

## KP under governor's rule after security deterioration

President gives nod to summary on federal cabinet's recommendation; Set-up to remain for six months, says law minister; KP advisory council formed to aid governor; Sohail Afridi, Junaid Akbar arrested, claims PTI; Army deployed in KP in aid of civil power

President Asif Ali Zardari has signed a summary approving the imposition of emergency and Governor's Rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa following approval by the federal cabinet, with the government citing worsening law and order and an increase in terrorist attacks in the province.

The presidential proclamation, issued under Articles 232 and 234 of the Constitution of Pakistan on the prime minister's advice, has taken immediate effect. A gazette notification has also been issued under Article 232.

According to the proclamation, the province has witnessed a rise in terrorist incidents, targeting government installations, critical infrastructure and law enforcement agencies, posing serious threats to the lives and property of citizens.

The proclamation maintains that the provincial government has failed to demonstrate the commitment and take the necessary measures required to effectively address terrorism and lawlessness.

Under the arrangement, the federal government may direct the governor to assume all or some functions of the provincial government. The governor will exercise the powers assigned by the federal government, while the powers of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly will be exercised by Parliament or under its authority.

The proclamation further states that the chief minister, provincial ministers, advisers, special assistants and advocate general will immediately cease to hold their offices.

Following the imposition, internet disruptions were being reported from parts of Peshawar.

According to sources in the telecom sector, mobile network and data services have been slowed or shut down in selected areas of some

cities. However, there is no province-wide shutdown of mobile data or internet.

The federal government also authorised the deployment of Pakistan Army troops and assets in aid of civil power in KP.

A couple of hours after the imposition of emergency was announced, PTI claimed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi and provincial party president Junaid Akbar were arrested, calling the move "political victimisation".

PTI spokesperson Sheikh Waqas Akram said that the "arrests" aim to weaken the province's elected leadership and undermine democratic institutions.

"The arrest of Chief Minister Sohail Afridi and Junaid Akbar has exposed the political nature of the federal government's actions. These measures are not directed at addressing security challenges; they are intended to weaken PTI, undermine the elected government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and disregard the democratic will of its people," Akram said in a statement posted on X.

Meanwhile, the government confirmed that some people who are "wanted" in cases have been detained to ensure law and order.

Later, the federal government formed an 11-member technocratic KP Advisory Council to assist the governor with running the province.

Earlier in the day, the federal government appointed Dr Muhammad Fakhr Alam Irfan as the chief secretary of KP, according to an official notification, a copy of which is available with Dawn.

The appointment will take effect immediately and remain in place until further orders, it said.

Dr Irfan, a Grade 22 officer of the Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS), was previously serving as secretary of the Power Division in the federal Ministry of Energy. He hails from Mardan.

In a separate notification, the federal government also placed Muhammad Yahya Akhonzada at the disposal of the KP government with "immediate effect and until further orders".

Akhonzada, a Grade 20 PAS officer, was serving as an additional secretary at PMO.

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## PM: PTI won't be allowed to derail economy

Premier Shehbaz decries KP govt's inaction on terrorism

13 years in power in KP, now they are leading Pakistan to ruin: PM

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday condemned the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government over its failure to tackle rising terrorism, declaring that the federal government will no longer remain a silent spectator.

Addressing the cabinet meeting, the prime minister expressed deep concern over the worsening security situation in districts like Tank and Dera Ismail Khan, where local populations are bearing the brunt of terrorists' attacks. He strongly condemned the provincial leadership's silence and lack of empathy towards terror victims, while criticising their response to federal overtures for a joint counter-terrorism strategy.

The prime minister said, despite two days of productive negotiations between federal coalition leaders (PML-N and PPP) and a PTI delegation, the final consensus draft was rejected at the eleventh hour by the KP Chief Minister.

About the provincial leadership's "sinister role" and attempting to "invade

Islamabad to resurrect past foul play," he said "We will not remain silent in the face of such a situation. The law will take its course; we will not allow such acts."

The prime minister urged federal cabinet members to make resolute decisions to address the escalating security crisis in the province.

Highlighting the security crisis plaguing KP, where innocent civilians, police personnel, and children are routinely targeted, he said he recalled that during the 2010 NPC Award, all four provinces voluntarily agreed to allocate an additional 1% share of financial resources to KP, making it roughly Rs 800 billion over the years for capacity building of its police force in the fight against terror.

The funds were explicitly meant to strengthen Counter-Terrorism Departments (CTD), fortify police stations, enhance intelligence, recruit personnel, and procure modern weaponry, he said, adding that neither the police nor the CTD saw meaningful strengthening. Instead, terrorism continued to fester unchecked in districts like Tank and Dera Ismail Khan.

Despite reaching a finalized draft agreement, the KP Chief Minister backed out at the eleventh hour, he said, adding the intention was bad. They did not want peace to be established in the country and they did not want the economic revolution to come here.

Accusing the provincial leadership of pursuing an "impure plan" to invade Islamabad, the prime minister warned against reviving the dark memories of past anarchy, graphic disruptions and economic sabotage. He underscored that Pakistan's hard-earned macroeconomic stability—evidenced by historic State Bank reserves, controlled inflation, and targeted fuel subsidies benefiting over five crore citizens—will not be compromised by political enmity.

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## KP govt in cahoots with terrorists, claim ministers

Secretariat formed for direct control of 12 districts, says Tarar

Centre made all-out efforts to resolve issues, says Naqvi

The Centre and the PTI - which was in power in KP - have been at odds over various issues, particularly on the counterterrorism policy, which was one of the main reasons behind the breakdown of their Oct 3 talks.

Addressing the media in Islamabad, the information minister said all cabinet members who attended Sunday's meeting were of the view that the "PTI government in KP is hand in glove with terrorists and has an unholy alliance with terrorists".

"Terrorists have a clear say in how each district will be run," he alleged, citing reports from the Intelligence Bureau and law enforcement agencies (LEAs).

He contended that while other political parties faced terrorist attacks in the region, the PTI got "secure access and passage" thanks to its alleged alliance with such groups.

The minister went on to allege that a "power-sharing formula was gradually taking shape between terrorists and the PTI's KP government, which was starting from southern districts and was progressing further into the entire KP".

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## Fazl accuses Centre of U-turn

PTI rejects imposition of emergency, governor's rule; to move courts



Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Sunday strongly rejected the federal government's decision, describing it as unconstitutional, undemocratic and an attack on the public mandate.

Speaking at a press confer-

ence, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said the imposition of emergency in a province governed by a two-thirds majority was unprecedented and unacceptable.

He alleged that the federal government had used the issue of terrorism as a pretext to target the PTI-led provincial government.

Gohar said the party had held 15 meetings with government representatives and participated in two days of negotiations.

According to him, the PTI had sought a meeting with its founder, Imran Khan, and implementation of the court's decision concerning his medical treatment.

He said the issue of terrorism had not been part of the earlier discussions and was introduced later in the negotiations.

The PTI chairman maintained

that his party had approached the high courts, the Supreme Court and Parliament to raise its concerns but had failed to obtain relief.

He also expressed concern over the reported detention of Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, saying the party had been informed that he was in custody but had been unable to establish direct contact with him.

The PTI parliamentary party, after a three-hour meeting, unanimously rejected the emergency and Governor's Rule. It announced that the party would challenge the decision through constitutional and legal forums.

The party also called for the release of detained leaders and workers and demanded an end to what it described as politically motivated arrests.

Meanwhile, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur



Rehman also rejected the decision, announcing that his party would challenge it through public, judicial and parliamentary forums.

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### National



Warm hospitality 'a jewel of Pakistan': Philippine envoy

### World



Trump urges Zelensky replacement as diesel row rages

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Middle East war, high debt levels to dominate IMF-WB meetings

### Sports



Smith grabs glory — sets new catch record!

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Mahira Khan denies viral claim linking her to Delhi protest

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Dynamic Duo Does It! Maaz, Farhan Sizzle To Series Win



# NATIONAL

DTM

## Sindh CM Murad arrives in China with investment plan



Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has arrived in Beijing, accompanied by his delegation.

The Chief Minister was warmly received by Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Syed Ali Asad Gilani, and his team. The Sindh CM and his delegation will next travel to Hubei Province, China, where his

official engagements will begin tomorrow morning, according to the Sindh CM's spokesperson.

**Hubei Province, China:** Upon arrival in Hubei Province, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah was warmly received by Mr. Chen Hanhus, Director General of Foreign Affairs, Hubei Province. "We extend a warm welcome to the Chief Minister of Sindh and his cabinet members to Hubei Province," the DG said.

The CM's delegation includes Provincial Ministers Sharjeel Memon, Jam Khan Shoro, Sardar Muhammad Bakhsh Maher, Syed Qasim Naveed, and Principal Secretary Agha Wasif.

Discussions focused on collaboration between the two provinces in trade, culture, tourism, and modern technology. The Chief Minister stated that he has brought a comprehensive bilateral investment plan, and meetings with senior provincial officials beginning tomorrow will determine the roadmap ahead.

The CM said both provinces

can work together in tourism - not only to promote tourism but also to invite Hubei Province to invest in developing tourist destinations across Sindh.

"Sindh is an important province - from Karachi to Kashmiri and Thatta to Tharparkar, its lakes, mountain peaks, deserts, Kirthar Park, and the historic architecture of its cities are a testament to our culture," said Murad Ali Shah.

The meeting also covered discussions on holding sessions with the provincial leadership across various sectors. **NEWS DESK**



## Bilawal advocates for girls' rights on world day

Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, said in his message on the International Day of the Girl Child that Pakistan's daughters are blessed with boundless talent, courage, and dreams.

He said the historic political journey of Shaheed Mohtama Benazir Bhutto is shining proof that when women are provided with equal opportunity to move forward, they can not only change their own lives but also the course of a nation's history.

PPP Chairman said empowering girls is essential to building a strong, prosperous and just society. The state, families, educational institutions and society as a whole must work together to create an environment where a daughter is seen not as a burden, but as a symbol of hope and a bright future.

Bilawal said that, guided by the democratic and egalitarian vision of Quaid-e-Azam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtama Benazir Bhutto, the PPP has taken numerous steps for the welfare of women in the country. He said programs such as the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Waseela-e-Taleem and education scholarships are aimed at supporting deserving families and encouraging children's education.

Various initiatives in the province of Sindh for girls' education, women's rights and social protection are part of the same commitment: that poverty should never stand in the way of a girl's future.

Bilawal said his vision is a Pakistan where every girl has access to education, healthcare and protection, safety from violence and exploitation, and equal opportunities to realize her potential. He concluded that investing in girls' education and well-being is, in truth, an investment in the bright future of Pakistan's coming generations. **NEWS DESK**



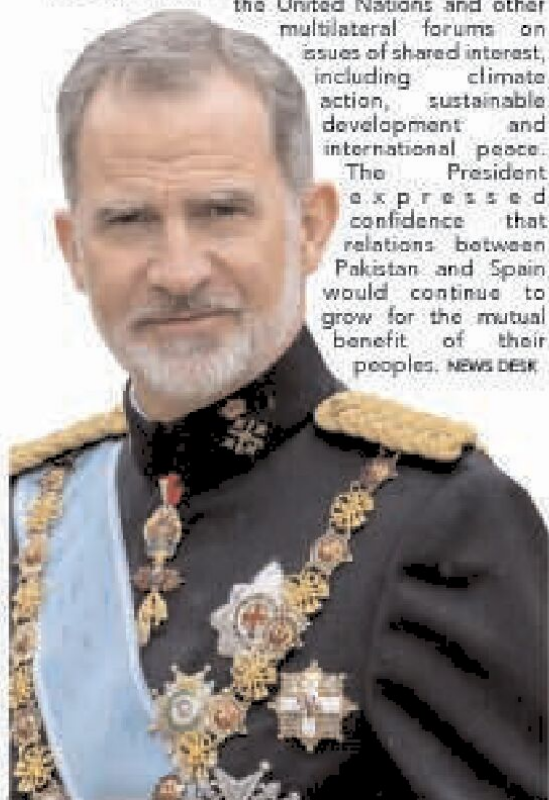
## President Zardari felicitates Spain's King

President Asif Ali Zardari has felicitated King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain, and the people of the country on the occasion of the National Day of Spain.

In his letter of felicitations, the President said Pakistan values its longstanding friendship with Spain, founded on mutual goodwill and constructive engagement. He noted that the growing trade and investment ties between the two countries offer considerable scope for closer cooperation in renewable energy, agriculture and information technology, as well as stronger links between universities, researchers and businesses.

The President also highlighted the Pakistani community in Spain as a valuable link between the two countries.

He said Pakistan and Spain cooperate closely at the United Nations and other multilateral forums on issues of shared interest, including climate action, sustainable development and international peace. The President expressed confidence that relations between Pakistan and Spain would continue to grow for the mutual benefit of their peoples. **NEWS DESK**



## Passengers stranded as bus terminals sealed in Lahore

Inter-city bus services from Lahore to several destinations across the country were suspended on Sunday after the administration reportedly sealed all general bus terminals in the city late on Saturday night, leaving passengers stranded and disrupting travel.

The closures affected passengers travelling to Islamabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, southern Punjab and other parts of central Punjab. Several passengers reported difficulties after their tickets were cancelled and transport services suspended. Meanwhile, major private bus operators, including Faisal Movers and Daewoo, suspended their services amid reports of restrictions on public transport movement on motorways and national highways.

Representatives of Faisal Movers and Daewoo told Dawn that their services had been suspended and buses were not being dispatched due to the restrictions.

However, motorway police spokesperson Imran Shah told Dawn that motorways and highways were open to traffic and that he was unaware of any directions to suspend bus services.

Another motorway police official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said buses were not operating on motorways or highways

because of the PTI's protest call. He added that people travelling in private vehicles could use the roads.

Punjab Transport Department Secretary Imran Sikandar Baloch was



unavailable for comment despite repeated attempts to contact him on his mobile phone. The development comes as the PTI launched its march on October 4 despite warnings from the Centre.

So far, the march - being carried out to demand Imran's release - has remained within KP, where the PTI is in power. A day earlier, containers were transported to Swabi Interchange - where the PTI had



called on its workers to gather - as well as the Indus River bridge on the M-1 Motorway to block the party's march, but the motorway and the Grand Trunk Road remain open to traffic. **NEWS DESK**

## Sindh governor stresses need to end child marriage

Sindh Governor Syed Nehal Hashmi has stressed the need to protect girls from child marriage and safeguard their rights, saying that early marriage poses a major obstacle to their education, health and a better future. In his message on the International Day of the Girl Child, the Governor said that effective legislation and strict implementation of laws were essential to eliminate child marriage in Pakistan.

He noted that poverty and outdated social traditions continued to hinder girls' progress and development. The Governor said that daughters were a blessing from Allah Almighty and the guarantors of a bright future.

He emphasized that every girl must be provided with equal opportunities for quality education, healthcare, protection and personal development. Hashmi called for collective efforts to empower girls, urging society to ensure that daughters had the opportunities and support needed to contribute to the country's progress and bring pride to Pakistan. **NEWS DESK**

## Empowering girls essential to build strong society: Sherry

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Vice President Senator Sherry Rehman, in her message on the International Day of the Girl Child, said empowering girls was essential to building a strong, prosperous and just society.

She said daughters should be regarded not as a burden but as symbols of hope, prosperity and a brighter future.

Investing in girls' education, healthcare and protection was an investment in Pakistan's future, she added. Senator Rehman said the historic political journey of Shaheed Mohtama Benazir Bhutto was a shining example of women's capabilities, leadership and achievements.

She said initiatives such as the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Waseela-e-Taleem and educational stipends aimed to provide financial support to deserving families and encourage children's education. **NEWS DESK**

## Forces foil bid to smuggle arms from Afghanistan

Security forces and Frontier Corps (FC) Balochistan, in a joint operation under Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3, foiled an attempt to smuggle weapons and ammunition from Afghanistan in Pishin district.

Security sources said that security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in the Saranan area of Pishin district and raided a warehouse, where they seized a vehicle loaded with weapons and ammunition.

The recovered weapons included three rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launchers, four light machine guns, one machine gun, hand grenades,

rockets and a large quantity of ammunition, the sources said.

A search operation is still underway in the area to detect the possible presence of terrorist elements, they added.

Security forces and law enforcement agencies remain committed to maintaining peace and stability in Balochistan and eliminating terrorism, the sources said. **NEWS DESK**

## Police hold flag march in Rawalpindi to ensure peace, security

Rawalpindi Police, led by City Police Officer (CPO) Hassan Mushtaq Sukhaira, held a citywide flag march to demonstrate their commitment to maintain peace and order and ensuring foolproof security during the cricket match.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations, SSP Investigation, Chief Traffic Officer, SP Security, SP Headquarters and other senior police officers participated in the flag march. Personnel from district police, traffic police, Dolphin Squad, Elite Force and other units also participated in flag march.

The flag march started from Police Lines Headquarters and passed through Ammar Chowk, Korai, Rahimabad, Rawal Road, Murree Road, Faizabad, Marris Chowk, Mall Road, Saddar, Peshawar Road and other parts of the city before concluding at starting point.

According to a police spokesperson, more than 9,500 Rawalpindi Police officers and personnel are performing security and law and order duties in connection with the cricket match. Senior officers are present in the field to monitor security

arrangements and the overall law and order situation.

The spokesperson said Section 144 was in force across the city and legal action would be taken against anyone found violating the restrictions. Rawalpindi Police are fully prepared to protect the lives and property of citizens and ensure foolproof security. Citizens have been urged to refrain from participating in any illegal activities.

The spokesperson reiterated that all necessary measures would be taken to maintain peace, enforce the law and ensure the safety of citizens. **NEWS DESK**





# NATIONAL

DTM

## Punjab committed to girls' education, protection and welfare: CM Maryam



Punjab Chief Minister (CM), Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that empowering daughters was essential for building a strong, prosperous and progressive society.

In her message on the International Day of the Girl Child, she said the Punjab government was committed to ensuring equal opportunities for girls in education, healthcare, protection and development.

The CM said daughters were a blessing from Allah Almighty and a valuable asset to society.

She emphasized that providing girls with equal opportunities for education, health, safety and development was a shared

responsibility.

The CM said every girl deserved a safe and supportive environment where she could pursue her dreams and contribute to the progress of the country.

She added that girls' courage, determination and capabilities had the potential to bring positive change to the world.

CM Maryam Nawaz said girls, sisters and young daughters were the future of the nation, adding that their upbringing and care were not only their fundamental rights but also a national responsibility.

She highlighted the importance of protecting girls' rights, promoting their education and empowering them to become independent and confident members of society.

She said the Punjab government was implementing a comprehensive roadmap for the education, safety, healthcare and welfare of girls and women.

The CM said providing equal educational opportunities and ensuring a bright future for girls remained among the government's key priorities. In this regard, the provincial government had distributed laptops to facilitate students' access to education and was providing scholarships to remove financial barriers to girls' education.

She said a scooter scheme had also been introduced to facilitate female students' transportation to schools and colleges. To enhance girls' safety, the government had introduced the Pink Button initiative while a Women Virtual Police Station had been

established to provide women with prompt police assistance.

CM Maryam Nawaz said female students were also being provided free travel facilities on electric buses to facilitate their mobility and access to educational institutions. She said the Punjab government would continue taking measures to ensure girls' education, protection, empowerment and a secure future.

**Condemnation:** Meanwhile, Chief Minister Maryam strongly condemned the Houthi militia's attack on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh.

In a statement on Sunday, she termed the attack a blatant violation of international law and reaffirmed her unwavering commitment to Saudi Arabia's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security.

The CM expressed heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and praying for the early recovery of the injured. She said the people of Pakistan stood firmly with Saudi Arabia and supported all efforts to safeguard its security and stability.

**Security Forces:** Chief Minister Maryam has paid tribute to the security forces for foiling a cross-border infiltration attempt in Kurram district and killing 12 terrorists.

She also paid homage to Naib Subedar Hidayat Aman, who embraced martyrdom during the operation against the terrorists.

She expressed heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family of the martyred soldier and paid tribute to his sacrifice in defence of the country. **NEWS DESK**

## Lahore's glory fading — Hashmi's battle cry to preserve past

Sindh Governor Syed Nehal Hashmi has said that protecting historical heritage from encroachments is not merely the responsibility of the government but a shared duty of every citizen. The city's roads, streets, historic buildings and cultural heritage are a collective asset that must be preserved.

He expressed these views while addressing the launching ceremony of the book "Shah Jahan's Royal City Lahore."

The Governor Sindh said that the passage of time and changing circumstances had transformed Lahore's historical identity. Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan played a significant role in the development of Lahore and its historical heritage, while rulers from different periods also contributed to the city's progress.

He said the services and spiritual significance of Datta Ganj Baksh (RA) could never be forgotten. However, he observed that the collective efforts required to protect Lahore's historical heritage and preserve the beauty of the city had not been made to the extent necessary.

Hashmi said that ongoing development projects in Lahore were encouraging, but protecting and maintaining them was equally a collective responsibility.

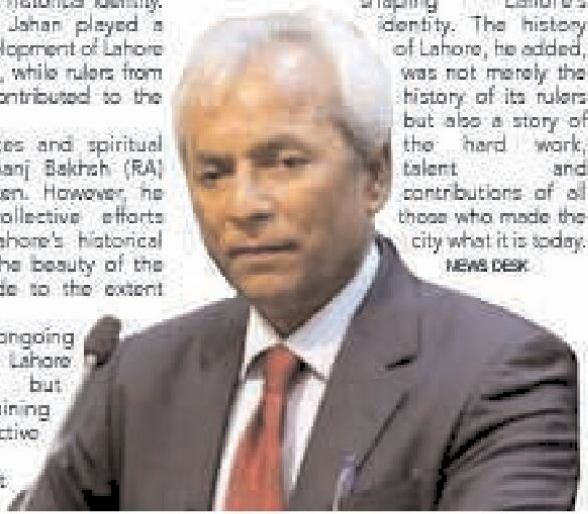
He emphasized that preserving historical

heritage meant safeguarding the nation's culture, identity and the future of coming generations. Citizens must demonstrate responsibility towards their cities, streets and historical landmarks, as connecting the past, present and future was a shared obligation.

Referring to the author, Bakhtiar Sahib, the Governor said he was fortunate to have distinguished intellectual and seasoned politician Ahsan Iqbal attending the ceremony. He expressed hope that Bakhtiar Sahib would highlight in his next book the contributions of all those who had played a role in Lahore's development.

The Governor Sindh stressed that while remembering the kings and rulers who commissioned historic buildings, it was equally important to acknowledge the engineers and labourers who actually constructed them.

He further said that artisans, gardeners, engineers, writers and poets had made valuable contributions to shaping Lahore's identity. The history of Lahore, he added, was not merely the history of its rulers but also a story of the hard work, talent and contributions of all those who made the city what it is today. **NEWS DESK**



## Security beefed up around Adiala Jail following emergency in KP

Security has been tightened around Adiala Jail and adjoining areas following the imposition of an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with additional police personnel deployed and new checkpoints planned on Adiala Road.

According to police sources, additional personnel have been deployed across a six-kilometre area surrounding Adiala Jail to deal with any possible security situation. The Anti-Riot Force has also been deployed as part of the security arrangements.

Sources said eight new checkpoints would be established at different locations along Adiala Road. Vehicles passing through these checkpoints would be searched, while citizens would also be required to present their national identity cards for checking.

Police have advised residents living along Adiala Road and in nearby areas to keep their Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) with them to avoid inconvenience while travelling.

The Rawalpindi district administration has already imposed Section 144 in the area until November 8, restricting activities covered by the order.

The security measures come amid heightened tensions following the federal government's imposition of an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on October 11, 2026. **INP**

## New York hears Lahore's story — culture fest steals show

The Lahore Literary Festival (LLF) returned to New York Saturday, with Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, describing the Punjab capital as a "fountainhead of creativity and intellectual discourse" in the country.

The Asia Society, New York, held a day-long festival in conjunction with the Lahore Literary Festival, one of South Asia's premier cultural events, at which a wide variety of subjects were discussed.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Sheikh, who was accompanied by Pakistan's Consul General in New York Aamer Ahmed Atozai, highlighted Lahore's immense and continuing contribution to Pakistan's literature, drama, theatre, film and performing arts.

He also recalled the historic significance of the Lahore Resolution, adopted in 1940, describing it as a

legendary piece of political literature which transformed into reality affording the ideological foundation for the eventual creation of Pakistan.

LLF founder and CEO Razi Ahmed welcomed the Ambassador for his presence, as did Rachael Cooper on behalf of Asia Society.

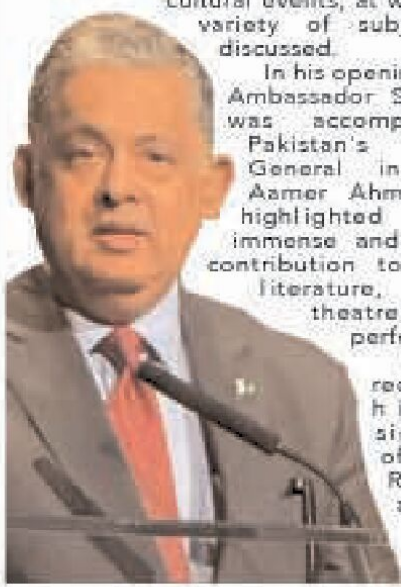
The event brought together distinguished writers, intellectuals and artists, celebrating arts and literature and promoting cultural understanding between Pakistan and the international community.

Speakers presented to American audiences with a more nuanced view of Pakistan, with discussions on fiction and nonfiction writing, art, science, history, and politics.

This year's LLF speakers included Hazel Kahan, Sadia Shepard, Salima Hashmi, Cassim Shepard, Suketu Mehta, Ayeda Husain, Mehreen Jabbar, Sunita Kohli, Farwa Aamer and Felicia Kainat Norton.

In his remarks, Ambassador Sheikh drew on his long personal association with Lahore, saying that nothing quite matched the City in its glory, vibrancy and cultural significance.

Drawing a parallel with the United States, Ambassador Sheikh remarked that Lahore in Pakistan was comparable to New York in America—a city that embodied cultural dynamism, intellectual vitality and national identity. **NEWS DESK**



## NCCIA Islamabad recovers money lost in online fraud

The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) Islamabad has recovered Rs600,000 belonging to a financially struggling citizen who had saved the money for his son's medical treatment but lost it in an online fraud.

An NCCIA official told on Sunday that the agency took prompt action on the citizen's complaint and successfully recovered the amount, providing much-needed relief to the affected family.

The official said the citizen had approached NCCIA Islamabad after losing his savings and lodged a complaint seeking help in recovering the money.

The case was handled by NCCIA officer Waqar, who worked on the complaint and helped ensure the recovery of the amount.

Expressing his gratitude, the affected citizen said he was a poor man and had saved Rs600,000 with great difficulty for the treatment of his ailing son.

I am a poor man and had kept this money for my son's treatment. When I lost it, I was extremely worried because I had no other means to arrange such a large amount, he said.

He said NCCIA Islamabad took his complaint seriously and helped him recover the entire amount.

I am very thankful to NCCIA Director General Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi and Mr Waqar for helping me get my money back. This amount means a lot to my family because it was meant for my son's treatment, he added. The citizen expressed satisfaction over the agency's performance and appreciated the efforts of the officers involved in recovering his savings. **NEWS DESK**

## AIOU extends enrollment deadline for autumn semester

In a major relief for continuing students, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has extended the enrollment deadline for its Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programs for the Autumn 2026 semester.

On the special directions of the Vice Chancellor, AIOU, the last date for enrollment of continuing students has been extended till October 19, 2026.

The decision was taken to facilitate thousands of old students who were unable to complete their enrollment formalities within the earlier deadline.

According to the official notification, the extension applies to all ODL programs offered in Autumn 2026. The university clarified that continuing students can now complete their course registration process through the CMS Portal.

AIOU is one of the largest distance learning universities in Asia, catering to more than a million students across Pakistan. The university regularly issues such extensions to ensure no student is deprived of education due to time constraints.

The administration has advised all continuing students to avail this final opportunity and register their courses immediately to avoid any further inconvenience.

**HEC:** The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has stepped up efforts to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment in higher education institutions by strengthening drug prevention, awareness and control measures.

A meeting on Drug Prevention, Awareness and Control Measures in Educational Institutions was organized by HEC at its Secretariat in Islamabad to review reported cases of drug use and supply and to strengthen preventive measures, institutional monitoring and inter-agency coordination.

Chairman HEC Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar emphasized the importance of a safe and healthy learning environment, reinforcing the need for institutional responsibility, preventive awareness and coordinated efforts to address drug and tobacco abuse in higher education institutions.

Engr. Saleem Ullah Soho, Director General, Research & Analysis Activities (R&AA), HEC, briefed the participants on reported cases during 2025 and January-September 2026, along with the initiatives undertaken by HEC and higher education institutions to address the issue.

Representatives of the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police also shared updates on enforcement and prevention measures, emphasizing coordinated action, institutional accountability and awareness campaigns.

The meeting also proposed a roundtable with heads of public and private higher education institutions in Islamabad and members of their Anti-Drug and

Tobacco Committees to review implementation and develop a coordinated way forward for ensuring drug-free campuses.

**COMSTech, IDF:** OIC-COMSTech and the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) have agreed to expand cooperation in diabetes prevention, research, healthcare capacity-building and professional training across OIC member states, with plans to sign a memorandum of understanding to formalize the partnership.

The understanding was reached during a meeting between Coordinator General OIC-COMSTech Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary and IDF President Prof. Dr. Peter Schwarz at the COMSTech Secretariat in Islamabad.

The meeting was also attended by Prof. Dr. Abdul Basit, Secretary General of the Diabetic Association of Pakistan, representatives of Riphah International University and Indus Hospital & Health Network, and senior COMSTech officials.

Following a presentation on COMSTech's health-related programmes and initiatives, the two sides identified priority areas for collaboration, including halal health products, expansion of the Faith-Based Diabetes Prevention Programme, professional training through the COMSTech Expert Service Programme and promotion of safer and healthier environments.

It was also agreed that OIC-COMSTech and IDF would work in collaboration with Indus Hospital & Health Network and the Diabetic Association of Pakistan, to send healthcare experts to

African OIC member states, particularly countries in the Sahel region, for diabetes prevention, professional training and capacity-building programmes.

Under the proposed initiative, a first group of 20 experts will be mobilised to support local health professionals and institutions in strengthening diabetes prevention and control, community awareness and professional capacity.

The two sides also discussed research collaboration, knowledge-sharing and preventive healthcare approaches aimed at addressing the growing burden of diabetes and related non-communicable diseases in OIC countries. Prof. Choudhary said international partnerships could help connect scientific expertise, professional training and community-based interventions with the healthcare needs of member states, particularly countries facing limited technical and institutional capacity.

Prof. Schwarz emphasised the importance of prevention, professional training and wider institutional cooperation in reducing the burden of diabetes and improving long-term health outcomes.

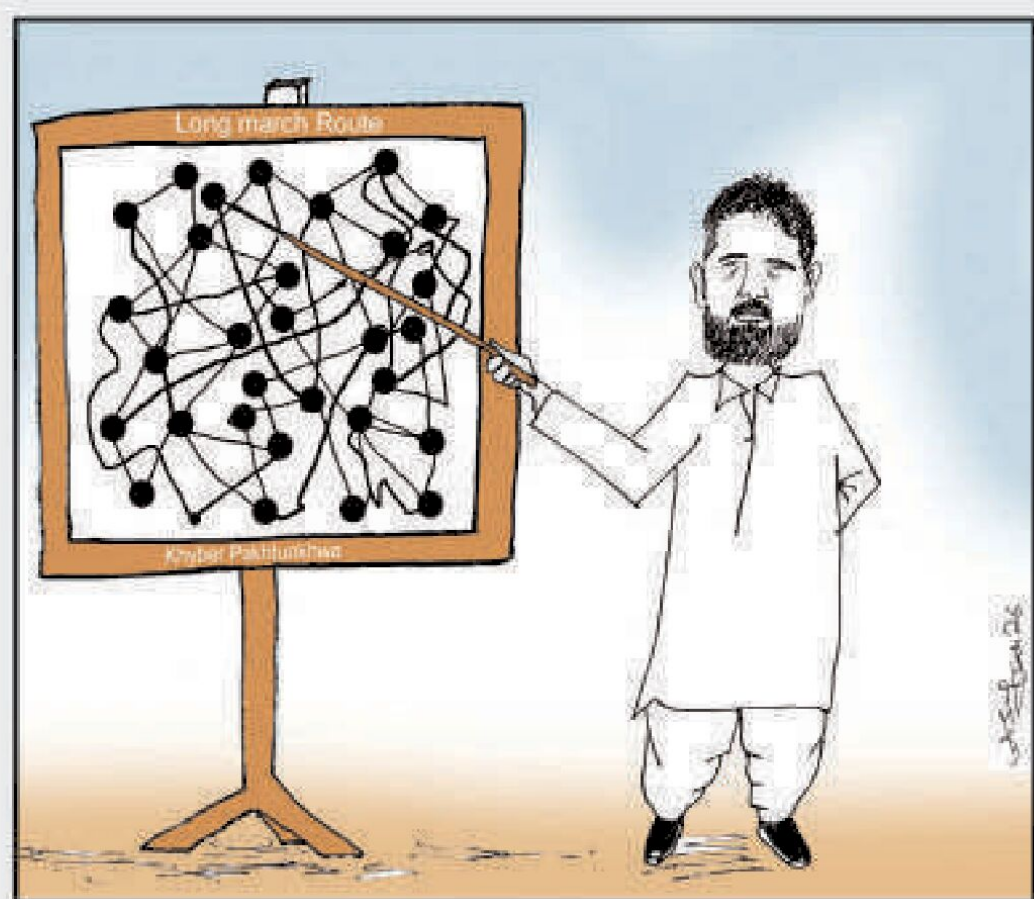
The meeting further agreed that the possibility of OIC-COMSTech obtaining transnational membership of the International Diabetes Federation would be considered at the federation's forthcoming meeting in April 2027.

The proposed MoU is expected to provide an institutional framework for joint training, expert missions, research, prevention programmes and wider cooperation in diabetes control across OIC member states. **NEWS DESK**



# EDITORIAL

DTM



## Saudi Arabia, Yemen must give diplomacy a chance

Three Saudi nationals, including a pilot of the national airline Saudia, were killed in two attacks on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, Saudi authorities said on Friday. Several others were injured, while airport facilities and an aircraft were damaged. The General Authority of Civil Aviation said the attacks took place on Thursday, with the first targeting airport facilities and the second hitting a Saudia aircraft. Airport operations have since returned to normal. The Yemen-based Houthi group claimed responsibility for the airport attack, saying it had launched two cruise missiles. It also claimed attacks on an airport in Najran and an airbase in Khamis Mushait, though Saudi authorities have not confirmed all the reported targets. The latest violence follows earlier strikes on Riyadh and Abha airports that Saudi authorities said killed three people on Wednesday. The deteriorating security situation has disrupted air travel, with Pakistan International Airlines and several other carriers suspending or cancelling flights to Riyadh. Businesses and diplomatic missions have also taken precautionary measures.

The attacks underline the urgent need to prevent the conflict from escalating further. Saudi Arabia has supported Yemen's internationally recognised government in its fight against the Houthis, who have continued to challenge its authority. However, missile attacks on airports and other civilian infrastructure endanger lives, disrupt economic activity and deepen regional instability. Saudi Arabia has legitimate security concerns, but military retaliation alone is unlikely to deliver lasting peace. The Houthis, too, must recognise that attacks on civilian facilities will only increase suffering and make negotiations more difficult. Both sides should give diplomacy a genuine chance, with regional and international powers using their influence to encourage restraint and meaningful dialogue. A ceasefire and a negotiated political settlement offer a more sustainable path than repeated attacks and retaliation. The people of Yemen, already burdened by years of conflict, deserve an end to violence, while Saudi civilians have a right to live without the threat of missile strikes. Diplomacy may be difficult, but the cost of continued escalation will be far greater.

## Why are Pakistanis reluctant to return home?

More than 212,000 Pakistani nationals who travelled to Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah this year have yet to return home, raising questions about the monitoring of religious travel and the possibility of exploitation by human traffickers. The figures warrant a thorough investigation by the relevant authorities, including an examination of travel agents, visa arrangements and the circumstances of those who have remained abroad. However, the number alone does not establish that these people are victims of trafficking or that they have violated any rules. Their whereabouts, visa status and reasons for not returning must be verified before conclusions are drawn. The government must establish whether any individuals were deceived by agents or taken abroad under false promises, and ensure that those at risk of exploitation receive protection. Religious travel must not become a means for criminal networks to exploit people seeking better opportunities.

Yet the government must also ask a more difficult question: why are so many Pakistanis not returning home? Is it possible that some see better prospects in Saudi Arabia than in their own country? Pakistan's shortage of jobs, low wages and limited economic opportunities have pushed many citizens to look for a future abroad. For some, remaining overseas may appear more attractive than returning to uncertainty and financial hardship. This possibility does not excuse visa violations or justify human trafficking, but it points to a deeper problem that cannot be solved through surveillance and enforcement alone. The government must establish the facts, hold anyone responsible for exploitation accountable and strengthen protections for overseas travellers. At the same time, it must create jobs, improve wages and restore public confidence in the domestic economy. People should not feel compelled to use religious travel as a possible route to a better life abroad. The real test of governance is not simply whether citizens return home, but whether they can find decent work and a dignified future when they do.

## Gandhi and the Fading Memory of History

Gandhijee had visited a Bhangi colony during a campaign against untouchability. On his return, he reported his pleasant surprise that the kitchens there appeared far cleaner, better swept and tidier. The few utensils in each kitchen had been washed and brushed until they shone brightly. He had been offered food cooked there, but Gandhijee declined it. His bitter critics triumphantly seized upon this incident as conclusive proof that such a gesture could have resulted solely from caste-based food taboos.

An amusing example of how mere ignorance of Gandhi's life and views in our time has misled prejudiced critics into totally misjudging him can be found in an anecdotal account.

Of late, there has been a spate of virulent attacks on Gandhi. Unlike the entirely prejudiced and concocted or distorted histories produced by cohorts of the Sangh Parivar, these revisionist histories are vigorously promoted narratives based on the observations of contemporary critics of Gandhi who have no links with the saffron camp. Some rely on assessments by hard-boiled Naxalite sceptics who were convinced that Gandhi was a British agent who covered up his links by wrapping a cotton cloth around his torso in winter. He gave advance notice of the launch of every movement to the British rulers so that they could easily snatch it before it got out of hand. Then there are acute readers of contemporary records, Gandhi's notes and Mahadev Desai's memos who triumphantly proclaim to the world that the Saint, under his saintly guise, was a die-hard racist and casteist. This is not merely a hatchet job but a plain extirpation of a vast mythology surrounding an alleged con man and his hoax.

Such virulent and vinegary spew from two sources. Most of these critics were born decades after independence and Gandhi's death, when, under utterly different circumstances, Gandhi's personal charisma had faded into oblivion and his austere ethical style of thinking and working had become simply inaccessible to generations no longer under the shadow of his enormous influence. He had become too remote a figure to touch a chord in their hearts. Utterly strange and irrelevant motives were read into his acts and opinions: His methods had begun to look like voodoo or mystical claptrap. These generations can no longer understand how a man's fast unto death can restore tender, humane feelings in demented mobs numbering thousands, engaged in savage mutual slaughter for days and nights.

Gandhi and his closest followers were profoundly convinced that political activity could be leveraged by unbending ethical impulses and measured by strict ethical principles. They literally believed that adamant resistance to brute power could be accompanied by a complete absence of hatred and rancour towards the tyrants, crooks and monsters holding power. Literally, millions were prepared to shed blood and sacrifice their lives at the altar of such principles and methods. Terrorists who had maimed and murdered British civil servants and flint-hearted bureaucrats could, upon returning from the ghastly dungeons of the Andamans after decades of incarceration and torture, turn into dedicated Gandhians.

Let us briefly examine a few of the allegations. There was a time when untouchability was not merely an inflexible custom but a deeply entrenched religious practice. Gandhi is now regarded as a hypocrite who was forced into professing opposition to it only by Ambedkar's impassioned and logically invincible critique.

But Ramchandras Guha, in his voluminous and well-documented Gandhi: The Years That Changed the World, mentions a curious incident that throws light on Gandhi's real convictions. When he first started an ashram for an ideal communal life, with both moral and financial support from Gujarati followers, an untouchable couple wrote to him asking whether he would agree to admit them into his community. Gandhi knew that he would lose

his large and growing number of devoted followers in a trice if he admitted them and would also be deprived of the funds needed to support the ashram. The next morning, he had his answer ready. He would admit them and allow them to become part of the bigger family. The result was an immediate loss of external support and a total depletion of funds. But he was deeply resolved to struggle on, undaunted. After all, to him, a human being was a human being above everything else.

The next revelation came from a Bengali youth from Kolkata, Amisabha Sengupta, a supporter of CPI(ML), who called me "Hiren mama" (Uncle Hiren).

He had journeyed to Sevagram, one of Gandhi's flourishing ashrams, even in the 1990s. He told me that every inmate or guest there was expected to take part in the most menial tasks of daily life, including cleaning service latrines. With this simple rule, Gandhi had knocked the bottom out of untouchability, which forced certain castes alone to carry out the meanest, lowliest and most despised tasks of society and exposed them to the contempt and sheer horror of more fortunately placed castes.

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The actual reason, as even a child would have known eighty years or so ago, was that Gandhijee's regular diet consisted of goat's milk, then considered more nutritious and healthier than cow's milk, along with a few nuts and cereals. He abstained from all other food. What Gandhijee had learnt from Ambedkar's relentless attacks was the enormity of the injustice and the utter cruelty of the social practices to which untouchables were subjected.

His dilemma was that the freedom movement across the country had gained momentum, while none of the other Congress leaders was the least concerned about the issue. Even the Communists and Socialists were silent. If he broached the subject then, the countryside stir might become confused and hesitant, and its momentum might be lost. Freedom remained the most important objective on the agenda. People belonging to the so-called 'touchable' castes formed the majority of the country's population and also the majority of Congress members.

Hence, although he was deeply touched, he thought the time was not appropriate.

In the course of time, however, the social redemption and uplift of untouchables became one of his major concerns, and he devoted considerable energy and time to the cause. He renamed the 'untouchables' 'Harijans' to purge the term of its derogatory associations.



**HIREN GOHAIN**

Hiren Gohain is an Assamese polymath, scholar, writer, literary critic, and social scientist.

## The International Criminal Court is Under Attack

Meanwhile, the assault on the ICC escalated. Although U.S. President Joseph Biden scrapped Trump's sanctions on the Court and authorized sharing information with it during investigations of Russian atrocities in Ukraine, he and numerous officials of other nations denounced the ICC's November 2024 war crimes arrest warrant for top Israeli officials. Netanyahu assailed what he called "the antisemitic decision" of the ICC and said that Israel refused to comply with it.

On October 9, only hours after the announcement of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Navi Pillay, a former judge on the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Trump administration imposed its latest sanctions on the global judicial body. According to Secretary of State Marco Rubio, "we will ban transactions with this rogue court, cutting off their resources and crippling its ability to operate."

When the ICC became operational in 2002, it represented a major breakthrough for the human rights groups that had campaigned for it. The new organization had the mandate to prosecute individuals for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and, after 2018, the crime of aggression. Once nations ratified the ICC's authorizing document, the Rome Statute, they took responsibility for arresting these individuals and submitting them to the Court for trial. Designed to complement, rather than to replace, national criminal justice systems, the ICC could prosecute cases only when countries were unwilling or unable to do so. A total of 125 countries (nearly two-thirds of the world's nations) have ratified the Rome Statute. Since its founding, the ICC (headquartered in The Hague, the Netherlands) has acted to hold individual perpetrators accountable for the world's gravest atrocities. Its actions included opening



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34 cases (some with more than one suspect), holding 17 different investigations across four continents, issuing 61 arrest warrants, and, thus far, issuing 13 convictions and 4 acquittals.

In the United States, President Bill Clinton signed the Rome Statute, but refused to present it to the U.S. Senate for ratification, warning that it had "significant flaws," including the inability to "protect U.S. officials." His successor, George W. Bush, "unsigned" the treaty in 2002 and signed U.S. legislation authorizing military force to liberate any American nationals it held for crimes. During Trump's first term as President, he denounced the ICC before the UN General Assembly and imposed economic sanctions and visa restrictions on top ICC officials for any effort to investigate the behavior of U.S. personnel in Afghanistan.

Russian officials, too, soon realized that enforcement of international law threatened them. Although, initially, the Russian government signed the Rome Statute and participated constructively in the ICC, it withdrew its signature after Ukraine appealed to the ICC in 2014 and 2015 to investigate Russian war crimes in Ukraine. The ICC did initiate a preliminary inquiry that, after the full-scale Russian invasion of 2022 and Russia's murder of Ukrainian civilians and prisoners of war in Bucha, expanded into a formal investigation.

In 2023, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Russian President Vladimir Putin and Commissioner for Children's Rights Maria Lvova-Belova for the kidnapping of thousands of Ukrainian children.

Denying any wrongdoing in Bucha, the Russian government also dismissed the charge of kidnapping as "outrageous." Dmitry Medvedev, deputy chair of the Russian Security Council, threatened a Russian hypersonic missile attack upon the ICC headquarters.

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ment to ensure that it would not investigate the Republican president and his top officials, now, punishing U.S. sanctions would be imposed on the Court. The Russian government also ramped up its attack. In December 2025, a Russian court, retaliating for the ICC's arrest warrants for Putin and Lvova-Belova, convicted the ICC prosecutor and eight ICC judges, in absentia, of "unlawful prosecution," sentencing

them to terms of imprisonment ranging from 3-1/2 to 15 years. In July 2026, Rubio announced what the U.S. State Department called "a sweeping campaign to dismantle the threat posed by the International Criminal Court to U.S. sovereignty." It would "feature a whole-of-government response to systematically disable the ICC's ability to operate" and destroy the Court "brick by brick." That August, imposing additional sanctions on Court officials, Rubio proclaimed "our unwavering mission to protect Americans from this sham of a court." Meanwhile, U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth called on Latin American and Caribbean governments to sever their ties with the ICC.

Many observers, of course, were appalled by the Trump administration's behavior. The European Union immediately expressed its backing for the ICC, while Germany's Foreign Minister declared that the Court made the world "safer and more just."

In a biting article, Kenneth Roth, a former executive director of Human Rights Watch, argued that "the administration's real goal is to secure impunity for war crimes." Nevertheless, the campaign against the ICC is having a serious impact. In late July, thanks to U.S. government pressure, Venezuela and Chad announced their withdrawal from the Court's Rome Statute. The number of withdrawals now stands at five, including Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. The latter three are ruled by military juntas allied with Russia.

As the Nobel committee warned when announcing the Peace Prize, the "judges and institutions of international law are under political attack." If the attack succeeds, it will produce a disaster not only for the rule of law, but for the cause of human rights.



# OPINION



QUETTA: Locals collect water in pots from a distribution point. INP

## Letters To The EDITOR

### Public decorum at music events

I recently attended a music event where some people were openly consuming alcohol in the presence of children. Such behaviour sets a poor example for younger generations. I also witnessed intoxicated individuals shouting and engaging in physical fights, creating an unpleasant and potentially unsafe environment.

Cultural events should provide a welcoming atmosphere for families and the wider community. Disorderly conduct and the open consumption of harmful substances can discourage families from attending such gatherings.

Event organisers should take effective measures to maintain discipline, ensure public safety and promote responsible behaviour. Everyone deserves to enjoy cultural activities in a peaceful and family-friendly environment.

MUKHTIAR MEHR  
Hub

### Health crises

Through your esteemed newspaper, I would like to draw your attention to Shapuk, a rural area of the district. Kach does not have proper hospitals. It is very unfortunate that Shapuk, despite having a large population, does not have hospitals and basic health facilities.

The people of Shapuk have to travel to Karachi for even minor treatment. In case of an emergency, like road accidents, injuries, or maternity cases, patients die on the way due to lack of emergency treatment.

Ironically, poor people cannot afford the cost of transportation to other cities. Health is a basic right. It is the duty of the provincial government to provide medical facilities to everyone, no matter where they live.

I request the provincial government and its health department to immediately establish a hospital with qualified doctors, nurses, medicines, and emergency services in Shapuk.

ROZATOON SHABEER  
Shapuk, Turbat

### Rising online abuse

Through the columns of your esteemed newspaper, I wish to draw your attention to the rapidly increasing issue of online abuse in our society. This

growing problem is causing severe mental stress, damage to personal reputations, and a loss of trust in digital platforms.

Young students, women, journalists, and ordinary citizens are suffering from anxiety, depression, and stress. Apart from this, online abuse is silencing free speech, spreading misinformation, and creating deep divisions in our society. It fuels hatred between religious, ethnic, and political groups.

Furthermore, targeted practices like doxing and image-based abuse expose individuals' personal addresses, phone numbers, workplaces, or private photos. This exposes victims to real-life stalking and blackmail. Every day, people face cyberbullying, explicit threats, and impersonation without consent.

SAINA MOOSA

Jamak Turbat

### Sanitation workers

Through the columns of your esteemed newspaper, I would like to draw public attention to the crucial contributions and severe challenges faced by sanitation workers in our society.

Sanitation workers play a vital role in keeping our environment clean and healthy. Their daily tasks are extremely demanding—they sweep roads, markets, shops, parks, and other public areas while collecting household garbage to prevent the spread of diseases. Crucially, they clean gutters, manholes, underground sewer lines, and medical waste from hospitals. Despite performing some of the most hazardous jobs, many operate without basic protective gear such as boots, masks, or gloves.

These workers endure harsh weather conditions from early morning to late evening, yet most are employed on low-paying contractual arrangements without social respect or job security. According to reports:

91 percent of sanitation workers clean trash and dirty water with their bare hands.

53 percent receive minimal pay for their intensive physical labor.

79 percent of workers are not compensated for extra hours working.

The vast majority receive little to no medical aid or government support when injured or infected on the job.

Sanitation workers deserve fair wages, proper safety equipment, medical coverage, and above all, dignity. Without them, our towns and cities would become unlivable. I urge the authorities to reform their working conditions and call on citizens to treat them with the respect they truly earn every day.

SHARBANO SAJJAD ALI

Kach

## Why the IMF Keeps Returning

The IMF's critics ask an obvious question: if these programmes are so frequently problematic, why do countries keep signing them? The answer is structural rather than irrational. A country in a balance-of-payments crisis has, by definition, run out of foreign currency. Without an IMF programme, the alternative is typically a disorderly default, loss of access to international capital markets, and an inability to finance essential imports.

The IMF programme, however costly its conditions, at least provides a bridge.

In 2022, Sri Lanka defaulted on its sovereign debt for the first time in its post-independence history. Fuel queues stretched for kilometres. Hospitals ran out of medicines. The president fled the country. Within months, Sri Lanka had signed its seventeenth IMF programme - a number that is worth pausing on. Seventeen. For a country the size of Sri Lanka, with a population of roughly 22 million, to have required IMF intervention seventeen times since independence is not a story of a single crisis, or a single government's failure. It is a story about a structural relationship between certain categories of countries and the international financial system, a relationship in which the IMF sits at the centre, and that deserves to be understood on its own terms rather than through either uncritical acceptance or reflexive dismissal.

### What the IMF Actually Does

The International Monetary Fund was established at Bretton Woods in 1944 with a clear purpose: to provide emergency financing to countries facing balance-of-payments crises - situations where a government runs out of foreign currency and can no longer meet its external debt obligations or pay for essential imports. The idea was straightforward. Currency crises can spread quickly. If one country defaults on its debts, the resulting panic can spill across borders and threaten the wider financial system. The IMF was created to act as an international lender of last resort.

But IMF loans come with conditions. In principle, that makes sense. Any lender wants some assurance that the problems behind the crisis will be addressed. The debate over the past four decades has never really been about whether conditions should exist. It has been about what those conditions have required - and whether they have consistently served the interests of the borrowing country's people, or primarily those of its creditors.

### The Pattern of Conditionality

The standard package of conditions attached to IMF programmes since the 1980s has followed a recognisable template: fiscal austerity reducing government deficits by cutting expenditure and raising taxes; monetary tightening raising interest rates to stabilise currencies and control inflation; trade and financial liberalisation removing barriers to imports and capital flows; and privatisation - selling state-owned enterprises to raise revenue and improve efficiency. This package became known as structural adjustment, and by the 1990s it had been applied, with variations, across Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and large parts of Asia.

Joseph Stiglitz, who served as chief economist of the World Bank during this period before leaving in protest, subsequently argued that the IMF's one-size-fits-all approach caused serious harm in country after country, deepening recessions rather than ending them, dismantling the public institutions countries needed to recover, and prioritising creditor repayment over economic stabilisation. His critique was not that emergency lending was wrong, but that the specific conditions attached to it reflected the ideological preferences of creditor governments, primarily the United States and Western Europe, more than the developmental needs of the borrowing country.

The East Asian financial crisis of 1997-98 sharpened this debate. When Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea sought IMF assistance after their currencies collapsed, the programmes imposed austerity and fiscal contraction in economies already contracting sharply - the opposite of what macroeconomic theory would prescribe for a recession. Malaysia, which chose not to take an IMF programme and instead imposed capital controls, recovered faster than its neigh-

bours that did. The IMF later acknowledged that some of its prescriptions during that crisis were mistaken.

### Ghana, Pakistan and Argentina: The Same Story in Different Registers

The contemporary evidence is no less mixed. Ghana entered an IMF programme in 2023 after its debt burden became unsustainable, with the programme requiring steep cuts to public subsidies, a VAT increase, and wage restraint for public workers conditions that fell heavily on the population least responsible for the debt accumulation. Pakistan has been in and out of IMF programmes with such regularity - 23 programmes since 1958 - that the programmes themselves have become part of Pakistan's political economy, with governments using the IMF's demands as political cover for austerity they might have implemented anyway but prefer not to own.

Argentina's relationship with the IMF is the most extensively documented and the most painful. After a \$57 billion programme in 2018, the largest in the IMF's history at the time, failed to prevent Argentina's currency collapse and subsequent default, the IMF commissioned an internal review that found - significant errors in its analysis of Argentina's debt sustainability. A new programme negotiated in 2023 required primary fiscal surpluses in an economy still recovering from pandemic-driven contraction. Argentina's debt to the IMF has become a defining issue in its domestic politics, invoked by governments across the ideological spectrum as a constraint on sovereign economic decision-making.

### Why Countries Keep Returning

The IMF's critics ask an obvious question: if these programmes are so frequently problematic, why do countries keep signing them? The answer is structural rather than irrational. A country in a balance-of-payments crisis has, by definition, run out of foreign currency. Without an IMF programme, the alternative is typically a disorderly default, loss of access to international capital markets, and an inability to finance essential imports. The IMF programme, however costly its conditions, at least provides a bridge. Countries return not because the programmes work in the way their architects intend, but because the alternative unassisted default in a world financial system designed by and for creditors - is often worse.

The Bretton Woods Project, which monitors the IMF and World Bank, has argued that Sri Lanka's seventeenth programme risks producing the same outcome as its previous sixteen: short-term stabilisation that addresses creditor concerns without resolving the underlying structural vulnerabilities, potentially setting up a further crisis, with some analysts projecting another Sri Lankan default as early as 2028. This is not simply the failure of one programme or another. It reflects a deeper problem in the way the international financial system is organised. The institution responsible for managing sovereign debt crises is also one whose governance gives the greatest influence to the countries whose financial institutions are often the largest creditors. The IMF's voting system allocates influence according to economic size, leaving the United States with effective veto power over major decisions. That creates a tension the institution has never fully resolved. It is expected to serve all its members, yet its decision-making is shaped disproportionately by a small group of wealthy creditor nations. Understanding why the IMF keeps returning to the same countries means understanding that tension not as evidence of bad faith, but as a structural feature of an international financial architecture built for the post-war world of 1944 and only partially adapted to the realities of today's global economy.



UTKARSH MISHRA

Utkarsh Mishra is research scholar

## Bangladeshi Fashion Workers and a German law (part-1)

Every Saturday, a bundle of printed advertising brochures still lands in the mailboxes of millions of households in Germany. Aldi Nord invites you to a pleasure trip to Greece, Penny offers cheap sparkling wine, and Lidl offers loungewear. A woman walks through the picture under the Esamara lettering, in beige fine-knit pants and a striped fine-knit sweater. Next to it are pictures of panties and a soft bra. From Monday, you can get a whole outfit for under €30 (about \$35).

While the original whitewashing was simply the painting of a surface - such as a house - with a lime-based mixture for sanitation, more recently whitewashing has come to mean the

covering up of corporate scandals to make them appear better. This is why corporate public relations - evil heretics call it corporate propaganda - exists.

It gets worse. Next came greenwashing, which is the deceptive marketing of a corporation or a product. It portrays polluting corporations, or environmentally damaging - or even dangerous - products, as more environmentally friendly or sustainable than they actually are. In the world of business schools, greenwashing is smoke-screened through two ideologies: business ethics and corporate social responsibility.

Of course, greenwashing also includes carbon-washing. This occurs when corporations exaggerate or misrepresent - evil heretics call it corporate lies and deceptions - the extent of their carbon footprint reduction efforts and investments in carbon offsetting initiatives.

It becomes what it actually is: mere window dressing - or, as some might call it, putting lipstick on a pig. In any case, the idea of carbon-washing is to make corporations appear greener and more sustainable than they actually are.

But wait, there's more. Since the recent watering down of Europe's supply chain law, corporate PR vandals now have an even newer tool to make corporations appear good. This is where supply chain washing comes in.

This is about making corporate supply chains look better than they actually are, hiding environmental destruction and slave-labor-like working conditions down the supply chain. With supply chain washing, workers in distant factories can be mistreated and underpaid - or not paid at all, or both - while a corporation still looks good.

Since Stanley Milgram, we have known that the more distant the victims are, the more they will be tormented. Adolf Hitler never visited a single concentration camp.

The more steps down the supply chain - and the more distant a production facility is - the better for corporations.

While corporations no longer run concentration camps as they did in Nazi Germany, today's corporate profit maximization often starts in a distant factory.

All too often, these corporate profits are made on the backs of workers in distant sweatshops, and often at the cost of the natural environment. To camouflage both, supply chain washing helps corporate managers make their corporations look good.

It is no mistake that, in the supply chain, this is part and parcel of what corporations do. The recent watering down of Europe/Germany's supply chain law allows for both: corporations can look good while still causing harm to workers and the environment in distant places.

In other words, a seamstress in Bangladesh, for example, can be beaten by her supervisor, and the fashion company can still look good at the other end - a fashion store in the Global North. The case of the beaten worker in Bangladesh puts Germany's supply chain act to the test: if it works for corporations, not workers.

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7,000 kilometers further southeast, Hemalika packs a sweater into a cardboard box. It is the last step of a production chain in which threads are dyed, fabrics are woven, and parts are sewn. Before the finished textiles land on Hemalika's workboard, other employees sew labels onto them - Esamara is written on them. Hemalika stands for millions of women in her country, Bangladesh.

All that unites them with Germany are textiles - for €9.99, €8.99, €4.99 (€5 ? \$6). Germans consume; they produce. With Germany's Lieferkettensorgfaltspflichtengesetz, or Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG), introduced at

the beginning of 2023, Germans and Bangladeshi workers have even more in common: a small piece of German law.

According to that law, the original idea was that it should no longer matter what happens on the other side of the world where production is carried out for German profits. In reality, consumers think these workers are safe and that they are buying fairly produced clothes at low prices. In reality, local seamstresses often do not even know their rights.

Although the law has been in force for three years - surprise, surprise - not a single case has become publicly known in which labor law violations in a supply chain have actually had noticeable consequences for a German company. In other words, the window dressing works. Corporations are seen as good companies while they mistreat workers - without any consequences.

Welcome to modern capitalism with an Orwellian twist. In George Orwell's 1984, the Ministry of Love functions as the epicenter of surveillance, torture, and brainwashing. Under Germany's Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, workers in Bangladesh can be beaten and nothing happens - except that these corporations can now say, "we comply with the LkSG," and German consumers are led to believe they are buying from a decent shop.

This is unlikely to change. In an industrial area in Gazipur, near Dhaka, Hemalika stands at her workboard on a Saturday in August 2025 when her department head approaches her. He does not like her work, so he strikes her. It is noon in one of the largest industrial areas of Bangladesh. Textile factories line the streets, interspersed with small workshops and residential buildings. Hemalika's workplace is here-the factory of Fiat Fashion Ltd.



THOMAS KLIKAUER

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# NATIONAL

DTM

## NADRA urges pensioners to submit Proof of Life Certificates directly

The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has clarified that banks have no role in the approval or updating of the Proof of Life Certificate (POLC) related to pension payments.

During a NADRA podcast, a question was raised about what pensioners should do if their Proof of Life Certificate is not accepted or updated by a bank or pension controller. Responding to the question, a NADRA spokesperson explained that the process takes place directly between the pension recipient and the relevant institution responsible for disbursing the pension.

According to the spokesperson, some individuals have raised concerns about why their POLC is not being accepted or updated by their bank or pension authority. In this regard, NADRA clarified that banks have been excluded from the entire process under the Proof of Life Certificate system.

The clarification further explained that the actual transaction in pension-related matters takes place between the pension recipient and the pension-disbursing institution, while the bank remains entirely separate from this process. Therefore, pensioners do not need to submit their applications through their banks.

According to NADRA, pensioners can submit their applications directly to the relevant authority or department responsible for issuing their pensions through NADRA's mobile application.

NADRA has urged pensioners not to

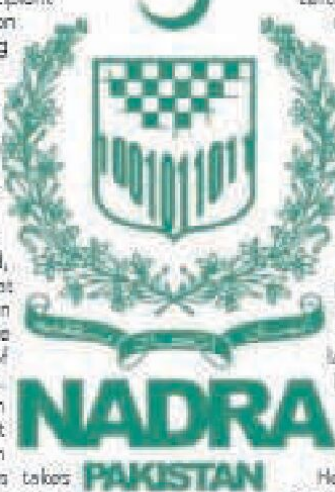
hold banks responsible for matters concerning Proof of Life Certificates, as the application process and transmission of the certificate to the relevant institution are handled directly through NADRA's mobile application.

**Pakistan Railways:** The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has clarified that Pakistan Railways is best placed to explain the underlying reasons for the difficulties faced by its pensioners in obtaining 'Proof of Life' certificates. However, NADRA has developed the technological platform required to provide pensioners with access to this digital facility.

Speaking during a podcast, NADRA spokesperson Syed Shahab Ali said that a project is underway to provide digital Proof of Life certificate services to pensioners affiliated with various institutions across the country. However, given the large number of Pakistan Railways pensioners, it is essential to bring the railway department on board as part of the initiative.

He explained that NADRA has completed the work falling within its responsibilities, while final approval from Pakistan Railways is still awaited.

Responding to a question, he said that NADRA and Pakistan Railways would need to work together on the project before railway pensioners could be included in the digital service. He further stated that once Pakistan Railways grants approval to move the project forward, its pensioners will be incorporated into the digital Proof of Life system as soon as possible. **W**



## Former militant commander Noor Bugti surrenders

In a significant development for peace and reconciliation efforts in Balochistan, former militant commander Noor Khan Bugti surrendered before Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti in Sui on Sunday and formally rejoined the national mainstream along with his associates and family members.

A total of 60 individuals laid down their arms and pledged allegiance to Pakistan during the event held at Pakistan House, Sui.

The development took place during an open public forum (Khuli Kachehri) convened by the chief minister. Noor Khan Bugti and his companions took an oath of loyalty to Pakistan, signalling their commitment to

abandoning militancy and becoming part of the country's constitutional and political framework.

According to a CM's Secretariat press release, Noor Khan Bugti had remained in hiding in the mountains for the past two decades and had allegedly been involved in several terrorist activities.

Following his surrender and return to the national mainstream, he and his family will settle in Sui. His return is being viewed as a major step towards improving law and order and promoting long-term peace and stability in the region.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that loyalty to the State of Pakistan, adherence to the Constitution and the rule of law, and commitment to national unity were the foundations of sustainable peace and development.

He said establishing peace and stability in Balochistan and across the country was a collective national responsibility, adding that recognising the writ of the state and abandoning violence were essential for achieving this objective.

The chief minister said



Pakistan was the shared homeland of all its citizens and that no compromise could be made on its security, sovereignty and stability.

He emphasised that standing with the state was the only way to ensure the protection of lives and property, economic progress, educational advancement and a brighter future for the younger generation.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti maintained that violence and unrest could never provide a lasting solution to any issue. Instead, he said, the path to national development and prosperity lay through peace, mutual trust, the rule of law and collective efforts.

He noted that the people of Balochistan desired peace, development and prosperity and urged the province's youth to utilise their talents and abilities for the country's progress and play a

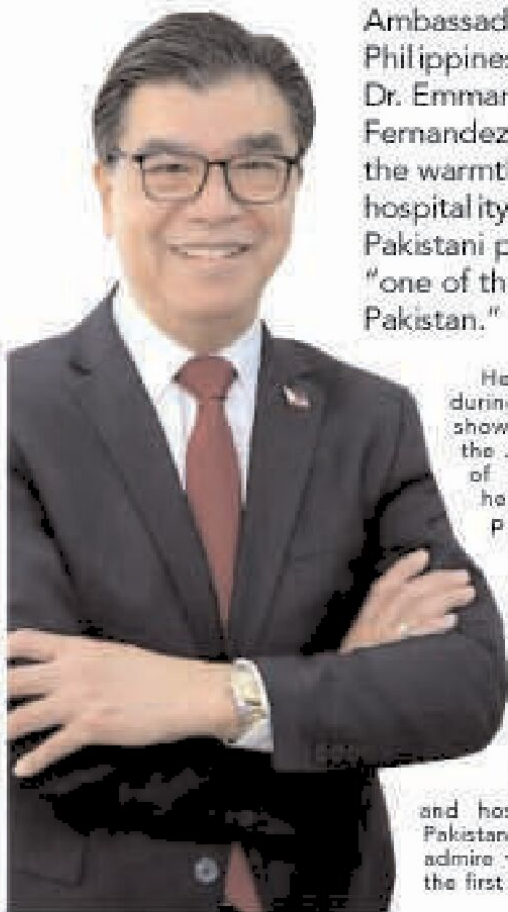
constructive role in national development.

He further remarked that the decision to return to the national mainstream and align with the state would not only benefit the individuals concerned but would also positively impact their families and the future of the region.

The chief minister said state institutions were actively fulfilling their responsibilities to establish enduring peace in Balochistan, while cooperation from all segments of society remained essential for achieving the shared goals of national unity, legal order and development.

The surrender of Noor Khan Bugti and dozens of his associates is being regarded as an important milestone in ongoing efforts aimed at strengthening peace, reinforcing state authority and encouraging reconciliation in Balochistan. **NEWS DESK**

## Warm hospitality 'a jewel of Pakistan': Philippine envoy



Ambassador of the Philippines to Pakistan Dr. Emmanuel R. Fernandez has termed the warmth and hospitality of the Pakistani people as "one of the jewels of Pakistan."

He was speaking during a video talk show organized by the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) here, sharing his personal impressions of living and working in Pakistan.

"In terms of my wonderful experience in Pakistan, I would say that it is the warmth and hospitality of the Pakistani people that I admire very much. From the first time I set foot in

Pakistan, I already felt that warmth," he said.

Recalling an encounter with local residents, the ambassador said he and his wife were walking through a shopping mall when a group of children approached them.

"Out of nowhere, a group of children just came up to us. They weren't shy at all. They politely asked for our names and wanted to take a picture with us. Later, we went to the National Monument, and the exact same thing happened. People just welcomed us with open arms," he said.

"You don't see that in other countries. You only see it in Pakistan. I truly think that is the one jewel of Pakistan - the warmth of your hospitality," he added.

Highlighting the country's natural beauty, Dr. Fernandez said Pakistan's diverse landscapes were another major attraction.

"And, of course, the other jewel is the beauty of Pakistan itself. As I always say, Pakistan is a very huge and beautiful country. You have everything here. You have snow-capped mountains, deserts, plains, bustling cities and serene

rural areas. It is a beautiful country, and that diversity goes far beyond just geography," he said.

Dr. Fernandez, who also serves as chairman of the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad, emphasized Pakistan's cultural and linguistic diversity, describing it as an experience the other countries should explore.

"Culturally, linguistically and in so many other areas, Pakistan is incredibly diverse," he said.

"I think it is an experience that other countries should have. And it is something that ASEAN, in particular, should not simply experience, but use as a driving force to steer towards greater, deeper cooperation with our region," he added.

The ambassador expressed confidence that relations between Pakistan and ASEAN member states could be further strengthened through mutual respect, cultural understanding and people-to-people exchanges, alongside appreciation for Pakistan's breathtaking landscapes and renowned hospitality. **NEWS DESK**

## FGEHA rejects unapproved housing scheme agreement

Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) has disowned an unauthorized document purportedly containing commitments regarding land, allotment, development and payment matters in connection with the Park Road/Margalla Orchard Housing Scheme.

According to an FGEHA spokesperson, the document, purportedly executed between the Director Land of FGEHA and Sadeer Ahmad Chaudhary, son of Muhammad Sharif, and Syed Tanveer Hassan Shah, son of Syed Ishaq Hussain Shah, has been circulating on social media and among stakeholders of the housing scheme.

The spokesperson clarified that the document had neither been issued nor approved by the competent authority of FGEHA and did not represent the authority's official position, decision, undertaking, commitment or assurance.

FGEHA has expressly disowned the

document and all representations, arrangements and obligations purportedly contained therein, stating that it would have no binding effect or legal consequence against the authority.

The spokesperson further clarified that no FGEHA officer, including the Director Land, was competent to independently bind the authority to any settlement, compromise, financial arrangement or other substantive commitment unless specifically authorized by the FGEHA Executive Board.

The authority advised all members, allottees, applicants and other stakeholders not to rely on or act upon the document, particularly by making payments or entering into transactions or arrangements on its basis.

Stakeholders have been urged to rely exclusively on documents and communications issued through FGEHA's authorized channels.

The spokesperson added that the authority reserved the right to take appropriate legal action against the unauthorized use or circulation of documents purporting to be official FGEHA documents or undertakings.

The public notice has been issued in the public interest to prevent stakeholders from being misled by the unauthorized document. **NEWS DESK**

## Ulaqab to Bahawalpur: Exploring a future in AI, innovation

At first glance, Ulaqab in north China's Inner Mongolia and Bahawalpur in southern Pakistan may appear worlds apart. Yet the two regions share a striking landscape of dry weather, vast open spaces and sandy terrain.

Their development stories, however, are taking increasingly different directions: while Bahawalpur is exploring new opportunities in technology, higher education and innovation, Ulaqab has leveraged its geographic, climatic and energy advantages to become a growing hub for computing power and artificial intelligence.

According to China Economic Net (CEN), a visit to Ulaqab's computing facilities shows how a region traditionally associated with energy and natural resources is becoming part of China's rapidly expanding digital infrastructure.

The city has been integrated into China's national "East Data, West Computing" strategy, which channels computing resources toward western regions where land, energy and climatic conditions can support large-scale data centers.

For Pakistan, the transformation raises an important question: could regions with similar dryland environments develop new economic opportunities by connecting energy, education, technology and digital infrastructure?

According to Zhang Xiaoliang, of the Economic Bureau of Chahar High-tech Zone, Ulaqab possesses several advantages that make it suitable for data-center development.

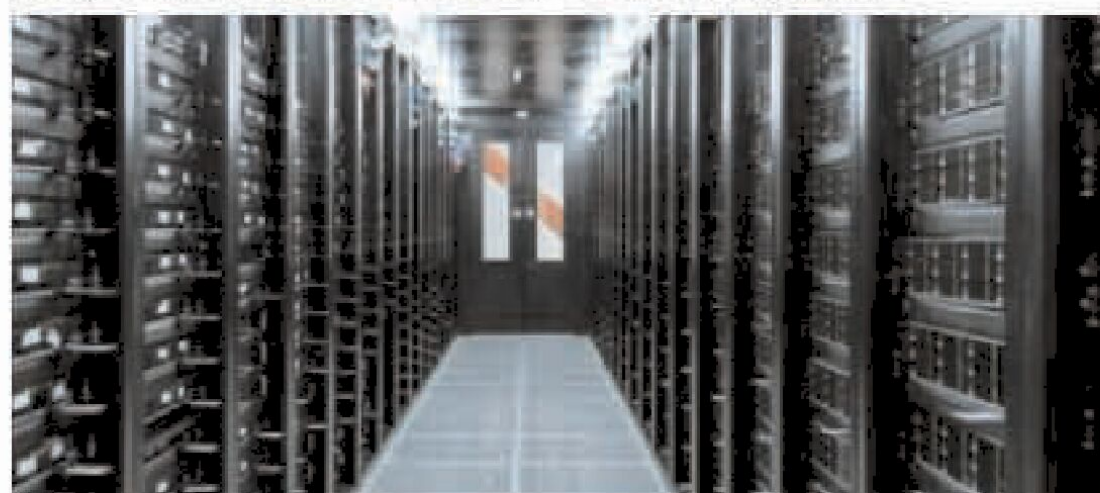
"Inner Mongolia has its own power grid," Zhang explained, noting that electricity availability and comparatively favorable power costs are important

advantages for data centers, which require stable and large-scale energy supplies.

He also highlighted Ulaqab's proximity to Beijing, its relatively cool climate and geological conditions as factors

and is developing a source-grid-load-storage project combining wind, solar and energy storage.

The wider Inner Mongolia model is also increasingly associated with green computing.



supporting the development of computing infrastructure.

The city's strategy is increasingly linking computing power with green energy. Centrin Data's Ulaqab computing-power cluster, located in the Chahar High-tech Development Zone, is part of the Inner Mongolia national computing hub.

The company has planned several large data centers

More than 85 percent of electricity used by regional data centers reportedly comes from clean energy, demonstrating how renewable power can be integrated with energy-intensive AI infrastructure.

But the lesson for Pakistan may not be about building identical data centers. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kamran, Vice Chancellor of The Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB),

argues that the more important question is whether computing infrastructure can be connected with universities, research, industry, energy and human capital.

"Computing capacity has to be tied to reliable energy, research institutions, universities, industry and people who actually know how to use it," Kamran said.

For Bahawalpur, this perspective is particularly relevant. IUB is expanding its focus on emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and quantum computing.

The university has introduced AI-related learning across disciplines and established an Artificial Intelligence Research and Advancement Lab. It also launched an advanced Quantum Computing programme in 2026.

Kamran said the value of cooperation with China should extend beyond equipment or individual projects. International partnerships, in his view, can provide technology, expertise and exposure, but Pakistani universities ultimately need to develop their own research capacity, skilled graduates and stronger links with industry.

He stated that the comparison between Ulaqab and Bahawalpur does not mean Pakistan can simply reproduce Inner Mongolia's development model.

The two regions have different energy systems, industrial structures and economic conditions. Instead, Ulaqab offers a case study in how natural advantages can be connected with infrastructure and economic demand.

For Bahawalpur, the opportunity could therefore lie in connecting its universities, young population, research institutions and emerging technology capabilities with broader national and international digital networks. **NEWS DESK**



# NATIONAL



## PM: PTI won't be allowed to derail economy

Continued from Page 1

"They ruled for thirteen years and are now pushing Pakistan to destruction," the prime minister opined.

Recounting steps for economic stability, he highlighted improvements in key economic indicators, noting that national remittances had increased, fiscal discipline had strengthened, and State Bank reserves had reached historic highs.

The prime minister also referred to the completion and inauguration of key technology infrastructure (such as the Deanship/National IT Park in Islamabad built via international cooperation) to support startups, SMEs, artificial intelligence innovation, and youth empowerment. Plans to replicate these hubs across major cities like Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, and Quetta were on foot, he added.

About the role in the Gulf mediation and peace efforts, the prime minister emphasized Pakistan's active, sincere diplomatic role in striving to de-escalate tensions and secure ceasefires in the Gulf region, working closely with allies like Saudi Arabia and Qatar, alongside engagement with Iran.

He also appreciated the roles of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, DPM/FM Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Mohsin Naqvi in this regard.

Reaffirming deep-rooted historic ties, he stressed that Saudi Arabia is a highly trusted brotherly nation. He strongly condemned escalations and threats in regional waterways (such as the Bab-al-Mandab strait) and drone attacks targeting holy sites, declaring them a red line and asserting that Pakistan stands in absolute solidarity with Saudi security and the protection of Makkah and Madinah.

## Kundi sets fight against terrorism as aim in Advisory Council's first meeting

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday chaired the first meeting of the KP Advisory Council, which was formed by the federal government following the imposition of an emergency and governor's rule in the province.

At the outset of the meeting, all members of the council introduced themselves and their portfolios.

Addressing the meeting, Kundi congratulated the members of the council, while noting that they would have to face many challenges. He said that they would get a briefing on the portfolios they had been assigned and would get a few days to familiarise themselves.

"We have to fast-track things. There will be zero tolerance on corruption. Things should be done in a timely manner," he said, adding that they would have to demonstrate a clear difference from the work done by their predecessors.

He said that the first order of business was the law and order situation, adding that there should be no hesitation in taking inspiration from the other provinces.

Kundi then went on to read out a message for the people of the province, in which he said that due to "extraordinary circumstances", "necessary measures" were taken under the Constitution.

price for the terrorism that plagued the province.

"The time has now come to give the people of the province, who have rendered these sacrifices, the right to peace. Our fight is against terrorism. Our fight

Therefore, the state had resolved that terrorism would be eliminated from KP and the people would be allowed to live their lives without fear.

"My first priority will be protecting the peace and the people. Right now, our biggest priority is taking effective steps against terrorism. For this, the capacity of the police and the Counter Terrorism Department will be increased," he said. He went on to say that another objective would be to cater to the people.

"More statements are not the real test of a government, rather the service it provides to the people," he said. Kundi said that the council would focus on healthcare, education, and employment. The last objective, he said, would be to eliminate the whole ecosystem giving rise to terrorism in the province.

"We cannot solve the issue by just targeting terrorists. Those facilitating and financing... must be eliminated," he said, adding that those involved in terrorism would be dealt with according to the law. He assured the people of KP that the "extraordinary steps" taken were not meant to target a particular party or group. Kundi said that the main purpose was to ensure peace and security as he asked for their cooperation. NEWS DESK



He said that he would refrain from levelling allegations and political rhetoric. "I have one message: peace, protection and stability have to be brought back to KP," he said. He added that the people of KP had paid a huge

is against the ideology and network which facilitates terrorism and weakens the implementation of the law," he said.

He also said that Pakhtuns were not a cause of terrorism, but were the "biggest victims".

He said that the current situation was an "opportunity" as he called for building the province's soft image. "If we have peace, we will get tourists and investors. My support is with you. I am available for you 24/7," he said.

## Security tightened in Peshawar, Rawalpindi: KP House sealed

In Islamabad, the main opposition alliance — which would typically hold pressers at KP House — could not find a place to hold a press conference in the urban areas as KP House was sealed.

The Tehreek-e-Tahafuz-e-Ayn-e-Pakistan (TTAP) has therefore decided to hold its presser at Jamia Al Wilaya near Bhara Kahu on the Murree Expressway.

TTAP spokesperson Akhunda Hussain Ahmed Yousafzai said that after deciding to hold a press conference, the alliance initially thought to go to KP House, but came to know that it had been sealed. He added that they then decided to hold it at the National Press Club (NPC), but were refused by the club despite being willing to pay the fee.

"Now we have decided to hold the presser at Bhara Kahu," he said. Shipping containers were placed around the city of Peshawar to block roads after the imposition of the emergency.

Containers were placed near Peshawar's railway station to block the routes towards Khyber Bazaar, Shaba Bazaar and beyond. They were also placed near Edwardes College to block entry to Jail Road and Malik Saad Shamsud Flyover, while people were turned away from Sher Shah Suri Road as it was reported to be completely closed.

Police were reportedly deployed in significant numbers, particularly around Governor

House. The deployment included personnel called from other districts. The road leading to Khyber Road was shut down by a container and the traffic control gate closed. A large number of police personnel were also seen around Suroy Pul, a favoured spot for protesters.

Grand Trunk (GT) Road was blocked by containers at Firdous Chowk and the correspondent reported a large number of police



personnel in the area. Only pedestrians were allowed to move ahead. Additionally, containers near Bala Hissar Fort and outside the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) office on Arbab Road blocked entry towards Mall Road.

Only official vehicles were being allowed to travel from Governor House towards the Chief Minister's House, while tight security was reported on Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum road where they

are located. The Civil Secretariat was seen to be deserted.

Royal Artillery (RA) Bazaar has been closed, while Saddar remains partially open.

Additionally, Peshawar's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations were reported to be shuttered by Dawn's correspondent.

The stretch of Khyber Road connecting to University Road and Airport Road at Aman Chowk was reported to be open but with low traffic. A large police contingent was seen at Aman Chowk. Meanwhile, University Road was blocked by containers at Tehkal, and containers at Stadium Chowk allowed for only single-file passage of vehicles on both sides.

Earlier, traffic jams were reported due to the closure of Khyber Road, which connects GT Road with the eastern side of University Road and serves as the

main artery and choke point. The resulting diversions created pressure on auxiliary roads.

The area is part of the cantonment, and the Red Zone contains important installations such as the Corps Commander's House, civil secretariat, central police office, CM Secretariat, CM House and Governor House.

All telecoms services, including landline and DSL, are reported to be suspended in the provincial capital. The city had witnessed a nearly 48-hour mobile service blackout just days ago, on account of the presence of the PTI in the city for its long march. On Saturday, KP Inspector General of Police (IGP) Zulfiqar Hameed put district police on alert for possible violent protests and sabotage in the event of an emergency in the province, emphasizing caution in the use of force.

A notification issued by the IGP's office said district police officers (DPOs) could issue appropriate directions, instructions or guidelines to regulate protests and ensure public safety. In the event of violence, they could also take necessary legal action.

Security has been tightened around Adisha Jail and adjoining areas following the imposition of an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with additional police personnel deployed and new checkpoints planned on Adisha Road. AGENIES

## KP under governor's rule after security deterioration

Continued from Page 1

Separately, 15 officers belonging to the Pakistan Administrative Service have been transferred out of KP and directed to report to the Establishment Division, according to information provided in the transfer orders.

The transferred officers include personnel in grades 18 through 21.

Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen leader Allama Nasir Abbas condemned the imposition of emergency, describing it as a blow to federalism and democratic representation.

He questioned why emergency measures were being imposed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa when similar measures had not resolved security challenges in Balochistan.

Nasir Abbas said the province's population, particularly its young people, deserved respect for their electoral choices. He also warned that operations resulting in civilian casualties could not be supported.

The Tehreek-e-Tahafuz-e-Aain Pakistan, or Movement for the Protection of the Constitution of Pakistan, described Governor's Rule as a violation of constitutional principles and an insult to the electorate's mandate.

In a statement, the alliance said the decision could deepen political instability and increase tensions between the federation and the

province. It announced plans to convene a meeting and formulate a joint strategy with its allies.

Jamaat-e-Islami chief Hafiz Naeemur Rahman also opposed the move, saying emergency rule and Governor's Rule were not solutions to the province's problems.

ANP President Senator Aimal Wali Khan said he remained opposed to Governor's Rule and emergency measures, describing them as undemocratic and contrary to democratic traditions.

However, he clarified that his opposition did not amount to support for the PTI's governance in the province, which he criticised on financial, administrative and political grounds. In contrast, Sunni religious leader Allama Ata Muhammad Dershani welcomed the imposition of emergency.

The decision has triggered a fresh political confrontation between the federal government and opposition parties, with the PTI and several other political groups vowing to challenge the move.

While the federal government has cited security concerns and the need for effective counterterrorism measures, opposition leaders argue that the decision undermines constitutional protections, provincial autonomy and the electoral mandate. Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar told a news conference in Islamabad that the arrangement would initially remain in place for six months. NEWS DESK

## Fazl accuses Centre of U-turn

Continued from Page 1

At a press conference, Fazlur Rehman said he was unwilling to accept what he described as an unconstitutional move and pledged to struggle for the restoration of constitutional rights.

He outlined his role in recent negotiations between the federal government and the opposition, saying opposition leaders and federal ministers had approached him after his return from Umrah on October 7 to help resolve the political deadlock.

According to Fazlur Rehman, the government had asked for the PTI's long march to be called off, while the PTI had demanded access to Imran Khan and implementation of the court's order regarding his medical treatment.

He said he had spoken to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and sought assurances that the PTI's demands would be addressed if the march was withdrawn.

Fazlur Rehman alleged that the government proceeded with the emergency decision despite the ongoing mediation efforts.

He questioned why similar measures had not been taken in Balochistan, arguing that the security situation there was also severe. The JUI-F chief criticised the government's counterterrorism approach, saying successive military operations had failed to deliver lasting peace. He stressed that security operations should not come at the cost of civilian lives.

Fazlur Rehman said his party would decide on future protests, including possible joint demonstrations with the PTI, as the situation developed. NEWS DESK

## KP govt in cahoots with terrorists, claim ministers

Continued from Page 1

He said the "unholy alliance and the nexus between them, as a result of which they had outsourced several districts to terrorists," enabled the martyrdom of people and attacks on civilian infrastructure.

"I say this publicly that these [Taliban] are foreign-funded people who want to bring our country to destruction," he said, asserting that a provincial government's facilitation towards such elements was a "constitutional breakdown".

Tarar referred to the recent bill regarding police assignments and alleged that the KP government wanted to "hire individuals from terrorist groups in the police". "They were gradually dragging the entire province towards destruction, irrefutable proof and evidence of which is available."

Meanwhile, the interior minister warned the groups gathered in parts of KP — an apparent reference to PTI supporters taking part in its long march — to disperse as they did not have any "provincial protection".

"Whoever is caught, complete legal action will be taken and that person themselves will be responsible for it. We will deal with them strictly, so it is my request that please disperse." Responding to a query, Naqvi said, "We have to restore law and order in KP and we will take whatever action is needed for that, and we will normalise the situation as soon as we can."

Asked about the reported arrests of KP

ministers, Naqvi said individuals would be held under preventative detention where required to maintain law and order, whereas those "wanted will be arrested".

On the KP emergency, the law minister explained that an Area Development Secretariat (ADS), overseen by the governor, has been formed by the federal government to directly manage 12 districts "that were nearly in a war situation".

He noted that Parliament assumes the legislative powers of the provincial assembly as the latter stands non-functional. The minister then questioned the KP cabinet's performance, hailed the province getting "rid of this group" and provided details of a technocratic KP Advisory Council.

The 11-member council has been formed by the Centre as part of the emergency measures under Article 232 of the Constitution. It will assist the governor in exercising the functions of the KP government on behalf of the federal government. The province's home affairs will be overseen by former prisons chief Kifayatullah Khan, described as "very competent" by Tarar. Tariq Mahmood Pasha, a former FBR chief and an aide to then-finance minister Ishaq Dar, has been assigned as advisor for finance affairs. MNA Samar Haroon Bilour has been appointed as information adviser, while retired Lt Gen Nigar Johar has been tasked with health affairs.

Former advocate general Amir Javed was assigned the portfolio for law; ex-senator Osman Saifullah Khan will advise the governor on energy and power; Asif Rafiq

Afridi was given the portfolio for communication and works; while Maulana Tayyeb Qureshi will oversee religious affairs.

Tarar noted that all chosen advisers had either doctorate degrees or extensive experience in public service. These included Adviser for Industries and Commerce Dr Muhammad Inshad (a former FBR chief with a PhD in finance), Adviser for Mines and Minerals Dr Sarfraz Ali Shah (who had a PhD in economics) and Adviser for Education Dr Syed Amir Abdullah (with a PhD in international relations). In his remarks, the interior minister said the Centre tried to take the KP government on board in the counterterrorism fight, but the efforts were in vain due to a lack of response from the latter.

At the outset of Sunday's briefing, Naqvi said, "Today was not an easy day for us. For over one month, we continuously tried to take the KP government on board. I was personally in touch with them in the background; our only goal was to onboard them so that we could fight together against terrorism." Naqvi also highlighted efforts by veteran politician Maulana Fazlur Rehman to reduce tensions, but no solution could be found. He even said the Centre communicated to the PTI repeatedly that it had "no issue" with the party's long march. "Our issue was entirely terrorism-related, and we went to take you on board on it."

While acknowledging that there were many issues related to KP's governance, Naqvi said, "My and the entire interior ministry's point of view was clear: the situation

was not linked to politics even one per cent. We were purely seeing this on the basis of terrorism." The minister further claimed that the PTI team had agreed on imposing emergency in 12 districts, but added that they were "scared of being seen meeting with us". "We had clarity on one thing that we did not want to involve politics in this."

He further alleged, "Their connections with the Taliban are no secret. I would not say anything further." The minister remarked that the security situation was extremely bad in certain districts, yet the PTI was able to hold rallies and "not even one person was harmed". "We only had two options: either we would see the martyrdoms daily, or we end them. So this difficult decision we have made has a background," he maintained, adding that the federal government tried its best to avoid it. During the briefing, Naqvi claimed that "demands" the PTI put forward were already being considered last month, before the opposition party announced its long march towards Islamabad. "Some of their own people could not understand why the long march was taking place."

He recalled that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif wanted to hold talks with the National Assembly opposition leader last month and proposed forming a committee, but the government did not get any confirmation.

"We were trying our best to hold the meeting before the prime minister left so that the situation could be diffused," he said, noting that a committee for the Oct 3 talks was formed later. NEWS DESK



# BACKPAGE

## Dynamic Duo Does It! Maaz, Farhan Sizzle To Series Win

Pakistan on Sunday took 2-0 unassailable lead in the three-match T20I series when they whipped Sri Lanka by 82 runs in their second show at the Pindi Stadium in Rawalpindi.

Pakistan rode on superb batting display from Maaz Sadaqat (96) and skipper Sahibzada Farhan (73) to pile-up 215-3 in the stipulated 20 overs. This is also a record total at this venue, eclipsing the previous 195-5 which Pakistan had scored against Zimbabwe on November 23, 2025.

Young pacer Imran Randhawa, who made his Test debut against England recently, then took 3-11 in four overs to restrict Sri Lanka to 133-7.

This is also the heaviest win from Pakistan against Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka were never in the run as they kept losing wickets at regular interval.

After Salman Mirza removed in-form Lahiru Udara (5) early, it was Imran Randhawa who put great pressure by picking up the wickets of Sineth Jayawardena (22), Kusal Mendis (9) and Sahan Arachchige (0) in quick succession to break the back of the visitors.

Saim Azeb then had Dasun Shanaka (9) before Shadab got rid of Kamindu Mendis (23) to leave Sri Lanka gasping at 74-6.

Chamindu Wickramasinghe resisted with 24-ball 29 before falling to Salman Mirza.

Maheesh Theekshana remained top-scorer with 32 not out which featured four fours.

Imran was ably backed by his new ball partner Salman Mirza with 2-28.

Earlier Maaz Sadaqat and skipper Sahibzada Farhan did a glorious job to enable Pakistan post a big total on a batting track.

Maaz and Farhan shared 88 runs off 48 balls for the second wicket stand to take the hosts to a decent total in the end.

Farhan was dropped on 12 when

he skied one early in the innings. However, he capitalised on the opportunity and went on to hit his second successive fifty of the series. He brought in his fifty off 31 balls and hammered five sixes and four fours in his commanding 44-ball 73.

Earlier, he, along with Fakhar Zaman provided a rapid start to the hosts, sharing 55 off 35 balls for the opening stand.

Fakhar fell for 17-ball 22 with four fours to off-spinner Maheesh Theekshana.

Maaz, who brought in his second successive fifty off 30 balls, then went after the ball and played some superb strokes.

He also hit Theekshana for three glorious sixes in one over which yielded 22 runs.

He along with Hasan Nawaz scored a rapid 72 runs for the third wicket partnership to take Pakistan to a huge total.

Maaz hammered seven sixes and six fours in his gallant 51-ball 96.

He lost his wicket off the final ball of the innings when he went for a big hit in a bid to complete his century but was held in the deep.

Hasan Nawaz remained not out on nine-ball 19 with one six and one four.

Pakistan scored 46 in the power-play, were 90-1 in ten overs, reached 145-2 in 15 and made 70 runs in the final five overs.

Theekshana remained the most expensive bowler as he finished with 1-55 in his quota of four overs.

Eshan Malings (1-41) and Dasun Shanaka (1-30) were the other successful bowlers.

Earlier, Sri Lanka won the toss and elected to bowl first. Pakistan made one change, bringing in Salman Mirza in place of Razaullah who had made his T20I debut in the previous game at the same venue.

Sri Lanka made two changes. The third and final game is scheduled for Tuesday at the same venue. NEWS DESK

## PM Shehbaz condemns Houthi attack on Saudi airport that killed 12, wounded over 300

The dead included four Saudis, two people from Bangladesh and one person each from the US, Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Sudan and Egypt

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday condemned a Houthi missile attack on Saudi Arabia's King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, in which at least 12 people were killed and over 300 injured.

Reiterating Pakistan's commitment to Saudi Arabia's security under the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, the prime minister maintained that targeting civilian and critical infrastructure was "completely unacceptable and [constitutes] a serious threat to regional peace and stability."

He stressed that such acts of violence, which flagrantly violate international law, must cease immediately.

Expressing solidarity with Saudi Arabia, Shehbaz reiterated Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the kingdom's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security, citing the joint defence agreement and the longstanding bonds of brotherhood between the two countries.

**Houthi hit Riyadh airport again**

The development comes after Houthi targeted, for the third time this week, Riyadh's international airport, leaving at least 12 people dead and more than 300 wounded, Saudi authorities said.

The Houthis claimed responsibility for the strike.

The dead included four

Saudis, two people from Bangladesh and one person each from the US, Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Sudan and Egypt, the Saudi civil aviation authority said. At the latest count, they said 309 were wounded.

Hospitals were flooded with wounded brought by ambulance and helicopter, people briefed on the matter said. Some were in critical condition.

Saturday's attack occurred without warning, with no alert issued by Saudi Arabia's threat warning system. This week's two previous attacks on King Khalid International Airport left four people dead and caused heavy damage to a Saudi commercial plane parked on the tarmac.

This week's deadly strikes exposed vulnerabilities in the kingdom's self-defence capabilities as it wages an air campaign against the Houthis to support a ground war by the Yemeni government against the group.

Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni government have claimed hundreds of strikes on targets in Houthi-held territory. The Houthis have said these killed civilians including women and children.

Reuters could not independently verify those claims.

All flights were diverted from Riyadh on Saturday, and operations at the airport that serves a city of roughly 8 million people were temporarily suspended, the Saudi civil aviation authority said.

The head of the Houthi media office said in a post on X after the attack that the group had "shut down Riyadh international

airport". The Houthis have said airlines should avoid Saudi airspace, declaring it a zone of military operations after the Saudi-backed Yemeni government launched an offensive against the group on Monday.

US President Donald Trump, speaking to reporters outside the White House, was asked whether Washington planned to join Saudi strikes on the Houthis.

"We may. We're going to look at it. We just found out about the recent attack, so we'll make a decision. We move very quickly," he said.

**Eyewitness saw wounded on the ground**

One eyewitness at the airport on Saturday reported seeing an explosion and then multiple people lying injured on the ground inside. More than a dozen ambulances were seen rushing towards the facility. A video verified by Reuters showed ambulances at the airport.

An injured traveller told Reuters they saw something fly across the sky outside the airport before part of the ceiling near a departure gate collapsed.

The US embassy in Riyadh said it was "aware of attacks" and "strongly recommends all US citizens avoid this airport and surrounding areas."

Saudi Arabia entered the Yemen war in 2015 at the head of an Arab coalition to try to force the Houthis out of the Yemeni

capital Sanaa. The Houthis had stormed Sanaa the previous year, pushing out government forces.

The war was fought to a bloody stalemate, with hundreds of thousands of Yemenis killed by fighting and famine. Saudi Arabia struck a 2022 deal with the Houthis, freezing the conflict.

That ceasefire unravelled over the summer, culminating in a lightning Houthi advance that took the Red Sea chokepoint of Bab al-Mandab from Saudi-backed government forces.

The Saudi-backed Yemeni government began an offensive this week to try to retake that territory, which has so far made slow gains, even as the Houthis put the country's third-largest city, Taiz, under siege.

**Riyadh due to hold major summit**

Flight-tracking site flighttracker24 showed all flights to Riyadh had either been diverted or cancelled, with only a helicopter hovering over the airport at one point.

Houthi attacks on Thursday and earlier in the week had already prompted a number of carriers to suspend or cancel services to the Saudi capital, shortly before Riyadh is due to host major energy and investment conferences.

Organizers of those conferences said on Saturday they would go ahead as planned, and they sought to reassure attendees of their security. REUTERS

## Bill Gates warns cyberattacks most imminent AI threat

Bill Gates on Sunday warned that unregulated artificial intelligence poses a growing threat and predicted an escalation in AI-powered cyberattacks in the coming year.

The Microsoft co-founder said the risk of AI "getting out of control" remained years away and emphasized that the immediate concern was "bad people" using existing systems without safeguards.

"The front that we'll probably see most dramatically in the next year is cyberattacks," Gates said in an interview with ABC News.

"The real danger right now is not the AI's getting out of control. We need to work on that, but that's years away in terms of the big impact that might have," he said.

"It's really bad people using AI, particularly in AI where you can take out all the safeguards," he said, adding that increased restrictions were needed to prevent bad actors using AI for

bioterrorism and cyberattacks.

"But right now, you're allowed to take all those safeguards out. So when you have bad people, no safeguards, and then the latest models, that's where, over the next year, primarily in the cyber area, we are going to have a lot of negative surprises," he told ABC.

Gates — who warned in a lengthy August post that the world was dangerously unprepared for the upheaval brought by AI, especially to employment — is the latest tech magnate to sound the alarm on the threats posed by the new technology.

In his interview Sunday, he dismissed the idea — advocated by US President Donald Trump — that self-regulation by AI companies was sufficient to keep the world safe.

"The idea that for the most dangerous technology humans ever invented, that's the final word, that just the

companies themselves are the only check that society has...it's clear we're not doing enough," Gates said. AFP

## 12 terrorists killed, soldier martyred in Kurram exchange of fire

Security Forces foiled an infiltration attempt by Khwarij and Afghan Taliban from Afghanistan into Pakistan, killing 12 of them during an intense exchange of fire.

However, Naib Subedar embraced martyrdom while valiantly confronting the infiltrators, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

"While security forces, maintaining a high state of alertness and vigilance, effectively thwarted the infiltration attempt, Afghan Taliban Posts also opened fire to support the infiltration attempt by Khwarij. Skillful and precise engagement by vigilant troops resulted in killing of twelve Khwarij and Afghan Taliban," the news release said.

During intense fire exchange, Naib Subedar Hidayat Aman (age: 40 years, resident of District Ghizer), having fought gallantly, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced shahadat.

This incident along Pakistan-Afghanistan border once again vindicates Pakistan's objective and factual stance regarding the wilful abject failure of the Afghan Taliban Regime to deny the use of Afghan soil to the terrorist organization, rather facilitate and patronise cross-border terrorism.

The Afghan Taliban Regime has consistently failed to honour its international counter-terrorism obligations.

The Security Forces of Pakistan remain resolute and unwavering in their commitment to defend the nation's frontiers.

A sanitisation operation is being conducted to eliminate any other Indian-sponsored Kharij found in the area as a relentless Counter Terrorism campaign under vision "Azmi-e-Istehkam" (as approved by Federal Apex Committee on National Action Plan) by Security Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies of Pakistan will continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign sponsored and supported terrorism from the country.

These sacrifices of our brave soldiers further reinforce our unwavering commitment to safeguarding our nation and its frontiers at all costs. NEWS DESK

## Migrants Sea Tragedy: 139 dead, 84 missing

At least 139 migrants died, including 15 children, and 84 went missing when an overcrowded boat sank while heading from Djibouti to Yemen, a UN agency said Sunday.

The vessel was carrying 305 people, most of them Ethiopian, when it capsized north of the Djibouti town of Obok on the night of October 8-9, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said in a statement.

"Survivors told me that the boat started to sink backwards as soon as they got in it," Alexandre Coissac, IOM chief of mission in Djibouti, said AFP.

"This is a devastating loss of life," he said earlier in the statement.

"Our thoughts are with the survivors and the families who have lost loved ones or remain without news of their relatives."

The IOM gave an initial toll of 109 dead and 116 missing, and revised it to 139 dead and 84 missing in a later statement after more bodies were recovered.

Coissac said IOM teams were on the ground alongside Djiboutian authorities to provide emergency aid.

"This tragedy is a stark reminder of the dangers faced by migrants along this migration corridor as they seek economic opportunities" by trying to cross the Bab al-Mandab Strait to Yemen and then reach Gulf countries, he said.



Coissac said he had spoken to one survivor of the wreck who came from the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia, where rebels are battling the federal government in a recent flare-up of violence.

Among the 109 bodies earlier recovered were 52 men, 42 women and 15 children — nine girls and six boys — the initial statement said.

Eighty-two people survived the shipwreck, all Ethiopian nationals, according to the updated toll.

"Poverty, insecurity and the growing impacts of climate change drive many to undertake this journey, despite mounting instability across the Middle East," the IOM said.

The IOM said it was assisting 64 survivors at a migrant centre in Obok. AFP



# GLAMOURDTMUR

Women have spent decades being told that visibility is power while someone else owns the platform, the audience or the image,' she told Page Six in a statement. 'I'm interested in what happens when women own all three.'

The mom-of-four, 40, has promised potential subscribers 'videos, photos and posts you won't find anywhere else' along with the ability to directly message her.

## OnlyFox: Megan Breaks Internet

Megan Fox has taken the plunge and joined a new OnlyFans-style subscription website called Subs.com. The mom-of-four, 40, has promised potential subscribers 'videos, photos and posts you won't find anywhere else' along with the ability to directly message her. In a savvy move, Fox confirmed that she actually co-owns the newly-launched platform. The Transformers star teamed up with OnlyFans co-founder Tim Stokely to start the subscription-based site and shared a series of snaps taken by photographer Cibelle Levi. 'Women have spent decades being told that visibility is power while someone

else owns the platform, the audience or the image,' she told Page Six in a statement. 'I'm interested in what happens when women own all three.' Stokely added, 'Megan isn't simply launching a page on Subs. She has a seat at the table and is helping us build the platform.' The project is already a smashing success, with the site completely crashing within hours of its 'You guys keep breaking the site,' Fox posted on Instagram. 'They're working hard to get it back up.' The Jennifer's Body bombshell is currently charging fans \$19.99 a month to subscribe to her page. She also has a number of pay-per-view posts up, ranging from \$18 up to \$88. Fox was last seen on screen in the 2024 erotic sci-fi thriller Subversive. In the film, she plays an artificially intelligent fembot who gains sentience and becomes hostile. She hasn't acted in a film since then, but she did provide the voice for Chica in Five Nights at Freddy's 2. NEWS DESK

## Red Hot and Inked: Scarlett Stuns at BFI

Scarlett Johansson stunned in a strapless red dress which showed off her huge back tattoos as she attended the Ray Gunn premiere during the BFI London Film Festival on Saturday. The actress, 41, cut a stylish figure for the event held at The Royal Festival Hall where she posed with her co-star Sam Rockwell. Ray Gunn is an upcoming computer-animated sci-fi mystery film directed by Brad Bird. The plot follows Raymond 'Ray' Gunn, the last human private detective, who gets drawn into a dangerous web of conspiracy and murder after being hired to investigate a case involving the volatile multimedia pop star Venus Nova – voiced by Scarlett. Scarlett turned heads in the dress which she teamed with strappy heels to boost her height and accessorised with a simple gold necklace. The red number showed off the huge flower vine and lamb inking on her back which she got in 2017. This summer Scarlett revealed the secrets to her health and beauty routine to maintain her radiant complexion and natural beauty. NEWS DESK



## Kim's Singapore Date With Lewis

The businesswoman and reality star, 45, made sure to turn heads in the paddock with a £2,290 sheer pink maxi dress from French fashion house Alsaia, which hugged her famous hour-glass curves. She accessorised perfectly with a matching Hermes Mini Kelly bag, adorned with silver charms, and chunky dark sunglasses. The mother of four was flanked by two friends and a member of her security team while arriving at the Marina Bay Street Circuit. After the day's qualifying events the pair were seen together, as Hamilton smiled at her in a sweet moment. Never one to blend into the background, Ms Kardashian attracted plenty of attention as fans unashamedly snapped pictures of her as she walked around earlier in the day. Members of the media were quick to pick her out of the crowd and, when she appeared on screens, Sky Sport's Brundle joked: 'I did try once.' He was referring to a previous attempt to speak to Ms Kardashian at the Monaco Grand Prix in June, when both she and her sister Khloe point-blank ignored him, prompting complaints from fans they had been 'rude'. Kim Kardashian reunited with her beaming boyfriend Lewis Hamilton at the Singapore Grand Prix on Saturday after cheering on the F1 driver NEWS DESK

## Sofia's Cryptic Clapback at 'Narcissist' Joe

Sofia Vergara has shared a seemingly pointed message after her ex-husband Joe Manganiello made shocking claims about her. On Friday, the 54-year-old actress reshared an Instagram Stories post calling out 'narcissistic' men. She added the note, 'Remember, kids, when dealing with a narcissist, it doesn't matter how much you do for them, because they will resent you for it and nothing will (ever) be enough, and they'll always somehow try to paint you as the bad guy.' The chart comparing a 'good man' to a 'narcissistic man' was initially posted by the Modern Family star's son Manolo Gonzalez Vergara, 35. It comes days after Manganiello, 49, said Vergara 'refused to hug' him amid an autoimmune disease battle that left him suicidal. Manganiello split from Vergara in July 2023 after seven years of marriage – with the pair making conflicting remarks about whether starting a family was the cause of their divorce. Amid the listed behaviors of narcissistic men in Vergara's post were gaslighting, lying, and blame shifting. The graphic also noted that narcissists are 'grandiose, self-serving, play the victim, and make excuses.' Manganiello unveils the details behind the demise of his marriage to Vergara in his new memoir Bloodlines, due to hit shelves on October 13. NEWS DESK



## Hania Aamir reacts to Asim Azhar's latest reel



Pakistani actress Hania Aamir has once again attracted attention on social media after commenting on singer Asim Azhar's latest Instagram reel.

Asim recently shared a lighthearted video featuring himself and his father on Instagram. The reel quickly caught the attention of his followers, with Hania also joining the conversation through the comments section. Reacting to the video, Hania wrote, 'Screaming, I can't,' expressing her excitement and amusement after watching the clip. Her brief reaction soon drew attention from fans, who were quick to notice her interaction with the singer. The actress's comment has sparked curiosity among social media users, particularly because Hania and Asim have previously remained in the public spotlight due to their close relationship in the past. Although both celebrities have moved forward in their respective careers, their social media interactions continue to attract considerable interest from fans. Even a brief comment or reaction from either star often becomes a topic of discussion among their followers. NEWS DESK

## Yumna Zaidi's tearful flight moment melts hearts

Pakistani actress Yumna Zaidi has shared an emotional glimpse of a moment when she struggled to hold back tears while leaving her family behind for work. The actress recently posted a video on Instagram showing her sitting inside an airplane as she prepared to travel for professional commitments. Yumna appeared visibly emotional, with tears in her eyes, while wearing earphones and maintaining a gentle smile. Alongside the video, Yumna opened up about the emotional difficulty of leaving home despite having spent years working in the entertainment industry. She said that even after being part of showbiz for many years, she still becomes emotional whenever she leaves home for work. Yumna described her long-standing connection between flights and tears, explaining that travelling for work means leaving her family behind and facing the challenges of life on her own. The actress acknowledged that she has become familiar with these emotional moments over the years. NEWS DESK



challenges of life on her own. The actress acknowledged that she has become familiar with these emotional moments over the years. NEWS DESK

## Mahira Khan denies viral claim linking her to Delhi protest

Pakistani actress Mahira Khan has rejected a viral social media claim suggesting that she expressed support for an anti-government demonstration scheduled in New Delhi, India, on October 10. The claim spread across social media platforms after a video alleged that the actress had shared an Instagram Story explaining why she could not attend the protest. However, Mahira denied posting the statement attributed to her, distancing herself from the controversy. According to the circulating claim, Mahira had expressed solidarity with protesters opposing India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The alleged message also referred to restrictions on Pakistani artists entering India and suggested that the demonstration could help improve relations between Pakistan and India. The claim gained attention after a social

media user posted a nine-second video on X on October 8. The video alleged that Mahira had



shared the statement on Instagram, prompting further discussion and the circulation of similar posts on other platforms. However, the actress's response contradicted the allegation. When asked about the purported Instagram Story, Mahira denied sharing it. No verified evidence has established that she publicly endorsed the protest or expressed an intention to participate in it. The controversy highlights how unverified statements attributed to celebrities can spread rapidly online. A claim may gain widespread attention through reports and online discussions without establishing whether the person

named actually made the statement. The demonstration mentioned in the viral post is linked to political concerns in India over alleged changes to electoral rolls. Protesters have reportedly raised questions about voter registration procedures and demanded the resignation of the country's Chief Election Commissioner. These developments have fuelled debate over electoral transparency and political accountability. However, the protests themselves do not substantiate the separate claim that Mahira supported the demonstration. Mahira, one of Pakistan's most prominent screen personalities, has frequently attracted public attention because of her acting career and public profile. Her name becoming associated with the viral claim has renewed attention to the need to verify statements attributed to public figures. NEWS DESK



# MONEY

DTM

## World Bank in talks with dozens of countries about crisis aid, Banga says



The World Bank is in discussions with 30 to 40 countries about potential crisis aid to help them manage energy shocks and price increases triggered by the war in the Middle East, its president, Ajay Banga, told Reuters in an interview.

Banga said the global economy had proven fairly resilient, in part due to big AI investments and adjustments in supply and demand for oil, which meant that few countries had sought the initial \$25 billion in crisis funds that the World Bank had made available when the war began in late February.

However, a sharp spike in diesel and fertilizer prices and other factors, including the looming super El Niño weather effect, were adding to challenges facing developing countries, Banga said in an interview ahead of this week's annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

"There is pressure, and so I think maybe over the coming months, more countries will come for some slice of that first \$50 to \$60 billion," Banga said, referring to the initial \$25 billion plus another \$35 billion that countries could tap by diverting resources from already approved World Bank projects.

"We'll see, but we're ready. We're engaged. We're having conversations with a number of them, you know, 30 to 40 countries are in dialogue with us," he said.

Many developing countries have been hit hard by the spike in energy prices and high interest rates that have increased borrowing costs at a time when their fiscal coffers are still depleted by measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic and the spike in inflation following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

World Bank estimates show that developing countries owe external creditors about \$400 billion in 2026, with interest payments alone comprising one-third of the

total.

Banga said more countries had shown interest in retooling existing projects than in tapping the immediate crisis window to address their liquidity needs. If the situation worsened, the Bank could make available as much as \$100 billion in funds, he said, exceeding the \$70 billion disbursed during the pandemic.

The World Bank last month announced that it attracted a record \$112 billion in private capital in the year ended June versus \$69 billion a year earlier, and more than triple the 2022 total before Banga, a former Mastercard CEO, became president.

That was on top of the \$123 billion invested from the bank's own resources for that year, for a combined \$235 billion, Banga said, underscoring the importance of tapping all available resources, especially at a time when Western countries have sharply cut official bilateral development aid.

"There is no one answer that fits when the world has these kinds of issues. What you need to do is figure out how to cut your coat to suit your cloth," Banga said.

Banga said he expected further gains in private capital flows in coming years, aided by expanded political risk guarantees from the bank's Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, growth in local currency financing, and continued work on regulatory reforms that made it easier for foreign investors.

The private capital jump was biggest in projects in upper-middle-income countries like Argentina or India, which accounted for \$50 billion of the private capital, and lower-middle-income countries, including

Bangladesh and Angola, which accounted for \$37 billion. But more work was needed to boost the roughly \$3 billion in private capital flowing to low-income countries.

"In the smaller countries, it hasn't multiplied enough, and there are challenges," he said, noting the bank would announce some new initiatives this week aimed at ensuring micro-, small- and medium-sized businesses also had access to private capital.

Banga said private capital growth was also regionally spread, with the largest increase seen in Latin America and the Caribbean, which accounted for \$36.3 billion of last year's total, followed by Europe and Central Asia with \$21.3 billion, South Asia with \$19.2 billion and Africa with \$22 billion.

The top 10 recipient countries were Brazil, India, Türkiye, Romania, Nigeria, Argentina, South Africa, Bangladesh, Mexico and Chile, the Bank said.

Banga said the World Bank and IMF were working together to address the high debt levels plaguing many developing countries through a series of initiatives, including efforts to boost countries' domestic revenue collections.

The Bank had already set up some debt-for-development swaps for Angola and Ivory Coast, and a portfolio-based guarantee for Argentina, and was working on over a dozen more projects.

"We've got 14 or 15 in the pipeline, helping them rotate out higher-priced old debt for newer-priced debt with our guarantees," with the difference then targeted at education, healthcare, water, or nature programs, he said. **Reuters**

## Middle East war, high debt levels to dominate IMF-WB meetings

The IMF says public debt is at the highest level since World War Two and will exceed 100% of GDP before 2030

Finance officials from around the world will gather in Thailand this week under the shadow of a widening war in the Middle East, the biggest energy supply shock ever and rising interest rates that together pose daunting risks to already-sluggish global economic growth.

The US-Israel-Iran war with Iran, now in its eighth month, and the inflation and hardship it has caused, will dominate the agenda and sideline conversations during the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, being held outside of Washington for the first time in three years.

Notably absent will be US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who dispatched two senior officials in his stead while he handled some "domestic engagements," a US official said.

His decision to skip the high-profile gathering and a meeting of the Group of 20 major economies, which the US leads this year, may frustrate counterparts amid rising tensions over the Iran war, Ukraine's battle against Russia's invasion and the US move to impose sanctions on the International Criminal Court.

World Bank President Ajay Banga told Reuters that while global growth had held up better than feared when Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz, shutting off some 20% of the world's oil, pressures were building again. Soaring prices for diesel, rising fertilizer prices and a looming "super" El Niño weather effect that experts say could lead to 450,000 heat-related deaths are all hitting at once.

Group of Seven countries have agreed to release 100 million barrels of diesel and crude oil from emergency reserves under pressure from US President Donald Trump, who is keen to see lower gasoline prices before November elections that could see his Republican Party lose control of Congress.

Trump on Friday announced a deal with Russia that would provide even more diesel to global markets and a temporary waiver of US sanctions designed to deprive Moscow of revenues for its war on Ukraine. The move drew swift criticism from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

More than 1 billion barrels of oil have been released mainly from onshore commercial inventories since the start of the war on February 28, but industry

executives say the amount of oil in storage that is accessible to the global market is running low, making the market more fragile and fueling pressure on prices.

Banga said the Bank was not revising down its global forecasts at the moment, but was keeping a close eye on developments. "The real thing is not just El Niño by itself, it's the combination ... What's happening to fertilizer prices? What's happening to energy costs? What's happening to debt? It's that put together that creates its own challenges," he said. "And I think that will call upon all of us to be far more careful on what we prepare for in the coming months."

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva issued a similar warning in her traditional curtain-raiser speech previewing the meetings, telling the audience, "Winter is coming."

The IMF has signaled little change in its forecast for 3% global growth in 2026 and may edge its forecast for next year slightly higher. But some countries will see downgrades, including Ukraine, now in its fifth year of war against Russia's invasion, and Gulf countries hit by Iranian strikes and sharply reduced energy exports.

IMF research released on Tuesday showed that sharp spikes in food and energy prices are an increasingly common source of crises that drive inflation expectations higher for longer, worsen poverty and threaten economic stability.

One huge headache for policymakers is the growing public debt burden that is sapping growth and adding inflationary pressures.

The IMF says public debt is at the highest level since World War Two and will exceed 100% of GDP before 2030.

Advanced economies, led by the United States, have the highest debt-to-GDP ratios, but emerging markets and low-income countries are particularly vulnerable, given a perfect storm of challenges: capital outflows in search of higher US rates, El Niño, and lack of investment in AI, which has mitigated negative supply shocks in the US and other rich countries.

Developing countries are particularly vulnerable given high public debt levels that will have to be renegotiated at higher interest rates. Interest payments already exceed 10% of revenue in developing countries on average.

Early in the COVID crisis, G20 leaders announced a suspension of debt service payments for the poorest countries, but there is little appetite for such action now, according to diplomats from G20 countries, who said high debt levels and political pressures posed bigger hurdles this time. **Reuters**



LAHORE: People shop for shoes at a Landa Bazar in the provincial capital. **ONLINE**

## Nvidia in talks to invest further in Reflection AI or buy it

Nvidia is in talks to deepen its investment in open-source startup Reflection AI or acquire it, the Financial Times reported on Saturday, citing people with direct knowledge of the matter.

Talks are at an early stage and a deal could take several forms, including a so-called acqui-hire arrangement where Nvidia would hire staff and license technology rather than pursue a full acquisition, potentially avoiding a lengthy regulatory review, the newspaper said.

An agreement could be reached in the coming weeks, according to the report, which cited multiple people familiar with the matter, while adding that the discussions could still fall apart.

Reflection declined to comment on the FT report, while Nvidia did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Nvidia is already a major financial backer and strategic investor in Reflection AI, having invested \$800 million in the startup, the FT reported.

Founded in 2024 by former DeepMind researchers Misha Laskin and Ioannis Antonoglou, Reflection develops tools that automate software development, a fast-growing use case for AI.

Reflection's chief executive, Laskin, told CNBC in April that the Nvidia-backed startup was raising fresh capital at a pre-money valuation of \$25 billion.

The company on Monday launched its first open-weight model, Beam, as it seeks to compete in coding and agentic tasks with lower-cost Chinese models such as DeepSeek and Kimi. **Reuters**

## Trump's trade wars sting US manufacturers

For Doug Rende, who runs an aluminum product manufacturer in the US state of Ohio, President Donald Trump's tariffs have meant millions of dollars more in annual costs — and recently, the Iran war has made shipments even more expensive.

Rende is chief executive at Shapes Unlimited, one of many American producers smarting from Trump's economic policies as midterm elections approach.

"Frustrating would be one word," Rende told AFP.

"And I think that we're sending a lack of trust in not only the administration but the governmental process, the role of Congress to rein in executive power," he added.

Since returning to the presidency in January 2025, Trump has wielded executive authority to slap tariffs on various products and countries.

Besides aluminum, the duties hit steel and autos too, while US trading partners face additional tariffs that vary by country.

Even as some American manufacturers have benefited as

their foreign competitors encounter higher barriers, others struggle with ballooning costs and persistent uncertainty.

Trump's spiraling trade fight with Canada and war with Iran have only deepened worries.

Grievances over Trump's trade policies are among fault lines that Democrats hope will work in their favor as they push to flip control of the Senate and House of Representatives in November's vote.

Rende's company in North Jackson, Ohio, makes and distributes aluminum building products used in fixtures like fences.

Trump's tariffs on aluminum have steadily climbed, from 10 percent during his first presidency to 25 percent and then 50 percent last year, and Rende has felt the impact.

"This year alone, it's upwards of \$4.5 million to \$5 million in additional costs," Rende said.

"There's only so much that the end consumer is willing to eat," he added. "So, we absorb a healthy portion."

These added costs include steeper transportation fees, as fuel prices surged with the US-Israel war on Iran. Surcharges are "upwards of \$6,500 per container" of goods from suppliers, Rende said.

As a result, he has paused recruitment for new jobs while investing in more robotic assembly.

Sam Miller, another Ohio manufacturer who makes kitchen and bathroom products, has been hit on both fronts in Trump's trade wars, paying tariffs on imported materials from Asia

while finding it

harder to expand into Canada because of trade tensions.

"It's been difficult for businesses to manage," Miller told AFP from his factory floor in Warren as a machine hummed nearby, cutting countertop material. "I do think that there will be a shift away from Republican views."

Although Miller received refunds after the Supreme Court struck down many of Trump's duties, the US leader has since reinstated many of them. **AFP**





# WORLD

DTM

Donald Trump called on Saturday for Ukraine to "get a new leader" after Volodymyr Zelensky slammed Washington's easing of Russian diesel sanctions, as the US president faces fuel price pressure weeks before midterm elections.

Trump, whose Republicans face dim prospects in next month's vote partly because of soaring energy costs, defended a deal allowing more Russian diesel onto global markets after saying Vladimir Putin wanted "strongly" to reach a settlement in Ukraine.

Trump accused the Ukrainian president of blocking a deal with Moscow and ignoring instructions to not strike Russian refineries, while Kyiv and its European allies warned that easing pressure on Moscow would help fund the Kremlin's war.

The row unfolded as the latest Russian attacks across Ukraine killed at least 21 people, including children.

Trump announced Friday that he had spoken to Putin and agreed for Russia to release large amounts of diesel into world markets. Ukraine and its European allies expressed dismay, with Zelensky telling reporters Friday it was a "weak decision."

## Trump urges Zelensky replacement as diesel row rages



criticism, Trump said Zelensky had disobeyed his orders not to strike Russian refineries and that the attacks risked worsening fuel shortages linked to the US-Israeli war on Iran.

"He better damn well stop," Trump said. "I suggest they get a new leader who can make a deal, because he could have made many deals that, for some reason, he never does," Trump said.

Trump later said Putin was interested in ending the war.

"Russia would like to make a deal... but for whatever reason, Zelensky does not want to make a deal," he told reporters. "President Putin would like to see a settlement, strongly." The US president also

criticized Zelensky for not holding an election since Russia's invasion in 2022.

"I think he should have an election and he could have settled this thing many times," Trump said.

**Allies back Kyiv**

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said lifting sanctions on Russian diesel would only help sustain Russia's war effort.

"This is not the time to ease pressure on Russia, and Europe won't," she wrote online.

UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham reiterated his "complete solidarity" with Zelensky in a call.

Downing Street said Burnham also pledged that Britain would "strengthen its sanctions on Russia".

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andriy Sybига also backed his president. "He has the support of the Ukrainian people, and they have the right to decide," he said in a post on X.

**Deadly Ukraine bombardment**

On Saturday, a Russian glide bomb attack on the southeastern city of Zaporizhzhia killed 20 people, including three children, according to Ukraine's state rescue service. "Today, Russia expressed its thanks for the lifting of sanctions on diesel exports by dropping five glide bombs on residential buildings in Zaporizhzhia," Zelensky said in a post on X. **AP**

## Freed Cockroach movement leaders back on streets



Leaders of a popular Indian youth movement vowed to continue protests Sunday after being released from detention, a day after police cracked down on demonstrations against a controversial revision of voter lists. The movement is demanding the resignation of the country's election chief.

The protests were triggered after authorities removed more than 130 million voters from the list since last year. Critics say the move is politically motivated. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and the Election Commission deny manipulation allegations.

The Cockroach Janata Party's three leaders - Abhijeet Dipke, Saurav Des and Ashutosh Ranka - were freed on condition that they commit "no breach of peace for one year," Ratna Singh, the movement's legal director, said in a social media post. It was unclear what the condition meant or whether it would restrict their participation in protests. Police boarded the leaders' flight from Mumbai after it landed in New Delhi on Saturday and took them into custody as they prepared to lead a demonstration in New Delhi. After his release, Dipke called Modi "an embarrassment to India."

"Never has this country seen a bigger coward and bully," he wrote on X.

Des, a spokesperson for the movement, urged supporters to take to the streets. "A situation has been created where the state is at war with its own citizens," he told reporters Sunday. Following Saturday's protests, authorities launched a sweeping security crackdown in the capital, detaining more than 2,000 protesters, including several opposition lawmakers. Train services to the capital were canceled, metro stations closed and mobile internet suspended in parts of the city. **AP**

## Oliver Tusk: Online glorification fuelled attacks

The attacks at Polish schools over the past week were "spontaneous acts" driven by the online "glorification of violence," Prime Minister Donald Tusk said on Sunday.

Three attacks at schools in the Mazovian province in central Poland took place within four days this week, leaving one dead and many wounded, including children.

By Sunday morning, police had detained 117 people across Poland for carrying knives or other dangerous weapons, or for threatening to attack schools or fellow students. Some 64,000 schools were checked.

"We are not dealing with any group organized on a big scale," Tusk said on Sunday morning, during a crisis meeting with government and security services. "These are very often spontaneous actions inspired by online activity."

"In the past years and

months, we have noted globally and in Poland a rise in the fascination with violence."

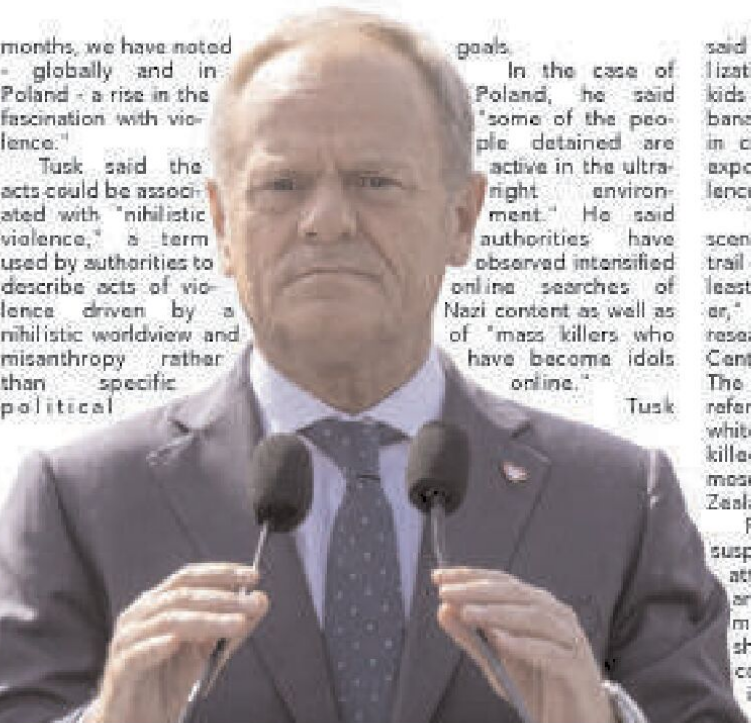
Tusk said the acts could be associated with "nihilistic violence," a term used by authorities to describe acts of violence driven by a nihilistic worldview and misanthropy rather than specific political goals.

In the case of Poland, he said "some of the people detained are active in the ultra-right environment." He said authorities have observed intensified online searches of Nazi content as well as of "mass killers who have become idols online."

Tusk said Poland was facing a "civilizational phenomenon" where kids playing video games, even banal ones, or those interested in crime stories, were getting exposed to more and more violence.

"This is essentially a copycat scenario, something of a long trail of attackers going back to at least 2019, if not decades earlier," Kacper Rekawek, senior researcher at the International Center for Counterterrorism in The Hague, told the AP. He was referring to Brenton Tarrant, the white supremacist who shot and killed 51 Muslims at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 2019.

Rekawek said that one of the suspects in the latest Polish attacks used the same imagery and esthetics as Tarrant, which means the Polish incidents should be "placed within the confines of essentially terrorist behavior." **AP**



## Flood alert in Nepal after landslide

Nepali authorities urged villagers on Sunday to move to safer places after a massive flood in a river in the central part of the country swept away several houses and infrastructure, but there were no reports of any casualties.

A dry landslide in Chumrubri village in Gorkha district, about 100 km (62 miles) west of Kathmandu, blocked the Budhi Gandaki River, leading to downstream flooding, authorities said. The Budhi Gandaki is a tributary of the Trishuli River, downstream from another tributary where a glacier collapse caused a catastrophic flood in August that killed 1,457 people, with thousands still missing. "We have asked villagers living along the river banks downstream to evacuate and remain safe," said Dharmendra Kumar Mishra, the Gorkha district's most senior bureaucrat. Mishra said several houses and two suspension bridges had been swept away, and a hydroelectric project was damaged by the flood. National disaster authorities alerted people living along the river in the Gorkha, Tanahun, Chitwan, East Nawalparasi and West Nawalparasi districts about the flood.

Nepal flood losses estimated at \$2.56 billion, officials say.

"Please help ensure that people in at-risk areas are moved to safe locations in time and assist search and rescue operations as needed," the National Disaster-Risk Reduction and Management Authority said in a social media post.



## Erie, Pennsylvania shooter killed 8 people, then himself, police say

A 45-year-old man shot and killed eight people in Erie, Pennsylvania, including a pregnant woman and two children, then apparently shot himself to death, authorities said on Saturday at a press conference where they revealed details of the previous evening's shooting. The shooter, who has yet to be identified, died of an apparent self-inflicted wound before officers arrived on the scene, said Erie Police Chief Rick Lorah.

"Some scenes stay with you long after you leave them. This is one of those tragic scenes," Lorah said.

Police have yet to establish a motive, Lorah said. He said eight of the nine who died in the shooting were family members, and one was a family friend.

Lorah said after the shooter entered the home, he came out of the house and shot two women who appeared "distressed" and were pacing back and forth seeking assistance from neighbors. Police found the suspect on the second floor of the home on Perry Street, Lorah said.

Erie Mayor Daria Devlin said the police department "arrived at a horrific scene, faced unimaginable circumstances, and carried out their duties with courage and professionalism." "They too are members of this community, and they too will carry the weight of what happened last night," she said. Earlier, Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro said in a statement on X that he had spoken with Mayor Devlin and had offered support following "the tragic mass shooting." **REUTERS**



## Anger and fear grip Okinawa after killing

A week after a US marine was arrested on suspicion of murdering a Japanese woman in Okinawa, resident Takako Kakazu is clear what she wants: American soldiers to leave.

The case has prompted public outrage, caused Japan's premier to slam the "heinous crime" and reignited controversy over the heavy US military presence on the southern island.

"I just can't accept this anymore. How many more women in Okinawa have to suffer like this? Everyone is angry," she told AFP.

"I know America says they'll protect us if there's a war, but all we ever get is suffering... Please leave," said the 55-year-old housewife, who has one daughter.

On a busy, sunny weekend close to Okinawa's capital Naha, life seemed normal as tourists and Americans who appeared to be from the military packed beaches and shopping streets.

But residents on Okinawa, where any crimes involving US forces have long inflamed criticism of the troops' presence, told AFP of their frustration and anger in the wake of another alleged incident.

According to police, a US

Local media reported she was choked to death and that the Marine is denying the allegations.

"Honestly, my first reaction



marine stationed on Okinawa was arrested on suspicion of killing a 39-year-old woman at a hotel in Naha and stealing her wallet.

was: 'Not again,' said Aini Hiane, a 23-year-old cafe worker.

"If they're going to maintain that presence here, they need to follow the rules. Otherwise, it's

hard to feel like we can move forward together."

But Hiane acknowledged it "difficult to demand that it (the US military) be removed entirely", and other residents also said that Americans were important to many local businesses.

Military base-related income accounts for around five percent of the region's annual total, and some argue that the bases create jobs.

Japan - which has a pacifist constitution - also relies on US military might as a deterrent against any potential attack, and has emphasized the importance of American soldiers being garrisoned, trained and on standby 24/7.

For Americans living on the island, there were fears that the latest incident would create tensions within the community.

Stephen Butler, a bar owner in Naha, acknowledged that "it does not look good for the rest of us that are here, that want to be here peacefully and enjoy the culture." **AP**



# SPORTS



## Drought Over! Kipchoge Storms to Melbourne Victory

Kipchoge, who won his last marathon in September 2023 at Berlin, broke away inside the last 10 kilometers of the 42.2-kilometer race Sunday and crossed the finish line in 2 hours, 9 minutes, 10 seconds, two seconds inside the previous race record.

Two-time Olympic champion Eliud Kipchoge set a race record Sunday in winning the Melbourne Marathon. And it could have been a few seconds faster. The 41-year-old from Kenya, a former world record holder and who won gold medals at the 2016 and 2020 Games, slowed down to wave to spectators inside the Melbourne Cricket Ground, where the last half-lap was run.

Kipchoge, who won his last marathon in September 2023 at Berlin, broke away inside the last 10 kilometers of the 42.2-kilometer race Sunday and crossed the finish line in 2 hours, 9 minutes, 10 seconds, two seconds inside the previous race record.

## Pakistani Hulk Rameez Conquers America

Pakistani bodybuilder Rameez Ibrahim, on Sunday won a gold medal in the Men's Physique category at the Mr. America International Bodybuilding Championship held in the United States, while also securing a silver medal in the Pro category. According to reports, Rameez was the first Pakistani bodybuilder to win a gold medal at the championship. Bodybuilders from 25 countries participated in the competition, showcasing their skills in various categories.

The championship has a long history, having been held annually since 1939.

Rameez dedicated his achievement to the Pakistan Army, describing the victory as a significant milestone for Pakistani bodybuilding.



## Astrid The Great! French Flair Seals Islamabad Title

France's Astrid Giratle clinched the women's singles title at the W15 Islamabad - World Tennis Women's Futures Championships 2026, defeating Thailand's Kamonwan Yodpetch 7-5, 7-5 in the final at the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) Tennis Complex on Sunday.

The first leg of the championship concluded successfully, featuring 30 players from 17 countries, including France, China, Russia, Denmark, Mexico, Uzbekistan, South Africa, the Netherlands, Korea, Nepal, Japan, Hong Kong, Germany, Thailand, Türkiye, the Czech Republic and Pakistan.

The tournament provided international players with an opportunity to compete at a high level and earn valuable ranking points.

Sponsored by Fatima Group, the event aimed to promote and develop international women's tennis in Pakistan.

Usam Sharif of Fatima Group attended the closing ceremony as chief guest, while DIG Saleem Marwat was the guest of honour.

The ceremony was also attended by Col. Gul Rehman, Director PTF; Zaira Ahmad Zaka, Secretary PWTA; former Pakistan No. 1 Sarah Mahboob Khan; and Tufail Cheema, Secretary ITA. Players, parents, media representatives and tennis enthusiasts were also present.

The tournament was supervised by Abdullah Haluk Torun of Türkiye, an International Tennis Federation (ITF) Bronze Badge Referee.

Meanwhile, the PTF announced that the main draw of the second leg of the W15 Islamabad - World Tennis Women's Futures Championships 2026 would commence on October 13 at the PTF Tennis Complex, Islamabad. AGENCIES



## He's Back! Messi Bags Brace in 4-0 Miami Rout

Lionel Messi scored two goals to give him a league-leading 23 this season, and Inter Miami beat D.C. United 4-0 on Saturday night.

Luis Suárez also scored twice and Germán Berterame had two assists for Inter Miami, which snapped a five-match winless skid. Miami had four draws and one loss before Saturday's outburst.

Four days after playing his farewell match that ended a 21-year tenure with the

1 rout of CF Montreal on Aug. 29. It was also the first league win for new coach Christian "Kily" González, who took over Sept. 16.

D.C. United is winless in its last five matches.

Messi scored his first in the 47th minute after Suárez tallied twice in the first half to give Inter Miami a 2-0 lead at the break. Suárez centered a pass near the 6-yard box, where Messi retrieved it and tapped in a shot inside the right post.

Inter Miami padded its lead when Messi struck again in the 60th minute. He received Rodrigo De Paul's pass, dribbled inside the large area and eluded two



Argentine national team, Messi played the entire 90 minutes. The win was Miami's first since a 7-

defenders to beat goalkeeper Sean Johnson with a shot from 12 yards. AP

## Brennan Bags Second Title with Japan Triumph

Michael Brennan won the Baycurrent Classic on Sunday for his second victory of the season and third on the PGA Tour, paring the final six holes for a 3-under 68 and a one-stroke margin over Jacob Bridgeman and Keith Mitchell.

"Unbelievable. It was an unbelievable week," Brennan said. "Japan was spectacular. The fans were amazing this week. It was so awesome to have my brother fly out here and be here for the weekend."

Tied for the third-round lead with Bridgeman and Zach Bauchou in the FedEx Cup Fall event, Brennan rebounded from a bogey on the 10th with birdies on Nos. 11 and 12 before the winning par run at hilly Yokohama Country Club.

"I was frustrated after 10, probably could have handled it a little bit better," Brennan said. "Definitely should have hit a better chip, but making a really nice roll on 11 and 12 was huge."

His best par save came on the par-3 16th when he hit a long shot from a greenside bunker to a foot. He finished at 18-under 268.

Brennan has won the three titles in 33 starts. The 24-year-old former Wake Forest player took the Wyndham Championship in August and finished the season 46th in

the FedExCup standings. He won the Bank of Utah Championship last year.

"I just think you can get more comfortable in those situations," Brennan said. "I was very nervous today, especially coming down the stretch. Jacob and I had a great battle. He played really great."

coming down and that was really fun. We played a lot of golf in college together. AP



## Battler De Minaur Roars Into Next Round

Australia's Alex de Minaur has been made to fight hard but has reached the last 16 at the Shanghai Masters.

De Minaur came up against Japanese qualifier Rei Sakamoto, a 20-year-old ranked

Both players held serve comfortably again in the second set before de Minaur grabbed a break from deuce to lead 3-2. He then staved off the only two break points against him for the match to hold for 4-2, which proved the decisive margin.

In a match of inches, De Minaur converted his only break point opportunity, while Sakamoto converted none from two.

De Minaur won 92 per cent of his first serve points compared with Sakamoto's 71 per cent, and shaded second serve points by 62 to 58 per cent.

Earlier, US Open finalist Ben Shelton conceded he had been "outplayed" after a shock 7-6 (7-5) 7-6 (7-3) defeat from France's Arthur Guez in the third round.

World number four Shelton, who has barely played since losing to Alexander Zverev in September's US Open final and withdrew from the recent Japan Open due to fitness concerns, lost both sets against the world number 56 in tight tiebreakers.

Asked if his recent lack of action had had an effect on him, Shelton told reporters: "I mean, I got outplayed today. The guy played better than me. A hundred per cent, I would have liked to have come over here earlier and be prepared and have already dealt with the jet lag by the time I was playing here in the Shanghai Masters."

"My body wasn't ready. I wasn't physically ready to play in Tokyo. That's just the way this tour is sometimes." AP



137th compared to the Australia's No.9 seed and world ranking. The 27-year-old de Minaur had to dig deep but ultimately prevailed 7-5 (8-6) 6-4 in an hour and 34 minutes to progress to a meeting with 26th-seeded Russian Karen Khachanov. De Minaur and Sakamoto held serve comfortably through the first set, with three holes to 30 by Sakamoto being as close as either player came to conceding a break. The Australian snatched a mini-break in the tiebreaker to lead 4-2, and after holding his next two service points, led 6-3. Sakamoto hit back with a mini-break to make it 6-6, but de Minaur held then broke his rival immediately and closed out the set.

## Smith Grabs Glory — Sets New Catch Record!

Australia's Steve Smith set a record for most Test catches as his side took a firm grip on the first Test with hosts South Africa 238 runs for eight wickets, still trailing the tourists by 152 runs at tea on the third day at Kingsmead.

Smith took three superb catches on Sunday to take his Test tally to 222, going past the record of 220 held by England's Joe Root.

Two of the catches showed outstanding anticipation as Smith shuffled across a few steps to snag South Africa captain Temba Bavuma and Kyle Verreynne as they both tried reverse sweeps off the spin bowling of Nathan Lyon, and he also produced a flying dive across first slip to break the record and see off the threat of David Bedingham.

Australia captain Pat Cummins took 3-54 to lead a combined

bowling effort as South Africa's batsmen were guilty of playing loose shots at crucial junctures of the contest with three wickets falling before lunch and four more in the second session.

South Africa added 57 runs to their overnight tally of 27-1 before Aiden Markram got a healthy edge as he tried to drive Mitch Starc and was caught by Matt Renshaw at first slip for 37.

An injudicious reverse sweep by Bavuma saw him go cheaply for three runs while Bedingham was out for 49, caught in spectacular fashion by Smith as he edged a back-foot drive.

After lunch, Cummins took two quick wickets with Wiaan Mulder (30) out to a misused hook shot and Tristan Stubbs (32) following shortly as his plucked effort was caught at deep fine leg. REUTERS

