



Tehran tells Hamas it won't enter war with Israel

TEHRAN (Agencies): Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, has reportedly told Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh that Tehran won't get directly involved in the militant group's war with Israel after being surprised by the October 7 attacks that triggered the conflict. Khamenei and Haniyeh discussed the war during a face-to-face meeting earlier this month in Tehran, Reuters reported on Wednesday, citing senior Iranian and Hamas officials with direct knowledge of the talks. Iran, which wasn't forewarned of the Hamas raids that killed an estimated 1,200 Israelis, would only enter the conflict if it was attacked by Israel or the US, according to the report. Barring such an attack, Iran's involvement in the conflict will be limited to political and moral support, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Khamenei directed Haniyeh to silence the Hamas leaders who have called for Iran and its Lebanese ally, Hezbollah, to fully join the battle against Israel. Mohanad Hage Ali, an expert on



Hezbollah at the Carnegie Middle East Center think tank in Beirut, said the October 7 attacks forced allies of Hamas to make tough choices on confronting foes with superior firepower. "When you wake up the bear with such an attack, it's quite difficult for your allies to stand in the same position as you," he told Reuters. More than 11,000 Palestinians have reportedly been killed since the war began, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to "demolish Hamas." He has also accused

Iran of being complicit in the October 7 attacks. "In fighting Hamas and the Iranian axis of terror, Israel is fighting the enemies of civilization itself," Netanyahu told reporters late last month. US forces have launched a series of airstrikes against militant groups linked to Iran after blaming them for a series of rocket and drone attacks against American military bases in Iraq and Syria. However, Hezbollah and other Hamas allies have stopped short of large-scale operations that might escalate the crisis.

Russia and India sign deal on Igla-S missiles – TASS

MOSCOW (Agencies): Moscow and New Delhi have signed a contract for the supply and licensed manufacturing of Igla-S portable anti-aircraft missile systems (MANPADS) in India, according to Russia's main arms export body, Rosoboronexport. The Igla-S, which is designed to bring down an enemy aircraft or small-sized air targets like cruise missiles, was adopted by the Indian Army last year under emergency procurement from Russia in small quantities, while a larger procurement was pending. "We have already signed the relevant document and now, together with an Indian private company, we are organizing the manufacturing of Igla-S MANPADS in India," Alexander Mikheyev, CEO of Rosoboronexport told TASS on Tuesday, on the sidelines of the Dubai Airshow 2023. India has decided to procure the latest version of Igla-S MANPADS to replace the outdated Soviet-era Igla-M systems used by the army since the 1980s, Economic Times reported in 2018. The deal was estimated at \$1.5 billion, adjusted for inflation.

Pentagon Quietly Ramps Up Ammo for Israel

WASHINGTON (Agencies): As Israel continues its operation to eliminate Hamas in the Gaza Strip whatever the costs, the Pentagon has reportedly been tacitly boosting military aid to its biggest non-NATO ally. Despite publicly voicing concern over the surging civilian death toll in Gaza, Washington is maintaining a "weapons pipeline" to cater to Israel's military aid requests, reported Bloomberg. Thus, Israel has asked for over 57,000 155 mm high explosive artillery shells, 20,000 M4A1 rifles, 5,000 PVS-14 night vision devices, 3,000 M141 hand-held bunker-buster munitions, 400 120 mm mortars, and 75 army vehicles, specifically, the Army and Marine Corps' new Joint Light Tactical Vehicle. Israel has also ostensibly requested 200 armor-piercing Switchblade 600 dive-bombing drones made by AeroVironment Inc., which the US Army does not have in its inventory. All of this is contained in an internal Defense Department list seen by the outlet. The catalogue of weapons shipped to Israel is reportedly contained in a Pentagon document, "Israel Senior Leader," dated late October. Some of the weapons are already being delivered, while others are in the process of being provided by the US Defense Department from both American and Europe-based stockpiles, it was added.

China not supplying Russia with weapons to fight Ukraine – White House



BERLIN (Agencies): The White House is confident that China has not supplied weapons to Russia for use in the Ukraine conflict, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan told reporters on Monday. Sullivan was asked for an update on the issue ahead of a meeting on Wednesday between US President Joe Biden and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping. Biden is hosting Xi along with other foreign dignitaries at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in San Francisco. In late July, the Office

of the Director of National Intelligence released a report on what it called Chinese support of Russia "with respect to its war in Ukraine." The document detailed China's purchase of Russian energy and the use of the yuan in commerce with Russia, which go against the sanctions that the US pushed for. It also described the supply of dual-use parts, such as semiconductors used in navigation equipment, as a form of support for Russia's military action. Washington has repeatedly warned Beijing against providing weapons to Moscow, despite Chinese assurances that it has no intention to become involved in the conflict on either side, and has instead sought a diplomatic resolution. Last month, the US sanctioned 42 Chinese companies for allegedly supporting Russian military production in defiance of trade restrictions.

North Korea Develops, Test-Fires New IRBM Solid-Fuel Engines - State Media

MOSCOW (Agencies): North Korea has developed and test-fired new-type high-thrust solid-fuel engines for intermediate-range ballistic missiles, North Korean state-run news agency KCNA reported Wednesday. The first ground tests of the first- and the second-stage engines were held on November 11 and 14 respectively, the report said. The tests were aimed at evaluating the technical specifications of new IRBM engines, the media reported, adding that the tests were "very successful" and the "reliability and stability" of the engines and manufacturing technologies were verified. North Korea's General Missile Bureau attaches great importance to the development of the new type of IRBM, believing that the latest tests were "an essential process for further enhancing the strategic offensive capabilities" of North



Korea's armed forces against the background of the unstable security environment and "the future military situation" in the region, the report said. In April, Pyongyang announced the successful test of its first solid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missile - "Hwasong-18", calling the event a key breakthrough in the development of the country's nuclear standoff capability. Solid-fuel missiles do not require fueling before launch, making them more difficult to detect and destroy and faster to use.

US court clears Trump for White House run



MOSCOW (Agencies): Former US President Donald Trump is eligible to remain on Michigan's 2024 presidential primary ballot for the Republican Party, a state court has ruled. A local activist group had sought to bar Trump from running for office by filing an "insurrection" lawsuit against him. Michigan Court of Claims judge

James Redford delivered the ruling on Tuesday. The decision followed a legal bid by liberal activist group Free Speech for People, which had claimed that Trump's alleged role in the January 6, 2021, Capitol riot should disqualify him from campaigning for elected office. In his verdict, Redford explained that deciding if the events of January 6 represented a "rebellion or insurrection, or whether or not someone participated in it" should be deferred to Congress. He further stressed that Michigan's electoral authorities do not have the power to remove Trump from the ballot.

Russia and Ukraine may never sign peace treaty – Kiev

MOSCOW (Agencies): Russia and Ukraine may never sign a formal peace treaty ending the current conflict, Kirill Budanov, the head of Ukraine's military intelligence, wrote in an op-ed, excerpts of which were published on Monday. He pointed to Russia and Japan, which never signed a comprehensive peace treaty after World War II due to Tokyo's claims on several of Russia's Kuril Islands. "There are cases in history when old wars between the states have not been legally concluded. An obvious example is Russia and Japan. They did not sign a peace agreement after 1945 due to [the dispute] over the Northern Islands, also known as the



Kuril Islands in Russia. This territorial problem is now more than 70 years old," Budanov wrote in an op-ed for NV magazine. "This is why such a scenario is highly likely in our case, considering that Russia has significant territorial appetite when it comes to Ukraine, and not only pertaining to Crimea."

Turkish lawyers want ICC to charge Netanyahu with 'genocide'



ANKARA (Agencies): Two Turkish lawyers and a former lawmaker have petitioned the government in Ankara to charge Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with genocide and war crimes against his country's conduct in Gaza. The request is expected to reach the International Criminal Court, which neither Türkiye nor Israel recognizes. Metin Kulunk, a former member of parliament from the

ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), teamed up with attorneys Mucahit Birinci and Burak Bekiroglu and sent the 23-page lawsuit to the Istanbul Prosecutor's Office on Tuesday. "Today, representing the conscience of the citizens of the Republic of Türkiye, we filed a lawsuit at the International Criminal Court in The Hague against the 21st century Hitler, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, who must stand trial for the genocide he committed in the Gaza Strip and all crimes against humanity," Kulunk wrote on X (formerly Twitter), accompanied by the cover page of the lawsuit. "May God be with our Palestinian brothers and those who defend their just cause to the extent of their strength," Birinci posted on X.

Taiwan rules out invasion from Chinese mainland in near future

BEIJING (Agencies): Chinese President Xi Jinping won't have the military wherewithal to launch a successful invasion of Taiwan within the next few years, meaning the self-governing island has more time to build up its defense capabilities, a top Taiwanese security official has claimed. "I don't think it will happen in the near future or at least within one to two years," Taiwanese National Security Council chief Wellington Koo told reporters on Tuesday in Taipei. "If China needs to carry out amphibious landing operations to take Taiwan, I don't think it will have such capabilities by 2027." Koo's comments echo an assessment last year by US Army General Mark Milley, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,



who said Beijing would not be ready to forcibly reunify with Taiwan for "some time." Milley claimed that China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) didn't have the "experience" or "background" to successfully invade the self-governing island and had not yet trained for such an operation. At the time, he said Xi wanted the PLA to be ready to invade Taiwan by 2027.

Widespread Pesticide Use Linked to Global Sperm Count Decline, Study Finds

NEW YORK (Agencies): A comprehensive analysis of studies spanning five decades suggests that pesticides used in homes, gardens, and on food crops are contributing to a significant decline in sperm count among men worldwide. According to the senior study author, Melissa Perry, Dean of the College of Public Health at George Mason University, sperm concentration has fallen by approximately 50% globally over 50 years. The study specifically points to two common insecticides, organophosphates and N-methyl carbamates, as strongly associated with the decline in sperm concentration. Organophosphates, widely used in agriculture and household applications, are also components of nerve gas, herbicides, and pesticides. N-methyl carbamates, structurally similar to organophosphates, are employed in insecticides for various crops. The research, examining 25 studies globally, revealed that men more highly exposed to these pesticides, such as those in agriculture, had significantly lower sperm concentration. Sperm count and concentra-



tion are critical factors in assessing future fertility. Animal studies suggest that these pesticides may interfere with sexual hormones, damage testicular cells, and impact neurotransmitters affecting sperm production. In addition to pesticide exposure, researchers are exploring other factors contributing to declining sperm count, including obesity, poor diet, chronic disease, and environmental toxins such as pollution and PFAS. A recent study also highlighted a potential link between high mobile phone use and low sperm count. The study underscores the need for action to reduce insecticide exposure, emphasizing the importance of choosing organic foods to minimize pesticide exposure.

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.

Appointment of KP interim CM challenged at Peshawar High court

PESHAWAR (APP): The appointment of Arshad Hussain Shah as the interim Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been challenged in Peshawar High Court on Wednesday, stating it goes against the Constitution. This happened a day after Shah took the oath as the caretaker chief minister following the passing of Mohammad Azam Khan due to a brief illness. The person filing the petition is Advocate Tajammul Hussain Shah. He, along with his lawyers Wali Khan Afridi and Shah Faisal, presented the plea. The plea



includes the caretaker chief minister, his cabinet, law secretary, federal government, and advocate general as respondents. The petitioner told the court that Arshad was appointed as the caretaker chief minister on the second day after Khan's

death. He requested the court to declare this appointment invalid. The argument is that the caretaker government has lost its credibility, and the appointment violates the procedures outlined in the Constitution's Articles 224 and 224-A. The petitioner claimed that the KP Assembly was dissolved when the appointment was made. Additionally, Mahmood Khan and Akram Khan Durrani were no longer in their roles as chief minister and opposition leader, respectively, during this appointment.

PHC adjourns hearing of ANP petition for disqualification of PTI chairman

PESHAWAR (APP): A two-member bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) Wednesday conducted hearing in a petition filed by Awami National Party (ANP) provincial president Aimal Wali Khan for disqualification of Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan for future elections. The bench

comprising Justice Abdul Shakur and Justice Syed Arshad Ali on the request of PTI Chairman's lawyer Qazi Anwar adjourned the proceedings. The ANP provincial president maintained in the writ petition that neither PTI chairman disclosed his assets in the by-election nomina-

tion papers nor even mentioned his wife's Rs seven million jewelry which was a violation of Election Act 2017. PTI chairman also sold To-sha Khana gifts illegally, he added. The petitioner sought disqualification of PTI chairman for the future elections.

KPPSC bans 18 accused of cheating for future tests

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Service Commission (KPPSC) Wednesday banned 18 candidates from appearing in all kind of test for three years after being found guilty of using unfair means (UFMs) in the exams for the

post of Assistant Engineer / SDO BPS-17 in irrigation department. According to a notification issued here, around 18 accused were found guilty of the charges of using electronic devices, master cards and other unfair means during the abili-

ty test for BPS-17 post. The commission banned the candidate from one to three years for all kinds of recruitment of KPPSC with the penalties, adding that the ability test for the same post would be re-conducted on December 23.

Businessmen, Traders, Civil Society Laud Services Of KP Governor, Holds Coronation Ceremony

PESHAWAR (APP): Business Community of the province and civil society of Peshawar here Tuesday arranged a coronation ceremony for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor,

Haji Ghulam Ali for his services to business community and residents of provincial metropolis. The ceremony among others was attended by Mayor Peshawar, Haji Zubair

Ali, President Business Community, Malik Mehar Elahi, Presidents of Nowshera, Mardan, Swat and Abbotabad chambers, representatives of traders and business organizations.

Prolonged power load-shedding irks citizens

PESHAWAR (APP): The 12-15 hours prolonged and unscheduled power load-shedding in various areas of the provincial capital had made life miserable for the citizens who took to the street on Wednesday against Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO). According to a survey, Danishabad, Sufaid Dehri, Bara Gate, Muzaffarabad, Dalazak road, Lalazar Colony Charsadda road, Palosi, Kohat road were facing 12-15 hours of unscheduled load-shedding. The PESCO consumers urged the government to take notice of the issue, adding that due to prolonged load-shedding the

domestic and commercial consumers were facing hardships. They said that despite paying heavy amounts of bills the actual consumers were suffering and PESCO had no option to provide them relief. They also complained that PESCO officials kept the electricity power off during operation against power theft which was also aggravating the situation. Meanwhile, the PESCO spokesman said that the areas with 100 percent bill payment were not facing load-shedding however, the feeders with heavy line losses were suffering from the load-shedding.

IMSciences Team Clinches Victory in Nayatel Beat the Curve Competition

PESHAWAR (Khyber Mail): Team IMSciences, led by Muhammad Shoaib and including members Owais Ahmed Aman, Harris Daniel, and Fatima Iqbal, have emerged triumphant in the Nayatel Beat the Curve Competition. The team, mentored by Mr. Asad Ashfaq, Assistant Manager Career Development Center, secured the top spot in the marketing idea competition. Held across 14 universities in six cities in Pakistan, Beat the Curve by Nayatel aimed to discover the most creative and practical cam-



paign idea. The winning team from IMSciences has been awarded a cash prize of PKR 100,000. The IMSciences have expressed appreciation to Nayatel for providing students with a valuable opportunity for practical learning and skill development.

Human trafficker, two illegal money exchangers held

PESHAWAR (APP): Composite Circle Mardan, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Wednesday arrested a human trafficker and two illegal money exchangers in different intelligence-based operations. According to FIA, the accused Tauseef Khan

and Sajid Khan were involved in the illegal business of Hundi in Swabi, adding that they sent money abroad through mobile accounts. During the raids, the FIA teams recovered Rs 3.882 million from the accused besides the receipts of Hundi.

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Violation of basic rights exposes India's facade of largest democracy:APHC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has said that violation of Kashmiris' fundamental human rights exposed the India's facade of so-called largest democracy as it has converted the entire Indian Illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) into the world's largest open air jail. According to Kashmir Media Service (KMS), APHC leaders including Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori, Abdul Ahad, Advocate Arshad Iqbal, Muhammad

Saleem Zargar, Sibte Shabbir Qummi and Maulana Musaib Nadvi in their statements issued in Srinagar said, "Death of India's fake democracy is daily witnessed in the killing fields of Kashmir where Modi-led Hindutva government is increasing number of its occupation troops on daily basis to suppress the freedom movement." However, they added that the Kashmiris were determined to spearhead their liberation cause against all odds. Crushing with brute force the Kash-

miris' right to self-determination has proved that India is a sham democracy, the leaders said and pointed out, "Deployment of around one million Indian soldiers in IIOJK was a proof that India is fighting a lost war." They said, "India's status in the territory is just of a usurper because Kashmiris have not accepted its occupation from the day one while New Delhi has converted the territory into the world's largest jail and besieged the oppressed people."

British High Commission's Development Director and Pakistan's Planning Minister Align Efforts for Socioeconomic Growth

ISLAMABAD (Adnan Hameed): A two-member delegation led by Jo Moir, Director Development at British High Commission Islamabad called on Caretaker Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Muhammad Sami Saeed. During the meeting, two sides exchanged views on the existing portfolio for Pakistan and expressed their resolve to further enhance in the future. The Planning Minister appreciated the support of BHC for its decades-long assistance, which has been playing a vital role in the socioeconomic uplift of Pakistan. He also appreciated their continued support and commitment for the ongoing development projects particularly in the climate sector. During the meeting, the Planning Ministry highlighted a National Climate Finance Strategy (NCFS) which has been prepared to identify sectoral



priorities and scaling climate finance. Similarly, he also highlighted the newly established Sustainable Finance Bureau (SFB) to revolutionize climate finance. Pakistan is among the countries in the world that are most affected by weather/climate-related hazards such as floods, landslides, droughts, heat waves, extreme cold, and cyclones, etc. Pakistan has already geared up the efforts to cope with such a huge challenge as Planning Ministry taken a lead in establishing a NCFS and Climate Responsive Public Investment Framework.

Portugal's Ambassador Discusses Collaborative Initiatives with Pakistani Culture Minister

ISLAMABAD (Staff Report): In a diplomatic rendezvous, Manual Frederico Pinheiro da Silva, the distinguished Ambassador of Portugal, engaged in substantive discussions with Interim Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah. The discourse primarily centered on the fostering of cultural ties between Pakistan and Portugal. Both dignitaries concurred on the imperative to fortify bilateral relations, underscoring the need to augment the frequency of cultural exchanges. Delving into the finer points of collaboration, they explored avenues for joint cultural events and the promotion of the rich cultural heritage shared by Pakistan and Portugal. Minister Jamal Shah expressed optimism regarding the substantial potential for collaboration between the



two nations. Ambassador Manual Frederico Pinheiro da Silva, in turn, acknowledged the prospect for cooperation in diverse domains, including culture and sports. As a tangible manifestation of this commitment, Ambassador da Silva proposed the establishment of a dedicated Portugal book corner at the prestigious National Library of Pakistan (NLP). This proposal, if realized, would serve as a symbolic bridge between the literary treasures of Portugal and the intellectual landscape of Pakistan.

From Olive Groves to Global Tables: Italy's Culinary Diplomacy Shines during 'Italian Cuisine Week' in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (Staff Report): The Embassy of Italy in Pakistan recently marked the vibrant 'Italian Cuisine Week' with two exceptional events, graciously hosted by Ambassador Andreas Ferrarese and his wife, Albana Ferrarese. During the evening affair, Ambassador Ferrarese formally petitioned UNESCO to acknowledge and designate Italian culinary traditions as intangible heritage. In his address, he illuminated Italy's profound influence on both local and global gastronomy, citing the approximately 50 million people of Italian origin scattered across the world who actively contribute to the dissemination of Italian cuisine. The Ambassador underscored the global recognition of quintessential Italian dishes such as pizza and pasta, emblematic of the nation's rich gastronomic heritage. Ambassador Ferrarese engaged in a thoughtful



discourse on the dynamic exchange and evolution of culinary traditions, spotlighting the fusion of traditional Italian practices with influences from immigrant communities, notably the impact of Albanian immigration. He shared insights into ongoing initiatives aimed at globalizing Italian culinary activities, exemplifying a collaborative project in Pakistan funded by an Italian agency for collaboration and development, with a primary focus on olive oil production.

Excise Staff to provide vehicle registration, transfer, token tax Services at Rose & Jasmine Garden

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a move to facilitate vehicle owners, the Islamabad Excise Department will be holding a special vehicle registration, transfer, and token tax camp at the Rose and Jasmine Garden parking lot today from 3 pm-5 pm. The camp is being organized on the instructions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Irfan Nawaz Memon, ICT spokesman Dr Abdullah Tabasum talking to APP said Wednesday. "Moreover, the ICT Doorstep service will also be present at the camp. It

provides a variety of services, including domicile certificates, birth certificates, power of attorney, international driving permits, fuel permits (domestic/commercial), and motor vehicle registration." "This is a great opportunity for vehicle owners to take advantage of these convenient services without having to go to the excise office. The camp is located at the Rose and Jasmine Garden parking lot, which is easily accessible from all parts of the city," spokesman added.

Four profiteers held

SARGODHA (APP): The district administration got arrested four shopkeepers accused of profiteering in various parts of city on Wednesday. According to official sources here, the price control magistrates inspected various points, including Sillanwali road, Istaqlalabad and Chak no 130 NB and found that shopkeepers- Amanullah, Saeed, Raftaqat Ali and Zafar Iqbal were involved in profiteering. The magistrates got registered cases and also imposed fines on them.

IRSA releases 94,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 94,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 50,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1510.69 feet and was 110.69 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 25,800 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1189.70 feet, which was 139.70 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 7,000 cusecs and 32,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 63,900, 48,700, 41,500 and 7,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 8,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 4,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

181 new dengue cases reported on Wed

LAHORE (APP): Dengue outbreak is still active in Punjab, as 181 new cases were recorded here on Wednesday. According to the latest Health Department data, a total of 12,045 confirmed dengue cases were reported across 36 districts in Punjab this year. During the last 24 hours, Lahore reported 92 new dengue cases, Rawalpindi 08, Multan 17, Gujranwala 32, Faisalabad 09, Narowal 04, Sheikhupura 3, Attock 03, Okara 03 and Dera Ghazi Khan reported two new dengue cases. Meanwhile, Kasur, Sargodha, Sialkot, Toba Tek Singh, Jhang, Hafizabad, Rajanpur and Jehlum each reported 1 case of dengue within 24 hours. Currently, 160 dengue patients were undergoing treatment in various hospitals across Punjab, with 77 of them in Lahore district hospitals. The Secretary of Health Punjab, Ali Jaan Khan, issued a compelling plea to citizens, urging them to maintain clean and dry surroundings as a preventive measure against dengue fever. He also called for cooperation with health department teams that are working tirelessly to combat this outbreak.

Three fake seed dealers booked

SARGODHA (APP): Three seed dealers were booked for selling seeds at their shops without having registration and licence here on Wednesday. According to official sources, during an ongoing drive against fake seed dealers in the district, Seed Inspector Mansoor Ahmad visited grain market Sillanwali for monitoring seed market and found that three fake dealers-Asad Abrar at Sheikh enterprises grain market Sillanwali, Muhammad Ashraf at Ashraf traders shop 71 grain market Sillanwali and Malik Asim at Malik Shafique traders shop 20 grain market Sillanwali were selling seeds without having any registration and the licence.

Regional Transport Authority withdraws controversial CNG fare increase

ABBOTTABAD (APP): After a widespread public protest on Wednesday, the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) Hazara division has decided to withdraw the recent fare hike for Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) operated vehicles on urban routes within the city. The unprecedented increase, driven by a substantial surge in CNG prices, faced criticism for being excessive and did not match with the general public's affordability. In an official statement released by the RTA, the transport authority, as the custodian of the Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1965 and subsequent Rules 1969, acknowledged its responsibility to provide dignified and

affordable transport services. The decision to retract the controversial fare hike was made following intense petitioning from the aggrieved public. The controversial Notification No. RTA/821, dated 13-11-2023, which had initially announced the fare increase, has been immediately withdrawn. The transport authority revealed that a review of the baseline rate, upon which fare determinations were made, is now deemed necessary. To address the underlying issues and ensure a fair and balanced resolution, RTA will conduct a comprehensive meeting with stakeholders, including representatives from commuters and the Transport Union.

Media awareness drive, timely precautions advises for 'Asthma attacks' in Winter

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Health expert Wednesday suggested a media awareness drive and timely precautions for 'Asthma patients' to avoid travel during thick smog at the hospital in the wake of the rising number of patients with a history of 'asthma attacks' at the peak. A Pulmonologist and lungs Specialist Prof. Dr. Javaid A. Khan talking to a private news channel said that about seven percent of Pakistan's population is suffering from asthma and there might be an increase of about 20 to 25 percent within the next few weeks. He further said rapid changes in the weather, especially the rapid onset of cold weather, are directly responsible for decreased lung function in asthmatics. He advised citizens to adopt a proper diet and wear face masks to reduce the risk of asthma attacks and other allergies during winter as asthmatics

need to be very careful about the type of fats they are consuming. He informed that a permanent cure for asthma is not currently available, but with proper medication usage patients can live a normal life. Dr Javaid urged doctors to educate their respective patients in order to provide maximum awareness of asthma and its management, adding that the patients to keep the windows of their vehicles shut during the journey and clean the inside of the vehicle thoroughly, removing dust with a vacuum cleaner before embarking on the journey. He said according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), currently around 300m people worldwide are suffering from asthma, adding, cold wind, air pollution, increase in urban population, obesity, lack of movement as some of the reasons for increasing asthma attacks.

Rs 4,822,500 fine imposed on shopkeepers over encroachment

SARGODHA (APP): The Municipal Corporation Sargodha imposed a fine of Rs 4,822,500 on various shopkeepers over encroachments and issued 396 challans tickets over multiple violations by enforcement team during the last month. Talking to APP here on Wednesday, Chief Officer MC Muhammad Tariq Proya said that crackdown against encroachments had been launched while anti-encroachment team headed by Regulation Officer

MC Zoya Masood were inspecting various markets of the city. He said that a total of 200 warning notices were issued to violators. The anti-encroachment team removed temporary encroachment established at Satellite town, Sherazi town and mission road and also imposed fines on shopkeepers in Faisal Bazaar, Katchery Bazaar, streets of block no 2, General Bus Stand road and Qenchi morr over encroachments during the last month, he added.

ANF foils eight bids to smuggle drugs; arrests five

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) managed to foil eight bids to smuggle drugs and recovered 29 kgs of narcotics besides arresting five accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He told that on information from intelligence sources about drugs smuggling, ANF personnel started special surveillance and managed to recover total 29 kgs drugs in eight operations. Five drug smugglers were also sent behind the bars, he added. About 400 grams Ice drug concealed in two shampoo bottles was recovered from a courier office in Rawalpindi. The parcel was booked from Rawalpindi

di to Bahrain. In another operation at Allama Iqbal International Airport, 79 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from the possession of a passenger. An accused, resident of Sahiwal, was leaving for Bahrain by flight number GF-676. A passenger traveling to Qatar via flight number QR-621 was also arrested at Allama Iqbal International Airport. Over 1.5 kgs Ice drug was recovered from the trolley bag of the accused, resident of Bahawalnagar. In an operation at Sialkot International Airport, 2.3 kg Ice hidden in the passenger's trolley bag was recovered. The accused, resident of Sargodha, was leaving for Bahrain by flight number GF-769.

Islamabad police actively disseminate public awareness messages in last month

ISLAMABAD (APP): During the preceding month, the Islamabad Capital Police effectively delivered 130 awareness messages via its FM Radio 92.4, primarily focusing on enhancing awareness of traffic regulations. The disseminated messages covered a spectrum of subjects, including pe-

destrian safety, zebra crossings, traffic signals, types of road signs, distinctions in lanes, and instructional videos elucidating parking laws, according to police sources. Moreover, timely updates on traffic laws and road conditions are regularly communicated to citizens through FM radio channels.

Commissioner visits Asghar Mall road to review construction work

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta here Wednesday visited Asghar Mall Road and reviewed construction work of the road being constructed from Murree Road to Chungi No 4. The Commissioner on the occasion said that after completion of the construction work, smooth flow of traffic could be ensured in this area. Liaquat Ali Chhatta said, the road construction work should be completed within shortest possible time frame after the sewerage lines on the side of the road are completed. "If the

sewer lines are not properly constructed, the road would be destroyed after a few months," he added. Substandard work would not be tolerated under any circumstances, he warned. He directed the relevant authorities to complete the road project as soon as possible to facilitate the citizens. The RDA plot on Asghar Mall Road should be vacated immediately, he ordered. Liaquat Ali Chhatta directed the relevant officials that no one should be allowed to encroach the open space outside the houses in residential areas of Asghar Mall.

Saira Peter and Minister Jamal Shah Convene to Elevate Cultural Harmony Through Music

ISLAMABAD (Staff Report): Renowned British-Pakistani soprano and Sufi Opera Singer, Saira Peter, held a significant meeting with Interim Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah, at the Division on Wednesday. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss collaborative initiatives within the music industry and to propose a Solo-concert to be hosted at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). Accompanying Saira Peter were her official Manager, Zafar Francis, and her husband, Stephen Smith, an accomplished Ethnomusicologist and pianist/Harmonium player. The Director General of PNCA, Muhammad Ayub Jamali, also participated in the meeting, highlighting the importance of fostering cultural exchange. The agenda of the meeting encompassed various mutual interest issues related to the music industry, as well



as the upcoming solo concert. Minister Jamal Shah, in acknowledgment of Saira Peter’s contribution to the cultural landscape, presented her with a commemorative shield. Saira Peter, currently collaborating with a team of British artists, is actively involved in the development of the world’s first full-scale “Sufi Opera.” This musical stage drama, based on the story of Umar Marvi—one of Latif’s “seven heroines” of Sindh—is set to be staged in London upon completion. Saira Peter is poised to take on the pivotal role of “Marvi” in this groundbreaking production.

Awareness among the parents may help to resolve refusal: Expert

ISLAMABAD (APP): A health expert on Wednesday called upon people from different walks of life to hold more awareness drives that can overcome the challenges of ‘refusal of parents’ during polio drives to make the country free of the polio virus. Dr Iqbal Memon talking to a private news channel said that the polio virus has been eradicated from different countries but unfortunately, Pakistan was still fighting against it due to the refusal of guardians. He said although there has been significant progress towards the eradication of the disease, there is a need for collaborative efforts to get rid of polio. “Parents in Karachi and other far-flung areas of the country must understand the huge risk polio poses to their children’s well-being and ensure that they receive multiple

doses of the oral polio vaccine and are up to date on their routine immunizations,” he added. Ulema should play a pivotal role in polio eradication, while a focus on removing misconceptions against the vaccine was needed, he mentioned. He also lauded the efforts of the government and appreciated the decrease in number of polio cases. He suggested that educational institutes should be involved in arranging awareness campaigns and polio eradication policies while adding that conferences on the issue would be helpful. Replying to a question, he said that the management of polio survivors is not only a medical and rehabilitation problem involving accessibility, and accommodations, but also a public health issue, and most importantly, an ethical concern.

Railways Police arrest around 3,843 accused over violations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways Police claimed to have arrested a total of 3,843 accused due to their involvement in violations of rules and laws and also registered some 3,563 cases against them in eight Railways divisions over one year. “Around 641 cases were registered in Peshawar Division, 561 in Rawalpindi, 1,037 in Lahore, 321 in Mughalpur workshops, 389 in Multan, 206 in Sukkur, 343 in Karachi, and 65 in Quetta Division,” official sources in the Ministry told APP. They said the Railways Police Help Desks had been established at

all the major railway stations across the country and the performance of Railways Police is quite satisfactory during the last year. “The Railways Police has handed over 199 missing boys and 73 girls to their heirs and 267 boys, 159 girls, and 47 women who ran away from home to their parents/siblings and the welfare organizations,” they added. The sources said the lost luggage worth about Rs14.21 million of 2,267 passengers was handed over to them. Besides, 11,213 passengers were also provided with other facilities like first aid, wheelchairs, and stretchers.

Caretaker CM, CEC collaborate for impartial elections

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice (Retd) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah briefed Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja on Wednesday about election preparations, emphasizing their joint commitment to ensuring free, fair, and impartial elections in the province. During a meeting at the Election Commission Secretariat, the Chief Minister pledged that the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, working collaboratively with the Election Com-

mission, is devoted to ensuring the elections in the province are conducted with a strong emphasis on freedom, fairness, and impartiality. The Chief Election Commissioner congratulated the caretaker Chief Minister on assuming office and emphasized the ongoing efforts to ensure the peaceful conduct of general elections, taking into account the current security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Chief Minister pledged to prioritize the protection of voters as the government’s foremost concern.

Seminar Series on Drug Awareness Held at IBU



BAHAWALPUR (Agencies): In line with the directives of the Vice Chancellor of Islamia University Bahawalpur, Prof. Dr. Naveed Akhtar, a seminar series aimed at creating awareness about the side effects of drugs and discouraging their use is currently underway. The committee overseeing this initiative is headed by Prof. Dr. Fayazuddin Ahmed. A seminar, hosted by the Faculty of Islamic and Arabic Studies, took place at Baghdad ul-Jeeded Campus. Dr. Faheema Nadeem, Senior Medi-

cal Officer, and Dr. Maleeha Arif, Principal Medical Officer, provided a comprehensive discussion on drug use and its adverse effects on mental and physical health. Prof. Dr. Sheikh Shafiq ur Rahman, Dean of the Faculty of Islamic and Arabic Studies, expressed gratitude to Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Naveed Akhtar for initiating the awareness seminar series on drug abuse. He encouraged students to play an active role in educating society about the dangers of drug use and its harmful effects.

UK-Pakistan Alliance Deepens with Doubled Investment on Royal Occasion”

ISLAMABAD (Adnan Hameed): British High Commissioner Ms Jane Marriott, during an event commemorating the 76th birthday of King Charles, announced a doubling of the United Kingdom’s investment in Pakistan. The increased support aims to address climate change, enhance climate resilience, and promote adaptation initiatives in Pakistan. Aligned with the United Kingdom’s advocacy for a ‘Loss and Damage’ fund at COP 28, focused on assisting climate-vulnerable nations, the commitment underscores a shared commitment to environmental sustainability. The evening, themed around environmental sustainability and climate change, featured a captivating performance by the historic Band of the Artillery



Company, approved by King Charles himself. The event emphasized the urgent need to address climate vulnerabilities, particularly in the aftermath of devastating floods affecting millions in Pakistan last year. Highlighting the collaborative spirit, High Commissioner Jane Marriott announced key initiatives, including the expansion of an AI-based ‘Early Warning Forest Fire Detection System’ in collaboration with the Global System for Mobile Communications.

This project aims to minimize the risk of forest fires and protect lives and biodiversity in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federal Capital Territory. Other collaborative efforts unveiled include the expansion of the Chevening scholarship program through new private partnerships and the establishment of the online ‘Pakistan Museum of Food’ in collaboration with Google and the Save and Observe Children’s Health (SOCH) Foundation.

Nine drug peddlers held

FAISALABAD (APP): The district police arrested nine drug peddlers with huge quantities of contraband during the last 24 hours. A police report said here on Wednesday that the teams of various police stations conducted raids under their jurisdiction and nabbed Javed Iqbal, Muddassar, Akmal, Jibran, Mehtab, Allah Yar, Bilal, Asif and another. The teams also recovered 4.9-kg hashish, 65 litre-liquor from their possession. Police registered separate cases against them and launched investigation.

Dera admin imposes section 144

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district administration of DI Khan has imposed Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), imposing ban on pillion riding and display of arms from November 18. According to district administration, The order would take effect from November 18-27, and it has been enforced for the safety of citizens’ lives and properties and to prevent any untoward incidents. It imposes a ban on pillion riding on motorcycles, display of arms, assembly of five or more than five people at one place and holding any kind of rallies without permission from the authorized institution.

Shalimar train route extended

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Railway administration has decided to extend the Shalimar Express (27Up-28Dn) on its designated route Karachi-Lahore-Karachi via Multan and Faisalabad for one more month. According to a PR spokesperson on Wednesday, the decision would be applicable with an immediate effect, to facilitate travelers.

AC seizes 15000 hoarded fertilizer bags

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): District administration seized 15000 bags of fertilizers illegally stored in a godown, here Wednesday. According to official sources, Assistant Commissioner (AC) Nasir Shehzad Dogar raided a godown of F Enterprises and managed to seize 15000 bags of fertilizers. AC observed that operations against illegal storage of fertilizers would be dealt strictly. “The administration is committed to ensure implementation on government policies to facilitate the masses,” he added.

Mayor Sukkur reviews construction work on different roads

SUKKUR (APP): Mayor Sukkur Barrister Arslan Sheikh on Wednesday visited Station Road and reviewed construction work of the road being constructed from Queen Road to Sokha Talab and Shikarpur road. The Mayor on the occasion said that after completion of the construction work, smooth flow of traffic could be ensured in this area. Barrister Arslan Sheikh said that the road construction work should be completed within shortest possible time frame after the sewerage lines on the side of the road are completed.

Islamabad police verifies 17,695 vehicles, enhances citizen services

ISLAMABAD (APP): Police Khidmat Markaz, under the direction of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, has successfully completed the verification of 17,695 vehicles out of the 17,718 applications received. The Police Khidmat Markaz offers a range of services to the citizens of Islamabad, including the issuance of character certificates, foreigners’ registration, and the registration of tenants and domestic servants, as highlighted by a police public relations officer. To undergo vehicle verification, applicants are required

to present their original CNIC, the original documentation of the vehicle, and the owner’s CNIC. Additionally, printed images of the vehicle’s engine and chassis numbers are necessary for the verification process. The police have been actively working to enhance citizen convenience, with a police mobile facilitation van service operational. Furthermore, Khidmat Markaz locations in various areas, including sectors F-6, G-10/4, H-11, Bani Gala, Swan Garden, Khanna, and different police stations, are dedicated to facilitating citizens.

Five drug peddlers netted with over 10 kg charras

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up five accused on recovery of over 10 kg charras. According to a police spokesman, Rattaamral police managed to net a drug peddler namely Murad Khan and recovered 4400 grams charras and also arrested Asad for having 1400

grams charras. Saddar Wah police rounded up Saif for possessing 1650 grams charras while Gujar Khan police netted an accused namely Shah Zaib and seized 1500 grams charras. R.A.Bazar police nabbed a drug peddler, Atif for carrying 1300 grams charras. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations were underway.

‘Let power of intellect overrule military might to save humanity from wars,’ President tells world

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said with wars and conflicts resulting in the massacre of innocent people, the world needed a unified approach to saving humanity from the violence of the powerful. “Power of intellect should be the world order taking precedence over the violent forces which quash the spirit of humanity and justice,” he said at the Annual Margalla Dialogue 2023. The event themed ‘Evolving world environment: Charting the course of our future’ gathered diplomats, thinkers, and intellectuals from various countries. President Alvi said dehumanizing people had become a norm in the world where vested interests prevailed over humanity. War, he said, was not a solution to resolve

any conflict and always resulted in a never-ending vicious cycle of violence. He pointed out that using the right of veto against the cessation of war questioned the ethical standards of the countries concerned. In Gaza, he said the massive killings of Palestinians committed by Israel needed urgent attention by the international community to act and play its role in stopping the bloodshed. He said Israel, in its justification to eliminate Hamas was “killing the Palestinians like savages” and calling the colossal deaths as collateral damage”. The president mentioned that the world after several war-related deaths in Europe arrived at the culmination of peace treaties and bodies like the League of the Nations and the United Nations (UN).

ML-1 to become favourable transit route for region: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday said the Main Line (ML-1) railway project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would prove a favourable transit route for countries in the region. The prime minister vowed to complete ML-1 on a priority basis, saying the project would also improve connectivity between the country’s seaports with its economic zones. Chairing a meeting to discuss ML-1 here at the PM House, the prime minister said the project would contribute to the improvement of communication network in the country. PM Kakar said there existed huge potential for foreign investment in Pakistan Railways and stressed the need for early materialization of its projects. He stressed meeting the targets of the project within stipulated time and directed the formulation of a comprehensive reform strategy for Pakistan Railways to maximize the benefits of the ML-1. Emphasizing transparency in the implementation of ML-1, he said, the project would result in the creation of new employment opportunities and



reduced travel time and freight rates. The meeting was told that the ML-1 project was in its final stage of modalities and its ground-breaking would be performed by early next year. The project will be completed in two phases. In the first phase, a 930-kilometre-long rail track will be laid from Karachi to Multan. Also, the railway infrastructure damaged by the 2022 flood will be upgraded as per international standards. In the next phase, the 796-kilometre-long rail track from Multan to Peshawar will be laid in line with the requirements of the future. The meeting was attended by caretaker federal ministers including Shamshad Akhtar and Sami Saeed, PM’s Adviser Ahad Khan, PM’s Special Assistant Jahanzeb Khan, and senior officials of the ministries concerned.

Saudi ports' container volumes increase 5.31% in October: Mawani

RIYADH (Agencies): Ports in Saudi Arabia witnessed a rise of 5.31 percent in container handling in October compared to the year-ago period, according to a statement. The Saudi Ports Authority, or Mawani, reported on Nov. 14 that ports in the Kingdom handled 741,905 standard containers last month and 704,486 in October 2022. The number of transshipment containers handled by the ports in the Kingdom stood at 290,110 last month, up 2.12 percent



compared to October 2022. Last month, the ports handled 627,637 tons of general cargo, 4,575,549 tons of solid bulk and 11,415,187 tons of liquid. Mawani

added that the rise in cargo handling in Saudi ports signifies the Kingdom's growth as a global logistics hub, aligned with the goals outlined in the National Transport and Logistics Strategy. The statement added that Saudi Arabia's ports received 59,810 passengers in October, up 35.11 percent from the same month in 2022. On the other hand, the Kingdom's ports received 109,646 cars in October, also marking an annual rise of 17.13 percent.

OpenAI pauses new signups to manage overwhelming demand

NEW YORK (Agencies): OpenAI will pause accepting new users for its paid ChatGPT Plus service due to overwhelming demand, chief executive officer Sam Altman said in a post on Tuesday. Altman's company introduced new features and upgrades at its first-ever developer conference last week, allowing users to build custom versions of ChatGPT to accomplish specific tasks. The announcements triggered a rise in demand for OpenAI's artificial intelligence tools and services. "The surge in usage post devday has exceeded our capacity and we want to make sure everyone has a great experience," Altman wrote on X, the plat-



form formerly known as Twitter. The AI startup said at its conference that roughly 100 million people use its services every week and more than 90% of Fortune 500 businesses are building tools on OpenAI's platform. With the new option, users will be able to create their own specialised versions of ChatGPT — simply called GPTs — that can help teach math to a child or explain the rules of a board game. No coding is required, the company said.

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Siemens Energy gets state-backed €15 billion rescue package

FRANKFURT (Agencies): Siemens Energy will receive a €15 billion (US\$16.3 billion), state-backed rescue package, Berlin said Tuesday, as the German group struggles to overcome a crisis in its wind power unit. The company's Gamesa subsidiary has faced long-running technical problems with its onshore wind turbines, which have cost huge sums to fix and led to massive losses. The unit's difficulties come amid broader troubles for the whole wind power



sector in Europe, even as demand for clean energy grows. These range from higher prices for materials to strong competition from China. Siemens Energy revealed last month

that it was in talks with the German government over "guarantees" to help the company finance major new contracts, sending its shares crashing. After weeks of talks, the state has now granted Siemens Energy €7.5 billion worth of guarantees, the economy ministry said. They are part of a €15 billion package agreed with other stakeholders, including private banks and the larger Siemens conglomerate, which is a major shareholder in Siemens Energy.

Snapchat shares jump 7% on in-app Amazon shopping deal

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): Amazon on Tuesday confirmed it is partnering with Snapchat-parent Snap to let users of the ephemeral messaging service buy things from the online retail titan without leaving the app. Snap shares shot up more than 7% on the news, ending the formal trading day at US\$12.15 per share. "For the first time, customers will be able to shop Amazon's Snapchat ads and check out with Amazon without leaving the social media app," a spokesperson for the



online retail platform said in response to an AFP inquiry. "Customers in the United States will see real-time pricing, Prime eligibility, delivery estimates, and product details on select Amazon

product ads in Snapchat as part of the new experience." In-app shopping will be available for select products advertised on Snapchat and sold at Amazon, the spokesperson added. People will be able to link their Snapchat and Amazon accounts to take advantage of the in-app shopping feature, according to Amazon. Snap and Amazon last year unveiled a collaboration that let Snapchat users "try on" eyeglasses using augmented reality (AR) then buy those they liked at Amazon.

Cooling US inflation raises hopes of an end to Fed rate hikes

WASHINGTON (Agencies): US consumer inflation cooled more than expected last month, according to government data published Tuesday, providing welcome news for policymakers looking to control price increases without damaging the economy. The consumer price index (CPI) inflation gauge increased by 3.2% in the 12 months to October, down from 3.7% a month earlier, the Labor Department said. Inflation was unchanged month-



over-month from September, with a sharp monthly decline noted in energy prices. Both the annual and monthly figures came in below the

median expectations of economists surveyed by MarketWatch. "Today we saw more progress bringing down inflation while maintaining one of the strongest job markets in history," President Joe Biden said in a statement. "I'm working to get results for the American people and it's happening." US stock markets rose sharply on the news of cooling inflation, which reduces the likelihood of another interest rate hike next month.

Renault seeks to charge up investors for EV unit IPO

PARIS (Agencies): Renault will try on Wednesday to fire up doubtful investors ahead of a planned market listing of its electric vehicle (EV) unit Ampere, a key plank of CEO Luca de Meo's revamp of the French automaker. De Meo has targeted a valuation of €8-10 billion (US\$8.6-10.7 billion) for the initial public offering (IPO) of Ampere, which has already been delayed once and is now slated for spring 2024. Slower demand for EVs, choppy markets and increased



Chinese competition have complicated de Meo's plans, with sources close to the matter telling Reuters last month his hoped-for price tag looked over-ambitious at this stage.

Two of the sources said Renault was unlikely to go ahead with the IPO if the valuation falls below €7 billion, and one said the cut-off point could be closer to €6 billion. UBS analysts have valued Ampere at just €3-4 billion, and others have questioned the rationale of listing the EV business to raise funds. On Wednesday, De Meo will argue his case for what could be the first attempt by a traditional automaker to unlock value from an EV business via an IPO.

Airbus announces 10-plane order from EgyptAir

DUBAI (Agencies): European aerospace giant Airbus announced an order for 10 A350-900 planes by Egypt's state-owned carrier EgyptAir today, on the second day of the Dubai Airshow. Airbus commercial director Christian Scherer told a news conference that the deal marked "an important milestone" in the "long and successful partnership" with EgyptAir. Without discounts, which are routinely applied in the industry, the transaction is worth US\$3.2 billion, according to the manufacturer's latest published list price. Airbus, which yesterday announced an order for 30 A220-300s from Latvian budget carrier airBaltic, has been overshadowed by US rival Boeing at this year's



Dubai Airshow. Boeing announced a mega-contract with Emirates, the Middle East's biggest airline, yesterday for 55 Boeing 777-9s, 35 777-8s, and five 787 Dreamliners in a deal worth US\$52 billion. The 777-9s are expected for delivery in 2025 and the 777-8s are scheduled for 2030. Low-cost carrier flydubai, also based in the Gulf emirate, announced an order for 30 Boeing 787-9s, valued at US\$63 billion. Emirates chief execu-

tive officer Tim Clark said today that he will not buy Airbus' A350 until he has concluded negotiations with engine manufacturer Rolls Royce, which he blames for a lack of durability and longevity. Clark said "40% of the 350-1000s have been sold into this region," adding, "This is the region that is buying these airplanes and will buy the big numbers if the engine issue's resolved." Airbus has emphasised that the technology used by the Airbus in the A350s enables the aircraft to consume 25% less fuel than its competitor's previous models. The Emirates CEO said reliability was paramount in the selection of aircraft. "They might not be as advanced in their technology in their build materials.

Man City report record profits to match best season on pitch

MANCHESTER (Agencies): After capturing their first treble last season, Manchester City reported on Wednesday that the success was matched off the pitch with record profits, their highest ever revenue, and recognition as the most valuable football brand in the world. The club, which has been majority owned by Sheikh Mansour since August of 2008, earned revenues of £712.8 million (US\$889.4 million) to June 2023 according to Manchester City FC Ltd's annual report, an increase of £99.8 million (16.3%) over the previous season, along with a record net profit of £80.4 million. "The 2022-23 season saw Manchester City scale



new heights and set new benchmarks," City chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak, said in a statement. "In short, last season saw Manchester City achieve the greatest football and commercial year of its storied history." City experienced growth over the previous year across all revenue streams of commercial, matchday and broadcasting.

Investors expand tech bets amid continued market sector gains

NEW YORK (Agencies): Several hedge funds expanded their bets on big technology stocks including Amazon, Microsoft and Meta Platforms even as these companies stumbled some during the third quarter after having fuelled broad market gains this year, new regulatory filings show. Tiger Global Management, a widely watched fund in the investment world, increased its holding of Nvidia, whose semiconductors back artificial-intelligence systems, by 77% during the third quarter. It boosted its bet on Alphabet by 40%, the filings show. The firm also raised its Meta investment by 4%, boosted its bet on Microsoft by 8% and in-



creased its Amazon stake by 6.5%. Tiger Global and other hedge funds nursed heavy losses in 2022 when technology stocks skidded lower. But many fund managers put more money to work in the sector this year when seven big tech stocks raced higher, playing a critical role in helping the broader stock market recover after last year's drop.

Japanese economy contracts in blow to PM Kishida

TOKYO (Agencies): Japan's economy has gone into reverse, government data showed Wednesday, in a further blow to struggling Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. The world's No 3 economy shrank by 0.5% between June and September compared to the second quarter, the preliminary data showed, worse than the consensus forecast of minus 0.1%. The drop, which followed two straight quarters of growth, was on the back of continued low consumer spending and weakness in the global economy hitting Japan's exports. Exports grew 0.5%, down from 3.9% in the previous quarter, while imports rose 1.0%, further hitting overall growth. Private demand, in-



cluding private residential and corporate investment, fell 0.6%. The economy shrank 2.1% compared to the same quarter last year, missing market expectations of minus 0.4%, Bloomberg News reported. Economists at Dutch bank ING however called the contraction "a fleeting aberration in an otherwise positive growth environment led by the service sector".

Dollar down as markets bet Fed is done with hikes

TOKYO (Agencies): The dollar stuttered at broadly lower levels on Wednesday after slumping overnight as a surprisingly softer US inflation reading bolstered bets that the Federal Reserve has reached the end of its monetary tightening cycle. The sell-off in the dollar drove a rally for many of its peer currencies, with the euro sitting just below an over two-month high hit on Tuesday. The frenetic currency market activity was sparked by data showing US consumer prices were unchanged in October, with the annual rise in underlying inflation the smallest in two years. In the 12 months through October, the CPI climbed 3.2% — below economists' estimates — after rising 3.7%



in September. The data prompted market participants to all but eliminate the chance of another rate hike at the Fed's December monetary policy meeting, while bets of a rate cut in May next year increased to around 50%, according to the CME Group's FedWatch Tool. Traders reacted quickly to the shift in market pricing by sending the dollar tumbling 1.5% overnight against major currencies.

PetroChina Replaces Exxon Mobil as Primary Contractor in West Qurna 1 Oilfield

Baghdad (Agencies): Iraq and Exxon Mobil have signed a settlement deal, allowing PetroChina to take over as the primary contractor for the West Qurna 1 oilfield. The Deputy Director of Basra Oil Company (BOC), Hassan Mohammed, stated that PetroChina was deemed the best choice after evaluating the settlement deal. PetroChina will become the largest shareholder after Exxon Mobil's exit. The agreement includes a financial arrangement for BOC to acquire Exxon Mobil's



share, with an assurance to settle the tax issue through negotiations or arbitration if unresolved. The West Qurna 1 field, with 43 billion barrels of recoverable reserves, is among the world's largest oil fields.

Genting Singapore soars most in 3 years on earnings beat

SINGAPORE (Agencies): Genting Singapore Ltd jumped the most in more than three years after the casino operator posted better-than-expected third-quarter earnings, underscoring a recovery in tourism in Singapore. The shares climbed as much as 12%, their biggest gain since March 2020, and putting them

among the best performers on the MSCI Asia Pacific Index. The advance helped narrow the stock's year-to-date loss to just 2.6%. Genting Singapore's quarterly sales increased 33% from a year earlier, while net income surged 59%, the company said in an exchange filing late Friday.

Sinner edges Djokovic to close in on ATP Finals’ last four

TURIN (Agencies): Jannik Sinner edged toward becoming the first-ever Italian to reach the last four of the ATP Finals on Tuesday after a thrilling 7-5, 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (7/2) win over Novak Djokovic. World No. 4 Sinner needed a straight-sets victory in front of enthusiastic home support in Turin over tennis icon Djokovic to guarantee passage from the Green Group with a match to spare. And while the 22-year-old couldn’t quite make that happen, a superb performance gave him his first win in four attempts over Djokovic, who is bidding to win for a record seventh time at the year-ending tournament. “It means a lot to me,”



said Sinner on court. “When you win against the world No. 1 who has won 24 Grand Slams it’s obviously in the top-top.” Fans made an almighty din for Sinner, chanting his name to the rafters once he claimed victory in an exciting, three-hour contest which ran way past midnight at the Pala Alpitour. Sinner

has had the best year of his career and looks to be fulfilling the promise he has long shown, winning four titles this season including the Masters 1000 event at Toronto, and looks on form in Italy. He made the first breakthrough when he capitalized on Djokovic handing him advantage in game 11 with a double fault, moving 6-5 ahead with a big backhand before claiming the set with a service game to love. Djokovic pulled level after a bruising second set in which neither player faced a single break point, but after fighting back from 4-2 down in the decider he wilted in the tie-break and ended his winning run at 20 matches.

Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez face off in World Cup qualifying; Brazil could field teenager Endrick

SAO PAULO (Agencies): Lionel Messi and Luiz Suarez, close friends and former teammates at Barcelona, will renew their on-the-field rivalry on Thursday in World Cup qualifying. Messi, who appears to have recovered from a muscle injury in his leg, led Argentina to their third World Cup title last year and has his team in first place in the South American qualifying group for the 2026 tournament. The 36-year-old Suarez has just



returned to Uruguay’s national team as he nears the end of a high-scoring season in the Brazilian league. The Argentines will take on two-time

World Cup champion Uruguay at La Bombonera Stadium in Buenos Aires. Also Thursday, Brazil will travel to face Colombia in Barranquilla as they try to recover from a home draw with Venezuela and a loss at Uruguay in their previous two qualifying matches. Brazil coach Fernando Diniz, who recently won the Copa Libertadores with Fluminense, could use teenager Endrick after calling him up for the first time.

Juventus extend contract of banned Fagioli until 2028

TURIN (Agencies): Juventus have renewed the contract of Nicolo Fagioli until June 2028, the Serie A club said on Tuesday, after the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) banned the midfielder for seven months for breaching rules on betting on matches. Fagioli’s previous deal, signed in August 2022, was valid until 2026. “The relationship



with Nicolo therefore continues, with the midfielder having arrived

at Juventus in 2015 as a 14-year-old, rising through the youth ranks until his senior debut in 2021,” Juventus said in a statement. The ban of the 22-year-old Fagioli, who made his Italy debut in a friendly 3-1 win against Albania in November 2022, began on Oct 19, meaning the player could return to the squad for the end of the season.

Liverpool’s Diaz finally reunited with father after kidnapping

BARRANQUILLA (Agencies): Liverpool and Colombia winger Luis Diaz has reunited with his father for the first time since the latter’s kidnapping ordeal, the Colombian football federation said on Tuesday. Luis Manuel Diaz, 58, was released on Thursday by the leftist National Liberation Army (ELN) 12 days after he was taken hostage on Oct 28 in Barrancas, a rural municipality where he lives in the northern province of La



Guajira. The winger remained with Liverpool through this period up to Sunday’s Premier League win over Brentford, before returning to Colom-

bia ahead of Thursday’s World Cup qualifier against Brazil. The Colombian FA shared pictures of the father and son’s emotional reunion on X, formerly known as Twitter, with the caption “we are family.” Diaz’s father has said he would remain in Colombia despite his difficult kidnapping experience. “My aspirations are to continue in my town because I have my entire family in my town,” he told a press conference on Friday.

Man arrested on suspicion of manslaughter over death of ice hockey player Adam Johnson, police say

LONDON (Agencies): A man has been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter following the death of ice hockey player Adam Johnson last month, South Yorkshire Police said in a statement on Tuesday. Johnson died after sustaining a cut to the neck while playing for the Nottingham Panthers against the Sheffield Steelers in England on October 28. A Sheffield coroner’s report found that the 29-year-old “sustained an incised wound to the neck caused by the skate of another play-



er” and later died in hospital as a result of the injury. “Our investigation launched immediately following this tragedy and we have been carrying out extensive enquiries ever since to

piece together the events which led to the loss of Adam in these unprecedented circumstances,” detective chief superintendent Becs Horsfall said in a police statement. “We have been speaking to highly specialised experts in their field to assist in our enquiries and continue to work closely with the health and safety department at Sheffield City Council, which is supporting our ongoing investigation.” The police statement added that the man arrested remains in custody.

Man arrested on suspicion of manslaughter after UK ice hockey player death

LONDON, Nov 14 (Reuters) - A man has been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter following the death of Nottingham Panthers ice hockey player Adam Johnson who died after suffering serious injuries during a match last month, British police said on Tuesday. Police said the man, whose name was not released, remained in police custody. Johnson, 29, suffered a fatal injury when his neck was cut by the blade of another player during the match against Sheffield Steelers



in Sheffield, northern England. The American, who joined the club in August having previously played in Germany and Sweden as well as in the United States’ National Hockey

League (NHL), later died in hospital. “Our investigation launched immediately following this tragedy and we have been carrying out extensive enquiries ever since to piece together the events which led to the loss of Adam in these unprecedented circumstances,” Detective Chief Superintendent Becs Horsfall said. The coroner overseeing the inquest has called for neck guards to be made mandatory in the wake of the death, which Johnson’s club described as a “freak incident”.

Bento looking to extend winning start as UAE kick off 2026 World Cup qualifiers

DUBAI (Agencies): Another ticket to the World Cup after more than three decades away, or another false dawn? That is the burning question which hangs over Paulo Bento’s UAE side ahead of Thursday’s competitive debut versus Nepal, when qualifying kicks off. The ex-Portugal and South Korea tactician’s start has been exemplary. It has included a trio of friendly victories, opening with September’s 4-1 bow against Keylor Navas’ Costa Rica. The UAE’s stale squad appears rejuvenated by fresh faces, and a renewed sense of purpose has radiated out to the country’s often jaded fanbase. How Saudi Arabia’s Roberto Mancini and Bento’s Portuguese



compatriot Carlos Queiroz with Qatar must envy this efficacious introduction. Now comes the real test for a nation who stumbled through a torturous 2022 cycle under Bento’s many predecessors. A cursory scan of the road to Qatar details a pained near miss for The Whites, with Australia edging their tense fourth-round tie 2-1. In theory, an improving side were

almost one game away from returning to football’s grandest tournament for the first time since 1990. The preceding World Cup process, however, featured two stints at the helm for Bert van Marwijk, brief spells with Ivan Jovanovic and Jorge Luis Pinto amid the coronavirus pandemic, and Rodolfo Arruabarrena’s third-round interlude headlined by an encouraging defeat of South Korea, then defining reversal to the Socceroos. Order and focus must be inculcated by Bento, the UAE’s sixth permanent appointment since 2019. His record-long four-year tenure with South Korea culminated after last December’s World Cup round-of-16 defeat to Brazil.

Chelsea boss Hayes confirmed as US women’s soccer coach

LOS ANGELES (Agencies): Chelsea manager Emma Hayes has been appointed as the new head coach of the US in a record deal that will make her the world’s highest paid women’s football coach, the United States Soccer Federation said Tuesday. Hayes, 47, revealed earlier this month she plans to leave Chelsea at the end of the season after a trophy-laden spell in charge of the English club. “This is a huge honor to be given the opportunity to coach the most incredible team in world football history,” Hayes said in a USSF statement confirming her appointment. US Soccer did not divulge details of Hayes’ contract, but



said she would become the “highest paid women’s soccer in the world.” ESPN, citing a source with knowledge of the contract negotiations, reported that Hayes’ deal would run through 2027 and would see her earn a salary that was “close if not equal” to the \$1.6 million earned by US men’s football coach Gregg Berhalter.

McIlroy resigns from PGA Tour board



LOS ANGELES (Agencies): Golf star Rory McIlroy has resigned from the PGA Tour’s board in order to concentrate on his game and spend more time with his family, multiple US media reports said Tuesday. The New York Times cited a statement from PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan and board chairman Edward Herlihy confirming McIlroy’s decision to step down. “Given the extraordinary time and effort that Rory — and all of his fellow player directors — have invested

in the tour during this unprecedented, transformational period in our history, we certainly understand and respect his decision to step down in order to focus on his game and his family,” Monahan and Herlihy said in the statement. McIlroy’s resignation is another sign of the turmoil that has gripped golf since the emergence of the Saudi-funded LIV Golf circuit last year. The 34-year-old four-time major winner had been one of the staunchest allies of the PGA Tour during its bitter civil war with LIV, reportedly turning down a huge offer to join the free-spending series. However McIlroy was among those players left stunned in June when the PGA Tour announced that it was forming a joint company with LIV’s Saudi paymasters, effectively bringing the dispute to an end.

Man City 84% likely to win Premier League, predicts Opta

LONDON (Agencies): Manchester City have one Premier League point less than they had after 12 games last season but according to data analysts Opta are overwhelming favourites to claim a fourth successive title. The number crunchers at Opta Analyst have predicted where each of the 20 teams will finish the season based on 10,000 simulations of the 2023-24 campaign, based on form and remaining fixtures, fed into a super-computer. And the outlook looks good for Pep Guardiola’s side and worryingly grim for Burnley. City, according to Opta Analyst, have an 84.6% probability of lifting the trophy again with Liverpool given only a 9.1% chance and last season’s runners-up Arsenal on 5.6%. Back-to-back defeats for Tottenham Hotspur mean that, according to Opta, their title hopes are virtually non-existent at 0.3%,



the same as Aston Villa. Manchester United, currently in sixth place, are predicted to finish seventh and only have a 5.9% chance of finishing in the top four, although that has risen slightly of late. Newcastle United have a 25% chance of a second-successive top-four finish while Chelsea are predicted to finish ninth. Opta’s calculations also suggest that the bottom three, currently the three clubs promoted last season, will all go down with 20th-placed Burnley given an 86.9% chance of relegation.

DAILY HOROSCOPE: NOVEMBER 16, 2023



– It’s a general reading which may differ from person to person because of time date and year.
– **ARIES:** You need to calm down and let others catch up to you or even surpass you for the time being. It’s one of those days when it’s easy to forget that you’re in a marathon, not a sprint.
– **TAURUS:** Someone new in your life is making you rethink quite a bit of your preconceptions, and you think you like where you’re headed! It’s time for you to flip the switch and make a big change.
– **GEMINI:** You just aren’t sure what to make of your latest plan. Something seems confusing about it. You might need to just sit back and let people think it over before asking for feedback.
– **CANCER:** Communication is a bit more difficult today, especially with those who think they know you well. Their assumptions are off base, but you can’t read their minds to let them know how they’re wrong.
– **LEO:** You can score some serious brownie points by leaning over and helping someone gently with a tough problem they’re having. It’s

time to be more proactive with your friends and family!
– **VIRGO:** You’ve got needs and today gives you multiple opportunities to fulfill them. Your ambitions are pure and powerful now, so get out there in the world and do whatever it takes to get your way.
– **LIBRA:** You’re hung up on something that happened a long time ago, but you’re not sure what to do about it now. You may just need to forgive and forget, though that is never the easiest thing to pull off.
– **SCORPIO:** It’s the perfect time to sign anything, even autographs! You might have a lease or business deal awaiting your review, and you should feel good about any legal arrangement that begins today.
– **SAGITTARIUS:** It’s time to draw on your odder resources, and you may need to surprise a few people with some crazy moves. Your secrets are still safe, or at least most of them are, so feel free to move ahead.
– **CAPRICORN:** Expect the best today and it should come your way. Your energy is down-to-earth and practical, and you ought to see good results as early as this afternoon. Others are paying attention.
– **ACQUARIUS:** You’re not in the best position to get people back on track. Your energy is building up now, and you can’t make them see what needs to be done. Wait for one more day before taking action.
– **PISCES:** Your ability to mix it up with all the right people means that you’re drifting into a leadership role, that is, if you aren’t already filling it! Assume you can handle it and move on quickly.

