

QUOTE UNQUOTE



“There is an addiction to coal that we need to overcome because it remains a major threat in relation to climate change”

— ANTONIO GUTERRES, on fresh research this week predicting that several Asian megacities, including Mumbai, are at risk of extreme flooding linked to global warming

TOP OF THE WORLD



Chad Wolf

US
Chad Wolf next acting Homeland secretary: Trump

Washington: President Donald Trump Friday said Chad Wolf, a longtime Homeland Security official, would be the new acting head of the department, the fifth person in the job for this administration. But Trump's announcement, made in response to a reporter's question outside the White House, created more uncertainty about who was in charge of the department. There have been weeks of speculation over who would be named the next leader, and Kevin McAleenan, the current acting secretary, has agreed to stay on temporarily.

MALI
Attack on military post kills 35 soldiers

Bamako: Thirty-five soldiers were killed Friday in a “terrorist attack” on a Mali military post in the northeast of the country, the army said. “The provisional death toll has risen to 35 deaths,” it said on Facebook late Friday, adding that the situation is “under control”. An investigation into the attack on the outpost in Indelimane in the Menaka region is ongoing, it said. The attack came a month after two jihadist assaults killed 40 soldiers near the border with Burkina Faso, one of the deadliest strikes against Mali's military in recent Islamist militant violence.

SYRIA
At least 13 killed in car bomb at border town

Istanbul: At least 13 people have died Saturday in a car bomb blast near a market in a Syrian border town controlled by Turkish forces, Ankara and a rights watchdog said. “Based on first findings, 13 civilians were killed and around 20 others injured” in the explosion in the northeastern town of Tal Ayab, Turkey's defence ministry said in a statement. It blamed the attack on the Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) militia, which it sees as “terrorist” offshoot of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

AZADI MARCH

No one will be allowed to create instability: Pak Army to protesters

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, NOVEMBER 2

THE PAKISTAN Army on Saturday warned that no one will be allowed to create instability and chaos in the country, a day after the incaltrant cleric and politician Maulana Fazlur Rehman set a two-day deadline for Prime Minister Imran Khan to step down.

The hard-line cleric addressed a massive protest rally, dubbed “Azadi March”, held here on Friday to topple the incumbent government.

In his address to tens of thousands of protesters, the right-wing opposition leader said the “Gorbachev of Pakistan” must resign without testing the patience of peaceful protesters. He also said that only people of Pakistan and not any “institution” had the right to govern the country.

“We do not want conflict with our institutions. But we also want to see them to stay neutral. We give two days to the institutions (also) to decide if they will continue to support this government,” he said on Friday.

“Maulana Fazlur Rehman is a senior politician. He should clarify which institution he is talking about. Pakistan's armed forces are an impartial state in-



Major General Asif Ghafoor; (right) participants of the Azadi March in Islamabad on Saturday.

stitution which always supports democratically elected governments,” Pakistan Army spokesman Major General Asif Ghafoor said in response to Rehman's remarks. “Nobody would be allowed to create instability as the country cannot afford chaos,” he warned.

Ghafoor said the army was neutral and supported democratically elected governments in accordance with the Constitution. He also defended the army's deployment during the 2018 general elections, saying it fulfilled the constitutional responsibility in the polls. “If the opposition has any



reservations [about the results], it can approach the relevant forums instead of levelling allegations on the streets,” he added.

Ghafoor said in democracies issues should be resolved democratically and appreciated the contact between the protesters and the government.

Reacting to Ghafoor's remarks, Rehman told the media after meeting with the opposition leaders that the military spokesman should avoid giving such statements which violate the neutrality of the army.

“This statement should have come from some politicians and not from the army,” he said.

He also announced the Opposition would meet on Saturday to decide the future course of action, if the two-day deadline was not met by the prime minister Khan.

The much-hyped “Azadi March” led by Rehman's Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) reached its final destination Islamabad on Thursday after it set off from the Sindh province and left Lahore on Wednesday.

Along with Rehman, leaders of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Awami National Party (ANP) participated in the march held to top-

ple Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government led by Prime Minister Khan.

Unfazed by the protest, Prime Minister Khan, while addressing a public rally in Gilgit-Baltistan on Friday, told the protesters congregated in Islamabad that when they run out of food, more will be sent to them, but their leaders should not expect any relief from him.

“Gone are the days when one used to use Islam to gain power. This is a new Pakistan. Sit however long you want. When your food runs out, we will send more. But we will not give you an (NRO),” he said. **PTI**

In election pitch, Boris backs his deal over no-deal Brexit

REUTERS
LONDON, NOVEMBER 2

BRITISH PRIME Minister Boris Johnson has put his Brexit withdrawal deal at the centre of his election campaign, rejecting an electoral pact with the Brexit Party that would mean he would have to embrace leaving the European Union without a deal.

Johnson had previously pledged to take Britain out of the European Union with or without a deal on October 31, before lawmakers voted to force him to seek an extension until January 31.

But he has abandoned the threat of a no-deal Brexit in his Conservative Party's manifesto for the December 12 election, the Times newspaper reported on Saturday.

On Friday, Johnson rejected a call from the Brexit Party to drop the deal he negotiated with the European Union last month in order to form a new electoral pact, saying that he could put his deal through parliament after any election win. “What we've got is a fantastic deal that nobody thought we could get,” Johnson said. “As soon as we get back in the middle of December, we can put that deal through.”

Nicky Morgan, the culture minister who is standing down as a lawmaker, said a vote for the Conservatives would be a vote against no deal.



BORIS JOHNSON

EXPLAINED
E

May split voter base

THE UK PM's decision to forego a no-deal Brexit will set his party against Nigel Farage's Brexit Party, which could potentially split an already divided voter base even further.

As one of the major forces pushing for the UK's split from the EU, the Brexit Party could woo votes away from Johnson if it chooses to contest the general elections. This could be damaging at a time when the PM is fighting calls for a referendum on whether Brexit should happen at all.

‘Last major n-arms treaty could expire with no replacement’

NEW YORK TIMES
NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 2

A RUSSIAN arms control official said for the first time on Friday that there was not enough time to replace the last and most important nuclear arms-limitation treaty with the United States before it expires early in 2021, raising the possibility that Washington and Moscow would then be free to expand their arsenals without limits.

President Vladimir V Putin's government has said that Russia hopes to renew or revise the treaty — but that the negotiations to revise it would have to begin immediately.

New START expires in February 2021, just weeks after the next presidential inauguration in Washington. While it can be extended for five years by

“It is already clear that within the remaining time... we won't be able to come up with a full-scale document to replace it”

— VLADIMIR LEONTYEV
RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY

mutual agreement, Trump and his aides have signaled repeatedly that he intends to let it expire unless it can be broadened to include other nations with strategic weapons, chiefly China.

But the Chinese are not interested — their arsenal is far smaller and they have shown no interest in negotiating a nuclear weapons deal. Trump's insistence on including other nations has largely been seen as a move to kill the treaty.

Downtown Hong Kong becomes battleground amid tear gas, arson

CLARE JIM & DONNY KWOK
HONG KONG, NOVEMBER 2

HONG KONG police fired tear gas into a park to break up thousands of anti-government protesters who fled to the Central business district, setting fire to street barricades and metro stations in some of the worst violence in months of unrest.

Central, its streets lined with banks and top-end jewellery and fashion stores, became a battleground after night fell, with running clashes between police and black-clad, masked activists.

As peaceful family protesters finished making origami paper cranes in Chater Garden, a cricket pitch in colonial days, activists began throwing petrol bombs on the streets.

Police again responded with tear gas on what was the 22nd straight weekend of protests. Activists later set fire to an en-



Riot police in Hong Kong on Saturday. Reuters

trance of the MTR metro's Central station, and smashed glass walls with bricks at another.

“Some masked rioters vandalised shops and committed arson,” police said in a statement.

Activists blocked streets and set fire to plastic barricades, the acrid smell mixing with the tear gas, and ripped at least two telephone booths out of the ground.

The MTR has often been a target of protesters' anger as it closes down services to stop people gathering. Central station was closed on Saturday evening.

Protesters also gathered across the harbour in the hotel and shopping district of Tsim She Tsui, with scores of passengers chanting “Hong Kong people resist”. Hundreds gathered

XINHUA OFFICE HIT

■ Protesters vandalised the office of China's official Xinhua News Agency for the first time during demonstrations, smashing windows and doors. Local media showed scenes of the aftermath that included a fire in the lobby of the office, with shattered windows and graffiti sprawled over the wall.

Iraqi forces kill one, wound 91 protesters

REUTERS
BAGHDAD, NOVEMBER 2

SECURITY FORCES killed a protester and wounded 91 others in Baghdad on Saturday, security and medical sources said, as thousands of Iraqis continued to gather in mass anti-government protests.

Tens of thousands have been gathering in the capital's central Tahrir Square this week, demanding the downfall of the political elite in the biggest wave of



A protester uses a slingshot during a clash, Saturday.

mass demonstrations since the fall of Saddam Hussein.

Protests have accelerated dramatically in recent days, drawing huge crowds from across Iraq's sectarian and ethnic divides. They have been comparatively peaceful by day, becoming more violent after dark as police use tear gas and rubber bullets to battle self-proclaimed “revolutionary” youths.

Clashes have focused on the ramparts to the Republic Bridge leading across the Tigris to the

heavily fortified Green Zone of government buildings, where the protesters say out-of-touch leaders are holed up in their walled-off bastion of privilege.

Amnesty International said on Thursday security forces were using “previously unseen” tear gas canisters modelled on military grenades that are 10 times as heavy as standard ones.

More than 250 people were killed in October, as security forces fired tear gas canisters and rubber bullets at crowds of protesters.

9 children killed in Afghanistan mine blast

REUTERS
KABUL, NOVEMBER 2

NINE AFGHAN children were killed on Saturday when a mine exploded as they walked to school, police said, the latest victims in a growing toll of civilian casualties in the war.

The blast happened in the northeastern province of Takhar. Saturday is a school day in Afghanistan.

“This area is under Taliban control and since security forces launched attacks to clear it, the Taliban have planted anti-personnel mines,” Khali Asir, a spokesman for the provincial police, told Reuters. “Unfortunately, today, one of those mines exploded and killed nine primary school students,” he said.

The children, aged nine to 12, included four from what Asir described as a “Taliban family”.

A spokesman for the Taliban, who are fighting to oust foreign troops and defeat the U.S.-backed government, was not immediately available for comment.

Civilian casualties have been increasing to record levels this year, despite efforts by the United States and Taliban insurgents to reach a peace deal.

A record 4,313 civilians were injured or killed between July and September, a 42 percent increase from the same period last year, the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan said last month.

The toll included more than 1,000 deaths, the bloodiest period since the mission began collecting figures in 2009.

SHE REGISTERED AS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FIVE TIMES — AND WAS REJECTED EACH TIME

Azam Taleghani, defiant would-be president of Iran, dies at 76

ARASH AZIZI
NOVEMBER 2

AZAM TALEGHANI, a dissident politician and women's rights activist who repeatedly fought to become the first female presidential candidate in Iranian history and each time was denied, died on Wednesday in Tehran. She was 76.

Taleghani had been admitted to Pars Hospital with a brain disorder and died there, her brother Mohammadreza Taleghani said in a statement. Taleghani was best known for her recurrent attempts to run for the presidency. In stipulating the qualifications for the of-

She refused to give up. In her last attempt, at age 74, she had to be helped up the stairs of the Interior Ministry to register. “I will register to run for president for as long as I am alive,” she said.

It wasn't just her gender that made Taleghani a thorn in the side of establishment. Espousing a progressive brand of revolutionary Islamism, she was a staunch ally of reformists and an inspiration to a generation of female politicians who tried to work within the narrow range of tolerated politics in the Islamic Republic.

“She was a militant woman who always stood with the people,” said Masoumeh Ebtekar, a



Azam Taleghani, dissident politician and activist. AP

active progressive cleric, and his second wife, Tooran Taleghani.

Taleghani was studying Persian literature in Tehran's teachers college in 1975 when she was arrested, in part because of her activities at the foundation. Convicted by a military court and given a life sentence, she was sent to the notorious Evin prison in Tehran. Two of her brothers suffered the same fate, all part of a pressure campaign by the shah against their father.

“It was in prison that I realized women don't have their organizations, and that something ought to be done about this,” she said.

After the revolution, she was repeatedly stymied in her attempts to found women's organizations. Although she had written the bylaws for what became the Islamic Women's Institute of Iran in late 1978, it could not be established until 1983. Her efforts to found a political party for women took even longer: It was not until 1992 that her Society for Women of the Islamic Revolution was allowed to form.

Azam Taleghani was nevertheless elected to the first post-revolutionary Parliament — one of only four women to gain seats — on a ticket made up of supporters of President Abolhassan Banisadr, an

ally of the Freedom party.

As a new generation of secular Iranian feminists emerged in the late 1990s, they found a kindred spirit in Taleghani. Like her father, she opposed making it mandatory that Iranian women wear the head covering known as the hijab, even though she chose to wear the even more enveloping chador.

A month ago, in her last major speech, Taleghani said, “From the beginning of the revolution we were told that those in power shouldn't be criticised, but if we had been allowed to criticise, we wouldn't have so much embezzlement, theft and betrayal.” **NYT**