



– German Merkel says she lacked power to influence Putin –

Ukraine works to restore water, power after Russian strikes

- Russia ‘likely’ using warheads from ageing missiles against Ukraine.
- Nato troops conduct exercises near Belarus, Russia borders
- A third of Western howitzers sent to Ukraine out of action – NYT
- Belgian PM says his country will fully support Kiev
- Ukraine marks Soviet-era famine as Russia’s war rages on

KIEV/MOSCOW: Ukrainian authorities endeavored Saturday to restore electricity and water services after recent pummeling by Russian military strikes that vastly damaged infrastructure, with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy saying millions have seen their power restored since blackouts swept the war-battered country days earlier. Skirmishes continued in the east and residents from the southern city of Kherson headed north and west to flee after punishing, deadly bombardments by Russian forces in recent days. The strikes have been seen as attempts at Russian retribution against Ukraine’s beleaguered but defiant people after Ukrainian troops over two week ago liberated the city that had been in Russian hands for many months. “The key task of today, as well as other days of this week, is energy,” Zelenskyy said in his nightly televised address late Friday. “From Wednesday to today we have managed to halve the number of people whose electricity is cut off, to stabilize the system.” Some 2,000 Allied troops took part in the Tumak 22 exercise in northern Poland near the borders with Belarus and Russia’s Kaliningrad exclave. This was reported by Poland’s ministry of defense, according to Ukrinform. Polish military from various units practiced operational interoperability with their American, British, Romanian, and Croatian counterparts. In the course of the exercises, the military crossed rivers and reservoirs, repelled the attacks of a conventional enemy,

and also ran a counteroffensive. Western-made artillery pieces sent to Ukraine are constantly breaking down or being damaged in combat, and this has become a problem for the US Department of Defense, the New York Times reported, citing sources. To address the issue, the Pentagon, which has provided Kiev with hundreds of the weapons, has reportedly set up a repair facility across the border in Poland. According to US officials and other people “familiar with Ukraine’s defense needs” interviewed by the outlet, one third of the 350 howitzers that the West has sent to Ukraine are out of action at any given time. Russia is likely removing nuclear warheads from ageing nuclear cruise missiles and firing unarmed munitions at Ukraine, Britain’s military intelligence said today. The defence ministry said open source imagery shows wreckage of an air launched cruise missile fired at Ukraine which seem to have been designed in the 1980s as a nuclear delivery system, adding that ballast was probably being substituted for the warheads. Such a system will still produce damage through the missile’s kinetic energy and unspent fuel. However, it is unlikely to achieve reliable effects against intended targets, the ministry added in its daily intelligence update posted on Twitter. Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel has defended her policy towards Russia prior to the February invasion of Ukraine, saying she had run out of power to influence Vladimir Putin. She said she had tried to convene

European talks with the Russian president and French President Emmanuel Macron in the summer of 2021. “But I didn’t have the power to get my way,” she told Spiegel news. She added that “for Putin, only power counts”. Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo has said that his country will support Ukraine for as long as it takes. He said this after talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv on Saturday, November 26, according to an Ukrinform correspondent. “Some things must be repeated. We have been saying this since the beginning of this war, but it is important to repeat that we condemn Russian aggression against your country and your population. Belgium supports the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Our support is extremely firm and unwavering,” De Croo said. Ukraine accused the Kremlin on Saturday of using the same “genocidal” tactics that it used against it in the 1930s under Josef Stalin as Kyiv commemorated a Soviet-era famine that left millions of Ukrainians dead during the winter of 1932-33. Ukraine this year holds its memorial day for the victims of the “Holodomor” famine as it grapples to repel invading Russian forces and deals with massive power outages across the country after waves of Russian air strikes on vital infrastructure. “Once they wanted to destroy us with hunger, now – with darkness and cold,” President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wrote on his Telegram channel. “We cannot be broken.” (Agencies)

Imran Khan announces to quit all assemblies



RAWALPINDI: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has announced that his party has decided to quit all the assemblies. “We will not be part of this country’s political system. We have decided to quit all assemblies,” former premier said while addressing the party workers and supporters at Rawalpindi Jalsa. Khan said that his party had decided not to go to Islamabad to avert any destruction or chaos. “I would announce the date of resignations after consulting chief ministers and the parliamentary party,” he announced. It is pertinent to mention here that the Imran Khan-led party is ruling the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province while they are also in power in Punjab through a coalition with Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q). At the outset of his address, the former prime minister urged the party workers and supporters to free themselves from the fear of death if they wanted to live freely. Referring to the incident of Imam Hussain’s (A.S) martyrdom, Imran Khan said that the people of Kufa did not come to his help due to fear of reprisal from the authorities. “Fear makes an entire nation into slaves”. The former prime minister said ev-

everyone had advised him when he was leaving from Rawalpindi not to do so due to his injured leg as well as the threats. He claimed that “three criminals” — those he accuses of being behind the Wazirabad attack — were waiting for another assassination attempt. He said he had a close encounter with death, calling on the gathered crowd to make their faith stronger. While praising the nation, Imran Khan said: “Many prime ministers come and go but public never came out in such large number like they gathered here for me”. “There would be no difference between animals and humans if people of the country accepted the rulers who came to power through ‘NRO,’” he added. He reiterated that overseas Pakistanis were standing with him because they are aware of the importance of the rule of law. “Pakistan is in a difficult situation today due to the absence of rule of law” he added. Criticising the Sharifs and Zardaris, he said these two families were responsible for weakening Pakistan’s institutions in a bid to protect their “looted wealth”. He further said that prosperous societies had a rule of law while developing countries were afflicted by no regard for the law which explained their problems. *Agencies*

Pak to lose Google Play Stores services from Dec 1

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani users will not be able to avail the Google Play Store services from December 1 as the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has suspended the direct carrier billing (DCB) mechanism. The central bank’s move to block DCB has caused suspension of the payment of \$34 billion to international services providers. The unavailability of the Google Play Stores will force customers to make payments through their bank cards to download Google and other international apps. Furthermore, a large number of mobile users will not be able to download apps from Google Play Store a due to limited credit card facilities. Meanwhile, the Telecom Ministry, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and cellu-



lar service operators approached the SBP, urging it to withdraw the move as it will create problems for the users. They said that the decision would impact the top tech giants, including Google, Amazon and Meta, pushing them to discontinue their services in Pakistan. Pakistani social media users have raised concerns over the SBP decision, asking it to review the move that has ignited meme fest on Twitter. (Agencies)

Xi says willing to work with North Korea for ‘world peace’

PYONGYANG: North Korean has said that Chinese President Xi Jinping told North Korean leader Kim Jong Un that Beijing is willing to cooperate with Pyongyang for “world peace.” Pyongyang’s official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) released the report on Saturday quoting from the message it said was received in response to congratulations from Kim after the Chinese Communist Party Congress last month handed Xi a third term. Xi stressed in his message to



Kim that Beijing is ready to cooperate with North Korea to establish “peace, stability, development, and prosperity of the region and the world.” Xi said was fully willing to work with Pyongyang as “chang-

es in the world, times, and history are taking place in unprecedented ways.” Xi’s message came days after North Korea fired an intercontinental ballistic missile in one of its most powerful tests in months, announcing that it would respond to US nuclear threats with its own nuclear weapons. On November 18, North Korea fired a long-range missile designed to strike the mainland US, a day after Pyongyang warned of a “fiercer” military response to the United States. (Agencies)

Canada’s Trudeau defends crackdown on protests

OTTAWA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has insisted his government was right to invoke sweeping emergency powers to quell mass street protests against Covid-19 mandates early this year, saying that drastic measures were needed to “keep people safe.” Addressing an official commission created to investigate Trudeau’s decision in February to activate the Emergencies Act for the first time in Canada’s history, the PM argued



it was a “tough” but necessary decision given the chaotic demonstrations gripping the country at the time. “First of all, what if the worst had happened in those following days? What if someone had gotten

hurt?” he asked. “What if, when I had an opportunity to do something, I had waited and we had the unthinkable happen?” Though Trudeau noted he was willing to have dialogue with some protest leaders, the PM said that holding such negotiations could have set a bad “precedent” for the future of Canadian democracy, suggesting that street demonstrations should not seek to directly affect government policy. (Agencies)

UK mulling curbs on foreign students’ entry to control migration

LONDON: UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and his cabinet are considering to introduce curbs on the entry of foreign students to the UK saying they are enrolling for “low-quality” degrees and bringing dependents, news agency BBC reported citing officials from Downing Street. Sunak’s spokesperson said the idea was being discussed as official figures showed net migration to the UK

touched the half a million mark, setting a new record. The spokesperson did not define what the government means by “low quality” degree. A government adviser on migration while speaking to the news agency said such a decision would bankrupt universities. In a separate report, the Times magazine said plans to bring down numbers of foreign students would include restricting admis-

sions to UK’s top universities. They will also restrict visas for students’ dependents. Suella Braverman, the UK home secretary, earlier cited her concerns regarding rising migration and said students bring family members who “piggyback onto their student visa” and said universities are “propping up, frankly, substandard courses in inadequate institutions.” (Agencies)

Shehbaz meets Erdogan

Reaffirm commitment for \$5b trade in three years

ISTANBUL: Pakistan and Turkiye on Friday reaffirmed their commitment to take the bilateral trade to the volume of \$5 billion within three years to exploit the immense untapped potential between the two countries.

The bilateral relations were discussed in one-on-one meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan as well as the delegation level talksheld at at Vahdetin Mansion, after both the leaders jointly launched the third of the four MILGEM Corvette Ships for the Pakistan Navy, PNS Khaybar, at the Istanbul Shipyard here. Both the leaders agreed to take robust follow up action for the implementation of Trade in Goods Agreement that was signed by the two countries in August this year, a PM Office press



release said. The prime minister stressed the need to explore avenues of furthering cooperation in the area of renewable energy, particularly wind and solar energy. The Prime Minister was accompanied by Minister for Defence Production, Minister of Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar, Minister of Information Marriyum Aurangzeb, SAPM Syed Tariq Fatemi and SAPM Fahd Hussain. (Agencies)

About Khyber Mail The Khyber mail was first published in Peshawar, Pakistan in 1932. A newspaper in English by the eminent journalist Sheikh Sana Ullah. From 1932 to 1989 it has survived as leading English newspaper in the region by the sons of Sana Ullah i.e. Sheikh Zaka Ullah, Sheikh Inayat Ullah and Sheikh Saleem Ullah. The publication was shut down in 1989 due to various reasons. The current owner Rizwan Inayat son of Sheikh Inayat Ullah and grandson of Sheikh Sana Ullah, has restarted the family heritage but meeting with the requirement of the century, by giving the readers current happenings around the world with one touch anywhere any time and updating the reader to pace up with the world.

PPP to hold public meeting of foundation day on Nov 30

PESHAWAR: Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) district Peshawar leadership on Friday expressed resolve to celebrate the party’s 55th foundation day with great enthusiasm and would hold a historic public meeting in Peshawar on November 30. It was decided in a high-level meeting of former office bearers and workers of PPP Peshawar City

here on Friday in PK 75 at residence of President Pir Muhammad where-in Syed Ayub Shah, Anwar Zeb Comrade, Haji Tala Muhammad, Zulfiqar Afghani, Zulfiqar Awan, Haji Misbahuddin, Malik Liaquat, Sajjad Khalil, Jahanzeb, Haji Imran, Sikandar Iqbal, Tariq Rahim and other officials were also present. The workers participated in the

meeting and suggestions were made regarding the preparations and organisational matters of the PPP’s 55th Foundation Day. It was decided that the former present office bearers of the party from Peshawar City, leadership and workers from Union Council Wards would participate in the celebration with full preparations. (APP)

231 MBBS, BDS graduates awarded degerss at 6th Convocation of Gandhara University

PESHAWAR: A total of 231 graduates of MBBS and BDS and post-graduates were awarded degrees at Gandhara University 6 th Convocation held here on Saturday at Shiraz Arena. The Chief Justice Peshawar High Court, Mr Justice Qaisar Rashid Khan was the chief guest of the event. After the entrance of academic procession in the hall, Qari Abdur Raud Madani recited verses from the Holy Quran. The convocation was declared open by Chancellor of the university, Mrs Roeeda Kabir. Prof Ahmad Hussain Mishwani took the oath from the graduates taking the pledge to serve the humanity with honour and dignity and to remain honest in their profession. Dr Abdul Wajid Khan, Dr Hafsa Malik, DR Hafsa Malik, Dr Reda Raza Khan and Dr Amna Khan



were declared the best Graduates of MBBS and BDS, while Dr Zeb Babar Ali, Dr Abdal Hidayat and Dr Shah Gullan topped their Final Examinations. Dr Musab Umair, Dr Umar Haider, Dr Tooba Syed, Dr Junaid Hamza, Dr Nayab Khalid Qazi were awarded medals for distinctions I various subjects. Tha Vice Chancellor, Prof Ejaz Hassan Khan presented brief report of Gandhara University, stressing upon the progress in academics and research. The Chancellor, Mrs Roeeda Kabir in her address advised the graduates to ex-

cel in their profession to serve the nation. The Chief Guest, Mr Justice Qaisar Rasheed Khan in his very learned speech, said that as part of the nation we must light a candle for others to follow their path. He advised young graduates to be sincere to their profession and patients. He said that a doctor must be first a healer as he is among few chosen by Almighty Allah. Prof Shaeed Iqbal In his vote of thanks admired tireless efforts of the faculty for the success of convocation. The event was hosted by Dr Ismail Qamar.

Sikandar Sherpao alleges PTI govt fails in securing provincial rights

* Staff Reporter*

PESHAWAR: Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) provincial Chairman Sikandar Hayat Khan Sherpao on Saturday said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government failed to secure the rights of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. “The PTI has been ruling KP for the last nine years, but it has been unable to safeguard the rights of the province,” he said while addressing a gathering at Watan Kor here. On this occasion, workers of various political parties, including Nekzada, Shad Khan, Qareebullah, Mohammadzada, Amanat Khan, Shahabuddin, Ali Rehman, Ali Khan, Ahmad Jan, Bilal Khan and others announced joining the QWP along with their family members and supporters. Sikandar Sherpao said the PTI government was wasting the resources of the province on the

useless long march. He asked the PTI leadership to shun the politics of agitation and work for the development of the country instead of creating anarchy. He said the PTI government failed to plead the case of the province and secure the arrears of the net hydel profit from the centre. He said the PTI leadership was misguiding the youth and inciting them to resort to violence. “Imran Niazi failed to deliver when he was the prime minister, but he is unwilling to admit his failure,” he said, adding that he was now using the people to create unrest. He said that none of the promises Imran Niazi had made was honoured be it the creation of 10 million jobs or the establishment of five million houses. He said the PTI leader was good at deceiving the nation and taking U-turns, which was his only specialty.

GIK Institute, KPCTA join hands to promote tourism

PESHAWAR: Ghulam Ishaq Khan (GIK) Institute of Engineering and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority on Saturday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to mutually work for the promotion of culture and tourism in the province. The MoU was aimed to join hands and make collective efforts, utilize resources, and introduce new technology for exploring opportunities for the promotion of tourism and culture

in KP. The tourism authority would also collaborate with GIK Institute to develop new software for the purpose, holds exhibitions, and provide a platform for getting needed help from the industrial sector. Addressing the ceremony Rector of GIK Institute, Professor Khalid Ahmad said that the GIK institute could arrange various courses for the promotion of tourism besides providing data-based information and services to visitors.(APP)

KPBC demands approval of lawyers protection act

PESHAWAR: A meeting of All Pakistan Lawyers organized by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council (KPBC) here on Saturday demanded immediate approval of the Lawyers Protection Act by the national assembly to protect the lawyers’ community. Vice Chairman Mohammad Ali Khan Jadoon chaired the meeting while lawyers throughout the country participated including vice chairmen of KPBC from Punjab, Islamabad, Balochistan, and AJK. The participants also demanded all inspector generals of police in the country to

immediately appoint a DIG rank focal person in all provinces, including AJK for contacting him in target killing and other security matters. The meeting insisted on holding a meeting of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan and filling up vacant posts of judges on a seniority basis in Peshawar, Lahore, Sindh and Islamabad high courts. It said that governments should ban the re-appointment of all government employees including judges and excessive protocols of bureaucracy should be ended “to save national resources”. (APP)

GSLEP receives Int’l biodiversity award

PESHAWAR: Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme (GSLEP), an initiative recognized as world leader in snow leopard research and conservation with operations throughout Central and South Asia, has received a prestigious International Biodiversity and Conservation Award. According to a press release issued here on Saturday, the award was received by Snow Leopard Trust (SLT) as lead programme of GSLEP in recognition of its role in helping create and support a 12-nation cooperation alliance for conservation of the highly endangered specie. “The Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP) is a first-of-its-kind intergovernmental alliance for the conservation of the snow leopard and its unique ecosystem,” the press release said. Led by respective Environment

Ministers, this alliance provides a cooperation platform for governments, conservationists, scientists, industry, and others to work together for the conservation of snow leopards and their high mountain ecosystems in Asia. ”This award is a watershed moment in nearly 10-year journey of this remarkable conservation collaboration by 12 governments and various international and national organizations,” says Dr Koustubh Sharma, International Coordinator, GSLEP Secretariat. “It’s also a fitting recognition of the magnificent snow leopard as a symbol of Asia’s globally important high mountain ecosystems,” he added “The achievement has also been termed ‘moment of pride’ for member countries, including Pakistan”, said Dr Muhammad Ali Nawaz, Director Snow Leopard Trust (Pakistan). (APP)

14 arrested; arms, narcotics recovered

PESHAWAR: The capital city police during crackdown on anti-social elements arrested 14 persons and recovered hashish and fake Currency from their possession, said a police spokesman on Saturday. The Sarband police station has successfully acted on a tip-off during which a drug dealer has been arrested and recovered more than one kilogram of hashish from him. Similarly, Bhana Mari police station arrested a person and recovered 155,000 rupees fake Pakistani currency on Kohat Road,

Qamar Din Ghari bridge. Successful operation of Rehman Baba police station, two suspects involved in dangerous Afghan outlaw gang were arrested and recovered 24 valuable mobile phones from their possession. The Shaheed Gulfat Hussain police station arrested two suspects involved in robbing innocents. In another raid, the Nasir Bagh police arrested three suspects involved in burglary, and recovered two laptops, as many cameras and one pistol from the accused arrested.(APP)

Cold weather likely to persist in city

PESHAWAR: The Regional Met Office on Saturday forecast cold and dry weather for most districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and partly cloudy weather for the province’s upper parts during the next 24 hours. Shallow fog in isolated places is likely to occur over Swa-

bi, Mardan, Nowshera, Charsadda, Peshawar and DI Khan districts, as well as Peshawar to Swabi Motorway during late night and morning hours. The weather remained cold and dry in most districts of the province during the last 24 hours. (APP)

PAJCCI congratulates Ghulam Ali as Governor

PESHAWAR: A delegation of the Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Saturday called on Governor Haji Ghulam Ali and congratulated him on taking oath as the 35th Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A six-mem-

ber delegation of the chamber visited the Governor’s House and expressed hope that the new governor would help resolve the longstanding problems of the business community and others in the province. (APP)

KP historical importance peeping through annals of history



PESHAWAR: As a gateway to the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa carried a unique geographical location, archaeological heritage and primitive history that witnessed the oldest civilizations including Gandhara and onslaught of invaders that marched to India through historic Khyber Pass. “Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is known for its rich history in the Subcontinent where followers of almost all religions came and stayed for accomplishment of their political, trade and business objectives. As result of which different religions including Buddhism, Hindusim, Sikhism and Christianity gained roots for many years in the region of present-day Pakhtunkhwa before Islam,” said Bakhtzada Khan, Research Officer, Department of Archeology and Museums while talking to APP. “The discovery of human remains in Soan Valley in Pakistani Punjab as evidence of the stones and bones’ tools dating from around (2 million to 90,000 years before present) of the Early Paleolithic period signified that people were living here.” He said, “Sangaro cave’s excavations, Mian Khan, Mardan conducted by the renowned archeologist Ahmad Hasan Dhani and Farid Khan in 1963 had revealed the presence of people’s remains in the Middle Paleolithic period (9,000 to 27,000 years before present) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.” He said these people were living in stone-made caves, who fulfilled their food mostly from hunting of

birds and animals. The discoveries of primitive rocks, bones and hunting tools dating back of Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age (10,000 to 8,600 years before present) during excavations at Khanpur in Haripur district and Sangaro Cave signified presence of humans’ life in Swat and Dir where every stone speaks about their lifestyle, culture, livelihood and civilizations, he informed. He said it was found that people started making clay and stones made pots, crockery and others related utensils for kitchen during the Neolithic period or commonly known as new stone-age dating back some 8,000 years before as evident from excavations of historic Mehar Gharh in Balochistan of the Indus Civilization, Rehman Dheri DI Khan and Sheri Khan Tarkai Swabi. The evidence had magnified that people were living in the stone and mud houses in those primordial eras. He said the graves of Aryans in-

vaders were also discovered at Aligram Swat, Sangota Chitral and Timergara Dir Lower dating back to the Dark Ages period of around 2,000 BC. He said semi-nomadic Aryans entered KP from the Afghanistan side and settled along rivers Swat, Gomal, Kurram, and Kabul before migrating to India. “The Gandhara civilization gained roots in the province after Persians conquered it in 6th century BC and made it one of the provinces of the Achaemenid Empire.” He said reading and writing in Swat, Dir, Mardan, Charsadda, Peshawar and Malakand, famous for Ghandara civilization, were started as evidence of the inscriptions mostly made on stones by Iranians. In 327 BC, he said Alexander the Great invaded the subcontinent through Khyber Pass and faced tough resistance while trying to subdue Youafzai tribesmen at Swat and Kunar valleys. Alexander also resided in Taxila where he met a bold young man named Chandragupta Maurya, who was an exiled prince of Magadha in eastern India and Maurya decided to forge an empire in Alexander’s footsteps. However, his dream remained unfulfilled after the death of Alexander. Later, Alexander’s general Seleucus established rule in India’s territories. The Indo-Greeks, a group of about 39 kings and queens laid the foundation of its own culture and introduced Greek art style which still existed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa besides promoting Bhuddism. (APP)





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New Appointments in Military

Finally, the government issued notifications of appointing General Syed Asim Munir as a new Chief of Army Staff and General Sahir Shamshad Mirza as Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) for next three years. Similarly, a notification of retirement of current CJCSC General Nadeem Raza on November 27 and COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa on November 29 has also been issued. General Asim Munir will take over as the 17th Army Chief on November 29, while General Sahir Shamshad Mirza will take over charge as CJCSC on November 27. Both the newly appointed generals met President Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif. The PM hoped that the armed forces under the leadership of the new military leadership will effectively deal with the challenges and continue completely eradicating the menace of terrorism. In both the appointments, seniority has been taken into account as General Asim was at the first position in the seniority list while General Sahir Shamshad was at the second position. Both the officers have rendered unforgettable and valuable services to the Pakistan Army. They are among the most capable soldiers. In these two big appointments, the role of all, including the government and coalition parties was positive and everyone avoided creating any trouble though the PTI allegedly tried to make these appointments controversial. However, it didn't happen. It is now better for everyone to forget recent history and move forward. These appointments under seniority have given a clear message that discipline and merit is established in the Pakistan Army and it is also reflected in the decisions. The government as well as the entire leadership is praised for making this very important decision on merit by following the seniority list, if this procedure is adopted in the future, many problems will be solved automatically.

Transformation through women's education

— By Muhammad Akhtar

"No nation or country can develop unless their women and men are educated". Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who is our guardian in terms of education, realised that Muslim men and women could not progress unless they were educated. So, to fulfil the demand of the hour, he established the Aligarh Muslim University. In the movement for the creation of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam said, "No war of independence can be fought by keeping fifty percent of the population under house arrest." Quaid-e-Azam always kept his sister Fatima Jinnah with him as well. The independence movement also focused on women's modern education. On the other hand, Islam has also clearly stated regarding women's education. According to the teachings of Islam, the mother's lap is declared the child's first school. Which shows how imperative it is for a woman to be educated. However, it is a matter of fact, in our society women are half of the population, so unless this half is equally involved in the affairs of the country, we cannot even dream of development. Education and training are needed to bring women on an equal footing in political, Social, and economic development. The first thing, principally in social awareness, is education. Unless we look at women from the perspective of equals and responsible citizens, the role of educated women in the development of the country cannot be understood. In this connection, if we take a look at the history of the revolution in the world, it shows that; most of the girls' schools were opened immediately after the Russian Revolution. There was equal space for girls in every school, college, and university. The women's corner was set aside not only for education but also for women in important fields of medicine, engineering, and science. The same approach was later adopted by the countries that acknowledged the revolution. In the modern world. After the Industri-

al Revolution in Europe, the importance of women was understood and they were included in every sphere of life. Quaid-i-Azam emphasised women's education in every one of his speeches during and after the creation of Pakistan and also said that Pakistani women should take part in national development alongside men. It should be noted, this will be possible only when we consider women as productive members of society. Being a Muslim society, other than worldly we firmly believe that Islam is a revolutionary religion. But, in our society, there is a huge need to explain and understand Islam in the right sense. It is pertinent here to trace back the history if we go through the dark pages of the history we came to know; before Islam, there was a tribal society where girls were buried alive in the name of honour, they had no rights, which were considered the property of their male relatives, then the holy religion of Islam gave women equal rights. Today, the population of the Islamic world is 1.2 billion, half of whom are women. Women in Muslim societies are portrayed as completely different from women around the world. In the name of Islam, an attempt is made to separate their sphere from that of men, due to which a large part of the population of the country is separated from the education and development of the country. In my opinion, that is why these countries are lagging far behind in the race for development. In a country like ours, which is a developing and agricultural country, if the style of education is not curricular but based on training and self-accountability, then the sources of knowledge and education will be widened. The purpose of education is not just to read books but to wipe out the current poverty, ignorance, filth and diseases, and the animal instincts of our society.

Courtesy The Nation

A successful conclusion

— By Aneela Shahzad

Pakistan's 23rd prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, has appointed Pakistan's 17th army chief, Lt-Gen Asim Munir. In Pakistan's power politics, army chiefs have traditionally outlasted prime-ministers. It would be the opposite if the country's business of state ran according to the constitution; the three year term of the army chief would mean Pakistan would have had far more army chiefs and fewer prime ministers. But, either via grabbing power through dictatorship or by securing extensions from weak and blundering prime ministers, this powerful position ends up running anywhere between six and ten years. In the recent past, prime ministers, despite having been directly or indirectly ousted by those they have favoured by ignoring generals senior to them, have tended to expect loyalty. Former prime minister Imran Khan, a man who like his predecessors willingly gave his patron-general an extension and offered another one in March 2022 to avert his own ouster, learnt the hard way that such power play generates unintended and unanticipated consequences. So, with all this power and authority hugely tilted in favour of the army's top commander, his nomination would always acquire huge significance. The appointment of Gen Bajwa's successor generated unprecedented excitement, speculation and political wrangling. It became exceptionally significant for multiple reasons. For some time it had remained unclear to many if the outgoing COAS would actually doff his uniform. Hence the process had begun with many questions even about its relevance. There were widespread speculations – based on conveniently spun anecdotes and indeed some publicly known facts – that perhaps Gen Bajwa was here to stay. Imran Khan, while having attacked the outgoing army chief as unpatriotic, even comparing him to

figures like Mir Jafar and Mir Sadig, had also paradoxically called for his extension. Unconstitutionally challenging the current prime minister's constitutional authority to nominate the new army chief, Imran advocated that Gen Bajwa continue as army chief until the next elections so that a newly elected PM could nominate a new army chief. Several among those who met Gen Bajwa believed his departure was perhaps not imminent – that some form of extension was still a possibility. In the digital age where desperate and coordinated efforts are made to create facts through social media posts, in people's minds speculations continue to trump facts, and unsurprisingly most believed that the general would stay on. Yet within the current government and the PML-N – Mian Nawaz Sharif especially – there were no takers of an extension. Imran Khan tried his utmost to make the new appointment controversial by insisting that the so-called 'imported government' would not be allowed to appoint a new chief. He perhaps banked on street support and his own rhetoric to sway support from within the institution to weaken the prime minister's authority to appoint the new chief. He then moved to making the seniority list of the generals controversial. Once he recognized that he would probably not be able to abort the PM's authority to nominate, he sought to botch the process itself. The PM, he argued baselessly, would appoint a controversial general, one who would ban Imran's politics and allegedly protect the Sharif family's ill-gotten wealth. In his irrational rhetoric he was investing in the army chief authority the chief could not even exercise. In fact, in fighting his political battle, Imran was willing to accept an unconstitutional role expansion for the army chief. Imran's rhetoric flowed from a degree of apprehen-

sion given his own experience with the senior-most general in the list of potentials, who was removed from the post of ISI chief when reportedly he showed the then prime minister – Imran Khan – evidence of corruption by some individuals in the PM's close circle. Apparently – according to PTI circles – there were some policy differences that cropped up after a foreign tour that also created problems leading to the general's removal. Like the PML-N which was apprehensive of one former ISI chief, the PTI was reportedly apprehensive of the other. It soon became clear that the government was determined to exercise its authority to appoint the new chief, despite the pressure from Imran Khan which interestingly included the culmination of the PTI's long march in Rawalpindi on November 26. Many interesting moves followed. The general's retirement date was November 27, two days before the outgoing chief's retirement, yet the government had the authority under Rule 16A of the Pakistan Army Act 1952 to still ensure his eligibility as a candidate for the chief's position. But for that the seniority list had to arrive in the defence ministry and a summary sent to the PM days before November 27. The government's key men pulled out the PAA 1952 and rules of business to assert its own authority. Nawaz Sharif took the decision to appoint the new chief after detailed consultation with many within and outside of the PML-N. He had all the PDM allies on board. Once he made the decision, he closed all discussions and took off for Europe. So, the government's clear messaging, sobriety – and above all adherence to law, tradition, precedence and the constitution – enabled the long-winded turbulent process to conclude successfully four days before Gen Bajwa's retirement.

Courtesy The News

COP – United Nations Climate Change Conference

— By Dr Aima Mehdi

COP 27 or the 27th annually held United Nations Climate Change Conference ended on November 20 in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt. COP is a series of annual summits attended by member countries that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC): a treaty that came into force in 1994 to tackle the deteriorating state of the planet due to adverse climate changes. It includes the clauses pledged under the Paris Agreement which was formulated in 2015 at COP21 and is adopted by 196 countries. This agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change and an active step in halting further deterioration. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below two, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. This agreement provides a framework for financial, technical, and capacity-building support for countries that need it. To achieve these long-term temperature goals, countries aim to reach the global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible. This will also enable them to achieve a climate-neutral world by 2050. COP members meet every year so that they can discuss the improvement and see the progression. They have also decided to work on early weather systems for controlling the deterioration of weather effects. Member countries

also discuss novel solutions and research targets. Most countries have upheld their pledges, with the exception of Iran, where the emissions remain high. The ratification process to the committee is executed through the Kyoto protocol. This protocol operationalises UNFCCC by committing industrialised countries and economies in transition to limit and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with individual targets. The convention itself only asks those countries to adopt policies and measures on mitigation and to report periodically. Highlights from COP 27 the highlights of the outcomes cover all the areas of the Paris Agreement, which include finance, technology and mitigation. This includes US 100 billion pledged annually by developed nations to fight climate calamities and for strengthening the framework to curb greenhouse gas emissions. Stress was also laid on curbing the use of coal. It was also highlighted that global climate finance flows are small relative to the overall needs of developing countries, with such flows in 2019–2020 estimated to be USD 803 billion. This is 31–32 per cent of the annual investment needed (USD4–6 trillion) to keep the global temperature rise well below 2 °C or at 1.5 °C, and also below what would be expected in the light of the investment opportunities identified and the

cost of failure to meet climate stabilisation targets. Evidently, developed countries are the main drivers of climate catastrophes since they are the ones who industrialised first and emitted the most amount of carbon into the atmosphere. Moreover, in the last thirty years, developing countries have been asking developed countries to financially compensate for the damage global warming has caused to their economies. This includes extreme weather events like floods, drought, and extreme winds. At COP27, the discussions were intense and long, because developed nations continued to show resistance in pledging to provide compensation for the harm they have caused. However, after a two-week-long discussion, a deal was struck. According to this deal, member nations have decided to establish a “Loss and Damage” Fund that will assist developing countries, which are particularly vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change in responding to loss and damage. The formation of this fund is the highlight of COP 27 since the aim of this fund is to cover all costs incurred by climate change that go beyond what countries can adapt to or mitigate against. This agreement holds paramount significance because 2020 has been the warmest year on record, and 2011-2020 has been the warmest decade.

Courtesy Daily Times

Courtesy Daily Times

Letter to the Editor

FIFA and Qatar

Despite continuous propaganda against FIFA's World Cup host country, Qatar should be lauded for sticking to its Islamic roots. While the Western media struggled to tarnish the image of the oil-rich country by raising issues such as human rights violations, let us not forget the armed hostilities and oppression it wrecked upon the

Middle East for the “greater good” of humanity; leaving the pages of history splattered with blood. From banning alcohol to rising against immoral activities during football matches, Qatar has sent across an important lesson for countries that were established based on Islamic ideology to be proud of their religion and not bow to Western propaganda. Perhaps Pakistan should

take a leaf out of Qatar's book and understand where it is headed when it comes to the promotion of its content. An example of this is the film industry. Let us not forget the chant that liberated us from the colonials.

- Ifrah Shahbaz
- Islamabad

Khan's demand for early polls only possible if he returns to assembly: Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi Saturday made it clear that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan should demand early elections after returning to assembly and pressure tactics would not be allowed to make system hostage. The democratic government will complete its term and then elections will be held on time, he said while talking to a private news channel. He criticized

that a person deprived of power was only busy in targeting the national institutions under a well-thought-out agenda and campaign, adding, PTI chief should return to the Parliament as this was the only way if he wanted early elections in the country. If Khan continues to behave in a similar manner, the country could not move forward as a deadlock between the government and PTI would persist, he mentioned. Replying a question, he

said Khan's real intentions are violent, adding that the long march was just a pretext, and actually he aimed at creating divisions and destroying the country. He said that PTI was totally frustrated after the failure of its fascist politics and they were putting the people in trouble and worry as due to the closure of the roads, people were facing extreme hardship and were unable to reach their destinations. (Agencies)

IHC seeks police response on plea of 'Pakistan's gentleman citizen'

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Saturday sought response from police on registering a case against a woman on a petition filed by a person who introduced himself as 'Pakistan's gentleman citizen'. IHC held hearing on a woman's plea pertaining to a case registered against her by the Islamabad police. The said case was filed by a person who has used the term 'Pakistan's gentleman citizen' instead of his name. In the hearing, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri issued a written notification on the woman's plea, in which the court underscored that the name and number of the plaintiff have not been mentioned in the FIR, adding that the case was registered against the woman for not being involved in the investigation, but if there is no name

and address of the person filing the FIR, then it's just out of question for the Investigation Officer (IO) to launch investigation on the matter. The court remarked that what sort of criminal procedure could be launched on an FIR registered with the name 'Pakistan's gentleman citizen'. Furthermore, the woman also put up serious allegations of physical abuse against Tahmoor Shamil, husband of AIG. She also apprised the court regarding an application submitted against Tahmoor Shamil to SSP Operations. It should be noted that the woman had filed a plea for the disposal of the aforementioned case in the Aabpara Police Station Islamabad on Nov 13, while according to police the plea was received by women's police station on Nov 8. (Agencies)

APHC leaders welcomes appointment of Pakistan's new CJCS, COAS

ISLAMABAD: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders on Saturday welcomed the appointment of Lieutenant General Sahir Shamshad Mirza as Pakistan's new Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) and Lieutenant General Asim Munir as Chief of Army Staff (COAS). According to Kashmir Media Service, the APHC spokesman in Srinagar thanked Pakistan for its continued moral, political, and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris in their struggle for the right to self-determination. He urged India to take steps to settle the Kashmir

dispute as per the United Nations resolutions for ensuring durable peace in the region. Meanwhile, Wariseen Shuhada-e-Jammu and Kashmir pasted posters on pillars, electricity poles, and walls in different areas of the territory containing pictures of Pakistan's newly appointed Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Lt Gen Sahir Shamshad Mirza and Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Asim Munir. "The Hurriyat leadership and people of Kashmir greet the new military leadership of Pakistan. A strong Pakistan is essential for the success of the Kashmir freedom movement," the posters read. (Agencies)

Eco-degradation endangering biodiversity, food security

LAHORE: Ecosystem degradation through depletion of natural resources like water, air, soil and habitat is bringing about destructive effects on the environment endangering biodiversity, wildlife and food security. With the rising population and availability of meagre resources to excel in this domain, the environmental issues continued to aggravate over the years. Massive tree cutting resulting in floods, using agricultural land for housing societies and ill-planned cities and towns have further aggravated the situation. Therefore, the natural resources that provide the basis of "our existence are massively under pressure as we witness the water table going down rapidly and agricultural land shrinking due

to unruly construction". According to recent World Bank findings, climate change-related disasters have affected over 75 million Pakistanis during the last three decades in terms of agriculture and bio-diversity damages incurring estimated losses of over \$ 29 billion (roughly \$ 1 billion per annum). As Pakistan is a signatory to numerous international agreements and protocols, there was a dire need to focus on this area diligently. Therefore, the present government efficiently pleaded the case of developing nations at the Conference of Parties (CoP-27) held in Egypt this November and sailed through successfully in getting created multi-billion funds to cope with climate change challenges. (Agencies)

Anti-polio drive targeting 2m children kicked-off

LAHORE: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali formally inaugurated anti-polio drive by administering polio vaccine to children at the Mian Mir Hospital here on Saturday. During the seven-day drive starting from November 28 to December 4, as many as two million children under five years of age would be administrated anti-polio drops and for this purpose, 6500 teams had been formed. Talking on the occasion, DC Muhammad Ali said that Union Coun-

cil Monitoring Officers and Area In-charges would perform duties in the field to make polio drive a success. He maintained that all district officers and assistant commissioners would monitor the drive in their respective tehsil. He urged the parents to get their children administered anti-polio drops to protect them from life-long disability. "Polio free Lahore is our mission", he added. The DC also inspected the dengue ward of the hospital. (APP)

Encroachment removed from Kaki road in Serai Naurang

LAKKI MARWAT: Additional Assistant Commissioner Naurang Gohar Ali supervised an anti-encroachment campaign and removed encroachments from several places of the tehsil. The operation was carried out on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Lakki Marwat, following repeated public complaints.

In this regard, an encroachment was removed on Kaki Road to clear the roadsides for smooth flow of traffic. The AAC also inspected shops and checked the price, quantity and expiry of essential food commodities besides checking hygiene conditions at butcher shops in the Naurang Bazar. (APP)

Lok Mela continues in Sargodha

SARGODHA: The seven-day lok mela arranged by Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) is continue here aimed to high light rich cultural heritage. The mela is entertaining the people of Sargodha with vibrant colors of Punjab. Talking to APP, Media consultant PHA Shafqat Awan said that the focus of the lok mela was to create provincial harmony. A number of folk artists, rural musicians and folk dancers from all over the country are participating in the event. The daily attractions of the mela included provincial pavilions having various cultural themes, traditional food stalls, folk dances, music, shopping stalls, kids' corner, concerts in open-air theater among several other programmes. Secretary Culture and Tourism Punjab Asia Gul and Additional Director General Anti-Corruption Establishment Punjab Yasir Bhatti appreciated the efforts of PHA over organizing the loke mela. (APP)

Ten passengers injured

MUZAFFARGARH: At least ten persons including two women sustained injuries in a collision between a passenger bus and truck near Punjnad head-works, Karachi road last night. According to Rescue 1122 officials, a Karachi-bound passenger bus after a brake failure became uncontrolled and collided with a roadside parked truck near Punjnad head-works Karachi road. As a result, ten passengers sustained multiple injuries. Meanwhile, after receiving the information, Rescue teams rushed to the spot and started relief operations. The injured were identified as Kamran, Shakil, Kausar Bibi, Jamal, Khan Muhammad, Shahid, Sharif Bibi, Zain, Kamran, and Muhammad Ijaz. First aid was provided to eight with minor injuries on the spot while two critically injured were shifted to the district headquarters hospital. The victims hailed from Alipur and Shehr Sultan areas. (APP)

CTD arrest nine suspected terrorists

LAHORE: The Punjab Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on Saturday arrested nine terrorists during intelligence-based operations (IBO) across Punjab. A CTD spokesperson said that 25 IBO's were conducted across Punjab during which some 21,111 people were interrogated and nine were arrested. Moreover, some 372 combing operations were conducted within a week, 36 arrests and 33 FIRs were lodged. The official added that the terrorists wanted to attack important personalities and government buildings. At least two improvised Explosive Devices (IED), explosive materials, 13 detonators, fuses, weapons, cash, ammunition and other items were recovered from the terrorists, CTD said. (Agencies)

Man crushed to death

WAH CANTT: A man was crushed to death by a speedy dumper recklessly driven by an unknown driver on GT road near the bypass in the jurisdiction of Taxila Police station here on Saturday. The Police spokesman said that the man, in his 30s, was crossing GT road when a speedy dumper recklessly driven by an unknown driver rammmed over him, killing him on the spot. The dumper driver managed to flee from the scene. The body was not identified till filing this news report. The Taxila Police registered a case and started further investigation. (APP)

Sanaullah believes masses 'say no' to Imran Khan's long march

RAWALPINDI: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Saturday berated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's leadership, saying that the masses have sidelined the long march of former premier Imran Khan. Sharing his views Sanaullah claimed that in the PTI's march, the participants are not more than 16,000 -15,000 to 16,000 according to Rana - as

he claimed that if the PTI leadership opted to stage sit-in, then by Maghrib prayer, the - number - of participants would be shrink to 7,000. Talking about the preparations of the government over the long march, Rana said that the preparations are made to bar the participants of the long march to enter Islamabad. (Agencies)

Rawalpindi feels proud to host Imran: Sheikh Rashid on long march

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League (AML) Sheikh Rashid on Saturday said that the masses of Rawalpindi - Rashid's hometown - feel proud to host Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan. Addressing the participants of the long march, Rashid lashed out at the incumbent government over

economic situation. Talking about the ouster of Imran's government, the former federal minister said that the PTI-led government was toppled by purchasing the conscience of the lawmakers. Vowing to overthrow the government through the constitutional way, Rashid berated Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, saying that Dar is lying over LC. (Agencies)

Traffic police launched road safety awareness drive

SARGODHA: Traffic Police on Saturday launched a campaign to raise awareness among road users. The aim of the campaign was to create awareness about the use of helmets, back view mirrors, head and tail lights, and indicators of bikes. At the start of the campaign, road users were given guidance on PSCA accidental camera footage for awareness purposes. The motorcyclists were also briefed about other safety tips necessary while riding a bike. Motorcyclists were briefed to install a back view mirror, drive at a slow pace at the extreme left of the road, avoid using a mobile phone and triple riding. Later on, back view mirrors were installed

for motorcyclists and safety helmets were distributed among the road users. While launching the "Road Safety Awareness Campaign", Incharge Traffic education Sargodha Sajid Mehmood talking to APP said that in Pakistan thousands of people die every year in road crashes and under age motorcyclists were major contributors to them, adding that motorcyclists should use side-view mirrors and helmets to avoid fatal accidents. He said that traffic police was striving hard to reduce road accidents and taking all possible steps to control the accidents. He appealed to the people to cooperate with traffic police. (APP)

DC for timely completion of development projects

SIALKOT: Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Khurram Niazi has said that for the convenience of the people, Punjab Intermediate Cities Improvement Investment Program (PICIIP) must ensure the completion of development projects in the stipulated time period. Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park should be completed and handed over to the district administration by December 31, 2022. He expressed these views while addressing a meeting held to review the work on projects under the Punjab PICIIP. Project Director PICIIP Hamza Salik, Deputy Director (DD) Development Raja Yasir, National Engineering Services Pakistan (NESPAK) and the representatives of contractors company attended the meeting. Briefing the meeting participants, the city manager of PICIIP and representatives

of the contractor company said that Khadim Ali Road will be completed in 21 days. They said that the work on Defence Road will be completed in 3 weeks, the number of teams working on Marala Road will be increased. Similarly, steps will be taken to arrange the material required for the completion of Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park without delay. Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Khurram Niazi said that the projects of PESP are very important for the development of the city, however, due to the delay in these projects, the people are facing difficulties and he had received a large number of complaints in this regard. He directed that the PICIIP and contractors to manage machinery and additional labour simultaneously on projects and set time-lines for these projects. (APP)

Five scholars receive PhD degrees

LAHORE: The Punjab University has awarded five PhD degrees to scholars in various disciplines. The PU spokesman told the media here on Saturday that Nida Iram, daughter of Rais Ahmad, was awarded PhD degree in the subject of education after approval of her thesis entitled 'Effects of Teachers' Emotional Intelligence on Classroom Learning Environment and school Climate at Secondary School Level', Imran Hayat, son of Malik Rab Nawaz, in the subject of Islamic Studies after approval of his thesis entitled 'Islamic Law on Interfaith Marriages: Practical Issues of Contemporary Pluralistic Societies', Tasawer Shahzad Ahmad son of Muhammad Ashraf in

the subject of High Energy Physics after approval of his thesis entitled 'Triply Flavored Baryon Anti-Baryon Decays of Charmonia', Muhammad Bilal Ahmad, son of Javed Iqbal, in the subject of Commerce after approval of his thesis entitled 'Investigating the Impact of Proactive Career Attitudes on Career Outcomes through Job Crafting Behavior: An Empirical Evidence' and Shahzadi Nudrat Humera, daughter of Siddique Muhammad Khan, in the subject of Solid State Physics (Nanotechnology) after approval of her thesis entitled 'Preparation of Barium Titanate, Strontium Titanate and their Alloys for High-Tech Applications'. (APP)

Various steps afoot for rehabilitation of flood victims: commissioner

D.I.KHAN: Commissioner Aamir Afaq has said the government was taking various measures for the rehabilitation of flood-affected people after the recent floods which caused a lot of damage in Dera Ismail Khan. He expressed these views while addressing the flood-affected farmers of Dera Ismail Khan as a special guest on the occasion of the launch of the distribution of wheat seed and fertilizer aid at the Model Farm Services Center Dera Ismail Khan. He said initially, the relief activities were carried out to restore the damages and all available resources were utilized for the restoration of

the infrastructure. Similarly, after the damage assessment survey in the affected areas, the compensation amount was being provided to the victims. While, the teams assigned to other affected areas were carrying out the survey process. The commissioner lauded the services of USAID on immediate assistance of certified wheat seed and fertilizer to flood-affected farmers. The commissioner further said that he would not sit idle till the rehabilitation of the last flood victim. All out efforts were being made for the restoration of the irrigation system and the agriculture sector. (APP)

Ashrafi for joint strategy to counter defamation drive against Pakistan Army

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister’s Special Representative for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Saturday said the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) should devise a joint strategy to counter the defamation drive against the Pakistan Army and national security institutions. On twitter, Ashrafi who is also the chairman of Paki-

stan Ulema Council said launching malicious campaign against the national defense institution’s head, in fact, is a nefarious design to weaken the resolve of the country. He said that the most important countries of Islamic world had been weaken through false propagandas. “It is our collective responsibility to give a befitting response to those who are allegedly involved in anti-state and nation activities,’ he added. Shedding

light on the professional potential of the nominated army chief Gen Syed Asim Munir, Ashrafi said that he had served as the head of two most sensitive institutions; Military Intelligence and Inter-Services Intelligence and he was well-acquainted with the internal and external affairs of the state. He said that General Asim Munir was a man of good character with a clear mind of the defensive policy of the country. (APP)

Maryam says Khan’s long march, plan to make new COAS controversial failed

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML- N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz on Saturday while lashing out at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supremo Imran Khan said that Imran Khan’s long march and plan to make the new COAS contentious failed. Taking to Twitter, Maryam penned that “This long march failed miserably, one after another drama and lies, but the truth is that his 9-year plan to conspire against the government and to bring a favored COAS failed.” She further stated that “His [Imran Khan] plans to create hurdles in the appointment of the new COAS, to make him controversial, have failed. This is what you get for conspiring.” Earlier, the Rana Sanaullah berated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf’s leadership, saying that the masses have sidelined the long march of former



premier Imran Khan. Sharing his views Sanaullah claimed that in the PTI’s march, the participants are not more than 16,000 –15,000 to 16,000 according to Rana – as he claimed that if the PTI leadership opted to stage sit-in, then by Maghrib prayer, the – number – of participants would be shrink to 7,000. Talking about the preparations of the government over the long march, Rana said that the preparations are made to bar the participants of the long march to enter Islamabad. (Agencies)

Dar chairs apex committee meeting on Reko Diq

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar here on Saturday chaired a meeting of the Apex Committee on Reko Diq Project to review the progress on implementation of agreed steps for completion of the Reko Diq arrangement. The Finance Minister highlighted the importance of early completion of the remaining steps under the agreed arrangement and stressed upon all concerned to ensure that the deadline of December 15, 2022 is successfully met, and the project revived soonest after the settlement, said a press release issued here. The meeting was informed that after the advice of the Supreme Court on the reference already filed is received, necessary legislative steps would be taken, for which the relevant provinces concerned are fully on board. The provincial governments have also assured to complete all the

codal formalities within the due date. The meeting was of the view that successful completion of the agreed arrangement by the deadline would add to the confidence of the international investors. The revival of Reko Diq project would give a fillip to the economy by boosting investment sentiments and will increase employment opportunities in the country. Federal Law Minister Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Masood Malik, SAPM on Revenue Tariq Mehmood Pasha, DG (MI) Maj. Gen. Iftikhar Hussan Chaudhry, Director (MI) Brig. Atif Rafiq, Additional Attorney General Ahmed Irfan Aslam as well as senior officials from Attorney General’s office, Petroleum Division and Finance Division attended the meeting in person while Chief Secretary Baluchistan and officials of the Government of Baluchistan joined the meeting on zoom. (APP)

Sindh govt to provide markup subsidy on loans to women owned SMEs

KARACHI: The Sindh government will provide a markup subsidy on loans provided to women-owned small and medium enterprises for the promotion of economic and business activities, particularly in rural areas. An agreement was inked here on Friday between Sindh Enterprise Development Fund (SEDF) and First Women Bank Limited (FWBL) under which markup subsidy would be provided on loans disbursed to women entrepreneurs by FWBL through SEDF. Chief Executive Officer SEDF Khizr Parvez and President and Chief Executive Officer of FWBL Farrukh Iqbal Khan signed the agreement in presence of Special Assistant to Sindh Chief Minister on Investment and

Public-Private Partnership Projects Syed Qasim Naveed Qamar. Secretary Investment Sindh Syed Mansoor Abbas Rizvi, officers of SEDF and First Women Bank Limited were also present on this occasion. SACM while addressing the ceremony said that the government of Sindh had chalked out an effective program of women empowerment and subsidised credit facility on bank loans that were being provided to women entrepreneurs. Qasim Naveed said that the government was focusing on strengthening the economy, especially the rural and agricultural economy, and promoting economic and business activities through the promotion of small and medium enterprises. (APP)

PM’s aide on culture Amir Muqam inaugurates Lok Mela

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister for National Heritage and Culture Engr Amir Muqam here on Saturday formally inaugurated the 10-day folk festival of Pakistan “Lok Mela” organized by Lok Virsa, National Heritage and Culture Division. Speaking on the occasion, the adviser stated that Lok Mela provides a much-needed platform to the traditional practitioners including master artisans, folk artistes, folk musicians, and folk dancers from all over the country to participate in the festival and win recognition of their talent at national level. Artists and artisans are our asset and they contribute immensely to the development of the society, he added. The adviser further stated that the events like Lok Mela

serve to promote national harmony and integration among all federating units through projection of their indigenous culture and folk heritage. The events like Lok Mela are a priority of the present government as these promote Pakistan’s traditional culture and provide healthy entertainment for the people. Engr Amir Muqam maintained that Pakistan is a peace loving country with a diverse and ancient cultural heritage. Our creative people continue keeping their centuries’ old traditions alive with great pride. The work of our artisans and artists is matchless. Our crafts have a separate identity in the entire world. Culture is an effective tool through which true soft image of Pakistan can be projected. (APP)

Child killed after sexual assault in Vehari

VEHARI: A child was allegedly killed after sexual assault by unknown outlaws in the jurisdiction of Luddan Police Station in district Vehari on Saturday. According to police spokesman, a ten-year-old child namely Shoaib went to enjoy a cultural fare at Mauza Ghulam Shah. He was allegedly subjected to sexual torture and then killed by unknown outlaws. The parents of the deceased traced the body from a field. The Police shifted the dead body to District Headquarters Hospital and started search for the alleged outlaws. (APP)

Railways reduces freight rates

LAHORE: The Pakistan Railways has reduced freight charges for different goods trains to facilitate the business community. According to the PR spokesperson on Saturday, the decision was made on the direction of PR Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique. Reduction in freight charges would attract goods transportation through railways. Reduction in freight rates has been made for ZBFC (small), ZBFC (large), MBFR & BFRB /BKF wagons.(APP)

IRSA releases 81,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 81,900 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 50,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1512.37 feet and was 114.37 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 23,200 cusecs while outflow was 42,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1139.85 feet, which was 89.85 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded at 9,100 cusecs and 22,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu, and Sukkur was recorded at 56,500, 39,700, 28,300, and 13,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 11,600 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera, and 2,000 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala. (APP)

PGMI’s 10th convocation on Nov 30

LAHORE: The 10th convocation of the Post-graduate Medical Institute (PGMI), and 4th convocation of Ameer-ud-Din Medical College Lahore will be held at Aiwan-e-Iqbal, here on Wednesday, Nov 30. According to a spokesperson on Saturday, a total of 91 graduates would get MBBS degrees and 70 post-graduates successful would be given their degrees/diplomas. The distinction-holders having marks 85 per cent and above would be awarded gold medals in that particular subject. A total of 31 distinction-holders would be awarded 130 gold medals. Also, the post-graduates passing their diploma exams in the first attempt securing more than 70pc marks would be getting a High Achiever Medal. Out of 70 post-graduates, 19 would be receiving high achiever medals. PGMI/AMC Principal Professor Al-Fareed Zafar underscored that parents and family members of the students have also been invited to see the proceedings of the convocation. (APP)

Fazl says PTI’s govt imposed through rigging four years back

MANSEHRA: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman said on Saturday that PTI rigged the 2018 elections to come to power, which led to a economic turmoil. Addressing the public gathering, the PDM leader said, “Firstly political chaos was created in the country, we have saved it from devastation, and soon political and economic stability will be seen.” The JUI leader stated we have fought a war for the sake of the country’s sovereignty and protection. Paki-

stan was on the verge of destruction. Today we have stepped out of some major crises, and now Pakistan is off the “grey list.” While criticising Imran Khan, Fazlur Rehman said “foreign funding was kept hidden, everything has been proven, and there is nothing left to keep from the public.” He stated that “JUIF is working for people’s rights. “It is said that there should be a national government, and I want these powers to know that this country has a national government.”(Agencies)

PTI ‘optimistic’ about change in institution: Fawad Chaudhry

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf senior leader and former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry on Saturday said that his party is optimistic about change in the institution. Addressing the participants of the long march, Fawad asked the – rulers – incumbent government to accept the decision of the masses and announce the snap election. He challenged the rulers to ‘come’ and contest election, if they [rulers] feel that the masses are standing by their side. Taking a swipe at PM Shehbaz Sharif, the

PTI stalwart [Fawad] was of the view that the PM ran away to Turkiye due to Imran’s fear – as he came to know that the PTI is chief coming for the long march. Taking a jibe at PM Shehbaz [continuously], he asked PM to make his way to the Airport to meet the PTI leadership there. Lamenting that the PTI’s mandate was snatched eight months back, Fawad made it clear that the people are not going to make their way back from today’s gathering as – according to him – it is the time to ‘rewrite’ history.(APP)

Religious ministry to make legislation for reorganization of private Umrah companies:Minister

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Mufti Abdul Shakoor Saturday said that practical steps are being initiated for the systematic reorganization of private Umrah companies through legislation on the same pattern as Hajj companies to ensure all facilities to pilgrims. “Due to some necessary amendments an act in this regard would be tabled in National Assembly very soon”, he said while speaking to the PTV news. After this amendment all private companies would be bound to work under the religious ministry, he said, adding, the ministry will strictly monitor the activities of operators and will address the complaints of pilgrims, and curb misappropriations in matters about religion. Minister also stressed that the ministry and tour operators needed to work together to improve pilgrimage services,

ensuring the comfort of intending pilgrims. The legislation is aimed at giving legal cover to Hajj as well as Umrah and after approval, Umrah operations would also be monitored, he added. Replying to a question, the minister stressed the importance of a stable neighborhood that the country under the leadership of Shahbaz Sharif was pursuing policies that will strengthen ties with neighboring countries. He further criticized that PTI chief Imran Khan had “ruined” Pakistan’s foreign policy during its tenure and isolated the country on the diplomatic front, adding, a coalition government was trying to revive bit-by-bit the ties with other countries which were damaged by Imran Khan. To another question, he said Khan had pushed the country into chaos due to his vindictive nature, political victimization, and poor governance. (APP)

98 kanal state land retrieved from land Mmafia in Vehari

VEHARI: District administration retrieved over 98 kanal state land during an operation against the land mafia, here on Saturday. According to official sources, a team of the revenue department led by Tehsildar Hafiz Iqbal Mahmood retrieved over 89 kanal land, illegally occupied by

Muhammad Asif son of Muhammad Hussain, at Chak no 51/WB. The land grabber had maize cultivated crops at the grabbed land. Deputy Commissioner Safdir Virk remarked that nobody would be allowed to grab the land. The operation against illegal land grabbers will continue.(APP)

Benazir crises centre to be empowered for protecting women’s rights

MULTAN: Steps are being taken to empower Benazir Crises Centres and Shelter Home at tehsil and district levels in order to eliminate crimes against women. This was stated by Chairperson Women Authority Rafia Kamal while talking to media persons here on Saturday. She said that Benazir Crises Centre and Shelter Homes were being upgraded on patterns of Violence Against Women Centre (VAWC) as the Punjab As-

sembly had notified in that regard. The victim women could contact administration of both the departments for their redressing their grievances. Both departments were given special powers for dispensation of justice. “The department will also facilitate women and provide all sort of legal support. Counseling, rehabilitation and treatment facilities will also be given to the victims,” she concluded. (APP)

Seminar on right to information held at IUB

BAHAWALPUR: Punjab Information Commission in collaboration with the Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB) organized Right to Information Awareness seminar as part of the regular lecture series at the University at Ghulam Muhammad Ghotvi Hall, Abbaisa Campus here Saturday. Commissioner Bahawalpur Division Raja Jahangir Anwar was chief guest while District and Sessions Judge Bahawalpur Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Vice Chancellor Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob were the guests of honour. The program was was aimed to educate civil society, teachers and students about human rights and rule of law. Chief Information Commissioner Mehboob Qadir Shah while speaking on the topic said that the Right to Information was inevitable for good governance as in a prosperous and ideal

state, the citizens have full access to information and Punjab Information Commission was working diligently for this purpose. Access to information is a fundamental right of citizens to provide them with guidance on government institutions and their decisions, especially on the use of funds. Its aim is to establish a system based on transparency, he said adding that its second objective was to bring the performance of these institutions before the public eye by providing access to information. Commissioner Bahawalpur Raja Jahangir Anwar said that under the leadership of Chief Information Commissioner Mehboob Qadir Shah, the Punjab Information Commission was playing the role of a bridge between common people and public sector organizations, which was a welcome development. (APP)

Azerbaijan to import Pak rice with tax exemption for five years

ISLAMABAD: Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev has said that the decision to import rice from Pakistan with tax exemption of five years was the outcome of his meetings with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held in the last couple of months. Addressing at an international conference “Along the Middle Corridor: Geopolitics, Security and Economy” held at ADA University, Baku, the other day, the president said during these meetings, they discussed the agenda of their bilateral



relations. The president of Azerbaijan was responding to questions raised by Executive Director of Center for Global and Strategic Studies of Pakistan Khalid Taimur Akram, as a participant. The

president said he discussed with Pakistan's Prime Minister, the prospects of further intensifying the bilateral economic and trade cooperation and the decision over special regulations for rice from Pakistan, was a reflection of that. He said they had decided to take this step in order to stimulate the growth of mutual trade between the two countries. He had discussed with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif what kind of goods they could provide to each other, he added. (APP)

US FCC bans sales, import of Chinese tech from Huawei, ZTE

WASHINGTON: The U.S. is banning the sale of communications equipment made by Chinese companies Huawei and ZTE and restricting the use of some China-made video surveillance systems, citing an “unacceptable risk” to national security. The five-member Federal Communications Commission said Friday it has voted unanimously to adopt new rules that will block the importation or sale of certain technology prod-

ucts that pose security risks to U.S. critical infrastructure. It's the latest in a years-long escalation of U.S. restrictions of Chinese technology that began with President Donald Trump and has continued under President Joe Biden's administration. “The FCC is committed to protecting our national security by ensuring that untrustworthy communications equipment is not authorized for use within our borders, and we are con-

tinuing that work here,” said FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel, a Democrat, in a prepared statement. Along with Huawei and ZTE, the order affects products made by companies such as Hikvision and Dahua, makers of widely used video surveillance cameras. The FCC's order applies to future authorizations of equipment, though the agency leaves open the possibility it could revoke previous authorizations. (Agencies)

BMW raises investment in Hungary EV factory to over 2 bil euros

BERLIN: BMW raised its planned investment in an electric vehicle (EV) factory under construction in Hungary to over two billion euros (US\$2.08 billion) on Friday and said it will build a 500-million-euro high-voltage battery assembly plant on site. The carmaker had previously said it would spend over one billion euros on the Debrecen factory, due to open in 2025 and ramp up to producing 150,000 cars a year. Hungary's government will provide 13.5

billion forints (US\$33.92 million) of non-refundable subsidy for the additional investment, Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto said at a press conference. “The close link between battery assembly and vehicle production is part of our strategy,” said Markus Fallboehmer, senior vice president of battery production at BMW. BMW assembles batteries at three sites in Germany, as well as its US Spartanburg site and its Shenyang plant in China, and will source

battery cells in Europe from Chinese battery producers CATL and EVE. Five hundred additional jobs will be created to staff the battery assembly plant. Orban's government is pinning hopes on electric vehicle and battery investments to steer Hungary, highly exposed to the internal combustion car sector, through to the next phase of the industry, which accounts for about 5 to 6% of its GDP and employs over 150,000 people. (Agencies)

Food delivery orders rise as MENA continues embracing digital economy

RIYADH: The appetite for food delivery in the Middle East and North Africa region has continued to grow in 2022 after the pandemic kick-started demand for the services in the region, according to a new report. According to data in ‘Digital Transformation in MENA 2022’, produced by cloud-based payments platform Checkout.com, over half — 53 percent — of MENA consumers purchased food online in the past year, with 42 percent consumers saying they are buying food online more frequently this year than in 2021. The online food

ordering sector has numerous moving parts that need to come together in each transaction, from the restaurants to drivers and aggregators to payment providers. Close collaboration is therefore vital for the many stakeholders, noted Ramzi Alqrainy, chief technology officer at The Chefz, a leading Saudi-based food delivery app. “Collaboration allows us to innovate effectively and to reach and serve society in its most inclusive sense. These days, one provider doesn't need to manage all aspects of a consumer experience from A to Z. We

all need to work together. This is the death of ownership,” said Alqrainy. The findings fit the trend of the region increasingly embracing digital technology. Data from the report shows that 91 percent of consumers across MENA bought products online in the past year, with fashion and clothing making up 46 percent of all online purchases in the region. A fifth of consumers across the region purchased retail products online more frequently than last year, with 33 percent shopping more often for fashion and clothing online. (Agencies)

Bank of Japan to Launch Digital Yen Pilot Program Next Year

TOKYO: The Bank of Japan is preparing to run a test trial of its own central bank digital currency (CBDC), the digital yen, with help from three top banks and regional institutions. The pilot program, estimated to last two years, will focus on testing the currency via several transactions, and experimenting with its functionality in environments without internet connections. The Bank of Japan is planning to test the functionality of a version of its CBDC, the digital yen, in partnership with three top banks and several regional institutions, according to Nikkei. The results obtained from the pilot program, reportedly set to run for two years, will be key in the decision of

the government to actually develop a digital yen. The pilot program will include different tests for the currency to determine its behavior when doing everyday transactions, such as deposits and withdrawals. Also, the bank will be testing its functionality in emergencies, where internet connections are limited or simply not available. This will be the first CBDC test that the Bank of Japan runs in conjunction with other financial institutions. Since April 2021, the bank has been running a proof-of-concept that tests the feasibility of a digital yen and its core functions and features. The institution announced the second phase of these tests in March 2021. (Agencies)

Qatar reviewing London investments after transport ads ban - FT

LONDON: Qatar has launched a review of its investments in London after the city's transport authority this week banned the Gulf state's tourism advertisements on the capital's buses, taxis and Underground train system, Saturday's Financial Times reported. The paper said the move by Transport for London (TfL) was triggered by concerns over the soccer World Cup host's stance on LGBT+ rights and its treatment of migrant workers. The FT quoted a person involved in the Qatari review as saying TfL, which is chaired by London Mayor Sadiq Khan, contacted Q22, the body overseeing the World Cup and Qatar's tourism authority, this week to inform them of the ban. The TfL ban “has been interpreted as a message from the mayor's office that Qatari business is not welcome in London,” the person was quoted as saying. Qatar is one of the biggest investors in London through its sover-

eign wealth fund. The Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) owns Harrods, the department store, the Shard skyscraper and is co-owner of Canary Wharf. The Gulf state also owns the Savoy and Grosvenor House hotels, a 20% stake in Heathrow Airport and a 14% stake in Sainsbury's, Britain's second biggest supermarket group. A spokesperson for TfL said that ahead of the World Cup it provided its advertising partners and brands with “further guidance on the advertising which we are likely to consider acceptable to run during the tournament while also ensuring that football fans are not denied the opportunity to support their teams”. “Each advertising campaign continues to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.” TfL said advertising which promotes travel to Qatar, tourism in Qatar, or portrays Qatar as a desirable destination would not be considered acceptable. (Agencies)

Goldman issues stock market warning

MOSCOW: The current rally in global stocks is temporary, according to Goldman Sachs, which forecasts a market bottom in 2023. The Wall Street bank's strategists cite “typically consistent” indicators when saying that the bear market phase is not over yet. “We continue to think that the near-term path for equity markets is likely to be volatile and down before reaching a final trough in 2023,” they wrote in a note to clients. The investment bank noted that while valuations had fallen this year, they had mostly done so in response to rising interest rates. Goldman added that investors haven't yet priced-in earnings losses from a recession. The strategists expect the S&P 500 index to end 2023 at 4,000 points, which is just 0.9% higher than Friday's close. (Agencies)

EU energy crisis to last for years – FT

BRUSSELS: Europe's energy problems will last for years if demand for gas remains high but new supplies are not secured, the Financial Times reported on Friday, citing industry executives and strategists. The experts warned that even fully filled gas storages ahead of the winter months cannot guarantee that sufficient supplies will be available next summer and for the following winter. EU nations managed to fill their gas storage facilities to 90% at the end of September, when heating demand typically begins to increase. This came despite the reduction in Russian supplies amid Ukraine-related sanction pressure. “We are in a gas crisis, and we will continue to be in a little bit of a crisis mode for the next two or three years,” Sid Bambawale, the head of liquefied natural gas for the Asia region at Vitol, told FT at the Commodities Asia Summit in Singapore. (Agencies)

Musk says Twitter made ‘mistake’ banning Trump

WASHINGTON: Twitter's ban on then president Donald Trump after the Jan 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol by his supporters was a “grave mistake” that had to be corrected, chief executive Elon Musk said yesterday, although he also stated that incitement to violence would continue to be prohibited on Twitter. “I'm fine with Trump not tweeting. The important thing is that Twitter correct a grave mistake in banning his account, despite no violation of the law or terms of service,” Musk said in a tweet. “Deplatforming a sitting President undermined public trust in Twitter for half of America.” Last week, Musk announced the reactivation of Trump's account after a slim majority voted in a Twitter poll in favour of reinstating Trump, who

said, however, that he had no interest in returning to Twitter. He added he would stick with his own social media site Truth Social, the app developed by Trump Media & Technology Group. Republican Trump, who 10 days ago announced he was running for election again in 2024, was banned on Jan 8, 2021, from Twitter under its previous owners. At the time, Twitter said it permanently suspended him because of the risk of further incitement of violence following the storming of the Capitol. The results of the November 2020 presidential election won by Democrat Joe Biden were being certified by lawmakers when the Capitol was attacked after weeks of false claims by Trump that he had won. (Agencies)

Britain and Singapore to deepen fintech collaboration

LONDON: Britain and Singapore have signed a deal to try to break down trade barriers in the financial technology (fintech) sector by opening new regular talks between regulators and businesses, the UK's Treasury department said on Friday (Nov 25). The new memorandum of understanding (MOU) will support continued growth, investment and innovation, the government said in a statement, adding that it would build on a financial services partnership between the two countries announced last year. “The UK and Singapore are among the world's leading jurisdictions for financial tech investment and today's (Fri-



day) announcement will only accelerate growth and innovation in our respective sectors,” City Minister Andrew Griffith said. The British government, which has been striving to preserve London's status as a global financial hub following Brexit, said the MOU would also increase sharing of information on emerging trends in the fintech sector. (Agencies)

Pakistan to repay \$1bn bond on Dec 2, three days before due date: SBP chief

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will repay a \$1 billion international bond on December 2, three days before its due date, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Governor Jameel Ahmad told a briefing on Friday. There has been growing uncertainty about the ability of Pakistan to meet external financing obligations with the country in the midst of an economic crisis and recovering from devastating floods that killed over 1,700 people. The bond repayment, which matures on December 5, totals \$1.08 billion, Ahmad told a briefing, according to two analysts who were present. Ahmad added that funding has been lined up from multilateral and bilateral sources to ensure the repayment would not affect foreign exchange reserves. An immediate inflow of \$500 million was expected next week on Tuesday from the Asian Infrastructure Investment



Bank, he said. Pakistan's reserves with the central bank stood at \$7.8 billion as of November 18, barely enough to cover a month's imports. Ahmad said reserve levels will depend on the continued realisation of expected inflows and rollover of loans from friendly countries, but added he was confident the reserve figure will be “much higher” by the end of the financial year in June 2023. He told the briefing he expects external financing requirements would be met on time because of inflows from international lenders. (Agencies)

China frees up \$70b for banks to underpin slowing economy

BEIJING: China said it would cut the amount of cash that banks must hold as reserves for the second time this year, releasing about 500 billion yuan (\$69.8 billion) in long-term liquidity to prop up the faltering economy. The People's Bank of China (PBOC) said it would cut the reserve requirement ratio for banks by 25 basis points (bps), effective from Dec. 5. That would lower the weighted average ratio for financial institutions to 7.8 per cent, the central bank said. The cut, which follows a 25-bp reduction in April, had been widely expected after state media on Wednesday quoted the cabinet as saying China would use timely reserve ratio cuts, alongside other monetary policy tools, to keep liquidity reasonably ample. The PBOC has been walking a tightrope

on policy, seeking to support the slowing economy but eager to avoid big rate cuts that could fuel inflationary pressures and risk outflows from China, as the Federal Reserve and other central banks raise interest rates to fight inflation. The world's second-largest economy suffered a broad slowdown in October and a recent spike in COVID-19 cases has deepened concerns about growth in the last quarter of 2022. The economy was already under pressure from a property downturn and weakening global demand for Chinese goods. On Monday, the central bank kept its benchmark lending rates unchanged for a third straight month, as a weaker yuan and persistent capital outflows limited Beijing's ability to ease monetary conditions to support the economy. (Agencies)

Czech pubs tap tech to save energy costs on beer

PRAGUE: Czech pubs are turning to technology to reduce the cost of putting glasses of beer on the bar for thirsty locals. With Czechs among the biggest beer drinkers in the world, brewer Plzensky Prazdroj plans to install sensors which will collect data on beer flow, as well as tube and tap temperatures. This will be sent to a cloud database and analyzed to make recommendations on improving a pub's systems, said Jakub Zaoral who is leading the Asahi-owned brewery's Smart Taproom project. Plzensky Prazdroj hopes that by making adjustments its pubs will save up to

30 percent of the energy needed for cooling and tapping their beer, a goal made more pressing by rising energy costs. “We will ‘x-ray’ and observe 45 pubs using 1,200 sensors which gives us the exact numbers, how our tapping system consumes electric energy and we will relate this with the beer flow and its consumption in the pub,” said Zaoral. The system uses Internet of Drinks solutions by start-up firm Smart Technology, which uses ultrasound metering and provides information on the amount of beer tapped, sanitation intervals and the state of the cooling system. (Agencies)

Host nation Qatar eliminated from the World Cup

DOHA: Host nation Qatar crashed out of their own World Cup on Friday after they were beaten 3-1 by Senegal and Ecuador held the Netherlands to a draw. The Gulf state, which has spent an estimated \$200 billion to stage football's global showpiece, become just the second World Cup hosts in history after South Africa in 2010 to bow out in the group stage. Senegal scored either side of half-time through Boulaye Dia and Famara Diedhiou before Qatar substitute Mohammed Muntari replied in the 78th minute to set up a dramatic finale. The African champions substitute Bamba Dieng scored six minutes later to put the result beyond doubt and lift Senegal, who opened with a 2-0 loss to the Netherlands, right back into contention in Group A. Qatar's second successive defeat

left the Asian champions relying on Ecuador beating the Dutch a few hours later, but the match ended 1-1 to seal the Qataris' fate. "We would like to say we're very sorry to the supporters, to the country," said Tarek Salman, who was a second-half substitute. "We have made them feel bad about losing two games in a row in the World Cup." "It feels very bad to be out of the World Cup. I think today we played a good game and in the big games small details change the game," he said. "We made two mistakes, they scored two goals but for some minutes of the game we played better than them, we scored a goal. We have to learn from our mistakes." Qatar had made a nervy start to the tournament in a 2-0 defeat to Ecuador and they again looked tentative against Senegal. (Agencies)

Larissa defeats Kayla to win PFL title



NEW YORK: The Professional Fighters League (PFL) wrapped its 2022 season with the World Championship, featuring the last two fighters across six weight classes each battling for a PFL World Championship and a \$1 million purse. In the night's main event, Larissa Pacheco battled two-time PFL Women's Lightweight

champion Kayla Harrison over five thrilling rounds. Pacheco earned a razor-thin unanimous decision, handing Harrison her first professional loss en route to her first Women's Lightweight crown. In the co-main event of the evening, Brendan Loughnane and Bubba Jenkins faced off in the PFL SmartCage for the PFL Featherweight World Championship. The suspenseful bout ended with Loughnane walking away a PFL champion, defeating Jenkins by 4th round TKO. Loughnane, who fights out of Manchester, England, moved his PFL record to 6-1 in his second season with the PFL, and finished the season with a perfect 4-0 record. (Agencies)

Creamline, Signal roll to sweeping starts in PVL

MANILA: The Creamline Cool Smashers started the next phase of their Premier Volleyball League (PVL) Grand Slam bid with a rousing sweep of the defending Reinforced Conference champion Petro Gazz Angels, 25-21, 25-20, 25-23, at the PhilSports Arena on Thursday, November 24. Import Yeliz Basa brushed off a minor shoulder issue from her last game to lead the way with 17 points, while Jema Galanza scored 14 with 8 excellent digs at

the start of Creamline's semifinal campaign. Alyssa Valdez tallied 11 points with 15 excellent receptions as Jia de Guzman rounded out the offense with 19 excellent sets and 4 points off 3 aces. With its backs against the wall after falling behind two sets to none, Petro Gazz banked on the scoring prowess of import Lindsey Vander Weide and middle blocker MJ Phillips to take a 20-19 lead late in the third. (Agencies)

DAILY HOROSCOPE: NOVEMBER 27 2022



– It's a general reading which may differ from person to person because of time, date and year.
– **ARIES:** If what you receive this weekend is more than you think you deserve, don't call attention to the fact. It may be that you have done more good deeds than you recognize or remember. You are certainly not the sort to keep count of them.
– **TAURUS:** Ignore those who preach doom and gloom and have fun this weekend. The simple fact is you've never had it so good and have every right and every reason to enjoy yourself. A positive attitude is a must and should come easily now.
– **GEMINI:** Some of your ambitions may have been frustrated in recent weeks but your luck is on the turn and it won't be long before you are again moving up in the world. Enjoy your time in the spotlight but don't make too big a deal of it.
– **CANCER:** This may be a testing time for you but it should also be a fortunate time as Jupiter's influence brings opportunities that are specifically designed for you to profit from. Dare to be different. Dare to take chances. Success is all but guaranteed.
– **LEO:** The things you valued yesterday are unlikely to be the things you value tomorrow, so don't think you can never let go of possessions and people you have grown used to. Change is in the air, bringing with it

your big chance to move on.
– **VIRGO:** Someone you tend to think of as a rival will surprise you over the next 48 hours, most likely by saying and doing things that make you look good. Whatever they think of you personally, it's clear they rate your professional skills highly.
– **LIBRA:** It may be that something you have been working on for weeks, maybe months, must now be abandoned but it's not the end of the world. It could in fact be the start of a more creative phase, thanks to the lessons you have learned from your failure.
– **SCORPIO:** Don't hold back over the next 48 hours: whatever it is you are working on, go for it 100 per cent. Physically, mentally and emotionally you will be at the peak of your abilities, so give it your all and expect to get even more back in return.
– **SAGITTARIUS:** Before you accuse someone of talking about you behind your back, make sure you know all the facts. The planets warn that a third party could be trying to muddy waters in an attempt to break up your friendship. Don't fall for their tricks.
– **CAPRICORN:** Forget about your chores and just have fun this weekend. If you make an effort to get out and about you will soon be caught up in a whirl of social activities and will quite enjoy being at the center of things. It's good to be popular.
– **ACQUARIUS:** Important people will be watching you closely and there is no doubt at all they will like what they see.
– **PISCES:** Your confidence will soar this weekend and those who think you lack the drive to succeed will be forced to think again. Jupiter in your sign makes you determined to raise your sights to a higher level, one where your talents cannot be ignored.

PCB chief warns of skipping World Cup if India avoid Asia Cup in Pakistan

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ramiz Raja warned that the Men in Green won't travel to India for the 50-over World Cup if they withdraw from the Asia Cup, scheduled to be held in Pakistan in 2023. Raja makes first public reaction to Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah's statement that the Team Blue won't be travelling to Pakistan for the continental tournament. Giving an explosive statement, Ramiz Raja said:



"If Pakistan doesn't participate in the World Cup scheduled to be held in India next year, who will watch it?" He categorically stated that Pakistan team will only travel to India if they come to play the Asia Cup

next year. "If they don't come then they can play the World Cup without us," Raja told media. Saying Pakistan will adopt an aggressive approach, he said that the Team Green has showed performance in the recent tournaments. He highlighted that Pakistan cricket team defeated a billion-dollar economy team twice in a year. India has secured the hosting rights for the next 50-over World Cup and it is unlikely that it will be relocated from India. (Agencies)

'Proud' Australia reach first Davis Cup final since 2003

MALAGA: Australia reached their first Davis Cup final since 2003 on Friday when they battled back to beat last year's runners-up Croatia 2-1. Max Purcell and Jordan Thompson stunned 2021 Wimbledon champions Nikola Pietrangeli and Mate Pavic 6-7 (3/7), 7-5, 6-4 in the decisive doubles to hand Australia a final clash against either Canada or Italy on Sunday. The victory was reward for the decision by Australia skipper Lleyton Hewitt – who played in the

2003 title-winning team – to pair Thompson with Purcell. Matthew Ebden, who had partnered Purcell to this year's Wimbledon title, had been scheduled to feature in the deciding rubber before the late switch. "It's been a long time," said Hewitt. "We're a very proud Davis Cup nation and I'm very proud of these guys. They deserve to be in the final and in with a chance of winning this thing." Hewitt admitted there had been a "slight injury concern" over

Ebden. "But I had no concerns about the chemistry of these two (Purcell and Thompson)." After Pietrangeli and Pavic claimed the 53-minute opening set in the tiebreak to nudge Croatia closer to a fourth Davis Cup final in six years, the Australian pair hit back. They broke in the 11th game of the second set to level before breaking again in the seventh game of the decider on their way to victory after two hours and 14 minutes. (Agencies)

Heels on Wheels team's Dakar entry delayed to 2024

SYDNEY: Heels on Wheels, a Czech team hoping to be the first fully consisting of women amateurs to compete at the Dakar Rally, has pushed back their plans a year to 2024. The team had hoped to enter a Can-Am Maverick at the 2023 Rally in the T4 category with Lenka Hlavatá and Gabriela Budinová as driver and co-driver, respectively. "Whether it's personal plans, business or any project, you always need a little bit of luck to go along with determina-



tion and hard work. And our drop of luck was needed elsewhere more this year," said Hlavatá. "Until the last moment, we believed that our dream would come true. Literally at

the last minute, together with Gabi, we decided not to participate in the current edition of the Dakar Rally." A myriad of factors affected the decision to back out for 2023, with one of the biggest being budget. According to Hlavatá, much but not all of the finances had been accounted for, and racing without fully making up the budget "would mean compromising the quality of the experience for our fans and partners, which we didn't want. (Agencies)

Smith leads by three after 54 holes at Royal Queensland Golf Club on DP World Tour

PARIS: Cameron Smith leads the Fortinet Australian PGA Championship by three shots after posting a third-round two-under-par 69 at Royal Queensland Golf Club. The Australian carded six birdies and four bogeys on Saturday to head into the final round on 11 under par, with Japan's Masahiro Kawamura and China's Liu Yan Wei his nearest chal-

lengers on eight under. Two-time DP World Tour winner Min Woo Lee and halfway leader Jason Scrivener were part of a four-strong group of Australians with Brad Kennedy and Jake McLeod a shot further back. Smith, who won The Open Championship earlier this year, began day three a shot adrift of Scrivener, but was two ahead after he made his second birdie

of the day at the fourth and his countryman made a bogey. The Major winner made his third birdie of the day at the sixth to lead by three, before another followed at the seventh, but he bogeyed the par-five ninth to hit the turn in 33. Back-to-back bogeys at the 11th and 12th where playing partner Kawamura made a birdie saw Smith's lead disappear. (Agencies)

Sharjeel wins KP snooker, billiard men C'ship

PESHAWAR: Internationally recognized snooker player Sharjeel clinched the trophy after defeating his strong rival Sirbaland Khan in the final of the 34th Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Snooker and Billiard Men Championship played here at Lounge Snooker Club on Friday. Former sports Minister and President Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Olympic Association Syed Aqil Shah was the chief guest on this occasion. President KP Snooker and Billiard Association Zulfiqar Ali Butt, Secretary General Faisal, Associate Secretary Aamir Shehzad, Kaki Dada of Swat (SVP) and member executive committee Salahuddin, and a large number of spectators were also present. 27-year-old Sharjeel, who is

also in the top national ranking, faced tough resistance against Sirbaland (32) in a marathon three hours play. Sharjeel won the first two frames but failed to click in the third and fourth frames won by Sirbaland Khan. It was the fifth and sixth frames in which Sharjeel managed his position accordingly. The fifth frame started with past tempo and each of the players wanted to set some snooker but Sirbaland quite easily managed his position and succeeded in breaking. Sirbaland got a chance against Sharjeel and made a strike back in the fifth frame by taking three consecutive shorts of superb pots excellently racing up 21 points besides opening the game. (APP)

Pandelela, Tze Liang deliver gold in diving GP

KUALA LUMPUR: National diving ace Datuk Pandelela Rinong was back on top of the podium again by emerging champion in the KL edition of the International Swimming Federation (FINA) Diving Grand Prix today. The 29-year-old Sarawakian clinched the women's 10m platform event gold after accumulating 324.70 points in the finals at the National Aquatic Centre in Bukit Jalil here. Australian Milly Puckeridge (289.90 points) and Kim Nahyun (254.10) of South Korea took silver and bronze respectively, while

another Malaysian, Eilisha Rania Abrial Rajagopal (231.20), finished fourth. "I think my performance this afternoon was better and more consistent than (preliminary round and semi-finals) in the morning. However, I need to improve tactically and polish my dives. I need to improve my fitness as competing in two or three rounds in one day is quite challenging physically. "However, competitions like this are beneficial because many tournaments had been cancelled previously due to COVID-19. (Agencies)

Polish tennis chief resigns amid sexual abuse claims

MOSCOW: The president of the Polish Tennis Association (PZT), Mirosław Skrzypczyński, has left his post after claims emerged that he had sexually assaulted a player when working as a coach. Current women's world number one Iga Świątek has been among those to speak up in light of the allegations. "Mr. Mirosław Skrzypczyński submitted a statement of resignation from the position of the President of the Management Board of the Polish Tennis Association with immediate effect. [His] resignation

was unanimously accepted," read a statement from the PZT on Thursday. Earlier this week, news outlet Onet published an interview with Polish politician Katarzyna Kotula, in which she accused Skrzypczyński of sexually assaulting her when he was her coach in the early 1990s. The claims followed more accusations against Skrzypczyński in an article by Onet which alleged that he had used physical and psychological violence against his family and other players he coached. (Agencies)

Landsliding kills eight in Italy

ISCHIA: At least eight people are dead and several are missing, including a newborn child, after a severe storm triggered a landslide on the Italian island of Ischia. The island, in the Gulf of Naples, was engulfed by heavy rain overnight, with the landslide hitting the hamlet of Casamicciola Terme early on Saturday morning, flooding homes and sweeping away several cars. Before the deaths were confirmed by the deputy prime minister, Matteo Salvini, 13 people were reported missing. Among those missing is a family with two children and a couple with a newborn child, according to Italian news reports. A 60-year-old man has been hospitalised with serious injuries. Electricity has been cut off in the affected area while about 30 families have been stranded in their homes in the hamlet of Lacco Ameno, where several buildings are reported to have collapsed. (Agencies)

Protests erupt in China's Xinjiang after deadly fire

HONG KONG: Protests have broken out in China's remote Xinjiang region, as anger boils over three months of harsh Covid curbs, and after a fatal blaze at a locked-down apartment killed 10. Hundreds of people marched through the streets of the far western territory's capital, Urumqi, on Friday evening shouting "Lift the lockdown," according to online videos verified by Nikkei Asia. "We've been under lockdown for more than 100 days," one resident, who declined to be named, told Nikkei. "Every day people are locked in their homes. There are no government subsidies." "There were 10 lives lost and we've been under lockdown for [over three months]. We're all angry." It was not clear if virus curbs contributed to the death toll from the apartment fire on Thursday evening. (Agencies)

US deploys MQ-9 Reaper drones to Greece



ATHENS: The US has deployed eight MQ-9 Reaper drones to Greece for one year, according to Pentagon. The drones have been deployed to Larissa Air Base, Anadolu Agency has learned. The confirmation came after reports in Greek media said the drones and their support personnel were stationed. The deployment was conducted as part of an agreement signed on Nov. 1 between the US European Command (EUCOM) and the Greek army under the US-Greece Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement. The Greek military said that the deployment was part of efforts to improve cooperation with allied forces and would "contribute to NATO's interoperability and deterrence." (Agencies)

Rockets hit US base in Syria

BEIRUT: Two rockets targeted a US patrol base in northeastern Syria late Friday, the third such attack in nine days, US Central Command said. Centcom did not indicate who fired the rockets but said, in a statement, that they aimed at "coalition forces at the US patrol base in Al-Shaddad, Syria". The strike at about 10:30 pm (1930 GMT) caused no injuries or damage to the base or coalition property, said Centcom, which covers the Middle East region. The US troops support Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which are the Kurds' de facto army in the area and led the battle that dislodged the Islamic State group (IS) from the last scraps of their Syrian territory in 2019. Hundreds of American troops are still in Syria as part of the fight against IS remnants. "Syrian Democratic Forces visited the rocket origin site and found a third unfired rocket," Centcom added in its latest statement. (Agencies)

Australia raises migration quota, yet foreigners not returning fast enough

SYDNEY: Australia is facing difficulties attracting enough foreigners to fill its workforce gaps, despite raising its yearly permanent migration quota by 35,000 people to 195,000. Migrants, students and working visa holders, as well as tourists, are returning to Australia in ever-increasing numbers, following the country's reopening from COVID-19. But it could take some time before Australia's labour force, which relies heavily on foreign workers, feels the impact from the quota increase, as it competes with other countries for talent. This is especially true for the hospitality industry, where restaur-



rants, pubs and hotels remain among those hardest hit by COVID-19, after a large number of temporary visa holders left during the pandemic. Mr John Hart, executive chairman of the Australian Chamber of Tourism, said: "We've got restaurants that are

operating for five days out of a week instead of seven. And our overall recovery is 74 per cent of what it could have been if we had actually been able to staff all of our venues to the levels that we need to deliver the service experience." Modern Australia, one of the world's most successful multicultural nations, is built on a history of migration, with settlers arriving from Britain, Greece, Italy, and more recently, the Middle East and Asia. A Welcome Wall was unveiled in Sydney in September 2018, at the spot facing Darling Harbour and Pyrmont Bay, where many migrants first landed in Australia. (Agencies)

EU endorse new migrant plan after France-Italy spat

BRUSSELS: European interior ministers welcomed Friday an EU plan to better coordinate the handling of migrant arrivals, after a furious row over a refugee rescue boat erupted between Italy and France. France has accused Italy of failing to respect the law of the sea by turning away the NGO vessel earlier this month, triggering crisis talks in Brussels to head off a new EU dispute over the politically fraught issue. All sides described the meeting as productive, although Czech interior minister Vit Rakusan, whose country holds the EU presidency, later said all participants had agreed that "more can and must be done" to find a lasting solution. The ministers will gather again at a pre-planned

December 8 meeting to pursue the "difficult discussion", he said. European Commission vice-president Margaritis Schinas, the commissioner charged with "promoting our European way of life", said Europe could no longer settle for just another ad hoc solution. "We cannot continue working event-by-event, ship-by-ship, incident-by-incident, route-by-route," he said, recalling that previous crises had been seized upon by "populistic and europhobe forces". Numbers of asylum seekers are still far lower than the levels of 2015 and 2016, but the dispute has already undermined a stop-gap pact to redistribute arrivals more evenly around the 27-nation bloc. (Agencies)

Taiwan votes in local polls amid tensions with China

TAIPEIL: Polls closed in Taiwan on Saturday in local elections that President Tsai Ing-wen has framed as being about sending a message to the world about the island's determination to defend its democracy in the face of China's rising bellicosity. The elections for mayors, county chiefs and local councillors are ostensibly about domestic issues such as the Covid-19 pandemic and crime, and those elected will not have a direct say on China policy.

But Tsai has recast the election as being more than a local poll, saying the world is watching how Taiwan defends its democracy amid military tensions with China, which claims the island as its territory. "Taiwan is facing strong external pressure. The expansion of Chinese authoritarianism is challenging the people of Taiwan every day to adhere to the bottom line of freedom and democracy," Tsai told supporters late on Friday. (Agencies)

Kyrgyzstan eyes resolving border disputes with Tajikistan

BISHKEK: The Kyrgyz authorities expect to resolve all issues on the disputed sections on the border with Tajikistan in the near future, Kyrgyz leader Sadyr Japarov said, Report informs citing TASS. "Our main goal is, despite any difficulties, to solve all the border problems that passed from one government to another, without leaving them to the next generations. Now we have fully begun to resolve border issues with neighboring Tajikistan and are making every effort to complete them in the most as soon as possible," he said. He noted that after the coronavirus pandemic, as well

as the subsequent global political and economic events, the republic faced negative consequences. "New threats and problems have arisen in all countries, including Kyrgyzstan. One of them is the issue of security. The latest events that threaten the integrity of our state have excited and worried every citizen of Kyrgyzstan. Frankly speaking, the main reason for the tragic events where lives were cut short in clashes of our border guards and local residents, was that the processes to clarify the border lines were not completed and prolonged for a long time," the president believes. (Agencies)

Deadlock deepens at Adani's south India port as protesters block trucks

KOCHI: Protesters from a fishing community blocked attempts by India's Adani Group to restart work on a \$900 million transshipment port in south India, a company spokesperson said on Saturday, prolonging a deadlock that has stalled the port's development. Construction at Adani's Vizhinjam seaport in Kerala state on the southern tip of India has been halted for more than three months after protesters, mostly Christian and led by Catholic priests, erected a large shelter blocking its entrance, saying the port's development had

caused coastal erosion and deprived them of their livelihoods. The Adani Group, led by the world's third-richest man Gautam Adani, attempted to move heavy vehicles into the port on Saturday following a court directive this week that construction work must resume, but protesters blocked them from entering, an Adani spokesperson in the southern state of Kerala told Reuters. Around 25 trucks had tried to enter the port and were forced to turn back after two were hit by stones thrown by the protesters, the spokesperson added. (Agencies)

NASA's spacecraft successfully enters lunar orbit

HOUSTON: The US space agency on Saturday successfully performed a burn to insert Orion spacecraft under the Artemis I Moon mission into lunar orbit and Orion will fly about 40,000 miles (64,400 kms) above the moon. Flight Controllers at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston inserted Orion into a distant retrograde orbit by firing the orbital maneuvering system engine for 1 minute and 28 seconds. Shortly before conducting the burn, Orion was travelling more than 5,700A miles above the lunar surface, marking the farthest distance it will reach from the Moon during the mission. While in

lunar orbit, flight controllers will monitor key systems and perform checkouts while in the environment of deep space. "Due to the distance of the orbit, it will take Orion nearly a week to complete half an orbit around the Moon, where it will exit the orbit for the return journey home," the US space agency said in a statement. About four days later, the spacecraft will harness the Moon's gravitational force once again, combined with a precisely timed lunar flyby burn to slingshot Orion onto its return course to Earth ahead of a splashdown in the Pacific Ocean on December 11. (Agencies)

Three killed in twin school shootings in Brazil

BRASILIA: At least three people including an adolescent girl were killed and 11 others wounded yesterday when a 16-year-old shooter opened fire on two schools in southeastern Brazil, officials said. Authorities in the city of Aracruz, in Espirito Santo state, said the shooter had opened fire on a group of teachers at his former school yesterday morning, killing two people and leaving nine others wounded. He then left that school a public primary and secondary school and went to a nearby private school, where he killed an adolescent girl and wounded two other people, officials said. Authorities have arrested the shooter, said Governor Renato Casagrande, who declared three days of mourning in the state. "He was a student at (the first) school until June, a 16-year-old minor. His family then transferred him to another school. We have information he was undergoing psychiatric treatment," Casagrande told a news conference. He said some of the survivors' lives remained at risk from their wounds. (Agencies)

Nine BLA terrorists killed in Kohlu IBO: ISPR

KOHLU: At least nine terrorists, associated with proscribed Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), were killed in an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Balochistan's Kohlu area by the security forces, ARY News reported on Saturday, citing Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). According to military's media, the security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation (IBO) against Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) in Kohlu area of Balochistan. The security forces undertook a "clearance operation" and managed to eliminate nine terrorists belonging to the proscribed organization after a heavy exchange of fire. Meanwhile, three terrorists were also arrested in injured condition, the ISPR added. The military's media wing further said that the security forces were chasing the BLA terrorists since the September 30 blast in Kohlu Bazar, which claimed live of two people. The ISPR added the terrorists were involved in various criminal activities including kidnapping, ransom and extortion. "Terrorists were also involved in attacks on security forces," it added. (Agencies)

Tokayev swears in as Kazak president

ASTANA: Kazakhstan's new president took office on Saturday after an inauguration ceremony in the capital Astana. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev was sworn in at the Palace of Independence during the ceremony, which opened with the Kazakh flag, presidential standard, and Constitution being brought into the Grand Hall. Swearing an oath of loyalty to the people of the Central Asian country, Tokayev was officially declared head of state. In his address, he said the snap presidential election held earlier this month was a "patriotic triumph," confirmed by journalists and international observers to have been "just and open." "I see the election results as support for my political platform and a mandate of trust for the implementation of plans for the coming period. (Agencies)

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