

Bilawal asks PTI to change course, quit extremist politics

Says emergency or governor's rule should be used only as a last resort

PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said on Friday that the PTI's 'extremist politics' were hurting the party itself, calling on it to reconsider its political strategy.

"The PTI is a party that has public supporters, but it keeps disappointing the people because of its decisions and extremist politics," Bilawal said while addressing an event in Karachi.

"It has no political role in this city or in the federal government, and if it continues with its extremist politics, it will not remain in power in the province (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) either."

"Instead of fulfilling their responsibilities and taking care of their province and its people, this party is stuck on the politics of hate," Bilawal said.

He added that a week earlier,

the federal government and the entire system had been prepared to impose an emergency in KP. The PPP, he said, had consistently maintained that imposing an emergency or introducing governor's rule was a constitutional and legal option, but one that should be treated as a "legal atom bomb" and used only as a last resort. In an apparent reference to talks between the government and opposition, he said, without explicitly naming anyone, that although all political parties including those in the opposition, had reached an agreement, the chief minister of one province had chosen "negative politics" instead of pursuing dialogue.

He said that sometimes "extremist politics" were preferred when one was in opposition, but said that this was ultimately affecting "the country, that province and its people, the youth and most of all the PTI".

He called on the party to play its role in politics, adding that if it abandoned its current ways, he would help to change the "political atmosphere" from Karachi itself. Bilawal said that Karachi had two

political powers, the PPP and the PTI.

However, the PTI is fighting with other political parties, the federal government, the judiciary, Parliament and the establishment.

"When this is your politics, then your workers will also be disappointed," he said. Bilawal said that the PTI had not participated in parliamentary proceedings.

He said after several months, the PML-N had agreed to form a parliamentary committee on electoral reforms. "But it is expected that those crying the most about rigging... will not become a member of the committee. If you do not participate then how will we stop rigging in the future?" he asked.

Bilawal said that the PPP, from one political party to another, was insisting the PTI to abandon its "extremist politics". He said that once that happened, the space for dialogue would open and the party would be able to address its concerns. "If they are true to their party and to their leader, if the chief minister who is so loud these days is true to Imran Khan, then he will abandon this extremist politics," he said.

"It is Pakistan's history, if someone is in jail today, it does not mean they remain there tomorrow," he said. Bilawal said his father, President Asif Ali Zardari, held the "record" for being jailed the longest.

"If the PTI continues with its extremist politics, then Khan sahib will break Zardari sahib's record and he will remain a prisoner. If the PTI leaves its extremist politics, then it will be able to achieve its political goals and save its workers from becoming disillusioned. Let's see if they listen to what I am saying," he said. Bilawal said the country's situation had deteriorated to the point where the public was facing hardships. "Poverty is increasing to such an extent that the World Bank is now saying that Pakistan is bearing the heaviest burden of poverty and unemployment in the entire region," Bilawal said.

"We want that whoever is the prime minister, in the federal government should be successful, so that the public gets relief. For creating those conditions, we need political stability, and this is only possible right now if political parties cooperate with each other on the country's basic issues," he said. **AGENCIES**

ISPR: Pakistan working to defuse Iran-US tensions

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has said Pakistan is acting as an 'honest broker' while mediating between the United States and Iran, reiterating the commitment to a 'negotiated and peaceful' outcome.

The military's spokesperson made the remarks in an interview with CNN correspondent Ivan Watson, who posted a small clip of the interview on his X account.

During the interview, Lt Gen Chaudhry was asked whether Pakistan can "still play a neutral role (in the US-Iran war) when Iran has targeted Saudi Arabia in the past, with the Makkah alliance, and now you have an Iranian ally - the Houthis - attacking Saudi Arabia".

"Can Pakistan be a neutral broker?" Watson asked.

In response, Lt Gen Chaudhry said: "Pakistan has been exhibiting that we are a very honest broker... everything stems from honesty. We have been very clear on where Pakistan stands with all our partners".

He recalled that when the US-Iran war began, Pakistan had openly condemned Israeli attacks on Iran and also condemned Iran's retaliatory campaign in the Gulf.

"So we have been honest about that. We don't mince our words; we have a stake in regional peace and stability. We tell all that nobody benefits from expanding this war," he said. Lt Gen Chaudhry said Pakistan was committed to a "negotiated and peaceful" outcome to the conflict. He stressed that the country was doing "whatever is possible, whatever is necessary so that the gap narrows".

"We want that the conflict should not

expand horizontally or vertically." In a small clip of the interview released on Wednesday, Lt Gen Chaudhry was asked about deployment of Pakistani troops in Saudi Arabia under the Makkah defence alliance. In response, he said Pakistani troops were in Saudi Arabia, adding that they had been in the kingdom "for decades" and across multiple domains.

In a longer clip of the interview posted by state-run Pakistan TV on X on Friday, the military's spokesperson said that such questions were dwelling on the operationalisation of the force. "The Makkah accord, its actualisation, and whatever effects it achieves, that will be purely defensive. That's how the partners, that's how the principles have agreed, that's how it is going to manifest itself," he said.

"How that will be done, which component will go there, how it will be employed, that's for the operational commander to decide. And the operational details, because it's a military conflict... no participating country starts disclosing how and where I am going to employ my forces," he said. "So how and when they will be employed, you will see [for] yourself," he said. However, Lt Gen Chaudhry hastened to add that it would be "defensive in nature". He went on to say that under the United Nations charter, all countries had the "right to self-defence".

He went on to say that the signatories of the Makkah defence pact, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, had potent military and diplomatic capabilities. "So, then anyone who is having some funny ideas against any other will hopefully think twice, thrice or multiple times. So, that stops something terrible [from] happening. That is how collective defence works," he said. **NEWS DESK**

'Alliance forces to defend Saudi only'

Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan said on Friday that the Makkah defence alliance between Pakistan, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia was intended to defend the three countries against aggression and the allied forces would not launch attacks inside Yemen.

Addressing a weekly press briefing in Islamabad, the spokesperson said the three countries had agreed to move towards the practical implementation of their collective defence commitments under the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement (MJDA), with the three countries approving measures to strengthen military readiness, integration and coordination.

The decision includes measures to

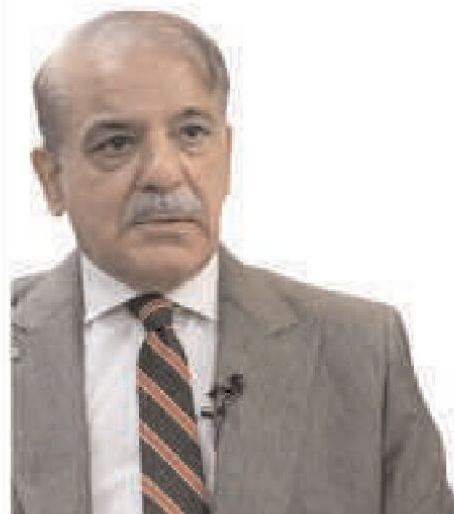
provide agreed military forces and capabilities and ensure their rapid deployment in Saudi Arabia, in accordance with approved arrangements and the national laws of the three countries.

Asked whether allied forces could engage Houthi forces in Yemen, Khan said the alliance was meant to defend the three countries against aggression and would not launch attacks from within Yemeni territory.

"These forces would not cross the border into Yemen to launch attacks against the Houthis," he said, adding that they would be used to defend Saudi territory and safeguard its sovereignty.

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Federal huddle today to seal KP's fate



Sources say top civil, military officials to attend; Tariq Fazal refuses confirmation

PM Shehbaz, Fazl confer on current political situation, PTI long march

KP CM Afridi says long march will extend beyond Swabi

Cross Swabi if you can, Kundi tells marchers; asks CM Afridi to quit

The federal government is considering emergency measures in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with a high-level meeting expected today amid Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)'s long march, according to sources.

The meeting is expected to be attended by the president, the prime minister and senior military officials. Reports from national security institutions are also expected to be reviewed, the sources said.

One proposal under consideration is to impose an emergency in 12 districts, including the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) merged districts. The federal government may also assume key powers in the province, according to the sources.

The sources said a final decision on the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa could be made at the meeting, with Articles 232 to 234 of the Constitution expected to be considered. Media report quoting sources earlier said that the prime minister has summoned key federal ministers and figures including Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Kashmir Affairs Minister Amir Muqamto the Prime Minister's House.

A follow-up consultation is scheduled with President Asif Ali Zardari to discuss institutional and legal steps regarding the province.

However, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, while speaking to a private TV news channel, refused to confirm the meeting.

Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif telephoned Maulana Fazlur Rahman to "discuss" the political situation of the country, including PTI's long march.

During the conversation, Maulana Fazlur Rahman reportedly emphasized that dialogue and mutual understanding should resolve the issues.

He also called for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and the opposition to demonstrate seriousness in finding a political solution, the sources said. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the federal government was making every possible effort to resolve matters through political means. He stressed the need for political stability, adding that the government had made strenuous efforts to strengthen the national economy.

Government sources said the PTI's insistence on proceeding with its long march had created complications. They also maintained that the opposition should refrain from advancing towards the federal government. The discussions focused on resolving political differences through dialogue and maintaining stability in the country. Earlier, a PTI leader said that Fazl had advised them to slow down the pace of the long march.

Meanwhile, KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi was leading PTI protesters to Charsadda from Peshawar on sixth day of the party's protest march that is being carried out to demand the release of jailed PTI founder Imran Khan.

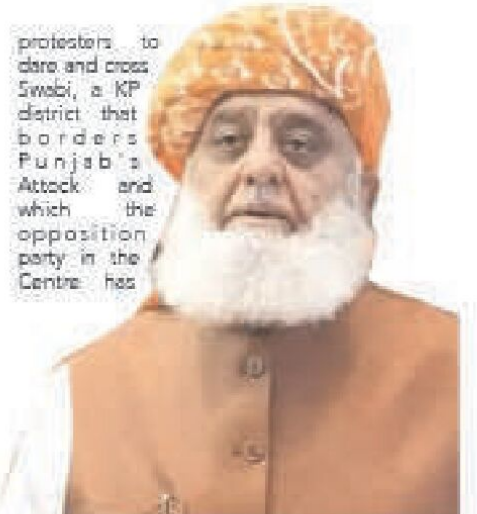
The route plan for the march has undergone multiple changes since its launch on Oct 4. While the party initially vowed to march towards Islamabad, its final destination seemingly remains tentative as the KP CM has yet to announce the plan for the trek after Oct 11, beyond Swabi. On the way to Charsadda, CM Afridi briefly addressed participants and told them not to worry as "we have to go elsewhere as well after Swabi".

So far, the march has remained within KP, where the PTI is in power.

The PTI march began after weekend talks with the federal government failed to bridge their differences for multiple reasons, particularly over the counterterrorism policy. The federal ministers have warned the PTI not to lead the march beyond KP, and are also linking differences over the counterterrorism policy with the possibility of an emergency or governor's rule in KP.

Afridi termed the federal government's warnings "empty threats" and told the march participants that it "cannot harm the workers after they will cross the province's boundary".

Earlier in the day, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faizal Karim Kundi challenged PTI



announced as the eventual destination of its long march.

Kundi raised doubt on the realisation of the PTI's plan to reach Swabi on Oct 11.

"They are probably going to Charsadda today, then they might go to Mardan, and after that they might end up reaching Afghanistan through Dir," he said while addressing a press conference in Peshawar. "Because whenever they turn towards Swabi, their legs start shaking, and their hearts tremble [...]. If they have any self-respect, reach Swabi tomorrow and cross it, or even step inside it. I will accept that you are a revolutionary party that aims to make a naya (new) Pakistan."

Continuing to rail against the party, he said senior PTI leaders were "sitting in drawing rooms" in Islamabad while others were in "hiding". "They say that they have run successful mobilisation campaigns across Sindh and Punjab; did you see anyone from these provinces on their long march's truck?" he questioned.

Reacting to the PTI's claims that KP lawmakers and cabinet members were being "abducted", Kundi said: "You (KP CM Afridi) should tell who is abducting your ministers as you are the chief executive of the province."

"You cannot protect your ministers, MFAs, and MNAs; how will you protect my people, the province and the nation? This is your position," Kundi added that the KP CM and his cabinet should resign on "ethical grounds".

"They say that the SHGs do not listen to them; if no one listens to you, then why are you sitting [in the government]? Only to make money or for corruption," he remarked, adding that presently, doctors, teachers, nurses, and municipal officers were observing strikes in KP.

On the possibility of governor's rule or an emergency in KP, the governor said that when the president or the prime minister deems that the situation in the province has worsened to the extent that these options should be availed, they would make a decision.

"Whenever the federal government will seek report on province's situation; we will provide as per the information we have," he added. In response to another question, Kundi took a jibe at the PTI, saying the party had turned its long march into "lucky Iran! Circus, travelling from city to city [...]. But whenever they turn to Swabi, they opt to take a U-turn." **NEWS DESK**

National



Sharjeel Memon inaugurates sports complex at Dawood University

World



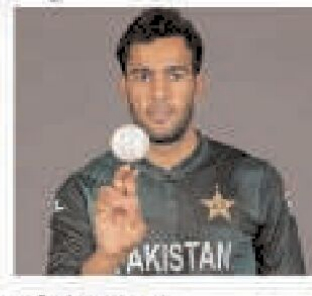
Trump's online rant targets Somalis and Muslims

Money



PIA, Norse Atlantic ink Dreamliner pact

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Afridi to lead HK Sixes defence

Lifestyle



Ella Langley's hunting past comes back to haunt her

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Navi Pillay takes Nobel Peace Prize

NATIONAL

DTM

Sharjeel Memon inaugurates sports complex at Dawood University

Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon inaugurated the dormitory and sports complex at the Iqbal Campus of Dawood University of Engineering and Technology.

Member of the Sindh Assembly Qasim Siraj Soomro and Ganiwar Khan Isari were also present with him on this occasion. Vice Chancellor Dr. Samreen Hussain and other university officials welcomed him and took him on a visit to the sports complex, students' hostels, auditorium and other available facilities. On this occasion, the guests were also briefed about the facilities being provided to students at the university.

Later, addressing the ceremony, Senior Minister Memon said that it was a matter of pleasure for him to be here as a guest of Dawood University. He said that he was pleased to see the facilities provided to students by the university administration. Before attending the ceremony, he visited the university's sports complex and reviewed the sports facilities, while he also saw the students' hostel rooms and the impressive auditorium. He said that the university administration was playing a full role in serving students and providing them with the best facilities to pursue their education in a conducive environment. Students have the right to receive quality facilities for acquiring education, while the establishment of the sports complex is an important step towards providing students with better opportunities for sports.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the students of Dawood University were future engineers and would have to take responsibility for the country's development and progress in the coming years. Engineers play a fundamental role in building a better future; therefore, young people must develop their technical skills and capabilities. He said that young engineers could bring honour to the country through their abilities in IT, petroleum and other sectors. Students should create new employment opportunities by utilising their abilities instead of depending on government jobs, and should find their own paths to success. In whichever field young people acquire expertise, they can find employment and opportunities for advancement in that field both within the country and internationally.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that male and female students would have to choose their own paths for the future and work hard to achieve their goals. Acquiring a good education and having command of the English language are important for professional development. However, students should not limit their focus only to a degree or language; rather, they should also develop practical, technical and professional skills. He said that our students were talented and, if provided with suitable opportunities, they could demonstrate their capabilities at both national and international levels. Preparing young people for human resource development and utilising their capabilities is an important need of the time. He said that making Pakistan secure and self-reliant was the responsibility of all of us. We must move towards self-reliance, and for this purpose, young people must trust their abilities and play their role in the country's development.

For future construction and progress, it is necessary that students be equipped with modern knowledge, research, and innovation and practical skills so that they can meet changing global requirements. Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the Sindh government had paid special attention to the education sector over the past 18 years and had established several new public-sector universities in different cities of the province. The establishment of higher education institutions in Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur and other cities had remained among the government's priorities for the promotion of higher education. He said that a total grant of Rs48 billion was provided to universities across Sindh, while the Sindh government had provided a grant of Rs1.8 billion to Dawood University of Engineering and Technology. The purpose of investment in universities is to provide students with quality education, modern facilities and better research opportunities. **NEWS DESK**

Hashmi calls British Council Library a treasure trove

Sindh Governor Syed Nehal Hashmi has described the British Council Library as a treasure trove of knowledge, culture, history and civilisation, where young people can learn about diverse cultures, histories and civilisations from around the world.

He stated that the Prime Minister of Pakistan is striving to provide young people with access to libraries alongside digital devices, enabling them to benefit from modern technology while also developing a habit of reading.

He expressed these views while addressing a ceremony as the chief guest marking the 10th anniversary of the British Council Library's relaunch. British Deputy High Commissioner Alison Blackburne, the Director of the British Council Library and other officials welcomed Governor Sindh on the occasion.

Governor Sindh highlighted the British Council Library's effective role in providing knowledge and information to young people. He emphasized that promoting reading habits is just as important as benefiting from modern technology.

He further observed that libraries play a vital role in nurturing young people's intellectual abilities, broadening their horizons and encouraging a culture of reading.

Governor Hashmi appreciated the services of the British Council Library and expressed hope that the institution would continue to strengthen its contribution to spreading knowledge, raising awareness and developing the intellectual capabilities of young people.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Governor Sindh distributed certificates among individuals and children who had demonstrated outstanding performance in various categories of library membership. **NEWS DESK**

Smaller provinces essential for development

Syed Sharif Jamal, leader of Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and Member of the Sindh Provincial Assembly, has called for a national debate on the creation of smaller provinces and administrative units, saying that decentralisation, empowered local governments, and institutional reforms are essential for sustainable development and improved public service delivery.

In an exclusive interview with APP, he said Pakistan had a large population and diverse administrative requirements, making smaller provinces and administrative units an important subject for national discussion. Jamal said such arrangement could bring governance closer to the people and improve access to education, healthcare, clean drinking water, employment and other essential services.

He emphasised that national progress also depended on political stability, economic development, transparency, merit and

effective governance.

He stressed that the creation of new provinces should be considered on administrative, constitutional and public-interest grounds rather than through linguistic or partisan considerations. Consultation with all stakeholders and national consensus, he added, were essential for any such initiative.

He said Karachi, Hyderabad and several parts of rural Sindh continued to face challenges relating to education, healthcare, clean drinking water, employment and basic civic facilities. The solution, he said, lay in empowering local governments, introducing administrative reforms, ensuring merit-based recruitment and implementing laws effectively. Elected local representatives should have adequate administrative powers and financial resources to address issues such as water supply, sanitation, roads, drainage and public transport. **NEWS DESK**

Awais flags proposed PPL head office shift

Speaker Provincial Assembly of Sindh, Syed Awais Qadir Shah, has expressed concern over reports regarding the proposed relocation of Pakistan Petroleum Limited's (PPL) head office from Karachi to Islamabad, stating that Karachi is the country's economic hub and has played a significant role in the growth and stability of national institutions.

Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah said that PPL's longstanding association with Karachi reflects the city's importance to Pakistan's energy sector. He stated that, as a key national energy institution, any decision concerning PPL's head office should take into account not only administrative requirements but also Sindh's economic interests, Karachi's business significance, and the future of employees associated with the organisation.

Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah emphasised that important decisions concerning national institutions should be based on transparency, economic efficiency, and the broader national interest. He added that consultation with relevant stakeholders and an assessment of the potential implications of such decisions would be a constructive and responsible approach.

He further stated that the relevant authorities should provide a clear explanation regarding reports of PPL's head office relocation, clarifying the reasons behind the proposed move, its administrative justification, and the future scope of the organisation's operations in Karachi.

Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah expressed hope that the relevant authorities would carefully review the matter, giving due consideration to Sindh's interests, Karachi's economic significance, and the rights of PPL employees. **NEWS DESK**

Remove encroachments, orders commissioner

Karachi Commissioner Syed Hassan Naqvi on Friday directed the deputy commissioners to continue campaign against road side encroachments, illegal parking and profiteers.

He asked the relevant authorities to play their role to make enforcement operations more effective and ensure that encroachments removed by the administration are not allowed to reappear.

Deputy Commissioners have submitted reports to the Karachi Commissioner detailing various enforcement operations conducted in their respective districts. According to East Deputy Commissioner Nasrullah Abbasi, operations are continuing in various areas to prevent roadside encroachments and unauthorised hotel seating arrangements that obstruct traffic flow. According to the report, under the supervision of Gulshan-e-Iqbal Assistant Commissioner Faraz Abbasi, illegal raised platforms and other items placed by hotels on footpaths near Hassan Square were removed, restoring public access to the footpaths. South Deputy Commissioner Javed Nabi Khosa said that routine operations against roadside encroachments and illegal parking affecting traffic flow were continuing in District South.

According to the report, Assistant Commissioner Shoab Elahi dismantled an illegal bus terminal at Lea Market on Thursday and had an FIR registered against the bus operator. The Assistant Commissioner said that buses travelling to Hub Chowki are conditionally permitted to park at the location, with only one bus allowed to be parked at a time. However, action was taken after the operator violated these conditions.

A similar operation had been conducted last month, when the operator was warned to comply with the law. Despite the warning, buses continued to be parked illegally, prompting further action. During the operation, a Mazda vehicle was seized and two individuals were arrested, while the occupants and staff of the remaining vehicles fled upon seeing the administration and police. **NEWS DESK**

NATIONAL

DTM

Azma criticises Afridi for ignoring KP security

Punjab Minister for Information and Culture Azma Bokhari has said that while terrorism continues in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sohail Afridi remains atop a container. She said his long march had now turned into a "Short-Term March." According to Bokhari, the march serves neither the interests of PTI's founder nor those of the Pashtun people; rather, she alleged, it is being held in support of terrorist organisations.

Bokhari said the entire province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was unsafe, yet the march on the roads appeared to be proceeding under complete security. She said security forces were sacrificing their lives to protect the people of the province, while, on the other hand, a person standing atop a container was mocking these very forces and expressing sympathy for terrorists. The Punjab Information Minister said PTI's senior leadership had been held hostage by a "container politician." She noted that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was among the provinces most severely affected by terrorism, adding that the sacrifices made by the police and the public in the fight against terrorism were unforgettable. Bokhari further claimed that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa themselves were demanding freedom from PTI and its associates. She alleged that, after being rejected by the public, AI-generated videos were now being produced and shared on social media. **NEWS DESK**

Rain, thunderstorm likely from today

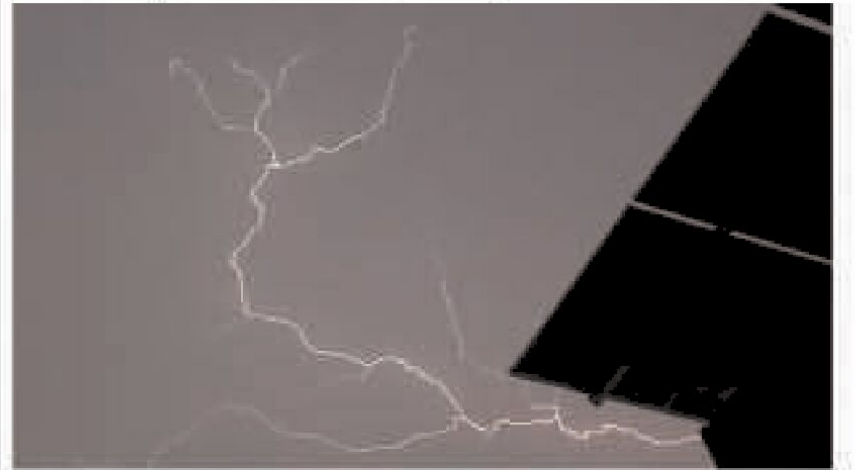
The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain, windstorms and thunderstorms, with isolated hailstorms, across the upper and central parts of the country from Saturday, with occasional gaps between spells.

A westerly wave is expected to enter the upper parts of the country on Saturday and is likely to persist until October 15.

In Punjab and Islamabad, rain, wind and thunderstorms, with isolated hail, are expected in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Murree, Galliat, Lahore, Faisalabad,

In Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, isolated spells are expected in Muzaffarabad, Neelum Valley, Mirpur, Kotli, Gilgit, Skardu, Hunza and other areas over the same period, again with occasional gaps.

Balochistan will remain mainly hot and dry, though isolated rain or thunderstorms are likely in Zhob, Barkhan and Musakhel on October 10, 11 and 13. Sindh is also expected to stay mainly hot and dry in the coming days. The PMD has warned that strong winds, hail and lightning could damage weak structures such as kacha



Gujranwala, Sialkot, Sargodha and several other districts on October 10-11 and again on October 13-14.

Multan, Layyah, Dera Ghazi Khan, Bahawalpur, Sahiwal, Okara and nearby districts may see similar weather on October 10, 11 and 13.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is likely to see the longest spell, with rain, wind and thunderstorms, along with isolated hail, expected in Peshawar, Swat, Dir, Chitral, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan and other districts from October 10 to 15.

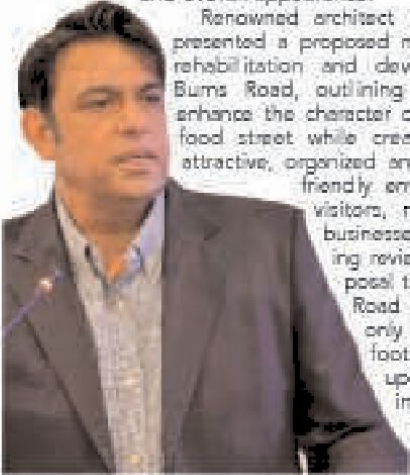
houses, electric poles, billboards, vehicles and solar panels.

Hailstorms may also damage standing crops in the plains of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while light snowfall is likely over high mountains and glaciers. Daytime temperatures are expected to fall by 2 to 4C during the forecast period.

The department advised farmers to plan their crop activities according to the weather and urged all concerned authorities to remain vigilant and take necessary measures to avoid any untoward situation. **NEWS DESK**

Burns Road beautification plan reviewed

Sindh Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah chaired a meeting to review the proposed rehabilitation and beautification plan for Burns Road and its adjoining areas, with a focus on preserving the historic identity of the area while improving its infrastructure, accessibility and overall appearance.



and enhance the overall experience of the historical street.

Chief Secretary Shah emphasized the importance of developing Burns Road in a manner that preserves its historic and cultural significance while improving public facilities and the urban environment. He said that the area's traditional character should remain central to the development plan, ensuring that its identity as one of Karachi's well-known destinations is maintained.

He added that the Mayor of Karachi and the municipal town administrations were fully aligned with the proposed plan. He added that all relevant stakeholders, including local residents and business community representatives, were also on board with the proposal, reflecting a shared commitment to the rehabilitation and beautification of Burns Road while preserving its historic identity.

The proposed pedestrian-friendly approach aims to provide a more comfortable environment for people visiting the food street while helping organize traffic and improve access to adjoining areas. The rehabilitation plan is also intended to enhance the overall outlook of the locality without compromising its traditional character and longstanding association with Karachi's food culture. Deputy Commissioner South, Municipal Commissioner Karachi Metropolitan Corporation and other relevant officials attended the meeting. **NEWS DESK**

Bail pleas of three PTI workers rejected

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday dismissed the interim bail applications of three Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders and workers in the May 9 Jinnah House attack case after they failed to appear before the court.

ATC Judge Mansur Ali Gill heard the bail applications filed by PTI leader Awaiz Younis and workers Syeda Fatima and Hasnain Ali. The prosecution informed the court that the three accused did not appear whereas they had also remained absent at the previous hearing. Their interim bail applications were subsequently dismissed due to their non-appearance.

Meanwhile, the court accepted a one-day exemption from personal appearance sought by Punjab Assembly member Ali Imtiaz Wernsah and extended his interim bail until October 26. The court also extended the interim bail of other accused in the case until October 26.

PTI workers Rukhsana Naveed, Kamran Saleem, Farhanur Rehman, Hassan Adnan, Malik Tariq, Taqi Raza Khan, Ammar Nadeem and Tauqeer have also filed interim bail applications in the case.

Separately, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday granted a three-day physical remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Taqi Raza Khan in a case involving the burning of police vehicles at Afghan Chowk during the May 9 violence. ATC Judge Mansur Ali Gill passed the order after police produced the accused before the court upon completion of his 19-day physical remand.

The investigating officer sought further physical remand, stating that the police needed to recover the accused's mobile phone for investigation. Defence counsel Bilal Mustafa and Yousaf Wain appeared on behalf of the accused and opposed his arrest in the case.

The defence lawyers argued that Taqi Raza Khan had been arrested in the case after three years. They also informed the court that he was already on interim bail in the Jinnah House attack case. The court subsequently approved a further three-day remand. The accused has been arrested in the case registered at Sanwer Road Police Station under FIR No. 103/23. **NEWS DESK**

Lanjar launches Law Department's web portal

Sindh Minister for Home, Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Criminal Prosecution Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar on Thursday inaugurated the Law Department's new official web portal at a ceremony held at the Sindh Assembly.

Law Secretary Saeed Sheikh and the department's director of information technology briefed participants on the portal's features and demonstrated how it works.

Developed in-house by the department, the portal aims to provide the public, legal practitioners, government departments, researchers

and other stakeholders with convenient access to legal information. It includes Sindh legislation and Gazette publications dating from 1937, enhanced search facilities, AI-assisted

the portal. He said information about cases involving the Sindh government should be obtained from the High Court and other courts and regularly added to the portal to keep it updated and



legal support and QR-based access to end verification of documents.

The Minister directed that the offices of the Advocate General and Prosecutor General also be linked to

aligned with modern requirements.

Saeed Sheikh said work in this regard had already been undertaken and that the portal had been further updated. **NEWS DESK**

Two suspects remanded in foreign woman rape case

A judicial magistrate on Friday granted police a four-day extension in the physical remand of Ali Zain and Mohsin, suspects in the rape case involving a foreign woman.

The suspects were produced before Judicial Magistrate Azhar Mahmood at the Cantt Courts upon completion of their previous physical remand.

The police sought a further extension, submitting that a substantial part of the investigation had been completed but that the suspects' mobile phones still needed to be recovered. After hearing the police request, the court approved a further four-day physical remand of both suspects. The Defence C police had registered a case against the suspects over the alleged rape of the foreign woman. **NEWS DESK**

Urs of Hazrat Qutb Shah begins

Provincial Minister for Awaqaf, Religious Affairs, Zakat and Ushr, Syed Riaz Hussain Shah Shirazi, visited the shrine of Hazrat Qutb Alam Shah Bukhari yesterday, performed Chadar Pushy and Fateha, and formally inaugurated the four-day annual Urs celebrations being held from October 8 to 11.

Adviser to the Sindh Chief Minister for the Human Settlement, Special Development and Social Housing Department, Syed Najmi Alam, also accompanied the Provincial Minister. Chairman Lyari Town Khalil Hoosh welcomed Provincial Minister Syed Riaz Hussain Shah Shirazi and other Officials upon their arrival at the shrine and presented them with traditional Sindhi Ajrak.

Chief Administrator Awaqaf Sindh Mukhtiar Ali Abro, Director Religious Affairs Sindh Shaukat Ali Ujjain, Administrator Awaqaf Karachi Abdul Hameed Mughal, the shrine manager, relevant officers of the Awaqaf Department and other staff members were also present. **NEWS DESK**

1818: A step towards justice for poor litigants

The Supreme Court of Pakistan inaugurated the 1818 Legal Call Centre to provide citizens with a dedicated telephone facility for court-related information, free legal guidance and assistance in accessing legal aid.

The facility was inaugurated in the presence of the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi, with the first caller, Mr. Muhammad Saleem, formally marking the commencement of the service.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Justice emphasised that any person requiring legal advice may simply dial 1818 to seek free legal guidance without having to visit the Court or incur consultation expenses. The initiative is intended to make

assistance more readily available to citizens, particularly those who face financial difficulties, live in remote areas or are unfamiliar with court procedures.

The Call Centre will serve as a point of contact for lawyers, litigants and members of the public seeking information about the Supreme Court's services and procedures. It will address queries concerning the status of cases, hearing dates, cause lists and case fixation, as well as the relevant offices or service channels through which callers may obtain further information or pursue their requests. Callers will also be able to seek guidance on filing cases and applications, understanding procedural requirements, addressing filing objections and obtaining certified copies of judgments, orders and other court documents.

Queries relating to early hearing applications and the procedure for seeking information about pending matters will also be addressed. The purpose is to help citizens understand the steps they need to take and approach the appropriate office

with the necessary information and documents. The facility will further guide callers on accessing the Public Facilitation Centre and the Supreme Court's online services, including the use of the Court's website, online case information and available electronic application facilities.

Citizens requiring help in locating a service, understanding how to submit a request or identifying the appropriate channel for a service-related concern will be guided accordingly. This telephone support will complement the assistance available through the Court's physical and digital facilitation channels.

An expert legal adviser will also be available to address queries relating to litigation and legal cases. The adviser will provide free legal guidance, help callers understand the nature of their legal concerns and explain the appropriate procedural steps or avenues through which they may seek assistance.

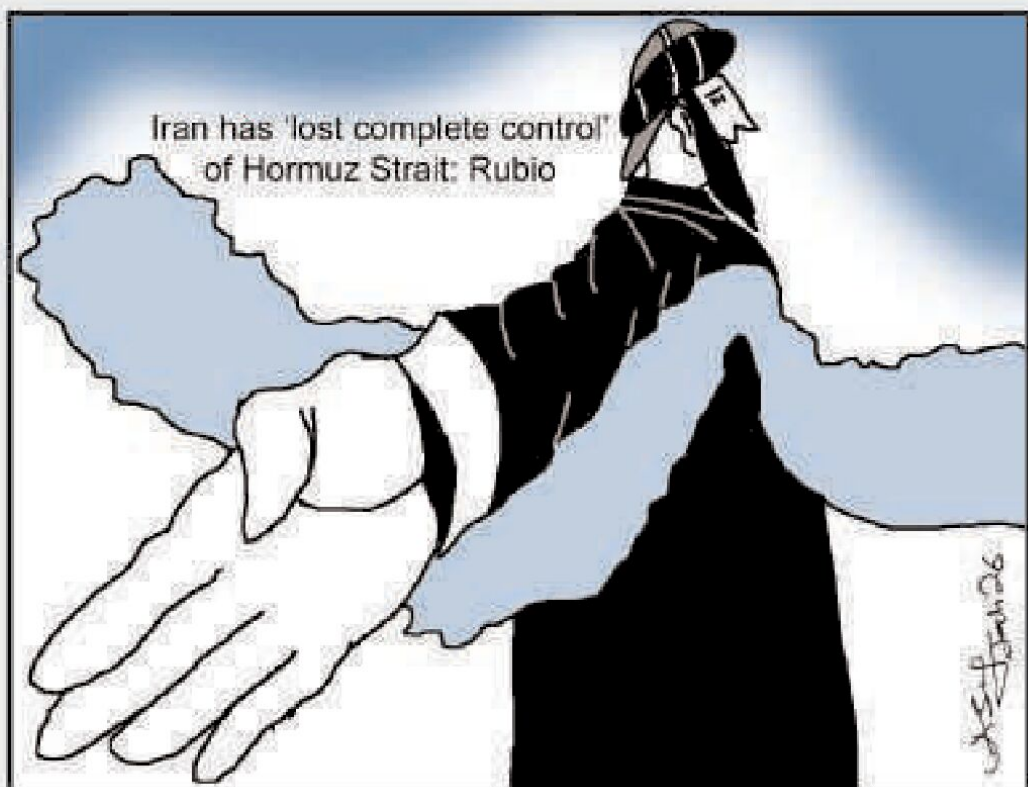
This will be particularly useful for individuals who need initial advice before

approaching a lawyer or a court, as well as litigants who require clarification about how to proceed with a legal matter.

For litigants who require free legal assistance, the legal adviser will also forward their names and applications to the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJC) for consideration and further action through the relevant legal aid arrangements.

The referral will help connect persons seeking assistance with the institutional mechanism through which their requests can be examined. The Call Centre will thus provide both initial legal guidance and a route for seeking further assistance where a litigant is unable to meet the cost of pursuing a case. The information and guidance provided through the Call Centre will help citizens navigate court services and legal procedures. Decisions on judicial matters will continue to be made by the competent courts, while applications referred for free legal assistance will be considered through the relevant legal aid process. **NEWS DESK**

EDITORIAL



Pakistan's defence commitment to Saudi Arabia

The Ministry of Information has rightly rejected as "fake and fabricated" a report claiming that Pakistan Air Force fighter jets are being used against Yemen's Houthi rebels. The report, published by The New York Times, cited an unnamed source amid rising tensions between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis. Islamabad has urged international media organisations to avoid speculation about the deployment of Pakistani forces under the Makkah Defence Alliance. This clarification is important because unverified reports of military involvement can deepen regional tensions and create unnecessary confusion about Pakistan's intentions. Pakistani troops have been stationed in Saudi Arabia for decades, serving in different capacities under long-standing defence and military cooperation arrangements. Their presence is not a new development, nor does it automatically mean that Pakistan has entered an active conflict. The government has also rejected claims that it plans to send between 30,000 and 40,000 additional troops to the kingdom. In such a sensitive situation, facts must take precedence over speculation.

Pakistan has consistently expressed solidarity with Saudi Arabia and affirmed its commitment to the kingdom's security. However, support for Saudi defence must not be confused with a willingness to intervene in conflicts beyond that commitment. Pakistan does not believe in violating the sovereignty of other countries or interfering in their internal affairs. Its defence cooperation with Saudi Arabia should therefore be understood in the context of protecting the kingdom and strengthening collective deterrence, not as a licence for offensive operations in Yemen or elsewhere. The Makkah Defence Alliance, involving Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye, aims to strengthen collective defence arrangements in accordance with the participating countries' laws and agreed commitments. Any decision on deploying troops or military assets must be announced by the relevant authorities, not inferred from anonymous sources or unconfirmed reports. Islamabad must continue to communicate its position clearly to prevent misunderstandings and avoid being drawn into a wider regional confrontation. Saudi Arabia's security is important to Pakistan, but so are regional peace, sovereignty and restraint. Pakistan can honour its defence commitments without abandoning its longstanding preference for peaceful coexistence and non-interference.

The human cost of America's war on Iran

The return of the USS Abraham Lincoln to California on October 9, after a reported 322-day deployment in the Middle East, raises serious questions about the cost and purpose of America's military adventures abroad. The aircraft carrier's crew reportedly spent 265 consecutive days at sea while supporting US military operations against Iran alongside Israel. Reports of food shortages, difficult living conditions and serious concerns about sailors' mental health have exposed the human cost of prolonged military deployments. Reports that eight personnel aboard the carrier attempted suicide are particularly disturbing and demand careful examination. For sailors and their families, the end of such a mission is a moment of relief, but it cannot erase months of separation, uncertainty and hardship. The reported reunion of one sailor with his four-year-old daughter after nearly 10 months illustrates the personal price of distant wars. While US officials have praised the crew's service and President Donald Trump has dismissed reports of poor conditions, the questions raised by this deployment cannot simply be brushed aside.

The experience should also force Washington to reconsider the assumption that military intervention can secure its interests without consequences. The return of the carrier after such an extended deployment is a humiliating image for a country accustomed to projecting military power across the world, even if the return itself does not establish military defeat. Iran's resistance has demonstrated that confronting another country carries costs that cannot always be controlled or contained. In that sense, the conflict may have done a service to the American people by forcing a debate about the price of attacking other nations. Washington may now have to think twice before embarking on another foreign adventure. The disruption of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and the resulting risks to global energy supplies show how regional wars affect ordinary people far beyond the battlefield. The end of this deployment should therefore mark more than a homecoming for exhausted sailors. It should encourage a broader reassessment of interventionist policies.

Why Governments Must Listen to the Voices of the Youth

Historically, the youth of India have largely been left invisible in political decision-making. Today, however, 65% of India's population is under the age of 35, with the country's average age being 29. While India boasts one of the largest youth populations in the world, their actual political representation and participation remain a matter of deep concern.

Democracy is never a fully accomplished state; rather, it is a continuous, evolving process that must be constantly refined. No current government is a perfect democracy in the truest sense. Therefore, true democracy is always something that lies ahead in the future.

Democracy grants people the fundamental freedom to question and rectify the flaws and power structures of existing systems. It is the only political system capable of self-criticism and adaptation.

While democracy is susceptible to failures and the abuse of power, it possesses an inherent resilience to overcome these crises and transform into something better. In essence, democracy is not a finished building, but an ongoing construction project under constant revision, driven by hope.

This is precisely the lens through which we must understand the current sociopolitical landscape of Indian democracy. At times, this continuous process of democratic correction manifests as powerful public protests.

Another French philosopher, Jacques Rancière, explains that real politics or democracy thrives on "dissensus." Democracy is not a state of absolute, passive agreement. Its true essence comes alive when people who were previously invisible or marginalised raise their voices, challenge existing laws and structures, and protest to claim their rights.

Historically, the youth of India have largely been left invisible in political decision-making. Today, however, 65% of India's population is under the age of 35, with the country's average age being 29. While India boasts one of the largest youth populations in the world, their actual political representation and participation remain a matter of deep concern.

This is especially significant given that today's youth possess the technical expertise, progressive ideas, and anti-corruption mindset necessary for good governance.

While Demide viewed democracy as an ongoing future and Rancière saw it as an act of dissent, Percy Bysshe Shelley, in his famous poem *Ode to the West Wind*, envisions the West Wind as a revolutionary force heralding a democratic spring.

In this poem, Shelley uses the wind as a metaphor for the public voice and freedom of expression in a democracy. Just as the wind has the power to destroy the old and preserve new life, the collective voice of the

people has the power to rebuild and rejuvenate democracy.

The poem's most famous line, "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?" serves as a powerful source of inspiration for democratic struggles.

Through the imagery of the wind, the poet expresses humanity's desire to sweep away old, decayed, and corrupt political structures like dead leaves, paving the way for a new democratic order rooted in liberty and equality. The poet shares an optimistic belief that no matter how severe the tragedy, the democratic rights of the people will ultimately triumph.

Those in power today must view the revolutionary developments unfolding across India with the same sense of optimism. It is highly dangerous for rulers and ruling parties to perceive these movements

merely as threats to their power. This democratic "West Wind" is only bound to grow stronger, and those who stand stubbornly in its way risk being swept aside.

The only way to manage this democratic wind is through open dialogue and debate. In a democracy, listening to the people is just as crucial, if not more important, than speaking to them. Listening is a state's greatest strength. Conversely, turning the military apparatus-meant for national security-against its own citizens is inherently anti-people.

The poet notes that even the deepest vegetation trembles and sheds its leaves in fear of the wind's power. Similarly, those who stand against the tide of public sentiment are bound to wither away.

Abraham Lincoln's famous words also point towards these inevitable shifts in a democracy: "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time."

In a democracy, ultimate authority rests with the people. Rulers may temporarily deceive the public through propaganda or false promises, but the electorate will not remain blind forever.

If democracy truly means a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, then those in power must pay heed to this rising public anger. Leaders currently have a golden opportunity to strengthen the nation's democratic fabric. Failing to recognise this potential, and crushing the promise of a democratic spring, will only leave them on the wrong side of history.



PROF DR P J THOMAS PATHILCHIRA

Prof Dr P.J Thomas Pathilchira, Independent journalism for people and planet.

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The Lists Are Growing: Will Israel Finally Pay a Price?

On September 8, twelve countries - Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom - announced their intention either to introduce national restrictions or support European restrictions on trade with illegal Israeli settlements. Britain went further, banning settlement goods and moving against companies involved in settlement construction.

Let's start with the good news. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has added 61 companies to its database of businesses involved in activities linked to illegal Israeli settlements, expanding the list from 158 to 214 companies. Why is this good news? Because it further illustrates a degree of seriousness within the international community to move its position on Israel from the realm of language to that of action. Yet more good news: five previously listed companies were removed after the Office determined that their involvement in the relevant activities had ended.

This matters because it suggests that the mechanism can work: sustained scrutiny can influence corporate behavior, and supporting Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine can carry a price. Expectedly, the updated list has been welcomed by Palestinian and international human rights organizations, though, rightly so, they insist that such lists are not enough unless followed by direct government action and expanded to other facets of the Israeli military and economy. But before focusing on what else needs to be done, we must acknowledge the significance of such reports, especially when placed within the larger context of global initiatives aimed at isolating Israel and its extremist leadership.

First, the 2026 update demon-



DR RAMZY BAROUD

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strates continuing institutional commitment by the UN Human Rights Office. The database was not a one-off initiative issued under temporary political pressure. Its continued expansion and revision show that corporate involvement in Israel's illegal settlement enterprise remains subject to international scrutiny. Second, the addition of 61 companies reflects extensive research and follow-up by the UN, supported by information from Palestinian civil society and human rights organizations. The database is therefore not simply symbolic; it documents the international corporate networks that sustain and profit from Israel's settlement project.

Third, the removal of five companies suggests that the mechanism can produce results. Its impact remains far below what Palestinians need, but the removals indicate that companies can and relevant activities and subsequently be removed from the database.

The list also provides civil society with credible material for accountability and boycott campaigns. More importantly, it can help move such efforts beyond individual consumer choices toward action by governments, financial institutions and regulatory bodies.

This is particularly relevant as Western governments begin taking measures of their own.

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Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom - announced their intention either to introduce national restrictions or support European restrictions on trade with illegal Israeli settlements. Britain went further, banning settlement goods and moving against companies involved in settlement construction.

The significance was difficult to miss. Heavyweights such as Britain, France and Canada were no longer merely condemning settlement expansion; they were beginning to attach economic consequences to it.

But here lies the challenge: reports, databases and sanctions remain insufficient - and risk becoming meaningless - unless they are followed by sustained monitoring and practical action.

What is the worth of sanctions if they are not enforced, expanded and accompanied by political pressure capable of changing Israel's behavior?

Decisions, lists and threats are dou-

ble-edged swords. They can become launchpads for sustained and meaningful political action. Or they can be used to mollify civil society, allowing politicians to buy time and votes while avoiding any fundamental policy change.

However, there is a way to help distinguish between the two.

An independent international monitoring group, composed of and supported by civil society figures with recognized moral authority, could systematically track governments that have committed to sanctions, boycotts or trade restrictions: what was promised, what was implemented, what loopholes remain and whether measures are producing tangible consequences.

Monitoring these governments is becoming almost as important as monitoring Israel itself.

The same principle applies to UN reports. Palestinian and international civil society organizations must incorporate their findings into the growing

global boycott and accountability movement, while governments must ensure that companies under their jurisdiction are not contributing to illegal settlement activities.

Considering that Israel continues its genocidal assault on Gaza while accelerating settlement expansion and annexation measures in the West Bank, none of these steps can ever be sufficient on their own. They are, however, meaningful steps in the right direction.

Palestinians expect - and deserve - far more than the bare minimum. The situation in the occupied territories is simply too urgent for symbolic politics. Every passing day should bring another measure of accountability: another restriction, another divestment, another sanction, another political or economic consequence.

Israel has operated for decades on the assumption that it is effectively untouchable - that condemnation will remain rhetorical, reports will gather dust, and Western governments will ultimately retreat when meaningful pressure becomes politically costly.

That assumption must end.

For the Israeli mindset to change, the consequences of occupation, annexation and genocide must become unmistakable. Sanctions cannot merely be announced; they must be enforced. Boycotts cannot remain symbolic; they must carry an economic cost. International law cannot simply be invoked; it must have consequences.

The real measure of these initiatives, therefore, is not how many companies appear on a list or how many governments announce sanctions. The real measure is whether these actions can finally impose a political and economic price on Israel high enough to make occupation, annexation and genocide unsustainable.



OPINION

DTM



QUETTA: A roadside seller offers illegally imported Iranian petrol in plastic bottles at Rs270 per litre. INP

Brazil's Angry Tide and the Struggles Ahead

The Senate election is particularly consequential because 54 of its 81 seats were contested. Senators serve eight-year terms, so the results will shape national politics well beyond the next presidential administration. The PL won 19 seats and will hold 28 in the new Senate, making it the largest party. The PT will have nine. The Bolsonaroistas have therefore established a formidable position, although the PL itself remains short of a majority and must bargain with other parties.

Brazil's general election on 4 October delivered a severe warning to the Left. Flávio Bolsonaro, the presidential candidate of the Liberal Party (PL), finished ahead of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, with approximately 47 per cent against 45 per cent. Neither secured a majority, sending them into a runoff on 25 October. More troubling than this narrow presidential gap was the advance of bolsoneirismo through Congress. The election has strengthened a political movement whose ambitions extend beyond defeating Lula to reshaping the institutions that obstruct its exercise of power. The imprisonment (house arrest) and electoral exclusion of Jair Bolsonaro have not dissolved his movement. His son Flávio carries its presidential banner, while other members of the family have won seats in Congress. Michelle Bolsonaro, Jair's wife, and Carlos Bolsonaro, his son, enter the Senate; Jair Renan, another son, and Renato, Jair's brother, enter the Chamber of Deputies. Nepobolsoneirismo is an appropriate name for this family's expansion through the state. Yet the family is only the most visible expression of a broader project, rooted in powerful economic interests and a deeply organised reactionary politics.



VIJAY PRASHAD
Vijay Prashad is a historian and journalist

rain on which the Right operates. Bolsoneirismo, or Brazil's far right of a special type, translates these frustrations into resentment against the Left, all public institutions, and vulnerable sections of society. Its promise of order offers an immediate language for fear, while concealing the economic arrangements that produce insecurity. The Left cannot answer this merely by advertising government achievements. It must connect those achievements to a credible programme for changing everyday life, and explain which interests prevent further advances. A worker struggling with debt needs more than reassurance that the economy is performing well. This has been the problem for Lula, whose programme for the future does not seem to promise more than what has been delivered till now. The Senate: A Struggle Over Institutional Power

The Senate election is particularly consequential because 54 of its 81 seats were contested. Senators serve eight-year terms, so the results will shape national politics well beyond the next presidential administration. The PL won 19 seats and will hold 28 in the new Senate, making it the largest party. The PT will have nine. The Bolsonaroistas have therefore established a formidable position, although the PL itself remains short of a majority and must bargain with other parties.

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A Presidential Contest with Continental Stakes

Lula remains the principal obstacle to the return of this project to the presidency. His defeat would affect workers and peasants throughout Brazil, but also the possibilities for regional cooperation and an independent Latin American foreign policy. Brazil's size, industrial capacity, raw minerals (such as critical minerals), agricultural resources, and diplomatic reach give its political direction continental significance. A government that subordinates these assets to Washington's priorities would weaken the space available to neighbouring countries seeking their own paths of development.

The first-round geography demonstrates both Lula's strength and his difficulties. He retained a commanding position in the Northeast, while Flávio led across the other four regions. São Paulo's enormous electorate provided a particularly important advantage to the Right. These divisions cannot be explained by an opposition between an enlightened population and an ignorant one. They require an examination of the different conditions of work, the organisation of political life, and the capacity of competing movements to interpret people's frustrations.

Lula approaches the runoff with a substantial social record. Unemployment fell to 3.3 per cent in the quarter ending in August, the lowest rate for that period in the statistical series beginning in 2012. Such improvements matter enormously to families for whom a regular wage brings relief from daily uncertainty. But an improved national indicator does not settle the political argument. Employment can coexist with exhausting journeys, expensive housing, inadequate public services, and the insecurity of debt. The distance between statistical improvement and lived experience remains ten-

Michelle Bolsonaro and Bia Kicis took both seats in the Federal District, while Carlos Bolsonaro and Carol de Toni won the two seats in Santa Catarina. These victories show the movement's ability to organise coordinated campaigns and concentrate support behind its candidates. There were important successes for the Left: Rui Costa and Jacques Wagner won in Bahia, Humberto Costa retained representation in Pernambuco, and Marília Campos won in Minas Gerais. These results preserve points of resistance within an increasingly hostile chamber. The Senate's significance extends beyond ordinary legislation. The Bolsonaroistas have made their confrontation with the Supreme Federal Court a central political objective, including demands to impeach its ministers. Their strengthened representation increases their capacity to pursue that confrontation and to influence the election of the Senate president. Predictions of an automatic majority for impeachment should be treated cautiously: party affiliation, campaign declarations, and votes in a specific proceeding are different things. Nevertheless, the danger of using legislative power to intimidate the judiciary has plainly grown.

This is part of a struggle over the conditions under which the far right can govern. The judicial proceedings against Jair Bolsonaro did not remove the social forces supporting him. Those forces now seek greater leverage over institutions capable of restraining them. For the Left, defending democratic space must therefore accompany the struggle to expand social rights. Workers' organisations cannot afford to lose the freedoms through which they organise, educate, and confront capital.

Letters To The EDITOR

Strategic rents and governance

In the wake of hostilities between the United States and Iran, a narrative has emerged that shifts attention away from Pakistan's internal governance problems and presents its economic challenges as an outcome of its ability to benefit from its geopolitical importance. This view is an oversimplification.

Although strategic rents can create complacency and delay reforms, Pakistan's problems stem largely from domestic mismanagement and weak governance. The country's ability to withstand external shocks depends more on the quality of its institutions and policies than on international developments.

Estimates suggest that better governance and reduced corruption could increase Pakistan's GDP by up to 6.5 per cent. International lending agencies have also stressed the need for structural reforms, productivity growth and investment in human capital to generate millions of jobs. Research on aid effectiveness similarly shows that institutional quality and sound policies matter more than the availability of external financing alone. Countries such as Egypt and Jordan have also benefited from their geopolitical importance while maintaining relatively stable macroeconomic conditions. Pakistan's fundamental problems lie in weak fiscal institutions, a narrow tax base and a fragmented political economy. Domestic borrowing from banks, financial institutions and the State Bank of Pakistan may appear safer than external borrowing, but excessive reliance on it can restrict private investment, increase interest payments and complicate inflation management. The government must address the basic imbalance between its expenditure and revenue by expanding tax collection and controlling spending.

Bringing undertaxed sectors into the tax net is essential. The government must also reduce inefficient subsidies, address losses in state-owned enterprises and prioritise necessary development projects over wasteful expenditure. The National Finance Commission Award has contributed to a soft budget constraint, as provinces depend heavily on federal transfers without sufficient incentives to mobilise their own revenues. The state's failure to tax politically influential sectors, combined with bureaucratic hurdles, continues to fuel fiscal crises. As a result, Pakistan struggles to generate primary fiscal surpluses and remains dependent on domestic and foreign borrowing.

SYEDA ZAINAB SABZWARI
Paris, France

Smart traffic management

Islamabad is one of Pakistan's most beautiful and modern cities, yet it lacks an efficient and technology-driven traffic management system. Countries such as China use artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced surveillance to monitor traffic and identify suspicious activity. Islamabad should also adopt modern systems, including AI-based monitoring and drone surveillance, to improve traffic control and public safety.

Security measures should be strengthened at parks, hospitals and other public places. The movement of licensed weapons must be monitored strictly, while the entry and exit of vehicles and individuals into the capital should be digitally recorded where appropriate.

Adopting modern technology would help Islamabad remain green, clean and secure. An efficient, AI-based traffic and security system is the need of the hour.

KHALIL AHMED
Islamabad

Shortage of prosecutors

The recent visit of Punjab's prosecutor-general to the Child Protection Court highlighted an imbalance in the deployment of prosecutors. The court reportedly had only six pending cases but three prosecutors, raising questions about the distribution of available staff.

Meanwhile, several districts, including Attock, Mianwali, Khushab, Bhakkar, Layyah, Rajanpur and Dera Ghazi Khan, are facing a serious shortage of prosecutors. In some special courts with relatively light workloads, three or four prosecutors are posted, while districts with greater needs lack sufficient staff.

The government should review the workload of courts and districts and deploy prosecutors accordingly.

Regular transfers and rotations between stations could also help distribute the available workforce more fairly and improve the quality and efficiency of prosecution services.

NAMÉ WITHHELD ON REQUEST
Khushab

France: Another Mass Revolt That Will Not Lead to Systemic Change

No one can say that there is not mass discontent in the US over inflation, especially with regards to fuel and food, high housing costs, the price and narrowing availability of health care, unemployment and inadequate wages. But do we see mass movements here? No, the only apparent mass organizing is focused on elections to congress or to state and local offices. The millions, the majority, who oppose Trump's open fascism, war on Iran, support of Israeli genocide and open self-aggrandizement are led only to object at the ballot box

As of October 6, hundreds of thousands of workers and students are demonstrating in France, as similar protests occur in Belgium and Spain. At least six large French unions have joined the struggle, initiated by high schoolers, and are planning a November general strike. Meanwhile, in the US, discontent over fascism, inflation, and war is increasing, but the response is focused on electing Democrats or democratic socialists. The question is whether the mass action tactics in Europe have a greater chance of winning reforms or challenging capitalism, whether they too will ultimately devolve into electoral politics and leave capitalism unscathed.

What's Going on in France

Protests began September 21 at a high school in the poor working class and heavily immigrant suburbs of Paris against large class sizes, a shortage of teachers, poor ventilation, and an unworkable system of admission to higher education. The movement targeted a proposed \$61.3 billion budget cut affecting education, health care and transportation. As the strike spread to many schools and universities, many unions joined, and it came to encompass wages, climate change, Palestine and fascism.1

By October 6, actions were held in over 40 cities and drew up to half a million marchers, closing some 1800 schools. The

police have responded very aggressively, blowing off the hand of a 15-year-old with a grenade, while arresting over 6000, including those as young as 14.2 Five major unions have called for a general strike on November 7, as the government has also proposed freezing wages for state employees, and increasing taxes on workers while cutting corporate taxes, freezing pensions and raising the retirement age.3 Today, October 8, police are tear gassing and beating students at a massive march in Paris, and students and teachers' unions are calling for the general strike to be October 13.4

Inspired by the revolt in France, students also protested in Liege, Belgium over school budget cuts. Airline, transit and public sector strikes are planned on different days next week in response to additional government cuts.5 In Spain, 50 marches took place in many cities over rent increases, evictions (especially that of an 87-year-old woman), and investor buy-ups of properties, all happening under the Socialist Party government.6

And in the US?

No one can say that there is not mass discontent in the US over inflation, especially with regards to fuel and food, high housing costs, the price and narrowing availability of health care, unemployment and inadequate wages. But do we see mass movements here? No, the

only apparent mass organizing is focused on elections to congress or to state and local offices. The millions, the majority, who oppose Trump's open fascism, war on Iran, support of Israeli genocide and open self-aggrandizement are led only to object at the ballot box. We must recall that the main victory opposing ICE's anti-immigrant crackdowns took place in Minneapolis because of mass action, and this should be our model to follow.

American unions won significant gains in the late 1800s-1930s through mass militant strikes, including the eight-hour day and health care, but today the movement is in sharp decline. Only 10% of workers are unionized, and the leaders make sure that there are no mass actions about living conditions or against war, fascism or genocide (see <https://multiracialunity.org/2026/08/05/the-mummification-of-the-af-cio/>). The biggest mass mobilizations are to get out the vote, organized by such groups as the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) or the No Kings marches, led by the Democratic Party. Even when the farthest left (DSA) candidates on the ballot are elected, as in the mayoral race in New York City, they can do little to keep their promises as they have no control of the purse strings, all significant wealth and power remaining firmly in capitalist hands. As thousands are organized to encourage voting and observe polling places, there are no millions in US streets demanding lower prices, an end to war on immigrants and Iran, higher wages, better schools, or opposing health insurance cuts.

October 3, the education minister had already promised to decrease higher education registration fees and address teacher shortages. Students and politicians alike remember the strikes of 1968, involving at least 11 million, that won better wages and benefits and launched women's, gay and civil rights movements.7

However, there was not then, nor is there now, a call to overthrow capitalism, the system that requires exploitation and inequality in the first place. The intersyndical coalition of unions is calling only for wage and pension increases in a general strike limited to one day.8 The various "left" parties are, at present, asking only for reforms, not revolutionary change. The New Anticapitalist Party (NPA), formed in 2009, by a coalition of Trotskyites and militant workers, has been minimized by splits and reformism.9 The Communist Party, founded in 1920 under the influence of the USSR, grew to great importance after its role in the resistance to Nazism, but it also became an electoral party calling only for reforms.10 Perhaps the largest left party today is France Unbowed (LF), accused by the state of leading the insurrection, but it is also essentially an electoral party with a democratic socialist agenda.11 Thus, despite the mass struggle now occurring in France, there is no leadership trying to build the struggle into an enduring attack on capitalism. Instead, all are asking for reforms and votes in the next election. They will most likely win some temporary gains, as have past mass mobilizations, but these will be reversed as western capitalism continues on its decline and heads toward ultimate conflict with Chinese capitalism and its Russian and other allies.



ELLEN ISAACS

NATIONAL

DTM

Pakistan urges UN to protect peacekeeping from fiscal pressures

Against a backdrop of multiplying global conflicts and severe financial strain, Pakistan warned at the United Nations that any reform must not "hollow out" the bedrock of UN peacekeeping, the world body's flagship activity.

Speaking at the Challenges Annual Forum 2026, themed "Turning the Tide: Building Momentum for Peace Operations in a Demanding World," Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan said, while highlighting the severity of the current financial pressures, and urging the international community not let a temporary liquidity crisis dictate the future of peacekeeping. The essential challenge is not the perceived decline of peacekeeping, but the preservation of the long-established institutional capacity and political trust required for future deployments, he said in the course of the discussion. As one of the world's largest troop-contributing nations, Pakistan's stance, in this regard, carries heavy institutional weight.

Over the past six decades, the Pakistani envoy said, more than 270,000 Pakistani peacekeepers have served under the UN flag; 183 have made the ultimate sacrifice. Pakistan is also a host country to one

of the UN's oldest peacekeeping missions — United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), which monitors the Line of Control (LoC) in disputed Jammu and Kashmir. "So, our perspective is shaped both by contributing to peacekeeping and by hosting a mission," Ambassador Jadoon pointed out. Peacekeeping is the Security Council's primary tool for turning resolutions in New York into reality on the ground, he said. Stripping the Council of a credible peacekeeping capacity paralyzes its ability to halt escalation, shield civilians, and safeguard fragile political processes.

"There is a critical need to distinguish financial pressure from political legitimacy," the Pakistani envoy said, warning against the assumption that political support for peacekeeping is eroding, as the evidence points in the exact opposite direction. This year, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations once again reached a consensus on its report and recommendations for peacekeeping. It was pointed out. Furthermore, he said, the Pakistan-Denmark Security Council Resolution 2823 (2026), which focuses on accountability for crimes against peacekeepers, was adopted unanimously. Remarkably, this resolution attracted 153 co-sponsors—a record number for any Security Council resolution in history.

This milestone serves as an extraordinary demonstration of interest and widespread support for peacekeeping across the entire United Nations membership, the Pakistani envoy said. "The objective of reform, therefore, should be to strengthen this instrument for the future, not to hollow it out in response to what may prove to be temporary financial pressures," Ambassador Jadoon added. **NEWS DESK**

Balochistan cabinet approves mineral fund policy, reforms in key sectors

The Balochistan cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, approved wide-ranging reforms aimed at strengthening economic development, education, health, industry, tourism, women's protection, and public services.

The cabinet endorsed the policy for effective utilization of the Balochistan Mineral Development Fund, ensuring that financial benefits from natural resources are directed towards provincial development and public welfare. It also approved the draft Balochistan Tourism Policy and Cultural Policy to promote tourism, safeguard heritage, and create employment opportunities through cultural and natural assets.

In education, the cabinet passed the Balochistan Non-Formal Education Act 2025, targeting the enrolment of nearly 1.6 million out-of-school children aged 10 to 16. It also approved the introduction of double-shift schooling to maximize existing infrastructure and accommodate more students, alongside the reconstitution of the Balochistan Education Foundation's board. Industrial revival was

prioritized with a policy to reactivate closed and non-functional units, offering financial support and incentives to generate investment and jobs. The cabinet also approved administrative adjustments to Quetta's revenue boundaries, dividing North and South Quetta for improved governance and service delivery.

Health reforms included the interim appointment of Professor Abdul Razzaq as CEO of the Balochistan Institute of Kidney Diseases, pending open recruitment, and the passage of the Telemedicine and Remote Health Services Act 2026 to extend medical expertise to remote areas. The Public Health Act 2026 was also approved to strengthen the legal framework for healthcare delivery. Women's protection measures featured amendments to the Balochistan Commission on the Status of Women Act 2026 and the Shelter Homes and Darul-Aman Administrative Control Act 2026. The Chief Minister directed the establishment of safe shelters for women at all divisional headquarters. Urban development decisions included creating a public park and urban forest on Radio Pakistan land at Serabi Road under public-private partnership, relocating dairy farms outside Quetta to improve sanitation and urban health, and expanding public transport facilities.

The cabinet also approved the Ease of Doing Business Act 2026 to simplify business processes, amendments to the Motor Vehicle



Ordinance 1965 regarding third-party insurance, and increased cost estimates for mechanized cotton cultivation projects to strengthen agriculture.

Significant reforms were introduced in public procurement. Amendments to the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules 2014 will expand electronic bidding, mandate e-tendering for contracts above Rs. 500,000, revise financial limits for petty purchases and quotations, abolish bid document fees, and streamline bid validity periods. The reforms aim to enhance transparency, competitiveness, and efficiency in government procurement. According to Shahid Rind, Aide to the Chief Minister on Media and Political Affairs, the cabinet's decisions mark a major step towards boosting economic activity, improving governance, and aligning provincial policies with public needs.

The provincial cabinet was informed that the proposed amendments to the Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (BPPRA) rules had

already been approved by the board, reviewed by the Law Department, and ratified by the Chief Minister. The cabinet formally endorsed these amendments, aimed at reducing unnecessary delays in routine and emergency procurements while ensuring transparency, financial discipline, and compliance with regulations.

For public convenience, the cabinet approved the issuance of e-domicile and local certificates through NADRA. The government's proposed fee of Rs. 200 was abolished, meaning citizens will not have to pay this fee, though NADRA's standard charges will still apply. This step is expected to reduce lengthy paperwork, eliminate repeated office visits, and minimize unnecessary waiting, allowing citizens to obtain domicile and local certificates directly from NADRA centers.

The cabinet also approved recommendations of the Home Department to redefine police station jurisdictions following the merger of Balochistan Levies into the police. **NEWS DESK**

Korea grants \$4 million for 800 amputees

The Republic of Korea will provide a grant of 4 million US dollars for a rehabilitation engineering project aimed at modernising prosthetics and orthotics services at Mayo Hospital, Lahore, and providing advanced artificial limbs to around 800 amputees.

Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique, while meeting a Korean delegation at King Edward Medical University (KEMU) on Friday, welcomed the project and assured full cooperation from the Punjab government under the directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

He said Punjab, the country's most populous province, was establishing new children's, cardiac and cancer hospitals in line with the chief minister's vision. He added that the provincial government was also providing free transplant services worth billions of rupees to patients.

The minister said the memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the rehabilitation engineering project marked an important milestone in international cooperation in physical disability, rehabilitation engineering and health sciences.

The Korean delegation gave a presentation on the history and development of Mayo Hospital's Prosthetics and Orthotics Workshop, highlighting existing challenges in prosthetic rehabilitation and the need for modern facilities. It also outlined the project's objectives, duration and expected outcomes.

Under the project, the workshop will be comprehensively upgraded and equipped with modern machinery. Master trainers will receive specialised training in the Republic of Korea, while Korean experts will provide technical assistance through visits to Mayo Hospital.

The initiative aims to improve access to quality prosthetic devices and rehabilitation services while developing sustainable local capacity in prosthetics and orthotics. King Edward Medical University will lead the project's implementation, with a Project Management Unit (PMU) overseeing its execution, academic activities and capacity-building initiatives.

K-RERI Managing Director Dr. Sehoon Park appreciated the Punjab government's cooperation and commended its health initiatives.

KEMU Vice-Chancellor Professor Mahmood Ayaz said the Social Welfare Department would help identify deserving individuals, particularly persons with physical impairments and disabilities, and refer them for relevant services. The Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) would support the development and management of the project database and provide the required IT infrastructure. **NEWS DESK**

ATC remands 20 suspects in custody in Tollinton Market attack case

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday granted a 10-day physical remand of 20 suspects arrested in connection with an alleged attack on a Punjab Food Authority (PFA) team at Tollinton Market.

The suspects, including Shoaib, Shahid, Akram and Younis, were produced before ATC Judge Manzoor Ali Gill. Police sought their physical remand for investigation.

The prosecutor also supported the police request, submitting that traders and workers at Tollinton Market allegedly attacked administrative officials and

assaulted members of the Food Authority team. He further told the court that when a magistrate visited the market shortly afterwards, his vehicle was also attacked.

The prosecutor said the suspects allegedly gathered in a mob and surrounded administrative officials, while police personnel accompanying the team were also subjected to violence.

Subsequently, the court approved 10-day physical remand of the accused and directed police to produce them on expiry of remand term. The Ichhra police has registered a terrorism case against the suspects in connection with the incident.

Separately, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday sentenced Habibullah, an alleged member of a banned outfit, to four years in prison in a case involving the recovery of explosive material.

The court also ordered the confiscation of his property in favour of the state.

ATC Judge Malik Abid Hussain announced the verdict after hearing final arguments from the defence and reviewing the evidence presented by the prosecution.

The accused was brought to court from jail for the hearing. Prosecutor Mian Tufail presented evidence against him, while defence lawyers Salma Iqbal and Ghali Shamsi completed their final arguments.

The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), Lahore, registered the case against Habibullah in January 2026. According to the CTD, explosive material was recovered from his possession, and he was linked to a banned organisation and allegedly involved in terrorist activities. **NEWS DESK**

Four witnesses identify Anmol Pinky in drug trafficking case

Four witnesses identified accused Anmol alias Pinky in a drug recovery case and told the court that she operates a large drug-supply network. According to details, significant progress was made against Anmol alias Pinky during the hearing of the drug case before an Additional District and Sessions Court, where four prosecution witnesses formally identified her. The accused was produced before the court from jail via video link.

In their statements, the witnesses told the court that Anmol had been arrested from the Garden area and that she ran a large and organized network for supplying drugs. The identifying witnesses included CTD investigation officer Mansoor, Lady Constable Sonia Ashraf, Sub-Inspector Abdul Sattar and ASI Aurangzeb.

Public Prosecutor Shakeel Abbasi submitted that the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) had completed the identification process of the accused. He said her call data record clearly established that she had remained in continuous contact with drug dealers. The court, advancing the detailed proceedings in the case, summoned more witnesses for the next hearing. **AGENCIES**

Markhor hunting permit auctions in KP fetch record \$1.21m

The auction of four international Markhor trophy hunting permits administered by the Wild life Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has generated a record \$1.21 million, equivalent to approximately Rs335.7m.

This represents the highest-ever revenue generated through a trophy hunting programme in Pakistan's history, the wildlife department's statement issued on Friday said. It said the department conducted a "historic" auction of the Markhor trophy hunting permits for various village conservation committees in Chitral and Kohistan.

The permits were auctioned for Toshi-I, Chitral at \$320,600; Toshi-II, Chitral at \$335,600; Gahrat Gol, Chitral at \$260,000; Kigah Khwar, Kohistan at \$295,600. "The four permits collectively generated \$1,211,800, equivalent to approximately Rs335.725m, marking a historic record for the trophy hunting programme in Pakistan," the statement said.

Despite global controversy surrounding

trophy hunting, supporters argue that such programmes help prevent poaching, empower local communities and contribute to wildlife conservation. Latifur Rehman, the spokesperson for the KP Wildlife Department, told the media that only a limited number of permits had been issued under the trophy hunting programme for the hunting of mature and old male Markhor.

According to Rehman, the fundamental objectives of the programme were to support wildlife conservation, ensure sustainable management of natural populations, and enable local communities to benefit economically from conservation. "This is more than an auction. It is a success story of a conservation philosophy: when forests are protected, wildlife thrives; when wildlife thrives, communities prosper; and when communities prosper through conservation, the future of nature becomes more secure," he said. The spokesperson said the government was taking "effective and result-oriented measures" to conserve wildlife, promote the sustainable use of natural resources, and make local communities "meaningful partners in the protection of nature".

He highlighted that 80 per cent of the revenue generated through trophy hunting would be directly allocated to the welfare and development

of the relevant local communities while the remaining 20pc would be deposited into the government treasury.

The spokesperson said that the communities living in the mountains, valleys and remote areas of the province had maintained a close relationship with nature for generations, adding: "The government's policy of linking wildlife conservation with livelihoods, development and community prosperity is transforming this longstanding relationship into a stronger and more sustainable partnership." **AGENCIES**



NATIONAL

DTM

Pakistan, Ethiopia eye stronger education ties



Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui received Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan Dr. Oumer Hussien Oba at the Ministry of Education and Professional Training for a courtesy call.

The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation in education, including higher education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), STEAM education, research and institutional linkages.

Welcoming the Ethiopian Ambassador, the Federal Minister said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its longstanding and friendly relations with Ethiopia and

looks forward to further expanding bilateral cooperation, particularly in the field of education. He noted that Pakistan and Ethiopia established diplomatic relations in 1973 and that the opening of the Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad in 2022 represented an important step towards enhancing bilateral engagement.

A key focus of the discussion was the draft Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in education, which was shared with the Ethiopian side in December 2025 through diplomatic channels. The proposed MoU seeks to establish a structured framework for educational cooperation between the two countries, covering higher education, technical and vocational

education and training, STEAM education, as well as institutional and academic linkages.

The Federal Minister welcomed an update from the Ethiopian side regarding the status of the draft MoU and expressed Pakistan's readiness to consider any comments or observations from Ethiopia with a view to finalizing a mutually agreeable text through the appropriate diplomatic channels. Discussing higher education cooperation, the Federal Minister highlighted the potential for joint seminars, workshops and webinars, guest lectures, visiting scholars, student networking, cultural exchanges, research showcases and innovation activities, as well as the sharing of educational resources. NEWS DESK

MNA Abdul Latif's disqualification case adjourned

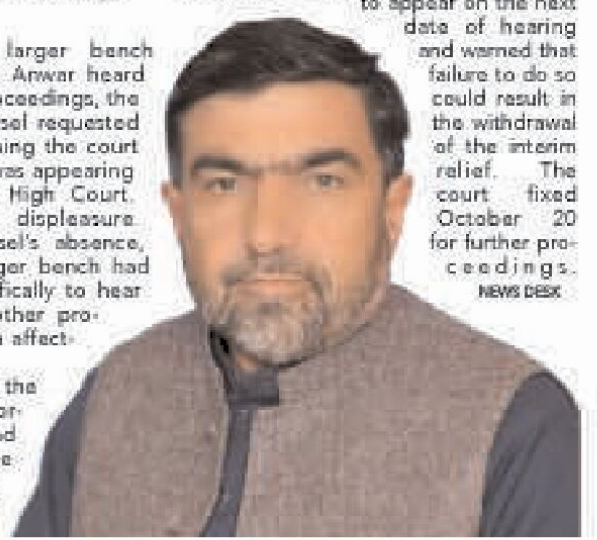
The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Friday adjourned until October 20 the hearing of a petition challenging the disqualification of MNA Abdul Latif, elected from NA-1 Chitral, giving his counsel a final opportunity to appear and warning that the interim stay order would be withdrawn if the lawyer failed to attend the next hearing.

A three-member larger bench headed by Justice Ijaz Anwar heard the case. During the proceedings, the petitioner's junior counsel requested an adjournment, informing the court that the senior lawyer was appearing before the Islamabad High Court. The bench expressed displeasure over the senior counsel's absence, observing that the larger bench had been constituted specifically to hear such cases and that other proceedings had also been affected by its formation.

The court noted that the petition involved important legal questions and that it needed to hear the petitioner's counsel before deciding the matter. During the

hearing, Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) officials informed the court that Abdul Latif had been disqualified following his conviction by an anti-terrorism court in Islamabad.

Abdul Latif has challenged the ECP's disqualification decision before the PHC, and the petition is still pending adjudication. The ECP's representative told the court that the National Assembly seat for Chitral had remained vacant for nearly a year and that an election could not be held because of the interim stay order. The commission's counsel requested the court to vacate the stay so that the electoral process could proceed. The PHC granted the petitioner's counsel a final opportunity to appear on the next date of hearing and warned that failure to do so could result in the withdrawal of the interim relief. The court fixed October 20 for further proceedings. NEWS DESK



Archaeologists discover ancient structure at Jandial in KP

A previously unstudied, ancient structure measuring nearly 100 metres long and 50 metres wide has been discovered at Jandial in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Khanpur-Taxila region. The discovery has opened "new avenues for understanding the history and urban landscape of Gandhara", a press release said on Friday.

The monument, identified as Jandial D, lies opposite the famous Ionic temple of Jandial, outside the ancient fortified city of Sirkap. First noted by Alexander Cunningham in 1864, the structure remained largely unexplored for more than a century.

Excavations that began in mid-August 2026 revealed substantial walls, while the monument's precise function — whether public or religious — remains under investigation.

The discovery was made by the KP Archaeology Department under the Khyber PATH Project, directed by Italian archaeologist Dr Luca M. Olivieri and funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS). The project is being implemented by the Italian Archaeological Mission of Ca' Foscari University of Venice in collaboration with the KP Directorate General of Archaeology and Museums. It is supervised by KP Director General of Archaeology and Museums Dr Abdul Samad.

Italian NGO ISCOS provided logistical and financial support for the project. AGENICES

CAREC Tranche-III project reviewed

Federal Ministers Abdul Aleem Khan and Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari on Friday reviewed progress on the CAREC Tranche-III project connecting Rajanpur, Dera Ghazi Khan and Dera Ismail Khan, stressing the need to resolve outstanding issues and expedite implementation.

The high-level joint meeting was co-chaired by the Federal Minister for Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan, and the Federal Minister of Energy (Power Division), Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari, to review the progress on all four lots of the project, said a press release.

The joint session was convened at the specific request of the Federal Minister for Power Division to review progress on the

CAREC Tranche-III project.

During the meeting, progress on all four lots of the project, aimed at improving connectivity among Rajanpur, Dera Ghazi Khan and Dera Ismail Khan, was reviewed.

Chairman of the National Highway Authority (NHA) briefed the participants on the overall implementation status of the project. The meeting also discussed matters relating to the Land Acquisition and Resettlement Plan (LARP), including land acquisition, resettlement of affected people, and the measures required to fulfil the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) requirements. Emphasis was placed on addressing outstanding issues and ensuring the timely completion of the project.

Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division), Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari, stressed the need to accelerate project progress, effectively address implementation-related matters and

to ensure coordinated efforts to resolve the issues at hand.

Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) Sardar Ammar Ahmad Khan Leghari, Sardar Dr. Hafeez-ur-Rehman Khan Dreshak and Sardar Shamsher Ali Mazari, along with Commissioner Dera Ghazi Khan Ashfaq Ahmad Chaudhry and other relevant officials, also attended the meeting. NEWS DESK



'Alliance forces to defend Saudi only'

Continued from Page 1

The spokesperson also categorically rejected reports that Pakistani fighter jets had been involved in cross-border operations, describing them as false.

Responding to questions about the alliance's military deployments, the spokesperson said that following the signing of the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia last year, there had been further deployments.

"Since 1982, the Pakistan Armed Forces have been present in Saudi Arabia in one capacity or another, sometimes under logistical arrangements and sometimes as part of training missions," he said. He added that the three countries had approved measures to strengthen their collective defence capabilities.

Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned repeated attacks by Houthi militia against Saudi Arabia, including strikes targeting King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh and Abha International Airport.

In a post on X, the prime minister said the attacks had resulted in civilian casualties and injuries. He commended the Saudi armed forces and the coalition for intercepting multiple ballistic missiles and protecting civilians. "Pakistan stands in unwavering solidarity with the leadership and people of our brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," Shehbaz said.

He said Pakistan's commitment to Saudi Arabia's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security remained firm under the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement and recent decisions of its Strategic Political and Defence Committee. The prime minister also expressed support for Saudi Arabia's right to defend its people, cities and vital infrastructure.

Meanwhile, the US strongly condemned Houthi attacks on civilian infrastructure and airports in Saudi Arabia on Friday, calling on Iran to end its support for the Yemeni group. "The United States is gravely concerned by the continued escalation by the terrorist Houthis," US deputy envoy to the UN Jeff Bartos told a Security Council meeting. NEWS DESK

2 cops martyred, 10 terrorists killed in KP

Two police personnel were killed in separate firing incidents in Jamrud, Khyber district, on Friday, prompting police to launch investigations into both cases.

According to police officials, Constable Kamran Khan, son of Qadir Khan, a serving member of Khyber Police, was martyred when unidentified assailants opened fire in the Jalaluddin Kalay area near Shah Kas Qadam Athari within the jurisdiction of Jamrud Police Station.

In a separate incident, the body of Bahadur Shah, a police constable serving in Peshawar Bahadur, was found at Ghundi Sakhi Pul in Jamrud. Police said unidentified assailants had shot Bahadur Shah dead the previous night.

Meanwhile, security forces killed seven terrorists of Fitna al-Khawarij in KP under the Azma-l-Istehkam vision. A significant quantity of weapons and ammunition was also recovered. Moreover, CTD and district police Tank killed three terrorists belonging to the (TTP) Bhitani group during a joint intelligence-based operation in the Garah Faqira area of Jandola Road within the jurisdiction of S.M.A. Police Station in Tank district, police said on Friday. NEWS DESK

PM hails efforts as fuel aid hits 10m

Pakistan eyes increasing agricultural lending to \$5.36bn by June 2027

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday appreciated the collective efforts of the federal and provincial governments and relevant institutions as the number of direct beneficiaries of the government's fuel subsidy scheme crossed 10 million, announcing a national award for the Information and Technology Minister Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

Hosting a high tea to recognize ministers and government officials for their efforts in executing the landmark scheme and ensuring its transparent outreach, the prime minister said the government would also honor others with shields to acknowledge their dedication and sustained hard work.

He said the scheme had faced several challenges and concerns at the planning stage, but coordinated efforts by all stakeholders had helped it achieve significant progress. The prime minister resolved that the programme would continue as the government had allocated Rs75 billion for the initiative.

He expressed gratitude to the provincial governments and their chief ministers for extending support to the initiative, and said its success would not have been possible without their cooperation.

He said the number of people directly benefiting from the scheme had crossed 10 million, including motorcyclists, rikshaw and Qingqi operators, and owners of cars up to 800cc.

The initiative was providing eligible beneficiaries with fuel subsidy and that

the benefits also extended indirectly to their families. The prime minister estimated that, considering an average household size of five, around 50 million people were benefiting directly or indirectly from the scheme.

He recalled that an earlier initiative launched in February had recorded the redemption of around 1.3 million fuel subsidy tokens at its peak. He said the concerted efforts of the federal and provincial governments had enabled the

tireless efforts.

He also appreciated the contributions of the Petroleum Division, Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), State Bank of Pakistan, National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), telecommunications operators and other relevant organisations.

The prime minister announced that Shaza Fatima Khawaja would receive a national award in March in recognition of



current scheme to expand its reach considerably.

The prime minister particularly acknowledged the contributions of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dor, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, IT Minister Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, relevant federal secretaries and officials, as well as provincial chief secretaries and other institutions involved in the implementation process. Describing the achievement as an example of effective teamwork, he praised the officials for their unwavering commitment, dedication and

her role, adding that other contributors would also be presented with shields.

Sharing the statistics of the scheme, Prime Minister Shehbaz said that more than 10.8 million citizens had registered for the scheme, while approximately 27 million tokens had been issued. Of these, around 19.4 million tokens had been redeemed by citizens to obtain fuel at subsidised rates. Out of this figure approximately 9.2 million citizens had used tokens more than once, while nearly 96 per cent beneficiaries were of motorcyclists.

Pakistan aims to increase beneficiaries for agricultural loans from 3.4 million so far

to 4.5 million by June

Pakistan's government plans to increase agricultural lending to Rs1.5 trillion [\$45.36 billion] by June 2027 and the number of beneficiary farmers to 4.5 million, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said on Friday, as Islamabad attempts to increase farmers' access to financial resources to strengthen food security and enhance crop quality.

Agriculture is arguably the most important sector of Pakistan's economy, employing a large workforce and farming contributing to one-fifth of the country's GDP. The government has repeatedly emphasized expanding credit access to small farmers as part of broader efforts to boost productivity, stabilise food supply and support economic recovery under a reform program backed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met a delegation comprising bank presidents and CEOs on Friday to recognize their institutions' efforts in extending loans to the masses under an affordable housing scheme, to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and the agriculture sector. "The meeting was further informed that the total volume of agricultural loans had reached Rs1.352 trillion [\$4.83 billion] by the end of September 2026, benefiting 3,455,313 people," the PMO said in a statement.

"By June 2027, the government aims to increase agricultural lending to Rs1.5 trillion [\$5.36 billion] and the number of farmer beneficiaries to 4.5 million."

Sharif said improving lending to small-and-medium (SME) businesses, the housing sector and agriculture would promote employment, investment, productivity and overall economic growth. NEWS DESK

BACKPAGE

Navi Pillay takes Nobel Peace Prize

The South African-born jurist and former UN human rights chief Navi Pillay, who is currently an ad hoc judge at the International Court of Justice, won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for her efforts to promote peace and international law.

Pillay's work "is a source of hope and inspiration to all those who seek to bring about a more peaceful world," said Jørgen Wæver, Chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, in announcing her win in Oslo, Norway.

Her win is sure to be seen as a high-profile rebuke to US President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who have both rejected the findings of a UN commission she led that Israel committed genocide in Gaza. Both leaders also have been highly critical of the institutions where Pillay has worked.

While her work has been global in scope, criticism often has been fiercely local, notably in places like Israel and in apartheid-era South Africa as she and peers took on some of the world's most

painful and sensitive legal issues and most vulnerable populations.

Pillay, 85, received the news while attending the Nuremberg Forum, a gathering to discuss international law in Nuremberg, Germany, the location of the trials of Nazi war criminals that helped lay the foundations of international law.

"Firstly, at this venue, your applause means a great deal to me," she said to a standing ovation. "You know, you don't want to receive an award, prize or anything unless the public agrees that you deserve this."

And joking, she added: "But being a lawyer and a judge, I still want to verify this information."

Pillay chaired the Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel, which was created by the UN-backed Human Rights Council. The commission a year ago concluded Israel was responsible for genocide in Gaza with a specific intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza.

The commission also found that the Israeli president, prime minister and former defense minister "have incited the commission of genocide." AP

Pakistan, Türkiye join hands against organised crime, terrorists

Turkish minister reports sharp decline in irregular migration from Pakistan following crackdown on human smugglers

The two countries agree to establish joint working group, expand cooperation in cyber policing, narcotics control

Pakistan and Türkiye signed an agreement on Friday to strengthen cooperation against militant violence, drug trafficking and organised crime, Pakistan's interior ministry said, adding that Türkiye had reported a sharp decline in irregular migration from Pakistan following Islamabad's crackdown on human smuggling networks.

The agreement was signed during a meeting between Pakistani Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and his Turkish counterpart, Mustafa Çiftçi, in Istanbul. The two countries also agreed to establish a joint working group to strengthen coordination between their interior ministries.

The agreement comes as Pakistan intensifies its crackdown on human smuggling networks following deadly migrant boat disasters involving Pakistani nationals and seeks closer international partnerships against trafficking and transnational organized crime.

"The two interior ministers signed the agreement to enhance cooperation between Pakistan and Türkiye to combat terrorism, narcotics

and crime," organized the statement said. Both sides also agreed to expand cooperation

through technical assistance, exchanges of experts and joint initiatives, including in cyber policing, narcotics control and police training. Cooperation would also involve

Pakistan's Anti-Narcotics Force and National Police Academy. Çiftçi told Naqvi that the rate of irregular migration from Pakistan to Türkiye had

fallen from 70 percent to 17 percent, according to the Pakistani statement, which did not specify the period covered.

The Turkish minister praised Pakistan's measures to curb irregular migration, while Naqvi briefed him on the results of Islamabad's crackdown on networks facilitating unauthorized travel abroad.

Pakistan has sought to complement domestic enforcement with international cooperation. Earlier this week, it agreed with the United Kingdom and Poland to strengthen cooperation on irregular migration, narcotics and organized crime, including through proposed agreements on law enforcement and legal assistance.

The latest agreement with Türkiye expands that cooperation to counterterrorism, cyber policing and narcotics enforcement, with both governments committing to closer coordination between their law enforcement institutions. NEWS DESK

Govt cuts petrol price by Rs 0.66, raises diesel by Rs 0.52 per litre

Effective: Oct 10-12, 2026



The government reduced the price of petrol by Rs 0.66 to Rs 398.30 per litre, while increasing the price of high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs 0.52 to Rs 396.24 per litre, effective from Saturday, October 10, 2026.

The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) revised on Friday the ex-depot prices of petroleum products under the

federal government's petroleum pricing mechanism, according to a notification issued by the Petroleum Division.

The revised prices will remain in effect from October 10 to October 12, 2026.

The Petroleum Division said the change was necessitated by global developments, including movements in Platts rates, premiums and incidentals. NEWS DESK

Pakistan thrash Sri Lanka in T20I opener

Pakistan defeated Sri Lanka by four wickets in the first T20I, with captain Shahbazade Farhan's 89 and Maaz Sadaqat's half-century powering the hosts to a successful chase of 183 at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Friday.

Chasing a target of 183 runs, Pakistan got off to a blistering start as opener Shahbazade Farhan and Fakher Zaman smashed 54 runs in the first five overs.

With Pakistan at 54-1, Farhan was joined by Maaz Sadaqat after Fakher (21 off 13 balls) was dismissed by Eshan Malunga. The pair added 92 runs for the second wicket, with both batters scoring freely.

Sadaqat scored 50 off 29 balls, hitting three sixes and four fours before being trapped lbw by Maheesh Theekshana.

Sri Lanka struck back with three quick wickets as Pakistan slipped from 144-1 to 156-4 in the 16th over.

Hazan Nawaz and Saïm Ayub failed to make an impact, falling to Dushmantha Chameera and Theekshana, respectively.

Farhan, who brought up his half-century off 33 balls, went on to score 89 off 53 deliveries, steering Pakistan towards victory in the 19th over. The skipper struck four sixes and 10 fours before being dismissed with just four runs needed.

Shadab Khan, who came in at number seven, was also dismissed before Khawaja Nafay and Mohammad Imran guided Pakistan to victory.

For Sri Lanka, Maheesh Theekshana

and Eshan Malunga claimed two wickets each, while Dushmantha Chameera and Nuwan Thushara took one wicket apiece.

Earlier batting first after winning the toss, the visitors made a shaky start, losing two wickets for just 18 runs in the fourth over. Naseem Shah struck in the opening over, dismissing Kusal Mendis for just one run.

Kamil Mishra also fell cheaply, scoring six runs before debutant Muhammad Imran sent him back to the pavilion.

Opener Lahiru Udara and Kamindu Mendis then steadied the innings with a 60-run partnership for the third wicket.

Saïm Ayub broke the stand in the 10th over, dismissing Kamindu Mendis for 23 off 18 balls, including four boundaries.

Imran struck again in the following over, removing Sahen Arachchige to leave the visitors at 83-4 after 10.1 overs.

Udara and Dasun Shanaka then added 57 runs off 34 balls for the fifth wicket.

Udara then combined with the lower order batters to push Sri Lanka past 170 before Naseem ended his impressive knock.

Dushmantha Chameera and Eshan Malunga scored 10 runs in the over as the visitors posted 182-8 in 20 overs. For Pakistan, Naseem picked up three wickets for 36 runs in four overs while Imran finished with a figure of 2-2. Saïm, Abrar, and Razaullah also took a wicket each. Pakistan also conceded 26 extras. AGENCIES

Pakistan remittances rise 14% to \$10.9 billion in first quarter

September inflows rise 12.7 percent year-on-year to \$3.6 billion, down 1.9 percent from August

Remittances sent home by overseas Pakistanis rose 14 percent to \$10.9 billion in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, with Saudi Arabia remaining the largest source, the central bank said on Friday, providing a boost to the country's foreign exchange inflows as it navigates economic pressures and external financing needs.

The July-September inflows compared with \$9.5 billion in the same period last year, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). Remittances are a crucial source of foreign exchange for the South Asian country, helping finance imports, support household incomes and ease pressure on its external accounts.

The increase comes as



Pakistan implements a \$7 billion International Monetary Fund loan program aimed at stabilizing its economy and rebuilding fiscal and external buffers. The country relies heavily on remittances from millions of Pakistanis working abroad, particularly in the Gulf states.

"Cumulatively, workers' remittances increased by 14.0 percent to \$10.9 billion during Q1 FY27, compared to \$9.5 billion received during the same period last year," the central bank said in a statement.

Remittances totaled \$3.6 billion in September, up 12.7 percent from a year earlier but down 1.9 percent from August, the SBP said.

Saudi Arabia remained the largest source of remittances in September, with Pakistani workers sending home \$899.1 million, followed by the United Arab Emirates at \$748.5 million.

Inflows from the United Kingdom stood at \$515.1 million, while those from the United States totaled \$305.9 million, according to the central bank.

The four countries together accounted for nearly \$2.47 billion of the month's remittances, highlighting the importance of Gulf economies and Western labor markets to Pakistan's external finances.

Pakistan received a record \$41.6 billion in workers' remittances during the fiscal year that ended in June 2026, compared with \$38.3 billion a year earlier, according to central bank data.

The sustained inflows have helped cushion Pakistan's external accounts, although the country continues to face pressure from its import bill and debt repayment obligations.

Pakistan recorded a current account deficit of \$139 million in fiscal year 2025-26, compared with a surplus of about \$1.84 billion in the preceding year, according to official figures.

Remittances remain a key source of foreign currency for Pakistan, where money sent by overseas workers helps households meet everyday expenses and provides support to the broader economy. NEWS DESK

No Meeting With PM Without Levy Abolition, Warns JI Emir

Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has warned that he will not meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif if federal ministers continue issuing statements against abolishing the petroleum levy, saying the issue will ultimately be decided on the streets of Islamabad.

He said the JI would announce by October 12 when people would march to the federal capital, reiterating that the complete abolition of the levy was its demand. "If the prime minister cannot abolish this extortionist levy, there is no need for us to meet him. We will meet him only when the people reach Islamabad and

force the government to end it," Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said while addressing a public meeting in Charsadda on Friday.

He urged youth to prepare for a major struggle, saying the government could no longer deny the public its rights. The JI chief questioned the government's decision to collect an estimated Rs1,700 billion through the petroleum levy instead of reducing interest rates to ease the financial burden on the country. He said a one-percentage-point cut in the interest rate could save the national exchequer Rs594 billion. "Why does the government want to collect billions from the people instead of reducing the interest rate and saving the national exchequer?" he asked, saying the rulers were protecting the interests of the banking sector.

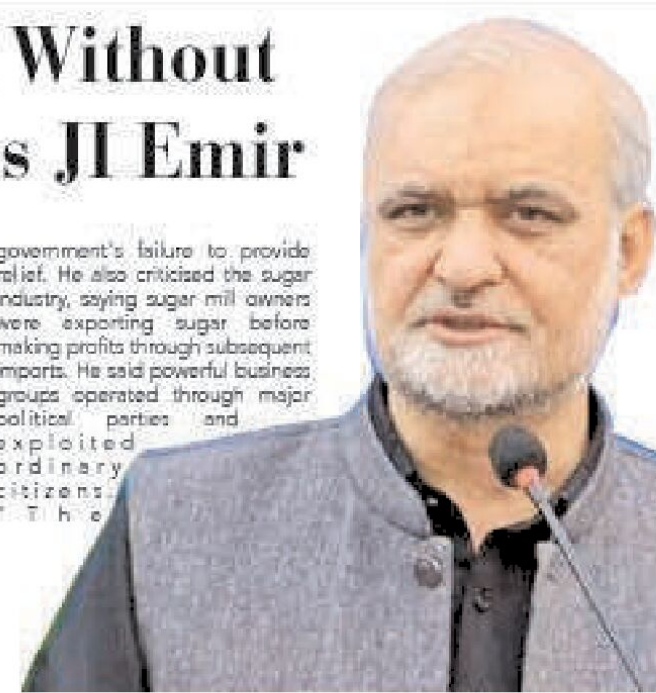
Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said JI had been campaigning for the rights of 280 million Pakistanis for the past three months. He cited rising flour prices, the difficulties faced by farmers and expensive fertilizer as evidence of the

government's failure to provide relief. He also criticized the sugar industry, saying sugar mill owners were exporting sugar before making profits through subsequent imports. He said powerful business groups operated through major political parties and exploited ordinary citizens. "This

government must stop deceiving the nation in the name of the IMF. Does it seek the IMF's permission before spending billions on aircraft and the luxuries of the ruling elite?" he asked.

The JI emir also criticized independent power producers (IPPs), saying that their agreements were being used to exploit consumers. He said the flour, sugar,

power and land mafias financed political parties, while the public continued to bear the cost of the existing system. He said political parties dominated by feudal lords, influential families and powerful individuals were exploiting the country for decades, and urged people to recognise the nexus between political and capitalist elites. SABAH



GLAMOURDTMUR

Ella Langley's Hunting Past Comes Back To Haunt Her

Ella Langley has come under fire after her old hunting photos resurfaced online. The 'Chosen' Texas hitmaker, 27, has posted a series of images to her own social media accounts of her various kills over the years. One, shared to Facebook in November 2018, showed Langley beaming toward the camera as she and her younger sister supported the head of a dead deer. Another upload, dated February 2020, saw her posing with a fresh kill on the back of an ATV, posted alongside a caption that read: 'Not my biggest buck, but a wild story we'll remember forever.' Several others were taken in her home state of Alabama. One Instagram snapshot from December 2021 saw her decked out in a camo jacket and cap as she gripped the antlers of her fresh kill. It was captioned: 'Finally put one down this afternoon.' But amid her recent chart-topping success, it appears that animal rights activists and pop music fans unaccustomed to country life have piled in to hit out at her former hobby. Sharing a selection of images to X, one

disgruntled observer wrote: 'This disgusting industry plant, MAGA, Zionist and now weird b**ch is the same one all of you are listening to and supporting, and she's suddenly topping every music chart out of nowhere...' 'Please stop making just any idiot famous, this is simply awful.' Another wrote: 'That's really unfortunate, I hope she addresses it and learns from the past.' And a third added: 'She's disgusting.' However, there were plenty of others who leapt to Langley's defense, as one shared: 'Wow! Ella just keeps getting better and better. She is the real deal American girl.' More to love about her every single day. Thanks for pointing this out because it makes me want to listen even more.' Someone else wrote: 'I love these pics. Nice wholesome sport, you get to spend time with family and friends while hunting and get to harvest food and learn how the world really works.' Others branded Langley as a 'true patriot,' adding: 'Get a life! There is nothing wrong with this.' NEWS DESK



Anne Hathaway's Flop After Verity Win

Anne Hathaway has showered praise on Tom Cruise's new movie Digger in the wake of its dismal box office results. Released last Friday, the black comedy stars Cruise as an oil tycoon who triggers an environmental crisis and then finds himself scrambling to fix it. Although the movie was once tipped as a potential Oscar vehicle for the prolific Hollywood star, a raft of scathing reviews left it with a 52 percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes. Digger collected a mere \$8 million in America over its opening weekend and a further \$12

million abroad, against a production budget of at least \$125 million that some sources say eventually swelled to \$180 million, via Variety. However, Hathaway, 43, whose new film Verity bowed the same day as Digger and triumphed at the box office, has lent a gracious word of support to Cruise's flop. She gave the movie five stars on Letterboard and hailed Digger as 'brilliant' in the first review she has ever published on the website. NEWS DESK



It's Over: Mia Goth Dumps Shia LaBeouf



Mia Goth has filed for divorce from Shia LaBeouf nearly 10 years after the two actors were married. The petition filed Tuesday in Los Angeles County Superior Court says the 32-year-old Goth and the 40-year-old LaBeouf have been separated since July 2025. The two met and became a couple while filming 'Nymphomaniac: Vol. II' in 2012, and married in 2016. They had previously split and said they were divorcing in 2018, but remained legally married, reunited in 2020 and had a daughter in 2022. Goth is seeking primary legal and physical custody of the 4-year-old, with visitation rights for LaBeouf. She also asked the court to deny either party spousal support. It was the first marriage for both. As with most U.S. divorces, irreconcilable differences were cited as the reason for the split. Representatives for Goth and LaBeouf did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment. The actor, born Mia Gypsy Mello da Silva Goth in London, most recently appeared as the unfaithful servant

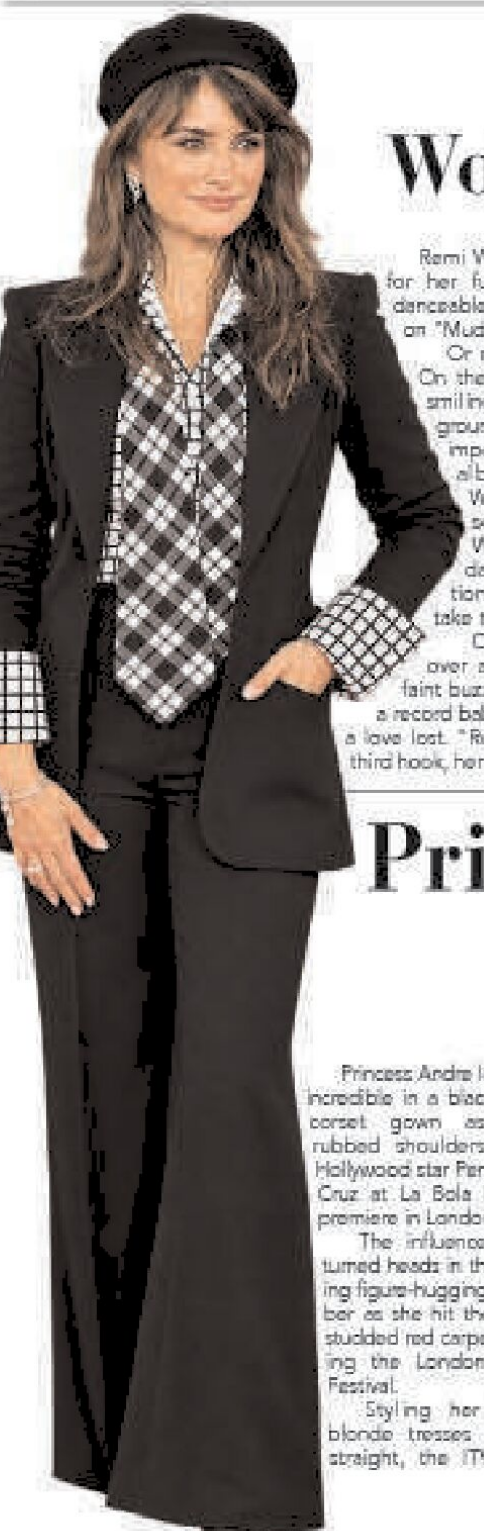
Melanthe in this summer's 'The Odyssey,' and had a dual role in last year's 'Frankenstein.' She previously starred in the horror trilogy 'X,' 'Pearl' and 'MaXXXine.' AP

'Mad Dream' African Film Showcase Opens In Capital

Nigerian producer and media mogul Mo Abudu has realized a 'mad dream' by opening a unique cultural centre in London complete with a cinema dedicated to African film and black culture. Close to the Houses of Parliament and its Big Ben clock, a massive concrete facade conceals the venue, which opens to the public this weekend - the first of its kind in Britain and Europe. A small sign reads 'EbonyLife: Place London'. While the name may mean little to many passers-by, film lovers will recognise the reference to EbonyLife, a leading African production company and a major player in Nollywood, Nigeria's film industry. Mosunmole 'Mo' Abudu, 62, heads a media empire that stretches far beyond Nigeria's borders. In 2025, Forbes ranked her among the world's 100 most influential women. 'It's time to tell our own stories,' she told AFP. 'I want to showcase the best of who we are, celebrate who we are. Let them see us at our very best.' Abudu, who was born in London, is pursuing that ambition in the British capital through the cultural centre, which she describes as both 'literally a blank canvas' and 'a bit of a mad dream.' 'We have to make the journey because the thing is that we have consumed so much of the world. How much of the world has consumed us?' she asked. She recalled that growing up in England: 'I could never go anywhere during my youth and watch a Black movie.' So she decided to act. 'I'm not waiting anymore for anyone to take a six-hour trip from London to understand what it is to watch a Nigerian film or to see Nigerian fashion and so on and so forth. It's right here in London,' AFP



Remi's Dirty Comeback: Wolf Howls Again On 'Mud'



Remi Wolf, the pop singer-songwriter known for her funk and soul-inspired choruses and danceable, synth beats, comes down to earth on 'Mud,' her third studio album. Or maybe she's coming out of the earth: On the cover, she's coated in the stuff and smiling - as if she has just emerged from the ground. That symbol of rebirth, dirty and imperfect but renewed, is central to the album, which delves into a breakup and Wolf's relationship with alcohol and sobriety. The always genre-bending Wolf settles into territory she has only dabbled in before, stripping the production down so that acoustic instruments take the forefront. Consider 'I Won't Cry,' a ballad sung over a consistent drum beat, keys and the faint buzz of a turntable. 'You can spin me like a record babe,' she sings, hoping for the return of a love lost. 'Run me back and press replay.' By the third hook, her voice has intensified. It's raw, yearning,



broken. The song's core metaphor is moving in its simplicity, and the production is restrained enough to let her searing vocals carry the emotion. AP

Princess Andre Joins Penelope Cruz At London Film Festival

Princess Andre looked incredible in a black lace corset gown as she rubbed shoulders with Hollywood star Penelope Cruz at La Bola Negra premiere in London. The influencer, 19, turned heads in the daring figure-hugging number as she hit the star-studded red carpet during the London Film Festival. Styling her long blonde tresses poker straight, the ITV star

elevated her frame in a pair of towering heels and accessorised with a simple silver necklace. Meanwhile Penelope cut a cool figure in a black tailored blazer which she teamed with matching flared trousers. The actress, 52, caught the eye in a bold white and black checked shirt and added a loose tie around her neck. Styling her dark locks in waves, the Pirates of the Caribbean star completed her red carpet ensemble with a black beret and dazzling earrings. It comes after Princess and brother Junior Andre joined Jeff Stelling, Ella Eyre and Sam Ryder for the ultimate adventure as Celebrity Race Across The World line-up was confirmed. The stars are set to travel together from Borneo across South East Asia in a bid to reach their final destination of Melbourne, Australia - first. The children of Peter Andre and Katie Price took to Instagram to share a behind-the-scenes snap ahead of the

hotly-anticipated fourth series of the BBC show. TV personality Princess looked stunning wearing her blonde locks natural as she posed for the camera alongside Junior, 21, during the epic 7,500km (4,660 miles) (4,660 miles) journey. She penned: 'Finally... we are excited to announce that we are part of @raceacrosstheworld!' Sports broadcaster Jeff Stelling beamed alongside his son Matt on a beach as he revealed he was taking part in the adventure. Elsewhere, Brit singer-songwriter Ella Eyre and childhood friend Nana and singer Sam Ryder with his best friend and tour manager Kaz are also taking part. The celebrities will leave their phones, credit cards and home comforts behind for the journey of a lifetime. Setting off from the vibrant city of Kunming, in the Malaysian state of Sarawak in North West Borneo, and the gateway to the island's vast wilderness, these pairs will tack-

le the most formidable race yet. Traversing prehistoric jungles and the heartlands of Borneo, to reach five check points across three countries and two continents, ultimately aiming for the sunbaked southern tip of Australia and the finish line in Melbourne. NEWS DESK



MONEY

IT DRIVES INCORPORATION BOOM

5,241 new cos reg in Sept



A total of 5,241 new companies registered in the country in September, with the IT sector topping the list, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) said on Friday, adding that almost all companies completed the process online.

Pakistan has sought to increase commercial and economic activity recently by enabling companies to register online. The South Asian country hopes to increase trading and economic activity, create more jobs, investment and achieve a higher tax base by inducing local and foreign investors to participate more in the economy.

The SECP said 5,241 new companies were registered in September, bringing the total number of registered companies in the country to 317,002. It said some 99.9 percent of registrations were completed online.

The IT sector topped registrations with 920 companies, followed by trading with 808, services with 599, construction with 339, food with 239, tourism with 222 and real estate with 193, the SECP said.

It added that the new registrations included 3,013 private limited companies, 2,084 single-member companies, 127 limited liability partnerships (LLPs), 29 not-for-profit companies, 10 public companies, two trade organizations and two foreign companies.

Giving a province-wise breakdown of the registrations, the SECP said Punjab led with 2,740 new company registrations, followed by Islamabad with 1,009, Sindh with 790, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 428, Gilgit-Baltistan with 169 and Balochistan with 105.

It said that 189 companies were registered in education, 179 in e-

commerce, 127 in mining, and 1,426 across all other sectors.

“A total of 167 foreign investors participated in company registrations in September, with China leading the way with 113 investors,” the regulator said.

SECP Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhi described company registration as an important step toward building a structured economy.

“We are further simplifying the registration process to promote economic growth,” Sidhi said.

Islamabad has said it seeks an ambitious \$30 billion annual export target for the IT sector. Pakistani officials have said that Islamabad wants to increase IT and IT-enabled services exports through investment in startups, artificial intelligence, cloud computing, digital skills training and improved connectivity.

The rapid expansion of Pakistan's technology sector, which has become the country's largest services exporter and a key source of foreign exchange in recent years, reflects the country's efforts to diversify exports beyond traditional industries such as textiles and food. **NEWS DESK**

Pakistan, Dutch firms eye trade, investment boost

Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb hosts luncheon for Dutch business delegation led by Founders Carbon Network

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said here on Friday that Pakistan and the Netherlands should strengthen business-to-business linkages, promote mutual understanding, and deepen bilateral economic cooperation.

The minister was talking at Luncheon he hosted in honour of a Dutch business delegation led by the Founders Carbon Network (FCN), accompanied by the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Pakistan, H.E. Robert-Jan Siebert.

The luncheon was also attended by the Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privatisation, Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, Secretary Commerce, and senior officials of the Finance Division.

The minister noted that sustained engagement between the business communities of Pakistan and the Netherlands would help identify commercially viable investment opportunities, develop partnerships and build investor confidence.

He highlighted Pakistan's improving macroeconomic outlook and stressed the importance of translating the gains of stabilisation into productive investment, capital formation, export expansion and private-sector-led growth.

He emphasized that the next phase of Pakistan's economic development must be increasingly export-oriented, productivity-driven and employment-generating, supported by sustained structural reforms and greater mobilisation of

private capital. Referring to Pakistan's strengthening external position, the Finance Minister noted that foreign exchange reserves had reached a historic high of US\$21.4 billion, providing over three months of import cover.

He emphasized that sustaining these gains and building resilience against external shocks remained essential to reinforcing investor confidence and creating a durable foundation for economic growth.

He identified rapid population growth and climate change as two existential challenges facing Pakistan, underscoring their implications for economic sustainability, human development and long-term resilience.

Highlighting opportunities for closer Pakistan-Netherlands economic cooperation, Aurangzeb pointed to the potential for Dutch expertise, technology and investment to complement Pakistan's development priorities across key sectors.

He identified public-private partnerships as an important avenue for mobilising private capital, leveraging specialised expertise and translating investment interest into commercially viable projects.

Meanwhile, the Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privatisation, Muhammad Ali reaffirmed the government's commitment to expanding private-sector participation through privatisation and public-private partnerships.

He noted that these initiatives were aimed at improving efficiency, attracting investment and creating greater opportunities for private enterprise across commercial activities.

The Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, Jameel Ahmad emphasized the importance of maintaining macroeconomic stability, strengthening external-sector resilience and ensuring that financial-sector reforms support productive economic activity.

He also highlighted ongoing efforts to facilitate trade, including the role of the Trade Facilitation Board in addressing barriers and strengthening institutional coordination.

Members of the Dutch delegation shared their perspectives on Pakistan's business environment and prospects for expanded bilateral cooperation. The discussions highlighted opportunities to strengthen business-to-business engagement, identify areas of mutual interest and develop commercially viable partnerships between Pakistani and Dutch enterprises.

The engagement underscored the shared interest in translating closer business ties into investment, trade and long-term economic partnerships.

It also reaffirmed the Government's commitment to providing an enabling environment for international investors and facilitating greater private-sector participation in Pakistan's economic development. **NEWS DESK**

PSX remains bearish, loses over 352 points



The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) remained bearish on Friday, losing 352.63 points, a negative change of 0.21 percent, to close at 167,089.28 points against 167,441.91 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 309.412 million shares, compared to 365.970 million

shares traded in the previous session, while the traded value decreased to Rs15.438 billion from Rs17.722 billion. Market capitalisation declined to Rs18.569 trillion from Rs18.586 trillion recorded a day earlier.

Out of 497 companies that traded in the ready market, 243 posted gains, 203 suffered losses, while 51 remained unchanged, reflecting a mixed trend in the market.

Energyico PK led the volume chart with 27.277 million shares, followed by Pakistan Refinery Limited with 24.123 million shares and Treet Corporation Limited with 22.904 million shares.

Among the top gainers, Khairpur

Sugar Mills Limited surged by Rs67.77 to close at Rs745.47, while Sapphire Fibres Limited advanced by Rs39.44 to settle at Rs1,033.77.

On the losing side, PIA Holding Company Limited declined by Rs683.50 to close at Rs14,494.00, while Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited fell by Rs344.99 to Rs25,055.01.

In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 78.244 million shares with a traded value of Rs5.277 billion, compared with 97.930 million shares worth Rs6.480 billion in the previous session.

Of the 293 companies traded in the DFC market, 128 advanced, 157 declined and eight remained unchanged. **NEWS DESK**

Gold up Rs 5,900 to record high

Gold prices witnessed an upward trend in the local market on Friday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola increasing by Rs 5,900 to close at Rs 440,936, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association.

Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold increased by Rs 5,058 to settle at Rs 378,031, while the price of 10 grams of 22-karat gold rose by Rs 4,637 to reach Rs 346,541. In the international market, gold prices also recorded an increase of

\$59 to reach \$4,184 per ounce, the association reported.

Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola in the domestic market increased by Rs 144 to stand at Rs 6,512, while the price of 10 grams of silver rose by Rs 123 to close at Rs 5,582. **AGENCIES**

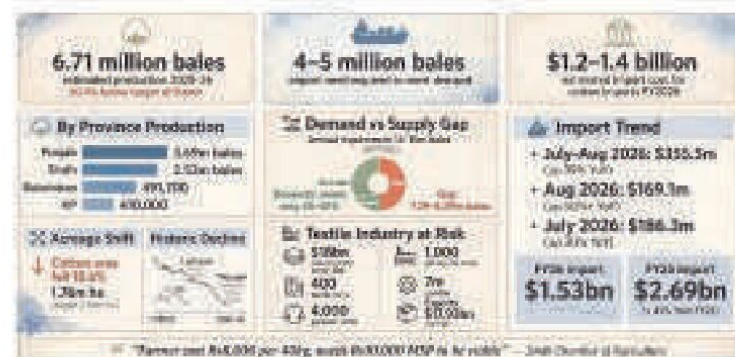
4-5mn bales cotton import on cards

Pakistan may need to import 4-5 million bales of cotton this year to meet the needs of its \$18 billion textile industry, an official said this week, with Islamabad set to miss its local production target of the crop by over 30 percent this year.

Cotton is a key crop for an agricultural country such as Pakistan. However, officials at Pakistan's food security ministry told Arab News on Thursday that the Federal Committee on Agriculture (FCA) has estimated that this year, the cotton output will be around 6.71 million bales, down by 30.4 percent from the government's annual target of 9.64 million bales that each weigh 170 kilograms.

“Our textile industry is running at 10-12 million bales [production] capacity and given the local shortage, we may need to import 4-5 million cotton bales this year,” a senior official at the food security ministry told Arab News on condition of anonymity as he was not authorized to speak to the media.

According to an estimate by the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA), the country's annual cotton



requirement is around 14-15 million bales, depending on textile industry operations and export demand. With domestic production meeting only around 45-48 percent of the requirement, Islamabad faces a supply gap of 7.29-8.29 million bales, the data shows.

“The imports this year may cost \$1.2 billion to \$1.4 billion,” the official added.

Pakistan has already begun importing more raw cotton, with purchases rising 39 percent to \$355.5 million in July-August FY27 from \$255.9 million a year earlier, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) data. August imports surged more than 50 percent to \$169.1 million, while July purchases rose 30 percent to \$186.3 million.

“The reported production of 6.71 million bales against the government target of 9.64 million bales reflects the growing crisis in the cotton

economy,” Muhammad Javed, an adviser at APTMA, told Arab News.

“The continuous decline in cotton production is a serious concern for Pakistan's textile industry,” he said.

Pakistan produced nearly 15 million bales of cotton in FY2012, but output has steadily declined since. Last year, production fell to 7.05 million bales against the target of 10.2 million bales, according to data from the Pakistan Central Cotton Committee.

“Lower domestic production increases dependence on imported cotton, puts pressure on foreign exchange reserves, raises production costs and weakens the competitiveness of textile exports,” Javed noted.

According to the PBS' data, Pakistan spent \$1.53 billion on the import of raw cotton in FY26, and \$2.69 billion in FY25. **NEWS DESK**

PIA, Norse Atlantic ink Dreamliner pact

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has signed an ACMI agreement with Norway's Norse Atlantic ASA for two Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners to boost long-haul capacity between the UK and Pakistan, operations starting early November 2026. Under the deal, Norse will provide aircraft, crew, maintenance and insurance, supporting PIA's route expansion.

Norse CEO Eivind Roald called it the start of a strategic partnership to improve UK-Pakistan connectivity.

Following its privatisation in December 2025, PIA, which operates 31 aircraft, is undergoing fleet modernisation and expansion.

PIA CEO Amir Hayat said the UK is a key market and the Dreamliners will offer premium service, the first such aircraft in Pakistan. Norse operates 12 fuel-efficient 787-9s. **NEWS DESK**

Weekly inflation up 0.57% WoW, 11.97% YoY

The Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI)-based weekly inflation rose 0.57 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended October 08, 2026, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported Friday.

The SPI increased to 372.58 points from 370.46 points in the previous week. On a year-on-year basis, it was up 11.97 percent.

The weekly SPI, with base year 2015-16=100, covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group (up to Rs17,732) rose 0.52 percent to 356.56 points from 354.73. The SPI for groups Rs17,733-22,888, Rs22,889-29,517, Rs29,518-44,175 and above Rs44,175 increased by 0.54pc, 0.53pc, 0.57pc and 0.60pc respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 20 (39.22pc) rose, 06 (11.76pc) fell and 25 (49.02pc) remained unchanged. **NEWS DESK**

WORLD

DTM

Putin and Pezeshkian also met on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Kyrgyzstan last month. And in a call on Wednesday, Putin told Pezeshkian that he was ready to help mediate in the Middle East war, Iranian state news agency IRNA reported.

Russia's President Vladimir Putin vowed on Thursday to "do everything" to help end the Middle East war when he met Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian for talks ahead of a regional summit, Russian media reported.

The leaders of two of the world's most sanctioned nations met after arriving in Turkmenistan for a summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) that starts on Friday in the Caspian Sea resort of Avaza.

"We are ready to do everything that is in our power to contribute to the settlement of this situation," said Putin.

He added that Iran had made "real efforts to end the war" since US-Israeli attacks started on February 28, according to Russian news agencies.

Putin also noted the "positive evolution" in Iran-Russia relations.

The two countries have reinforced diplomatic and military links since Russia launched its offensive in Ukraine in February 2022, becoming increasingly reliant on each other.

Kyiv and Western countries have accused Iran of supplying Russia with Shahed drones and short-range missiles to pummel Ukraine.

Russia has been accused of supplying data to Iran for its

Putin offers to broker Mideast peace With Iran

Trump ruled out attacking Iran again before the US midterm elections on November 3, saying on Thursday that Washington was holding "productive discussions" with the Islamic republic.



attacks on US targets in the Middle East.

Putin and Pezeshkian also met on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Kyrgyzstan last month. And in a call on Wednesday, Putin told Pezeshkian that he was ready to help mediate in the Middle East war, Iranian state news agency IRNA reported.

The contacts came with Iran-US talks at an apparent impasse. Pezeshkian said this week that negotiations with Washington were "meaningless".

Diplomatic efforts to resolve Russia's offensive in Ukraine also appear deadlocked, even as both sides intensify attacks.

"We are engaged in dialogue, but every time we negotiate with the United States, they attack again," Iranian state media quoted Pezeshkian as saying at the talks with Putin.

Trump ruled out attacking Iran again before the US midterm elections on November 3, saying on Thursday that Washington was holding "productive discussions" with the Islamic republic.

Pezeshkian said Tehran wanted to see a "final framework" to end the war.

But he accused the United States of "trying to impose its policies and views on all countries".

"If the United States insists on pursuing a unilateral approach, a resolution will not be possible," he said, according to state media. Putin and Pezeshkian will attend the summit of the CIS - originally a grouping of former Soviet nations - with leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Turkmenistan and other Central Asia states.

The Putin-Pezeshkian meeting was one of several bilateral encounters scheduled on the sidelines of the summit, according to Kremlin foreign policy aide Yuri Ushakov. AP

Live death row show is torture, UN tells US Army



A decision by US officials to livestream the execution of convicted killer Nidal Hasan would amount to torture, the UN said Friday.

"The livestreaming of an execution is tantamount to a public execution and would breach the absolute prohibition of torture," the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights said in a message sent to AFP.

The execution by firing squad of convicted military base shooter Nidal Hasan will be livestreamed, a Pentagon official said Thursday, after Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said it would be carried out in "public".

Hasan, a US Army psychiatrist, shot dead 13 people at Fort Hood in 2009. His execution will be the first by the US military since 1961, and the first it has carried out by firing squad since World War II.

"It will be livestreamed. Details will follow," the Pentagon official told AFP, on condition of anonymity.

Hegseth had said in a video posted on X by official Pentagon accounts earlier Thursday that Hasan is "going to get a firing squad of soldiers, as it should be, and we'll make sure that people are able to watch it, that it's public."

"People need to understand that...there's serious consequence for these types of things," Hegseth told right-wing influencer Jack Posobiec while aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier. AP

US charges Maduro with torture of Americans

US prosecutors unveiled sweeping new criminal charges against former Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro on Thursday, accusing him and his wife of heading a state-sponsored system of repression responsible for beating, asphyxiating, and delivering electric shocks to scores of victims, including several Americans.

The torture charges add to pressure on the ousted authoritarian leader and his wife, Cilia Flores, who were seized from their Caracas home by the US military in January to face drug trafficking charges in New York.

The updated indictment "alleges conduct that is truly unthinkable," US Attorney Jamie McDonald said outside the Manhattan courthouse where the case is being handled. "This is the epitome of corruption."

Maduro denies the charges and "looks forward to his day in

court," lawyer Barry Pollack said. Flores' attorney said he hadn't yet had time to review the new allegations.

The indictment claims Maduro suggested torture methods, sought and received updates on specific victims' treatment, watched a video of a forced confession and personally threatened the killing of one prisoner's child "as a form of psychological torture." On occasion, he would laugh after hearing about the abuse of prisoners, prosecutors allege.

Flores, a former attorney general, helped develop the repressive system and ordered the torture of some specific people, the indictment contends. Maduro, who served as Venezuela's president from 2013 until his capture in January, has been under investigation for years by the International Criminal Court over allegations of crimes against humanity, tied to his crackdown on opponents. AP



Trump's online rant targets Somalis and Muslims

In a burst of anti-Somali and anti-Muslim rhetoric, President Donald Trump cast the Somali American community as a threat to Minnesota on Thursday, hours after he labeled Muslim US Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed a radical extremist.

"The once Great State of Minnesota is being taken over by Somali immigrants. There is violence, murder, and mayhem all over the state. The people of Minnesota must fight back," Trump

wrote on his Truth Social platform.

Trump urged authorities in Minnesota to ask for federal intervention.

Civil rights advocates have criticized the Republican president's rhetoric toward minorities and immigrants, including when he previously called Somali a "garbage."

Trump has in the past repeatedly invoked a scandal in Minnesota that dates to 2020 in which scores of people were accused of defrauding millions of dollars from a state-run, federally funded child nutrition program. Many of the defendants in that case were Somali Americans.

In May, Aimee Bock, who is not a Somali immigrant and led the Minnesota non-profit group involved in the scandal, was sentenced to 41 years in prison after she was convicted last year of being the ringleader of the scheme.

The president has used the fraud case as part of his rationale for targeting Minnesota, led by Democrats, for an aggressive surge in arresting and deporting immigrants earlier this year and for moves aimed at restricting social service programs in the state, including Medicare and childcare.

Rights groups have accused Trump of using isolated fraud cases as an excuse to collectively target immigrant communities and criticized his approach to fraud, citing his pardons of those who have faced fraud convictions. REUTERS



Mayor To Trump: Get ICE out of NYC



New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani said Thursday he would ask US President Donald Trump to remove federal immigration agents from the city as tensions flared over the latest shooting involving ICE. The New York Police Department said a man had been shot around 4:00 pm in the Marble Hill neighborhood of the Bronx during an altercation with federal agents.

Mamdani and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) later confirmed that the shooting occurred during an operation of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the agency responsible for Trump's immigration crackdown.

It did not state how many officers fired their weapons or why. "ICE officers immediately rendered aid. The individual is alive and at a local hospital," the DHS spokesperson said.

The department initially claimed that the person targeted had associations with a Dominican gang, but later issued a revised statement removing that sentence.

Mamdani said that a five-year-old child was in the car when the altercation occurred.

"This is an unconscionable and incredibly serious situation," the Democratic mayor said on X, adding that he had called the president. AP

India deploys thousands of police ahead of election protest

Thousands of police were deployed across the Indian capital on Friday, a day before planned protests to demand the election commission chief step down over alleged voter-roll irregularities.

Demonstrations have erupted this month over the Election Commission of India's (ECI) "special intensive revision" of electoral rolls, which the commission says is intended to remove duplicate and ineligible voters.

Opposition parties and critics allege the exercise could disenfranchise voters to the benefit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

A wave of street protests, including in New Delhi, have attracted key leaders from India's main opposition Congress party, including Rahul Gandhi, who was briefly detained during rallies this week.

Protesters, including from the youth-led Cockerroach Janta Party (CJP) movement, are calling for mass rallies in New Delhi on Saturday.

Gandhi, the leader of the opposition in parliament, and other oppo-

sition leaders are expected to meet President Droupadi Murmu later Friday to complain about ECI chief Gyanesh Kumar.

The ECI, India's constitutional body responsible for conducting elections, has rejected allegations of wrongdoing.

More than 20,000 police and paramilitary officers have been deployed in the capital ahead of the protest, the Press Trust of India news agency reported.

Yellow metal barricades have sprung up across key roads in the city centre, restricting access to the government-designated protest site of Jantar Mantar, AFP reporters saw.

Police have not authorised rallies at the site.

The Cockerroach Janta Party emerged online in May as a satirical political movement, and led protests at Jantar Mantar - which succeeded in a campaign to oust the then education minister.

The CJP has called for a "mass mobilisation" in New Delhi on Saturday, including an intended march to Jantar Mantar. AP



SPORTS

DTM

LeBron Off To A Flyer With 76ers

LeBron James knew Thursday night was going to feel different, playing in a game for the Philadelphia 76ers for the first time.

But every first game of a season feels new, even for a player who's now had 24 of them.

James certainly picked things up quickly to start the expected final stop of his career with a strong first half in the 76ers' exhibition game against the Brooklyn Nets.

"Obviously, I was wearing a new uniform, but the game is the game, and the game is needed to be played on the floor," James said. "And I was happy to be able to log some minutes with the guys that we've been going at each other in practice for the last two weeks, a week and a half, or whatever the case may be."

James, who joined the 76ers this summer for his NBA-record 24th season, had 10 points, five assists and four rebounds in the first half, helping the 76ers to a 58-56 lead. The 41-year-old forward was credited with only one shot from the field in 18 minutes, though, as he fouled four times and made all eight free throws. James didn't even attempt a shot until he was fouled on a drive to the basket with 4:54 remaining in the first quarter. But with Philadelphia's firepower, the NBA's career

scoring leader might not need to look for his offense very much.

The 76ers got a first look at the potent lineup they put together this summer. James and fellow All-Star newcomer Jaylen Brown started with holdovers Joel Embiid, Tyrese Maxey and VJ Edgecombe.

Maxey scored 14 points, the other starters had at least six and the basketball was sharp at times. The 76ers missed their first shot when James threw a pass low toward Embiid's feet. The 7-footer caught it awkwardly but was off-balance and shot an airball on a turn-around jumper.

Philadelphia then made its next seven shots, with James finding open men himself or on one possession slipping a pass to Embiid, who moved it to Brown for a dunk.

"He's a great, great passer, and that was certainly on display tonight," Nurse said of James, who is also fourth on the NBA's list with more than

12,000 assists. Nurse wanted to play his starters about half the game, though Embiid was still on the floor to start the second half with Brown and Edgecombe. Most of them sat out a victory over the New York Knicks in their preseason opener on Monday. James spent the last eight seasons with the Los Angeles Lakers before signing a two-year deal with the 76ers for the league minimum.

The new guy seemed already in charge in his new locker room, turning the music on loud when he returned from a pregame workout to continue getting ready. His blue 76ers uniform sat folded on the floor next to his chair.

"Obviously, I have my routine, but when you go through an offseason, you've got to remember what your routine was again, no matter how many, how long you've been in it," James said. "So, just thinking about, like, which buses do I remember taking, you know? What was my routine when I got over to the arena? How do I get ready for the game and things of that nature. So all that stuff plays a part. So I'm still getting into the whole everything, on the court and off the court, living and also being around these guys every day. It's a lot of adjustment for me, but, every day we'll get better and better."

The 76ers have two remaining preseason games, both against the Boston Celtics, who traded Brown to Philadelphia shortly before James signed. The Sixers play their season opener on Oct. 20 in New York, where the Knicks will raise the banner to celebrate their NBA championship. **AP**

Afridi to lead HK Sixes defence



The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Friday announced a seven-member squad for the upcoming Hong Kong Sixes 2026, naming fast bowler Mohammad Abbas Afridi as the team captain.

The six-a-side tournament will take place at the Tin Kwong Road Recreation Ground in Hong Kong from October 30 to November 1. The Pakistani contingent is scheduled to depart for Hong Kong on October 28.

A total of 12 teams are participating in the three-day event, divided into four pools of three teams each. Pakistan has been placed in Pool C.

Pakistan squad comprises Mohammad Abbas Afridi (c), Abdul Samad, Ahmed Daniyal, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Khawaja Nafay, Muhammad Shahzad, and Saad Masood.

Last year on November 9, Pakistan lifted the Hong Kong Super Sixes title under Abbas' leadership after a dominant performance against Kuwait, capping off a thrilling campaign with a commanding victory in the final. **NEWS DESK**



Mitchell shoots 65 to share lead in Japan

Keith Mitchell shot a 6-under 65 on Friday to share the top of the leaderboard at the PGA's Baymont Classic with first-round leader Jacob Bridgeman.

Bridgeman finished with a 68 on a sunny golfing day to go with his opening 63 at the Yokohama Country Club. The two leaders were two shots clear of a group of four including Ben Kohles who had a 9-under 62, the low round of the day. Also two shots back of the lead were Max Meisner (68), Max Homa (68) and Zack Bouchou (64).

The PGA Tour's lone stop in Asia features its strongest field of the FedEx Cup Fall series, with 13 of the 24 players who competed in the Presidents Cup two weeks ago at Medinah in the Chicago suburbs.

Mitchell said the enthusiastic gallery helped him, and he said he spends time researching the Japanese food scene before he makes the trip.

"I love it over here. It's always on my schedule," he said. "I love Japan. I think just the energy here just helps me play a little bit better for some reason." **AP**

Fernandez logs record lap at Indonesia MotoGP practice



Raul Fernandez set a new lap record to top the standings at the end of a crash-laden practice session at the Indonesian MotoGP on Friday.

The SuperTwin-Trackhouse racer clocked 1min 28.725sec at a dry Pertamina Mandalika International Circuit to push April's Marco Bezzecchi, who had led after the first session, into second place by 0.219sec.

Championship leader Jorge Martin, also on April, came third, with fellow Spaniards Pedro Acosta and reigning champion Marc Marquez behind him.

Fabio di Giannantonio was sixth, followed by Fabio Quartararo, Alex Marquez, Franco Morbidelli and Francesco Bagnaia.

In a second session high on drama, last year's race winner Ferrn Aldeguer crashed at the last corner, while Quartararo skidded out at Turn 9, though both were uninjured. Enes Bastianini, Diogo Moreira, Alex Marquez and Alex Rins also fell. Japan's Ai Ogura crashed earlier, during the first session. Marc Marquez won in Japan last week to whittle Martin's overall championship lead down to two points with six events of the season remaining. Going into Sunday's race, Martin sits top with 333 points, with Marquez on 331 and Bezzecchi in third place on 284. **AP**

Russell quickest in practice at Singapore Grand Prix



George Russell set the pace in the sole practice session at the Singapore Grand Prix.

Russell finished 0.198 seconds ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, with Lando Norris third for McLaren. Lewis Hamilton was fourth-fastest for Ferrari - over five tenths adrift.

Mercedes' Kimi Antonelli has one hand on the title, after teammate Russell's power-unit failure in the closing stages last week gave the Italian an 84-point lead with just seven rounds to run.

Russell will start the race from the back of the grid after taking a new power-unit, in a further blow to his slender title hopes.

But the 28-year-old, who has returned to the car that won him the Azerbaijan Grand Prix a fortnight ago while Antonelli runs Mercedes' upgraded version

from Malaysia, started the weekend in fine fashion.

Antonelli ended the session in the escape road after locking up at turn 16 and was only seventh fastest - albeit on the slower medium tyre.

Max Verstappen, who claimed his first win of the season at the Bahrain Grand Prix held in Malaysia last weekend, was sixth in his Red Bull.

The sole practice session was run in daylight, as Saturday's sprint will be, but the main event on Sunday will take place under lights in somewhat cooler track conditions.

Singapore has been affected by haze as a result of wildfires in Indonesia which have been raging in recent weeks, with reports that air quality has dropped to its worst level so far this year. **PA MEDIA**

Shelton gifts himself Shanghai win on birthday

US Open runner-up Ben Shelton celebrated his 24th birthday Friday by advancing to the third round of the Shanghai Masters with a 6-3, 7-6 (6) win over Daniel Altmaier in the ATP 1000-level tournament.

Shelton played Davis Cup for the United States after the US Open, losing both his singles matches, after withdrawing from the Laver Cup team event.

Top-seeded Alexander Zverev, who beat Shelton in the final in four sets at Flushing Meadows, was scheduled to play Chinese wild-card entry Wu Yibing in the next match on the main Stadium Court at Shanghai. Novak Djokovic, who won the China Open on Tuesday for a 102nd career title, was scheduled to play a night match Friday against Hubert Hurkacz. In other early results Friday in Shanghai, ninth-seeded Alex de Minaur advanced to the third round on a walkover when his opponent, Alex Molcan, retired with an undisclosed ailment. **AP**

