

KP emergency gets parliament nod

Senate approves resolution with majority vote; National security at stake due to KP situation, says Tarar; PTI walks out in protest in Senate; PTI moves PHC against KP governor rule, emergency

Shortly after the National Assembly passed a resolution endorsing the federal government's imposition of emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Wednesday, the Senate also gave its approval for the measure.

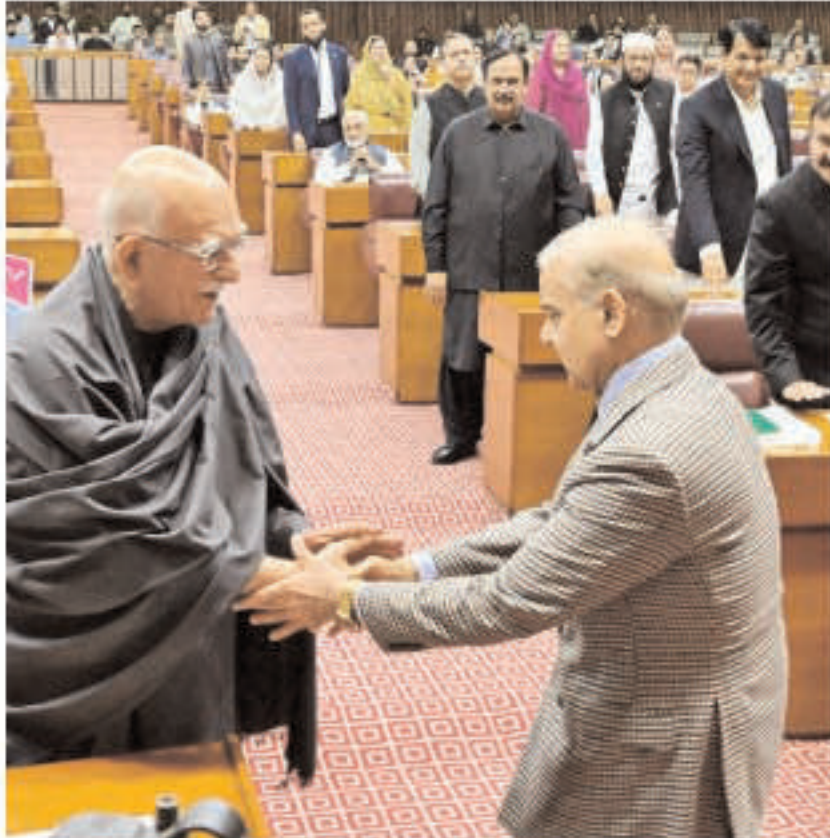
The Centre had imposed governor's rule and emergency in KP on Sunday, citing the provincial government's "deliberate disengagement" from the fight against terrorism. The move followed weeks of political tensions between the Centre and the PTI after the latter announced a long march to Islamabad to demand the release of its jailed founder, Imran Khan.

Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Tariq Fazal Chaudhry tabled the motions regarding the proclamation of emergency before both Houses.

In the Senate, the resolution was passed amid the opposition's outcry, with PTI senators staging a walkout.

The Senate's approval followed a heated debate between treasury and opposition members, during which Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar defended the procedural propriety presenting the resolution in the House and getting it approved.

He argued that a "constitutional resolution" had been laid before the House in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Senate. "Under Article 232, a copy of [the proclamation of] emergency has been laid before the House. An attempt to bypass the constitutional procedure cannot succeed," he said, adding that the requirement of a seven-day notice for tabling a resolution did not apply to one



presented under a constitutional necessity. "If its opponents have any objections, they should reject the resolution through their vote after the debate. We cannot deviate from the Constitution and rules of the House," he said.

As opposition voiced opposition to the resolution, Senate Chairperson Yousuf Raza Gilani asked them to exercise patience. "This is not a classroom, do not make noise," he remarked as senators from the opposition benches continued sloganeering.

Among them, PTI's Humayun Mahmand said independent Senator Faisal Vawda had said months ago that governor's rule would be imposed. He alleged that terrorism being cited as the reason for the measure was just an excuse and the actual "target is the PTI".

PTI-backed Senator Hamid Khan also argued that there "seems to be some other objectives behind governor's rule and emergency". Referring to the talks between the Centre and the opposition ahead of governor's rule and emergency in

KP, he alleged that negotiations "were just a drama" and were held "only to deceive the people".

"The real decision was taken elsewhere long ago," he claimed. He further said that Jamiat Ulama-i-Islam Fazl chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who tried to mediate between the Centre and the opposition, had stated that while the negotiations were taking place, "a decision came".

"Governments formed on the basis of Form-47 do not have the real mandate," he added.

JUI-F's Kamran Murtaza said the opposition's resolution against governor's rule should have also been included in the agenda for the day, but it was returned with objections.

Murtaza argued that the relevant material required for endorsement of enforcement of Article 232 and 234 - constitutional provision related to imposition of emergency and governor's rule - had not been presented in the House.

Despite letters and applications, the government had not provided documents and material related to the imposition of emergency and governor's rule, he said, adding that senators had to obtain that material through social media.

Members could not be satisfied with a decision until complete information came forth, he said.

The NA question hour session was suspended due to discussions on the emergency. The motion in the lower House of Parliament was adopted with a majority vote after a discussion opened by Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar.

"The National Assembly approves the Proclamation of Emergency issued by the President on the 11th October, 2026 in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under second proviso of clause (1) of Article 232 of the Constitution," read a post by NA's official X account.

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KP emergency PTI's political suicide attack: Bilawal

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Wednesday blamed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for the circumstances that led to the imposition of an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), calling it a "political suicide attack" on the provincial government.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said that the PTI leadership had played a key role in creating the current political and security situation by failing to cooperate with the federal government in the fight against



terrorism. "Their responsible leadership knows, even if it does not admit it publicly, that the PTI itself carried out a political suicide attack on its KP government," he said.

Bilawal said the PTI should have presented constitutional, legal or political reasons if it opposed the federal government's decision. "If the president was not supposed to sign the summary, there should have been a reason for refusing it," he said. He added that neither President Asif Ali Zardari nor the PPP had received a convincing constitutional, legal or political justification for opposing the move.

Bilawal said that when the summary for imposing an emergency was first sent to the president, the PPP had called for talks with the opposition, particularly the PTI, before invoking the constitutional provision. He said the PPP wanted the federal government's concerns about the KP government to be addressed through negotiations.

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Govt hikes petrol price by Rs 1.20, cuts diesel by Rs 0.17

The government on Wednesday increased the price of petrol by Rs 1.20 to Rs 393.86 per litre, while reducing the price of high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs 0.17 to Rs 396.65 per litre, effective for Thursday, October 15, 2026.

The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) revised the ex-depot prices of petroleum products under the federal government's petroleum pricing mechanism, according to a press release issued by the Petroleum Division.

Petrol was previously priced at Rs 392.66 per litre, while HSD stood at Rs 396.82 per litre. The revised prices will remain effective for October 15.

The Petroleum Division said the change was necessitated by global developments, including

movements in Platts rates, premiums and incidentals.

On Tuesday, the government had reduced the price of petrol by Rs 2.71 to Rs 392.66 per litre, while cutting the price of high-speed diesel by Rs 0.03 to Rs 396.82 per litre.

Meanwhile, oil prices steadied on Wednesday after rising on an attack on the headquarters of Saudi Arabia's state-owned oil company and Iranian comments about new tactics deployed to target ships and keep oil prices high to influence US midterm elections. **NEWS DESK**

Murad, Hubei leaders eye trade pact



Marking 75 years of enduring diplomatic ties, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah met with top leadership of China's Hubei province on Wednesday to forge broader provincial-level collaboration in agriculture, information technology, education, and vocational training.

Leading a high-level delegation during his official visit to Wuhan, CM Shah held comprehensive talks with Hubei Governor Li Dianxun and provincial Communist Party Secretary Quan Xiaobao. The discussions focused on translating the decades-old Pakistan-China friendship into tangible socioeconomic development projects, enhancing trade, and boosting people-to-people exchanges.

Hubei leadership pledges closer ties

Welcoming the Sindh Chief Minister and his delegation to Wuhan, Hubei Governor Li Dianxun lauded the deep-rooted friendship between Pakistan and China, describing it as an unbreakable bond of mutual trust and strategic cooperation.

Governor Li expressed Hubei's

strong commitment to deepening sub-national cooperation with Sindh, noting that the province's robust industrial base, advanced manufacturing capabilities, and world-class research institutions offer massive potential for joint ventures. He assured the delegation that Hubei is keen to expand collaboration in modern agriculture, digital industries, vocational training, and business-to-business partnerships, paving the way for mutually beneficial growth under the next phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Strengthening CPEC Phase-II

Emphasizing that the Pakistan-China alliance remains the cornerstone of Islamabad's foreign policy, CM Shah noted that the relationship has successfully weathered all regional and global challenges. He highlighted the upcoming 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations - formally established on May 21, 1951 - and expressed pride that Pakistan was among the first nations to recognize the People's Republic of China.

Shah welcomed Hubei enterprises to actively participate in the next phase of CPEC, particularly focusing on green growth, agricultural modernization, and skills development.

Focus on Agriculture Agriculture emerged as a focal point of the discussions. The Chief Minister expressed gratitude to China for training 1,000 Pakistani agricultural graduates, many of whom studied at

Huazhong Agricultural University. He welcomed ongoing partnerships in horticultural crop research and the establishment of a joint laboratory for smart and digital agriculture.

Highlighting Sindh's potential in agricultural production, Mr. Shah sought Hubei's expertise in hybrid rice, high-yield seed development, and farm mechanization. He stressed the need for advanced cold-chain logistics to minimise post-harvest losses for Sindh's high-quality fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy, and fisheries, thereby improving market access.

Tech, Education and vocational training

To boost innovation, the Chief Minister proposed linking Wuhan-based tech incubators and investors with Sindh's startups through joint incubation programs. He also invited Chinese firms to invest in pilot projects spanning port logistics, industrial automation, and urban traffic management in Karachi.

In the education sector, Mr. Shah called for enhanced university-to-university linkages in engineering and digital technologies, alongside joint technical and vocational training (TVET) initiatives to equip Sindh's youth with market-driven skills for modern manufacturing.

Concluding the visit, both sides expressed confidence that the enhanced engagement between Sindh and Hubei will further strengthen the Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership. **NEWS DESK**

Shoulder-to-shoulder with Riyadh: PM Shehbaz

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, signed between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye, was a historic milestone for peace, unity, and stability in the region.



The prime minister said this in a meeting with Lieutenant General (ret'd) Nauman Mahmood, the first Secretary General to the General Secretariat of the alliance, pursuant to Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, who called on him here.

He expressed his best wishes for Lt. General (ret'd) Nauman

Mahmood on assuming his position.

The prime minister emphasized that under the Agreement, Pakistan stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Saudi Arabia for its sovereignty, defense, and regional security, and fully supported Saudi Arabia's legitimate right to self-defense.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's

unwavering commitment to protecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and security of the Kingdom.

The Secretary General of the Makkah Defence Alliance briefed the prime minister on the strategy to promote defense and strategic cooperation under the framework of the Agreement. **NEWS DESK**

National



Verdict reserved on Bushra Bibi's pleas

World



Israeli settlers set fire to mosque in occupied West Bank

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Debt Down, Revenue Up, Reserves Up

Sports



Renshaw Heroics Fail to Solve Aussie Opener Puzzle

Glamour



Victoria: Harper Used PowerPoints for Perm

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Pakistan, Oman vow stronger ties

NATIONAL

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CM Murad calls for enhanced educational cooperation between Sindh and China



Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday called for a transformative era of academic and educational cooperation between the province of Sindh and China, proposing robust partnerships in teacher training, educational technology, student exchanges, Mandarin language instruction, and collaborative research.

Addressing a distinguished gathering of university leaders, faculty members, and students - both Pakistani and Chinese - at the prestigious Central China Normal University (CCNU) in Wuhan, the Chief Minister emphasised that education and youth engagement will serve as the cornerstone for the next chapter of Pakistan-China relations, particularly as both nations mark the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic ties.

The high-profile event was attended by Prof. Peng Shuangjie, President of CCNU; Mr. Xia Lixin, Secretary of the University Party Committee, along with senior academics, researchers, and students.

Educational Excellence
Praising CCNU's legacy since

its establishment in 1903, Murad Ali Shah lauded the institution's longstanding global contributions to teacher education and pedagogical innovation.

"It is an honour to stand in a university that has been educating teachers for more than a century. When you educate a teacher, you educate generations. Institutions such as CCNU shape the future of nations through knowledge, innovation, and human development," the Chief Minister remarked.

Drawing parallels between civilisations, he noted that just as the Yangtze River has shaped Chinese history, the Indus River has profoundly influenced the heritage of Sindh. He highlighted Sindh's rich civilisational milestones including Mohenjo-daro, the Makli necropolis, and the literary legacy of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai while inviting Chinese students and faculty to visit the vibrant commercial hub of Karachi and experience Sindh's rich culture firsthand.

A Four-Point Framework for Cooperation
Underscoring Sindh's ongoing

educational reforms - which include investments in digital learning, technical education, and the development of Karachi Education City. Murad Ali Shah put forward a concrete, four-point framework for bilateral collaboration with CCNU:

1. Teacher Training: Collaborating between CCNU, Sindh's Education Department, and provincial universities to elevate training programmes, starting with the preparation of master trainers from Sindh.

2. Academic Mobility: Expanding scholarships, faculty exchanges, research fellowships, and short-term academic programmes to encourage greater cross-border student and professional mobility.

3. Mandarin Language Instruction: Inviting CCNU to support the training of Mandarin teachers across Sindh's schools and universities to boost cultural, educational, and economic connectivity.

4. Joint Research Initiatives: Establishing collaborative research endeavors targeting critical shared challenges, such as climate change, water management, artificial intelligence, renewable energy, smart cities, and the comparative history of the Indus and Yangtze river civilizations.

Empowering Youth

In a heartfelt address to Pakistani students enrolled at the university, the Chief Minister described them as the true ambassadors of Pakistan. He urged them to absorb as much knowledge as possible and eventu-

ally return home to contribute to Sindh's development.

"The strongest bridge between Pakistan and China will not be built with concrete or steel alone - it will be built through educated, skilled, and connected young people who understand one another and work together for a shared future," he said.

Reception by CCNU Leadership

Earlier upon his arrival, the Chief Minister was warmly greeted by CCNU Deputy President Mr. Li and faculty members. He was later given a detailed briefing on the university's digital teaching classes, research endeavors, and its standing as a premier institution housing over 30,000 students and 2,500 faculty members across 25 departments.

During formal discussions, CM Murad Ali Shah presented traditional Ajraks and Sindh caps to President Prof. Peng Shuangjie and Party Committee Secretary Mr. Xia Lixin as tokens of cultural goodwill. The Chinese leadership welcomed the proposed initiatives, expressing a keen interest in broadening institutional exchanges and student mobility programmes between Sindh and Hubei Province.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, Minister P&D Jam Khan Shoro, Special Assistant to CM Syed Qasim Naveed, PSCM Agha Wasif, P&D Chairman Najam Shah, Investment Secretary Raja Khuram Shahzad, and Transport Secretary Asad Zaman, and others. **NEWS DESK**

Sindh seeks China's support to boost agricultural production

Sindh Minister for Agriculture Sardar Muhammad Bux Khan Mahar, accompanied by Secretary Agriculture Sindh Muhammad Zaman Narejo, visited Huazhong Agricultural University located in Hubei Province, China, where the Director General of the Department of Agriculture, Hubei Province, China, received the provincial minister.

On the occasion, the Director General of the Department of Agriculture, Hubei Province, China, briefed the provincial

Department of Agriculture, Hubei Province, China, in which matters related to mutual cooperation in the agriculture sector, exchange of modern agricultural technology and promotion of agricultural research were discussed. The provincial minister said that the purpose of the visit is to explore possibilities of cooperation in the fields of agricultural research and modern technology and to benefit from China's experiences.

He said that cooperation with China can help increase agricultural production in Sindh and introduce improved varieties of crops. Through modern agricultural technology, opportunities can also be created for efficient use of water and other agricultural resources and to tackle the impacts of climate change.

Mahar said that by benefiting from China's experiences and modern agricultural technology, farmers in Sindh can be facilitated and opportunities can be created



minister in detail regarding agricultural research, modern agricultural technology and ongoing research activities in the agriculture sector.

During the visit, Mahar also held a meeting with the Director General of the

to further strengthen the agricultural economy of the province. On the occasion of the visit, Secretary Agriculture Sindh Muhammad Zaman Narejo and other relevant officials were also accompanying the provincial minister. **NEWS DESK**

Mir Raza murder: JC to submit report tomorrow

A judicial commission formed to probe the murder of young entrepreneur Mir Raza has prepared its report after more than a month of hearings.

According to commission sources, the report will be presented to the Sindh government on Thursday, October 15. The sources added that the thorough investigation report will be submitted to the Sindh government on Thursday at 10:00 AM. The judicial commission has also summoned the secretary of home affairs on Thursday. The registrar of the judicial commission will hand over the report to the home secretary.

Meanwhile, the head of the judicial commission, Justice Umar Sial, will start hearing cases in Hyderabad. He will continue hearings at the Hyderabad circuit bench until November 7. Earlier, the details of answers given by DIG Amir Farooqi, head of the investigation team in the Mir Raza case, before the judicial commission have emerged. The Mir Raza Judicial Commission asked Amir Farooqi 19 questions regarding the investigation. In his responses, Farooqi said no shortcomings had been found in the previous investigation that could have affected the probe.

The commission asked whether he knew that Shabbir Laghari had personally recorded only 10 out of 33 statements. Farooqi replied that the statements recorded by Laghari were part of the investigation file. He said all evidence had been taken into custody in accordance with the law. However, he acknowledged that there had been irregularities at the initial stage regarding the preservation of the body and securing the crime scene. Farooqi said he was satisfied with the measures taken to secure the crime scene. He added that it would have been better if the holster, lighter, cigarette packet and bullet casing had been recovered on the first day. **NP**

Police raid residence of PPP MNA's brother

South District Police raided the residence of Asad Khan Jakhani, brother of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) MNA Aijaz Hussain Jakhani, in Khayaban-e-Rahat, DHA Phase VI, Karachi, on Wednesday.

According to reports, police faced resistance during the raid, leading to a heated exchange between the SHO and the residence's security staff. Video footage shows Mumtaz Jakhani attempting to prevent police from entering the house. The police later left the premises following the confrontation with the security personnel. The family alleged that the raid was carried out at the behest of MNA Aijaz Jakhani. In a video message from Saudi Arabia, Asad Jakhani accused his brother of harassing the family to satisfy his personal ego. He also alleged that Aijaz Jakhani wanted to deny them their share in the family property. Khalid Jakhani also alleged that the dispute stemmed from the family's property and inheritance issues.

Meanwhile, Aijaz Jakhani denied having any knowledge of the raid, saying that Asad must have done something that prompted the police action. He said Asad and Khalid were his half-brothers and that he had no association with them. Aijaz Jakhani further accused Asad of involvement in drug-related activities, adding that he had severed ties with him and had announced the estrangement on social media. **NP**

Sindh governor stresses equal rights, opportunities for persons with disabilities

Sindh Governor Syed Nehal Hashmi has emphasized that ensuring independence, protection, equal rights and opportunities for the dignified inclusion of persons with disabilities in society is a shared responsibility. He remarked that despite facing physical challenges, persons with disabilities possess immense abilities, determination and courage, setting an inspiring example for everyone.

Addressing an event organized by the Karachi Disability Network (KDN), Governor Sindh congratulated the organization on its meaningful services for the welfare, empowerment and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. He highlighted the important role of such organizations in providing opportunities for individuals

to demonstrate their abilities and participate actively in society.

Governor Sindh stated that Allah Almighty has entrusted humanity with the responsibility of supporting one another, and caring for others is an important test in life. He observed that persons with disabilities teach us how to face life's challenges with dignity, patience and courage while remaining grateful to our Creator.



He regretted that despite having numerous blessings, some people remain preoccupied with greed, conflicts and harming others, whereas the lives of persons with disabilities offer valuable lessons in patience, tolerance and positive attitudes.

Syed Muhammad Nehal Hashmi praised the educational struggles and abilities of persons with disabilities. He particularly highlighted the dedi-

cation and consistent practice required to read and write in Braille, noting that their commitment and capabilities demonstrate that determination and courage can overcome many obstacles.

The Governor emphasized that Allah Almighty has bestowed different abilities upon every individual and that no person is perfect in every respect. He stressed that rather than



taking pride in our own abilities, we should learn to recognize and respect the strengths of others and extend support to one another. Governor Sindh reaffirmed that collective efforts must continue to ensure that persons with disabilities become active, empowered and respected members of society, with equal opportunities to participate in every sphere of life. **NEWS DESK**

Minister visits SITE, orders action against absent employees



Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Jam Ikramullah Dharejo has paid a surprise visit to SITE and inspected various departments to review administrative affairs, employee attendance, cleanliness, and security arrangements. Managing

Director SITE Ahmed Fawad Shah also accompanied the provincial minister.

During the visit, the provincial minister checked the attendance registers and directed the authorities to initiate departmental action against employees found absent or arriving late at the office. He made it clear that no compromise would be made on discipline and punctuality in the performance of official duties.

Jam Ikramullah Dharejo directed the concerned officials to take effective measures to improve the performance of all departments at SITE and further strengthen cleanliness and security arrangements. He said that employees must perform their duties with honesty, dedication, and punctuality, warning that strict departmental action would be taken against those violating the rules.

The provincial minister also instructed the relevant authorities to provide all possible facilities to the business community and take effective measures to address their issues. He further emphasized that transparency must be ensured in all administrative and official matters to improve the institution's performance and promote industrial and commercial activities. **NEWS DESK**

Sattar urges government to revisit economic policies

Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader and Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Dr Farooq Sattar on Wednesday expressed grief over the deaths of five members of a family in Karachi, reportedly linked to financial hardship, and called for a serious review of the country's economic policies.

In a statement, Sattar described the incident as a moment of introspection for the government, saying that poverty, hunger and economic distress had once again highlighted the difficulties faced by ordinary citizens. "Since we are ourselves part of the government, this is not merely a time to question others but also to recognize our own responsibilities and take practical steps," he said.

Questioning the country's economic policymakers, Sattar said that if ordinary citizens were unable to provide two meals a day for their children, the government needed to seriously reconsider its economic policies.

He called for the formulation of people-friendly policies aimed at reducing inflation, creating employment opportunities and providing meaningful relief to low-income and middle-class households. Sattar stressed that the primary purpose of being in government was to serve the public and resolve their problems.

He said the government must ensure that no citizen was driven to despair by hunger, unemployment or helplessness. "This is not a time merely for expressing sorrow and issuing statements, but for taking practical measures, implementing effective policies and providing immediate assistance to deserving families," he said.

Meanwhile, police recovered a suicide note pointing to financial difficulties and strained family relationships after five members of a family, including a married couple, their two young daughters and the man's sister, were found dead at a house in Karachi's Bin Qasim area. The bodies were discovered at a house in a private housing society near Gulshan-e-Hadeed during the night between Monday and Tuesday.

The deceased were identified as 30-year-old Shahzaib, a property dealer; his 28-year-old wife, Saba; his 20-year-old sister, Shumaila; and their daughters, five-year-old Aizal and three-year-old Arya. **NP**



NATIONAL

DTM

Emergency imposed due to security situation: Azam Nazeer Tarar



Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar said on Wednesday that imposing an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was a last resort due to the worsening law and order situation and rising terrorist attacks.

Speaking in the National Assembly during a discussion on the proclamation of emergency issued by the president for KP on October 11, 2026, the minister said the federal cabinet had recommended the move after nearly two-and-a-half hours of deliberations and a detailed review of the available evidence.

He said the decision was aimed at protecting the lives and property of citizens and addressing growing security challenges in the province. Tarar said Article 232 of the Constitution dealt with emergencies arising from internal disturbances and external aggression, while Article 234 covered situations in which a provincial government could not function in accordance with the Constitution.

He said the cabinet had reviewed reports from various security agencies, focusing on the rising number of terrorist attacks, casualties and

injuries. The minister said the constitutional provisions had been invoked only after examining the available evidence and considering other possible measures.

He added that administrative responsibility for provincial affairs had been assigned to the governor following the proclamation. Similar constitutional provisions had been invoked in the past, he said, adding that related matters had also been examined by the courts.

Tarar said the matter had been placed before Parliament in line with the constitutional procedure, which requires an emergency proclamation to be presented to both houses for approval within the prescribed period.

Giving figures on terrorism, the minister said 2,911 incidents had been reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa between 2021 and 2024. Another 3,787 incidents were recorded between October 15, 2025, and October 9, 2026. He said the number of incidents reported during the latter period was higher than the combined total recorded over the preceding three years, underlining the seriousness of the security situation.

Tarar stressed the need for the federal and provincial governments to work together to combat terrorism.

He paid tribute to the armed forces, police, security personnel, religious scholars and civilians who had sacrificed their lives in the fight against terrorism. National unity was essential to defeating the menace, he added.

The minister criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-led provincial government, saying it had given greater priority to political activities than to tackling security challenges.

He said the provincial leadership should have visited areas affected by terrorist attacks, met the families of victims, visited the injured and prepared a comprehensive action plan in coordination with security institutions.

Tarar said a provincial chief executive had a responsibility to lead during a security crisis, hold regular meetings, ensure effective planning and implement measures to protect citizens.

Referring to announcements about marches towards Islamabad, he said the federal government had preferred dialogue and political engagement over the use of force. He thanked National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for providing a platform for negotiations at the request of the president and the prime minister.

According to Tarar, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Advisor to Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Senaullah and Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir Affairs Engr Amir Muqam represented the government in the talks.

Pakistan Peoples Party representatives, including Syed Naveed Qamar and Senator Sherry Rehman, also took part. The opposition delegation was led by PTI chairman Barrister Ali Gohar and Senate opposition leader Allama Nasir Abbas, he said.

Tarar said the talks continued through several rounds, during which the participants discussed different drafts.

However, the negotiations failed to make the desired progress on counterterrorism measures, as issues concerning meetings with incarcerated political leaders and other facilities also came up for discussion.

Explaining the legal position, the minister said matters relating to arrests, acquittals, trials and sentences had to be handled under the law and through the relevant judicial procedures.

He said the executive could not take the place of the courts in matters falling within their jurisdiction.

However, Article 45 of the Constitution empowered the president to grant a pardon, reprieve or remission of punishment in accordance with the law, he added. **NEWS DESK**

Stand with state, security forces against terrorism, says Asif

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Wednesday urged the nation to stand with the state and armed forces in the fight against terrorism, saying Pakistan's security and survival must take priority over political interests.

of making the release of a political leader the main issue.

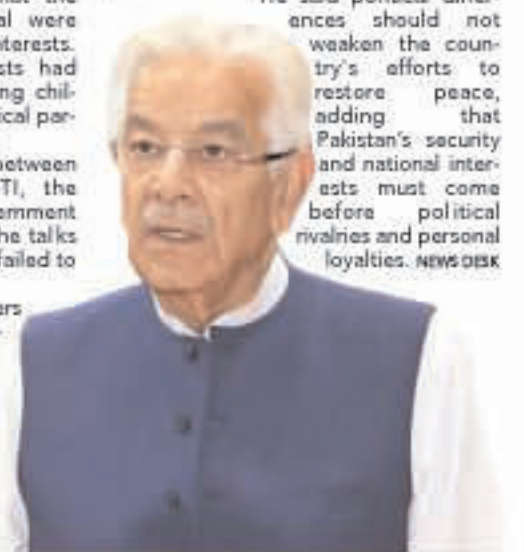
He recalled that former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, PML-N leader Maryam Nawaz and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had also been imprisoned during the PTI government. He said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had continued its political activities despite the imprisonment of its leaders and had not made their release the sole focus of its politics.

The defence minister also questioned the PTI's performance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, saying the party should explain its record on governance and public services after remaining in power in the province for several years.

He said the government and political parties should take responsibility for their past mistakes instead of blaming others.

Khawaja Asif stressed that the armed forces needed the full support of the civilian government and the public to defeat terrorism.

He said political differences should not weaken the country's efforts to restore peace, adding that Pakistan's security and national interests must come before political rivalries and personal loyalties. **NEWS DESK**



KP Assembly to be restored after 6 months: Sanaullah

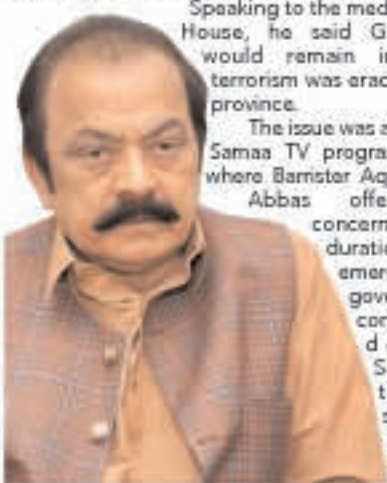
Prime Minister's Adviser Rana Sanaullah has said the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Assembly will be restored after six months, when lawmakers will elect their own leader and a government will be formed again.

Speaking to the media at Parliament House, he said Governor's Rule would remain in place until terrorism was eradicated from the province.

The issue was also discussed on Samaa TV programme Red Line, where Barrister Aqeel and Shafqat Abbas offered differing concerns about the duration of the emergency, provincial governance and the consequences for democracy.

Sanaullah told the media a strategy was being formulated to fill the political vacuum in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He accused the PTI government of prioritising political interests over national interests and maintained that Governor's Rule would continue until terrorism was eliminated.

He expressed confidence that terrorism would soon be eradicated from the entire province. Sanaullah reiterated that the KP Assembly would be restored after six months, allowing members to elect their own leader and form a government again. **WP**



FCCP restores status of 123 successful PPSC candidates

The Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan (FCCP) on Wednesday accepted the petitions of 123 candidates who had qualified examinations conducted by the Punjab Public Service Commission (PPSC), restoring their status and rejecting the commission's stance.

A two-member bench headed by Chief Justice Aminuddin Khan heard the case. During the proceedings, Justice Ali Baqar Najafi observed that the leaked examination papers had been recovered after the candidates had cleared the examinations and the PPSC had issued its recommendations for their appointments.

Justice Najafi asked how many PPSC officials had faced action in connection with the paper leak. The commission's counsel informed the court that four officials had been dismissed. The judge observed that the candidates had neither been issued show-cause notices nor given an opportunity to explain their position before being removed from their jobs.

Counsel for the petitioners submitted that his clients had been working in their respective departments after passing the PPSC

examinations and had also received four months' salaries from the Punjab Finance Department.

He further explained that, following a report regarding the leaked examination papers, the PPSC withdrew its recommendations for the candidates' appointments, leading to their removal from service. After hearing arguments from both sides, the court accepted the petitions filed by the 123 successful candidates and ordered restoration of their status.

Sets aside Information Commission order declaring company a public body: The Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan (FCCP) has ruled that declaring a company a public body under the right to information law requires a legal basis and concrete reasons, observing that 49 per cent shareholding or financial support by a government entity alone does not automatically qualify a company as a public body. A two-member bench comprising Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi allowed an appeal filed by Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company Limited and set aside the Pakistan Information Commission's order dated September 10, 2024, as well as the Islamabad High Court's judgment dated January 28, 2026.

In its judgment, the court observed that the information Commission had failed to provide reasons for declaring the company a public body, while the Islamabad High Court had also failed to properly examine this legal aspect.

The court noted that the company was registered under the Companies Act, 2017, and operated under the supervision of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP). However, these factors alone did not establish that it qualified as a public body under the right to information law.

According to the case record, a former employee of the company approached it on May 24, 2024, seeking records relating to payments made to its chief executive officer and their recovery. After the requested information was not provided, the former employee filed an appeal before the Pakistan Information Commission, which directed the company to furnish the information within 10 days. The company challenged the commission's order before the Islamabad High Court, but its petition was dismissed, prompting it to approach the Federal Constitutional Court. The FCC, however, rejected the company's objection regarding the constitution of the Information Commission, observing that under the relevant rules, the presence of two members constituted a quorum and that the law did not require all three members to be present for proceedings.

The court held that the legal objections concerning the company's status and disclosure of the requested records had not been properly examined. It consequently allowed the appeal and set aside both the commission's order and the Islamabad High Court's judgment. **NEWS DESK**

Pak Army wins silver at exercise cambrian patrol

High Commissioner of Pakistan to UK, Tipu Usman on Wednesday hosted Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026 Silver Medal winning team of Pakistan Army at the High Commission.

The High Commissioner discussed their experience of the exercise and congratulated them on their achievement, according to a press statement issued by the Pakistan High Commission London.

Exercise Cambrian Patrol was held in Wales from 2 to 13 October 2026. The exercise is widely regarded as one of the most demanding international military patrolling competitions. This year, 140 teams from 36 countries took part. Pakistan's entry, drawn from 59 Punjab Regiment, consisted of one officer and seven soldiers, and earned a Silver Medal.

The result adds to Pakistan Army's consistent record at the event. Its teams won Silver in 2022 and 2023, followed by Gold in 2024 and 2025. With this year's Silver, Pakistan has now medalled in five consecutive years.

The visit to the High Commission gave the team a chance to share their experience with mission staff and to be recognised for their efforts. Their performance reflects the professionalism and fitness of Pakistan Army personnel and adds to the country's standing in international military engagement. **NEWS DESK**



Sher Afzal calls for unity against terrorism

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MNA Sher Afzal Khan Marwat on Wednesday said the fight against terrorism should not be left to the army and police alone, stressing that the entire nation must unite to tackle the threat.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said the nation had expected a joint declaration from the government-opposition negotiations, as 260 million Pakistanis looked towards their political leaders for an agreement. "If political leaders cannot reach an agreement even on such limited issues, what should the nation expect from them on bigger challenges in the future?" he asked.

Recalling the personal loss caused by terrorism, he said he had carried the bodies of 125 relatives killed in different incidents, including his father.

He called for a comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism, saying the public must also play its part.

He urged political parties to set aside their differences and work together against militancy. "If soldiers and security personnel from other parts of the country are sacrificing their lives in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the local population also has a responsibility to play its part in this fight," he said. **NEWS DESK**

Pakistan needs economic march, not long marches

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said Pakistan needed an "economic march" instead of repeated political long marches and protests.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said the government would not allow the country to become a victim of political chaos and confrontation. He said the future of 260 million Pakistanis, particularly the youth, was at stake.

He said Pakistan could no longer afford repeated political confrontations and needed to focus on economic development, investment and job creation.

The minister said sustainable economic growth required a better security situation, political stability, continuity in government, investment and structural reforms.

He said the government was working towards these goals and would resist any attempt to derail the country's progress.

Ahsan Iqbal said the government would

not allow Pakistan to be dragged into further political chaos, adding that the country's economic future and the prospects of its younger generation depended on stability and sustained development.

He said the release of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, who has been convicted in a criminal case, depended on the legal process and relief from the courts.

He said a government could release a political leader if the detention was politically motivated. However, a person convicted by a court could secure release only through the relevant legal procedures, he added.

Referring to the £190 million Al-Qadri Trust case, the minister alleged that the money recovered in Britain had not been deposited in Pakistan's national exchequer. Instead, he said, it had been transferred to an account linked to a Supreme Court settlement involving Bahria Town chairman Malik Riaz.

He alleged that the money brought back from Britain was handed over to Malik Riaz to be

adjusted against a penalty imposed on him. He said the matter raised questions about alleged corruption and money laundering.

Ahsan Iqbal said the case had raised serious questions about the PTI's claims of fighting corruption. He said the party had often accused its political opponents of corruption but now needed to answer questions about the allegations surrounding the Al-Qadri Trust case. He urged PTI leaders and supporters to question their jailed leader about the case, saying the party had built its political narrative around accountability and opposition to corruption.

The minister also criticised the PTI's protest politics. He referred to attacks on Parliament, Pakistan Television (PTV) headquarters and the General Headquarters (GHQ), as well as the violence on May 9, 2023, and the vandalism of memorials honouring martyrs.

He also referred to the burning of Jinnah House during the May 9 protests, saying such incidents

had damaged the country and contributed to political instability. Ahsan Iqbal said the PTI founder had access to the services of the country's best doctors for his treatment.

He also recounted his own experience of being denied medical care during the PTI government. He said his arm had been permanently impaired because he was denied physiotherapy while in custody during the previous government.

The minister said he had undergone surgery on his arm, during which a steel implant was inserted. The implant was removed in another operation a year later. He said he received a notice from the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on the third day after the procedure.

Ahsan Iqbal said he chose to appear before the authorities instead of seeking an exemption on medical grounds, but was later arrested.

He said doctors and a court had recommended physiotherapy to improve his arm. However, he alleged that he was denied the treatment for two and a half months during his detention. He said the lack of medical care had left his arm permanently impaired, describing his experience as an example of how political prisoners were treated during the PTI government. **NEWS DESK**



EDITORIAL



Tax enforcement alone will not fix economy

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's warning that businesses withholding collected taxes will receive no concessions sends a clear message: tax money collected from citizens cannot be treated as private funds. The government is right to demand accountability from businesses that collect taxes but fail to deposit them with the state. However, strict warnings and stronger monitoring will not, by themselves, solve Pakistan's tax problem. The real test is whether the Federal Board of Revenue can enforce the law fairly, without allowing influential businesses to escape scrutiny while smaller traders face pressure. Technology, cameras and digital monitoring of industrial production may help identify tax evasion, but technology is only a tool. It cannot replace honest administration, transparent rules and equal treatment. The government must also explain how the additional revenue will improve public services. People and businesses are more likely to accept taxation when they see that public money is being spent responsibly. Enforcement must therefore go hand in hand with better governance and public trust.

The decision to double the financing target for small and medium enterprises from Rs1.1 trillion to Rs2.2 trillion by 2026 also deserves attention. Small businesses can create jobs, expand local production and reduce dependence on imported goods. Yet announcing a higher lending target is easier than ensuring that deserving businesses receive loans. Many small entrepreneurs struggle with complicated procedures, strict lending conditions and limited access to formal banking. Asking the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority to educate businesses about loans is a useful step, but it cannot remove every barrier. Banks must offer practical financing arrangements, explain their requirements clearly and assess applicants on fair terms. The government must also monitor whether loans reach genuine small businesses rather than remain concentrated among established borrowers. Pakistan needs both a stronger tax system and a more productive private sector. The first cannot succeed through pressure alone, and the second cannot grow through targets alone. Real progress will depend on fair enforcement, easier access to finance and institutions that deliver results rather than merely announce them.

Turning digital progress into universal internet access

Pakistan's plan to finalise a regulatory framework for satellite internet services is a welcome step, but the real test will be whether it improves access for people who remain poorly connected. Information Technology Minister Shaza Fatima Khawaja says the framework will offer satellite internet companies a supportive business environment. Speaking at an Asia-Pacific Telecommunity symposium in Islamabad, she also highlighted investments in submarine cables, optical fibre and mobile technology. Three new submarine cables have landed in Pakistan over the past two and a half years, while more than 17,000 kilometres of optical fibre have been laid under the Universal Service Fund. Fibre broadband home passes have exceeded five million, and Pakistan auctioned 480 megahertz of spectrum for 5G in March 2026.

Satellite internet could help connect remote villages and areas where laying fibre is difficult. Yet a business-friendly framework must also protect public interest, provide clear rules and encourage fair competition. The government should explain how licences will be issued, how service quality will be monitored and whether costs will remain within reach of low-income households. The minister's reference to Pakistan's progress in reducing the gender digital divide is also important. Women cannot fully benefit from digital services if they lack affordable devices, skills or safe access to the internet. Similarly, technology-based fuel subsidies show how digital systems can support public welfare, but such programmes must remain accessible to people without smartphones. The challenge is not only to bring more people online but also to ensure they can use the internet meaningfully. The minister noted that about 2.2 billion people worldwide remain offline, including around 48 per cent of the Asia-Pacific population. Pakistan should treat this as a warning against leaving poorer and remote communities behind. A sound satellite internet policy, backed by affordable services, transparent regulation and wider digital education, could help narrow the divide. Without these safeguards, new technology may expand the market without ensuring that its benefits reach those who need them most.

Counter-Terrorism, Crypto, Critical Minerals & the Price of Strategic Exceptionalism-Part-1

It is against this background that Pakistan's emerging strategic priorities deserve scrutiny. Counter-terrorism, crypto and critical minerals may indeed offer new opportunities. But there is a danger that they could also create an exclusive strategic space-one in which security, technology and resource extraction become sufficiently important to justify exceptional methods of governance.

A government is thus compelled to look outward rather than inward. When a government does not believe it derives its authority from the people, it is unlikely to feel genuinely answerable to them. That is where the problem becomes more profound. The issue is no longer simply whether political power has been acquired legitimately.

Pakistan appears to be entering a new strategic phase, one increasingly organised around three emerging priorities: counter-terrorism, crypto and critical minerals. There is nothing inherently wrong with any of these priorities. Counter-terrorism is an unavoidable security requirement. Digital assets and blockchain technology may become important components of the future financial system. Pakistan possesses significant mineral potential which, if responsibly and transparently exploited, could contribute substantially to national wealth.

The question, however, is not whether the three Cs are important. The question is, at what cost for Pakistan, this question cannot be separated from the political and institutional circumstances in which these priorities are now being pursued. The removal of a government through the 2022 vote of no confidence may have been constitutionally permissible in form, but the political circumstances surrounding it raised serious questions about manipulation and the use of institutional power. The subsequent caretaker period extended beyond what many regarded as its constitutional purpose, and the country proceeded towards the February 2024 general election amid growing allegations of pre-poll engineering and political manipulation.

The results themselves became deeply contested. The discrepancy between Forms 45 and 47 generated a dispute over the integrity of the electoral process that remains unresolved in the public mind. The consequence was a government whose representative legitimacy was questioned from the outset. Political parties that had performed poorly at the ballot box nevertheless became central components of the governing arrangement, while parties that had secured substantial popular support found themselves excluded, constrained or

Thus we see today the phenomenal aberration suffered by the KP government, where elected representatives have been

denied access to the necessary instruments of administration and governance - bringing into conflict the political masters before their own civil servants. The constitutional machinery continues to operate, interpreted as convenient, making the deeper question of political legitimacy and propriety highly questionable.

Legitimacy is not merely a product of constitutional procedure. It ultimately rests upon the consent of the governed. When that consent is seriously questioned, governments may retain office, but they begin to lose the moral authority required to govern effectively. This creates a dangerous condition: a government can remain legally constituted while becoming politically disconnected from the people it governs.

A government is thus compelled to look outward rather than inward. When a government does not believe it derives its authority from the people, it is unlikely to feel genuinely answerable to them. That is where the problem becomes more profound. The issue is no longer simply whether political power has been acquired legitimately. It is whether those exercising power begin to regard the preservation of that power as more important than the national interest itself.

Political Survival over National Interest When political survival becomes the overriding objective, governance changes character. Institutions are no longer strengthened because they serve the state. They are manipulated because they serve the incumbent. The Constitution ceases to be a restraint upon power and becomes an instrument for protecting power. The judiciary becomes politicised. The police become an instrument of political coercion. Elections become contests not merely over votes, but over who controls the machinery that counts and validates them. And constitutional amendments increasingly risk becoming solutions to immediate political problems rather than mechanisms for dispensing good governance.

The objective becomes simple: stay in power by constitutional means where possible, by political engineering where necessary, and by institutional control when required. That is how a state can gradually arrive at the absurdity of having a government sitting like a king would, in a castle governing a graveyard: secure within the machinery of power, yet increasingly disconnected from the people outside it.

Manufacturing Threats to Justify Control

It is against this background that Pakistan's emerging strategic priorities deserve scrutiny. Counter-terrorism, crypto and critical minerals may indeed offer new opportunities. But there is a danger that they could also create an exclusive strategic space-one in which security, technology and resource extraction become sufficiently important to justify exceptional methods of governance. Once such a space is created, the language of national necessity becomes extraordinarily powerful.

A threat is identified and is described as existential. Exceptional measures are introduced. Political opposition begins to be portrayed not simply as political opposition but as a potential security problem. Institutions are encouraged-or pressured-to toe the line. Accountability is sacrificed at the altar of stability. And eventually, what began as an exception becomes the normal method of governance - a new normal.

Exceptionalism becomes institutionalised, and from threat to exceptionalism a character is defined. The danger is not that every threat is imaginary.

Terrorism is real, external interference can be real, economic warfare can be real, and geopolitical competition is real. Security threats are real, but a functioning state must distinguish between a genuine threat and the political exploitation of a genuine threat. False narratives, manipulated information, exaggerated threats, and, where they occur, manufactured incidents can all serve the same purpose: creating an environment in which extraordinary action begins to appear ordinary.

The critical question must therefore always be: Who independently determines that the threat exists and who holds those making that determination accountable? Without such safeguards, the definition of a threat itself becomes a political instrument. And once that happens, almost anything can be justified in the name of

national security; anyone can be declared a threat, and anything can be labelled as an existential hazard.

How Political instability Deters Capital and Growth

In such an environment of political ambiguity and flexible/selective

governance, the problem is exacerbated when political authority begins to operate according to the principle of 'my way or the highway'. Arrests without convincing due process, allegations of enforced disappearances, prolonged detention of political opponents, pressure on politicians, restrictions on political activity, and constitutional amendments designed around immediate political necessities all contribute to the same institutional danger - of being held hostage to the instinct of political survival.

The issue is not merely who happens to occupy government. It is whether the rules of the state are becoming subordinate to the requirements of those who temporarily control the state. Once that happens, constitutionalism is inverted. The Constitution should determine how power is exercised and executed universally. Instead, power begins determining how the Constitution can be conveniently interpreted, amended, or applied to suit individual interests.

The same principle applies to accountability. Accountability cannot be selective, where some are more equal than others. The higher the office, the greater the responsibility as well as culpability for the omissions and commissions that are witnessed. In a constitutional democracy, those who exercise the greatest power should ultimately be subject to the greatest scrutiny. A state that progressively removes its most powerful individuals from meaningful accountability risks creating two classes of citizens: those who govern and those who are governed - the elite and the others.

That is not institutional stability; it is institutional imbalance and the erosion of the state, the consequences of which extend far beyond politics. A politicised police force cannot provide impartial law enforcement. A judiciary whose independence is questioned cannot provide the certainty upon which investment depends. An election process whose credibility is disputed cannot provide durable political legitimacy. An administration perceived as partisan cannot command the confidence of citizens or investors. And when several institutions begin to suffer simultaneously, the damage becomes cumulative. The state may continue to function administratively, but the legitimacy and credibility of its institutions begin to diminish.

The arc of the physical universe bends towards heat (Part II)

El Niño, likely exacerbated by climate change and definitely riding in on top of already overheated seas, will raise temperatures to places that no member of our species has yet experienced. It will be a preview of normal weather circa 2035 or 2040. It will be grim.

And it also may-and here the arc starts to bend a little bit, so chin up-give us a chance to see if humans can rise to the occasion. We've had climate-driven disasters aplenty, of course, probably beginning around Katrina. But these will be different because they are the first to come in a period when an alternative to fossil fuel is now easy to imagine and cheap to provide. Now, if humanity decides to move fast, it can. And recognition of the danger plays a role in that.

We got a bit of a controlled experiment in western Europe this summer, where temperatures reached their highest levels ever. As Ajit Naranjan reports:

The report found at least 60% of western Europe suffered through temperatures above 30C on 17 days this summer. In 2003, a year also marked by ferocious heat, this was observed on 11 days, and in 2025 on just seven. The high heat led to a record-breaking 13 days of "very strong" heat stress across western Europe....

"The consequences extended far beyond temperature records - affecting water availability, energy systems, transport, ecosystems and human health," said Samantha Burgess, a climate scientist at the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts. "As the climate continues to warm, events like these underscore the importance of building resilience to increasingly interconnected climate risks."

Compounding extremes of heat, drought

and fire proved particularly damaging. European sea surface temperatures this summer also broke records, the report found, while the continent's rivers experienced their lowest summer flows in more than 30 years. Hot weather and widespread drought helped wildfires run rampant.

And in turn, that seems to have moved attitudes. Lorraine Whitmarsh and Bella Zanin just published new survey data from the UK:

High temperatures made more 50% of British people more fearful about the future, including how hot summers will affect children. One poll found that 65% of the British public were now concerned about climate change, and only 16% unworried. Among Reform supporters this was 46% and among Green Party supporters 87%.

Polling shows that climate change and the environment shot up people's lists of concerns in 2026, with 51% of people saying the recent heatwaves made them feel it's more important that the UK government and businesses tackle climate change.

As it happens, when you accurately inform people about the crisis we face, their desire to act goes up dramatically. Pippa Neil reports on the success of a "National Emergency Briefing" in the UK-a movie that debuted ten months ago and has now been seen by about 185,000 Britons.

The team behind the event crowdfunding to produce the People's Emergency Briefing, a film outlining the urgent threats that climate and nature breakdown pose to food security, the economy and public health.

The film, which has so far been viewed by an estimated 185,000 people at more than 3,400 screenings, calls on the government to stage a primetime, televised emergency briefing on the climate and nature crisis.

Of the 13,000 people surveyed, 87% said watching the film made them more motivated to act. Watching the film is associated with a "substantial shift" in environmental understanding and concern.

Furthermore, 89% of people said the government should respond to the crisis with emergency-level mobilization, similar to the Covid-19 pandemic or the second world war. The logic of the climate crisis El Niño version joins with the logic of the endless-war-for-oil Iran version. At the always-worth-watching OilPrice.Com website, Haley Zaremba provided a fascinating update yesterday of the impact of Trump, Hegseth, and Rubio's High-T strategic failure in the most important places on earth for the climate future.

When the United States and Israel began their military offensive against Iran in February of this year, Iran responded by closing down the Strait of Hormuz - through which one-fifth of the world's oil and gas trade flowed on any given day - essentially overnight. The sudden disappearance of 18 million barrels per day from the global marketplace caused enormous energy shocks around the world, and especially in cash-poor, import-dependent developing economies.

The result has been that some of the world's emerging economies have turned their energy security strategies around on a dime, turbocharging their clean energy transitions to provide reliable and indigenous energy sources and buffer themselves from future global oil and gas shocks. Since March, approximately 25 countries have introduced structural policies to boost electrification, according to Australia's ABC News. As a result, many of the world's developing economies - and even some of the poorest - are now outpacing the richest nation in the world when it comes to clean energy development and electrification.

As David Fickling points out, that's bad news for LNG exports to Asia, precisely the region that Big Oil has been insisting will sustain its growth far into the future.

Stung by high costs and supply uncertainty, Asian governments are busy throwing those forecasts on the bonfire.



BILL MCKIBBEN

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OPINION

DTM



LAHORE: Residents purchase LPG cylinders from a shop at Shah Alami Chowk in Lahore amid gas load-shedding. ONLINE

Letters To The EDITOR

Improve healthcare awareness in Mingora

We are writing to express our concern over the lack of education and healthcare awareness among people in Mingora, Swat. Mingora is the largest city in the Malakand division and an important centre of social, cultural and economic activities in northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The city has a long history, with its past linked to the remains of the Indus Valley Civilization. According to the 2017 census, Mingora had a population of 331,091. Pashto is the main language spoken in the city, although people also speak Kohistani and Urdu.

The people of Mingora are known for respecting their elders, which helps maintain strong relationships within families and communities. Hospitality is another important feature of their culture. Many people also prefer natural food products, including homegrown vegetables, poultry, meat, eggs and fruits. However, despite these positive aspects of local life, a lack of education and awareness about modern healthcare remains a serious concern. Many people do not have sufficient information about vaccination, family planning and the importance of medical care during pregnancy.

Women in some communities do not regularly visit healthcare facilities, such as family clinics and rural health centres, during pregnancy. Some deliveries take place at home because of traditional beliefs and misconceptions about childbirth in hospitals. When deliveries are conducted without trained medical staff, clean equipment and proper medical facilities, both mothers and newborn babies face serious risks. Lack of awareness about safe delivery practices can contribute to preventable complications and deaths during childbirth and shortly afterwards.

To improve the situation, the government must ensure that children have access to quality education, from primary schooling to higher education. Education can help people understand the importance of vaccination, modern healthcare technology and hygienic practices during childbirth. Public seminars and community awareness campaigns should also be organised to explain the benefits of family planning, antenatal care and newborn healthcare.

Women must receive proper information about family planning methods and the importance of regular medical check-ups during pregnancy. The government should maintain accurate vaccination records to identify gaps in coverage and develop effective policies. It must also take action against unqualified people conducting deliveries without proper training or sterilised instruments. Government healthcare centres should be available throughout the area, and essential maternity services should be provided free of charge or at affordable rates so that poor families do not have to risk their lives because they cannot afford treatment.

The media can also play an important role by educating people about vaccination, family planning, maternal health and other important public health issues. With better education, awareness campaigns and accessible medical facilities, the government can help protect mothers and children and improve the overall health of people in Mingora.

MANAHIL JABBAR, ANAM MUKHTIAR, NOOR-UL-SHAHER, TAYYABA FATIMA, NILMA SAMUEL AND AMNA SULTAN

Gwadar protesters deserve to be heard

I am writing to express my concern over the continuing protests in Gwadar, Balochistan, where hundreds of women and children, along with thousands of other residents, have taken part in demonstrations under the banner of the Gwadar Haq Do Tehreek. The protesters are demanding basic rights, including an end to the activities of trawlers that threaten the livelihoods of local fishermen, the removal of check posts, the establishment of a university in Gwadar and the provision of clean drinking water. These demands reflect the concerns of people who want better living conditions, economic opportunities and access to essential services.

Initially, the government appeared to ignore the protests. However, as the movement gained public support and the number of participants increased, the authorities began taking notice. Prime Minister Imran Khan also acknowledged the issue in a tweet, saying that he had taken notice of the legitimate demands of Gwadar's hardworking fishermen. This was a positive step, but statements alone cannot resolve the problems faced by the people. The government must now take practical measures to address their concerns and ensure that its response leads to meaningful improvements in their lives.

The authorities should handle the situation carefully, particularly because Balochistan is already facing a separatist insurgency. The Gwadar movement has attracted support from different sections of society, including women and children. If the government continues to ignore the protesters or fails to respond to their genuine concerns, it could increase public frustration and create opportunities for hostile elements to exploit the situation. People who feel neglected may lose confidence in state institutions, making it even more difficult to address the region's problems.

The government must therefore deal with the protests peacefully and avoid unnecessary restrictions or the use of force against demonstrators. Banning protests or targeting their leaders could deepen resentment and make negotiations more difficult. Instead, the authorities should listen carefully to the protesters, examine their demands and make every possible effort to meet them. The demands for clean drinking water, educational facilities and protection of fishermen's livelihoods are matters of public welfare and should not automatically be treated as threats to national security. The government should also avoid describing the movement as being against the interests of the state without clear evidence. Such statements could further damage public trust and create misunderstandings between the authorities and local communities. At the same time, the government should counter disinformation through transparent communication and accurate information rather than suppressing peaceful voices. Gwadar has considerable economic and strategic importance for Pakistan, but development will have limited meaning if local people do not benefit from it. Protecting the rights and livelihoods of residents is essential for building public confidence and ensuring lasting stability. The government should treat the protests as an opportunity to understand the problems of the people and address them through dialogue, fair policies and practical action.

MUSTAFA ALI, LAHORE

Türkiye & Pakistan: Comparison of Protests and Response (Part II)

In Türkiye, the government has characterized the coup attempt as an existential threat to democracy and the state and the Gülen network as a terrorist organization that attacked state institutions. This emergency was invoked to eradicate this threat.

In Pakistan, the government presented the violence that occurred in May as an assault on the state institutions and national security. The military installations were different from political demonstrations, as they were restricted and sensitive locations in terms of the attacks.

The Judiciary as an Arena of Contestation
In both instances, the judiciary was a significant but separate entity. In Türkiye, the judiciary itself was one of the main objects of post-coup restructuring. Thousands of judges and prosecutors were discharged or suspended, raising questions of judicial independence. The European Commission later said the dismissals had significantly impacted the institutional capacity and independence of the judiciary.

Pakistan took a different path. The lawfulness of the state's answer became an issue for the judiciary. All the way to the Supreme Court, the issue of military trials of civilians was brought up. The Supreme Court in October 2023 ruled that the trial of civilians in military courts is unconstitutional, but this decision was suspended, and the case was still to undergo further court deliberation.

This illustrates an important difference: In Türkiye, the post-coup crisis had a significant impact on the judiciary itself. In Pakistan, one of the key battlegrounds over the legality of the post-May-9 response went through the judiciary. National Security as the Dominant Legal and Political Narrative

The other point of resemblance is that the language of justification for exceptional measures is the same for both. In both countries, the state described the crisis as nothing more than routine political opposition, and in both instances as a challenge to the constitutional and national order.

In Türkiye, the government has characterized the coup attempt as an existential threat to democracy and the state and the Gülen network as a terrorist organization that attacked state institutions. This emergency was invoked to eradicate this threat.

First, states tend to expand the security definition of a political crisis. If political violence is seen as an existential threat, then there are strong incentives for governments to expand investigations and preventive measures. This was dramatically so in Türkiye and in small institutional proportion also in Pakistan.

In Pakistan, the government presented the violence that occurred in May as an assault on the state institutions and national security. The military installations were different from political demonstrations, as they were restricted and sensitive locations in terms of the attacks.

The difference is crucial, as political protest is constitutionally protected, but violence, arson, assault, and attacks on restricted state installations are criminal offences. The question for a democratic government is then how to draw a line between them, not to label an entire political movement as criminal because some of its members were guilty of criminal acts.

The Problem of Collective Responsibility
The greatest conceptual overlap between the two cases is the threat of shifting from individual criminal responsibility to collective political responsibility. A democratic legal system ought to make responsible accountable based on individual conduct and evidence.

The state has a legitimate basis to prosecute if a person has been involved in violence, attacked a public building, damaged property, or assaulted law-enforcement personnel. However, a person's party membership alone does not constitute criminal guilt.

This distinction became more significant in Pakistan as arrests were made not only of people who were visibly involved in the violence, but also of non-violent people acting under the influence of it. Human Rights Watch voiced concern that there was also arbitrary arrest of members of political parties and peaceful protesters under general

laws related to public order and crime.

A similar worry was felt in Türkiye, where the post-coup framework ultimately had an impact on people whose alleged association with the Gülen movement did not necessarily mean that the person was involved in the coup. European institutions decried the application of general criteria and administrative grouping.

It is not the case, then, that both states did the same thing. When the political crisis is extraordinary, there are incentives for states to broaden the definition of the threat beyond the ones that are directly responsible for violence.

The Military Question in Pakistan

The military institution in Pakistan is something to be considered with great care when making comparisons with Türkiye. The Turkish event itself was an attempted military coup: there were elements of the armed forces who tried to take over political power.

But the situation of 9 May in Pakistan was not like that. The violence was linked to supporters of a civilian political party whose leader had been arrested. The government then turned to the armed forces to help restore order, and the institutions of civil society (provincial governments, police, the prosecutor's office, Parliament and courts) were involved in the legal and political response.

So it is inadequate to describe the Pakistani reaction as a 'military crackdown'. A better way of stating this is: The May 9 response was a state-wide coercive and legal response which engaged civilian governments, law-enforcement agencies, courts, Parliament and the armed forces in various capacities.

This does not free anyone of responsibility if it can be proved that an institution was responsible for wrongdoing, but it does not imply that an entire response is due to an institution if there is less evidence.

What the Comparison Actually Tells Us
The comparison shows three general points to be learned from states in extreme political crisis.

First, states tend to expand the security definition of a political crisis. If political violence is seen as an existential threat, then there are strong incentives for governments to expand investigations and preventive measures. This was dramatically so in Türkiye and in small institutional proportion also in Pakistan.

Secondly, the initial state response is not necessarily the legitimate response. Türkiye's failed coup was a valid assault on the constitutional order. Similarly, the public and sensitive installations were attacked in Pakistan, which was used as a proper ground for criminal investigation and prosecution. Collective punishment, arbitrary detention, and restrictions on due process are not justified by the legitimacy of the prosecution of violence. This is an important distinction.

Third, for institutional resilience, the importance of institutional power is less important. A state can't just be judged if it can restore order. It is also evaluated on its capacity to bring order in a foreseeable legal framework. The more the threat is perceived, the more significance is given to independent courts, to parliamentary control, to investigations that are transparent, and to individual criminal responsibility.



AZHAR ALI

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Sociology of Ecocide

According to a recent study, published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences ('Vertebrates on the brink as indicators of biological annihilation and the sixth mass extinction'), the sixth mass extinction of wildlife on Earth is accelerating. More than 500 species of land animals are on the brink of extinction and are likely to be lost within 20 years; the same number were lost over the whole of the last century.

What future awaits us? Is it possible to see ahead? Unfortunately, the outlook is not promising. For instance, earth is at least 1.73 C above the 1750 baseline marking the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. This global-average temperature is the highest ever with Homo sapiens present.

In the Anthropocene, humanity has arisen as the primary driver effecting changes in the Earth System. That's to say, the relationship between nature and society has thus evolved to the point that human production is generating an 'anthropogenic rift' in the biogeochemical cycles of the planet, resulting in the crossing of various planetary boundaries and representing the transgressing of critical thresholds in the Earth System that define a liveable climate for humanity.

As Bellamy Foster put it, climate change is one such threshold or planetary boundary. In essence, the quantitative build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has resulted in a qualitative change in the climate sufficient to threaten human existence, and even that of most life on Earth. Other planetary boundaries that have been crossed or are in the process of being crossed are represented by ocean acidification, loss of biological diversity (and species extinc-

tion), the disruption of nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, loss of ground cover (including forests), loss of fresh water sources (including desertification), and chemical and radioactive pollution of the environment.

The Anthropocene is a time of intensifying ecocide. In other words, the mass damage or destruction of ecosystems, an act of violence which is to nature as genocide is to people. Dwindling population sizes and range shrinkages amount to a massive anthropogenic erosion of biodiversity and of the ecosystem services essential to civilization. This 'biological annihilation' underlines the seriousness for humanity of Earth's ongoing sixth mass extinction event.

Mass extinction is generally defined as loss of at least 75 percent of all species over a short geological period - less than 2.8 million years. Extinctions are a normal part of evolutionary life. That's not the point. The problem is that the current rate of extinction is unique: It has been caused entirely by humans through their impact on the natural world, especially since the Industrial Revolution.



IVONALDO LEITE

Ivonaldo Leite is an author profile on Global Journals Publishing Group

which it is linked. But we are living in an age of irrationality that fuels large-scale wars, flirts with fascism and shows contempt for life. An age of ecocide and genocide.

In light of this reality, the sociology of the Anthropocene and ecocide must be conceived as a public sociology. In other words, it needs to produce sociological knowledge that is relevant to the public, constructed in cooperation with them, possibly for their benefit, according to Michael Burawoy's definition. A benefit may be understood as an outcome perceived by a public as valuable, one that remains in line with the shared understandings of collective good within civil society. In this regard, it is essential to show, for example, that the industrial interruption resulted in a break in the metabolic cycle between nature and society, and. At the same time, in the industrial capitalism, nature itself is commodified, creating a tension in the pursuit of surplus, resulting in an escalation of consumption and environmental problems.

The sociology of ecocide must present it, on the one hand, as a product of the anomalies in this Anthropocene epoch, and, on the other hand, largely as a result of Western conceptions of development. This fact challenges not only the major corporate and governmental actors, but also the dominant human rights framework, which is embedded in Western liberal values. After all, Eurocentrism is not merely a cultural preference, but rather a deeply flawed and dominant ideological distortion of world history. It wrongly presents capitalism as an internal civilizational achievement of Europe, while simultaneously masking the violent realities of global imperialism and uneven development.

NATIONAL

DTM

No compromise on war against terrorism: Kundi

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi here Wednesday said that the province was facing multiple challenges and problems, which would be addressed through practical measures.

He said there could be no compromise in the war against terrorism, adding that restoration of peace and resolution of public issues were his top priorities.

Talking to the media, Governor Kundi said he had convened a meeting of the Advisory Council on the very first day and also called a meeting of the Apex Committee. He said the previous government had not taken the Apex Committee seriously, whereas the present administration was taking steps to eliminate terrorism.

He said it had been made clear that the province's policies would be determined from Islamabad, not Kandahar or Afghanistan. Although the closure of the border was causing difficulties for traders, he said no compromise could be made in the fight against terrorism. He added that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was fighting on the frontline in the war against terrorism and the federal government assured full support to KP.

The Governor said measures for the families of police martyrs were among his top priorities and that the first challenge in this regard had already been addressed.

Faisal Karim Kundi said he did not believe in a policy of "ifs and buts" and wanted to bring visible change for the people through practical measures.

Kundi said the Inspector General of Police had been directed to immediately address the issue of

vacant posts and ensure recruitment against vacant positions in the police force.

He said efforts would be made to ensure peace in all districts of the province.

He further said development projects could be curtailed if they were causing harm to the public interest; however, public welfare would remain the priority.

He added that matters relating to the accountability bureau and other relevant issues would also be reviewed.

The Governor said that, in view of the approaching winter, efforts would be made to resolve the issue of gas supply at the earliest. He said a meeting with the CNG Association had also been convened to hear and address its concerns. He termed the shortage of flour another important issue and said steps would be taken to resolve it. Faisal Karim Kundi said seriousness and practical measures were essential in the fight against terrorism. He remarked that those who did not respect the sacrifices of police and law enforcement officials raised questions about their commitment to the province. He said a federal representative was now also present in the province and joint efforts would be made to eliminate terrorism.

Plot for heirs of 54 police martyrs

Governor Karim Kundi announced a major increase in salaries and welfare benefits for police personnel, saying the new pay package would exceed expectations and ensure that KP Police salaries become better than those of other provinces.

Addressing a ceremony at Governor House where allotment letters for residential plots were distributed among the heirs of 54 police martyrs, the Governor said compensation for police martyrs and personnel injured in the line of duty would also be enhanced.

NEWS DESK

CM Bugti orders reforms to curb spending, improve governance

Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday said that reforming and restructuring all government departments was essential to improve provincial governance, use public resources effectively for providing quality services to the public.

He said that the government would take concrete measures to curb unnecessary increases in public expenditure and align the administrative structure with the needs of the people.

He expressed these views while addressing a review meeting of the Secretaries Committee.

During the meeting, performance reports from various departments were presented, and a review was conducted regarding the administrative structures, workforce, non-development expenditures, and public service delivery of government departments.

Expressing concern over unnecessary recruitments and rising non-development expenditures across various departments, the chief minister said that every single penny of

resources derived from public taxes was a national trust, and the wastage of these resources could not be tolerated under any circumstances.

He said that these resources belonged to the ordinary, impoverished citizens of Balochistan, those who shiver in the cold and swelter in the heat, the primary objective of government department expenditures is to provide better facilities to the public.

He noted that a significant portion of the province's available resources is being consumed by non-development expenditures, yet, despite this, services of the required standard are not being delivered to the public.

Sarfraz Bugti said that government departments must be transformed into institutions that effectively discharge their responsibilities, rather than being turned into factories for recruitment. The government's responsibility is to create demand-driven employment opportunities aligned with the needs of various sectors and the market, not to increase the financial burden through unnecessary and excessive recruitment in government departments, he said.

The CM stated that departments, weighed down by the mounting burden of non-development expenditures were unable to devote the necessary attention to public service delivery, a situation that is deeply regrettable.



He emphasized that to improve the performance of government departments, administrative reforms, the effective allocation of resources and accountability mechanisms must be strengthened.

Discussing governance issues, the chief minister remarked that administrative weaknesses within the province and instead of shifting the blame for poor governance onto others, we must examine our own shortcomings.

He maintained that the collapse of the administrative system was not caused by any Punjabi arriving from Lahore but was the result of our own actions, rather than blaming others, we should focus on our own systems and responsibilities to improve governance in Balochistan saying that it is essential to identify internal weaknesses and take serious measures to rectify them.

He commented that tough but correct decisions would have to be made for the betterment of Balochistan and the provision of improved facilities to the public, difficult decisions would not be avoided during the reform process,

as the proper utilization of provincial resources and the enhancement of the performance of government institutions are critical needs of the hour.

The chief minister of Balochistan directed the secretaries of all departments to conduct a comprehensive review of their respective departments' administrative structures, workforce, expenditures, and performance to formulate actionable recommendations for reforms.

He also sought proposals regarding the potential merger of departments performing similar functions and the reduction of redundant staff, aiming to elevate the standard of public service delivery through the optimal use of available resources.

He expressed his resolve to make tangible progress through reforms enhancing the capacity of government departments, instilling fiscal discipline, and placing the public interest at the core of all government initiatives.

Earlier, Chief Secretary of Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presented a review report on the various departments. NEWS DESK

Verdict reserved on Bushra Bibi's pleas

The Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan (FCCP) on Wednesday reserved its verdict after completing the hearing of petitions seeking suspension of the sentence awarded to Bushra Bibi.

A two-member bench headed by Chief Justice Aminuddin Khan heard the petitions. Bushra Bibi's counsel, Salman Safdar, appeared at the rostrum, while Salman Akram Raja was also present in the courtroom.

During the hearing, Salman Safdar argued that courts had traditionally adopted a lenient approach in cases involving women. He submitted that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had sought adjournments on several occasions and had also raised objections to the application seeking suspension of the sentence.

The counsel maintained that the grounds for granting bail to Bushra Bibi had arisen following her conviction. He requested the court to suspend her sentence on the basis of her being a woman.

Chief Justice Aminuddin Khan observed that the court did not intend to examine the merits of the case at this stage, as the matter before it concerned only the suspension of the sentence.

The court directed Salman Safdar to submit the key points of his arguments in writing. After completing the hearing, the bench reserved its verdict.

NEWS DESK



Risk allowance exclusive to uniformed police personnel: FCCCP

The Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan (FCCP) has ruled that risk allowance is admissible only to uniformed police personnel performing active operational duties, while administrative and office staff cannot claim the benefit merely because they work in the police department.

The court set aside a Peshawar High Court judgment granting risk allowance to administrative employees of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and dismissed their petition.

A two-member bench comprising Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Syed Arshad Hussain Shah announced the judgment on a petition filed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government.

In its ruling, the court observed that the principle of equality under Article 25 of the Constitution did not require identical treatment for all employees performing different duties and working under different conditions. The government could establish reasonable classifications among employees, provided they had a rational connection with the objective sought to be achieved.

The court noted that uniformed police personnel faced physical risks and other dangers while maintaining law and order, making arrests, conducting raids, performing security duties and preventing crime. In contrast, administrative and office staff primarily performed clerical, managerial and support functions. The nature of their duties and exposure to occupational risks were therefore substantially different. The judgment stated that employment in the same department did not, by itself, establish entitlement to a

particular allowance. An employee had to demonstrate that they belonged to the category for which the allowance had been sanctioned. Equal treatment required similarity in duties, responsibilities, working conditions and occupational risks.

The court further observed that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government had approved a monthly risk allowance equivalent to one initial basic pay for all uniformed police personnel through a notification issued on April 30, 2009. The relevant laws and service rules also distinguished between uniformed personnel and administrative staff. It held that the Peshawar High Court had directed payment of the allowance primarily on the basis that both categories belonged to the police department, without adequately examining whether the employees performed duties comparable to those of personnel eligible for the benefit.

The FCC observed that service conditions and decisions regarding the grant or extension of allowances primarily fell within the authority of the competent authorities. Courts could intervene where classifications were arbitrary, discriminatory or unreasonable, but not merely because employees in another category sought the same benefit despite reasonable differences in their duties and occupational risks. The court converted the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's petition into an appeal and allowed it, setting aside the Peshawar High Court's judgment dated April 10, 2025. Consequently, the constitutional petition filed by the employees also stood dismissed.

NEWS DESK



Sindh govt to review Mehran University's development demands

Sindh Chief Secretary Syed Asif Hyder Shah visited Mehran University of Engineering and Technology (MUET) Jamshoro, and inaugurated a Girls' hostel accommodating 75 students.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary Shah said that there was a time when the environment here was so challenging that few were willing to come, and the number of female students was negligible; however, a distinct transformation is now evident in the atmosphere and development of Jamshoro.

The Chief Secretary remarked that universities abroad do not grapple with financial crises, instead, their focus remains on education, research, and training.

He quoted his visit to Harvard University, where students and researchers were being asked to join University and avail

all facilities free of cost even students could borrow loan on soft conditions.

He assured Vice-Chancellors that they do not worry about pension funds, as the government is formulating a plan for a permanent resolution to this issue.

Chief Secretary stated that higher education institutions in developed nations do not face shortages of water, solar energy, electricity, or gas. We, too, must develop our institutions and ensure our children receive their education within the country, when children go abroad for studies, it entails not only a financial burden but also emotional and psychological challenges. He stated that, in collaboration with the Secretary of Universities and Boards, the Vice-Chancellor of Mehran University, and the Sindh government's Planning Department, he would review the demands presented by the university, and well-considered decisions would be made to fulfill them.

He noted that education, water, and health are among the Sindh government's top priorities. The Chief Secretary of Sindh further remarked that unemployed youth

from the region face difficulties in securing jobs abroad in fields such as electrical work, driving, plumbing, and other technical trades; therefore, it is essential to take measures to provide these young people with local training, certifications, and licenses. He described Mehran University's proposal as feasible. Mentioning that the government is working on the restoration of Manchar Lake, he assured the Vice-Chancellor that he would make every effort to ensure the completion of the critical water supply pipeline project for Mehran University.

He observed that Mehran University is a major educational institution capable of playing a significant role regarding climate change, floods, the restoration of Manchar Lake, and the improvement, rehabilitation, and reform of projects like the RBOD and LBOD. Commending the performance and efforts of the Mehran University Vice-Chancellor, he noted that the latter would have another four years of leadership to conceptualize, plan, and execute work. He added that a visit to universities like Harvard and MIT reveals that even their corridors resemble modern laboratories. NEWS DESK

Cancelled mutation entries cannot establish ownership



The Supreme Court on Wednesday has ruled that cancelled mutation entries cannot, by themselves, establish legal ownership of property, observing that where title is disputed, a suit seeking possession alone is insufficient and must also seek a declaration of ownership.

The court dismissed an appeal concerning possession of one kanal of land in Kamalia, upholding the Lahore High Court's judgment.

In a judgment authored by Justice Shahid Waheed, the court held that the legal heirs of deceased appellant Abdul Rahim had failed to establish their lawful title to the disputed land. The relevant mutations had been cancelled by the District Officer Revenue on November 23, 2004, while the original sale deeds were not produced before either the trial court or the appellate court.

A three-member bench comprising Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Shahid Waheed and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan heard the case on October 13, 2026.

According to the judgment, the appellant claimed to have purchased the land from Isha Beldah and others through Mutation No. 8106 dated September 30, 1985, and filed a suit for possession on July 21, 1993.

The government educational institution concerned, however, maintained that the land had been in the possession of Government Normal School Kamalia since 1926. The institution is now known as Government College Elementary Teachers Kamalia.

The Supreme Court observed that revenue entries do not, by themselves, constitute documents of title, and their cancellation does not automatically invalidate the underlying sale deeds. However, the appellant failed to establish ownership through the required legal evidence because the original sale deeds had not been produced.

The court further noted that the defendants had not admitted the appellant's ownership in the suit filed under Section 8 of the Specific Relief Act, 1877. Read as a whole, their written statements showed that they opposed his ownership claim while defending their long-standing possession of the land. The judgment held that where ownership is disputed, a plaintiff must, depending on the circumstances, seek a declaration of title along with possession and, where necessary, an injunction. The court also referred to its earlier judgment in Khurshed Ali v. Mian Gul Adnan Aurangzeb (deceased), reported as 2025 SCMR 34.

Observing that the dispute concerned not merely possession but also the appellant's ownership, the court held that a possession-only suit without a prayer for declaration of title was not maintainable in the circumstances.

Finding no ground to interfere with the Lahore High Court's judgment, the Supreme Court dismissed the appeal without any order as to costs. NEWS DESK

NATIONAL

DTM

Kissan Ittehad welcomes proposed wheat price, urges timely procurement

Pakistan Kissan Ittehad President Khalid Mahmood Khokhar on Wednesday welcomed the proposed wheat price of Rs4,500 per 40kg, saying that fixing a fair price before sowing in consultation with the provinces would encourage farmers to cultivate wheat and help ensure affordable food for consumers.

Addressing a press conference at the Lahore Press Club, he said Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's announcement regarding the timely determination of wheat prices was encouraging for the farming community. He said the proposed price was an important step towards reviving the agricultural sector, adding that agriculture should be granted the status of an industry. He said Pakistan's economic development and food security were closely linked to farmers' prosperity, as millions of families depended directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihoods. A fair wheat price would encourage cultivation, improve agricultural production and help maintain a balance between supply and demand, he added.

Khokhar said farmers had faced severe financial difficulties over the past two years due to inadequate wheat prices, prompting many to shift towards other crops. This had created imbalances in cultivation patterns, affected the prices of certain crops and disrupted wheat production and supply. He stressed that wheat prices should be determined by keeping farmers' actual production costs in view, including expenses on seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, diesel, electricity, water, land preparation, harvesting and transportation. Without adequate returns, he said, farmers would struggle to arrange resources for subsequent crops, ultimately affecting national food security.

He urged the government to announce a clear wheat pricing policy in a timely manner and establish a transparent and effective procurement mechanism. He also called for the timely provision of gunny bags to farmers and arrangements enabling them to sell their produce at the announced price without facing uncertainty or unnecessary difficulties.

The Kissan Ittehad president said effective wheat procurement, storage and marketing systems were essential to maintain adequate national reserves and ensure the availability of wheat at affordable prices. He condemned the creation of artificial shortages for personal profit and appreciated the prime minister's decision not to grant concessions to wheat hoarders. He said a fair wheat price could also have positive implications for other crops, including potatoes, sugarcane, maize, onions and cauliflower, by helping farmers make better decisions regarding crop selection and cultivation.

Highlighting other challenges facing the agricultural sector, he referred to climate change and water scarcity, stressing the need for improved agricultural planning, appropriate crop selection and efficient use of available resources to meet future food requirements. Khokhar said the objective was to protect farmers' rights, increase agricultural production and strengthen Pakistan's food self-sufficiency rather than promote confrontation. He expressed hope that the government would adopt policies ensuring fair returns for farmers and affordable food for consumers. **NEWS DESK**

Musadik proposes green university to tackle climate crisis

Federal Minister for Climate Change Dr. Musadik Malik has called for global cooperation to develop practical climate solutions, proposing a virtual green university, a dedicated fund for green start-ups and shared access to publicly funded information technology to strengthen climate resilience.

Addressing the Arctic Circle Assembly 2026 in Iceland, the minister highlighted the devastating impact of glacial melting and climate-related disasters on vulnerable communities, particularly in Pakistan's northern mountain regions, and urged the international community to move beyond commemorating environmental losses towards developing practical solutions.

Recalling the death of a glacier in Iceland in 2019, which was commemorated with a plaque, he said the final line of the inscription — "Only you know if we did it" — raised questions about collective responsibility for environmental destruction.

"In my mountains, glaciers don't die quietly," he said, describing how falling boulders and torrents of water could devastate valleys and leave communities facing loss and destruction.

The minister recounted the experience of Zara, a resident of Hassanabad in Hunza, whose community had lived in the area for

around 400 years or more. He said the Shiper Glacier, which supported local livelihoods, farming, water supplies and food security, broke after temperatures rose and a lake formed behind it in May 2022. Zara's husband was working in the fields when the glacier broke. As the ground trembled and boulders came down, he rushed home and helped his wife and children escape, saving their lives, the minister said.

However, their house, livestock and essential community facilities, including schools and clinics, were lost, leaving the family and other residents facing renewed poverty.

Dr. Musadik Malik said it had taken generations for such families to emerge from poverty, while a single glacial disaster could reverse that progress. He said around 1,000 households in the affected areas of Nagar and Hunza's Hassanabad valley were wiped away within a month.

Recalling his visit to the affected area, he said a young girl had taken him to the rubble of her house and told him that her child was buried somewhere beneath it.

Quoting Zara's account of the psychological impact on children, he said: "My children used to look at these mountains with wonder. Now they look at this mountain with fear."

Drawing a comparison with Nepal, the minister referred to a glacial disaster there in August, saying the water level rose by nine metres, or 27 feet, within half an hour, sweeping away bridges, roads, hospitals and other infrastructure. He cited 600 deaths and said that, according to some estimates, the toll had exceeded 1,000 since the disaster.

The minister said the experiences of communities in Hunza and Nepal reflected a shared climate challenge, expressing solidarity with affected populations across



the region and elsewhere in the world. Highlighting Pakistan's experience of climate-related disasters, he said the country had faced five major floods over 15 years, resulting in 6,000 deaths, 19,000 injuries or disabilities and the displacement of 40 million people. He also recalled that a single flood had displaced 33 million people. He said the consequences extended beyond immediate deaths and physical destruction to include infant and maternal mortality, loss of livelihoods and disruption to education. Half of the 40 million displaced people, he said, were of school-going age, adding that three months of displacement would amount to 1.8 billion lost school days.

The minister emphasized the disparity between Pakistan's contribution to global emissions and its exposure to climate-related losses. "We only emit 1% of the carbon but we bear 100% of our national grief," he said, arguing that communities contributing little to the problem were bearing a disproportionate human cost.

Explaining why Pakistan's experience was relevant to an assembly focused on the Arctic, he said the glaciers in the country's mountains and the ice systems in Greenland and other polar regions were interconnected parts of the same global cryosphere.

He said he had been told that 80% of the original old ice had melted since the 1980s, while Greenland had lost hundreds of billions of tonnes of ice. He acknowledged that his figures might not be precise but stressed the shared nature of the challenge.

Dr. Musadik Malik urged policymakers and researchers to listen to communities living in mountain and polar regions, saying their experiences could provide valuable insights into environmental changes affecting their lives.

Rather than continuing to write obituaries for disappearing glaciers, he called for joint research and practical interventions to strengthen resilience.

As part of his proposals, he suggested establishing a virtual green university through which researchers could share infrastructure and collaborate on understanding changes in mountain environments. He said the mountains were the first places where the cryosphere experienced the impacts of warming and that studying these changes could help researchers model potential wider consequences and develop resilience measures.

The minister also announced that his ministry had established a \$10 million fund for start-ups focused on innovative climate solutions. **NEWS DESK**

Ayaz blames PTI for talks breakdown

National Assembly Speaker Sarder Ayaz Sadiq on Wednesday held the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) responsible for the breakdown of talks with the government, saying negotiations should not have been abandoned.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he recalled that government representatives were seated in his chamber while opposition members were waiting in an adjoining room during the negotiations. He said both sides had been hopeful of

a positive outcome and expected an agreement to be signed.

"Everyone was happy that things were moving towards improvement and that the agreement would be signed," he said. Ayaz Sadiq recalled that when the opposition members came out, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate Ailima Nasir Abbas expressed regret over the failure of the talks. He said Ailima Nasir was disappointed that the negotiations had failed and that he had to leave

with a heavy heart. Other opposition leaders also left afterwards.

The speaker said he had urged the opposition not to close the door to negotiations and to return to the table. He recalled telling them that they could come back within five minutes. He said several people present at the time, including Rana Sanaullah and other government representatives, could confirm that both sides had agreed to continue the talks. Ayaz Sadiq added that opposition leaders had

also agreed that dialogue should continue, but they faced difficulties in making decisions.

He said the opposition had entered politics with a public mandate and was expected to make its own decisions. However, consultations with other quarters had complicated the process. The speaker stressed the need for transparency when discussing sensitive issues, particularly the facilities being provided to PTI founder Imran Khan in prison. **NEWS DESK**

KP emergency gets parliament nod

Continued from Page 1

According to Article 232, if the "president acts on his own, the Proclamation of Emergency shall be placed" before both Houses of the Parliament for approval by each House within 10 days.

Meanwhile, a proclamation for governor's rule issued under Article 234 "shall be laid before a joint sitting and shall cease to be in force at the expiration of two months", unless a joint sitting approves its extension. However, such a measure shall not remain in force for more than six months. Throughout Wednesday's proceedings, opposition members participated calmly and did not stage any loud protest, unlike past instances when the PTI objects to the Centre. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also attended part of the session, with pictures released by the NA showing him shaking hands with Opposition Leader Mahmood Khan Achakzai.

Federal ministers defended the emergency imposition while assailing what they described as the PTI-led KP government's lack of will to combat terrorism.

At one point during the proceedings, NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq noted that the Oct 3 dialogue was held in a cordial atmosphere. Sadiq praised both sides for "attempting more than their capacity so that the matter is settled".

However, he said some matters were beyond the parties' control and voiced his support for forming the same committees for negotiations if ever needed in the future. Addressing PTI lawmakers, the speaker said, "Everyone's response was that this [process of dialogue] should continue, but you also understand that your hands were tied." He took note of the PTI's complaints regarding the jail conditions of party founder Imran Khan, adding that he had even provided details of facilities provided to the jailed ex-premier.

The session was adjourned to meet again at 11am today (Friday).

Opposition: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Wednesday approached the Peshawar High Court (PHC) challenging the imposition of Governor Rule and Emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and suspension of its provincial government, praying the court to declare the move unconstitutional.

PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar has filed a petition against the imposition of Governor's Rule and Emergency in PHC. The petition was filed in the Peshawar High Court through Advocate Ali Zaman, contending that the imposition of Governor's Rule and Emergency despite the presence of an elected democratic government was unconstitutional.

The petitioner has also requested the court to fix the petition for an early hearing. The petition contends that the action violates Articles 1, 2A, 4, 9, 10, 10A, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 19A, 25, 130, 175(3), 232, 234 and 245 of the Constitution, and therefore

seeks its declaration as null and void.

Addressing the house earlier in the day, Barrister Gohar has also accused the government of undermining democracy over the imposition of an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, alleging that terrorism was being used as a pretext.

"You have launched an assault on democracy," he said, alleging that someone else was hiding behind the terrorists in the area where the emergency had been imposed. He further accused the government of rendering the entire country dysfunctional and said it had found an excuse in terrorism to impose a governor's rule and an emergency in KP. Separately, Mahmood Khan Achakzai, Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, has strongly criticized the imposition of an emergency and Governor's Rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, calling for the immediate withdrawal of both decisions. Speaking during a session of the National Assembly, Achakzai warned that an obsession with the use of force was extremely dangerous and urged the government not to complicate matters through wordplay. He reiterated his willingness to meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the interest of the country and the Constitution. "Place two chairs here in the House, and Shehbaz bhai and I can sit face-to-face to find solutions to the country's problems," he said. "The decision to impose an emergency is entirely wrong. Reverse it and choose the path of dialogue with the people."

Defending former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, the opposition leader described him as a decent person who had never used abusive language but had simply urged people to stand up against oppression. He stressed that the government still had time to reverse what he described as unconstitutional decisions. Referring to former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who has come to be revered by many as a spiritual figure, or Qalandar and Peer, Achakzai questioned whether the government intended to turn Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan into a similar figure. Achakzai also pledged to meet Imran Khan privately, without disclosing details to anyone, to assess his mental and physical condition and explore the possibility of resuming negotiations from where previous talks had stalled.

Highlighting widespread corruption and administrative shortcomings, the opposition leader alleged that corruption worth trillions of rupees was taking place in the country. He further claimed that more than 23,000 civilian and military bureaucrats held dual citizenship.

He urged the country's relevant and sensitive institutions to investigate the matter and proposed that Federal Minister Khawaja Asif be appointed to head the inquiry committee established for this purpose. **NEWS DESK**

KP emergency PTI's political suicide attack: Bilawal

Continued from Page 1

The federal government had accused the provincial government of failing to cooperate adequately in the fight against terrorism.

The PPP chairman said his party's representatives were part of the committee holding talks with the opposition. Based on past experience, he had hoped the negotiations would succeed.

He said he had received encouraging reports that the talks were progressing and that the PTI might agree to some key proposals.

One proposal was to identify the areas most affected by terrorism in KP and formally declare them terrorism-affected areas through the provincial government, he said.

He added that there had also been a possibility of an agreement between the federal government, the provincial government and the KP chief minister to jointly tackle terrorism at the national and provincial levels.

Bilawal said he had hoped the negotiations would lead to a major political breakthrough. He reiterated that dialogue could still provide a way forward. He warned that restricting the political space of one party could also affect other political parties and Pakistani citizens.

Bilawal said Pakistan had reached a point where a difficult constitutional decision had to be made. The country was facing warlike conditions along its border with Afghanistan, while terrorist attacks continued across Pakistan. KP was among the provinces worst affected by terrorism, he added. Criticising the KP chief minister's reported remarks at a public gathering about the federal government's anti-terrorism efforts, Bilawal said it was politically self-destructive for a provincial chief executive to tell the public that he would not support the federal government's efforts to fight terrorism. He said the PPP had no reason to step back from the fight against terrorism, as its leaders and workers had sacrificed their lives in the struggle. The PPP chairman said President Asif Ali Zardari took pride in his role in the passage of the 18th Constitutional Amendment and the restoration of the 1973 Constitution. However, Bilawal said no convincing constitutional, legal or political reason had been presented to justify rejecting the emergency summary in the circumstances described by the government.

Despite the decision, he said, the federal government should keep the door open for political

negotiations. He urged the prime minister to reach out to the opposition leadership and other political parties to find a solution through dialogue.

Bilawal stressed that an emergency was an extraordinary measure and could not remain in force indefinitely. He said lasting success against terrorism required all political parties, federal and provincial governments, and state institutions to work together. He said the fight against terrorism should not be left to the police, the armed forces or individual political parties. The entire nation had to unite against the threat.

Pakistan had defeated terrorism in the past, he said, but success required national unity and collective efforts. He added that the current challenge was more complicated than previous phases of the fight against terrorism and required a comprehensive strategy involving all political stakeholders.

Referring to the recent conflict with India, Bilawal said Pakistan had inflicted a defeat on India that would be remembered by history.

He said Pakistan had shot down six Indian aircraft and that New Delhi would find it difficult to accept Pakistan's performance, particularly because it presented itself as a regional security provider. He said India might continue trying to destabilise Pakistan through different means.

Bilawal accused India of sponsoring terrorism in Pakistan through the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and separatist organizations. He said India's role in the changing situation in Afghanistan could not be ignored.

The PPP chairman also said Pakistan had taken on the responsibility of helping efforts to establish peace between Iran and the United States. While Pakistan's diplomatic initiatives could win international appreciation, he said, some forces might oppose them. He alleged that certain states and Zionist forces could try to interfere in Pakistan's domestic affairs and create instability by supporting militant organizations.

Bilawal said the government and opposition would have to stand together to deal with these threats. He said the KP leadership needed to assure the people that it was ready to defend the province and the country against terrorism. The PPP, he said, had never been afraid of terrorists and would continue the fight if necessary, even on its own. However, the party remained ready to work with other political parties. He added that it would also confront those accused of backing ter-

rorist groups. Bilawal said political consensus was essential to address the country's security challenges. Failure to reach an agreement would harm not only political parties but also the country as a whole. He called on political parties to set aside their differences and develop a joint strategy against terrorism. The PPP chairman welcomed the federal government's willingness to consider forming a committee at the prime minister's level in response to his party's request.

However, he said a committee comprising only PPP and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) representatives would not serve its intended purpose. He questioned the usefulness of a committee that excluded the opposition. While their participation might not resolve all differences, he said, it could at least help make progress. Referring to the National Action Plan, Bilawal said political parties had reached a broad consensus during the government of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif. Representatives of both the government and opposition had joined hands to develop a strategy against terrorism.

He called for a similar committee to be formed again to prepare a joint national strategy in the country's interest. Bilawal asked whether the PTI was willing to join such a committee and urged it to participate despite its political differences with the government. He said political parties should make every effort to create space for dialogue and reach agreement on matters of national importance. They should also avoid decisions that could harm their own political standing.

Bilawal said the decision to impose an emergency had been taken and that the PPP would continue its efforts to help the country deal with terrorism. He expressed the hope that the measures would improve security and protect the people of KP. He again invited the opposition to hold talks with the government and other political parties to create conditions in which the emergency would no longer be needed. "If political dialogue produces an agreement and circumstances improve to the point where the emergency is no longer required, I will personally stand in this House and request the prime minister to end it," he said. Bilawal said that Pakistan needed national unity, political reconciliation and collective action to defeat terrorism. Continued political divisions, he warned, would ultimately harm the entire country. He announced that the PPP would support the imposition of an emergency in KP. **NEWS DESK**

BACKPAGE

DTM

Pakistan to deepen ties with Russia: Field Marshal



Minister of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation Mr. Vladimir Kolokoltsev called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ here at General Headquarters (GHQ) on Wednesday.

bilateral security cooperation, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

They underscored the importance of closer institutional linkages and improved coordination between the security institutions of Pakistan and Russia.

The COAS reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to deepen its longstanding relations with Russia and expand tangible cooperation in areas of shared interest, particularly in the security domain.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's contributions to regional peace and stability and acknowledged the professionalism and sacrifices of the Pakistan Armed Forces in the fight against terrorism. **NEWS DESK**

During the meeting, both sides discussed matters of mutual interest and the regional security environment, with particular emphasis on strengthening

President welcomes Saudi, French envoys



President Asif Ali Zardari, Wednesday, received the credentials of the Ambassador-designate of France, Jean-Noel Poirier and the Ambassador-designate of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Dr Rajeh Tami Albugamy, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The president felicitated both ambassadors on their appointments and wished them success in their diplomatic assignments.

"He expressed confidence that they would contribute to strengthening Pakistan's relations with their respective countries and expanding cooperation in areas of mutual interest," the President's Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release.

During his meeting with Ambassador-designate of France Jean-Noel Poirier, the president reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening its longstanding relations with France through regular dialogue and

broader cooperation.

He emphasised the importance of multilateralism, regular high-level exchanges and an independent bilateral relationship.

The president highlighted opportunities to enhance trade, investment, parliamentary exchanges, educational and cultural links, and defence cooperation.

In his meeting with Ambassador-designate of Saudi Arabia Dr. Rajeh Tami Albugamy, the president underscored the close strategic partnership between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the Kingdom's security and defence.

He highlighted the importance of the Makkah Alliance for Defence and the institutional mechanisms underpinning bilateral cooperation.

The president also emphasised the need to deepen economic ties, appreciated Saudi Arabia's financial support and assistance with oil supplies, and highlighted the contribution of the Pakistani community in the Kingdom.

He expressed confidence that relations between the two countries would reach new heights during the ambassador's tenure. **NEWS DESK**

PM: Easy loans for housing, SMEs crucial

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that timely provision of loans to the housing, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and agriculture sectors was essential for promoting the national economy.

Chairing a meeting regarding access to finance for Agriculture, Housing and SME sectors, the prime minister reviewed the provision of loans and access to financial resources for the Prime Minister's Apna Ghar housing scheme, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the agriculture sector.

During the meeting, he encouraged banks actively participating in lending to these priority sectors to support national development and progress.

He also directed banks whose performance remained unsatisfactory to improve their performance to qualify for government encouragement and support.

The prime minister directed the relevant ministries, secretaries and the State Bank of Pakistan to

consult stakeholders associated with the SME, agriculture and housing finance sectors.

He instructed the relevant authorities to seek proposals from stakeholders to make ongoing schemes more effective and result-oriented. "The consultation process should be completed by the end of the current month, with recommendations submitted accordingly."

The prime minister also directed that the inactive warehouses and silos of the Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO) should be operated under a public-private partnership model.

He said collaboration with the private sector should enhance the capacity of these warehouses and silos to ensure the safe storage of farmers' produce.

The prime minister appreciated Allied Bank's model of establishing warehouses for storing agricultural commodities and providing loans to farmers against their stored produce. He directed that the model should be expanded with the participation of the private sector. He also appreciated Allied Bank's investment plan for establishing a proposed SME park.

The prime minister directed the authorities to simplify the process of providing information and documentation for people

seeking to benefit from the Apna Ghar housing scheme.

He instructed that obtaining an unencumbered title deed for housing finance should be made easier.

He also directed the committee on developers' finance to finalise its recommendations and submit them at the earliest.

During the meeting, participants were briefed on the progress and lending figures for the housing, agriculture and SME sectors.

The meeting was informed that banks were enhancing their institutional capacity to extend financing to all three priority sectors.

Work was also underway to promote developers' finance, for which a committee had been constituted.

Under the Prime Minister's Apna Ghar Scheme, loans worth Rs448 billion had been approved for 75,198 applicants so far, the meeting was told. Loans amounting to Rs76 billion have been disbursed to 14,000 people while a target of providing Rs700 billion in loans for 125,000 housing units has been set for the current year.

The meeting was further informed that the processing time for housing finance applications

had been reduced to just 15 working days, while the number of required documents had been cut from 25 to five.

In the agriculture sector, the total volume of loans stands at Rs1,352 billion, benefiting 3.455 million people while targets have been set to increase agricultural lending to Rs1,500 billion and the number of beneficiaries to 4.5 million by June 2027.

In the SME sector, loans amounting to Rs1,137 billion had been extended to more than 352,000 businesses. **NEWS DESK**

Pakistan, Oman vow stronger ties

Pakistan and Oman on Wednesday reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen bilateral cooperation across a broad spectrum of fields, including trade, investment, connectivity, logistics, energy, food security, tourism, and technology.

The bilateral ties and cooperation were discussed during the 8th session of the Pakistan-Oman Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC), co-chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of Oman Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi here.

Addressing a joint press stakeout following the meeting, the two leaders told the media that a key outcome of the session was the strengthening of the institutional framework through the establishment and operationalisation of several joint working groups on trade and investment, agriculture, oil and gas, and labour and human resource development, with a view to ensuring regular engagement.

They welcomed closer engagement between the business communities of both countries and encouraged greater

investment in special economic zones and free zones, besides agreeing to hold a business-to-business investment forum in Pakistan in the very near future.

The two leaders announced that later in the day, both countries would sign the protocol of the 8th session of the JMC, along with an agreement on mutual visa exemption for holders of diplomatic and official passports. Additionally, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) and several bilateral agreements would be inked during the Omani foreign minister's visit, covering communication and technology, historical documentation, records and archives management, and media cooperation.

Acknowledging the valuable contribution of the Pakistani community in Oman, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen cooperation in labour mobility, vocational training, and human resource development, as well as to create new opportunities for skilled Pakistani professionals and workers.

The two leaders exchanged views on the evolving situation in the Gulf, underscoring the importance of restraint, de-

escalation, dialogue, and diplomacy. They highlighted the need to ensure the safety and freedom of

navigation through the Strait of Hormuz and Bab-el-Mandeb, given their critical importance to regional and global food and energy security.

The deputy prime minister reiterated that Pakistan remained committed to contributing constructively to diplomatic efforts aimed at promoting peace and stability in the region. As both sides discussed the recent Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia, he conveyed Pakistan's strongest condemnation of the attacks.

Calling the attacks against

civilians and civilian infrastructure totally unacceptable, he reaffirmed Pakistan's full solidarity with the leadership and people of Saudi Arabia, as well as its unwavering commitment to the Kingdom's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and security in accordance with the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement.

As the two sides discussed the grave situation in Palestine, Deputy Prime Minister Dar reiterated Pakistan's principled and unwavering support for the Palestinian people and their inalienable rights, calling for the unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza.

Dar also raised the Jammu and Kashmir issue and reiterated Pakistan's call for a just and peaceful solution in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

On Afghanistan, he stressed the imperative of ensuring that Afghan territory is not used to carry out any activities against Pakistan. **NEWS DESK**

5 terrorists killed in Washuk operation



Security Forces killed five terrorists belonging to Fitna al Hindustan and injured four others during an intelligence-based operation in the Palantak area of Washuk district in Balochistan under Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3.

Security Forces said that the operation targeted terrorists affiliated with Fitna al-Hindustan, during which their hideouts were engaged with modern weapons. Security Forces recovered a cache of modern weapons and ammunition from the killed terrorists.

The recovered items included an RPG-7 launcher, five rounds, five advanced weapons along with magazines, three mobile phones and two motorcycles, the sources said. The killed terrorists were involved in looting local Baloch people, spreading fear and harassment, and damaging infrastructure, they said.

Security Forces remain committed to eliminating terrorism from Balochistan, and operations will continue until the last terrorist is eliminated, the sources added. **NEWS DESK**

Russia and Pakistan have agreed to strengthen cooperation in combating organized crime and finalizing agreements on the extradition and exchange of criminals, Pakistan's interior ministry said on Wednesday.

The statement came after a meeting of Russian Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev with his Pakistani counterpart Mohsin Naqvi in Islamabad,

which was focused on areas of shared interest.

The development comes as Pakistan seeks to strengthen international cooperation with partner countries to tackle transnational organized crime and improve information-sharing among law enforcement agencies.

The two ministers decided that working groups from the interior ministries of both countries would soon visit the other country for collaboration and information exchange.

"They agreed to finalize accords on extradition and the exchange of criminals," the Pakistani interior ministry said. "Consensus was reached on enhancing cooperation between the [Pakistani] Anti-Narcotics Force and relevant Russian

agencies."

They also agreed on preventing cybercrime and fostering cooperation between Pakistani and Russian police, while discussions were held on sending skilled manpower from Pakistan to Russia and simplifying visa procedures for tourists and the business community.

"Pakistan wishes to benefit from Russia's experience in curbing cybercrime," Naqvi was quoted as saying by his ministry.

"Easing the visa regime will enhance people-to-people contacts between the two countries."

Kolokoltsev shared that Russia had achieved a 33 percent reduction in cybercrime through effective measures.

"Joint measures are



essential to curb all forms of organized crime, including terrorism, drug trafficking, and illegal migration," he was quoted as saying.

Pakistan and Russia, once Cold War rivals, have warmed up to each other in recent years through regular business, trade and diplomatic interactions.

GLAMOURDTMUR

Victoria: Harper Used PowerPoints for Perm

Harper Beckham has a plan for her future. The 15-year-old daughter of Victoria Beckham recently approached her fashion and beauty mogul mother with two of her biggest asks, armed with

and these are the reasons. No. 2, she wanted a perm. She wanted to perm her hair." Victoria noted that while she remained open to one request, the other was a non-starter. NEWS DESK



some PowerPoint presentations to argue her points. "Two PowerPoint presentations," Victoria marveled on the Tuesday, Oct. 13 episode of Today with Jenna & Shienella. "One, she wanted a beauty brand,

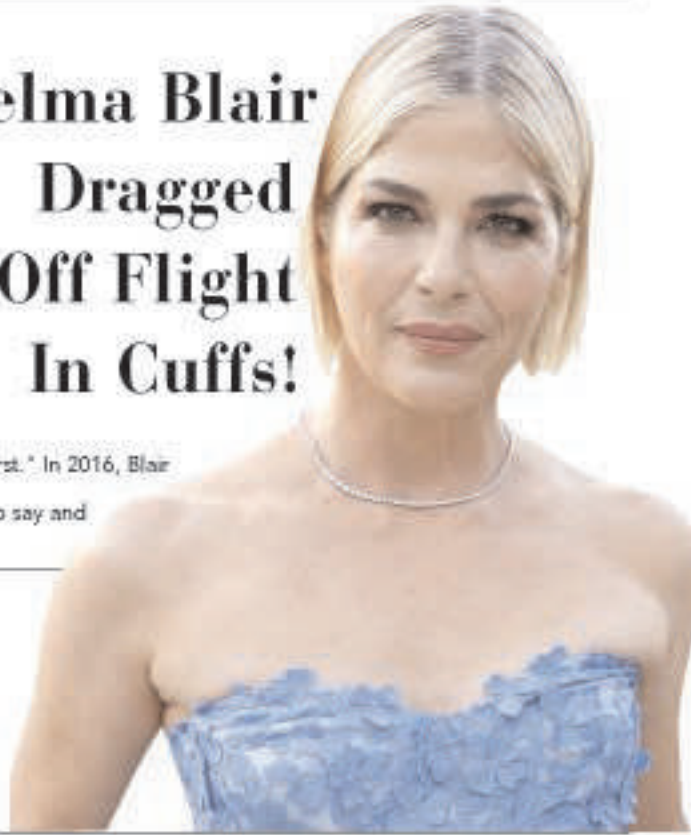
Jinn Claims False, Says Amna Malik

Pakistani actress, model and television host Amna Malik has clarified her earlier remarks about allegedly asking jinn to return her missing belongings. She has denied having any jinn under her control and said her comments were taken out of context and unnecessarily exaggerated on social media. In a video recently shared on Instagram, Amna addressed the controversy surrounding her appearance on Geo News' comedy programme Hansna Mana Hai, hosted by Tabish Hashmi. During the show, she had spoken about an unusual experience involving missing money and other belongings, which later attracted widespread attention online. NEWS DESK



US actress Selma Blair was arrested after an alleged altercation on a flight from Los Angeles to New York City that injured at least two cabin crew members, authorities said Monday. The "Legally Blonde" and "Cruel Intentions" star was detained at John F Kennedy Airport after her Delta Air Lines flight landed late Sunday following reports of a physically abusive passenger. US media said that Blair punched one flight attendant and bit another. The 54-year-old then reportedly assaulted a police officer and nurse as she was transported to hospital. "Selma experienced a medical emergency that led to the alleged conduct," a representative for Blair said. "Upon landing, she received immediate medical attention and is currently in stable condition." The FBI issued a summons accusing Blair of assaults on the plane, according to a federal judicial source. Blair was arraigned on two counts of second-degree assault Monday night and was released on bail. A new hearing in the case is scheduled for January 19, 2027. A spokesperson for Delta said the airline "has zero tolerance for unruly or unlawful behavior, as the safety of our customers and crew always comes first." In 2016, Blair was removed from a plane on a stretcher after another outburst on a flight. "I mixed alcohol with medication, and that caused me to black out and led me to say and do things that I deeply regret," she told Vanity Fair after that incident. A#

Selma Blair Dragged Off Flight In Cuffs!



PITT STOP! Brad's Bold Look Stuns Paris

Brad Pitt made a style statement as he stepped out in magenta trousers for a date night with girlfriend Ines de Ramon in Paris on Monday. The Hollywood actor, 62, turned heads in the bold trousers, which he teamed with an equally eye-catching teal jacket, after watching singer James Blake perform live in concert. Brad, who finished his look with a white shirt, black shoes and gold-rimmed glasses, looked on fine form as he held hands with his stunning girlfriend, 33. Ines meanwhile cut a typically glamorous figure in a fluffy cream jacket, which she styled with a crisp white T-shirt and black leather trousers. The jewellery designer rounded off her look with stylish shades, with the beauty flashing a small smile as she followed her actor partner outside. The couple, who have been together for nearly four years, looked in great spirits after watching singer-songwriter James, 38, on stage, who is known for tracks such as Retrograde and Mile High. NEWS DESK



Robert Pattinson confirmed that production on The Batman Part II is "pausing for a little bit" while walking the red carpet in London on Oct. 11. Representatives for DC Studios and Warner Bros. told multiple outlets on Oct. 5 that production on the movie "temporarily paused" while writer-director Matt Reeves addresses "a family matter". Robert Pattinson is sharing an update on the production delay for the sequel to The Batman. Pattinson, 40, addressed the movie's status when he chatted with Official Pop Drop in London at the Sunday, Oct. 11 premiere for Primetime. Multiple outlets previously reported on Monday, Oct. 5 that filming for the sequel had paused after writer-director Matt Reeves stepped away due to personal reasons. NEWS DESK



Pattinson Confirms Batman Sequel Pause

Kacey Rips Noem For Murdering Her Pup!

Kacey Musgraves lambasted Kristi Noem for previously admitting to shooting her dog, after the former Homeland Security secretary said she prefers country singer Elle Langley. The feud kicked off after Democratic politician James Talerico, who is running for the US senate, gushed about attending Musgraves's, 38, Dallas concert on Saturday in a post on X. After Talerico shared a photo with the singer and thanked her for having him at her show, Noem, 54, re-shared the post to her X and took a jab at Musgraves while endorsing conservative senate hopeful Ken Paxton. "I'll take @ellalangley over Kacey Musgraves any day. And if I'm chosen Texas, I'll take Ken Paxton over James Talerico," she wrote. NEWS DESK



No Room for Body-Shaming, Says Dur-e-Fishan

Pakistani actress Dur-e-Fishan Saleem has responded to online trolling over her physical appearance in the drama Dar-e-Nijaz. The actress chose a sarcastic yet confident response after facing criticism over her arms and biceps in a recent episode of the popular ARY Digital series. Written by Umara Ahmed and directed by Saqib Khan, Dar-e-Nijaz features Shehryar Munawar, Dur-e-Fishan Saleem and Nameer Nawaz Khan in prominent roles. The drama has attracted considerable attention from viewers, with its storyline and performances sparking discussions on social media. The controversy began after the 21st episode featured Dur-e-Fishan in a sleeveless outfit as Zaryab. Some viewers commented on the appearance of her arms and shoulders, while others took their criticism further by mocking her physique. Several users also shared AI-generated images exaggerating her muscles and comparing her appearance to international wrestlers. NEWS DESK



MONEY

AURANGZEB UNVEILS PAKISTAN'S TURNAROUND MATH

Debt Down, Revenue Up, Reserves Up

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday said Pakistan's fiscal deficit had declined to 2.6 percent of GDP from a peak of 12.5 percent, while tax revenues increased by 40 percent over the past two years.

The minister was talking at a panel discussion on "Mitigating Sovereign Risks in Market-Access Countries" at the World Bank-IMF Annual Meetings 2026, Bangkok.

He attributed the economic turnaround to fiscal discipline, revenue mobilisation, debt management and structural reforms.

The minister said the country had recorded three consecutive years of primary surpluses, with the fiscal deficit reaching a 22-year low in the last fiscal year. Inflation, which had peaked at 38 percent, had fallen to single digits before recently moving into the 10 percent range amid the ongoing conflict, he added.

Aurangzeb said foreign exchange reserves had improved from a level covering just two weeks of imports to approximately three months of import cover, strengthening the country's capacity to manage domestic and external economic shocks.

He identified domestic revenue mobilisation as the starting point of the recovery, noting that Pakistan's tax-to-GDP ratio had increased from around 8.5 percent to 10.3 percent.

He stressed the need to broaden the tax base, improve tax administration and

leverage technology and process reforms to enhance revenue collection.

The minister acknowledged that securing tax compliance remained a major challenge, observing that persuading people to pay taxes was among the most difficult aspects of economic reform. He also

highlighted expenditure reduction and privatisation as important

components of the government's fiscal consolidation efforts.

Discussing public debt, Aurangzeb said Pakistan's overall debt-to-GDP ratio had declined from around 75 percent to 68 percent. Given that debt servicing remained the largest item in the federal budget, the government had undertaken domestic debt liability-management operations, including buybacks and extending maturities, to reduce borrowing

costs and create fiscal space for other priorities.

On external debt, he said Pakistan had regained access to international capital markets after a gap of four years. Under its medium-term debt strategy, the government aimed to avoid increasing the overall stock of external debt while extending maturities, reducing rollover risks and moving towards a more sustainable debt profile.

Aurangzeb noted that Pakistan's issuance of a \$3 billion international bond in the first week of September had benefited from favourable market conditions, but stressed that such opportunities required systematic planning and preparedness.

Regarding engagement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the minister said the government had sought to use the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) to make macroeconomic stability more durable and advance long-delayed structural reforms in taxation, energy, tariffs, state-owned enterprises and pensions.

He said the key difference from previous IMF programmes was the ownership of reforms at the political leadership level, particularly by the prime minister. The government viewed the reform agenda as Pakistan's own programme, with the IMF providing support and financing, rather than reforms being pursued merely to meet external conditions. **NEWS DESK**



Exports key to ending aid trap: Ahsan

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said achieving the \$100 billion export target by 2035 was essential for Pakistan to break the cycle of economic dependency, ensure sustainable growth and strengthen its economic independence.

Addressing the inaugural session of the 39th International Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE), themed "Mission \$100 Billion: The National Race for Sustainable Prosperity," he said Pakistan must shift from consumption-driven growth to production- and export-led growth to avoid recurring economic crises.

"If Pakistan succeeds in exporting \$100 billion by 2035, then we will reach the level of economic independence. But if we fail to do this, then we will never be able to break the cycle of dependency traps," he said.

The minister said a country

unable to generate sufficient income to meet its needs had to rely on borrowing, which eventually constrained its decision-making, slowed development and left the aspirations of its youth vulnerable to recurring balance-of-payments crises.

Comparing Pakistan's export performance with that of other countries, he said its goods exports stood at approximately \$32 billion in calendar year 2024, compared with \$47 billion for Bangladesh, \$330 billion for Malaysia and \$404 billion for Vietnam.

He said Pakistan's goods exports stood at around \$6 billion in 1990, compared with \$2.5 billion for Vietnam. By 2024, Vietnam's exports had surged to \$404 billion, underscoring the need for Pakistan to reassess its economic choices and production strategy.

Ahsan Iqbal said Pakistan had repeatedly experienced a cycle in which economic growth increased imports, put pressure on the exchange rate and eventually necessitated restrictive measures

to restore stability.

Referring to the 6 per cent economic growth recorded in 2022, he said it was accompanied by record imports of \$90 billion and a trade deficit of \$50 billion, illustrating the risks of consumption-led expansion.

"There are only two ways of growth. Either you get it through consumption, or you get it through production and export," he said, adding that production- and export-led growth offered a sustainable alternative.

He said the government's URAAN Pakistan framework prioritised exports to strengthen the country's capacity to generate foreign exchange and maintain economic stability over the next five, 10 and 20 years.

The minister stressed that Pakistan needed to organise economic development around competitive industrial clusters, complete value chains and integration into global supply chains.

Such clusters, he said, could connect businesses with skilled



"If Pakistan succeeds in exporting \$100 billion by 2035, then we will reach the level of economic independence. But if we fail to do this, then we will never be able to break the cycle of dependency traps."

— Professor Ahsan Iqbal

workers, universities, technology providers, testing laboratories, financial institutions, logistics networks and international buyers.

He said Pakistan must align domestic production with international demand, meet global standards and ensure reliability to win and retain export orders.

Highlighting opportunities in agriculture, manufacturing, services, information technology, the blue economy and creative industries, he called for greater value addition, improved branding, technology adoption and stronger

links with international markets.

Citing Pakistani carpets sold at substantially higher prices in international markets under foreign brands, he said the country needed to develop its own designs, brands and value-added products to capture a greater share of export earnings.

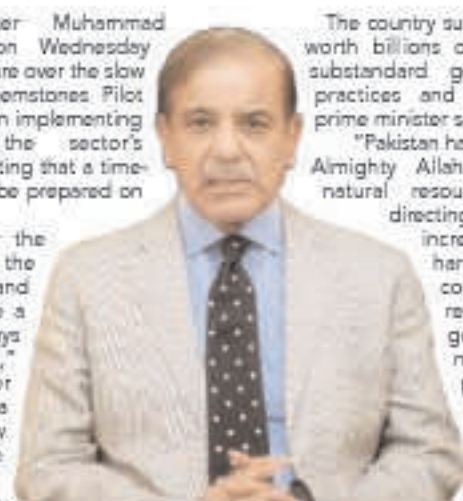
The minister emphasised that research should focus on practical solutions to identify promising industries and markets, attract investors and determine the policy reforms required to achieve the export target. **NEWS DESK**

Gemstones project in slow lane, PM sees red

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed displeasure over the slow progress of the Gemstones Pilot Project and delays in implementing measures for the sector's development, directing that a time-bound action plan be prepared on a priority basis.

"Measures for the development of the gemstones and jewellery sector are a priority, and no delays will be tolerated," the prime minister said while chairing a meeting to review progress in the gemstone sector.

He stressed the need to develop a complete ecosystem for value addition, covering gemstone mining, cutting and polishing,



The country suffers annual losses worth billions of dollars due to substandard gemstone mining practices and smuggling, the prime minister said.

"Pakistan has been blessed by Almighty Allah with abundant natural resources," he said, directing that measures to increase exports by harnessing the country's extensive reserves of gemstones and minerals be prioritised.

He stressed that work should be undertaken to establish Brand Pakistan for gemstones and jewellery, along the lines of other countries in the region.

He further directed that a roadmap be

developed for the early establishment of Centres of Excellence for value addition.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif instructed that all obstacles to pilot projects and the development of model gemstone mines be removed to ensure their early completion.

During the meeting, the prime minister received a detailed briefing on progress regarding the pilot project for gemstone exploration, cutting and polishing, value addition, and preparations for export.

He was informed that 4.8 kanals of land had been transferred for the Centre of Excellence project in Hussainabad, Skardu. The required funds were available, and construction would commence soon.

It was further informed that land had been identified for the project in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Islamabad. Until the Centre of Excellence in Islamabad is constructed, the facility will be made fully operational at an alternative location.

The meeting also received a briefing

on policy measures for the development of the sector. It was informed that geological mapping of identified gemstone-bearing areas had been completed. Eight new blocks in Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had been identified for further exploration and the discovery of gemstones.

An allocation of Rs1 billion has been earmarked under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for the development of the sector during the current year, the meeting was informed.

To facilitate exporters, export facilitation desks have been established at 80 branches of 10 banks across seven cities.

The prime minister directed that a comprehensive action plan for establishing Centres of Excellence for gemstones and jewellery, along with measures for the development of the sector, be prepared and presented next week. **NEWS DESK**



No more ponzi tricks: CIU on watch

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has approved establishing a Corporate Intelligence Unit (CIU) to proactively identify registered companies suspected of running Ponzi or pyramid schemes, taking deposits or lending without the required licence, or operating beyond their approved objectives.

According to a statement released on Wednesday, the unit will monitor publicly available information, including news reports, social media, and digital advertisements, to identify potential violations before receiving complaints.

Verified leads will be referred to the relevant SECP departments for inquiry or enforcement action. Where appropriate, information may also be shared with agencies including the FIA, NCCIA, State Bank of Pakistan and NAB. **NEWS DESK**

No fresh CCI nod needed for DISCO sale: PD

Privatisation Division (PD) has maintained that fresh approval from the Council of Common Interests (CCI) is not required to privatise power distribution companies (DISCOs), citing earlier decisions of the constitutional body and the National Electricity Policy.

In a response submitted to a Sub Committee of the Senate's Functional Committee on Devolution, the division said the CCI had approved the privatisation of three power generation companies and nine distribution companies in 2011.

"CCI also granted approval dated 21 June 2021 of the National Electricity Policy (para 5.9.4) which provides that the government shall explore various options of privatisation to improve the efficiency of state-owned entities, where applicable; both decisions remain in the field."

"On the validity of these decisions, the Law Division, in its letter of 25 September 2026, re-confirmed that in light of the 2011 CCI decision, fresh approval is not required for the privatisation of DISCOs."

"Accordingly, the Privatisation Division reiterates that, in light of the 2011 CCI decision and the 2021 NE Policy, fresh CCI approval is not required," read the response.

The position comes amid scrutiny of the federal government's authority to privatise power utilities and the role of the CCI. **NEWS DESK**

Gold falls by Rs 3k/ tola

Gold prices witnessed a decline in the local market on Wednesday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola falling by Rs3,000 to settle at Rs437,836, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association.

Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold decreased by Rs2,572 to Rs375,373, while 10 grams of 22-karat gold fell by Rs2,358 to Rs344,104.

In the international market, the price of gold declined by \$30 to \$4,153 per ounce, the association reported.

Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola decreased by Rs172 to Rs6,360, while the price of 10 grams of silver fell by Rs148 to Rs5,452.

The price of silver in the international market also declined by \$1.72 to \$58.82 per ounce, the association added. **NEWS DESK**

Rupee gains 1 paise

Rupee on Wednesday appreciated by 1 paise against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 276.95, compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 276.96.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the dollar's open-market buying and selling rates were Rs 277.60 and Rs 280.30, respectively.

The price of the Euro against the rupee increased by Rs 0.11, closing at Rs 310.05 against the previous day's rate of Rs 309.94, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs 1.74, and the British Pound witnessed an increase of Rs 0.71 and closed at Rs 367.40 compared to the previous day's Rs366.69.

The exchange rates of the Emirate Dirham remained stagnant at Rs 75.40, while the Saudi Riyal increased by 01 paise and closed at Rs 73.75. **NEWS DESK**

Pakistan bets on asset tokenisation in WB Talks

Minister of State and Chairman Pakistan Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority, Bilal Bin Saqib, holds high-level meetings with senior leadership of the World Bank Group, IFC, Treasury, Digital & AI and Controllers, during the 2026 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group in Bangkok, Thailand. The discussions revolved around modernising Pakistan's financial infrastructure and mobilising international capital.

The engagements focused on positioning Pakistan to benefit from the next generation of global financial innovation, including asset tokenisation, digital capital markets, artificial intelligence, cross-border payments and technology-enabled regulatory supervision.

In a meeting with Imad N. Fakhoury, Regional Vice President for the Middle East and Central Asia at the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank Group's private-sector development arm, discussions explored potential collaboration on tokenised bonds and sukuk, digital financial infrastructure, cross-border payments and mobilisation of international private capital.

Chairman PVARA also met Jorge Familiar, Vice President and Treasurer of the World Bank Group, to explore potential cooperation on digital bond issuance, asset tokenisation and AI-enabled financial operations.

In a separate engagement, Bilal Bin Saqib met Sangbu Kim, World Bank Group Vice President for Digital & AI, alongside Jonathan Gen Nagao,

Director for Data & AI, and Ozan Sevimli, Acting Director of Strategy & Operations.

The meeting focused on the potential application of artificial intelligence to financial regulation, particularly in strengthening supervisory capabilities, institutional expertise and digital asset oversight.

Further advancing the institutional agenda, Chairman PVARA met Zinga Verner, Vice President and World Bank Group Controller, alongside Junxue Chu, Director of Trust Funds and Loan Operations, and Thomas Puschnik, Solutions and Transformation Manager.

Alongside these engagements, Bilal Bin Saqib also participated in an investor roundtable organised by

Barclays.

Reflecting on the series of engagements, Minister of State and PVARA Chairman Bilal Bin Saqib said: "Pakistan must move beyond simply adopting emerging financial technologies to building the institutions that will shape the future of finance."

From tokenised capital markets and more efficient cross-border payments to AI-powered regulation, our ambition is to unlock international investment, strengthen financial transparency and create real economic opportunities for Pakistan.

The next chapter of Pakistan's economic transformation must be driven by innovation, backed by credible institutions and anchored in financial stability." **SABAH**

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Bilal Bin Saqib
Minister of State & Chairman, Pakistan Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (PVARA) MRE

WORLD

‘Cockroach’ Chiefs Jailed After India Protest

Two leaders of India's youth-led Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) were remanded in custody for five days on Wednesday, as police ratcheted up efforts to clamp down on anti-election commission protests.

CJP activists and opposition parties have defied a security crackdown to demand the resignation of India's chief elec-

tion commissioner, accusing the poll body of manipulating voter rolls to benefit Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party.

The commission, which oversees voting in the world's most populous nation, has denied any wrongdoing.

Delhi Police said CJP leaders Ashutosh Ranka, 30, and Saurav

Das, 27, were taken into custody for their "alleged repeated attempts to disturb public peace and violate the law".

At the end of the five-day remand period, they could have their detention extended, be granted bail or be released.

On Tuesday, the pair jumped security barricades to wave the national flag at Jantar Mantar, a decades-old protest site that police have barred people from using.

Their alleged attempts to instigate others through social media to engage in

similar unlawful activities were also taken into consideration," police added.

Parliamentary opposition leader Rahul Gandhi, from the Congress Party, backed the men, who were detained after entering the site.

Jantar Mantar, in the heart of the capital, has been sealed off for days with yellow metal barricades and guarded by security personnel.

Delhi Police said on Monday it had removed the site from its list of designated protest venues.

"Waving the Tricolour at Jantar Mantar in a peaceful protest is not a crime," Gandhi said in a post on social media. "Jailing youth for it is an act of cowardice."

The Congress and CJP have both protested over the voter roll revision. Gandhi said on Wednesday that "all protests are one".

"Different banners, one cause," he said. **AP**



731 War Dead Laid to Rest 60 Years On

Thousands carrying white flowers lined the roads in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City Wednesday as the remains of 731 people believed to have been killed during the 1968 Tet Offensive were taken for burial nearly six decades after their deaths.

Vietnamese Prime Minister Le Minh Hung attended the memorial services at Le Thi Rieng Park, where the remains were recovered from mass graves after over three months of excavations. They were laid to rest at Ho Chi Minh City Martyrs' Cemetery in the city previously known as Saigon. Generations in Vietnam have spent decades searching for loved ones who never returned from war, hoping to recover their remains, give



them a proper burial and finally find some measure of closure. The Tet Offensive began on Jan. 31, 1968, when North Vietnamese communist forces launched coordinated surprise attacks across South Vietnam during the Lunar New Year holiday, known in Vietnam as Tet. One of the largest campaigns of the Vietnam War, it sparked fierce fighting and heavy casualties, including in the southern capital Saigon, where communist fighters attacked the U.S. Embassy, military installations and government buildings.

Although the communist forces suffered a military defeat, the offensive shocked Washington, undermined U.S. public support for the war, and became a turning point in the conflict. **AP**

Pope Leo Recovering After Cancer Surgery

Pope Leo XIV spent a peaceful night in Rome's Gemelli hospital after doctors removed the lower lobe of his right lung and confirmed he has cancer, the Vatican said Wednesday. The surgery confirmed that the pope has the most common type of lung cancer, known as lung adenocarcinoma, the Vatican said in a medical bulletin late Tuesday.

The Vatican said doctors were waiting for the results of further tests before deciding on a course of treatment.

The press office pointed to the medical statement's mention of the "radical" removal of the lobe as an indication that doctors took out all sus-

pending traces of the cancer. Experts said some of Leo's lymph nodes also would have been removed and tested to determine if the cancer had spread. There was no word yet on those test results. If the cancer has spread, more tests will be needed to determine what kind of therapy to pursue, said Dr. Stephen Liu, a lung cancer expert at Georgetown's Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. Options include chemotherapy, a combination of chemotherapy and immunotherapy or targeted therapy, which involves oral pills for specific cancers. **AP**



Thunberg Backs French Student School Protests



Greta Thunberg on Tuesday threw her high-profile support behind high school protesters rattling the government in France, saying "the whole world is watching with awe."

She joined and applauded hundreds of teenagers who demonstrated boisterously outside a school north of Paris under the watchful eye of police.

The surprise appearance by the 23-year-old climate activist, along with another day of marches in the French capital and elsewhere, suggested that high school students' push for more resources for run-down schools is far from running out of steam. That's despite mass arrests, mounting injuries and fatigue from more than three weeks of blockading schools and demonstrating. **AP**

Refugees Given Less Time to Fight Status Loss in US

The Trump administration is cutting the time refugees have to contest the termination of their status, a move critics say could put tens of thousands of people who fled persecution and wars in their home countries on a path to deportation.

The new policy, which goes into effect Wednesday, reduces from 30 to 10 the number of days refugees have to challenge the revocation of their status. It is part of a broader effort by the Trump administration to restrict and transform a program that

has served for decades as a pathway for refugees.

The goal of the new policy, according to the document, is to "mitigate potential risks" associated with people who were admitted as refugees but were not eligible for refugee status.

The policy does not say exactly how many people could be affected, but it specifically refers to refugees admitted during President Joe Biden's administration, when it says there was an "alarming erosion of the integrity" of the refugee program. Refugee advocates dispute that claim. **AP**



Israeli settlers set fire to mosque in occupied West Bank

Israeli settlers set fire to a mosque and graffitied its outside walls on Wednesday in the occupied West Bank village of Mikhmas, Palestinian sources and the Israeli military said.

Atta Kanaan, a Palestinian resident of Mikhmas who lives 50 metres from the mosque, told AFP that he heard the sound of breaking glass shortly after midnight on Wednesday and immediately went to the building.

"A fire was burning fiercely, and we called the fire brigade. Young men rushed to help us with fire extinguishers, and we managed to contain part of the fire before the flames engulfed the entire mosque," he said.

Israel's military told AFP that soldiers were dispatched to Mikhmas following a report of graffiti and arson at the mosque, as well as damage to a vehicle.

"No suspects were identified," it said, adding an investigation had been opened.

AFP video footage showed that the fire had burned down the mosque's interior carpeting and blackened the walls. **AP**



India festival boat capsizes kills 13 children



Rescuers dragged out 13 dead children from India's Ganges river after an overloaded boat capsized en route to a Hindu festival, officials said Wednesday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressing grief over the "deeply

painful" tragedy.

The boat overturned late Tuesday in Vaishali district in eastern Bihar state, with locals rushing to pull people out of the water in the dark using

mobile phones to find the bodies.

"It was dark when we suddenly heard children screaming and crying for help as the boat capsized," Ravi Yadav, a young villager who joined the rescue effort, told AFP.

"We managed to rescue only three children, using the light from mobile phones and torches, because it was dark."

Villager Ramlakhan Rai said the boat was "small" and "not in good condition", saying people were crammed onto a vessel suitable for just a handful.

"It is devastating — a few families have lost all their children," he said.

Six people were pulled out alive, including two children reported to be in critical condition. **AP**

SPORTS

Miami Heat: Ideal Landing Spot for Giannis

Giannis Antetokounmpo ran off the floor about an hour into the first Miami Heat training camp session of the season. He had already sweated through his practice uniform and wanted to change into a fresh one. Someone let him into an adjacent room, and he found a place to change.

"Much better," Antetokounmpo said. With that, he sprinted back to practice.

Change, he believes, can be

good. After 13 seasons with the Milwaukee Bucks - with 10 All-Star selections, nine All-NBA picks, two Most Valuable Player awards and one NBA title during that span - the 6-foot-11 Greek forward is starting anew with the Heat, who have a lot in common with Antetokounmpo. Both have been to the top of the NBA mountain, and now, both are counting on the other to help them reach that height again.

But why now? Put simply, Antetokounmpo just wanted a fresh uniform. "I feel like I was in my comfort zone for many years and I just wanted just a new challenge," Antetokounmpo told The Associated Press. "And I feel that with where I am in my career, Miami is the organization that will bring the best out of me. It's an organization that loves to compete. Every single game, every single minute. And I'm the same. I'm the same person, so hopefully this - me being here - allows me to compete, allows me to help my team win games and get to the ultimate goal, which is winning the championship."

The Heat gave up a ton to make the deal happen. The full trade, finalized in July, brought Antetokounmpo and Bobby Portis Jr. to Miami in exchange for Tyler Herro, Kostas Antetokounmpo, Jaime Jaquez Jr., Kel'el Ware, three first-round picks, a first-round pick swap and a second-round pick. Miami won't finish paying off the trade, in terms of the draft capital, until 2033. AP

"I feel like I was in my comfort zone for many years and I just wanted just a new challenge," Antetokounmpo told The Associated Press. "And I feel that with where I am in my career, Miami is the organization that will bring the best out of me."

Eom Hit By Racist Abuse in Championship

South Korean international footballer Eom Ji-sung was allegedly racially abused during Swansea City's 1-0 win at Millwall in England's second-tier Championship.

The 24-year-old winger was warming up in the second half as a substitute for visitors Swansea on Tuesday evening when the alleged incident happened.

The game was stopped for about seven minutes as the referee spoke to both coaches, followed by an announcement over the loud speakers at The Den stadium in south-east London, reports said.

The announcement said there were alleged chants of racism and that police were scouring CCTV to identify who was responsible, the BBC said. AP

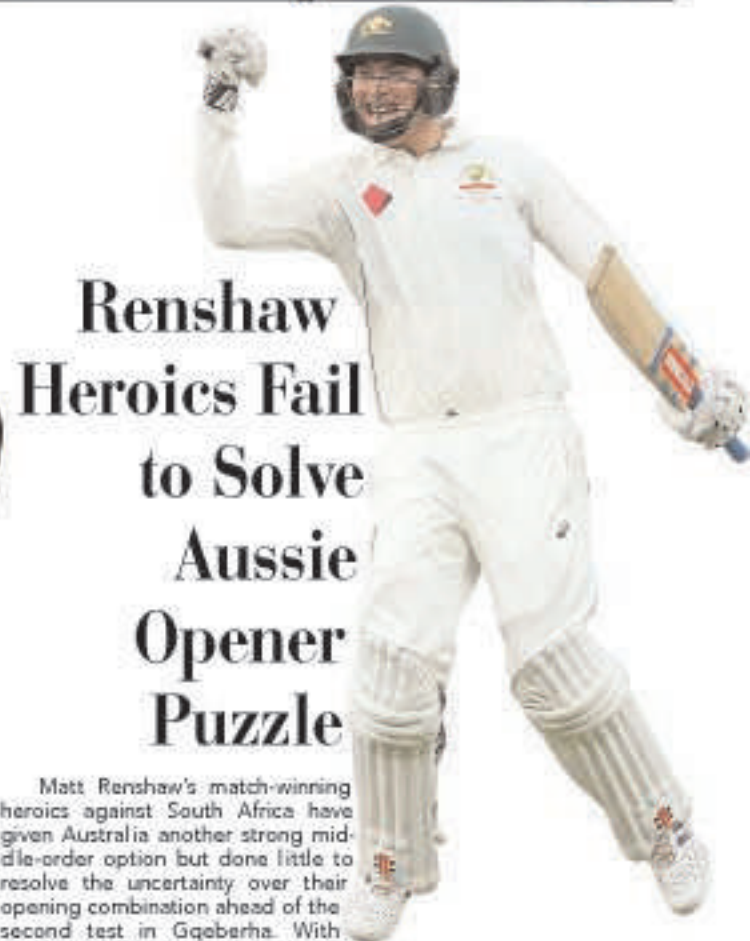
Swiatek Destroys Frech to Reach Wuhan Final 16

Iga Swiatek advanced to the round of 16 at the Wuhan Open with a 6-2, 6-1 win over Magdalena Frech on Wednesday. The six-time major winner started slowly against her Polish compatriot, dropping an early service game and falling behind 2-0 before winning six straight games to take the first set. She continued momentum by winning four straight games to start the second set before Frech made it 4-1. Swiatek is seeded No. 7 in the WTA's 1,000-level event. She reached the quarterfinals of the recent China Open in Beijing. Swiatek next faces either Ashlyn Krueger or Lariana Tarandee. She's in the same quarter as top-seeded Aryna Sabalenka, who faced Ann Li later Wednesday in a match to reach the final 16. AP



Renshaw Heroics Fail to Solve Aussie Opener Puzzle

Matt Renshaw's match-winning heroics against South Africa have given Australia another strong middle-order option but done little to resolve the uncertainty over their opening combination ahead of the second test in Qqberha. With Renshaw producing a majestic 190 and second-innings 82 batting at number five in the commanding 214-run victory in Durban, the Queenslanders' shift down the order looks to have been a masterstroke. Captain Pat Cummins said it would take a compelling argument to shift Renshaw again for Sunday's second Test, though he was enthusiastic about the options available. "I still think he can be a great opener, and now he's got another string to his bow that he's found this week," Cummins said. Coming nearly 10 years after his first Test century against Pakistan, 30-year-old Renshaw's second ton was a reward for perseverance for a player dropped repeatedly since his 2016 debut. His breakthrough has not settled the lingering questions over the team's opening batters, however. REUTERS



Medvedev Crushes Longtime Foe to Reach Quarters

Daniil Medvedev is back in the Shanghai Masters quarterfinals after getting the better of Stefanos Tsitsipas in the latest chapter of their combustible longtime rivalry. There was no real drama this time, though, as the fifth-seeded Medvedev won 6-4, 7-5 to become only the fourth player - after Roger Federer, Novak Djokovic and Andy



Murray - to reach the last eight of the tournament in three straight years. There have been verbal flare-ups in previous meetings between Medvedev and Tsitsipas down the years, including in the Australian Open semifinals in 2022. AP

Zayan Ali Khan wins Best Swimmer U-12

Zayan Ali Khan continues to make waves in Pakistan's swimming arena with another remarkable performance at the Ail Pakistan McDonald's Inter-School Swimming Championship 2026.

Representing Aitchison College, Lahore, Zayan was crowned Best Swimmer (Under-12) after winning 3 gold, 1 silver, and 1 bronze medals. He also broke the 200m freestyle record, adding another milestone to his growing swimming career. Earlier, at the Swimming Carnival 2026 held at Aitchison College, Lahore,

Zayan won 3 gold and 2 silver medals across the 50m backstroke, 100m backstroke, 100m freestyle, 200m individual medley and 4x50m freestyle relay, earning the Best Swimmer (U-12) title. His achievements build on an impressive record. In 2024, Zayan set a Pakistan National record in the Under-10 50m Backstroke, clocking 40.73 seconds at the National Age Group Swimming Championship in Lahore. From national records to championship victories, Zayan continues to make Aitchison College proud and establish himself as one of Pakistan's promising young swimming talents. INP

Ohtani In for Game 3 Against Brewers

Ohtani is hitting .150 (3 for 20) over six postseason games. He has seven strikeouts, three walks and one stolen base with no home runs, no RBIs and an OPS of .411.

Shohei Ohtani will be in the Los Angeles Dodgers' lineup for Game 3 of the National League Championship Series against the Milwaukee Brewers on Wednesday night.

Manager Dave Roberts said Tuesday that Ohtani will bat anywhere from second to sixth with the two-time defending World Series champion Dodgers losing the first two games of the best-of-seven series.

"He was very convicted that he is onto something mechanically (with his swing)," Roberts said. "He was adamant that he can help us. He's well enough to help us win a baseball game, so that's all I needed to hear." Ohtani is hitting .150 (3 for 20) over six postseason games. He has seven strikeouts, three walks and one stolen base with no home runs, no RBIs and an OPS of .411. He hasn't homered since Aug. 18 at Colorado. Ohtani admitted before the NLDS against Atlanta that he's not 100% healthy from right biceps and left knee issues that bothered him the last few months of the regular season. He has appeared visibly uncomfortable at the plate while flailing at pitches. AP

