lucrative investment options for investors due to its efficient nationally- and regionally-connected infrastructure, unmatched natural environment, bountiful resources and conducive policies. Your gateway to China opens in Yunnan, truly.

Yunnan has reasonably good commercial and investment ties with Pakistan, although still significantly less than the two-way potential that exists. Enterprises from Yunnan are actively engaged in the projects part of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Trade bonds are being gradually strengthened. Fertilizers from Yunnan have helped meet the shortfall in Pakistan, in recent years. Closer connectivity moves, hampered only temporarily due to pandemic, are envisaged. Yunnan is contributing towards the greening of Pakistan — something the country needs the most; and has also come forward to help the country's unfortunate flood affected. The province, its businesses and enterprises, would continue to play this role.

Overall, Yunnan — the South-western Province of the People's Republic of China — has played an instrumental role in building closer China South Asia and China Southeast Asia linkages; and thus transforming the commerce, connectivity and people to people ties in the wider region, under the guidance of China's central and provincial leadership. This journey is all set to continue.

— The author is director of Overseas Representative Office of Yunnan Commerce, Islamabad.

Briefs

France repatriates 40 children from Syria

DNA

PARIS: France said on Thursday it carried out a new operation to return French nationals - 40 children and 15 women - from Kurdish-run camps in north-eastern Syria.

The children were handed over to the child care services and will have medical and social follow-ups, the foreign ministry said in a statement, while the women would be transferred to the judicial authorities.

"France expresses its thanks to local authorities... for their cooperation which has made this operation possible", the ministry added. In September, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that France must re-examine repatriation requests from two French women who travelled to Syria with their partners to join Islamic State group.

The requests were also for the children they gave birth to there. The French citizens were among more than 40,000 foreign nationals, most of them Iraqis, in detention, according to Human Rights Watch. According to earlier estimates by rights groups, some women and children likely still remain in the camp after Thursday's repatriation operation which followed a similar mission in July.

5 centuries old Swiss graffiti found in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM: Graffiti with the name of a 15th-century Swiss knight has been discovered in Jerusalem, carved into the walls of a building where pilgrims stayed, the Israel Antiquities Authority said Thursday.

The knight Adrian von Bubenberg is believed to have visited the holy city in 1466, when researchers say he may have marked his name alongside his family emblem on a stone ceiling.

"The building served as a monastery and a hostel for the Western pilgrims, who left their mark on the walls," said the leaders of the research, Michael Chernin and Shai Halevi, in a statement. The team has uncovered more than 40 inscriptions on Mount Zion, adjacent to the Old City, which they attributed to Christian and Muslim pilgrims. Von Bubenberg was renowned for his role in the 1476 Battle of Murten near the city of Bern, when the Swiss beat the Burgundian army led by Charles the Bold.

Doubt remains as to whether the knight himself was behind the graffiti, or if it is the work of his son who carried the same name. Eli Escudido, director of the Israel Antiquities Authority, said the discovery creates a "fascinating picture" of the city's past. Graffiti bearing the name of Adrian von Bubenberg, a Swiss knight MENEHEM KAHANA AFP "The research carried out in Jerusalem embraces religions and cultures worldwide," he said in a statement. "Believers, pilgrims and visitors seeking to make contact with sanctified Jerusalem, left traces." - APP

Iran ready to use its capacities to end war

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: President Ibrahim Raesi says the Islamic Republic of Iran opposes war and conflict in Europe and is ready to use all its capacities, including in the diplomatic sphere, in bringing an end to it. In a phone call with his Polish counterpart on Wednesday in which the two discussed strengthening bilateral relations and the Ukraine conflict, President Raesi dismissed accusations leveled against Iran by the Western countries regarding the Ukraine conflict, and said that the Islamic Republic is ready to use all its means to play a role in ending the war in Europe through diplomacy. President Raesi assured Andrzej Duda that "the Islamic Republic of Iran will use all its capacity and po-

tential to end the war." "In light of the current circumstances, both Tehran and Warsaw should seek to improve economic and trade relations by providing appropriate solutions," Raesi added. For his part, Duda stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran has always sought to expand and promote peace and stability in the world and called for enhancing the level of cooperation between the two countries on both bilateral and international stages. The US and the European Union have repeatedly made allegations that Iran has been providing weapons and drones to Russia for deployment against Ukraine. The anti-Iran claims first emerged in July, with US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan alleging that Washington had received "information" indicating

that Iran was preparing to provide Russia with "up to several hundred UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), including weapons-capable UAVs on an expedited timeline" for use in the war in Ukraine. On Tuesday, Iranian

Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kan'ani said such allegations against Iran were made on the basis of "misinformation and ill-intentioned presumptions." He pointed out that these claims were being circulated as part of a political and goal-oriented campaign led by some countries' me-

dia outlets. Kan'ani assured that Iran was ready to hold dialog with Ukraine towards nullification of the allegations. Also last week, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian reiterated that the Islamic Republic of Iran has not and will not provide any weapon to be used in the war in Ukraine. "We believe that the arming of each side of the crisis will prolong the war, therefore we have not considered and do not consider war to be the right way either in Ukraine or in Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen," Amir-Abdollahian noted. Meanwhile, the massive flow of US-led arms to Kiev continues, including American supplies of HIMARS multiple rocket launchers, which the Ukrainian army uses to strike key infrastructure facilities and other Russian targets. The truck-mounted systems

fire GPS-guided missiles that are reportedly capable of reaching targets up to 80 kilometers away. Earlier in September, Russia's Defense Ministry reported that its forces destroyed a US-made M777 howitzer gun which Ukrainian forces had used to shell the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant located in southeastern Ukraine. Russia launched a "special military operation" in Ukraine on February 24 with the aim of "demilitarizing" the eastern Ukrainian region of Donbas, which is made up of the Donetsk and Lugansk republics. Back in 2014, the two republics broke away from Ukraine, refusing to recognize a Western-backed Ukrainian government there that had overthrown a democratically-elected Russia-friendly administration.



Germany calls for international 'Marshall Plan' for Ukraine

BERLIN: Germany on Thursday called for an international "Marshall Plan" for Ukraine to rebuild the war-ravaged country. Speaking to lawmakers in the German parliament, Chancellor Olaf Scholz said Ukraine needs strong financial support from its Western allies to stabilize the economy, to cover the costs of reconstruction and recovery.

"During the EU leaders meeting, which starts today, we will discuss further support to Ukraine," he said, adding that Ukraine's short-term financial needs until the end of this year have been covered, but more support is needed for the middle- and long-term. "If you've seen the pictures of the villages and towns, which have been liberated from Russian occupation, you will understand that this is a job for generations," he said, and underlined that this will require a massive commitment like the post-WWII Marshall Plan. Scholz said, as a first step, Germany will host an international conference in Berlin next week, which will bring together scholars, policymakers, businesspeople and civil society representatives, to discuss the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine. "This is going to be an international expert conference, they will bring together proposals for a long-term, reliable and transparent reconstruction of Ukraine. They will provide input for an international Marshall Plan for Ukraine," he said. The Marshall Plan was a US-sponsored program designed to rehabilitate the economies of Western European countries after World War II. - DNA

Siege of Nablus 'declaration of war' against Palestinians

NEWS DESK

RAMALLAH: A Palestinian Authority official says the latest siege of the occupied West Bank city of Nablus by Israeli forces, as well as their aggression on Palestinian cities, is a declaration of war against the Palestinian people. In a statement on Wednesday, Nabil Abu Rudeineh, a spokesman for President Mahmoud Abbas, said the Israel military's incursions into Palestinian cities, villages, and camps, the continued storming of al-Aqsa Mosque and the Ibrahim Mosque, and the attempt to change the status quo of these holy sites, is a declaration of an all-out war against the Palestinian

people and their leadership. "The continuation of this reckless and irresponsible policy has created an atmosphere of increased tension that would explode the situation, which we have long warned about it," he said. The spokesman went on to say that "the occupying Israeli regime should realize that this policy will not bring security and stability, but will rather push matters into a dangerous situation, stressing that the Palestinian people will in no way accept the continuation of the occupation." Abu Rudeineh also noted that Mahmoud Abbas is following closely the siege of Nablus, the attacks on other cities and villages, as well as the kill-

ing of children, adding that he has warned everyone against the consequences of this Israeli policy. On October 9, an Israeli soldier was killed while two others were injured in a shooting attack at the Shuafat refugee camp checkpoint in East al-Quds. Two days later, a second shooting operation targeted and killed another Israeli soldier near the Shavei Shomron settlement in Nablus. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in Nablus have been trapped in the Shuafat refugee camp and nearby towns by Israeli forces since October 11 amid an ongoing search for the shooter that killed an Israeli soldier. Since the beginning of the Israeli blockade, Palestin-

ians have been unable to leave to receive necessary health treatments, and many basic supplies like flour are running low. Education within the camp has been suspended as well. Israeli forces have recently been conducting overnight raids and killings in the northern occupied West Bank, mainly in the cities of Jenin and Nablus, where new groups of Palestinian resistance fighters have been formed. The Palestinian health ministry says at least 171 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces in the illegally occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip since the beginning of the year, including 51 Palestinians during Israel's three-day assault on Gaza in August.

Germany violated HR, European court rules

DNA

BERLIN: Germany has violated European Convention on Human Rights by denying independent, effective investigation into racial profiling by police officers, Europe's top human rights court ruled on Tuesday.

The judgment was delivered after a German national of Indian origin, who became the victim of racial discrimination, brought his case to the European Court of Human Rights, and fought a four-year-long legal battle.

The court unanimously ruled that Biplab Basu and his daughter's rights to non-discrimination were violated, as they complained about the racial profiling practice by German police during their travel on a train, but authorities denied any independent investigation into the claims.

"State authorities had failed to comply with their duty to take all reasonable measures to ascertain through an independent body whether or not a discriminatory attitude had played a role in the identity check, and thus had failed to carry out an effective investigation in this regard," the court said in its ruling. The court reiterated that the internal police investigation cannot be considered effective, and states should ensure independent mechanisms to investigate complaints about racial profiling.

Collective measures needed to curb smog

LAHORE: Punjab Secretary for Environment Usman Ali Khan on Thursday said that collective measures were must to eliminate the menace of smog. He was speaking at a meeting here at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI). LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt, Executive Committee Members and former office-bearers were present. The Secretary Environment said that the genuine businessmen should not support those elements that were responsible for environmental pollution.

He said that the smog level in Lahore was high, adding that the role of factories was only 20 to 30 percent and the major contributors were 6.5 million vehicles in Lahore with 42 percent share in smog. He said that the kilns and dust were also prominent causes of smog. He urged the industrialists not to support the elements that were using carbon, rubber, tyres and other prohibited fuels. Usman Ali Khan said that the genuine industrialists were well aware of the environment related standards and ensuring their implementation.

He said that the action was being taken against those factories where scrubbers were not installed, adding that the factories, which had scrubbers but working not properly, were only being given notices. He said the Punjab government was going to unroll the Smog Policy 2022 soon, adding that there was a need to introduce cheap technology for the industries to control pollution. "There is a dire need to create awareness among the general public regarding pollution", he added. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Nepal Tapas Adhikari visits Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry FPCCI, Capital Office and interacted with Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President, Umar Masood Ur Rehman, Vice President FPCCI. - DNA

NATO blames Iran is giving Russia drones

BRUSSELS: Every indication points to Iran supplying drones to Russia, the NATO chief said Thursday, lending further support to claims made by Ukraine and its Western allies, including the US. "We call on all nations, including Iran, to not support Russia's illegal war against Ukraine," Jens Stoltenberg said at a joint press conference with Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson. "The horrific attacks we have seen by these drones just highlights the urgency of stepping up support for Ukraine," he said, adding that several NATO states, including Germany, the US, Netherlands, and France, are "now in the process of delivering more and advanced air defense systems" to Kyiv. Ukraine and its supporters have accused Moscow of using Iranian military drones to attack multiple

targets, with Kyiv even considering cutting off diplomatic ties with Tehran. Iran has rejected the allegations, saying they are "based on political goals" and "fueled by Western sources." Stoltenberg asserted that NATO is "monitoring closely what Iran is doing when it comes to also providing any support to Russia." "We call on Iran not to provide neither drones nor missiles. And any supplies of missiles will also be in clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions," he said. His remarks came a day after the US said it has "abundant evidence" that Russia is using Iranian drones in Ukraine. "As Iran continues to lie and deny providing weapons to Russia for use in Ukraine, we are committed to working with allies and partners to prevent the transfer of dangerous weaponry to Russia," State Department spokesman Ned Price said in a statement. He warned that the US will not hesitate to use sanctions and other appropriate tools against all those involved in these transfers. - Agencies

Ambassador invites Pak business to invest in Nepal

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Nepal Tapas Adhikari visited the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) in Islamabad and had a meeting with the Chamber President Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh and office bearers of the Chamber. During the meeting, he shared the features of Nepal-Pakistan relations that both countries enjoy excellent bilateral relation based on friendship, mutual trust and cooperation and now it is a time to translate the goodwill of two countries into economic cooperation and interactions. Both countries are aspiring for development and need to maximize the economic opportunities whatever available with them for the benefits of people. He also shared the Government of Nepal economic policies to attract foreign direct investment that could be useful to them to promote trade and investment. As neighboring country, both Nepal and Pakistan are members of SAARC and have similar cultural and social backgrounds.

Since the Chamber has great role to mobilize the entrepreneurs and businessmen, I suggested them to visit Nepal to explore business opportunity. I also shared that Nepal is a hub of adventure tourism and it has excellent hospitality industry in South Asia and suggested them to visit Nepal with friends and family for their official or personal business to enjoy Nepali hospitality, food, culture and other tourism activities. The President of the Chamber and members appreciated the visit and information on business opportunities in Nepal. They expressed their eagerness to translate the Nepal-Pakistan relations into economic field. They assured that they will make a program to visit Nepal to explore business opportunities and to interact with Nepali businesspersons and assured full cooperation of Chamber to the Nepal Embassy in promoting Nepal-Pakistan economic relations. FPCCI is an umbrella organization of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Pakistan. Established in 1950, FPCCI is playing an active role in presenting problems of trade, industry and environment and safeguarding the interests of the private sectors in Pakistan. It has offices in Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta and in Karachi. - DNA

Co-op with Europe vital for Türkiye's security: Survey

WEB DESK

ANKARA: The majority of the Turkish people believe that cooperation with European countries is vital for Türkiye's security, a recent survey revealed Thursday. A press conference and subsequent panel hosted by the Economic Development Foundation (IKV), a nongovernmental organization and think-tank that mainly focuses on the Türkiye-EU relations, presented the findings and results of a recent survey titled "Public Perceptions on Europe and the European Union in Türkiye," discussing them in Istanbul with the participation of Deputy Foreign Minister and Director for EU Affairs Faruk Kaymakci. IKV Deputy Chair Haluk Kabaoglu and Friedrich Naumann Foundation Permanent Representative to Türkiye Beate Apelt gave opening speeches.

Following the speeches, Mustafa Aydın, Global Academy coordinator and an academic from Kadir Has University, presented the findings of the study to the participants. In the end, experts discussed the topic of "Europe's Future and Türkiye" in a panel format. A noteworthy finding of the study was that 56.4% of the Turkish people believe that "cooperation with European countries" is positive for Türkiye's security. Greece, France and Austria were listed as the three leading countries responsible for the Turkish people's negative perception of the European Union. On the other hand, more than half of the participants listed Germany as the most important partner of Türkiye among EU countries. Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom ranked as the three most trusted European countries. Despite the recent disagreements, 76% of participants said that they support Türkiye's possible EU member-

ship. Visa liberalization, the refugee crisis and the negotiation process are seen as the most important topics today in bilateral relations. The EU primarily means "freedom and democracy" to participants. When participants think about the concept of "Europe," freedom, equality, democracy, high-quality living standards and economic development are the first five things that come to mind. The concept of "European culture" primarily means equality from their perspective. Nearly 30% of participants defined Türkiye as a European country, 25% described it as a Middle Eastern country and 16% said that it is a unique country that cannot be categorized. Those who feel negatively about the EU argued that this was because: "they are self-interested, they dislike foreign countries, they ostracize Türkiye, Türkiye is self-sufficient, Türkiye isn't allowed into the EU."

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Briefs

Housing societies' members open fire on landowners

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: People belonging to the housing societies opened fire on the locals when they staged a protest against the inauguration of the Islamabad Federal Employees and Supreme Court Bar societies to be connected to Park Road in the Tamari area of Chak Shehzad in Islamabad. The local residents during their protest against the murder of a youth from the housing societies' members damaged vehicles while the opponents used iron rods and sticks against the protesters. The channel report said the police did not interfere to stop the clash and oppression from the people of the housing society. The Federal Employees and Supreme Court Bar Societies was connected to Park Road by 600 kanals of land and some time ago, a youth belonging to the area was killed while connecting the societies and Park Road. The locals staged a protest against the lack of progress in the murder case and held the inauguration ceremony from the rival housing society, the local people protested and vandalized. A heavy contingent of police and district administration reached the spot to bring the situation under control. The locals during their protest demanded the government that they should be compensated for the lands.

Malaysia to hold general election on Nov. 19

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia will hold the general election on Nov. 19, the country's election commission said on Thursday. The nomination of candidates will be held on Nov. 5, providing two weeks for official election campaigning, commission chairman Abdul Ghani Salleh told a press conference. There will be 363,515 election workers who will operate 8,958 voting centers across the country to serve a total of 21,173,638 registered voters, the official said. Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob dissolved parliament on Oct. 10, paving the way for a snap election, citing the need to end the political uncertainty which has seen two prime ministers appointed since 2020 following the resignation of former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad in February of that year. - APP

Over 150 killed in 2 days of fighting in Sudan's south

KHARTOUM: At least 150 people have been killed in two days of fighting in the latest ethnic clashes triggered by land disputes in Sudan's southern Blue Nile state, a medic said Thursday. The fighting is some of the worst in recent months. Clashes in Sudan's troubled Blue Nile state broke out last week after reported arguments over land between members of the Hausa people and rival groups. The fighting has centered around the Wad al-Mahi area near Roseires, some 500 kilometres (310 miles) south of the capital Khartoum. "A total 150 people including women, children, and elderly were killed between Wednesday and Thursday," said Abbas Moussa, head of Wad al-Mahi hospital. "Around 86 people were also wounded in the violence." On Wednesday, residents in the area reported intense gunfire and houses set on fire. Last week, clashes in the same area sparked by "a dispute over land issues" left at least 13 people dead and 24 injured, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Authorities have since imposed an overnight curfew to contain the violence. - APP

British PM Liz Truss announces resignation

Truss says she will stand down as leader of the Conservative Party, triggering a contest to elect her successor

NEWS DESK

LONDON: British Prime Minister Liz Truss has announced she will stand down as leader of the Conservative Party after her policies triggered economic turmoil and sharply divided the party. Speaking outside her Downing Street office on Thursday, Truss said she could not deliver the promises she made when she was running for Conservative leader, having lost the faith of her party. "I cannot deliver the mandate on which I was elected by the Conservative Party. I have therefore spoken to His Majesty the King to notify him that I am resigning as leader of the Conservative Party," she said in a hastily arranged statement. Truss, who has been prime minister for just 45 days, said she will remain as prime minister and party leader until a successor is chosen. The leadership contest should be concluded by October 28, Graham Brady, the chair of the Conservative Party's 1922 Committee said. The opposition Labour party called for an immediate general election. "The Tories cannot respond to their latest shambles by yet again simply clicking their fingers and shuffling the people at the top without the consent of the British people. We need a general election - now," opposition leader Sir Keir Starmer said in a statement. The Conservative Party "has shown it



no longer has a mandate to govern," he added. "After 12 years of Tory failure, the British people deserve so much better than this revolving door of chaos." On Wednesday, Truss had pledged to stay in power, saying she was "a fighter and not a quitter". But she could not hold on after a senior minister quit her government with a barrage of criticism and a vote in the House of Commons descended into chaos and acrimony just days after she was forced to abandon many of her economic policies. A growing number of lawmakers had called for Truss to resign after weeks of turmoil sparked by her economic plan. When it was unveiled by the government last month, the "mini-budget" triggered financial turmoil and a political crisis that has seen the replacement of Truss' chancellor, several policy U-turns and a breakdown of discipline in the governing Conservative Party. Lawmakers' anger grew after a Wednesday evening vote over fracking for shale gas - a practice that Truss wants to

resume despite opposition from many Conservatives - produced chaotic scenes in Parliament. With Conservatives holding a large parliamentary majority, an opposition call for a fracking ban was easily defeated. But there were displays of anger in the House of Commons, with party whips accused of using heavy-handed tactics to secure votes. Rumours swirled that Conservative Chief Whip Wendy Morton, who is responsible for party discipline, and her deputy had resigned. Hours later, Truss's office said both remained in their jobs. With opinion polls giving the Labour Party a large and growing lead, the Conservative Party decided its only hope of avoiding electoral oblivion was to replace Truss. But they remain divided over who exactly should do that. The party is eager to avoid another divisive leadership contest like the race a few months ago that saw Truss defeat ex-Chancellor Rishi Sunak. Among potential replacements are Sunak and House of Commons leader Penny Mordaunt. Boris Johnson, who resigned as prime minister earlier this year, was expected to stand in the leadership contest, the Times reported. The newly appointed Chancellor Jeremy Hunt will not stand in the contest, according to UK media reports. Whoever it is will be the country's third prime minister this year. A national election does not have to be held until 2024.

PPP not running away from LG polls: Murtaza

KARACHI: Sindh Government Spokesman Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Thursday said that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) was not running away from the local government (LG) elections as it was a popular party in the province. The party, he said, would grab the mayoral slots both in Karachi and Hyderabad, whenever the LG polls were held, as evident from the Malir by-election where it had won back the National Assembly seat. Actually, the PPP government was committed to improve the local government system and that was why the summary for amendments in the municipal laws would be sent for approval in the next 48 hours, he said addressing the opening ceremony of the 100 kilowatt power generation project here at the Kidney Hill Park. Director General Parks Junaidullah Khan and other officers were also present on the occasion. Murtaza Wahab, who is also Administrator Karachi, said the Karachi Municipal Corporation (KMC) had planted trees across the city to combat climate change. The KMC was setting a new tradition in the form of a green energy project to emulate by the LG bodies elsewhere in the country, he added. Barrister Murtaza said the KMC was also working on the concept of green energy and in the first phase, solar panels were being installed in the Kidney Hill Park to generate 100 kilowatts of electricity. - APP

Ukraine face blackouts after Russian air strikes

KYIV: Ukrainians endured power cuts including the first blackouts imposed by grid authorities since the war began on Thursday to allow the repair of infrastructure destroyed by Russian air strikes as Kyiv forces pressed on towards the city of Kherson. Although Ukraine is advancing against Russian troops in the east and the south, it is struggling to protect power generating facilities and other utilities from missile and drone strikes that appear designed to disrupt and demoralise as winter approaches. People across the country were urged to use less power as the government enforced nationwide curbs on electricity usage between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m., the first such restrictions since Russia Feb. 24 invasion and including blackouts in some areas. That followed a barrage of Russian attacks that President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said had struck a third of all power plants. Meanwhile the northeast region of Sumy went without water as some Kyiv grocery stores reported sales of bottled water picking up in preparation for possible shortages there. There is much anger against Russian leaders and Russian people, Mikheylo Holovenko, a Kyiv resident, told Reuters.

Rupee slide slows down

KARACHI: The downward slide of the Pakistani rupee slowed on Thursday as the encouraging current account deficit number has lent some support to the local unit. According to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the local currency closed at Rs220.95 in the interbank market after depreciating registering a meagre loss of 0.03% against the greenback compared to Wednesday's close of 220.88. The market took positive cues from the current account deficit released a day earlier, which narrowed 37% to \$2.2 billion in the first quarter of the current fiscal year due to lower imports and a rise in exports. Commenting on the rupee's movement, Pakistan-Kuwait Head of Research Samiullah Tariq said better than expected current account deficit number has improved the sentiment. "Slight movement was exhibited by the rupee," he said. Regarding the outlook, Tariq said it had improved significantly with a lower current account deficit number. - DNA

Pakistan desires to strengthen ties with Uzbekistan: Khawaja

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Uzbekistan which are based on historical, cultural and religious commonalities and desires to further strengthen ties in all fields of mutual interests especially defence. He expressed these views during a call on paid by Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan Aybek Arif Usmanov at his office in Islamabad on Thursday. The minister mentioned that Pakistan was amongst the first three countries to open an embassy in Tashkent in June 1992, a news release said. Khawaja Asif

said Pakistan condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations in the region and across the globe. The minister emphasised on Pakistan's indispensable role in resolution of Afghan crisis and sustainable peace in the region. Moreover, Khawaja Asif said Pakistan desired lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan. "Instability in Afghanistan has serious consequences for the entire region. We would like to strengthen multifaceted cooperation with Uzbekistan." The visiting ambassador conveyed and reaffirmed the commitment of the people and the government of Uzbekistan to work closely with Pakistan to further strengthen their bilateral relations, especially in the field of defence.

Nawaz contacts party leaders, rejects backdoor links with Imran Khan

DNA

LONDON: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Quaid Nawaz Sharif contacted the party leaders and rejected the rumours about his backdoor links with PTI chairman Imran Khan. According to sources in the PML-N, Nawaz Sharif said that the general elections will be held on the stipulated time. "The coalition government will provide the relief to the masses

at all costs," he was quoted as saying. Nawaz Sharif, according to sources, has rejected the explanation of the party leaders regarding the defeat in the by-elections. Nawaz Sharif also deliberated on forming an interim set-up of the PML-N till return of Nawaz Sharif to the homeland. A key responsibility will be assigned to Maryam Nawaz. According to sources, the interim set-up will have the power to deal with the all matters and decision-making on key matters.

Sherry meets EU envoy to discuss flood relief efforts

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman met Ambassador of the European Union (EU) Dr Riina Kionka on Thursday to discuss ongoing rescue and relief efforts in the flood-affected regions and further technical and financial assistance needed for the rehabilitation of the affectees. EU Ambassador Dr Riina Kionka expressed great concern about the devastation wreaked by the floods and assured full support to Pakistan from the European Union, a news release said. Thanking the EU Ambassador for their

support, Minister Rehman said, "We appreciate EU's support during these trying times and are looking towards the international community to assist in the rehabilitation process. Due to Pakistan's unique topography, each province has different needs. We are in coordination with the provincial governments but we sorely need assistance and technical capacity. We will be bringing the case of Pakistan at the forefront in the upcoming COP-27 and Loss & Damage and Adaptation will be at the core of country's COP-27 agenda. Ease of access to the Climate Finance will be another agenda at the conference." Dr Riina Kionka expressed deep regret for the loss of lives due to the devastating floods and assured full support from the European Union. - DNA

China supports Saudi Arabian intention to join BRICS

BEIJING: China on Thursday voiced support for the expansion of BRICS membership after reports about Saudi Arabia showing its intention to join the group that presently comprises Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. "As the BRICS chair for this year, China has actively supported the BRICS in starting the membership expansion process and advanced the 'BRICS Plus' cooperation," Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Wang Wenbin said during his regular briefing. The spokesperson said that BRICS came into being in the wake of the arrival of an era of major development, transformation and adjustment. For 16 years since its inception, it has delivered fruitful outcomes, making important contributions to the cause of world peace and development. "That is why BRICS has gained extensive recognition and support from the international community," he added. He said that more and more countries wanted to become a member of BRICS, make joint efforts to overcome difficulties and challenges, and realize common goals of development and prosperity. Wang Wenbin remarked that the 14th BRICS Summit was successfully held in June earlier this year. President Xi Jinping noted at the meeting that BRICS countries had gathered not in a closed club or an exclusive circle, but a big family of mutual support and a partnership for win-win cooperation. He said that at the summit, BRICS leaders reached important common understandings about BRICS expansion and expressed support for the discussion on the standards and procedures of the expansion. "This has been well received in the international community and many countries have expressed interest in joining the BRICS. China supports and welcomes this," he added. He said that going forward, China would work with fellow BRICS members to steadily proceed with the BRICS expansion process and enable more partners to join this promising endeavor. According to South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman expressed the desire to join BRICS. - APP

Palestinians strike over Israel killings

Teen dies a month after being shot by Israeli forces, and one-day shutdown called after suspect in Jerusalem attack killed in shootout

DNA

RAMALLAH: A Palestinian teenager has succumbed to wounds he sustained one month ago when he was shot by the Israeli army in the occupied West Bank. The Palestinian health ministry announced that Mohammad Fadi Nouri, 16, died on Thursday. Nouri was shot in the stomach during confrontations on the outskirts of Ramallah in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, the ministry said. The teen's death was announced as Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank began a one-day general strike and called for confrontations with Israeli forces. Thursday's shutdown came in response to the killing

of another Palestinian, 22-year-old Uday Tamimi, on Wednesday night. Israeli authorities accused Tamimi of an October 8 shooting at the main checkpoint into the Shuafat refugee camp in East Jerusalem, in which one Israeli soldier was killed and another wounded. Following a 12-day manhunt, Israeli forces killed Tamimi in a shootout after he allegedly carried out a second shooting near the illegal Israeli settlement of Maaleh Adumim in the West Bank. Israeli media reported a security guard was treated for minor wounds to the hand. A surveillance video of the gun battle, which lasted for about a minute, was shared on social media. Tamimi was pronounced dead at the scene. Israeli forces imposed a four-day siege on

the Shuafat refugee camp and surrounding areas after the October 8 attack, in which 130,000 people were prevented from entering or exiting. All major Palestinian political groups and institutions throughout the West Bank and East Jerusalem, including the ruling Fatah party, announced a general strike on Wednesday night. Hundreds of Palestinian youth, including armed men, held marches across several Palestinian cities and refugee camps. Confrontations broke out with Israeli forces in several locations on Thursday, including at the main crossing between Ramallah and Jerusalem, in Bethlehem, Nablus and Hebron. The Fatah party said in a statement that Thursday would be a day of "escalation on all confrontation points over the soul of

the martyr and hero Uday Tamimi and in condemnation of the occupation's crimes". The General Union of Palestinian Teachers said the strike would involve all schools and the education ministry. All Palestinian universities in the West Bank also joined the strike. Hamas, the armed movement that governs the besieged Gaza Strip, said in its own statement that Tamimi "is a national icon who represents Palestinian courage in his struggle against the occupier". The "joint operations room", which is made up of the main political parties in Gaza, condemned the killing and called on residents of the Palestinian territory to stand in a moment of silence on the streets at noon on Thursday as a salute to Tamimi.