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Italy's PM Meloni says she is not a step behind men

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Sindh seeks more ADB funds after devastation

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Djokovic sees good signs over Australia entry

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Briefs

Long March to bring revolution:

DNA

SIALKOT: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan on Wednesday said that he is taking out to the streets, not for the long march but to bring revolution. Addressing an event, the former premier went on to say that his long march is all set to kick off from Friday (October 28), adding that he will pour out onto the streets to bring actual freedom to the county. Saying that it is unfortunate that Pakistan has not managed to get actual freedom, Imran urged his supporters to come out for the sake of their children's future.

Authorities scared even of Arshad's body: Fawad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PTI Senior Vice President Fawad Chaudhary lashed out at the imported government and said that the authorities seemed so terrified of dead body of Arshad Sharif because they were constantly changing location of the ambulance as if he would stand up. In a statement on Wednesday, Fawad Chaudhary said that late at night, he was waiting for the dead body of Arshad Sharif at the airport but authorities were constantly changing location of the ambulance so as the people could not gather there.

Arshad Sharif's funeral today

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The body of senior journalist Arshad Sharif, who was assassinated in Kenya, has arrived in Islamabad. Early on Wednesday morning, the jet carrying his body touched down at the Islamabad Airport. Arshad Sharif's funeral prayer will be held on Thursday at 2:00 PM, at the Shah Faisal Mosque. He will be buried in the nation's capital's H-11 cemetery. On the evening of Sunday, October 23, Sharif was shot and murdered by Kenyan police.

Journalist's killing PM lambasts Imran over 'petty politics'

The premier says Khan is "playing a dangerous game", asks PTI chief to avoid baseless allegations

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday criticised PTI Chairman Imran Khan for using slain journalist Arshad Sharif's killing for "petty politics" and maligning state institutions. Taking to Twitter, the premier wrote that Khan is "playing a dangerous game". "He is using tragic killing of Arshad Sharif for petty politics & going to the extent of casting aspersions on state institutions," PM Shehbaz tweeted, asking the PTI chief to avoid resorting to baseless allegations. "He should be patient & wait for findings of Judicial Commission instead of resorting to baseless allegations," the prime minister wrote. On Tuesday, the PTI chairman used the term "target killing" to describe what had happened with Sharif, who was killed in a case of "mistaken identity" by the Kenyan police when he was travelling to Nairobi from Kenya's Magadi town on October 23. "No matter what anyone says, I know that Arshad Sharif became a victim of target killing," Khan said, claiming he received information that Sharif would be killed to silence the truth. Khan added that he had asked the journalist to leave the country, but he denied it. He shared that Sharif was receiving threats from unknown numbers.

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Sloganeering: MBS orders release of Pakistanis

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz on Wednesday ordered the release of Pakistani citizens jailed in Saudi Arabia for sloganeering at Masjid-e-Nabwi in April this year. The decision was taken by the crown prince following a request by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who concluded his visit to Saudi Arabia where he attended an investment summit, offered Umrah and paid respects at Roza-e-Rasool (Peace Be Upon Him). He also met Saudi Crown Prince and discussed the bilateral as well as the regional situation. The prime minister had requested the crown prince to

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PTI's march to reach the Capital on Nov 4

Islamabad police say 13,086 officers to be deployed in capital

SHAJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: PTI leader Asad Umar on Wednesday announced the itinerary of his party's "Haqeeqi Azadi March" to Islamabad, slated to commence on October 28 (Friday) from Lahore's Liberty Chowk. The march's commencement date was announced on Tuesday by former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan. "We will gather at Liberty Chowk at 11am on Friday, and set off for Islamabad," he had said. "We will go to Islamabad treading GT (Grand Trunk) Road and occupy the point already allowed by the courts. "We will stay peaceful. If any disruption comes, it would be from the other side, not ours. We are aiming for soft revolution. We are not going to Islamabad to create any mischief," Imran assured, adding that despite all his peaceful intentions he was ready for arrest as well. Revealing the protest schedule in a series of tweets today, Umar said that the march will begin on Friday from Lahore's Liberty Chowk and move onto the Azadi Chowk via the Ferozepur Road through Ichhra,

Continued on Page 06

SC rejects govt's request

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Wednesday rejected the federal government's request to immediately stop PTI chief Imran Khan's long march to Islamabad, with Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial advising the government to hold talks with the former prime minister. The federal government filed a contempt of court plea against the PTI chairman in the Supreme Court over his long march to the federal capital. In its petition, the government said, "Imran Khan is making announcements to attack Islamabad", which it claimed was a violation of a court order. It urged the apex court to direct the PTI chief to ensure

Continued on Page 06



MADINAH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and others offering prayers led by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar at Roza-e-Rasool. - DNA

Sharif's murder 'planned in Pakistan'



DNA

KARACHI: PTI leader Faisal Vawda on Wednesday claimed that journalist Arshad Sharif's murder was "pre-planned" and "conspired in Pakistan", adding that the evidence of the crime has been erased. At a press conference in the Islamabad Press Club, he vowed to reveal the truth behind Sharif's killing. "No evidence or Arshad's mobile or laptop will be found because they have been erased. "This is a cold-blooded planned murder," he alleged, adding that he was in contact with the journalist since the day Sharif left the country. "It is being said that around 20 bullets were shot and Arshad Sharif was killed. But this did not happen. According to me, he was shot from inside the car or close range. He received 2 bullets, in the head and chest, not 20 bullets." Vawda claimed that the story regarding a child's kidnapping surrounding the journalist's murder was false, saying that if a child was present in the car, why would the police open fire. "This was cold planned brutal murder just of Arshad Sharif in this car, not anyone else." The PTI leader said that he won't name the people involved in the crime. "I made video and have given names of those people [...] I have given those names internationally. I have given millions of dollars.

Team to probe Arshad's killing reconstituted

The ISI official from a team formed to investigate killing of journalist is excluded

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The government on Wednesday excluded the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) official from a team formed to investigate the killing of journalist Arshad Sharif in Kenya, cutting the team's size from three to two and leaving only Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the Intelligence Bureau (IB) representatives on it. Initially, the interior minister had on Tuesday formed a three-member team - comprising FIA director Athar Wahid, IB deputy director general Omar Shahid Hamid and Lt Col Saad Ahmed of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) - to probe the murder. However, the Ministry of Interior's notification - a copy of which is available with Dawn.com - issued today only mentioned the IB and FIA officials. It did not offer an explanation for the ISI official's exclusion.

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Kenya police claim they were shot at first

AGENCIES

NAIROBI: Days after the tragic killing of renowned journalist Arshad Sharif, Kenyan police on Wednesday claimed that the fatal shooting that ended the life of Sharif was "instigated" by his companion in the car they were in. According to a Kenyan media report, Arshad Sharif was aboard a Toyota Land Cruiser V8, registration number KDG 200M, through which the fire from the General Service Unit (GSU) officers penetrated, killing the journalist.

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Russia rehearses nuclear deterrence capabilities

Russian President Vladimir Putin remotely observed the annual exercise, called "Grom" or "Thunder", which uses test launches to put Moscow's nuclear forces through their paces in a show of force designed to deter and intimidate foes

FOREIGN DESK

KHERSON: Russia rehearsed its response to a nuclear attack on Wednesday in an exercise that involved nuclear submarines, strategic bombers and ballistic missiles at a time when tensions are high over a "dirty bomb" allegation it has made against Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin remotely observed the annual exercise, called "Grom" or "Thunder", which uses test launches to put Moscow's nuclear forces through their paces in a show of force designed to deter and intimidate foes.

Russian officials said test launches of nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles had passed off successfully. Putin was cited by the RIA news agency as saying the potential for conflict in the world and region remained high. The Pentagon said a day earlier that Russia had notified it of its intention to carry out the exercises at a time when NATO is rehearsing its own use of U.S. nuclear bombs based in Europe in its annual "Steadfast Noon" war games. The nuclear muscle flexing is sensitive because Russia is on the back foot in Ukraine and has accused Ukraine of planning to detonate a "dirty bomb" laced with radioactive material.

Kyiv and the West say there is no evidence for the allegation and that the warning looks designed to escalate tension around the war in Ukraine or to serve as the justification for some kind of Russian battlefield escalation. Western officials have expressed fear that Moscow may be tempted to use a low-yield "tactical" nuclear weapon in Ukraine to try to force Kyiv to capitulate at a time when Ukrainian forces are advancing inside the Russian-occupied Kherson province, threatening a major defeat for Moscow. U.S. President Joe Biden warned Moscow on Tuesday that such a move would be an "incredibly serious mistake."

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Tunisian envoy, APTMA agree to strengthen trade

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Borhene El Kamal, ambassador of Tunisia, and the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) leadership Wednesday agreed to strengthen efforts to enhance bilateral trade relations in the larger interest of the two countries.

The ambassador visited the APTMA Northern Zone office where he was welcomed by Kamran Arshad, senior vice chairman, Asad Shafi, vice chairman, Raza Baqir, secretary general, and other senior members of the Association. Former central chairman APTMA Abdul Rahim Nasir, along with other senior members, was also present. The visiting envoy said the online negotiations on a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) had started three years ago and authorities of both the countries are in contact with each other to

finalising the agreement. He hoped for breakthroughs after signing of the PTA, which would lead to upsurge in bilateral trade.

According to him, a Tunisian business delegation was also planning to visit Pakistan to look for the business opportunities in the coming months. It would visit APTMA and other trade associations, he added.

Senior Vice Chairman APTMA Kamran Arshad appreciated the role of the Tunisian embassy in pursuing PTA with Pakistan. He assured him of persuading the Commerce Ministry of Pakistan by APTMA to expedite the process.

He said the APTMA would welcome the delegation in the coming months to negotiate joint ventures (JVs) between the two countries. Both the countries might have JVs in areas like man-made fibres, denim, twill, drill, shirting materials and other technical textiles, he added. Earlier, he highlighted the sig-

nificance of cooperation, collaboration, and JVs of the industrial sectors of the two countries. He said an early signing of the PTA between the two countries would be beneficial to the textile sectors of the two countries. Also, he suggested signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between APTMA and the Embassy of Tunisia.

Vice Chairman APTMA Asad Shafi said Pakistan's exports to Tunisia stood at \$24.5 million with 31 per cent component of cotton and imports were at \$2.4 million in 2021. He said there was a strong potential for expansion in bilateral trade between the two countries, in particular, in the fields of textile, food, and chemicals.

According to him, the emerging status of Tunisia in the African countries and the geostrategic location of Pakistan could be beneficial to each other.

He also extended a vote of thanks to the visiting envoy at the end of the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of France Nicolas Galey calls on Chief Minister Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi. DNA

1721 fancy number plates removed

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has removed 1721 non-pattern number plates and 1071 tinted glasses from the vehicles plying on the roads of federal capital during last one month.

Joint operations of Excise and Taxation Department and Islamabad Transport Authority (ITA) were underway against vehicles using unauthorised number plates and having tinted glasses to eliminate VIP culture from the society. Similarly, commercial vehicles sans fitness certificate, causing environmental pollution were also being checked to ensure safe road environment in the city, secretary ITA Malik Noman told APP on Tuesday. — APP

Two cousins drowned in Chenab river

DNA

MUZAFFARGARH: Two cousins who were angling at Chenab river were drowned near Chak Robari here Wednesday, said Rescue 1122. After being alerted by a caller, the rescuers reached the spot where two eyewitness told them two youngsters were angling at the river when suddenly one of them slipped into it, the sources said. They quoted them as saying that another young man jumped into the river to save his cousin but he also went missing after he lost balance after jumping. The victims were later identified as Alyan (10) and Ali Raza (22), they said, adding that the body of one of the drowned youngsters was recovered by rescuers while search operation was discontinued after the darkness fell.

Food Dept arrest 274 wheat smugglers

QAZI SHOAB KHAN

ATTOCK: Punjab Food Department Rawalpindi arrested 274 wheat smugglers along with recovery of 5338 metric tons of wheat and wheat products from their possession during the months of August to October. This was told by the District Food Controller Rawalpindi Sufian Asif Awan while briefing newsmen about the anti wheat smuggling activities by the food department at Brahma-Bhattar toll plaza near here on Wednesday. While, replying different questions, he said from August 1 to October 23, the food department has seized the bids of 274 vehicles including 32 wheels trailers, trucks and mini trucks to smuggle wheat and flour from the various parts of the Punjab to KP. He said that

seven check posts were established at various points of the district to check the anti wheat smuggling activities. He said that bids were foiled at designated and un-designated routes especially Islamabad-Peshawar motorway (M-1), Rawalpindi-Peshawar GT road and link routes especially Taxila-Khanpur road and Taxila-Hattar road. He said that 274 persons were booked and sent behind bars after registration of cases under food act for wheat and flour smuggling during this period. District Food Controller Rawalpindi Sufian Asif Awan while narrating the details of confiscated 5338 metric ton of wheat and wheat products, he said that among this confiscated items, as many as 3449.10 metric ton of wheat and subsequently confiscated. He added that 120 vehicles

were also taken into custody and as number of crew members were booked and arrested accordingly. He further said that 154 vehicles of wheat products like flour, fine flour and maida metric ton wheat products were foiled during the period. He said that during the crackdown against the wheat products smuggling mafia, 1888.90 metric ton wheat products smuggling bids were foiled and 154 accused were booked under FoodAct, he added. He further said that 80 truckers point were established to supply flour to the masses on daily basis at their door steps in various markets and bazaars across the district. He said that with the recommendation of the concerned assistant commissioners of the relevant tehsils, flour is being supplied to as many as 2200 shops on daily basis across the district.

Red Crescent GB delegation calls on PRCS Chairman

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Red Crescent is well known for serving the humanity without discrimination and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, all branches of PRCS are diligently engaged in humanitarian endeavors and we will utilize all resources to strengthen our programs and bring innovation in service delivery, PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari expressed these views during the meeting with Gilgit-Baltistan Branch Chairman Brigadier (Rtd) Saleem Mehmood and Secretary Imran Rana at the National Headquarters here on Wednesday.

On this occasion, Brigadier (Rtd) Saleem Mehmood



congratulated Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari on assuming the office and expressed good wishes. He briefed PRCS Chairman regarding ongoing programs and initiatives by PRCS GB

Branch and about the timely and effective assistance provided to the families who were affected by the recent floods. Shahid Ahmed Laghari assured that PRCS National

Headquarters would take all possible steps to make all PRCS branches more innovative, advanced and dynamic.

He appreciated the efforts and actions undertaken by GB provincial branch to mitigate the sufferings of flood-affected people. "PRCS Gilgit Baltistan efforts are highly commendable, the branch executed the flood response in timely manner and provided relief goods to the flood victims who were in dire need of it", he added. Later, PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari presented commemorative shields to Gilgit-Baltistan Branch Chairman Brigadier (Rtd) Saleem Mehmood and Secretary Imran Rana.

All utility stores providing subsidy

ISLAMABAD: On the special directions of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Utility Stores Corporation is providing subsidies on basic essential commodities for the convenience of the people across the country. These essential commodities include flour, sugar, ghee, pulses and rice. Utility Stores Corporation is making access to this subsidy easier and more transparent. From November 1, 2022 customers of Utility Stores Corporation will SMS their ID card number to 5566 from their mobile before coming to the utility store and they will be provided with a OTP for shopping. —APP

Promoting national interests primary responsibility of envoys

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf Wednesday said that Ambassadors play a pivotal role in promoting and protecting the country's interests and appointment to such a crucial position is both an honor and entails great responsibility. He made these remarks during a courtesy call by Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Ireland Ms. Aisha Ferooqi at Parliament House, said a news release.

The Speaker congratulated the Ambassador on her new assignment and expressed the hope that she would play her due role in furthering bilateral and parliamentary relations between the two sides with dedication. He underscored that Ire-



land hosts a vast Pakistani diaspora which was contributing greatly to the progress and prosperity of both countries. The Embassy should make all-out efforts to facilitate all those Pakistanis and further carve opportunities for the country's students, professionals and businessmen, the Speaker

added. While talking about the importance of parliament to parliament contacts, the Speaker asked the Ambassador to especially focus on playing her role in furthering parliament exchanges between the two sides. He also welcomed the recent decision of the Irish government to open a resident embassy in Pakistan and said that this initiative would further bring people of both countries closer. The Ambassador-designate paid gratitude to the Honorable Speaker for his kind compliments and assured him of full contribution in further strengthening parliamentary as well as bilateral relations between the two sides. —APP

Increasing number of drug addicts, a serious concern says Addl IG

BAHAWALPUR: Why do educated youth get involved in drug trafficking and use? Dr Ehsan Sadiq Addl IG South Punjab Dr. Ehsan Sadiq, Additional IG, South Punjab, expressed these thoughts in an exclusive talk with Islamabad Post.

Dr. Ehsan Sadiq while speaking said that Police operations under the Narcotics Mukao campaign are going on in South Punjab. A month-long drug crackdown in South Punjab resulted in the arrest of 2,586 drug dealers and 153 drug dealers. 2796 cases registered and 414 cases registered under 9-C. 810 kg of hashish, 76000 liters of liquor and 250 active liquor vats were recovered. 20000 liters of liquor, 500 kg of heroin and 43 kg of opium were also recovered. 1153 kg of hemp, 29 kg of poppy and 3 kg of ice were recovered. 50 addicts were admitted to rehabilitation centers.

In South Punjab, the crackdown on gambling houses is also going on. 23 gambling house owners and 600 gamblers were arrested. Efforts are being made day and night to establish law and order in South Punjab. Complete elimination of criminal elements is a priority. A strategy has been put in place to control the inci-

dents of theft and robbery. The crackdown on drug peddlers has reduced the crime rate. The criminals of Kot Addu tragedy will be arrested soon. DPO Ahmad Nawaz and SP Rab Nawaz Tala have been assigned to arrest the criminals. Raids are being conducted to arrest the criminals. The suspects are being taken into police custody. One of the major problems of our time is the scourge of drugs. Hardly any region of the earth is safe from it. The promotion of drugs among the young generation is a matter of concern for every sphere of life. Due to this, many houses have been destroyed. According to a conservative estimate, millions of people around the world

are caught in this problem. The moment of concern is that this number is increasing every year. A large number of men as well as women are suffering from this addiction. According to the World Health Organization, every year more than 5 million people worldwide die due to drug use alone. Educational institutions are also not safe from it, but its trend is increasing there. The question arises, why do educated youth get involved in drug trafficking and use? Observations show that unethical education system and inattention of parents make children prone to waywardness and following this path they become addicted to drugs. It is a living reality that no religion and nation

except Islam has such a strong and coherent system of ethics in accordance with the nature and needs of man, which can meet the requirements of every era. As far as the problem of drug use is concerned, the policy of Islam is clear. It is forbidden in Islam. Allah Ta'ala and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) explained the exact principles of halal and haram. After all, one's personal interests have nothing to do with it, nor can one declare something as halal or haram by his own will. Rather, no one, big or small, has any immunity in its use. There are three places in the Holy Qur'an because of the cause of drunkenness. It was even said that do not

go near the prayer while intoxicated.

Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Umar (RA) is the narrator that the benefactor of humanity, peace be upon him, said that every intoxicant is forbidden, that every intoxicant is forbidden. And there is a further explanation in the tradition of Umm al-Mu'minin Hazrat Aisha Siddiqi, that every intoxicant is forbidden, and every intoxicant is forbidden. Similarly, it is narrated from Hazrat Jabir that even a small amount of that which causes intoxication is prohibited. Some people, greedy and greedy to become rich overnight, become victims of the drug mafia. These people want to use this killer poison as a tool to decorate their lives by putting their conscience to deep sleep and being deaf to the distinction between halal and haram. As a result of this, the punishment of the hereafter is the same, but most of the time they are humiliated and disgraced in this world or they eat air of prison. Sometimes drugs are used in search of solace. Away from religion, people seek peace of mind in worldly wealth and pleasures.



ECP organizes painting competition

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Wednesday organized a two-day painting competition among students of across country colleges and universities at PNCA aiming to highlight the importance of vote among the country's youth. The purpose of the competition themed "Your vote to a promising future" was to motivate the youth to fully participate in the electioneering process. The exhibition was inaugurated by ECP Sec-

retary Omer Hamid Khan. As many as 280 paintings were on the display, each depicted unique idea to motivate the youth to cast their vote. The ECP has announced prizes for three first winners of the competition and appreciation certificates among promising contenders. A panel of judges included Ahmed Bilal Mehbub PILDAT, Nagin Hayat of Nomad Art Gallery and Maryam Ahmed, Director of Visual Art, PNCA would decide about the winners. First

prize will be Rs 100,000, second Rs 50,000 and third Rs 25,000. The prize distribution ceremony will be held on 7 on National Voters Day. Speaking on the occasion, the ECP secretary said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has been conducting a special awareness campaign for students in various educational institutions throughout the country to create awareness about the electoral process and students could play their role as responsible. —APP



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For further information please contact the following.

Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman
Mobile: 0300 8553342

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
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
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TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

National Drug Use Survey Pakistan 2022-24 launched

The survey has been made possible with the support of U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law



MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Today, the Ministry of Narcotics Control, Government of Pakistan, U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime jointly launched the National Drug Use Survey Pakistan 2022-24 in Islamabad. In 2012 and 2013, UNODC in collaboration with the Ministry of Narcotics Control, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), and other national stakeholders conducted a national survey on drug use to estimate the extent and patterns of drug use in Pakistan. The overall results of the survey revealed that approximately 6 percent of the population - 9 percent of the adult male population and 2.9 percent of the adult female population - equivalent to 6.7 million people - had used a substance other than alcohol and tobacco in the preceding year. This year the World Drug Report 2022 revealed an estimated 284 million people worldwide had used drugs in 2020. Cannabis remains by far the world's most used drug, and the report also notes an increase in use of amphetamines. Globally, the report estimates that 11.2 million people worldwide injected drugs during the period of the study. Around half of this number were living with hepatitis C, 1.4 million were living with HIV, and 1.2 million were living with

both. Since the previous survey, there have been changing trends of drug use in the region, especially anecdotal information of a rapid increase in the use of synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine. To have scientific data on the current situation of drug use in Pakistan, the national drug use survey 2022-24 will be conducted to provide reliable evidence of the extent to which the population is using drugs and suffering from drug use disorders. This survey will be comprised of a household survey and high-risk drug use study that will have national coverage, including the major districts in each province. This survey is being carried out jointly by the Ministry of Narcotics Control and UNODC with financial support from U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. Dr Jeremy Milsom Representative UNODC in his welcome remarks thanked Mr Nawabzada Shazain Bugti, Federal Minister for Narcotics Control, and his Ministry for their support in taking lead on the survey and U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) for their gracious financial support to conduct the national drug use survey and drug prevention and treatment interventions in the country, he also mentioned that the comprehensive data on drug use patterns and trends is key to developing effective prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programmes and

the Survey report will serve to promote thoughtful discussions, inform policies and strengthen national cooperation. Mr Andrew J. Schofer - Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy Islamabad in his speech thanked the Federal Minister for Narcotics Control, UNODC, and other dignitaries for their partnership. DCM Schofer further stated that, "through this project, the U.S. Embassy's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) will support the Government of Pakistan to provide evidence-based information to shed light on changing patterns of drug use and allow for stronger implementation of programs and refinement of policies. The launch of the survey is an important milestone in the availability of evidence-based information on drug use in Pakistan, filling an often-overlooked gap. The information and recommendations contained in the completed survey report will help to save lives by informing the development of drug prevention and treatment programs and suggesting needed policy or regulatory changes. The United States is proud to partner with the Government of Pakistan on drug demand reduction efforts. To date, INL has provided \$24 million U.S. dollars - that's 522 million Pakistani rupees - of support for drug treatment and prevention efforts in Pakistan. I am also pleased to share with you that this year we celebrate the 75-year anniversary of the partnership between the United States and

Pakistan. The U.S. government, through INL, has invested more than \$1 billion dollars over the last 40 years to improve citizen security and enhance law enforcement capacity across Pakistan." Ms Giovanna Campello Chief of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation section UNODC Vienna office in her speech thanked the Ministry of narcotics control, INL and the participants for showing their concern on the drug situation and importance of the national drug use survey in Pakistan, she talked about the importance of drug survey in understanding the on-ground drug situation, the gaps and challenges to address the drug prevention and treatment interventions. She also talked about the efforts that are being made in collaboration with the government of Pakistan in developing a mechanism to ensure quality drug treatment services and also scaling up the capacity of drug treatment professionals to deliver quality drug treatment services that are in line with the international standards for drug treatment. Ms Humaira Ahmed Federal Secretary Ministry of Narcotics Control in her speech appreciated UNODC for their technical assistance in conducting the national drug use survey and U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs for their generous support for the national drug use survey and drug prevention and treatment interventions in the country. The Federal Secretary in her speech mentioned that drug use

problem has emerged as a serious threat to health and security of the people of Pakistan especially the youth with tendency towards drug use emerging even in educational institutions. emphasized that the drug problem requires a comprehensive multisectoral response from various departments/sectors to address the drug problem. Mr Nawabzada Shazain Bugti, Federal Minister for Narcotics Control, in his closing remarks thanked UNODC for the technical support and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs for the financial support to carry out the National Drug Use Survey. The Federal Minister emphasized on the need for being strategic in the drug prevention and treatment approaches and hoped that this Survey will help by providing information to take stock of drug situation in the country and facilitate in chalking out strategies to effectively combat the challenges of drug abuse. He stressed upon the importance of cooperation across borders to counter the growing drug use problem and urged all stakeholders to remain steadfast in their efforts to achieve the goal for a 'drug free' nation. The ceremony was attended by the dignitaries from Government Ministries, departments, foreign missions, UN organizations, Civil Society organizations etc. The survey has been made possible with the kind support of U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).

Govt. team to leave for Kenya to ascertain facts related to murder of Arshad Sharif

ISLAMABAD: The government has constituted a two-member team to ascertain the facts related to the murder of senior journalist Arshad Sharif from Kenya police and relevant authorities. The revised notification about the members of the team states that it would comprise of Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Director/DIG (Police) Athar Wahid, Intelligence Bureau (IB) Deputy Director General Omar Shahid Hamid which would leave for Kenya to probe the incident. The notification said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Pakistan's High Commission in Nairobi, Kenya will facilitate the aforementioned visit. This team will submit its report to the Interior Division. Minister of Interior Rana Sanaullah said that the team would depart for Kenya immediately to ascertain the facts of the case and would submit a report to the ministry. In Arshad Sharif case, the investigation team will look into the role of a person connected to a private channel in Pakistan in the gold smuggling business in Kenya. The investigation team will examine the complete reasons and motivations behind Arshad Sharif's departure from Pakistan to Dubai and then from Dubai to Kenya. After the confession of a political figure, the investigation team will also examine the factors that forced Arshad Sharif to travel from Pakistan to Dubai and back to Kenya.--APP

Govt to ensure safety of people's life

ISLAMABAD :The government would ensure the safety of people's life and property during the march by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), spokesman of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-F (JUIF) Muhammad Aslam Ghauri said. Talking to APP on Wednesday, he said that it was PTI chief Imran Khan's legal right to carry out march but it should be within the constitutional parameters. The JUIF spokesman said that Imran Khan would not be allowed to play with future of the country like the past. He said that the national leadership and coalition government had saved the nation from this 'tsunami of destruction' in the past and would do so in the future. He said the PTI chief was trying to damage the country's economy through petty political tactics in a bid to get in power again from backdoor channels and with the help of non-state actors.--APP

Rotary meeting held on Pak-German collaboration



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Rotary Club of Islamabad Metropolitan arranged a special talk on "Pak German collaboration to help communities in need" at a local hotel. H.E Alfred Grannas spoke about Germany's contribution to flood relief efforts in Pakistan. He revealed that 70 million euros have been given to Pakistan by Germany in the form of humanitarian aid. However, the reason why the German flag is not visible in the flood relief effort is because in the interest of efficiency, the assistance is given to professional and established humanitarian organizations as these have better coordination at the grassroots levels. "It is not important to be visible, it is important to be efficient," he said. His Excellency emphasized that this giving in times of need is not an act of charity, rather it is an obligation to those in

collaboration in the field of clean drinking water, health care and twinning of German Rotary clubs with Pakistani Club to promote fellowship. His Excellency the German Ambassador, Alfred Grannas spoke about Germany's contribution to flood relief efforts in Pakistan. He revealed that 70 million euros have been given to Pakistan by Germany in the form of humanitarian aid. However, the reason why the German flag is not visible in the flood relief effort is because in the interest of efficiency, the assistance is given to professional and established humanitarian organizations as these have better coordination at the grassroots levels. "It is not important to be visible, it is important to be efficient," he said. His Excellency emphasized that this giving in times of need is not an act of charity, rather it is an obligation to those in

AIOU commences final exams from November 9

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is commencing final examinations of different programs

offered in semester spring 2022 including MA/M.Sc, M.Com, MBA/MPA, M.Ed, and Postgraduate diplomas from November 9, 2022. According to controller examinations, Mian Muhammad Riaz, roll number slips have been uploaded to students' CMS accounts and the date sheet is available on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk) for the programs. Roll number slips are also being dispatched to the postal addresses of the stu-

dents and they are also being informed about the exams through mobile SMS. Moreover, the results of different master's degree programs for autumn semester 2021 including M.Ed (Special Education), M.Sc (Pakistan Studies), MA (Islamic Studies), MA (Quran and Tafsir), MA (Hadith and Seerah), MA (Islamic Law and Fiqh), and MA (Islamic Thought, History, and Culture) have been announced on CMS portal.



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Briefs

Minister stresses NAVTTC, NSU to perform with full capacity

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday said that there was a dire need for NAVTTC and National Skills University to perform at its full capacity.

He stated this while taking briefing from Executive Director National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) Sajid Baloch and Vice Chancellor National Skills University Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar. Senior officials of the ministry also attended the meeting.

Rana Tanveer also emphasized the need to work diligently and complete the ongoing projects at maximum speed.

He urged the management to be pro-active in their approach and enhance the productivity of their institutions so that the youth of Pakistan could be put on the track to success.

The minister said that it was the utmost duty of all of government departments to work with integrity and perform their duty in the most honest and productive manner.

He emphasized the need to increase productivity in the most effective and efficient manner.—APP

Int'l conference on children literature from Oct 31

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL), in collaboration with Daira Ilim-o-Adab Pakistan, will host a three-day international conference titled "Children's Literature: Past, Present and Future" from October 31.

In the conference, national and international writers, scholars, researchers and storytellers across the country are invited to present their literature, thoughts and children-related literature.

The seminar will highlight salient features of children's literature, including its significance and effectiveness, its development in Pakistani languages, international languages and the 21st century. Moreover, the seminar would also hold discussions on children's literature and the digital era, children's interests and future possibilities, tradition and patriotism, and hurdles in children's literature with practical solutions. Renowned writers and intellectuals Irfan Siddiqui and Shoaib Siddiqui would also narrate their childhood stories in a segment titled "Meri Bachpan Beeti".—APP

NHMP returns lost wallet

ISLAMABAD: The National Highway and Motorway Authority (NHMP) on Wednesday returned a lost wallet found on the M1 toll plaza.

According to Spokesperson Motorway Police, NHMP officers found a wallet near the M1 toll plaza which contained an amount of Rs 56,660.

Through a quick investigation, the owner was identified and contacted so the amount and wallet could be handed over.

The owner thanked NHMP for the speedy recovery and delivery of his wallet.

In another incident, NHMP officers found a vehicle parked on the side of the road. One of the two brothers in the vehicle was complaining of severe chest pain. Within minutes, the patient was moved into an ambulance and shifted to MMC Hospital, Mardan. Upon arrival at the hospital, doctors acknowledged that the patient was out of danger due to rapid action by NHMP officers.

DIG Motorways North Zone Muhammad Yusuf Malik and Inspector General Khalid Mahmood appreciated both officers and encouraged them to remain vigilant in order to enhance commuters' safety and confidence.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Romanian Defence Attaché, his spouse and other guest posing for a picture on the occasion of the Armed Force Day of Romania. DNA

Humanitarian aid worth RMB 300,000 departed for Pak

Supplies, donated by the Red Cross Society of China Guangxi Branch, composed of 4,286 blankets will be distributed among the flood affectees in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A batch of humanitarian aid worth RMB 300,000 is on its way to Pakistan, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday.

Shipment of the supplies started last Friday and will arrive at the Karachi Port by sea.

The supplies, donated by the

Red Cross Society of China Guangxi Branch, composed of 4,286 blankets will be distributed among the flood affectees in Pakistan. A launching ceremony was held on this occasion.

Wang Lei, Executive Vice Chairman of the Red Cross Soci-



ety of China Guangxi Branch, expressed his sincere sympathy to the people of Pakistan who suffered from the natural disaster. He hoped that the materials donated by the people of Guangxi could help them overcome the difficulties. He

also wished an early recovery in the flood-hit areas. Ahmed Farooq, Deputy Chief of the Pakistani Embassy in China attended the ceremony online and expressed his thanks to the people of Guangxi. It is learned that the materials will be received by the National Disaster Management Authority of Pakistan.

PTI must keep politics aside: Shazia Marri

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Security Shazia Marri on Wednesday asked Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership to concentrate on public issues instead of holding a long march. Talking to a private news channel, she said that PTI Chairman Imran Khan should avoid creating a law and order situation in the country and she warned that stern action would be taken against the violators.

She further said that Imran Khan wanted to create political instability in the country, adding that the incumbent government was busy promoting friendly relationships with neighbour countries. Replying to a question she



said that the country was still struggling with the challenges of rehabilitation of around 33 million people displaced due to the catastrophic floods, adding that the government had distributed Rs70 billion among 2.6 million flood-hit families of

the country so far to help them recover from the losses to some extent. Almost 97 percent of work for the distribution of relief amount under BISP programme has been completed, she said, adding, over 3.9 percent target population

needs nutrition which is a big challenge in present circumstances. Shazia Marri said transparency is being ensured in the process of distribution of relief money and urged all political leaders to shun the politics of agitation and focus on the rehabilitation of the floods-affected people before the harsh winter season. She also expressed her deep grief and sorrow over the killing of senior journalist Arshad Sharif in Kenya and prayed "May Almighty Allah grant him (Arshad Sharif) a high place in Jannat ul-Firdous and grant patience to the bereaved family, Ameen."—APP

Shah urges Kashmiris to observe October 27 as 'black day'

ISLAMABAD: APMC senior leader and chairman Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party Shabir Ahmed Shah on Wednesday while urging people to observe October 27, as "Black Day", said India's prolonged military occupation over the territory was a threat to peace and stability.

While referring to devastating impacts of the illegal occupation, the incarcerated APMC leader said that the invasion of Kashmir by India on October 27, 1947 was a naked aggression devoid of legal and moral justification. According to press statement received here, he termed it as an atrocious attack on the political and democratic rights of millions of Kashmiris, Shah

said, on this fateful day the so-called democratic state had brazenly violated the international law by usurping the fundamental rights of the people of Kashmir. "Despite suffering at the hands of Indian tyrants the valiant people of Kashmir have never accepted its dominance over the region," he said while retelling Kashmiris' historic resistance against the Indian occupation. "Kashmiris have neither accepted the hegemony of the Indian state in the past nor will they accept it in the future", Shah said adding that the day was not far when Kashmiris' struggle and their sacrifices for the noble cause would reach to fruition. About the Modi gov-

ernment's unlawful actions it had taken on Kashmir since August 5, 2019, Shah said Kashmiris have fairly and squarely rejected the move and there were no takers in Kashmir of what the BJP has been remorselessly projecting to deceive the international community. He said any piece of legislation made by the Indian parliament couldn't supersede the UN resolutions which clearly state that no country can change the disputed status of Jammu and Kashmir unilaterally. Urging the world community to play its proactive role to end India's prolonged military occupation he said that the world needs to realize the devastating impacts of the 75-year long illegal occupation.—APP

Rs10,533 million toll revenue collected

ISLAMABAD: The authorities concerned have collected an amount of Rs10,533.67 million as toll revenue from April 11 to July 2022. "The authorities have collected Rs10,533.67 million from the toll taxes of Highways and Motorways from April 11 to July 2022," an official told APP. He said an amount of Rs1,949.42 million was earned from toll taxes on Highways and Motorways from April 11 to 30, after the coalition government took over. "Rs 2,896.22, Rs 2,898.57 and Rs 2,789.46 million, toll revenue was earned in months of May, June and July, respectively," he said.

Early prevention of drugs use starts at parents' level

ISLAMABAD: Hectic routines, economic constraints, mental pressure and unfavorable relationships were some of the reasons, which compelled youngsters to indulge in drug addiction and in such a case, the role of parents was important. Talking to APP on Wednesday, Clinical Psychologist Mariam Riaz said that youngsters could become addicts and their parents should monitor the change in their habits for early prevention and cure. She said parents should get alarmed if their children look annoyed, unaware of their hygiene, spending unusual time in bathrooms and outside the home. "Friends' circle, telephonic conversation and internet search history of the youngsters can be monitored if parents have doubts about their drug addiction", she maintained. Explaining the treatment of addiction, Clinical Psychologist Shamsheer Hayat said that services of any registered rehabilitation centre could be acquired for the treatment and cure. He said a team of medical specialists, psychiatrists and clinical psychologists must monitor the health of the patient at the rehabilitation centre after which the process of detoxification could start. He said that a patient staying at the rehabilitation centre was delivered cognitive behavioural therapies and counseling sessions for three months. "Patients are also equipped with the techniques to avoid the slippery situation when they go into their normal lives", he added.

Communications minister meets UPU DG

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Asad Mehmood met with Director General of Universal Postal Union (UPU) Masahiko Metoki in Berne, Switzerland. DG Pakistan Post Hassan Akhtar Rana and Pakistan's Ambassador to Switzerland Aamir Shaikat were also present in the meeting held at the UPU Headquarters, said a press release. Asad led the Pakistani delegation to attend the UN agency's Council of

Administration (CA) annual meeting, on a special invitation from Metoki. The UPU director general appreciated Pakistan's dynamic role in the Union's activities throughout the history and highlighted the country's positive role as vice chair of the CA during 2016-2021.

He also expressed his concern on the devastation caused by the recent floods in Pakistan. Pakistan would be included as a priority country in the Regional Development Program (RDP) and Multiple Infrastructure Program (MIP), he said. "UPU will extensively support Pakistan Post for rehabilitation of postal infrastructure in the flood-affected areas of the country through its 'Quality of Service' programme and Regional Development Fund," he said.—APP

Pakistan to establish technical, vocational varsity

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) Sajid Hussain Turi said that Pakistan with the cooperation of Saudi Arabia would establish a technical and vocational university for Overseas Pakistanis.

He said that Saudi Arabia was the home of some 2.3 million Pakistanis who were working and living there for a long time and Turi reiterated that Overseas Pakistanis were playing a key role in the development of Pakistan hence, the development of the welfare of Pakistanis is paramount and it is considered to be a priority of the present government.

The minister was addressing to Pakistani diaspora in the United Kingdom, as Pakistan Peoples Party UK Chapter hosted a dinner and discussion in Ilford, with Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sajid Hussain Turi and Ex Governor Shoulatullah (KPK).

The meeting was held with prominent UK PPP leaders. Minister informed about the stances the party was taking with the Pakistan Peoples Party chairman's support to deliver innovative policies for overseas Pakistanis.—APP

ANF recovers over 100 kg narcotics; arrests three

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) on Wednesday managed to recover over 26 kg charras and 320,000 intoxicated tablets besides arresting three accused.

According to an ANF spokesman, ANF in an operation at South Asian Terminal Karachi recovered 320,000 intoxicated tablets weighing 75 kg from a container being sent to Jeddah. ANF also arrested two accused namely Abdul Waheed, resident of Larkana and Shehzad, a resident of Karachi. In another raid, ANF managed to recover over 26 kg charras from Millat Road, Faisalabad and arrested a drug pusher namely Tanveer, resident of Faisalabad. Separate cases have been registered against the accused, he said, and informed that raids were being conducted to net the accomplices of the accused.—APP

3 wheat flour smuggling bids foiled, 460 bags recovered

RAWALPINDI: The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police foiled three bids to smuggle wheat flour and seized 460 bags here on Wednesday.

According to a district administration spokesman, the officials of the food department along with Naseerabad and Taxila police conducted raids in different areas and rounded up three truck drivers namely Gulistan, Rehan and Ishaq and recovered 460 wheat flour bags from their possession.

He said the Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on the directives of the authorities concerned were strictly monitoring all the exit points of Rawalpindi district to foil wheat and flour smuggling bids.—APP

Ahsan lauds Turkiye for supporting Pakistan

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday lauded the role of Turkiye for supporting Pakistan on every regional and international front and said both the countries have deep-rooted historic, cultural and cordial bilateral relations with each other. He said that Pakistan and Turkiye are two countries but one nation. He expressed these views on the closing ceremony of an International Conference on Celebrating 75th Years of Turkiye-Pakistan

Relations as chief guest at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) on Wednesday. He said that during the recent horrific flood Turkiye's help and support was unprecedented and unsolicited. The minister paid warm gratitude to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for his immediate support in the relief activities during the crisis. Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Prof Dr. Mehmet Pacaci, Rector NUML Major General Muhammad Jaffar HI (M) (Retd), Pro-Rectors, Deans, Directors, HoDs, faculty members and a large number of students also attended the



ceremony. Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal while addressing the youth stressed the need of peace and harmony and advised them to keep away from internal polarization and the forces of propaganda. He said we must learn from Turkiye in this regard. Rector NUML Major General Muhammad Jaffar HI (M) thanked the Hon'ble Chief Guest Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal for sparing time to attend the closing ceremony of the international conference. Rector also appreciated and thanked the efforts of Turkish ambassador and

Department of Turkish Studies for arranging such an important conference on the bilateral relations of two brotherly nations. Earlier, inauguration ceremony was held in which former Ambassador and Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood was the chief guest while Turkish Ambassador Prof Dr. Mehmet Pacaci, Director General NUML Brig Syed Nadir Ali and Dean languages Prof. Dr. Jamil Asghar Jami shared their thoughts on the bilateral relations of Pakistan and Turkiye. Later scholars from Pakistan and Turkiye presented their papers on the said topic in two sessions.

Climate diplomacy

Less than two weeks before Cop27 opens in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, an outline of what to expect from the negotiations is becoming more distinct. The issue of loss and damage is expected to dominate – as it should. Wealthy countries have broken the promise made in 2009 at Cop15 in Copenhagen. An annual climate finance budget of \$100bn was agreed then to help the countries most dangerously exposed to global heating to adapt. But contributions have fallen short. The group of countries known as the V20, which includes the Philippines and several small island states, are justifiably angry and determined to ensure that past failures are confronted. So is Pakistan, which is not part of V20 but suffered catastrophic losses during recent floods. With one-third of its landmass under water and valuable crops destroyed by what one senator, writing in the Guardian, called a “monster monsoon”, the country now faces an immediate crisis as well as a longer-term, existential threat from melting glaciers. Pakistan, with its population of around 220 million people, is responsible for just 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Meanwhile, G20 countries between them produce 80%.

“People are enjoying their lives in the west, but someone here is paying the price,” said one government minister, Ahsan Iqbal. Such views have been echoed by other leaders. At Cop26, Madagascar’s environment minister, Bao-miavotse Vahinala Raharinirina, told the Guardian she believed that some short-haul flights should be banned. “You have to make a choice or have to make a sacrifice,” she said, pointing to the climate-induced famine in her country as the price being paid for western consumption habits.

But while lifestyle changes such as reducing meat-eating and car use are increasingly recognised as an important element of emissions-cutting plans, it is governments that must step up in Egypt. A bilateral agreement between the US and China was among the most encouraging developments at Cop26. Then, the US’s climate envoy, John Kerry, spoke of global heating as an issue of “math and physics” rather than politics. His Chinese counterpart, Xie Zhenhua, said “there is more agreement between China and the United States than divergence”. Eleven months on, relations between the two superpowers have chilled. Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan in the summer angered Chinese leaders. A recently unveiled US national security strategy described China as “America’s most consequential geopolitical challenge”. It was swiftly followed by new export controls on microchips, intended to hamper Chinese ambitions. The question is whether climate negotiations can be forced back on track despite this. While Mr Kerry used an interview in the Guardian on Tuesday to appeal for renewed cooperation, the war in Ukraine, combined with the China-US stand-off, have significantly raised tensions and lowered expectations.

The hope is that once leaders gather in Egypt, the scale of the threat from rising temperatures will focus minds. In asking for international support with loss and damage, the global south countries have right on their side – as rich countries knew when they agreed to the original climate finance package. Governments left Glasgow last year knowing that they had fallen short of what is required if humanitarian disasters of unimaginable severity are to be prevented.

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US military move to fuel the fire

It is the relentless eastward expansion of NATO that worsened the geopolitical situation in Eastern Europe and ultimately sparked the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, as it continually eroded the buffer zone between NATO forces and the Russian border. Headless of this, the United States has provocatively deployed more forces on the edge of NATO territory. In its most recent move, about 4,700 soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division have been deployed to NATO’s eastern flank. Known as the “Screaming Eagles”, division commanders told CBS News that they are there to defend NATO territory, and if the fighting escalates or should there be an attack on NATO, they’re fully prepared to cross the border into Ukraine. Statements that are provocative in themselves as Russia has made it clear it is not seeking a war with NATO.

But it is also clear, that the deployment is intended to send a message to Russia. With the conflict showing no signs of abating, the deployment of one of the US military’s most celebrated units reinforces a point made in a commentary article in The American Conservative magazine published on April 14, which made clear that the purpose of the US provision of weapons and other military assistance to Ukraine: “Washington will fight Russia to the last Ukrainian”. But as Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic warned the international community, the deployment “sharply aggravates the situation” and the world is approaching a “perfect storm”. Actually, the US had already made it evident that it wants Russia to bleed in Ukraine, and for that purpose Ukraine will have to bleed as well. Peace is definitely not what the 101st Airborne Division, or any other US military unit, is bringing to the Ukrainian people.

In a commentary piece in April, The American Conservative said that “Most disturbing is the apparent failure of the allies to support what the Ukrainian people need most, peace.” The deployment of more forces to Europe shows the US has no intention of allowing that until Russia’s status and influence are profoundly diminished. According to Pentagon reports, the US has committed to providing approximately \$2.6 billion in military aid to Ukraine since the start of the conflict, which in addition to the pre-conflict assistance given to the country by the Joe Biden administration totals more than \$3.2 billion. The conflict and the militarization of Europe are veritable gold mines for the Pentagon and US military contractors. The National Security Strategy recently released by the Biden administration prioritizes maintaining an enduring competitive edge over China and “constraining” Russia. The dictionary definition of constrain is “to compel or force someone to follow a particular course of action”. Despite all the high-sounding rhetoric from the administration, the conflict is fundamentally the result of and is being fueled by Washington’s insistence it hear the words “Yes, master” from Moscow.

Value the Biotic

Dr M Ali Hamza



Whenever we think of tourism and Pakistan together, generally we start visualizing the gigantic mountains, splendid valleys, and sparkling water streams. But we tend to completely ignore the very existence of unique Flora & Fauna. Pakistan has lot to offer in this dimension. Beside the long list, let’s focus on one of the least highlighted animals that is long-haired, short-legged oxlike domesticated mamma

The planet Earth is a beautiful place to live in. Thanks to our magnificent Sun and vast oceans of water that helped life flourish on the planet. No matter where we go on planet earth, the stunning life is surviving through plants, and animals that catch our attention. They are two very important aspects of any ecosystem what we call nature. In this technological era, humans interact more with gadgets than ever, and it’s almost impossible to find time to interact with nature. When the vacation time knocks, we plan traveling to exotic locations to trek through natural trails or just drive to see herd of fearless animals. This is enabled by flora and fauna that are spread across different parts of the world. Flora refers to the population of plant life whereas Fauna is the population of animal life in a certain location or time. Flora is also known as ‘Goddess of flower’ and Fauna ‘Goddess of Fertility’. They both regulate the amount of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the air and also provide us with a wide range of food, drink, fabrics and medicines. Flora and Fauna are the most fascinating of all biotic elements. As we appreciate the Abiotic: non-living substances, that are necessary for life to survive and enjoy, such as soil, water, minerals, diverse sights and climate, we need to equally take pride of biotic elements of one’s country.

Promoting biotic elements of one’s country, opens door to another captivating dimension of tourism called eco-tourism. Let’s take an example of Indonesia. They have promoted their Komodo Dragon: Indonesia’s endemic ancient species (that is also the world’s biggest lizard), by establishing Komodo National Park and people just visit one of the islands to only see these dragons. Raja Ampat;

world-famous diving paradise, attracts the lovers of marine biodiversity and pristine nature. West Bali National Park is a treat for naturalists.

The park has a popular birdwatching spot from where tourists are presented with a real chance to see the endangered Bali Starling. Moreover, places like Bunaken National Park, Sumba Island, Flora Island, Bangka Belitung Islands etc., in Indonesia invite every year a huge number of domestic and international tourists to satisfy their sense of Love for nature and desire of discovery. Other countries like Brazil, Mexico, Costa Rica, Peru, China, Australia, Thailand, Tanzania, Spain, USA, Ecuador, Italy, France, and even Kenya have seriously branded their Flora & Fauna and listed among the best tourists’ spots for ecotourism. There are many other countries blessed with natural treasury of Biotic & Abiotic elements but are poor in showcasing it, unable to offer variety of tourism and resultantly don’t in-cash the potentials. Pakistan is among those unfortunate ones.

Whenever we think of tourism and Pakistan together, generally we start visualizing the gigantic mountains, splendid valleys, and sparkling water streams. But we tend to completely ignore the very existence of unique Flora & Fauna. Pakistan has lot to offer in this dimension. Beside the long list, let’s focus on one of the least highlighted animals that is long-haired, short-legged oxlike domesticated mamma; the YAK – Beast of high altitudes. This specie of ox is only found in the Himalayan region of the Ladakh, the Tibetan Plateau, Northern Myanmar, Nepal, Mongolia, Siberia and Gilgit-Baltistan Pakistan. Few geographical locations that are lucky enough to have YAK, trying to make it worth selling through their eco and livestock tourism. Even some countries

like Nepal have introduced Goth Stay, where tourist trailing on high altitudes can stay with families that are breeding YAK, offer friendly engagement with the small community, provide the interesting orientation, and make the stay memorable through YAK ride, YAK polo, YAK wool, YAK stake etc. Are we in Pakistan taking any inventive steps? The answer is ‘Not Really’. The very next logical question is ‘why not?’ and the simplest answer is that we are not valuing our biotic elements to an extent we should, and if we deceptively believe that we are, then at least we are not branding it. Strangely, if you visit Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan, you won’t find any Statue of YAK. Check out the post cards, you won’t find a YAK post card. There are no YAK ornaments. Kids cannot find YAK t-shirts or YAK toys. There are no decorative YAK crowns or models. YAK mugs and cups are not in imagination. There is no YAK festivity or engagement of YAK in popular events like Sarfaranga Jeep Rally or Shandoor Polo Competition. It is commendable that Virtual university of Pakistan took an initiative and held first and second international conference on Yak in Lahore and Baltistan respectively. The collaborative role of newly emerged University of Baltistan, Skardu deserves appreciation. This effort brought researchers together. The establishment of first ever Yak Association in Pakistan is the outcome of this conference. Speakers from Germany, China and Mongolia shared their work. Most of the talks in the conference were focused on area of research to improve YAK productivity. A talk on branding YAK, argued on the negligence of not promoting a unique breed and explained basic corrective measure to be taken. It was an effort to create a ripple in the thought but we need to keep oaring to sustain the ripple to reach the goal.

Is Liz Truss a mere symptom of the UK’s decline?

Yossi Mekelberg

Truss has now gone, and soon her premiership will be confined to a very brief entry in the UK’s annals that refers to someone who had more ambition than the necessary competence to lead a political party, let alone a country.

Within minutes of her pitiful resignation speech, more likely even before she spoke, the “ruthless party” was busy searching for her successor. The failure of Truss is just one more result of the repeated failure of the Conservative party in the course of its 12 long years in power, to produce decent and competent leaders and policies for all.

People around the world usually associate the British with traits such as decency, common sense, level-headedness, prudence and fair play. However, for those who observe closely, and even less closely, current British politics feels as if all of these commendable characteristics have been sadly thrown off the top of the Big Ben tower. This is epitomized by years of instability that kicked off in 2016 with the ill-conceived referendum on the UK’s membership of the EU, which since then has claimed the scalps of four Conservative prime ministers, leaving the country facing one of its worst-ever social and economic crises, and in the process becoming the world’s laughing stock. The saga of members of the Conservative Party electing Liz Truss as their leader, and for the rest of us as prime minister, lasted an embarrassing 44 days, and considering the damage her government caused in such a short time, even her rushed resignation felt long overdue, given the consequences of her finance minister’s announcement of an economic plan that could not have been more detached from reality. Yet, with the chaotic and emotional scenes of the last few days it is difficult to avoid becoming immersed in the here-and-now intricacies of British politics, while ignoring the fact that this is only the latest episode in the decline of what has become the dis-United Kingdom. Much discussion has inevitably concentrated on the chaotic manner in which the country’s affairs are being conducted by Westminster and the resignation of two prime ministers in quick succession, but all this is a mere symptom of a country that has lost its sense of direction, and is struggling with the tensions between a modern democratic liberal society, while still unable and unwilling to completely rid itself of an enduringly class-based social and economic structure and a nostalgia for what too many consider to be a glorious imperial past. This weighs heavily on Britain’s shoulders, and its prevailing island mentality is holding it back from becoming a genuine modern-progressive society fit for the challenges of the 21st century. Truss has now gone, and soon her premiership will be confined to a very brief entry in the UK’s annals that refers to someone who had more am-

bitation than the necessary competence to lead a political party, let alone a country. Within minutes of her pitiful resignation speech, more likely even before she spoke, the “ruthless party” was busy searching for her successor. The failure of Truss is just one more result of the repeated failure of the Conservative party in the course of its 12 long years in power, to produce decent and competent leaders and policies for all. Despite the justified criticisms of Truss and the incomprehensible manner in which she approached her ascendancy to 10 Downing Street, the party’s MPs and members who voted for her and her “fantasy economics,” as her rival for the leadership (and now Conservative Party leader) Rishi Sunak put it, must shoulder much responsibility for throwing the country into this upheaval. Those are the same people who believed in all the fantasies of her predecessor Boris Johnson about the merits of Brexit, and all his lies about, well, almost everything. How on earth could the great people of the British Isles, who are supposed to believe in common sense, decency and fair play, elect a government of Robin Hoods in reverse, who in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis have seen fit to cut taxes for the rich, who have too many xenophobic ministers claiming that immigrants and asylum-seekers are an existential threat to the character of the country, and who are harming the national interest by constantly picking quarrels with their neighboring countries?

How could it be right for the same people who inflicted on us the totally disastrous, appallingly ill-judged, though thankfully short, premiership of Truss, to be entitled to promptly go about choosing another prime minister while we, the rest of the British public, are mere bystanders? It is simply preposterous that the political system as it currently stands should allow them to do this twice in a row, after they have already inflicted chaos and confusion on the economy and society, leaving the financial markets despairing of the pound, inflation at a 40-year high and interest rates rising inexorably, and spreading anxiety among millions of people who cannot afford to buy sufficient food or pay their energy and mortgage bills and thus face the dire consequence of losing their home. The failure of Truss is just one more result of the repeated failure of the Conservative

party in the course of its 12 long years in power, to produce decent and competent leaders and policies for all. But the country has been in a state of flux for many years, and has been deeply divided over the basic values and ideology of running a modern liberal-democratic welfare society, especially in a globalized world environment. These deep disagreements were focused for a long time on the issue of being part of Europe, after the UK joined the European Common Market in 1973. Subsequently being part of the EU meant accepting progressive labor rights, allowing the free movement of people, and taking crucial decisions in collaboration with other member states. For many, this went against their exceptionalist, island mentality, and such people were not necessarily Conservative Party supporters. The enduring wish to preserve British uniqueness by differentiation and limited engagement with the “Continent” and the rest of the world, while still holding on to the past through being the driving force behind the Commonwealth of Nations, which is comprised of former possessions of Britain’s Empire, illustrates the UK’s inability to redefine its character and mission for the 21st century. Its history and traditions have become a burden instead of an asset. Both Truss and Johnson, in their different ways, represented this confused and destructive approach which both creates social tensions at home, through clearly favoring the better off in society and perpetuating their status, and instigates tensions abroad as part of a nationalist-populist agenda. But 12 years of Tory chaotic and partisan time in power has finally led the public to completely lose faith in them, and should elections be held today, opinion polls suggest that the Conservatives would be destined for near-extinction. At this very low point in British history lies also a great opportunity for a new government and direction, which listens to the majority of the British people, and is not afraid to play a constructive role on the world stage. For this to happen, the next UK government must be chosen by all the British people, not just the members of the Conservative Party.

The writer is professor of international relations and an associate fellow of the MENA Program at Chatham House.

Briefs

PM lambasts Imran Khan over 'petty politics'

FORM PAGE 01

A day earlier, PM Shehbaz formed a judicial commission headed by a high court judge to investigate Sharif's killing, while the Pakistan Army also asked the government to conduct a high-level probe. The Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Athar Minallah, however, deferred the formation of a judicial commission deeming it a premature step.

Sloganeering: MBS orders release of Pakistanis

FROM PAGE 01

pardon the convicted Pakistanis out of compassion. "May Allah Almighty reward you for this," the prime minister said and thanked the crown prince for the gesture. Following the sloganeering at Masjid-e-Nabwi, a court in Madina Munawara had sentenced three Pakistanis with eight years and as many with six years imprisonment. Among those who were given eight years imprisonment included Khawaja Luqman, Muhammad Afzal and Ghulam Muhammad while Anas, Arshad and Muhammad Salim were given six years in jail. Besides, the court also sentenced another Pakistani national Tahir Malik with three years imprisonment and a fine of 10,000 Saudi Riyals.

PTI's march to reach the Capital on Nov 4

FROM PAGE 01

Mozang and Data Darbar. "The journey to Islamabad will start on the GT road from the next day," he tweeted. Elaborating the plan ahead, the former minister said Imran and his supporters would reach the capital on November 4 after passing through Muridke, Kamonki, Gujranwala, Daska, Sialkot, Sambaryal, Wazirabad, Gujarat, Lala Musa, Kharian, Jhelum, Gujranwala and Rawalpindi. Separately, during an address to party workers in Sialkot later in the day, Imran said he would be accompanied by "convoys from across the country" while entering Islamabad. "It will be the biggest sea of people," he said that Friday's march would be a "battle for power" and the "greatest freedom struggle in the history of Pakistan". Later in the day, he met Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi to discuss the arrangements for the upcoming march.

SC rejects govt's request

FROM PAGE 01

the implementation of its orders related to protests and sit-ins. A five-member bench, headed by CJP Bandial, comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi and Justice Sayeed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi heard the plea today. A day earlier, Khan said PTI will kick off its long march on October 28 (Friday) from Lahore.

Team to probe Arshad's...

FROM PAGE 01

"The team will travel to Kenya immediately," the notification said, adding the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Pakistan's High Commission in Nairobi, Kenya will facilitate the visit of the committee members. It said the committee will present its report to the interior division. Later in the day, Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) Hospital Director Dr Khalid Masud told Dawn.com that Sharif's postmortem was conducted by an eight-member team of senior doctors. The team comprised Masud, Professor SH Waqar, Professor Dr Mumtaz Khan Niazi, Professor Dr Farrukh Kamal, Dr Irshad Hussain, Dr Nasreen Butt, Dr Altaf Hussain and Dr Mohammad Umar Farooq.

Ireland shock England as Kiwis suffer WC washout

Ireland's second massive upset of the tournament after they beat the West Indies in the first round to send two-time champions home. England, who enjoyed an opening five-wicket win over Afghanistan

SPORTS DESK

MELBOURNE: Ireland and rain had a major impact on the T20 World Cup Wednesday as England suffered a shock defeat and New Zealand were denied the chance to take advantage when their match with Afghanistan was washed out. Captain Andy Balbirnie led the way for Ireland with 62 from 47 balls at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) to give England a 158-run target. But England's much-vaunted batting line-up struggled to get going in the face of some disciplined Ireland swing bowling and were reduced to 29-3 off the first five overs. A late Moen Ali boundary flurry (24 off 12 balls) took England to 105-5 off 14.3 overs when the rain ended play. England were five runs behind on the DLS scoring method,

handing Ireland a famous victory. "It's amazing, kind of emotional," said man-of-the-match Balbirnie. "Our message was to just create chances and we know how this England team like to play, if we take every chance then we would be in with a shot. "This will do a lot to grow the game back home." The rain stayed around for the rest of the night and, after several aborted attempts to start the second match of the MCG double-header, New Zealand and Afghanistan had to make do with a point each without a ball being bowled. It leaves New Zealand top of a wide open Group 1 with three points after two rounds of matches. Sri Lanka, England, Ireland and Australia are locked together on two points with Afghanistan bottom on one. It was Ireland's second massive upset of the

tournament after they beat the West Indies in the first round to send the two-time champions home. England, who enjoyed an opening five-wicket win over Afghanistan, are among the title favourites and were heavily-fancied to beat the Irish. Captain Jos Buttler had no excuses and said England needed to feel the pain of defeat after their dismal performance. He demanded a reaction for their next clash - a blockbuster against hosts and defending champions Australia in Melbourne on Friday. "I think we should let it hurt, to be honest," said Buttler, who is in charge of England for the first time at a major tournament following the retirement of Eoin Morgan this year. "Days like today are really, really disappointing and you've got to feel that. "We have got to reflect and

team face the Irish in their final Group 1 game on November 4. "It's great for world cricket." Ireland face Afghanistan next on Friday at the MCG in the first match of another double-header before the Ashes foes go head-to-head later in the evening. "It's all to play for," said Afghanistan coach and former England batsman Jonathan Trott denied that his side had "dodged a bullet" by avoiding an in-form New Zealand side, who romped past Australia by 89 runs in their opening match. "It would have been nice to play New Zealand and the guys to get the experience of playing at the MCG, and hopefully getting a win," said Trott. "It would have been nice to have got those points, like Ireland. To be saying it's a bullet dodged is a bit of disservice to the guys in my changing room."

Kenya police claim they were shot at first

FROM PAGE 01

The report stated that the police have now said the occupants of the V8 defied the orders by the officers to stop and instead opened fire at them, injuring one of their colleagues. The officers had flagged the vehicle to speed down upon reports of it being stolen. This, police said, instigated the officers to equally retaliate with gunshots. Meanwhile, Kajado News reported that a team of police officers allegedly involved in the fatal shooting surrendered their weapons as part of investigations into the tragic incident.

Boeing reports huge loss

NEW YORK: Aerospace giant Boeing reported a surprise \$3.3 billion third-quarter loss Wednesday as it struggled with swelling costs on several defense programs, including the US presidential jet Air Force One.

The performance woes in defense - which also affected the KC-46 refueling and military transport aircraft and the T-7A Air Force pilot training system - reflects the drag from supply chain problems that have plagued the broader economy, as well as the restrictive nature of the contracts. Locking Boeing into a fixed-price contract was unwise, Chief Executive Dave Calhoun acknowledged in an interview with CNBC that touched on the company's troubled execution of an Air Force One procurement revamp negotiated with former president Donald Trump. "It turns out the critics were right. So we didn't get enough price, that's fairly obvious to all of us," Calhoun said.

"The biggest, probably, mistake on... Air Force One was the fixed price nature of it," he said.

"When a program that requires that many agencies and that many things to come to bear on a particular platform, and there's only two of them, that just begs for more of a cost-incentive kind of contract." Boeing also said costs were rising in other unspecified defense projects.

The difficulties in Boeing's defense program came as the company saw a jump in revenues in its commercial airplane division following the resumption of deliveries of the 787 Dreamliner and an increase in deliveries in the 737 MAX.

The aviation giant reported a four-percent rise in revenues to \$16 billion, which also missed analyst estimates. -APP

Qatar to scrap pre-arrival Covid tests

DOHA: Qatar is to drop pre-arrival Covid tests before the World Cup, the health ministry said on Wednesday, weeks after announcing that the million-plus incoming fans do not need vaccinations.

The latest relaxation in anti-Covid measures will take effect on November 1, 19 days before the first World Cup on Arab territory starts on November 20.

The arriving fans, players, officials, staff and media are by far the biggest influx of visitors seen in tiny, gas-rich Qatar, which has a population of just 2.9 million.

"Visitors are no longer required to present a negative Covid-19 PCR or Rapid Antigen Test result before travelling to Qatar," a statement said.

Qatari citizens and residents will also no longer need to take a PCR or rapid antigen test within 24 hours of returning from abroad, the health ministry added.

The 29-day tournament will be the first major global sporting event with fans since the Covid pandemic erupted in December 2019, killing more than six million people.

Last year's delayed Tokyo 2020 Olympics took place largely behind closed doors, and the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics was held in a bio-secure bubble.

Qatari organisers and football's governing body, FIFA, have said they want the event to be a sign the world is getting over the devastating pandemic. -APP

Pak Navy shooter wins bronze in ISSF C'ship



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ghulam Mustafa Bashir MCPO bagged Bronze Medal at 1st International Sports Shooting Federation (ISSF)

Rifle/ Pistol shooting Championship held at Cairo, Egypt. This championship served as qualification event for Summer Olympics scheduled at Paris, France in 2024. Ghulam Mustafa Bashir and Rasam Gul from Pakistan Navy participated in 25m Rapid Fire

Pistol event and represented National Flag during said championship. Both shooters performed well and Ghulam Mustafa Bashir secured 3rd position. By securing Bronze Medal, Ghulam Mustafa Bashir not only qualified for participation in Paris Olympics 2024 but has reached to No. 07 at world ranking.

A total of 77 shooters from 37 countries participated in the championship. Upon return to Pakistan, both shooters were warmly received at Jinnah International Airport, Karachi. The medal winning performance of PN shooter is a testimony of Pakistan Navy efforts to promote shooting as a sports in Pakistan. Chief of the Naval Staff being President of National Rifle Association of Pakistan (NRAP) has applauded efforts put in by Pakistani shooters and expressed hope to bring more laurels for the Nation in future.

PTCL Group to launch 'Justuju'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest telecommunication and ICT services provider, PTCL Group collaborated with private organizations to bridge the gaps in the society through social and economic inclusion of persons with disabilities. In that regard, PTCL signed an agreement with the Network of Organizations Working for People with Disabilities Pakistan (NOWPDP) and Deaftawk here Wednesday to launch the third cohort of its flagship skill training program, Justuju for professional development of persons with disabilities (PWDs). For the 3rd cohort, the program duration has been extended from six weeks to six months with two months of soft skills training and four months of on-the-job training to allow extended mentorship and learning for professional success.

Justuju internship program is one of the most sought-after internship programs, designed to bridge the gaps in the society through social and economic inclusion of persons with disabilities. Talented individuals are prepared for career through robust training and hands-on experience under expert mentorship at PTCL and Ufone offices. The program will be implemented in collaboration with NOWPDP, which works to promote socioeconomic inclusion of persons with disabilities, and Deaftawk that bridges the communication gap between individuals with speaking and hearing impairment and the rest of society through qualified interpreters and digital tools. - DNA

'Positive signs' over Australia entry: Djokovic

WEB DESK

SYDNEY: Nine-times champion Novak Djokovic says there are "positive signs" that his three-year ban on entering Australia will be waived so he can play at the next Australian Open in January. The 35-year-old Serbian was deported from Australia in the lead-up to the Grand Slam tournament this year on the grounds that his opposition to Covid-19 vaccination threatened the stability of country. The former world number one said he was hoping to hear soon whether his bid to have his three-year visa ban set aside by the government had been successful. "When it comes to Australia, there are some positive signs, but unofficially," he told Serbia's Sportal in an interview. "We are communicating through my lawyers in Australia. In fact, they are communicating with the authorities in charge of my case. "I hope to have an answer in the next few weeks - whatever that answer might be, but of course I am hoping for a positive one - so that I have enough time to prepare for the start of the season, if that start is going to happen in Australia." Australia's Home Affairs ministry has repeatedly reiterated its policy of not commenting on individual cases. Djokovic remains unvaccinated but Australia scrapped a rule that required international travellers to declare their Covid vaccination status in July. Opposition lawmaker and former Home Affairs Minister Karen Andrews said earlier this month that to waive Djokovic's ban would be a "slap in the face" for Australians who did get vaccinated. Australian Open tournament director Craig Tiley said earlier this month that Djokovic would be welcome in January if he could get a visa, but that Tennis Australia was unable to lobby on his behalf. Djokovic, now ranked seventh in the world, confirmed that he would finish his season at the Paris Masters and ATP Finals in Turin and would love to kick off his 2023 campaign in Australia. "I really want to go there, I am over what happened this year and I just want to play tennis, it is what I do best," the 21-times Grand Slam winner said. "Australia has always been the place where I have played my best tennis, the results speak for themselves, so I am always extra motivated to go there. This time even more, so I am hoping for a positive answer."

Meshaal condemns Israeli raids

NEWS DESK

DOHA: A founding member of the Palestinian Hamas resistance movement has condemned the killing of six Palestinians after Israeli military forces raided several areas in the northern occupied West Bank city of Nablus, stressing that the Tel Aviv regime only understands the language of force. Khaled Meshaal, the head of Hamas'

political bureau abroad, stated that the ruling Israeli coalition administration led by prime minister Yair Lapid is seeking to emerge victorious in the forthcoming legislative elections, scheduled for November 1, by means of shedding the blood of ordinary Palestinians. "The martyrs of the resistance front have paved the way for the liberation of occupied [Palestinian] lands, and the re-emergence of resistance in the West Bank. Despite the persecution of Palestinians, targeted killings of resistance fighters, cruel siege imposed on the city of Jenin and elsewhere in the West Bank, and mass arrests, the resistance continues to flourish," Meshaal pointed out. He added, "The barbaric crimes of the Zionist regime will never undermine the determination of Palestinian resistance fighters. On the contrary, it shows that the spirit of resistance runs high among all Palestinians." The senior Hamas official also called on all Palestinians to

preserve national unity and tighten the noose around Israeli settlers. Meshaal went on to stress the need for turning Jenin, Nablus and other West Bank towns and villages into a strong fortress of resistance against Israel. "Al-Quds serves as a source of inspiration in order to transform the path of popular uprising (intifada) and resistance, and secure the complete liberation of occupied lands as well as return of Palestinian refugees to their ancestral homes," he stated. Early on Tuesday morning, large numbers of Israeli forces stormed the city of Nablus, located approximately 49 kilometers (30 miles) north of al-Quds. According to the Palestinian Health Ministry, five Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire. Palestinian health and security officials said one of those killed was unarmed. They identified the victims as 26-year-old Ali Khaled Antar, Mishal Baghdadi, 27; Wadee al-Hawah, 31; Hamdi Qayyem, 30; and 35-year-old Hamdi Mohamed Sharaf.



KARACHI: Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan George Steiner being presented souvenir during a function. - DNA

Iran sanctions several EU institutions, individuals

Blacklisted individuals are banned from receiving a visa or entering Iran, and the ownership of their properties and assets in Iran will be transferred to the Iranian government

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iran has announced tit-for-tat sanctions against institutions and individuals in the European Union (EU) due to their deliberate actions in support of terrorism and terrorist groups. In a statement released on Wednesday, Iran's Foreign Ministry once again strongly rejected and condemned the EU's October 17 sanctions targeting Iranian individuals and entities over baseless accusations that constitute a clear example of interference in Iran's domestic affairs. In response, it added, the ministry hereby announces sanctions against

a number of individuals and entities within the EU due to their "deliberate actions in support of terrorism and terrorist groups, encouraging and inciting terrorism, violence, and hatred, which has caused riots, violence, terrorist acts, and human rights violations against the people of Iran."

The sanctioned entities include the so-called Friends of Free Iran, the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism, Karl Kolb Co., and Rhein Bayern Fahrzeugbau Co. The blacklisted individuals are pres-

ident of the International Committee in Search of Justice Aljo Vidal Quadras, co-chairs of the Friends of Free Iran Javier Zarzalejos and Milan Azver, members of the European Parliament Charlier Weimers, Jan Zahradil, Helmut Geuking and Hermann Tertsch, member of the National Assembly of France Meyer Habib, mayor of France's Villepinte Martine Valletton, mayor of Paris first district Jean-Francois Legaret, current and former editors-in-chief of Germany's Bild newspaper Johannes Boeand and Alexandra Wurzbach. The blacklisted individuals are banned from receiving a visa or entering Iran,

and the ownership of their properties and assets in Iran will be transferred to the Iranian government. Earlier, Iran had imposed retaliatory sanctions against a number of British individuals and entities for supporting terrorism, inciting violence, and violating human rights. In a statement last week, Iran's Foreign Ministry announced that the embargoes on the British individuals and entities were a "tit for tat" move against the sanctions that had been placed by some European countries on Iran. The statement named three entities and nine individuals that had been blacklisted

under the Islamic Republic of Iran's sanctions regime. The entities included the National Cyber Security Center (NCSC) and Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) as well as Volant Media, Global Media, and DMA Media and anti-Iranian TV channels that they support namely, BBC Persian and the so-called Iran International. The ministry underlined that the measures by the listed entities led to "riots, violence, and terrorist acts" against the Iranian nation. The EU foreign ministers had decided a week earlier to levy sanctions against 11 Ira-

nian individuals and four entities over the country's response to the foreign-backed riots that followed the death of a young Iranian woman in police custody. Mahsa Amini's death initially triggered peaceful protests, but the gatherings were quickly hijacked by foreign-sponsored rioters, who engaged in deadly acts of violence and vandalism. In yet another hostile act against Tehran on Thursday, the EU unveiled a new set of sanctions targeting Iran over allegations that it has been supplying drones to Russia to hit Ukraine. Both Iran and Russia have denied the allegations.

Briefs

Meloni says she is 'not a step behind men'

ROME: Italy's prime minister on Tuesday lashed out on accusation by a member of the parliament from the main opposition Democratic Party.

"I have heard someone say that I want women to be one step behind men. Look at me, Honorable [Deborah] Serracchiani (congresswoman of the Democratic Party). Does it seem to you that I'm a step behind men?," Giorgia Meloni said at the Parliament when presenting her political program.

Meloni's remarks came after Serracchiani claimed that Meloni "wants women one step behind men and dedicated only to family and children." Meloni became Italy's first woman prime minister after her right-wing coalition emerged victorious in general elections on Sept. 25. She is now seeking a vote of confidence in the lower wing of parliament on Tuesday and in the upper chamber, the Senate, on Wednesday. She has also been accused of harboring sympathy for Italy's fascist period of 1922-1943 and its leader during that time.

"Freedom and democracy are the hallmarks of contemporary European civilization in which I have always seen myself. For this reason, I have never felt sympathy and closeness towards anti-democratic regimes, including fascism," she said.—APP

Climate pledges still not enough for 1.5C: UN

PARIS: International climate pledges remain far off track to limit rising temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius, according to a report released by the United Nations Wednesday, less than two weeks ahead of high-stakes negotiations to tackle global warming. The combined climate pledges of more than 190 nations that signed up to the 2015 Paris climate deal put Earth on track to warm by around 2.5C compared to pre-industrial levels by the century's end.

With the planet already battered by climate-enhanced heatwaves, storms and floods after just 1.2C of warming, experts say the world is still failing to act with sufficient urgency to curb greenhouse gas emissions. "We are still nowhere near the scale and pace of emission reductions required to put us on track toward a 1.5 degrees Celsius world," said Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change.

"To keep this goal alive, national governments need to strengthen their climate action plans now and implement them in the next eight years."—APP

4m fishes stocked in Rawal Dam

ISLAMABAD: Fisheries Department, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) has stocked around 400,000 fishes in Rawal Dam to provide sufficient amount of protein to the residents of the federal capital. Speaking at a ceremony here on the other day at Rawal Dam, Deputy Commissioner, Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon said fish stocking was done two to three times a year as per the demand of the city, but this time approximately 0.4 million fishes were released in the Dam.

He informed that ICT administration had already banned fishing and boating in Rawal Dam by imposing Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), adding that at least 11 motor boats were seized during a recent crackdown, whereas fishing rods, nets and other materials used in fishing was also confiscated from the adjoining localities to the Dam, a major reservoir supplying water to Rawalpindi. The DC urged the masses to cooperate with the civil administration to control illegal fishing and avoid boating in the water reservoir of Islamabad. Deputy Director Fisheries Islamabad Hamid Khan said the department was established with a mandate to develop and conserve fish culture activities in Islamabad Capital Territory.—APP

Minister assures support for industrial estate



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Syed Murtaza Mahmud, Federal Minister for Industries and Production Division assured that he would provide all possible assistance and support for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region as it would boost production activities and benefit the local economy. He said that soon a meeting of all stakeholders including the Ministry of Commerce, Board of

Investment and CDA would be convened to get their input on this important project. He said that ICCI should identify 2-3 sites for industrial zone to analyse and assess their potential for the project. He said this while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry that called on him led by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President. Syed Murtaza Mahmud said that ICCI's demand for representation in various attached departments of the Ministry of Industries would

also be given due consideration to enhance the role of the private sector in them. He said that a separate meeting with the pharmaceutical sector would be held to promote its exports. He assured that the government would facilitate the private sector by removing hurdles and bottlenecks being faced by it. Speaking at the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry briefed the Federal Minister for Industries about the importance of a new industrial zone in

the region as it would attract more investment, boost industrialization, improve exports, create employment and strengthen the local economy. He said that ICCI needed around 10,000 acre of land for this project to promote export-oriented industries, which can be available on the CPEC route in the vicinity of Islamabad and stressed that the government should help in acquisition of land to materialize this project. He said that ICCI should be given representation in the Boards of SMEDA, Engineering Development Board, National Productivity Organization, and

other relevant departments of the Ministry of Industries to serve the cause of the private sector more effectively. Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI, Zikria A Zia President Islamabad Industrial Association, Zafar Bakhtawari, Mian Akram Farid, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Nasir Qureshi, Shaban Khalid, Maqsood Tabish, Dr. M. Usman, Rizwan Chheena, Ameer Hanza and others also spoke at the occasion and highlighted various issues of the business community that needed the attention of the Federal Industries Minister for redress.

World Consultative Assembly Speakers Conf adopt declaration

ANTARA

BANDUNG: The three-day International Conference of Speakers of the Consultative Assembly ended in the West Java provincial capital of Bandung on Wednesday, with delegates from 15 countries adopting the seven-point Bandung Declaration.

Speaker of the People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia (MPR RI) Bambang Soesatyo read out the Bandung Declaration document during the conclusion of the conference. The seven points of the Bandung Declaration are elucidated herewith. First, delegates of the conference agreed on MPR RI's proposal for the establishment of the Forum for the World Consultative Assembly, Shura Council, Syuyukh Council or Other Similar Parliamentary Institution as part of the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation



Member States (PIUC), with the aim of creating world order based on independence, eternal peace, and social justice. Second, the Palestine question will remain a central issue of the forum and Muslims until the achievement of independence and self-determination rights for the Palestinian people and the establishment of an independent Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the international law. Third, to achieve the goals

as referred to in points 1 and 2, the conference agreed on the establishment of the Forum for World Consultative Assembly, Shura Council, Syuyukh Council or Other Similar Parliamentary Institutions within PIUC in accordance with their respective authority, especially in relation to consultations and cooperation to address global challenges that become a common concern, such as humanity, natural resources, environment, justice, women's role, and the younger generation. Fourth, observing the dynamics of global developments that may lead to complex multidimensional problems in each country, active participation and support from all sides are needed, including those from the Forum for the World Consultative Assembly, Shura Council, Syuyukh Council or Other Similar Parliamentary Institutions in accordance with the commitment to Dasasila Bandung (Bandung

Ten Principles), and the United Nations Charter. Fifth, the conference agreed to set up a working committee comprising the founders of the forum by coordinating with the MPR RI leadership and the PIUC Secretariat General to formulate the vision, mission, code of conduct, working program, and qualifications for the forum's membership. The working committee will later deliver a report of its jobs to the next meeting of the forum. Sixth, the conference commended and expressed gratitude to MPR RI for its initiative to set up the Forum for World Consultative Assembly, Shura Council, Syuyukh Council or Other Similar Parliamentary Institution as a forum among other PIUC forums. The next meeting of this forum will be held along with other activities of PIUC. Seventh, delegates of the conference congratulated the Republic of Indonesia on its G20 presidency this year and expressed optimism that it would be successful in performing the duty.

WASHINGTON: The US, South Korea, and Japan on Wednesday agreed to further strengthen deterrence to counter North Korea amid growing tension on Korean Peninsula. Senior officials of the three countries, including US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, South Korean First Vice Foreign Minister Cho Hyun Dong, and Japan Vice Foreign Minister Takeo Mori, met in Tokyo and discussed the regional security situation and fears of Pyongyang's seventh nuclear test, Kyodo News reported. Japan's Takeo Mori said they will never tolerate the nuclear blackmail employed by Russia in its war against Ukraine.

The officials also opposed any attempt to change the status quo in the East and South China seas, the news agency reported. Meanwhile, South Korean Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup said their efforts continue to prevent North Korea from additional nuclear tests.—APP

US, S.Korea, Japan agree to strengthen deterrence

Ukraine asks Germany to supply more weapons

KYIV: Ukraine's president thanked Germany for providing air defense systems and said more defensive weapons are needed to protect the country.

Speaking after a meeting with his German counterpart Frank-Walter Steinmeier in the capital Kyiv, Volodymyr Zelenskyy expressed his pleasure over the delivery of modern Iris-T air defense systems.

Saying the system works very well in protecting the country's airspace and people, Zelenskyy noted that he hopes they will be able to obtain more soon.

Touching on other military needs of Ukraine, he said Kyiv expects Germany's help in providing it with artillery systems, armored vehicles and other weapons. Zelenskyy added that he hopes Germany will help with the reconstruction of the Chernihiv region. Steinmeier arrived in Kyiv earlier Tuesday for the first time since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war in February. Upon his arrival, he conveyed messages of solidarity and support to Ukraine's people through his spokeswoman.

German Presidential Spokeswoman Cerstin Gammelin shared Steinmeier's twofold message on Twitter which stressed that the Ukrainian people could "count on Germany" in continuing to support Ukraine "militarily, politically, financially and in the humanitarian sense."—APP

Blinken, Grif-fiths discuss Istanbul grain deal

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met Tuesday with UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths, during which they discussed global humanitarian needs and the Istanbul grain deal. The meeting at the State Department addressed "record-high global humanitarian needs driven by a variety of issues, including conflict, climate change, and the pandemic," said State Department Spokesperson Ned Price in a statement.

"The Secretary noted the urgent humanitarian needs in Ukraine stemming from Russia's illegal war, including the need to renew the Black Sea Grain Initiative," said Price, referring to the deal that was brokered by the UN and Türkiye to get out grain from Ukrainian ports.

Türkiye, the UN, Russia and Ukraine signed an agreement in Istanbul on July 22 to resume grain exports from three Ukrainian Black Sea ports which were paused after the start of the Russia-Ukraine war in February.—APP

NZ urges its citizens to leave Iran

AUCKLAND: New Zealand on Wednesday urged its citizens in Iran to leave the country amid a worsening security situation due to the ongoing protests.

In a statement, Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta said New Zealanders currently in Iran are advised to leave as protests are continuing throughout the country, and a number of foreign nationals have been arrested. "The new advice for Iran reiterates the existing 'Do Not Travel' warning, and adds that due to the potential for violent civil unrest, the risk of arrest or detention and the volatile security situation in

the region, the risk to safety in Iran is significant," said Mahuta. She advised her citizens in Iran to stay away from all demonstrations, rallies, and large public gatherings as they could turn violent with little warning. "New Zealanders in Iran should stay away from any areas where police or security forces are deployed as their presence alone could be misinterpreted," she said. "In all cases of arbitrary arrest or detention in Iran, the ability of the government to provide consular assistance through the embassy and other official channels is extremely limited.—APP

UN warns Somalia humanitarian crisis 'dire'

FOREIGN DESK

NAIROBI: The United Nations said on Wednesday that the humanitarian response to the crisis in Somalia where a historic drought is threatening famine has gathered pace but warned the situation remained "dire". The impoverished Horn of Africa nation is on the brink of a famine for the second time in just over a decade, with UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths stressing in September that time was running out to save lives. The humanitarian re-

sponse has intensified since then but some 7.8 million people or nearly half Somalia's population still need assistance, including 230,000 at serious risk of starvation, according to the UN. "We believe that approximately 6.5 million are reached with some level of assistance and that amount has increased very significantly since the beginning of the summer," the UN special representative for Somalia, James Swan, said Wednesday. "There have been very substantial additional contributions of donor assis-

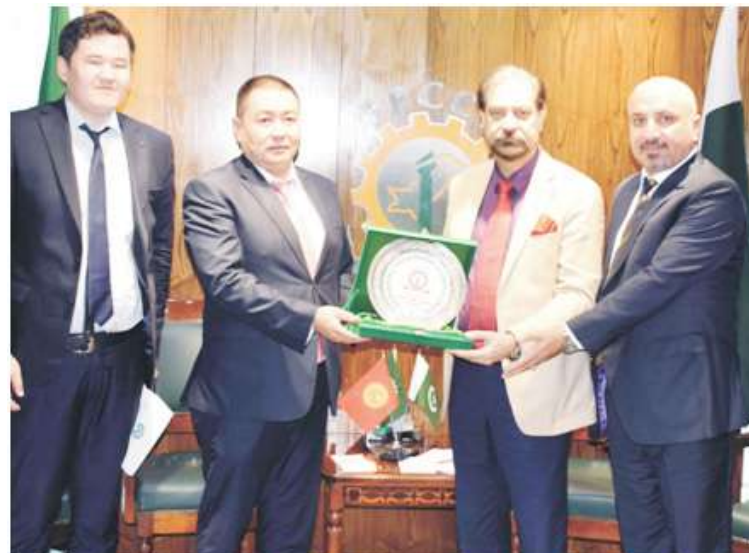
tance, particularly since the beginning of August, with something in the order of \$800 million in new commitments," he told reporters. But, Swan added, "We are confronting a situation that for reasons of the continuing drought and an existing relatively fragile population... the risks remain severe." Somalia, much like neighbours Kenya and Ethiopia, is in the grip of the worst drought in four decades after four failed rainy seasons wiped out livestock and crops. Since January 2021, 1.1 million people in Somalia have left

their homes in search of food and water, according to the United Nations. The conflict-racked nation is considered one of the most vulnerable to climate change but is particularly ill-equipped to cope with the crisis as it battles a deadly Islamist insurgency. UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi on Tuesday rallied international donors to keep their wallets open to fight the crisis. "Some of it (the drought) has been contained but unfortunately this is not an effort that can stop," he told reporters in Nairobi after a trip to Somalia and northeastern Kenya.

Pak, Kyrgyzstan vow to strengthen co-op

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador Kyrgyz Republic to Pakistan Mr. Ulanbek Totuaev, called on Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President, the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry at Capital House Islamabad. Mr. Amin Ullah Baig, Vice President FPCCI / Incharge Capital Office & Mr. Umar Masood ur Rehman Vice President FPCCI were also present on the occasion. During the meeting underscored the need for closer cooperation in trade, investments, and energy and people-to-people contacts. They accorded particular focus to further strengthening of exchanges Business Delegation, holding of business forms to increase the bilateral trade between both the countries and other affairs. The Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan further said that the volume of trade between the two brotherly countries is very low, major exports of Pakistan to Kyrgyzstan are fruits, vegetables, juices, surgical instruments, textile products, pharmaceuticals, furniture, sports goods and leather etc. Sim-



ilarly, Kyrgyzstan's export items are meat, dairy products, raw cow and sheep hides, mechanical and electrical equipment, aluminium, oil products, jet fuel etc. Both countries are producing several products, which could be of great value in each other's market and compete with products of other countries in terms of affordability and quality. He further said that

he was of the view that his country can act as a connectivity hub for Pakistan's exports that can reach the Central Asian and European markets by road. He also stressed that there is a great potential for tourism and investments in the Kyrgyz Republic as both nations have EU GSP+ and leveraging the free trade zones. Our nations can boost their economic activity,

especially with their exports to the European markets he said. We have to take advantage of our geographical contiguity and QTTA can play a significant role in this regard. Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President of FPCCI said that the geo-strategic position of Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan also highlights their geo-economic importance, which could play a significant role in promoting trade connectivity amongst different regions and potential markets of the world. Promoting bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan could be a milestone in regional and global trade integration and connectivity. Due to its geo-strategic importance, Pakistan is currently a major player in global and regional trade, bordering the Middle East and South Asian states on the one hand and the global economic power China on the other. He said that the geographical location of Kyrgyzstan offers many

opportunities for trade with Pakistan as it is the shortest entry point of Pakistani products to the 'Eurasian Economic Markets' of 182 million people comprising Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Armenia. The trade turnover of the Kyrgyz Republic with Pakistan amounted to \$5.9 million in 2021 with Pakistan's exports amounting to \$5.3 million and imports of \$600,000, he said. Mr. Amin Ullah Baig & Mr. Umar Masood ur Rehman Vice Presidents of FPCCI Said that Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan have a shared perception and stance towards many global and regional issues and are currently cooperating in the economy, energy, education, tourism and several other domains. The Kyrgyz Republic and Pakistan are endowed with huge reservoirs of natural resources and highly skilled human resources and there are many areas where both can collaborate. In addition, Pakistan could export its surplus fresh fruits and vegetables, especially during the winter season when there is an acute shortage of fresh fruits and vegetables in Kyrgyzstan, he said.

Briefs

Imran's march for influencing COAS appointment: Nawaz

DNA

LONDON: Former Prime Minister and Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif while reacting to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan's announcement on the long march date, said that Imran Khan's long march is not for any revolution but to appoint the army chief of his choice.

Taking to Twitter, the former PM penned that "People have seen Imran Khan's revolution in his 4 year tenure, and this long march is not for revolution but to appoint the army chief of his choice."

Pharma companies to reduce price of fever pill

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pharmaceutical companies Wednesday agreed to reduce the price of a 500mg fever tablet to Rs2.35.

The development came after Finance Minister Ishaq Dar met with the heads of pharmaceutical companies in the federal capital. During the meeting, the price of the fever pill was reviewed. According to the finance ministry, pharmaceutical companies have agreed to decrease the price of a single fever tablet to Rs2.35. The ministry added that it has also decided with the companies to set the price of one fever syrup bottle at Rs177.60.

Following the meeting, the ministry said that companies making these medicines have resumed production. Minister for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination Abdul Qadir Patel has said that GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) Consumer Healthcare Pakistan has resumed its manufacturing and supplying of Panadol in Pakistan.

Saudi Arabia to host green summits in Egypt

WEB DESK

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's cabinet on Tuesday affirmed that the Kingdom is set to launch the second edition of the Middle East Green Initiative Summit and the Saudi Green Initiative Forum in Egypt next month, coinciding with the UN Climate Change Conference. The Kingdom remains committed to supporting multilateral action on the environmental challenges facing the planet, said Acting Minister of Media Majid Al-Qasbi in a statement issued by the Saudi Press Agency. At the beginning of the session, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the nation's prime minister, who chaired the meeting at Al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh, briefed the ministers on his telephonic conversation with Algeria's President Abdelmadjid Tebboune on ways to develop joint cooperation between the two countries. The cabinet reviewed the Kingdom's foreign policy which is aimed at strengthening multilateral efforts through regional and international organizations, to address common challenges, especially on humanitarian aid.

Sindh seeks more ADB funding after devastation

CM Shah says that the climate change victims of Sindh have lost around 1.8 million houses during the heavy downpour and floods

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, in his meeting with the Director-General of the Asian Development Bank for Central and West Asia department Eugene Zhukov, said that the World Bank has pledged Rs110 billion against a requirement of Rs1,500 billion for the construction of houses destroyed in the recent floods, therefore, the Asian bank may come over to meet the shortfall of the funds. CM Shah said that the cli-

mate change victims of Sindh have lost around 1.8 million houses during the heavy downpour and floods, adding that the initial estimates showed that Rs1,500 billion were required to construct 1.8 million houses. The CM said that the world bank has pledged Rs110 billion (\$500 million) against a total requirement of Rs1,500 billion. "We shall be thankful if the Asian bank meets the shortfall of Rs1,390 billion so that all the homeless people could be provided with shelter/house," he said. The visiting ADB DG told



the chief minister that the bank has committed \$475 million to the federal gov-

ernment, of which \$300 million would be the share of the provincial government for the construction of damaged infrastructure. Out of \$475 million, \$100 million would be given to NHA for the reconstruction of the Motorway, from Karachi to Hyderabad.

general and the province of Sindh, in particular, has suffered heavy losses due to climate change despite Pakistan's total contribution to emissions recorded at 0.8%. He added that the international community and donor agencies should support the country in the rehabilitation of the affected people and infrastructure. Eugene said that his bank would start a project to mitigate the effects of climate change in Sindh. The project was under consideration between the ADB and the Sindh Planning &

Development department. The CM told the visiting DG of the ADB that the small roads connecting different villages to the main roads and the cities have been badly damaged. He proposed a project for the rehabilitation of small roads so that the mobility of the people for sake of their livelihood and economy could be ensured. The CM and the visiting ADB DG also discussed the rehabilitation of provincial roads for which P&D and works departments were working with the bank.

Diamer Basha a significant project for economy: Khursheed

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Water Resources Syed Khursheed Ahmed Shah has said that Diamer Basha Dam is a significant project for the national economy, as this will store water for irrigated agriculture, help mitigate floods and generate environment-friendly and low-cost hydel electricity. He expressed these views while visiting Diamer Basha Dam, being constructed by WAPDA on River Indus, downstream of Chilas town, said a press release. He was accompanied by Advisor to PM on KA&GB Qamar Zaman Kaira, Special Assistant to PM on Water Resources Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha, Federal Secretary Water Resources Hasan Nasir Jami and Chairman WAPDA Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd).

The minister reviewed excavation at right abutment of the dam and construction work on diversion system and permanent bridge. The minister, while assuring the full support of the Ministry, directed the project management to expedite their efforts for completion of the project as early as possible. Earlier, CEO Diamer Basha Dam Company along with the GM, PD, the consultants and the contractors briefed the minister about progress on the project. Construction work is being carried out on 10 different sites, which include excavation of dam abutments from the top, diversion tunnel, diversion canal, power intake, permanent access bridge and access roads. Scheduled for completion in 2029, Diamer Basha Dam will have a gross water storage capacity of 8.1 MAF to irrigate 1.23 million acres of additional land. It will have installed power generation capacity of 4,500 MW, and provide 18 billion units of green and clean hydel electricity to the National Grid per annum.—DNA

UK's Sunak delays plan on public finances until Nov 17

LONDON: Britain's new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Wednesday delayed the announcement of a keenly awaited plan for repairing the country's public finances until Nov. 17, two-and-a-half weeks later than originally planned. The postponement, Sunak's first policy decision since taking over from Liz Truss on Tuesday, pushed up British borrowing costs in financial markets but by far less than seen in the panic bond selling caused by Truss's September tax-cutting plan. Finance minister Jeremy Hunt announced the delay in a televised statement, saying it would take more time to ensure the new plan took into account the latest economic forecasts. "The prime minister and I have decided that it is prudent to make that statement on the 17th of November," Hunt said. The plan is expected to set out how the government will plug a budget shortfall of as much as 40 billion pounds (\$46 billion). Unlike Truss's plan last month, it will be fully audited by Britain's fiscal watchdog. A statement from Sunak's office said he told his newly assembled cabinet that it was "important to reach the right decisions and there is time for those decisions to be confirmed with cabinet."—APP



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi exchanging views with Jemal Bekir Abdula, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan. —DNA

Scholz and Macron meet amid deepening rift

NEWS DESK

PARIS: France and Germany have disagreed before, but things have come to head recently as they are increasingly making decisions independent of each other. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz met with French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on Wednesday amid recent tensions between the two nations. The leaders of two of Eu-

rope's biggest powers have disagreed on several issues lately, mostly pertaining to European policy and the energy crisis caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Reflective of the strained relationship, Macron had recently remarked that it is "neither good for Germany nor for Europe when Germany isolates itself." Initially, the Franco-German Council of Ministers was scheduled for the day, but the meeting was called

off last week without much notice and rescheduled for January. The Elysee Palace stated that the cancellation was due to scheduling conflicts and said "the delay does in no way give an indication of the current state of the Franco-German relationship." But this failed to placate experts who see a deepening rift between the two countries. Historically, France and Germany have held oppo-

sition positions on certain issues, but recently, as they have become more independent of one another, it has strained the relationship between the two of Europe's biggest economies. Berlin recently voted through a 200 billion (\$197 billion) emergency energy package at home, without informing France, which is possibly going to disrupt the gas and electricity market.

Germany extends grant aid worth 7.5m Euros

ISLAMABAD: Germany has extended grant assistance worth seven point five million Euros to Pakistan through Social Health Protection Phase-three project. The Financial Agreement was signed between Secretary, Economic Affairs Division, Dr. Kazim Niaz and Country Director, German Development Bank, Sebastian Jacobi, in Islamabad on Wednesday. According to

the agreement, grant assistance worth 1.785 million euros will be given to Gilgit Baltistan and 5.72 million euros to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. On the occasion, the Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, appreciated the govt and people of Germany for their support, with the assurance of extending all necessary facilitation for more meaningful cooperation.

Netherlands probes 'illegal' Chinese police stations

MONITORING DESK

THE HAGUE: The Dutch Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday that it was investigating reports that China had set up two illegal police stations in the Netherlands. "We are now investigating as a ministry what is going on with the centers, and when we have more intel about it we can determine the appropriate action," Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Maxime Hovenkamp said. "What is correct is that the Chinese government never informed us about the centers via diplomatic channels so that makes them illegal to begin with," Hovenkamp said. According to a report by Dutch broadcaster RTL Nieuws and investigative journalism platform Follow the Money published on Tuesday, there were "indications" that the centers were used to "put pressure on dissident Chinese in the Netherlands." The centers offer citizen services such as renewal of Chinese drivers licenses or declaring changes in marital status, the report said. A Chinese dissident who had received asylum in the Netherlands told RTL Nieuws and Follow the Money that he

had been summoned by the Chinese police office in the Netherlands' second-largest-city, Rotterdam. The Chinese citizen also reported having received threatening phone calls and text messages from unknown numbers, and said that bomb threats had been made under his name. According to the report, the Rotterdam center was opened by the police force in the Lishui prefecture of China's Zhejiang province, located immediately south of Shanghai, while the Amsterdam center is tied to the city of Fuzhou, which lies in Fujian province on the mainland Chinese side of the Taiwan Strait. The two eastern coastal regions are major sources of Chinese emigration to Europe. RTL Nieuws and Follow the Money said that they had received an e-mail from the Chinese embassy in Amsterdam saying that it did not know of the existence of the two overseas police centers. Spain-based human rights NGO Safeguard Defenders said in a September report that Beijing had overseas police "service stations" in "dozens of countries across five continents," including 12 EU countries. The report alleges that one of these stations is in Frankfurt, Germany. It claimed

that the operations "eschew official bilateral police" and "violate the international rule of law." The report claimed that Beijing has engaged in a campaign targeting overseas Chinese suspects of fraud and telecommunications fraud since 2018. Chinese authorities persuaded 230,000 nationals to return to face criminal proceedings between April 2021 and July 2022, Safeguard Defenders cited Vice-Minister of Public Security Du Hangwei as saying. According to the report, authorities used methods such as "tracking down ... the target's family in China in order to pressure them through means of intimidation, harassment, detention or imprisonment" to "persuade" overseas suspects to return to China. Since the end of November 2021, China has warned its citizens not to travel to seven countries in Southeast Asia, as well as Turkey and the UAE, which it deems are the source of serious telecommunications crimes. Safeguard Defenders claims that Beijing authorities have used intimidation tactics to pressure Chinese citizens residing in these countries, regardless of whether they are suspected of telecommunications fraud or other crimes, to return.

Uganda steps up Ebola response as virus kills 30

AGENCIES

KAMPALA: The number of confirmed Ebola cases in Uganda has risen to 109 and the outbreak has claimed 30 lives, Health Minister Jane Ruth Aceng said on Wednesday, adding that the government was setting up an additional treatment centre. Fifteen of the confirmed cases were among health workers, of whom six had died, she told a news conference. Aceng said five treatment centres were operational and a sixth was being set up. "The Ministry of Health with support from partners is setting up an additional treatment facility in Mulago sports field," she said, adding that the new centre would raise the number of beds available to treat Ebola patients to 351. The virus circulating in Uganda is the Sudan strain of Ebola, for which there is no proven vaccine, unlike the more common Zaire strain seen during recent outbreaks in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo. Aceng said her ministry would be evaluating the efficacy of three candidate Ebola Sudan vaccines in the coming weeks, one developed by Oxford University, one made by the Sabin Vaccine Institute in the United States and another by U.S. drugmaker Merck & Co (MRK.N.).

Sunni cleric challenges Iran's leaders

DUBAI: A prominent Sunni cleric who directed unprecedented criticism at Iran's supreme leader over a bloody crackdown in his hometown appeared unbowed this week by warnings from security forces, pressing his demands for more rights for his minority and voicing support for other groups in country-wide unrest. Molavi Abdolhamid has long been a dissenting voice seeking better living standards and more political representation for the Sunni minority in the mostly Shi'ite Islamic Republic, including the Baluchi ethnic group to which he belongs and the Kurdish population. Iran's government denies discrimination against Sunnis. His criticism has escalated since the death of a 22-year-old Kurdish woman in police custody on Sept. 16 ignited nationwide protests.—Agencies

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