

Aide offers dialogue to opposition on counterterrorism

Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah has accused the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of refusing to support operations against terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, urging all political parties to unite as security forces continue to suffer casualties.

Addressing the Senate, Sanaullah said the federal government was prepared to engage the opposition on the terrorism challenge, with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif willing to invite all political parties for consultations. He also criticised PTI's political conduct, social media campaigns and its stance on negotiations.

Speaking during a Senate session, Sanaullah stressed that terrorism was a challenge facing the entire nation and required a united response from all political parties. He said the government remained willing to sit down with the opposition to discuss counterterrorism efforts. He reiterated that the prime minister was ready to invite all political parties to find a solution to the issue. "Everyone must unite against terrorism," the adviser said, adding that the need for political consensus remained as important as ever.

Sanaullah recalled that Operation Zarb-e-Azb was announced following the Army Public School (APS) tragedy. He said the country had previously united against terrorism and that the operation had helped eradicate terrorism.

He also referred to past political confrontations, recalling that PTI had threatened to bring two million people to Islamabad. According to Sanaullah, party members staged a sit-in outside the Prime Minister's House and threatened to drag the prime minister out.

He said the prime minister had even invited the protesters to sit down and discuss a national issue, but the confrontation continued before Operation Zarb-e-Azb was launched.

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Governor rule to grab minerals: Fazl

Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazur Rahman has rejected the government's justification for imposing governor's rule or declaring an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), alleging that the proposed measures are aimed at gaining control over the province's mineral resources.

Addressing a press conference after a meeting of the party's Central Majlis-e-Shura, Fazur Rahman called for an in-camera session of Parliament to brief lawmakers on the prevailing situation. He also announced that JUI-F would not nominate any member to the proposed interim council in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He alleged that the use of force was being carried out at the behest of powerful quarters and maintained that the constitutional requirements had not been fulfilled by the president.

"We have disagreed with the government while being part of it and have also supported certain positions while sitting in the opposition," he said, underscoring his party's willingness to engage in political dialogue.

The JUI-F chief said his party believed in political dialogue and stressed that disagreements with government policies should be addressed through political engagement rather than accusations.

"If we or anyone else have grievances, an in-camera session of Parliament should be convened to discuss them," he said.

Fazur Rahman questioned the justification for governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, arguing that previous military operations had failed to produce the desired results.

He also criticised the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government over its handling of the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). He noted that the PML-N government had merged the former tribal areas with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but alleged that the same party was now seeking to bring the region under federal control.

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Pakistan steps in to defuse US-Iran impasse

Iran hails Pakistan's peace efforts, thanks Field Marshal Munir for 'brilliant' role

Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir on Tuesday met senior Iranian officials as Pakistan continued its diplomatic push to end the US-Iran conflict.

Pakistan is a key mediator between the US and Iran. Its earlier mediation efforts with both parties resulted in an interim peace agreement signed in June. But the Islamabad Memorandum quickly faltered, amid new fighting between Iran and the US weeks after.

According to Tehran Times, Field Marshal Munir met Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian and Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Mohsen Rezaei during his visit.

Field Marshal Munir and Iranian President Pezeshkian discussed mediation efforts and regional developments, Iran's Nournews reported.

During a meeting with CDF Munir, Major General Rezaei said Iran would not transfer any of its enriched nuclear material abroad.

"Not even the slightest amount of enriched nuclear material will be taken out of Iran," Rezaei said, describing the material as a major asset and a national treasure of the Iranian people, intended for use within the country.

He said the Iranian people and officials were united in their position that negotiations would not take place until the United States took steps to build trust.

"The first step towards building that trust is for the United States to fulfil Iran's conditions," he said, while emphasising the close ties between the peoples of Iran and Pakistan.

According to Tehran Times, CDF Munir, emphasising the reopening of the border between Iran and Pakistan, said the Iran-Pakistan border problem has been resolved and the border has been reopened.

The army chief also met with Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Speaker of Parliament, in Tehran. In the meeting, Ghalibaf, while appreciating the support of the Pakistani government and nation for Iran in conditions of war and negotiation, stressed the fraternal relations of the two countries. Asim Munir also announced the reopening of the two countries' border as of today and described border issues as temporary and technical.

Referring to Iran's deep distrust of the US and the Trump administration's violation of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding, Ghalibaf stressed that

the US can win Iran's trust only by implementing Iran's seven conditions presented in New York.

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PHC issues notices in plea against emergency, governor's rule in KP

The Peshawar High Court (PHC) here on Tuesday issued notices to the federal and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governments in several petitions challenging the imposition of emergency and governor's rule in the province and adjourned the case till November 10.

The two-member bench comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Muhammad Faheem Wali took up several petitions, including PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, PTI leader Shandana Gulzar, KP Bar Council and leaders of Tehreek-e-Tanfuz-i-Ayn-i-Pakistan (TTAP) and adjourned the hearing till November 10 next month after hearing preliminary arguments.

On October 14, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan moved the PHC against the Governor's Rule and emergency measures and prayed the court to declare them unconstitutional.

The court ruled that an order would be issued afterwards, adding that notices would also be issued to Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan and the KP advocate general.

Barrister Sameer Khosa and PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja appeared on behalf of PTI Gohar and argued that a resolution passed by the provincial assembly was mandatory for imposing governor's rule and emergency.

He maintained that no approval was obtained from the provincial assembly, noting that the National Assembly and the Senate approved the action later. The petitioner lawyer said, "we have also challenged this in the miscellaneous application."

"The provision to Article 232(1) states that approval from the provincial assembly is necessary. The word 'shall' is used, which means this condition is mandatory," the petitioner's lawyer reiterated.

He claimed that the measures had been taken without the provincial assembly's approval and were therefore illegal and unconstitutional. The counsel

claimed that the situation in KP was not beyond the provincial government's control and nonfunctional chief minister, Sohail Afridi, and speaker of the provincial assembly were currently missing.

The bench then asked whether the petition included a request for the leaders to be presented before the court or recovered. "Yes, we have made that request in this application," the counsel replied. He referred to a Supreme Court judgment in the case of ex-CM Pir Sabir Shah, in which the SC had established that the chief minister and the cabinet would continue to function if an emergency were imposed.

"In the current case, the chief minister, the cabinet and the advocate general have been stopped from working and rendered inactive," Sameer claimed. "Our plea is that the assembly be restored and the chief minister and speaker be released," he added.

The governor's rule and the state of emergency had been imposed without fulfilling legal requirements, the petitioner lawyer said, calling for the measures to be revoked and the provincial assembly restored.

The petitioner, Barrister Gohar, also addressed the bench, arguing that the PTI-led government in KP had always supported the Centre in the fight against terrorism.

He claimed that 12 MNAs and 14 MPAs affiliated with the PTI had been picked up and raids are being conducted on the homes of our members and are being harassed, he added. "We say that Pakistan comes first, we say that we are one, this country is ours," Gohar said.

Appearing on behalf of Shandana Gulzar, advocate Muazzam Butt also highlighted that the KP Assembly's approval had not been obtained before the imposition of governor's rule and the state of emergency.

He said that an apex committee had been formed under the National Action Plan (INAP), arguing that it was the committee's responsibility to assess the security situation in the province.

He further argued that responsibility for terrorism could not be placed on the provincial government given the existence of the apex committee.

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Sindh cabinet takes key decisions on public health, reforms

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday presided over a provincial Cabinet meeting focused on public healthcare, institutional reforms, revenue mobilization, and post-flood housing reconstruction. Most notably, the Cabinet decided to make the Mir Raza Ali Inquiry Commission report public.

The major proposals included a World Bank-supported programme to increase property-tax collection in Karachi's 25 Town Municipal Corporations from Rs2.3 billion to Rs25.5 billion, and a \$115 million European Investment Bank financing package for the third phase of Sindh's flood housing reconstruction project.

The meeting held at CM House was attended by provincial ministers, advisers, special assistants, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah and concerned secretaries.

At the outset, the Chief Minister briefed the Cabinet on his recent visit to China, expressing gratitude to the Chinese government for the invitation and highlighting opportunities to expand cooperation in investment, trade, technology, energy, agriculture and development.

Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah briefed the Sindh Cabinet on the outcomes of his recent China visit, highlighting investment opportunities and cooperation in energy, agriculture, water management, education, healthcare, industry and digital technology. The Cabinet directed the relevant departments

to follow up on the agreements and proposals and translate them into practical projects, employment opportunities and improved public services.

The Chief Minister informed the Cabinet that Sindh and China's Hubei province had agreed to deepen their longstanding partnership through a proposed Joint Cooperation Council.

The Shanghai Sindh Investment and Trade Conference attracted over 400 delegates and resulted in 36 MoUs - 12 with the Sindh government, five with Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company and 19 involving private-sector companies. The partnerships cover energy, mining, manufacturing, agriculture, logistics, education and digital infrastructure.

The delegation visited the Three Gorges Dam to study China's experience in hydropower, flood management and river navigation. Proposals included a sister-city arrangement between Yichang and Sukkur, while Chinese companies were invited to participate in the Sukkur Barrage gates bidding process and explore water transmission projects.

In the energy sector, discussions with Shanghai Electric Group covered Thar coal value addition, coal-to-chemicals technology, renewable energy, battery storage and the use of mine water for agriculture. Shanghai Electric also agreed to prepare a conceptual proposal for a seawater desalination plant for Karachi. Agricultural cooperation focused on hybrid rice, oilseed cultivation, biofertilisers and research, while the Education Department was directed to pursue partnerships in smart classrooms, AI-based learning, scholarships and teacher training with Central China Normal University.

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National



Sohail Afridi in protective custody

World



Austrian lawmaker hurt in car attack loses leg

Money



Exports up 9.09% to Rs 2.34 tr in 1st Quarter

Sports



Portugal ban Ronaldo 30 days

Glamour



Nicole suits up in pink tie at VS Show

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Nuke Alert! India moving to first-strike, says Pakistan

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Mayor Wahab launches Korangi upgrade project

Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that industrial areas and business activities are the backbone of Pakistan's economy and that the rehabilitation of the city's industrial zones has begun.

He said Korangi Industrial Area is a major hub of industrial activity in Karachi, where significant improvements in infrastructure are expected to become visible soon. Improving basic facilities and infrastructure in industrial areas will promote business activities and support economic growth.

He said Karachi remains a priority for both the Sindh government and the city administration. The Senator Taj Haider Bridge and Usman Ghani Bridge have also been provided to the people of Korangi by the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). He added that PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's vision is to listen to the concerns of residents of Malir, Korangi, Landhi and other parts of Karachi and address their demands. In line with this vision, development projects and the resolution of public issues are being prioritised across the city.

The mayor expressed these views on Tuesday while addressing a ceremony organized by the Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI) to lay the foundation stone for infrastructure rehabilitation works in Korangi Industrial Area. KATI President Muhammad Rehman, Zubair Chhaya, Zahid Seeed and other prominent industrialists were also present on the occasion.

Wahab said Rs 68 billion was being spent on improving the city's

infrastructure, while 149 new roads would be constructed in different parts of Karachi. He said the government was also taking measures in collaboration with the private sector to accelerate development projects and provide better commuting facilities to citizens. He added that the primary objective of development initiatives was to provide relief to the public and resolve the city's problems. The mayor said the

projects expected to be completed within three to four months.

He said the Jam Sadiq Bridge had been expanded to eight lanes, while the construction of the Korangi Causeway Bridge had facilitated industrialists, labourers, students and other commuters. Improvements had also been made to the Beloch Colony Expressway, along with the construction and rehabilitation of several major roads. The mayor said construction of

Encroachment-related obstacles had been removed, and funds were available to accelerate the project. He expressed hope that the bridge expansion, expected to be completed within the next two to two and a half months, would help reduce traffic congestion.

Assuring industrialists that their concerns regarding the Yellow Line and Red Line projects would be addressed, the mayor said the government would remain in



government and the private sector must work together for the city's development. Listening to public concerns, addressing complaints and building trust among different segments of society were the government's responsibilities. He added that strengthening human connections was just as important as constructing roads and bridges.

Mayor Karachi said tendering for several development projects had been completed, while the bidding process for some others was expected to conclude within the next three to four days. Work on these projects was targeted to begin in the first week of November, with some road construction

the loop connecting Shahr-e-Bhutto to Ayesha Masjid was progressing rapidly and was targeted for completion within the next two and a half to three months. Once completed, the project would provide commuters with a signal-free corridor. He added that the link road connecting the National Highway to the Super Highway was also nearing completion, while the completion of the M-9 interchange would improve access to industrial areas and facilitate transportation and logistics operations.

He further said a plan was in place to expand the bridge near Quaidabad to eight lanes.

coordination with the relevant ministers and departments to minimise inconvenience to citizens during construction. He added that the projects would be implemented in phases to reduce disruption caused by road excavation and ensure smoother traffic flow.

Speaking about security concerns on Shahr-e-Bhutto, he said he would contact the Sindh Home Minister to review police patrolling, surveillance arrangements and the installation of security cameras. He added that the traffic police would also be approached to address violations of traffic rules and dangerous overtaking. **NEWS DESK**

Sharjeel Memon directs completion of arrangements for new bus routes

An important meeting of the Transport and Mass Transit Department was held under the chairmanship of Sindh Senior Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon.

During the meeting, the minister issued directives to complete the necessary arrangements for launching new routes for the new double-decker and electric buses arriving in November.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, CEO Trans Karachi Zubair Channa, Project Director Yellow Line Kamal Dayo, Managing Director Sindh Mass Transit Authority Behzad Memon, and other relevant officers.

On the occasion, officials gave Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon a detailed briefing on progress on transport projects, while various matters, including construction work on the Yellow Line and Red Line, integration of BRT projects, and routes for the new double-decker and electric buses, were discussed in detail.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that connecting the various BRT lines with one another would make it easier for citizens to reach their destinations. He said that constructing BRT lines alone was not enough; establishing an effective travel connection between them was also essential. He said that connecting the Orange Line, Green Line, Red Line and Yellow Line with one another would provide citizens with better travel facilities and make the public transport system more effective.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon directed that construction work on various sections of the Yellow Line and Red Line, bridges and other infrastructure be accelerated further. In particular, he issued directives to speed up work on the second section of the Taj Haider Bridge and accelerate the construction of Yellow Line depots.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the Sindh government would continue its efforts to expand the public transport network and provide citizens with a better, integrated and modern transport system. **NEWS DESK**



SBP, WWF join hands to promote greener textile industry

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), in collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), has launched a Green Transition Toolkit to help small and medium-sized textile enterprises adopt environmentally friendly practices.

The toolkit will guide factories on conserving electricity and water, reducing pollution, adopting environment-friendly machinery and accessing financial support from banks. The initiative aims to help Pakistani products meet environmental standards in international markets and boost exports.

Deputy Governor SBP Saleemullah Khan, Sindh Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Coastal Development Faizal Ahmed Uqaili, WWF-Pakistan Director General and Chief Executive Hammad Naqi, German development agency GIZ representative Yulia Bazhenova, British Deputy High Commissioner Alison Blackburne, international WWF representatives, government officials, environmental experts and business figures attended the launch.

Speakers stressed the need for effective government policies, support from financial institutions and



partnerships between the public and private sectors to make the textile industry more environmentally sustainable. They said that formulating policies alone was not enough; their implementation, practical guidance for industries and access to financing for environment-friendly projects were equally important. The SBP and other financial institutions could play a key role in helping smaller enterprises adopt modern technologies and meet international environmental standards.

Speaking at the event, Mr Khan said climate change posed a major challenge to Pakistan's economy, while the devastating floods of 2022 had caused substantial economic losses. Timely measures were needed to reduce climate risks, he added.

The SBP had been working to promote green financing for more than a decade, he said, adding that the toolkit would help industries assess their environmental performance and access financing for sustainable projects.

Mr Uqaili said Pakistan's textile industry had significant potential to increase exports, but reducing carbon emissions and complying with environmental standards were essential to remaining competitive in international markets. He said the toolkit would help small and medium-sized enterprises adopt environment-friendly practices and gain access to green financing. Industrial pollution, he added, affected not only the environment but also the wider economy. **NEWS DESK**

Acting Governor Awais discusses bilateral ties with Iraqi envoy



The Acting Consul General of the Republic of Iraq in Karachi, His Excellency Abu Al-Hakam Adnan Sadiq, called on Acting Governor of Sindh Syed Awais Qadir Shah at his office today.

The Acting Governor was accompanied by his Focal Person, Irfan Ahmed Memon.

During the meeting, Acting Governor Syed Awais Qadir Shah and Acting Consul General Abu Al-Hakam Adnan Sadiq exchanged greetings and discussed matters of mutual interest, including bilateral relations, people-to-people contacts, and regional developments. The Acting Consul General informed the Acting Governor

that air travel between Pakistan and Iraq had increased significantly in recent years, reflecting growing religious, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries.

Acting Governor Syed Awais Qadir Shah welcomed the resumption of activities at the Iraqi Consulate in Karachi after a considerable period and assured the Acting Consul General of his full cooperation in facilitating engagements and meetings with relevant provincial government departments.

Both dignitaries exchanged views on regional developments, economic challenges, and infrastructure development in their respective countries. Acting Governor Syed Awais Qadir Shah observed that instability and conflicts in the Middle East had contributed to fluctuations in global fuel prices, which had also affected Pakistan's economy.

The Acting Consul General also briefed the Acting Governor on Iraq's parliamentary system and the progress made in the health and education sectors, particularly in Baghdad. Acting Governor Syed Awais Qadir Shah expressed his desire to visit Iraq in the near future to perform a pilgrimage and explore the country's rich religious, cultural, and historical heritage. **NEWS DESK**

SEF assesses academic progress of students

Mid-term assessments for students in Grade 4 and above are underway in schools supported by the Sindh Education Foundation (SEF) government of Sindh across Sindh to evaluate learning levels, monitor academic progress and identify areas requiring improvement.

SEF Managing Director Gahanwar Ali Laghari visited several SEF-supported schools in Karachi to review the examinations and interact with students. During the visits,



he observed the assessment process and emphasised the importance of maintaining quality and transparency.

Mr Laghari said the assessments would help gauge students' learning outcomes and identify gaps requiring further attention. SEF teams from the head office have been deployed to various districts to provide technical assistance to school staff, monitor examinations and ensure that standard procedures are followed.

During his visit to the Save the Future School, supported by SEF in Lyari, the Managing Director also interacted with students and exchanged greetings with Hindu students celebrating Navratri. He encouraged the school management to organise an event on Diwali to promote inclusivity, interfaith harmony and respect for cultural diversity among students. SEF officials said the field monitoring was aimed at ensuring the smooth conduct of assessments and strengthening efforts to improve learning outcomes across its supported schools. **NEWS DESK**

Non-bailable warrants for Dania in Aamir Liaquat case

A local court in Karachi has issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Dania Shah in a case concerning the circulation of videos of late television host Aamir Liaquat Hussain.

The Judicial Magistrate East issued the warrants after Shah failed to appear before the court and ordered that she be arrested and produced before it. During the hearing, the accused's counsel filed an application seeking exemption from personal appearance.

However, the court rejected the application following an objection from the complainant's counsel. The court adjourned the hearing until October 28. The case was registered by the Cyber Crime Wing following a complaint filed by Aamir Liaquat's daughter, according to the information provided. **EE**

PIA starts interviews for air hostesses recruitment

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has initiated interviews for air hostesses to be hired for its Karachi-based operations. The interviews for shortlisted candidates are currently underway at a local hotel.

The recruitment session is being chaired by PIA Chief Human Resources Officer Athar Hussain. PIA has already completed the interview process for air hostesses for its Lahore



and Islamabad bases.

It is pertinent to mention here that the PIA had announced a recruitment drive for air hostesses at its Karachi base in start of October. The national carrier was seeking applications from female candidates aged

20 to 28 for cabin crew positions.

Interested candidates were asked to submit their resumes and applications online through the PIA portal. According to a PIA communique, the deadline to submit online applications was October 7.

A bachelor's degree has been set as the minimum

educational qualification for the post of air hostess. Before this, PIA initiated recruitment drives for its Lahore and Islamabad bases. Earlier, the PIA imposed new restrictions on air hostesses during flight duties. PIA issued a circular stating that air hostesses can possess only one packet of cigarettes during flight duty. **EE**

NATIONAL

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NADRA reviews blocked CNICs through regional boards: Senate told



Minister of State for Interior Senator Talal Chaudhry told the Senate on Tuesday that NADRA blocks identity cards across the country when holders are found ineligible or have obtained them through forged documents, with such cases reviewed by regional-level boards.

He said 138,166 CNICs had been blocked in Balochistan, including 8,875 in the Makran and Rakhshan divisions. Replying to a calling attention notice by Senator Jan Muhammad, he said the two divisions comprised eight districts with a population of about 2.9 million. The minister said the regional-level board examined objections in each case and a blocked CNIC could be restored if the objections were resolved. Cases not settled by the board could be referred to a higher-level committee at NADRA headquarters.

He said some foreign nationals had obtained Pakistani CNICs using false documents, while others had been wrongly added to the family trees of Pakistani citizens. He stressed that cases were examined on merit, without targeting any particular national, tribe or region. Talal said the 8,875 blocked cards in Makran and Rakhshan accounted for about seven per cent of the total in Balochistan. He invited the senator to refer any specific cases for review. Referring to concerns raised by Oman, he said misuse of identity documents could affect Pakistan's credibility and relations with other countries. He added that the interior minister had visited Oman three times after concerns were raised there about human and drug trafficking.

Illegal migration to Europe: Senator Talal told the Senate that illegal migration from Pakistan to Europe had declined by 64 per cent, citing the European Union commissioner, and said the government was taking steps to prevent the misuse of Pakistani identity documents.

Responding to points of order raised by Senators Bilal Khan and Abid Sher Ali, he said people could be wrongly added to a family tree either by a relative or through false claims and forged documents. NADRA had conducted two nationwide campaigns, asking citizens to verify their family trees, B-Forms and other records through a helpline.

Chaudhry said the first campaign was launched under the

National Action Plan, followed by another three years later. He said the Federal Investigation Agency had registered criminal cases against more than 100 people in connection with identity-document fraud. Action had also been taken against NADRA employees, he added.

Referring to around 5,000 Pakistani passports identified in Saudi Arabia, the minister said officials linked to those cases had been removed from service. He said regional board proceedings were monitored through live streaming, with records kept of applicants' tokens, waiting times and case outcomes. He invited senators to refer specific complaints for review.

Responding to Abid Sher Ali, Chaudhry said no person was stopped from travelling solely on the basis of an FIR; the relevant department, including police or the FIA, had to send a written request. He said passport fees had been increased after several years, but the increase was nominal and Pakistan's fees remained lower than those of neighbouring countries.

The minister said illegal migration and crimes committed abroad by some Pakistanis created difficulties for lawful travellers and affected the country's visa arrangements. He added that more than 10 million Pakistanis living abroad sent about \$40 billion in remittances.

Senate passes two bills: Meanwhile, the Senate passed two amendment bills by majority vote after clause-by-clause consideration.

The bills passed by the House were the Area Study Centres (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Centre for Clinical Psychology Centres (Amendment) Bill, 2026. The bills had been discussed by the relevant Senate committees.

Meanwhile, the Senate referred

two other bills to committees for further deliberation. These included the Inter-Boards Coordination Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Islamabad Capital Territory Private Educational Institutions (Registration and Regulation) (Amendment) Bill, 2026.

All provinces represented in NHMP: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan told the Senate on Tuesday that all provinces, including Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, were represented in the National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP), adding that promotions had been made against available posts.

Replying to a question by Senator Shahadat Awan, he said the department's records showed representation from every province and region. In response to a supplementary question, he said he did not understand the claim that any province had been excluded or that the arrangement was illegal.

According to the figures presented to the House, the NHMP had 7,930 uniformed officers and officials. Of these, 3,927 belonged to Punjab, 1,396 to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 1,124 to Balochistan, 1,116 to Sindh, 150 to A.J.K., 113 to Islamabad and 104 to Gilgit-Baltistan.

The department also had 2,924 non-uniformed employees, including 1,229 from Punjab, 542 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 468 from Sindh, 460 from Balochistan, 98 from Islamabad, 97 from Gilgit-Baltistan and 30 from A.J.K. The minister said promotions had been made in line with the total number of sanctioned posts, and officers promoted to the next rank had been placed accordingly. He added that the figures also showed the province-wise deployment of NHMP staff across the country. **NEWS DESK**

Rs 13.5bn earmarked for solar scheme in former FATA: Ahsan

Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday told the National Assembly that the government would launch a solar energy scheme for more than 5,000 households in the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

Responding to a point of order raised by Aliya Kamran, Ahsan Iqbal said the federal government had provided Rs13.5 billion to the provincial government last year for a solar energy scheme targeting around 4,500 households in the former FATA districts.

However, he said the provincial government had been unable to move the scheme forward or secure its approval for nearly a year and a half, leaving the funds unused.

Ahsan Iqbal said that following the formation of a new provincial government, the federal government would work with it to utilise the Rs13.5 billion and allocate additional funds for the initiative. He said the prime minister would announce a solar scheme for more than 5,000 households in the former tribal areas and newly merged districts. The government would ensure its effective implementation, he added.

The minister said the Accelerated Implementation Programme (AIP) fund had faced numerous complaints over alleged misuse. These included concerns that funds were being diverted from the areas for which they had been allocated. He said the government had subsequently established a steering committee to address these concerns. The minister also announced plans to launch a training programme for around 5,000 to 7,000 young people in modern, digital and employment-oriented skills. He said the initiative aimed to equip young people in the region with the skills needed to find jobs and improve their economic prospects.

Education top priority: Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday

told the House that education remained the government's top priority in Balochistan and the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Responding to a point of order in the House, Ahsan Iqbal said he had personally visited Nushki to inaugurate a university campus.

He said he had also visited Pishin, Gwadar, Turbat and Naseerabad as part of efforts to promote higher education in the region. He said the government had approved several projects to upgrade existing educational institutions, including Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University and the University of Balochistan in Quetta, as well as Khuzdar Engineering College.

Ahsan Iqbal said the previous government had also introduced scholarships for talented students from Balochistan and the former FATA districts to help them study at leading universities. He said the second phase of the scholarship programme had now been launched. Under this phase, an additional 5,000 boys and girls from Balochistan and the former FATA would receive scholarships to pursue higher education at leading universities across the country. He said education was the most effective way to overcome backwardness and promote development in underdeveloped areas. Responding to concerns about companies operating in the region and their corporate social responsibility (CSR), the minister said he would invite the companies concerned and facilitate cooperation to improve the lives of local communities.

He said those benefiting from the region's natural resources should also contribute to the welfare of local people through CSR initiatives. This would ensure that local communities shared in the benefits of these resources. **NEWS DESK**

Pervaiz Ashraf urges reopening of newspaper market

Former National Assembly speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Tuesday urged the relevant authorities to reopen Islamabad's newspaper market, saying its closure had disrupted newspaper distribution to homes and offices for three days.

Speaking on a point of order in the National Assembly, he said the Capital Development Authority (CDA) had sealed the market last week without providing a clear reason. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said the market had been operating since 1982, when the CDA allotted it to the Newspaper Sellers Union and constructed its building.

He said the CDA had reportedly cited non-payment of ground rent for an adjacent vacant plot as the reason for sealing the market. However, the union maintained that the plot had not been allotted to it and that it had no connection with the property. **NEWS DESK**

Mohsin Naqvi, Qatari counterpart vow to expand security ties

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and his Qatari counterpart, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, who also commands Qatar's Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya), have agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation and expand the security partnership between Pakistan and Qatar.

During their meeting in Doha, the two interior ministers held detailed discussions on expanding cooperation in areas related to internal security. They also discussed the current regional situation and matters concern-

ing regional peace and stability.

Both ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation between their respective interior ministries. They agreed to enhance mutual cooperation and further develop their partnership in internal security.

The meeting focused on ways to increase coordination between the two countries in security-related fields. Both sides agreed that the existing partnership should be strengthened to support their shared security objectives.

The two ministers also discussed the importance of continued engagement between Pakistan and Qatar on regional devel-



opments and issues affecting peace and stability. Speaking during the meeting, Mohsin Naqvi said Pakistan and Qatar were working together to promote regional peace and stability. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to working with Qatar on matters of mutual interest, particularly those related to internal security and regional stability. The Qatari interior minister said Qatar attached great importance to its relations with Pakistan. Both ministers reiterated their resolve to strengthen ties between their ministries and expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest. **NEWS DESK**

Rs 116 billion spent on Balochistan under PSDP

Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan told the Senate on Tuesday that Rs116 billion out of Rs164 billion received last year under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) was spent on projects in Balochistan, saying the province had received a major share of the development funds.

Responding to senators' questions, he said Rs224 billion had been allocated for the ministry's projects last year, while the total estimated cost of 66 projects in the pipeline was around Rs3 trillion. He said about Rs100 billion had been spent on a single road project in Balochistan.

The minister said work was under way on several projects in the province and their details had been provided to the senators. He said law and order problems had delayed work on one road section but offered to provide further details about specific projects.

Referring to the N-25, he said the project had an estimated cost of Rs400 billion and was progressing. He expected the road to be completed by the end of 2027 or early 2028. Aleem Khan said the government was ready to address concerns about any specific road and would share project details with the relevant senators.

Pakistan Post faces

Rs12b annual loss: Aleem Khan told the Senate that Pakistan Post was facing an annual loss of around Rs12 billion, which could rise to Rs18 billion to Rs19 billion if pension expenses were included.

Replying to a question by Senator Shahadat Awan, he said that the government was preparing a policy to reduce the department's costs. Options under consideration included reducing its workforce or privatizing the service, and a detailed plan would be presented to the House later, he said. The minister said that Pakistan Post had 9,707 units across the country, including 2,887 departmental post offices and 6,735 extra-departmental offices, along with 85 formations. It listed a province-wise staff strength of 15,051, while the minister said the department currently had around 22,000 employees. Aleem Khan said staff expenses accounted for a large part of the department's costs. He added that recruitment and staffing followed provincial quotas, with shares distributed among the provinces according to the prescribed criteria.

M-2 maintenance: Meanwhile, Aleem Khan acknowledged concerns about the condition of the M-2 motorway, saying the matter was being taken up for necessary action.

Responding to Senator Abid Sher Ali in the Senate, he said the concern was valid and assured the House that steps would be taken to improve the motorway's condition.

The minister said some roads and motorways needed maintenance and that the matter was being raised at relevant forums. He added that companies responsible for road maintenance under agreements with the government were required to look after their assigned sections. **NEWS DESK**



APPLICATIONS INVITED

Applications are invited for interview of qualified candidates for hiring against the following posts purely on temporary basis on fixed monthly remuneration for period of one year under the ADP Scheme No.788/2026-27 titled "Establishment of Record Management Cell at Finance Department", Government of Sindh that aims at preservation of record both in hard as well as digital format, building data and retrieving.

"Establishment of Record Management Cell (RMC) at Finance Department"

Sr	Name of Post	Fixed monthly remuneration	No. of Posts	Qualification and Experience	Age Limit Min-Max
1	Assistant @ Karachi	60,000	01	Bachelor's Degree, M5 Office, at least 6 year's experience	18-40
2	Scanning Technician Operator @ Karachi	50,000	01	Intermediate, Courses (CIT/DIT or Diploma in IT)	18-40
3	Scanning Technician Operator @ Districts	50,000	24	Intermediate, Courses (CIT/DIT or Diploma in IT)	18-40
4	Computer Operator @ Districts	50,000	02	Intermediate, Courses (CIT/DIT or Diploma in IT)	18-40
5	Clerk	50,000	01	Intermediate, Courses (CIT/DIT or Diploma in IT)	18-40
6	Blinder	45,000	01	Intermediate, IT literate, 5 year's experience in blinding	18-40
7	Record Sorter	42,000	24	Matriculation	18-40
8	Helper @ Karachi	42,000	02	Primary Pass	18-40
9	Chowkidar @ Karachi	42,000	02	Primary Pass	18-40

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS:

- The hiring shall be on term specific and liable to be terminated on one month notice.
- The hiring shall be on fixed monthly remuneration.
- Candidates appearing for interview shall not claim travel expenses.
- Candidates having prescribed qualification, experience for the posts should send their application before **05-11-2026** at P.O Box #7738, Saddar, GPO Karachi-74400.
- All the candidates should bring their original documents on the date of interview.
- The process of assigning work is initiated on bona fide expectations, any adverse setback may cause withholding of process, it cannot be challenged, no claim to this effect is entertainable.

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EDITORIAL

DTM



Rising violence and the cost of sacrifice

The martyrdom of Major Wajahat Waheed in an improvised explosive device (IED) attack in Gwadar is a painful reminder of the human cost of Pakistan's continuing struggle against terrorism. The 34-year-old officer, who belonged to Lahore, lost his life when an explosive device struck the lead security team during clearance operations in Shadi Kaur and Pasni. His death is a profound loss for his family, whose grief cannot be measured by military statements or operational achievements. The nation owes its gratitude to those who risk their lives to protect others, but remembrance must also strengthen the resolve to prevent further bloodshed. While the elimination of armed groups may disrupt their immediate capabilities, lasting peace requires a broader strategy that combines effective security operations with accountable governance, public trust and attention to the grievances that militants seek to exploit.

The latest violence follows further counterterrorism operations in Quetta, Nushki, Khuzdar, Washuk and Mastung. The ISPR reported that eight terrorists were killed in operations in three districts on Sunday, while five militants were killed in Washuk during an operation on the night of October 12 and 13. Provincial officials have also reported arrests, including suspected members of banned organisations, with investigations and legal proceedings under way. Meanwhile, data compiled by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies showed that terrorist attacks in Balochistan increased from 83 in July to 89 in August, a rise of about seven per cent. The figures underline the urgency of a sustained and carefully coordinated response. Yet, the success of counterterrorism efforts must ultimately be measured not only by the number of militants killed or arrested, but also by whether communities can live without fear and families are spared the anguish of losing loved ones. Major Wajahat Waheed's sacrifice deserves solemn remembrance, alongside renewed efforts to protect those serving on the front lines. Pakistan cannot afford to treat each attack as an isolated tragedy.

Karachi's lingering heat raises concerns

Karachi is likely to remain hot until Friday, with temperatures expected to reach 38 degrees Celsius, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department. The city is experiencing hot and dry weather, with little immediate relief from the high daytime temperatures. The Met Office expects temperatures to fall slightly after Friday, settling between 34°C and 36°C. Nights have also begun to turn cooler, with minimum temperatures likely to drop to around 22°C in the coming days. However, the gradual change in nighttime conditions may offer limited relief to residents as daytime heat continues. The persistence of high temperatures in November is unusual for a city that normally begins to experience more comfortable weather at this time of year. According to the Met Office, Karachi's normal November temperature is 32.6°C during the day and 17.7°C at night.

The forecast also raises a wider question about Karachi's changing weather patterns and the growing need to prepare for periods of unusual heat. Daytime temperatures are expected to remain between 33°C and 35°C during November, while nighttime temperatures may range from 19°C to 22°C. Although these conditions are expected to be less intense than the current spell, they would still be warmer than the city's normal November temperatures. Such prolonged warmth can cause discomfort, particularly for outdoor workers, older people, children and those living in homes with poor ventilation. The city's high population density and limited access to cooling facilities can make hot weather harder to manage for many residents. Public awareness of heat-related illness, access to drinking water and practical advice from local authorities remain important even when temperatures are below summer peaks. At the same time, one month of warmer weather does not, by itself, establish a long-term climate trend. A clearer picture requires observations over several years and a careful study of changing temperature patterns. For now, Karachi residents should remain prepared for continued daytime heat while keeping in mind that cooler nights do not necessarily mean that the unusual warmth has ended.

Why Saudi Arabia's Water Diplomacy Should Matter to Pakistan

Unfortunately, international water security conferences have a history of eloquent statements and limited actions. According to the UN's own special envoy on the issue, the progress towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 6, which aims to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water for all by 2030, is too slow to reach the goals. It's a pattern we've seen in climate pledges: lofty promises made at glittery summits, years of lackluster funding, national priorities and the subtlest of excuses, and then the cameras turn off when it's time to walk away.

Water as Security Investment: Firstly, water must be viewed as a security investment and not a development add-on. Water infrastructure is a vital component of the protection of populations and perhaps more important than defense and deserves the same political urgency that many governments give to their defense spending.

The title of Saudi Arabia and Senegal pushing for "stronger global action" on water security may not have caught the eye of many during this week's UN General Assembly. Water diplomacy is not usually nice and noteworthy. No buildings on fire, no emergency airlifts, no viral images of confrontation. But behind the diplomatic jargon of the joint session "United for Water: A Call for Collective Action" is one of the most powerful warnings of our time: water is the one resource we cannot substitute for, can't manufacture in large quantities, and can't live without. The numbers should have been front-page news all over the world.

Today, about 2.2 billion people do not have access to clean drinking water, and 3.5 billion do not have access to proper sanitation. These are not predictions made in a distant future when climate change ravages the planet, but rather today's reality, unfolding with the back-and-forth of elections, military postures, and trade tariffs, as though water will "take care of itself. It won't. But I was most impressed by this particular assembly, not the numbers. This was the combination of countries talking.

A country that has been shaped by oil wealth and desert geography for 100 years, Saudi Arabia has quietly become a water diplomacy conference call for global water issues, having organized the Global Water Organization in 2023 and hosting the 11th World Water Forum in 2027. In December, Senegal will host the UN Water Conference together with the UAE in 2026.

Two countries of different economic levels, of different continents, and of different water realities united on this issue. This is no coincidence. It's a wake-up call that water-related issues are no longer a developing world problem that appears in the footnotes of climate reports but are a problem that both the richest and the most water-stressed countries are beginning to recognize as a matter of life and death.

This should not be an abstract issue in international affairs for those of us in Pakistan watching it. It should be personal and personal and personal. Water is one of the most critical challenges in Pakistan and is rarely at the core of the Pakistani conversation, like inflation, politics, and security threats.

We are an agro-based economy that relies on the sole river system, the Indus, which is dependent on glaciers that are shrinking at alarming rates owing to climate change.

The per capita water availability in Pakistan has declined from approximately 5000 cubic meters at the time of independence to less than 1,000 cubic meters now, which is considered the threshold for "water scarcity." For days on end, Karachi's tap water goes dry, and tanker mafias thrive on it. The situation of rural Sindh and Balochistan is one that would be considered a humanitarian emergency in any other part of the world but is little noticed at home.

But all this is set against the backdrop of the unanswered, highly contentious issue of the Indus Waters

Treaty with India, which is a contentious agreement now at a new impasse, where water is never just an environmental problem. It's a security problem, a diplomatic problem, and, more and more, a potential cause of regional war. That's exactly why it is important that the Saudi deputy minister's words in New York are more than just being given attention. Connecting water security to "the security of critical maritime routes" and "a fundamental issue of international security and resilience" is not just diplomatic rhetoric: it's a precise assessment of the twenty-first century.

For decades, we have considered water as an environmental or humanitarian issue that needs to be addressed by NGOs and development agencies. All the time, that was a framing that is incomplete. Water scarcity leads to population displacement, triggers population migration, exacerbates the North-South divide and, as we have seen in some countries in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, can lead to violent conflict over water resources shared by two countries over rivers and aquifers.

Unfortunately, international water security conferences have a history of eloquent statements and limited actions. According to the UN's own special envoy on the issue, the progress towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 6, which aims to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water for all by 2030, is too slow to reach the goals. It's a pattern we've seen in climate pledges: lofty promises made at glittery summits, years of lackluster funding, national priorities and the subtlest of excuses, and then the cameras turn off when it's time to walk away. Water security is a very real possibility to be added to that list, something we all say is important, but no one ever thinks is a priority.

Water as Security Investment: Firstly, water must be viewed as a security investment and not a development add-on. Water infrastructure is a vital component of the protection of populations and perhaps more important than defense and deserves the same political urgency that many governments give to their defense spending.

Enforceable Bilateral Frameworks: Second, regional cooperation frameworks, such as the Indus Waters Treaty, Nile Basin cooperation, or new South-South cooperation, such as what is being developed between Saudi Arabia and Senegal, must be made enforceable and not simply based on goodwill.

If there are no accountability mechanisms in a treaty, it is a mere promise. A promise doesn't irrigate a single field.

Domestic Governance Reform: Third, and most crucial in the case of a country like Pakistan, domestic water governance must be done with the same sense of urgency as one uses for international dialogue. Of course, it's a bit of a paradox to call for a global alliance on water cooperation while the very thing we depend on is leaking from our own cities at an estimated 30-40% before it reaches our household taps.



WAQAS ABDULLAH

Waqas Abdullah is a geopolitical and geostrategic analyst whose area of expertise is Middle Eastern and Indo-Pacific politics.

The 28th Constitutional Amendment: New Provinces and Federal Restructuring-II

What this lineage reveals is a pattern, not an isolated ruling: across six decades, whenever Parliament's amending power has expanded, the judiciary has responded by carving out an ever more explicit doctrine of unamendable features, with federalism and judicial independence recurring in almost every iteration. The Twenty-Seventh Amendment's Article 239(5) should be read against that pattern rather than in isolation. It follows a sequence of amendments: the Eighteenth Amendment's judicial-appointments commission under Article 175A, the Twenty-First Amendment's military courts (upheld, not struck down, in District Bar Association), and the Twenty-Sixth Amendment's new Constitutional Bench, which have progressively narrowed the judiciary's room to review executive and legislative action. Article 239(5) is the first of these, however, to attempt something categorically different: not narrowing review of a particular class of state action, but purporting to close off review of the amending power itself, the very power the District Bar Association bench had spent insisting was not absolute.

A Precedent Closer to Home: One Unit and the Politics of Redrawn Boundaries

Pakistan has, in fact, redrawn its provincial map once before, and that episode offers a cautionary pattern of its own. In 1955, under the Establishment of West Pakistan Act, the government merged Punjab, Sindh, the North-West Frontier Province and

Balochistan's constituent states into a single administrative unit called West Pakistan. This 'One Unit' scheme was justified at the time as a route to administrative efficiency and parity with East Pakistan. It was imposed after provincial assemblies gave their consent under considerable political pressure, with several dissenting members being jailed or removed from office in the process. It generated fifteen years of sustained opposition in Sindh, the NWFP and Balochistan and is now widely regarded as a failed experiment that deepened rather than resolved Pakistan's federal tensions. It was undone not through the ordinary constitutional amendment process but by martial-law fiat: General Yahya Khan's Legal Framework Order of 1970 dissolved One Unit and restored the four provinces by executive proclamation.

The lesson is not that administrative restructuring is inherently illegitimate, but that Pakistan's only precedent for large-scale redrawing of provincial boundaries was accomplished outside, not through, the ordinary constitutional process, first imposed and then reversed by decree. A 28th Amendment that genuinely ran the gauntlet of provincial-assembly and parliamentary supermajorities would, in that sense, be the first time Pakistan restructured its internal map by the constitutional method rather than around it.

Federal Restructuring Beyond Provincial Boundaries
Any package touching Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad

Jammu & Kashmir carries a further complication: Article 1 does not list Gilgit-Baltistan among Pakistan's territories, and the federal government has administered the region directly since the 1949 Karachi Agreement ceded it for that purpose. A seven-judge bench headed by Chief Justice Saqib Nisar ruled in January 2019 that the Supreme Court's jurisdiction extends to Gilgit-Baltistan, that no part of the 1973 Constitution can be abolished or amended without proper legislation, and that the region's constitutional status should instead be resolved through a referendum, directing that this process take place within fourteen days.

Separately, an August 2015 Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly resolution and a subsequent Nawaz Sharif-era reform committee recommended granting the region provisional provincial status, but explicitly conditioned that status on the plebiscite envisaged by UN Security Council Resolutions 91 (1951) and 122 (1957), precisely so as not to prejudice Pakistan's position on the wider Kashmir dispute. Any 28th Amendment provision touching Gilgit-Baltistan would have to navigate that same constraint. Likewise, proposals to abolish the National Assembly or shift toward a presidential system would touch the 'parliamentary form of government' that the Achakzai and District Bar Association benches both named as a salient feature, while proposals for a constitutionally protected local government system sit comfortably within the devolution Article 140A already promises, and arguably extend it rather than reversing it.

Observations: What the Pattern Suggests

Three patterns emerge from this history that are easy to miss if the 28th Amendment is treated as a standalone proposal. First, doctrinally, Pakistan's courts have never definitively closed the question of substantive limits on the amending power; each generation of judges has added to the list of salient fea-

tures rather than settling it, and each generation of amendments since 2010 has tried to narrow judicial reach in response. The 27th Amendment's euster clause is the sharpest version of that legislative response yet, and it is reasonable to expect the doctrine to resurface in some form if a province-creation or recentralization amendment is ever actually challenged. Second, procedurally, every past attempt to redraw Pakistan's internal boundaries at scale has bypassed rather than used the ordinary amendment machinery; One Unit was imposed and later dissolved by executive and martial-law order, not by two-thirds votes in provincial assemblies. A genuinely constitutional 28th Amendment would break that pattern, for better or worse. Third, politically, no reform of this scope has ever proceeded in Pakistan without a coalition partner capable of supplying the numbers, and today no single party, nor any plausible coalition currently in office, controls the two-thirds majorities Article 239(4) demands in Parliament, let alone in every affected provincial assembly simultaneously.

Four questions remain open, and each has a documented history behind it rather than a clean precedent: whether Article 239(4) can ground new-province creation at all, or whether a dedicated provision must first be inserted; whether a recentralising package can survive the salient-features test given the doctrine's consistent recurrence since 1963; whether the Twenty-Seventh Amendment's euster clause can itself be reconciled with that doctrine; and whether a coalition without a two-thirds majority anywhere can secure the consensus the Bar Council and the PPP demand, or whether the Supreme Court Bar Association's more permissive stance prevails. The Constitution does supply a route for creating new provinces - but that route runs through provincial assemblies and Parliament, not executive proclamation, and Pakistan has yet to test it. Whatever else the 28th Amendment eventually contains, that much is settled.



SAMEE BINT SAHBAN

Samee Bint Sahban is a third-year law student enrolled in the University of London's external program

OPINION

DTM



RAWALPINDI: Colorful charpays and quilts displayed outside a shop in Banni catch the eye of customers. ONLINE

Letters To The EDITOR

A better tomorrow starts today

I want to express my belief that a better tomorrow begins with the choices we make today. Everyone dreams of a successful and happy future, but dreams cannot become reality without effort. Every small step we take, every lesson we learn and every good habit we develop can help us move closer to our goals. Instead of waiting for the perfect time, we should begin making positive changes in our lives today.

Our daily decisions play an important role in shaping our future. Waking up early, completing our work on time, reading books and helping others may seem like ordinary actions, but they teach us discipline and responsibility. Success does not usually come from one great achievement. It is often the result of regular effort, patience and determination. People who use their time wisely and continue learning are better prepared to face future challenges.

A better future also depends on how we care for our health. Eating nutritious food, exercising regularly, maintaining personal hygiene and getting enough sleep can improve our physical and mental well-being. We should avoid harmful habits such as laziness, delaying important tasks and spending too much time on mobile phones. Good habits developed today can bring lasting benefits in the years ahead.

Building a better tomorrow is not only a personal responsibility. We must also think about the people around us and the world we will leave for future generations. Showing kindness, respecting others and helping people in need can make society more peaceful and caring. Protecting the environment is equally important. Planting trees, saving water, reducing plastic waste and keeping our surroundings clean are simple actions that can make a difference.

Life is full of difficulties, and everyone experiences failure at some point. However, failure should not stop us from trying again. Mistakes can teach us valuable lessons and help us become stronger. Honesty, patience, responsibility and determination allow us to face challenges and build trust with others. A better tomorrow is not a distant dream. It is the result of the decisions we make every day. By working hard, developing good habits, caring for others and protecting our environment, we can create a future filled with hope and opportunity. We do not need to wait for a special moment to begin. The journey towards a better tomorrow starts with one positive step today.

NAZAIK MAJID
Turbut

Equal treatment for every student

I want to express my concern about the unequal treatment that some students reportedly face in government schools. Educational institutions are expected to provide every child with equal opportunities to learn, develop confidence and prepare for a better future. Unfortunately, favouritism and disrespectful behaviour by some teachers can weaken this purpose and create an unhealthy learning environment.

Every student deserves attention, encouragement and fair treatment, regardless of academic performance, family background or personal circumstances. When teachers give special importance to a few children while ignoring others, students may begin to feel that their efforts do not matter. This can damage their confidence and reduce their interest in learning. A classroom should be a place where children feel encouraged to ask questions, make mistakes and improve their abilities.

Another serious concern is the behaviour of teachers who scold or humiliate students instead of guiding them with patience. Discipline is necessary in schools, but it should never become an excuse for insulting children or damaging their self-respect. Young students are still developing emotionally and intellectually. Harsh treatment can make them fearful of their teachers and reluctant to participate in classroom activities. Teachers should correct mistakes in a constructive manner and help students understand how they can improve.

The responsibility for addressing these problems does not rest with teachers alone. School administrations and education authorities must ensure that professional standards are followed. Regular visits, confidential complaint procedures and fair investigations can help identify cases of favouritism, negligence and inappropriate behaviour. Where complaints are proved, suitable action should be taken to prevent the same problems from continuing. At the same time, teachers need support and training in classroom management, child development and respectful communication. Creating a positive learning environment requires both accountability and professional guidance. Parents should also be able to raise genuine concerns without fearing that their children will face further unfair treatment. Government schools play an important role in providing education to children from different social and economic backgrounds. Their success should be measured not only by examination results but also by the fairness, safety and quality of the learning environment they provide.

BALOOCH KHAN
Okara

Pakistan's Foreign Policy Trajectory

However, this pact could also involve Pakistan in future confrontations unaffiliated with our national interests, resulting in conflict entrapment and civil-military imbalance. The pact aligns the mutual benefits of all stakeholders. Pakistan's way forward is to exercise the defense pact while maintaining an independent stance on regional conflicts. By focusing on diplomatic goodwill and developing economic and technological gains, this alliance can be translated into an asset for Pakistan.

It is evident in recent times how relations among states have been reshaped. Realists believe that the international system is in a state of anarchy, where no central regulatory body exists to regulate state affairs. The survival mechanism of states is based on self-help, and the main goal is to achieve power and security. However, liberals preach the message of cooperation, shared values, and mutual gains. States speak the language of liberalism but practice realism.

Over time, history has witnessed the evolution of state partnerships based on economic and strategic gains. During the Cold War, Pakistan joined the US-led Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) pacts, not because of ideological conviction. It was an interest-based alliance: Pakistan needed a strong ally against India, while Washington needed bases against the Soviet Union. In 1979, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, and Pakistan became a frontline state overnight, receiving billions in aid and weapons tied to a single interest. Once the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the Presler Amendment cut off military assistance. This shows that once the interest disappeared, the alliance faded.

Pakistan and China's friendship, celebrated as an "all-weather friendship," is not immune to this phenomenon. The Iron Brothers have shared a steady relationship since 1951, reinforced by reciprocal benefits: China, being a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), provides diplomatic cover to Pakistan. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), launched in 2015, brings a \$62 billion long-term investment to Pakistan, developing infrastructure, energy, roads, power plants, and the Gwadar Port.

Pakistan, developing infrastructure, energy, roads, power plants, and the Gwadar Port.

However, it also carries heavy loan repayments and interest. China also provides support on the technological front; the JF-17 Thunder fighter jet is a testament to its endurance in the skies. China's investment in Pakistan is not an act of unidirectional generosity. Gwadar Port offers Beijing a shorter route to the Arabian Sea, bypassing the Strait of Malacca, providing an efficient trade route across the Middle East and Africa.

The contemporary geopolitical dynamics are increasingly transformed by the formation of alliances and agreements to achieve economic and security benefits. On August 7, 2026, the Makkah Joint Defense Agreement was signed, in which Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye made a mutual trilateral defense pact. According to the pact, an armed attack against one signatory shall be considered an attack on all three. In September 2025, the Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement (SMDA), a bilateral defense agreement, was signed between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. However, it has since expanded strategically to include Türkiye, and the pact implicitly indicates a NATO-style Article 5 commitment.

Pakistan, being a nuclear power, holds a crucial position through its diplomatic and mediatory role. The three signatories of the pact share a distinct historical pattern and ideology. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia developed trust over decades: Pakistan has provided military cooperation, training, and personnel, while Saudi Arabia has provided economic assistance, energy support, and trade. Pakistan and Türkiye have built a rela-

tionship of mutual respect, with military-technical partnerships and the exchange of warships and training aircraft.

Türkiye's democratic system and Saudi Arabia's hereditary monarchy create an ideological contradiction. After the Arab Spring, both experienced deeper disagreements following the 2017 Qatar Blockade, and the 2018 murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul pushed relations to their lowest point. Now, the alliance and reconciliation are converging towards the concept quoted by Lord Palmerston: "We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and those interests it is our duty to follow." Hence, nations do not have permanent friends or enemies; they only have permanent interests.

Since May 2025, Pakistan has emerged as an epitome of defense and diplomacy, rewriting the fate of regional stability. Türkiye, being an active member of NATO, has joined this trilateral defense pact, adding a secondary security shield of military deterrence. This comes amid the current volatile scenario, where US reliability and Trump's commitments regarding NATO remain ambiguous.

For Pakistan, it is an opportunity to attain not only regional prestige but also economic leverage and foreign capital investments. The Makkah Pact has strategically placed Pakistan as a formal stakeholder in Middle Eastern security architecture, opened access to Gulf capital, and created new means of trade. Türkiye brings technological support and advancement, Saudi Arabia brings capital funding, and Pakistan brings workforce, manufacturing capacity, and geography.

However, this pact could also involve Pakistan in future confrontations unaffiliated with our national interests, resulting in conflict entrapment and civil-military imbalance. The pact aligns the mutual benefits of all stakeholders. Pakistan's way forward is to exercise the defense pact while maintaining an independent stance on regional conflicts. By focusing on diplomatic goodwill and developing economic and technological gains, this alliance can be translated into an asset for Pakistan.

Interestingly, the dynamic transformation of partnerships among states carries a significant economic impact: the boom-bust cycle. Pakistan's economic system is heavily influenced by foreign aid; with strategic partnerships, there is a sudden influx of funds into the country, but it makes Pakistan a victim of external patronage, leaving the domestic economy fragile and dependent, far from sustainable growth. A weak economy triggers political instability; hence, the long-term costs are not only fiscal but also structural.

Every nation, from Washington and Beijing to Riyadh, follows the same pattern. Palmerston's 1848 statement is still valid today, describing Islamabad in 2026. Pakistan has spent seven decades being useful to the United States against Russia. Partnerships are also a means of survival, as no nation can survive in isolation. Pakistan's current standing as a mediator on the global stage carries lessons and responsibilities. Diplomatic negotiations and foreign policy are the fundamentals of this game. Pakistan should take worthy action, build matters on its own terms, rise as a regional power, and create sustainable economic institutions for national prosperity.



MARIA IMRAN

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Protests and Movements in Pakistan: Containers As A Political Signal-Part III

There were also difficulties in maintaining the involvement of the key opposition parties in the sit-in. The movement initially attracted several opposition parties, but participation was not sustained at the same level during the protest. Later, JUI-F changed the tone of its approach to "Plan B," which included protests and road blockades in other regions of the country. The immediate objective of removing Prime Minister Imran Khan from his office was not achieved.

The PTI-PAT Islamabad Dharna 2014

The Islamabad sit-in 2014 was a fresh episode in the protest politics of Pakistan. Both Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT) made separate marches towards Islamabad. PTI called for the resignation of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, investigation into General Elections 2013 and electoral reforms.

The PTI sit-in lasted for almost 126 days, in which case it was the first time in Pakistani political mobilization history that a party made the capital its base for months.

The December 16, 2014, Army Public School (APS) attack in Peshawar became a turning point in the PTI's four-month-long Islamabad sit-in. In the aftermath of the tragedy, Chairman PTI Imran Khan postponed the party's planned nationwide protest and, on December 17, announced the end of the sit-in, calling for national unity against terrorism. The decision did not represent the fulfilment of the PTI's original demands; rather, the changed national security environment following the APS attack led the party to suspend its street mobilization and return to negotiations with the government.

The immediate objective of the Dharna was not achieved; the Prime Minister Mian



AZHAR ALI

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Muhammad Nawaz Sharif did not resign. The broader consequence was that institutional and political discussions of election-related questions grew widespread, and sit-ins in Islamabad became the norm of political pressure. In addition, it helped increase public awareness about elections, including greater familiarity with electoral result forms, election tribunals, and other related processes and terminology.

2017 Faizabad Sit-in

The 2017 Faizabad sit-in was yet another major event in the development of protest politics in the coun-try. The protesters, led by the Tehreek-i-Labbak Pakistan (TLP) and other religious organizations, took the Faizabad Interchange in Islamabad-Rawalpindi hostage for almost 23 days. The protest was sparked by the contentious changes to the 'Khatm-i-Nabuwat' declaration made in the Elections Act, 2017, which led to the demand for action against those behind it and, most prominently, for the resignation of Federal Law Minister Zahid Hamid. The change was said to be a clerical error, and Parliament eventually amended the original to reinstate the word, but protesters continued to press for the minister's resignation.

When an attempt was made by authorities to disperse the sit-in on 25 November, it proved unsuccessful and was accompanied by the spread of protest across the country.

The government had agreed to Zahid Hamid's resignation, release of protesters under legal conditions, publication of the report of the Raja Zafar-ul-Haq Committee and compensation for the loss caused by the protest, as part of an agreement reached with the protesters on November 27. The agreement also recognized the leadership of the army and was signed by a representative of the government, a representative of the protesters, and Retired Major General Faiz Hameed as a guarantor.

The immediate result was, therefore, proof of the protesters' success in forcing the government to make large concessions following extensive mobilization and a long disruption of the capital. The institutional implications were more ambiguous, however. The agreement was challenged in court, and the legal process following the sit-in posed questions about the legality of the sit-in itself, the disruption of citizens' movement and daily life, the role of the State institutions and the way the protest ended.

The main objectives of the Faizabad sit-in were achieved, as the government agreed to amend the law and the Minister for Law also stepped down from his position. However, the broader consequences of the incident extended beyond these immediate outcomes. It triggered a significant debate over the right to protest, public order, the exercise of state power, and the role of state institutions in resolving political confrontations.

Azadi March 2019 by JUI-F

Jamiat Ulama-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) started its Azadi March towards Islamabad in October 2019 to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Imran Khan and the removal of his office. The march arrived in the capital,

and the sit-in at H-9 in the capital lasted for about 13 days.

The main demand of the protest was the resignation of the prime minister. The immediate objective of the movement was not achieved, because the Government remained in place.

There were also difficulties in maintaining the involvement of the key opposition parties in the sit-in. The movement initially attracted several opposition parties, but participation was not sustained at the same level during the protest. Later, JUI-F changed the tone of its approach to "Plan B," which included protests and road blockades in other regions of the country. The immediate objective of removing Prime Minister Imran Khan from his office was not achieved.

PTI's Azadi March 2022

In April 2022, Imran Khan was voted out of the Prime Minister's office by Pakistan's Parliament; later, PTI started mobilising the political masses against the new government. It was in May 2022 when PTI staged a long walk towards the capital, Islamabad, with two main demands: that the National Assembly be dissolved immediately and Islamabad be called for fresh general elections.

The march was met with clashes, arrests, and restrictions on movement. The mobilization by PTI was eventually abandoned without PTI getting any of its immediate demands, including the dissolution of the National Assembly or any immediate announcement of a date for fresh general elections.

The immediate objective of the Azadi March was not achieved, and the National Assembly was not dissolved, and no date for immediate elections was announced.

NATIONAL

DTM

Rising terrorism worsened situation in KP: Danyal

Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry, on Tuesday said that conditions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had been worsening for years, while the provincial leadership had failed to take effective measures against terrorism.

Talking to the media outside the Parliament House, he said the government had continued negotiations with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) until the last moment in an effort to resolve the issue through dialogue.

He said that governor's rule or emergency was the least preferred option for any democratic government, but the sacrifices of martyrs and the rise in terrorism had compelled the government to take this step. He said that personnel of law enforcement agencies were being martyred daily in the fight against terrorism, while their families, widows and orphaned children repeatedly asked how many more children would be orphaned and how many more mothers would be separated from their loved ones.

He said PTI was repeatedly asked to give a practical commitment against terrorism, but no satisfactory response was received.

He said that coffins draped in the Pakistani

flag were arriving daily in Rawalpindi and other areas, while negotiations with terrorists and a policy of leniency had further worsened the situation. Barrister Danyal Chaudhry raised several questions regarding Maulana Fazlur Rehman and said that PTI had previously levelled various allegations against him, including those relating to permits, land of martyrs, training camps and support for terrorists.

He asked whether those allegations were wrong at the time or whether Maulana Fazlur Rehman's current defence of PTI was wrong. He said Maulana Fazlur Rehman had described PTI in 2012 as the creation of Jews and Western powers, while in 2021 he alleged that PTI founder and his party had received foreign funding.

He said that in 2023, Maulana had claimed that foreign agencies had used PTI founder to bring him into power.

Barrister Danyal Chaudhry said Maulana Fazlur Rehman had alleged in November 2022 that foreign funding was intended to support the long march and to cancel the visit of the Chinese president.

He said Maulana Fazlur Rehman had described the May 2023 incidents as an attempt to demoralize the martyrs of the armed forces and weaken Pakistan's military. He asked that if these statements were correct, what was the basis for standing in defence of PTI today.

Barrister Danyal Chaudhry said that a sudden change in Maulana Fazlur Rehman's political position after two decades suggested some personal or political interest, as no such change could outweigh the funerals of martyrs, their sacrifices and national security. **NEWS DESK**

Sohail Afridi in protective custody

Federal Information Minister Attaullah Tarar has claimed that Sohail Afridi is in police custody in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for his protection and has neither been formally arrested nor charged in any case.

Speaking on Samaa TV's programme Red Line, Tarar said Afridi was taken into protective custody following the imposition of an emergency and governor's rule in the province.

He maintained that Afridi remained in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, adding that Shafi Jan and other individuals had fled when the authorities took Afridi into custody. Tarar alleged that Afridi had been engaged in protests while the province was experiencing terrorist violence.

The minister further claimed that

Afridi had sought safe passage from terrorists to travel through a particular area in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He also accused Afridi of having led violent protests in the past.

Tarar said some people had been taken into custody, while others had gone into hiding or fled. He added that claims of large public participation in protests had not materialised, alleging that residents of the province had welcomed Afridi's departure.

The minister also referred to a Gallup survey, claiming it showed public support for the government's action. He did not provide further details of the survey during the remarks quoted in the report.

Tarar said the imposition of an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was carried out in



accordance with the Constitution, arguing that rising terrorist activity had provided a concrete justification for the move. He alleged that the previous provincial lead-

ership had protected militants' interests and claimed that its political leadership had facilitated the return and resettlement of militants in the region. **NEWS DESK**

'Governor's rule aimed at restoring peace in KP'

Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tanq Fazal Chaudhary on Tuesday said the imposition of emergency and Governor's Rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa followed the provincial government's lack of cooperation with the federal government and state institutions in the fight against terrorism.

Addressing a press conference, he said emergency and Governor's Rule were imposed through a presidential order on October 11 under Articles 232 and 234 of the Constitution, respectively. Both measures were subsequently endorsed by Parliament and a joint sitting, completing the constitutional requirements, he added.

He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faizal Karim Kundi had assumed the powers of the provincial government, while an 11-member advisory council comprising highly qualified profes-

sionals with distinguished records in their respective fields had been constituted to assist him.

Local tribal elders had also been included in councils formed for 12 terrorism-affected districts to ensure community participation in consultations and intelligence-based operations.

Dr Tanq Fazal said the imposition of emergency might have been avoided had the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led provincial government cooperated with the federal government, state institutions, law enforcement agencies and security forces in counterterrorism efforts. He recalled that during negotiations held in Islamabad on the prime minister's direction, the federal government had sought the provincial government's cooperation and assurances regarding counterterrorism measures.

The minister said terrorism had affected the

entire country and could not be controlled without full cooperation between the provincial government, federal institutions, the armed forces and security agencies. He added that terrorist incidents had increased significantly, particularly over the past two years, while personnel and officers of the armed forces, police and Frontier Corps continued to sacrifice their lives in counterterrorism operations.

He said Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi had contacted the provincial leadership several times through back-channel communications to seek cooperation, with some contacts reported in the media and others remaining unreported.

However, he said that the provincial government's non-cooperation had continued, leaving the federal government with no option but to take the decision. **NEWS DESK**

Lawyers beat up 'killer' of boy in Multan court

A group of lawyers allegedly assaulted contractor Touqeer Nazir when he was produced before a court in Multan on Tuesday in connection with the death of 15-year-old Waseem Abbas, an orphan who was killed after being struck by a speeding car in a private housing society.

According to reports, some lawyers became enraged during the court proceedings and allegedly slapped and punched the accused. The court approved the police request for physical remand and remanded Touqeer Nazir in police custody for four days for further investigation.

Police had arrested Touqeer in connection with the incident and taken the vehicle involved in the case into custody. A murder case was registered against him on the complaint of the police. According to police, Waseem had been learning electrical work under Touqeer. In his initial statement, the suspect claimed that the teenager would leave work without permission and that he had tried to stop him.

The suspect reportedly said he followed Waseem in his car to catch him. Police said the teenager was allegedly chased on foot before Touqeer pursued him in a vehicle, accompanied by another man identified as Amjad Ali. During the pursuit, the speeding car struck Waseem, causing him to hit the gate of a house. He died at the scene, police said.

Orphanage administrator Jawad Haider confirmed that Waseem, a resident of Muzaffargarh, was 15 years old and had reportedly been living in an orphanage for six years. He had been handed over to Touqeer to learn electrical work. **NEWS DESK**



Balochistan vows full support for security forces in fight against terrorism

Balochistan Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langau on Tuesday reaffirmed the provincial government's commitment to fully supporting security forces in the fight against terrorism, saying that the menace could only be defeated through collective national resolve, effective legislation and close coordination among all state institutions.

Addressing a press conference at the Civil Secretariat Quetta alongside Additional Chief Secretary Home Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat and Aide to the Chief Minister on Media and Political Affairs Shahid Rind, the minister said terrorism remained a serious threat to the country and that, under the prevailing circumstances, political differences must be set aside in favour of national interests.

He said security forces were continuously conducting operations against terrorist elements, while certain measures required financial resources, legislative backing and approvals from relevant authorities. The Balochistan government, he added, was extending complete cooperation to security agencies in all such matters. Referring to recent political discussions regarding the imposition of Governor's Rule, Zia Langau said emergency measures or Governor's Rule were adopted only under extraordinary and unavoidable circumstances. He maintained that cooperation between the federal government and security institutions could help improve the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The home minister stressed that Pakistan was currently passing through a sensitive period and called upon political leaders and the public to avoid statements that could undermine national unity or weaken public confidence in state institutions, security

forces and the sacrifices rendered by martyrs.

"If the state remains strong, politics can continue. Therefore, it is imperative that we all stand with the country and its institutions," he said.

Ziaullah Langau noted that Balochistan continued to face terrorist threats, with militants often targeting soft civilian targets. However, he said security forces had successfully foiled numerous terrorist plots and continued to work tirelessly to maintain peace and stability across the province.

He expressed hope for the early recovery of the brother of Balochistan Adviser for Sports and Youth Affairs Meena Majeed Baloch and Commissioner Rakhshan Division.

The minister further added that the people of Balochistan were an integral part of the province and that if circumstances necessitated the temporary relocation of residents from any affected area, the government would ensure all required arrangements and assistance. He emphasized that such decisions were never taken willingly but became necessary due to terrorism and hostile activities by anti-state elements. During the briefing on security measures and ongoing operations, Additional Chief Secretary Home Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat said law enforcement agencies were working in close coordination under the leadership of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti to establish lasting peace in the province.

He said implementation efforts were underway on the 14 points of the National Action Plan and 18 points of the Provincial Action Plan. According to him, the provincial government had approved 18 counterterrorism laws and established 17 new security structures to strengthen the security framework. **NEWS DESK**

Senate body seeks housing support for journalists

A Senate subcommittee on Information and Broadcasting has recommended that journalists affiliated with press clubs be facilitated through the Prime Minister's loan facility to help meet their housing needs.

The recommendation was made at the third meeting of the subcommittee, held at Pakistan Television (PTV) Headquarters on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Senator Syed Waqar Mehdī. Senator Jan Muhammad also attended the meeting.

The subcommittee reviewed progress on the timely and transparent allotment of plots and flats reserved for journalists and media workers under government housing schemes, particularly through the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA).

The convenor said he had received the final list of journalists who had been allotted plots so far. A representative of journalists informed the meeting that the list pertained to Drive-II, while efforts were now focused on Drive-I at Bars Kahu. Senator Mehdī said the matter would be taken up with the Ministry of Housing and Works, adding that considerable progress had been made. He also recommended that the list of journalists submitted to the Capital Development Authority (CDA) for plot allotments be verified as soon as possible to prevent duplicate allotments. Officials of the Ministry of Housing and Works briefed the meeting on the subcommittee's recommendations and progress made by the departments concerned. The formation of a grievance committee was also recommended to address complaints and disputes relating to the allotment of plots and flats to journalists and media workers.

A representative of journalists proposed that the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) also be included in the relevant list of beneficiaries under the plot-allotment schemes. Participants observed that plots had last been allotted to journalists approximately two decades ago, highlighting the need for renewed efforts to address their housing requirements. The journalists attending the meeting appreciated the subcommittee's efforts and recommended an extension of its tenure to help resolve pending issues. Senator Mehdī also acknowledged Senator Jan Muhammad's contribution to efforts for the welfare of journalists. The convenor said the housing-allotment matter would be pursued with the Ministry of Housing and Works. **NEWS DESK**

ECP postpones hearing on KP LG elections

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday postponed the hearing of a case concerning local government elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which was scheduled for the same day, with a fresh date to be announced later.

According to a delisting notice issued by the ECP, notices had been served on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief secretary and the secretary of local government, directing them to appear in person before the commission for the hearing.

However, the commission postponed the proceedings, and the next hearing date will be announced later. **NEWS DESK**

Azma wins defamation case

The Punjab Defamation Tribunal on Tuesday ruled in favour of Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari in a defamation suit against Punjab Assembly Opposition Leader Moeen Riaz Qureshi, ordering him to pay Rs 3 million in general damages.

In January, Bokhari filed the defamation suit against Qureshi seeking damages of Rs 800 million. She filed the claim against the opposition leader, alleging that he made "baseless and fabricated" accusations against her.

In a short order issued on Tuesday, the tribunal said that the counsel for both parties had concluded their final arguments. "The claim of the plaintiff is hereby decreed up to the extent of general damages amounting to Rupees three million (Rs 3,000,000)," said tribunal member Anjum Raza Syed. However, the tribunal dismissed the minister's claim for special and punitive damages.

Meanwhile, the PTI said in its statement that its MPA was told to pay Rs 84m in damages. Bokhari's counsel argued that the defendant,

Qureshi, had acknowledged making the remarks in question during a television programme but had failed to produce any evidence to substantiate the allegations. The tribunal said a detailed judgment would be issued separately.

The information minister had filed the suit following allegations Qureshi levelled at the time of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's then-chief minister Sohail Afridi's visit to the Punjab Assembly. He had alleged that the provincial minister got 200 paid individuals into the assembly premises, and that the journalists who put questions to Afridi were her salaried employees.

Commenting on the verdict, Qureshi wrote on X: "The voice I raise in favour of the people's rights, the supremacy of the Constitution, and Imran Khan cannot be silenced." He

asserted that as the opposition leader, his duty was "not to flatter those in power but to question them, defend the rights of the people, and stand firm against every undemocratic action". "Remember! Dissent is the strength of democracy, not its weakness. Attempting to respond to criticism with fines cannot prove any stance wrong."

In its statement, the PTI expressed its deep concern over the verdict, assailing the Punjab government for being "unwilling to tolerate even political criticism and dissent". It contended that the PML-N introduced the Punjab Defamation Act 2024 and used its majority to turn it into law, which it has now employed. Noting that Qureshi had been attempting to present a resolution in the Punjab Assembly against the imposition of emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, PTI said the emergence of the verdict "raises questions about its timing and political implications". **AGENCIES**



NATIONAL

DTM

Sindh cabinet takes key decisions on public health, reforms

Continued from Page 1

The Chief Minister also briefed the Cabinet on cooperation with Huawei following his visit to its approximately 1,000-acre technology campus near Shanghai, which accommodates 30,000 to 35,000 employees and includes offices, housing, hospitals, schools and transport facilities. An MoU was signed to promote cooperation in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, smart cities, digital governance and AI-enabled smart parks.

He said Sindh's progress in digital governance and Karachi's strategic location and seaports offered opportunities to develop major data infrastructure. Huawei's president is expected to visit Pakistan, while the Sindh Investment Department was directed to pursue the proposed initiatives.

The Chief Minister expressed gratitude to the Chinese government and reaffirmed Sindh's commitment to strengthening the historic Pakistan-China friendship. He said the provincial government would focus on converting the visit's outcomes into investment, technology transfer, economic growth, employment and better public services for the people of Sindh.

In a significant decision concerning transparency and accountability, the cabinet decided to make public the report of the Mir Raza Ali Inquiry Commission, which had been submitted in seven separate envelopes.

The cabinet directed that the report be uploaded to the Home Department's website on October 20, while a hard copy would also be provided to the affected family.

To ensure follow-up action, Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah constituted a subcommittee comprising Provincial Ministers Ziaul Hassan Janjir, Syed Naeem Hussain Shah and Saeed Ghani, along with the Advocate General Sindh, to examine the findings and submit recommendations for implementation.

The decision marks an important step towards making the inquiry's findings accessible to the public and determining the measures required in response to its recommendations.

The cabinet approved a package of reforms to the Sindh Public Service Commission following concerns raised by candidates over recruitment procedures and examination arrangements.

Under the approved measures, the upper age limit for the Combined Competitive Examination (CCE) has been increased from 30 to 33 years, while the number of permissible attempts has been raised from three to five.

The cabinet also approved reducing the screening-test passing threshold for CCE-2026 from 40 per cent to 33 per cent. Computer-based testing will be introduced for one-paper examinations, with results printed immediately after the tests.

Interview marks will also be revised in line with the Federal Public Service Commission ratio.

The agenda further included proposals for a Cabinet Reforms Committee to develop information

technology-enabled and artificial intelligence-based reforms for the SPSC, along with safeguards against retaliatory action against candidates who participated in protests and a mechanism to review allegations of candidates being targeted during interviews.

The reforms are intended to improve access to competitive examinations, strengthen transparency and build greater confidence in the recruitment process.

The cabinet approved the negotiated package for the World Bank-supported Sindh Property Revenue Enhancement Programme (Sindh-PREP), a major initiative to modernise property-tax collection, improve compliance and strengthen municipal financial management.

The programme carries World Bank financing of \$150 million, comprising \$110 million for the Programme-for-Results component and \$40 million for investment project financing.

The programme aims to increase urban immovable property-tax collection across Karachi's 25 Town Municipal Corporations from Rs2.3 billion to Rs25.5 billion during its implementation.

It also envisages modernising property taxation in other urban councils, building institutional capacity across 45 selected local councils and introducing an Integrated Financial Management Information System.

The negotiated package includes financing and implementation agreements, a results framework, verification protocols and environmental and social commitments. The World Bank's Board consideration was scheduled for October 30, 2026.

The programme is expected to strengthen local governments' revenue base and improve their capacity to finance municipal services.

The Cabinet considered the additional financing package from the European Investment Bank (EIB) for Phase III of the Sindh Flood Emergency Housing Reconstruction Project.

The package comprises €115 million, including a €100 million loan and a €15 million grant. It is aligned with the project's PC-I of Rs42.09 billion, approved by PCNEC in November 2025, comprising Rs35.075 billion in EIB financing and a Rs7.015 billion contribution from the Sindh government.

Under the financing arrangement, the federal government will act as borrower, the Sindh government as intermediary and the Sindh Peoples Housing for Flood Affected (SPHF) as the implementing entity.

The Cabinet ratified the already signed Finance Contract and Project Implementation Agreement and approved the draft On-Lending Agreement before its execution. The proposed agreement would formalise the transfer of financing from the federal government to Sindh and subsequently to SPHF under the Sindh Public Finance Administration Act, 2020.

The project is central to the

province's efforts to support flood-affected families in rebuilding their homes and recovering from the devastating effects of past floods.

The cabinet approved handing over the management of District Headquarters Hospital Sujawal to the Medical Emergency Resilience Foundation (MERF) for five years under a public-private partnership arrangement.

It also approved a five-year extension of MERF's management of DHQ/Teaching Hospital Thatta and seven health facilities in Thatta district, effective July 1, 2026.

A departmental committee recommended the arrangement in view of MERF's experience in managing the Thatta hospital and associated facilities. The proposed framework includes measurable performance indicators, independent technical and financial audits, and funding linked to performance.

The first-year financial requirement for DHQ Hospital Sujawal for 2026-27 is approximately Rs1 billion, covering salaries, operating expenses, renovation and equipment.

The arrangement is aimed at strengthening hospital management, improving service delivery and ensuring that public healthcare facilities provide more reliable services to patients.

The cabinet also approved the operationalisation of Chenesar Dispensary and Maternity Home through the Indus Hospital and Health Network (IHNN).

Located in Union Council 8 and serving approximately 122,000 residents, the facility has been renovated and is awaiting operationalisation. Under the approved proposal, it will function as a 24-hour primary healthcare and maternal, neonatal and child health centre.

Services will include normal deliveries, family planning, immunisation, specialised outpatient clinics, diagnostic support, digital medical records and community engagement.

The proposal carries a one-time capital expenditure of Rs27 million and operating expenditure of Rs66.9 million for 2026-27, taking the first-year financial requirement to Rs93.9 million. Annual operating expenditure of Rs66.9 million has been proposed for the following four years.

The initiative is expected to improve access to essential healthcare, particularly for women, children and families requiring round-the-clock medical assistance.

The Cabinet considered the draft Sindh Government Lands Management Act and its proposed implementation framework, covering the allotment, leasing and management of government land for industrial, residential, commercial and public purposes.

The deliberations focused on transparent allotment procedures, competitive auctions, clear lease terms, protection of lawful existing rights and safeguards for public assets, parks, amenity plots and heritage sites.

The Cabinet also discussed the treatment of existing leases, development timelines, public-private partner-

ship projects and mechanisms for appeals and legal compliance.

A committee headed by the Chief Minister was constituted to review the draft legislation and submit its recommendations at the next Cabinet meeting.

The Cabinet approved amendments to the Sindh Councils Unified Grades (Service) Rules, 2020, to update provisions governing the posting of officers and officials in local councils.

The amendments concern officers in BPS-16 to BPS-19 and officials in BPS-11 to BPS-14 of the Administration Branch, allowing them to be posted against equivalent-grade positions in local councils specified in the relevant Schedule of Establishment notified on June 16, 2023, or as subsequently amended by the Administrative Department.

The changes are intended to align the service rules with the applicable establishment schedule and provide greater clarity in administrative postings across local councils.

The Cabinet approved ex post facto approval for letters addressed to the Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan and relevant federal authorities seeking restoration of Sindh's 30 per cent share of the total sugar export quota.

The Agriculture, Supply and Prices Department had presented a proposal concerning the export of 200,000 metric tonnes of sugar and the province's share in the quota.

The proposal also called for distribution of Sindh's allocation among sugar mills through the established provincial mechanism.

The Forest and Wildlife Department presented a progress report on the proposed declaration of 405,002 acres of intertidal land in Sujawal district as protected forests to promote mangrove growth and environmental conservation.

A committee examining government land records in Dehs Gando, Sari and Lakha presented options concerning the identified land, including declaring the entire area a protected forest, protecting government land after accounting for existing allotments, or retaining the Zulfikarabad Development Authority's land title while arranging mangrove plantation through the Forest Department.

The cabinet directed the relevant departments to complete the necessary formalities and undertake a feasibility study. The Chief Minister also constituted a committee under Provincial Minister Jam Khan Shoro to review the future of the project.

The initiative is linked to the conservation of mangroves, protection of the coastal ecosystem and strengthening the environmental resilience of the Indus Delta.

The Cabinet approved the Sindh Policy for Receipt and Disposal of Natural Gas Royalty In-Kind 2026, enabling the provincial government to explore receiving its constitutional 12.5 per cent natural gas royalty in gas rather than cash, subject to commercial viability and protection of existing provincial revenue.

Under the policy, the Energy Department will oversee implementation, while Sindh Energy Holding Company Limited (SEHCL) will act as the designated provincial commercial and implementing entity. A hybrid approach will allow the government to retain cash royalty while selectively adopting in-kind payments on a field-by-field basis, ensuring that the province's net financial returns are not lower than its existing cash entitlement.

The policy provides for two disposal models involving transparent competitive bidding: direct allocation of royalty gas to qualified consumers or a public-private partnership with SEHCL. Gas-sale proceeds will be deposited into the provincial government's account, with financial safeguards, due diligence and Cabinet approval required before final agreements are executed.

The Energy Department will coordinate with the federal Petroleum Division, Finance Division and OGRA to address regulatory and operational matters and ensure effective implementation of the policy.

The Cabinet granted post-facto approval to the Home Department's notification declaring Mitha Ram Hostel, near Pakistan Chowk, Karachi, as a sub-jail for the safe custody of five accused persons allegedly involved in the KTC attack cases.

The hostel was declared a sub-jail through a notification issued on September 7, 2026, following a request by the Inspector General of Police, Sindh.

The Home Department sought post-facto approval for detention orders issued under Section 3(1) of the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance, 1960, concerning 64 persons from eight districts of Karachi.

According to the department's presentation, the orders followed requests from the Inspector General of Police, Sindh, relating to alleged activities considered capable of disrupting public order, including road blockages and sit-ins.

The matter was placed before the Cabinet for post-facto approval in view of the urgency cited by the department.

The Cabinet reviewed the record of its October 1 meeting and decisions taken through circulation on October 8 regarding the release of government wheat.

Under the approved policy for 2026-27, government wheat is to be released at an issue price of Rs12,500 per 100-kilogram bag for all categories, without a government subsidy. Releases to functional flour mills and atta chakkies were scheduled to commence on October 15.

The policy provides for flour mills to lift PASSCO or imported wheat from designated sites against prepaid challans, using their own transport under the Food Department's management.

Where mills are reluctant to lift wheat or quantities exceed their monthly quotas, the Food Department may arrange transportation to government godowns. Stocks from surplus districts are to be directed towards dis-

tricts facing shortages, while seized wheat is to be moved to the nearest procurement centres.

The arrangements are intended to improve stock distribution and help maintain the supply of wheat and flour across the province.

The Cabinet approved the proposal to convert Murtaza Abad village in Deh Simna and New Gud village in Deh Shahbeg, Taluka Bakrani, Larkana district, into katchi abadis under the applicable legal framework.

Departmental reports indicated that Murtaza Abad is situated on land recorded as forest land, while New Gud is reported to be located on state or revenue land.

The proposal was presented by the Land Utilisation Department for approval under the relevant legal provisions.

Alongside the hospital management decisions, the Cabinet approved extending the second tenure of Professor Dr Nabila Nejam Soomro as Executive Director of the Sindh Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (SIPMR) until August 10, 2028.

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities cited progress in clinical services, academic programmes, postgraduate training and research.

Plans include operationalising a new unit in Larkana during the current financial year and expanding rehabilitation services to Shaheed Benazirabad, Hyderabad and Rohri, improving access to rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities across the province.

The Cabinet approved the appointment of Mr Mehboob Ali Dayo, a retired District and Sessions Judge, as Presiding Officer of the Special Court (CNS-V), Karachi, under the Sindh Control of Narcotic Substances Act, 2024, as amended up to 2025.

The cabinet also ratified the de-notification of Ms Saima Imdad Mangi, former Assistant Advocate General, Sindh.

The Cabinet approved the renewal of the contract of Maj. (R) Syed Muhammad Abbas, Chief Executive Officer and pilot of the Sindh government's VIP Flight service, for two years.

The Cabinet approved the induction of Dr Hassan Abbas and Ms Tara Uzma Dewood as independent directors on the Board of the Sindh Peoples Housing for Flood Affected.

Cabinet decisions Focus on Public Services and Institutional Accountability The Cabinet's decisions covered a wide range of provincial priorities, from improving access to healthcare and strengthening recruitment procedures to mobilising municipal revenue, supporting flood-affected households, protecting coastal ecosystems and updating government rules.

The decisions also addressed the need for transparency and follow-through on the Mir Raza inquiry report, with the Chief Minister directing its public release and establishing a committee to recommend implementation measures. NEWS DESK

Pakistan steps in to defuse US-Iran impasse

Continued from Page 1

He also said that Iran is not warring but is fully prepared to defend the homeland and national dignity, stressing that threats and military moves cannot change the strategic decisions of the Islamic Republic, and that it is the US that must act to get out of the quagmire of war.

Negotiations between Iran and the US remain ongoing, with both sides continuing to engage as regional tensions deepen, Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesman Majed al-Ansari said on Tuesday. "The negotiation is ongoing. We are seeing engagement from the parties," Ansari, who also serves as an adviser to the Qatari prime minister, said at the Global Security Forum in Doha.

He said discussions were taking place with regional partners and expressed hope that the process would eventually produce an agreement, while warning that conditions on the ground were becoming increasingly difficult.

"Escalation left unchecked will mean that we are spiralling towards a regional war that will expand beyond the borders of our region," he warned.

Ansari said the current process followed an earlier attempt to use a ceasefire as a pathway toward negotiations, but that effort ultimately failed and fighting resumed. "Any ceasefire is basically a door that opens towards a destination rather than the destination itself," he said, adding that the previous ceasefire "broke down again."

On Yemen, Ansari said the conflict could be linked to tensions involving Iran but also had its own dynamics, describing the latest developments as part of an "escalatory ladder" that began in 2023.

"The only way to make sure that doesn't continue is to start defusing all of these conflicts at the same time," he said. The spokesman voiced concern over political

statements coming from Israel, saying regional instability should not be used for domestic political purposes.

"We are concerned about a lot of the statements coming out, political statements that are coming out, especially from Israel," he said, adding that exploiting regional instability for political infighting was "not something that any responsible statesman should do."

Türkiye submits Makkah pact to parliament for ratification: Separately, Türkiye has submitted a defence pact with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to parliament for ratification, three parliamentary sources said on Tuesday, moving NATO's second-largest army closer to a formal mutual defence pledge with Riyadh as it faces Houthi attacks.

The three countries signed the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement in August, under which an armed attack on one member is considered an attack on all. The agreement's first article says the parties shall use "all necessary means" to eliminate threats to one another's territorial integrity, sovereignty or internationally recognised borders, according to a text seen by Reuters.

At an emergency meeting of the alliance in Riyadh earlier this month, the three countries agreed to ensure the "rapid deployment" of military forces and capabilities in Saudi Arabia.

Türkiye, which has a robust defence industry, has condemned Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia, expressed willingness to help meet Riyadh's military technology needs and agreed to join a Saudi-led coalition to ensure navigational safety in the Red Sea.

The agreement also envisages close cooperation on defence industry, intelligence sharing, logistical support and the fight against "all means of terrorism," including at the operational level.

Parliamentary ratification is required for Türkiye to formally approve the agreement. NEWS DESK

Governor rule to grab minerals: Fazl

Continued from Page 1

According to Fazlur Rehman, these developments were linked to efforts to gain control over the province's mineral resources.

Rejecting governor's rule as unjustified, Fazlur Rehman said any change in government should take place in accordance with the Constitution rather than through the use of force.

Referring to previous instances in which former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

and President Asif Ali Zardari imposed governor's rule, he questioned whether those decisions had been universally accepted.

He also accused the president of signing the relevant decision without being satisfied that the constitutional requirements had been met.

Fazlur Rehman said no single power could claim to represent the interests of the entire nation.

He observed that Asia was once again emerging as a major global economic centre and stressed the need to formulate policies that take future challenges and

opportunities into account.

The JUI-F chief also called for the formation of an effective bloc among Muslim countries, arguing that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) had not been sufficiently effective in addressing issues confronting the Muslim world.

Commenting on attacks by Yemen's Houthi movement on Saudi Arabia, he said such attacks were an attempt to obstruct unity among Muslim countries.

He emphasised the need for greater cooperation among Islamic nations to address regional challenges and strengthen collective solidarity. NEWS DESK

PHC issues notices in plea against emergency, governor's rule in KP

Continued from Page 1

Representing the KP Bar Council, Advocate Babar Khan Yousafzai appeared before the court and adopted the arguments advanced in Gohar's case. Another petitioner, Advocate Qaiser Shah, supported the imposition of the state of emergency. A petition has also been filed by National Democratic Movement (NDM) central and provincial presidents Mohsin Dwar and Bushra Gohar, which was fixed for hearing on Oct 20 (Tuesday).

In his petition, Barrister Gohar had urged the PHC to declare the federal government's decision to impose emergency and governor's rule in KP "unconstitutional, ultra vires, coram non iudice, tainted with malice in law and fact, devoid of objective material, and of no legal effect" and to set aside the proclamation.

Filed under Article 199 of the Constitution, the petition named the

federation of Pakistan (through the secretaries of the Cabinet Division, law, interior, and defence ministries); the province of KP; KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi; the KP Assembly speaker; and the secretary of the KP Home and Tribal Affairs Department as respondents.

Sahail Afridi, who is no longer functioning as the province's chief minister following the imposition of governor's rule, was also named as a pro forma respondent.

Barrister Gohar challenged the "constitutionality, legality and vires" of the October 11 decision, the order deploying army troops to the province, and "all consequential and derivative executive orders, notifications, and bodies" constituted as a result.

These included the establishment of the KP Advisory Council and the arbitrary detention and removal of Afridi as the lawful chief minister of KP, along with his provincial cabinet, which had been vested with full executive powers under Article 130 of the Constitution. NEWS DESK

Petrol, diesel prices raised

The federal government has increased petrol and high-speed diesel prices under the latest fuel rate adjustment.

Petrol price has gone up 88 paise per litre, while diesel has risen by 53 paise. The revised rates will take effect on October 21.



2026, under the daily petroleum pricing mechanism.

According to a notification issued by the Petroleum Division, petrol has increased from Rs381.14 to Rs382.02 per litre. The price of high-speed diesel (HSD) has gone up, from Rs389.27 to Rs389.80 per litre. NEWS DESK

BACKPAGE

England crushed as allrounder Minhas fires for Pakistan

Allrounder Arafat Minhas struck a maiden half-century and grabbed a career best six wickets to anchor Pakistan's convincing 87-run win over England in the tri-series in Rawalpindi on Tuesday.

Minhas hit 59 off 58 balls and was ably assisted by Hasan Nawaz, whose 74-ball 79 lifted Pakistan to a solid 302-9 at Feroz Stadium.

The versatile Minhas then took 6-40 with his beguiling left-arm spin as England were reduced to 215 all out in 38.4 overs. He also ran out the last England batter to cap a superb showing.

England lost their last nine wickets for 95

Naseem Shah snared the prized wicket of Joe Root for 33, and Haris Rauf removed a dangerous Sam Curran for 27 as England's run chase faltered.

Nawaz and Minhas earlier lifted Pakistan from a precarious 133-5.

Nawaz, who hit four sixes and five boundaries, added 78 for the sixth wicket with Minhas as England struggled to break their stand, dropping three catches.

Minhas then added an invaluable 72 for the seventh wicket with Faheem Ashraf (39) as Pakistan added 91 runs in the last 10 overs.

Minhas hit nine fours, while



RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's players acknowledged the contribution of Arafat Minhas, centre, after the match. **AP**

runs after being well set at 120-1, with Tom Banton (57) and Ben Duckett (45) giving them a confident start.

Minhas grabbed three crucial wickets, getting Banton caught off a misused pull, bowling Harry Brook for five with a sharp turner, and then trapping Jordan Cox for 18.

Minhas completed his second five-wicket haul when he dismissed Will Jacks for 19 and then had Jamie Overton for one.

Banton smashed five boundaries and two sixes in his 53-ball knock.

Ashraf's knock included a six and five boundaries.

England's Gus Atkinson jolted Pakistan with the very first ball of the match to dismiss Fakhar Zaman, caught by Root at short mid-wicket.

Sonny Baker made it 2-31 with the wicket of Saïm Ayub for eight before Babar Azam (34) and Saad Binag (35) steadied the innings.

England's Baker took 3-65, while Atkinson finished with 2-35.

England meet Sri Lanka in the third match on Thursday, also in Rawalpindi. **AP**

Pakistan welcomes Maldives president with 21-gun salute



Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu arrived in Islamabad on Tuesday for a three-day state visit to Pakistan from October 20 to October 22, at the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, according to state media.

According to a press release issued from the Office of the President of the Maldives, the visit coincides with the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the Maldives and Pakistan, which were formally established on 26 July 1966 and also "marks the first high-level bilateral engagement between the Maldives and Pakistan in over a decade."

The press release further added that "upon arrival at Islamabad International Airport, the President and First Lady were accorded a 21-gun salute. The President will be accorded an official welcome tomorrow at Prime Minister House, the official residence of the Prime Minister of Pakistan."

Meanwhile, a delegation from Maldives arrived earlier on Tuesday and was led by Foreign Minister Iruthisham Adam and comprised cabinet ministers and senior officials, according to a statement from FO.

"The delegation was received at the airport by the Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Director General (South Asia & SAARC), High Commissioner of Maldives to Pakistan, and High Commissioner of Pakistan to Maldives," the FO added.

According to an earlier statement issued by the Foreign Office (FO), Muizzu was visiting Pakistan at the

invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and would be accompanied by First Lady Sajidha Mohamed and a high-level delegation comprising cabinet ministers and senior officials.

FO said that during the visit, President Muizzu would meet the president of Pakistan, who would also host a State Banquet in his honour, further adding that the visiting dignitary would also hold restricted and delegation-level talks with the premier.

"The two leaders will review the entire spectrum of bilateral relations and explore avenues for further strengthening cooperation in trade, investment, health, education, tourism, agriculture, defence, maritime security, climate change and people-to-people exchanges," the statement noted.

The statement added that "the State Visit, the first by a President of Maldives to Pakistan in eleven years, assumes special significance as the two countries commemorate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1966."

FO further added that Pakistan and Maldives enjoyed warm and fraternal relations rooted in shared faith, mutual respect, longstanding goodwill and close cooperation at regional and international forums.

"The forthcoming visit reflects the shared commitment of both countries to further strengthening their bilateral partnership and opening new avenues of mutually beneficial cooperation," the statement concluded. **NEWS DESK**

Pakistan pushes SCO for local-currency trade

Ishaq Dar seeks investment in transport, energy to boost regional integration

Pakistan on Tuesday urged members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to accelerate the use of national currencies in cross-border trade and establish a regional development bank and investment funds, as it sought deeper economic integration among countries facing growing uncertainty in global trade and finance.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar made the call at the 25th meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, where he emphasized investment in transport and energy infrastructure, expanded regional connectivity and reforms to the international financial system. The SCO brings together major Eurasian economies, including China, Russia, India and Pakistan, to promote cooperation on security, trade and development.

"We reiterate the need to accelerate efforts to promote the use of national currencies for mutual settlement and establishing SCO development bank, SCO development fund and

an investment fund," Dar told the gathering.

He said investment in transport and energy infrastructure was essential for regional economic integration and urged member states to expand cooperation in agriculture, mining, minerals and information technology.

Dar also criticized protectionist policies and unilateral economic measures, saying they undermined economic growth, technological progress and efforts to reduce inequality.

"Therefore, reform of the global financial architecture and trade regimes is essential for achieving equitable global development," he said.

The SCO has been exploring ways to deepen economic cooperation among its members, including proposals for new financing mechanisms and greater use of national currencies in trade settlements.

Such measures could help member states reduce reliance on existing international payment arrangements and mobilize financing for cross-border infrastructure and development projects.

Dar said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a multibillion-dollar infrastructure and energy initiative linking western China with Pakistan's Arabian Sea ports, offered opportunities for other SCO countries to participate in regional connectivity projects.

"The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor offers every SCO partner a compelling opportunity to participate in and accelerate our shared journey toward comprehensive economic integration," he said.

He also called for artificial intelligence, digital transformation, innovation, energy cooperation and international information security to become important areas of future SCO



collaboration.

Turning to regional security, Dar said lasting economic development depended on stability in Afghanistan and reiterated Pakistan's demand that the Taliban authorities prevent militant groups from using Afghan territory to launch attacks.

"In return, Pakistan has only one expectation from the Afghan Taliban regime that the Afghan territory must not be used for terrorism against Pakistan or any other country," he said.

Islamabad has repeatedly accused militants operating from

Afghanistan of carrying out attacks inside Pakistan, allegations the Taliban authorities have denied.

Dar said Pakistan remained committed to a peaceful and economically integrated Afghanistan and would continue supporting regional cooperation through the SCO.

He also outlined priorities for Pakistan's upcoming SCO chairmanship, including trade, climate resilience and people-to-people exchanges.

Pakistan is scheduled to host the SCO Council of Heads of State summit in August 2027. **NEWS DESK**

Nuke Alert! India moving to first-strike, says Pakistan

Lt. Gen. (r) Mazhar Jamil warned that India may be moving toward a first-strike posture, raising concerns over strategic stability in the region

A senior Pakistani nuclear adviser has warned that India may be moving toward an offensive nuclear first-strike posture, raising the risk of a catastrophic confrontation between the South Asian rivals following their deadly military conflict in May last year.

Lt. Gen. (r) Mazhar Jamil, an adviser to Pakistan's National Command Authority (NCA), made the remarks during a keynote address at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London this month, according to a transcript published by the institute.

He also called for reconsidering India's international nuclear trade waiver and warned that another military confrontation could escalate rapidly.

"India's capability of maintaining 'continuous-at-sea-deterrence' ... dilutes the credibility of India's claimed policy of NFU and points toward India adopting an offensive first-strike posture," Jamil said, referring to New Delhi's declared policy of no first use of nuclear weapons.

The remarks come more than a year after India and Pakistan fought their most intense military confrontation in nearly three decades, involving missiles, drones and air strikes across their disputed frontier and international border.

The four-day conflict in May 2025 was triggered by an April 22 attack that killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Indian-administered Kashmir. New Delhi blamed Pakistan, an accusation Islamabad denied while calling for an impartial international investigation. India, however, launched strikes inside Pakistan and Azad Kashmir on May 7.

Pakistan retaliated, and the fighting escalated to attacks on military installations in both countries before a ceasefire was announced on May 10 following US diplomatic intervention.

The confrontation raised fears of a wider war between countries that have fought several conflicts since independence from British rule in 1947 and openly demonstrated their nuclear weapons capabilities through rival tests in May 1998.

Jamil, who headed Pakistan's Strategic Plans Division from 2015 to 2017, was speaking at the 11th IISS-Center for International Strategic Studies Track 1.5 workshop on

nuclear deterrence and strategic stability in South Asia.

He cited an assessment by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) that India had reportedly begun mating some nuclear warheads with submarine-launched ballistic missiles and conducting sea-based deterrence patrols.

Jamil argued that such developments, coupled with the absence of advance notification of Indian submarine



launched ballistic missile tests, increased the risk of miscalculation during a crisis.

India maintains a declared no-first-use nuclear policy, while Pakistan has not adopted a comparable pledge and has instead called on the two countries to sign a no-war pact.

"Pakistan has been saying that India NFU is just a diplomatic ruse," he said. "It stands validated today."

NUCLEAR TRADE WAIVER

Jamil also urged the international community to reconsider the waiver granted to India by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which allowed New Delhi to engage in civilian nuclear trade despite not being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The 2008 waiver was a significant exception to international nuclear trade restrictions and enabled India to access foreign nuclear technology and fuel for its civilian energy program.

Jamil argued that the waiver and support from India's technology partners had helped New Delhi expand its nuclear and missile

programs, raising concerns about arms control and transparency.

"I think it is time that (the) international community should (be) thinking of reversing the NSG waiver of India because of (India's) irresponsible nuclear behavior," he said during the question-and-answer session.

He also expressed concern about India's development of long-range missiles and its access to advanced military and dual-use technologies, arguing that these capabilities were altering the regional strategic balance.

RAPID ESCALATION

Turning to the possibility of another military confrontation, Jamil warned that the May 2025 fighting had made future crises more dangerous by narrowing the space between military action and escalation.

He said Pakistan would continue to rely on its "Quid Pro Quo Plus" strategy, involving a strong conventional military response to aggression backed by its broader nuclear deterrence capabilities.

He also criticized India's decision to hold the Indus Waters Treaty in

abeyance following the April 2025 Kashmir attack, saying the move had added another source of conflict between the neighbors.

During the discussion, Jamil warned that another confrontation might escalate more rapidly than previous crises, likening escalation in South Asia to an elevator rather than a ladder.

He argued that the May 2025 conflict had already crossed several thresholds, making it more difficult to contain another confrontation.

Despite his warnings, Jamil said Pakistan remained prepared to pursue political dialogue with India, including over the disputed Kashmir region, and proposed a bilateral mechanism to manage future crises.

"Pakistan as a responsible nuclear state is ready to move forward toward (a) political dialogue to resolve all conflicts, including Kashmir, and offers to establish a robust crisis management mechanism, as a first step in that direction," he said.

Jamil also called for impartial international mediation to help resolve conflicts and manage crises in South Asia. **NEWS DESK**

GLAMOURDTMUR

Swift Stuns in Ophelia Live First



Taylor Swift delighted a star-studded crowd at the Academy Museum Gala on Saturday night with a live debut of her hit song *The Fate of Ophelia*. The song was Swift's lead single and opening track on her twelfth studio album, *The Life of a Showgirl*, in 2025, and her longest-running number one hit, and she finally gave it the attention it deserved. Swift, who helped husband Travis Kelce celebrate his 37th birthday this month, also sang her other hits *Blank Space*, *Love Story* and *I Knew It, I Knew You*, her original song from *Toy Story 5*. But her first-ever performance of *The Fate of Ophelia*, which spent ten weeks at number one on the *Billboard Hot 100*, went immediately viral on social media. Fans were amazed that Swift, 36, performed the tune at long last after months of speculation and waiting. 'TAYLOR SINGING THE FATE OF OPHELIA HIGH NOTE FOR THE FIRST TIME OMG,' one Reddit user wrote over a clip of Swift performing with backup singers and saxophone players. 'FINALLY OPHELIA OH MY GOD,' a fellow Swiftie shared in the comments. Another Reddit follower wrote, 'I love it. I love the dorky saxophone choreography, you can tell they were having fun with that. I also love that we are finally seeing a life of a showgirl performance.'

NEWS DESK

Miranda Kerr Says No to VS Show 20 Years On

The Victoria's Secret Fashion Show returned in spectacular fashion on Sunday, with the likes of Adriana Lima, Candice Swanepoel and Alessandra Ambrosio making their highly-anticipated return to the runway. But there was one Victoria's Secret veteran whose absence did not go unnoticed - Australian supermodel Miranda Kerr. Hours before the show, the mother-of-four, 43, took to Instagram to reveal she had turned down the opportunity to appear on this year's runway. '20 years since my first Victoria's Secret show. Looking back with so much gratitude for the friendships, the magical memories and for everyone who made that chapter of my life so special,' Miranda wrote next to a gallery of throwback photos document-

ing her time as a VS Angel. 'It meant so much to be invited to return this year, especially as it marks 20 years since my first show.... but I ultimately felt in my heart it was right to cherish this chapter as it was,' she continued. 'Sending so much love and light to everyone in this year's show!' NEWS DESK



Nicole Suits Up in Pink Tie at VS Show



Nicole Kidman looked stylish as she attended the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show at the Sony Pictures Studios in Culver City, California, on Sunday. The 59-year-old actress provided an A-list presence and fashionable look at the glam event in Southern California. The Academy Award-winning star donned a white button-up top with a pink tie with black diagonal stripes. The *Big Little Lies* star paired it with a black pencil skirt with garter belt embellishments, along with a Chanel burgundy clutch and black high heels. The Australian actress had her blonde, shoulder-length locks down and parted as she made her way through the upscale event. Kidman had been pictured seated next to Victoria's Secret CEO Hillary Super and Vanessa Bryant at the annual fashion showcase for the lingerie brand. Kidman brought her star power to an event that featured high-profile models Bella Hadid, Gigi Hadid, Anok Yai, Barbara Palvin and Ashley Graham, among others, walking the runway. The show also included musical performers such as Megan Thee Stallion, Megan Moroney, Tate McRae and Katseye.

NEWS DESK

GENTLEMEN SAY NO NEED FOR MEGHAN

Insiders on hit Guy Ritchie series *The Gentleman* have dismissed claims that Netflix 'used' the Duchess of Sussex to promote the new season of the show. Earlier this week the streaming service was accused by sources close to Meghan of revealing her potential involvement with the crime drama to boost its ratings. But that claim was rejected out of hand by those with close ties to *The Gentleman*'s production team. 'This is not a show in need of stunt casting,' a show insider told *The Times*. In August, Hollywood entertainment website *Deadline* reported that Meghan was in preliminary talks over a possible role in the third series of the Netflix crime drama. The news came only two days after she and Prince Harry were revealed to be indefinitely returning to Britain with their children, Prince Archie and Princess Lilibet. But less than one day after news of the talks was disclosed, they were abandoned amid a fierce 'backlash' from viewers. On August 22, Tina Brown, the former editor-in-chief of *Vanity Fair* and the New Yorker, wrote on blogging site *Substack*: 'I learned this morning that the casting of Meghan Markle in season 3 of Guy Ritchie's series *The Gentleman* has been withdrawn.'

NEWS DESK



JLo Wows in Plunging Dress at LA Ball



Jennifer Lopez commanded attention on Saturday night as she attended the Los Angeles Opera Ball Opening Night Gala. The 57-year-old entertainer, who was recently spotted leaving the gym, stepped out in a plunging black Dolce & Gabbana dress with an accent coat. The eye-catching outer layer boasted a thick brown fur collar and cuffs, while the black fabric was embroidered with a colorful floral pattern and had a satin, pale blue lining. NEWS DESK

Andre Glams Up for Birthday Night Out



Princess Andre looked glamorous as she celebrated a friend's birthday with a night out in Mayfair this weekend. The 19-year-old daughter of Katie Price and Peter Andre wowed in a strapless, sparkly black dress with a leopard print design. She was heading to swanky venue Bacchanalia with her pals and strutted confidently inside. Princess boosted her height with strappy black heels and wore her long tresses in loose waves over her shoulders. The night out comes after it was revealed that she and her brother Junior, 21, are soon starring on *Celebrity Race Across The World*. Earlier this week the first trailer for the new series showed the pair putting their close bond to the test as they led the star-studded lineup. NEWS DESK

MONEY

Twin deficit falls to 2.6% of GDP



Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday said Pakistan's twin deficit had declined from a cumulative 12.5 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to 2.6 percent, reflecting progress in macroeconomic stabilization and fiscal consolidation.

Addressing a two-day high-level workshop on "Reforms for a Modern and Growth-Friendly Tax System in Pakistan", the minister said that the

country had achieved a 22-year low fiscal deficit in the last fiscal year and recorded primary surpluses for three consecutive years.

The event was organized by the Ministry of Finance and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which bring together senior government officials, representatives of the IMF and World Bank, international tax experts, academics and private-sector leaders to discuss priorities for modernizing Pakistan's tax system and strengthening its contribution to sustainable economic growth.

Speaking on the occasion, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said that the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) tax-to-GDP ratio had increased from 8.8 percent to 10.3 percent, while tax revenues had risen by 40 percent over the last two fiscal years.

The minister attributed the improvement to stronger enforcement measures and new tax policy initiatives, explaining that 0.9 percentage points of the 1.5 percentage-point increase in the tax-to-GDP ratio over the last two and a half years had come from

enforcement, while 0.6 percentage points resulted from new policy measures.

The government would further strengthen enforcement, curb revenue leakages and broaden the tax base to improve revenue mobilization, he added.

The minister highlighted the ongoing FBR transformation program, covering human resources, processes and technology, which he said was being led by the prime minister and monitored through weekly reviews.

He said that the taxation reforms remained a critical component of the government's broader structural reform agenda, alongside reforms in the energy sector, state-owned enterprises (SOEs), privatization, public finance, pensions and tariffs.

Emphasizing the need to move from economic stabilization towards growth, Aurangzeb said Pakistan's economy had recovered from a contraction of 0.3 percent and returned to a positive growth trajectory.

However, he stressed that the country needed sustainable, export-led growth rather than liquidity-driven, consumption-based expansion, which had contributed to boom-and-bust cycles in the past.

"We will not let that repeat," he said, underscoring the government's commitment to ensuring that future growth was sustainable and supported by stronger economic fundamentals.

The finance minister also pointed to improvements in the country's external position, saying foreign exchange reserves had recovered from a level equivalent to around two weeks of import cover to more than three months, reaching a record high. **NEWS DESK**

IMF urges Pakistan to end tax breaks

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has called on Pakistan to rationalise tax concessions and bring under-taxed sectors into the tax net, saying a fairer and more neutral tax system is critical to improving revenue collection, encouraging compliance and supporting private-sector growth.

"Addressing under-taxed sectors, rationalising concessions, and reducing disproportionate burden are elements of a fair tax system," said Jihad Azour, Director, IMF Middle East and Central Asia Department, in his opening remarks at the Ministry of Finance and Revenue's "workshop on 'Reforms for a Modern and Growth-Friendly Tax System in Pakistan'."

The official also stressed that tax policy reforms must be accompanied by stronger revenue administration to ensure effective implementation.

"Many countries have strong reform ideas, but few translate them into durable results. Implementation requires ownership, coordination, engagement, and communication," he said.

Earlier this month, the IMF staff and Pakistan had reached a staff-level agreement on the fourth review of the \$7-billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and the third review of the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF), while completing the 2026 Article IV consultation.

The IMF official said that Pakistan has made "important progress" towards "restoring macroeconomic stability, rebuilding confidence, strengthening external buffers and supporting gradual recovery".

"The next milestone is to turn this stabilization into stronger and

more durable growth," said Azour.

He said that the IMF remains committed to supporting Pakistan authorities to "succeed in building an economy capable of delivering higher levels of productivity, led by a stronger private sector, and ready to deliver better opportunities for its young generations."

Referring to the regional outlook, Azour said inflation, fiscal pressure and financing needs are becoming more visible.

"For Pakistan, exposure to higher energy and food prices, disruption to trade and supply chains, external demand, and an abrupt tightening in global financing conditions heightens the premium on preserving stability while supporting the recovery."

He said in this context, the fiscal policy must do more than achieve the primary balance targets and protect debt sustainability.

"It must reinforce policy credibility, foster the recovery, and create space for the public investment and social spending needed to support stronger long-term growth and the well-being of



the Pakistani people."

Azour said tax policy and tax administration must move together, as a simpler policy framework makes administration easier, and a strong administration makes policy reform credible.

"Pakistan's stabilisation gains create opportunity; it needs to be amplified through transformative reforms," the IMF official said in his concluding remarks. **NEWS DESK**

Date exports fetch \$56.57m from 45 markets

Pakistan exported 138.74 million kilograms of fresh and dried dates worth \$56.57 million to 45 international markets during FY2025-26, with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) accounting for nearly 67% of total export earnings, according to official figures available with Wealth Pakistan.

Dried dates generated the bulk of export revenue, earning \$40.10 million from shipments of 115.44 million kilograms, while fresh dates contributed \$16.47 million from 23.31 million kilograms.

The UAE remained Pakistan's largest export destination by both value and volume, purchasing dates worth \$37.87 million, with combined shipments of 113.03 million kilograms. Dried dates accounted for \$36.93 million of these earnings, while fresh dates contributed \$933,560.

Germany ranked second, importing Pakistani dates worth \$4.30 million, followed by the United Kingdom at \$3 million. Together, the two European markets generated \$7.30 million in export earnings.

Australia imported dates worth \$1.90 million, while Turkey purchased fresh dates valued at \$1.45 million. Despite importing 2.10 million kilograms, Turkey generated lower earnings than Australia, which imported 2.01 million kilograms.

North America also remained an important market, with exports to the United States generating \$983,982 from 969,064 kilograms, while Canada imported 938,001 kilograms worth \$973,320. Combined earnings from the two markets reached approximately \$1.96 million.

Italy and Bangladesh purchased Pakistani dates worth \$945,209 and \$910,481, respectively. Fresh dates accounted for \$941,768 of exports to Italy, while dried dates generated \$908,781 from shipments to Bangladesh.

Among other destinations, Denmark generated \$632,246 in export earnings, followed by Japan at \$537,076, South Africa at \$503,934 and Poland at \$463,882.

The five leading markets, the UAE, Germany, the UK, Australia and Turkey are collectively generated \$48.52 million, accounting for 85.77% of Pakistan's total date export earnings. The remaining 40 markets contributed approximately \$8.05 million.

Fresh dates reached 38 destinations, while dried dates were exported to 24 markets, with 17 countries importing both varieties.

The figures highlight the concentration of Pakistan's date exports in a handful of destinations, particularly the UAE, despite the country's access to markets across Europe, North America, Asia, Africa and Oceania. **NEWS DESK**

Gold price in Pakistan drops Rs 3,600 per tola

Gold prices in Pakistan decreased on Tuesday in line with their loss in the international market. In the local market, gold price per tola reached Rs435,436 after a decline of Rs3,600 during the day.

Similarly, 10-gram gold was sold at Rs373,316 after it fell by Rs3,086, according to rates shared by the All-Pakistan Gems and Jewellers Sarafa Association (APGJSA).

Gold prices in Pakistan saw no change on Monday in line with the trend in the international market. In the local market, gold price per tola remained at Rs439,036.

The international rate of gold declined by \$36 to reach \$4,129 per ounce.

Meanwhile, the price of silver remained unchanged at Rs6,234 per tola. **NEWS DESK**

Exports up 9.09% to Rs 2.34 tr in 1st Quarter

Exports in rupee term increased by 9.09 percent during the first quarter of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

Exports during July-September (2026-27) totaled Rs2,344,984 million as against Rs2,149,566 million during the corresponding period of last year, showing an increase of 9.09%, according to PBS provisional data.

Meanwhile, exports from Pakistan during September, 2026 amounted to Rs.821,198 million as against Rs.703,220 million in August, 2026 and Rs.703,779 million during September, 2025 showing an increase of 16.78% over August, 2026 and of 16.68% over September, 2025.

Main commodities of exports during September, 2026 were knitwear (Rs. 132,590 million), readymade garments (Rs.109,861 million), bed wear (Rs. 80,080 million), cotton cloth (Rs. 41,332 million), rice others (Rs.41,182 million), Basmati rice (Rs. 31,120 million), towels (Rs. 27,851

million), madeup articles, excluding towels and bedwear (Rs.21,378 million), petroleum products, excluding top naphtha (Rs.21,347 million) and Cotton yarn (Rs.18,420 million).

On the other hand, imports during July - September, 2026 totaled Rs. 5,342,562 million as against Rs. 4,803,029 million during the corresponding period of last year, showing an increase of 11.23%.

Main commodities of imports during September, 2026 were petroleum products (Rs. 163,173 million), petroleum crude (Rs. 143,902 million), plastic materials (Rs.87,308 million), iron & steel (Rs.80,950 million), electrical machinery (Rs.77,492 million), iron & steel scrap (Rs.69,062 million), motor cars (cckd/skd) (Rs.68,149 million), raw cotton (Rs.42,040 million) and mobile phone (Rs.39,751 million). **NEWS DESK**



PSX continues bearish run, loses over 814 points

The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued its bearish momentum on Tuesday, shedding 814.44 points, a negative change of 0.49 percent, to close at 165,151.64 points against 165,966.09 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 446.842M shares, compared to 370.941 million shares traded in the previous session, while the traded value decreased slightly to Rs19,426 billion from Rs19,562 billion.

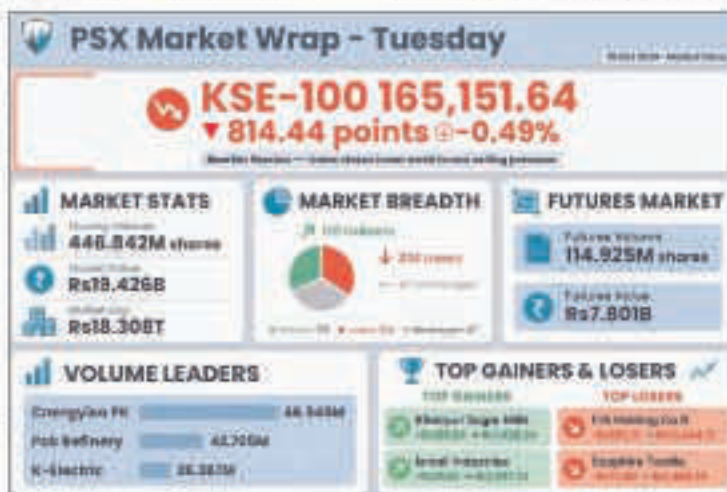
Market capitalization declined to Rs18,308 trillion from Rs18,427 trillion recorded a day earlier.

Out of 499 companies that traded in the ready market, 128 posted gains, 324 suffered losses, while 47 remained unchanged, reflecting a persistent bearish trend in the market.

Energy PK led the volume chart with 46.545 million

shares, followed by Pak Refinery with 42.705 million shares and K-Electric Ltd. with 26.387 million shares.

Among the top gainers, Khaipur Sugar Mills Limited



Textile Mills Limited fell by Rs73.80 to Rs1,484.94.

In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 114.925 million shares with a traded value of Rs7,901 billion, compared with 97.465 million shares worth Rs7,644 billion in the previous session. **NEWS DESK**

SECP sets up SOC to strengthen cyber defences



The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has launched its Security Operations Center (SOC) to protect critical information assets, detect cyber threats at an early stage and enable timely incident response, strengthening the regulator's cybersecurity and operational resilience, read a statement on Tuesday.

The SOC will provide continuous monitoring of SECP's networks, endpoints, servers and private cloud environments, read a statement.

Funded by Karandaz Pakistan, as the implementing agency for the UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), enabled by Inara Technologies, Pakistan, and supported by REWTERZ under a Managed Security Services Provider agreement, the centre will operate in line with recognised international standards and best practices.

Chairman of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), Lieutenant General Muhammad Munir Afsar, inaugurated the SOC and appreciated SECP's initiative, emphasizing the importance of cybersecurity.

During a separate meeting, SECP Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu briefed the NADRA chairman on the commission's IT reforms, infrastructure modernisation, and adoption of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies to improve service delivery and facilitate ease of doing business.

SECP also plans to integrate the Security Operations Centers of Capital Markets Institutions (CMIs) into a sector-wide framework for threat intelligence sharing and coordinated incident response, supporting the regulator's envisioned role as a Sectoral Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Sectoral SOC. **NEWS DESK**

Rupee gains 3 paise against Dollar

Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 3 paise against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 276.87, compared to the previous day's, closing of Rs 276.90.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the dollar's open-market buying and selling rates were Rs 277.55 and Rs 280.25, respectively.

The price of the Euro against the rupee increased by Rs 0.14, closing at Rs 310.56 against the previous day's rate of Rs 310.42, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 1.75, and the British Pound witnessed an increase of Rs 0.62 and closed at Rs 369.49 compared to the previous day's Rs368.87.

The exchange rate of the Emirati Dirham decreased by 1 paise and closed at Rs 75.38, while the Saudi Riyal increased by 02 paise to close at Rs 73.81. **NEWS DESK**

WORLD

DTM

Bibi Gets Cold Shoulder From Vance

Vice President JD Vance declined Monday to endorse Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu for reelection a day after President Donald Trump endorsed the embattled Israeli leader.

"The president has the most influential endorsement in American or international political history," Vance said during an interview with journalist Mark Halperin.

"I endorse American candidates, and that's where I'm focused on the midterms," Vance said, while traveling Monday to campaign for Republican Senate nominee Michael Whatley of North Carolina. "So, I'm not getting involved in Israeli elections."

Vance has campaigned for a foreign leader - then-Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, last spring before the right-wing leader's party lost that country's parliamentary election.

Vance's deference to Trump on Netanyahu comes at an extraordinarily sensitive time for Jewish Americans and the U.S. alliance with Israel. Concerns about antisemitism have surged across the political spectrum ahead of the midterm elections.

Republicans have been eager to portray Democrats, notably Michigan Democratic Senate nominee Abdul El-Sayed, as hostile toward Jews and Israel, while they deal with their own internal schisms.

Vance has faced skepticism from Jewish

Republicans about his commitment to Jewish Americans and the U.S. alliance with Israel.

Last month, Vance spoke privately in Las Vegas to the Republican Jewish Coalition, a leading GOP group committed to advocating for a strong U.S. relationship with Israel and against antisemitism.

Vance left a positive impression on his RJC audience while stopping short of disavowing influential conservative podcast host Tucker Carlson.

Vance has faced general questions about his association with Carlson, a former Fox News host who faced backlash last year for interviewing antisemite Nick Fuentes on his podcast.

In June, Vance sharply criticized members of Israel's government for opposing Trump's efforts to resolve the war with Iran.

In July, Vance said elements of the Israeli government had tried to influence American sentiment to derail negotiations.

"There are some people within their system that we know beyond a shadow of a doubt are manipulating and trying to change American public opinion to keep the war going on indefinitely," Vance said during an appearance on Joe Rogan's podcast. *AP*

Alberta Snubs Split, Delivers Win For Carney



Voters in Canada's oil-rich Alberta province overwhelmingly backed remaining in Canada, with early referendum results Tuesday delivering a boost to Prime Minister Mark Carney's push for national unity amid U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war and annexation threats.

With more than 1.5 million votes counted, 76% supported remaining in Canada, while close to 24% backed beginning a process toward separation, according to unofficial results from Elections Alberta.

The referendum wasn't a direct vote on independence. Approval would have set Alberta on a path toward a future vote on separation from Canada.

"Albertans made a clear choice," Carney said. "They chose unity, to build together, and to take care of each other. Above all, Albertans chose Canada."

Carney said that the result would allow Canadians to move forward together and accelerate efforts to diversify trade, develop major infrastructure projects and make Canada a global energy powerhouse, with Alberta at its center.

Alberta's separatists, however, saw a silver lining.

"We don't have the final results. I think the numbers are going to fluctuate, but it is fair to say that at least a quarter of Albertans feel that Alberta needs to be treated better," said Keith Wilson, a leader of the separatist movement.

Alberta Premier Danielle Smith welcomed the early results, saying they showed widespread support for remaining in Canada.

"Albertans have voted for a stronger Alberta in a united Canada," Smith posted on social media.

Smith, who called the referendum amid pressure from separatists within her governing United Conservative Party, or UCP, despite opposing independence, said that she would address the province Tuesday evening about the results and Alberta's future.

"We are a solid country that's united from coast to coast to coast," Thomas Lukaszuk, a former Alberta deputy premier who led the Forever Canadian campaign against separation, told supporters. *AP*

UK To Send Jets To Defend Saudi Arabia

British fighter jets will help defend Saudi Arabia against "absolutely despicable" attacks from Houthi rebels, Defence Secretary Wes Streeting has said.

RAF Typhoons will fly defensive missions to help protect Saudi cities and critical infrastructure from escalating strikes from the Iran-backed militant group, as the UK extends its military support to the kingdom.

This will be limited to a defensive role rather than supporting Saudi strikes against the Houthis, according to the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

The UK will also send military advisers and an Atlas A400M military transport aircraft to help move equipment within Saudi Arabia.

The move comes after mounting Houthi missile and drone

attacks on Saudi Arabia, with the capital's King Khalid International Airport repeatedly targeted this month.

Streeting said: "The continuing attacks from the Houthis on our

ally Saudi Arabia are absolutely despicable. The targeting of the airport in Riyadh

in particular shows the lengths the Houthis are going to escalate the situation in the region.

"That's why today I have approved further UK military support. RAF Typhoons will fly defensive air missions to help protect

Saudi airspace from drones and missiles. This builds on the UK equipment and personnel we already have in the country to defend against Houthi air attacks."

Prime Minister Andy Burnham last month announced that

British planes would provide defensive

air-to-air refuelling for Saudi jets.

With violence worsening since then, the MoD said it is in the UK's national economic and security interest to halt the Houthis' efforts to destabilise the region.

There are fears the deepening Middle East crisis will add to cost pressures facing British households and disrupt energy supplies.

The Iran-backed Houthis have secured a stranglehold over the Bab al-Mandab strait, a maritime chokepoint on the Red Sea vital for traffic heading to Europe through the Suez Canal. *PA MEDIA*

Australian Lawmaker Hurt In Car Attack Loses Leg

Australian lawmaker Helen Haines has lost a leg after being struck by a car in a deliberate attack, local media said Tuesday.

Political violence is rare in Australia, but law enforcement have documented a steady rise in threats and abuse directed towards the nation's elected officials in recent years.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the attack was a "test of our character" and led an outpouring of support for Haines, widely praised for her efforts to increase transparency in politics and crack down on corruption.

She was hit by a Toyota Land Cruiser outside her office in the town of Wangaratta, just over 200 kilometres (124 miles) northeast of Melbourne, at around 3:35 pm (0435 GMT) on Monday.

Witnesses told national broadcaster ABC they heard a bang and saw a woman pinned between two cars.

She was getting things from the trunk of her car when the attack happened, Albanese said.

The driver did a U-turn to get back to her after passing, he added. *AP*



Japan Blasts Off To Mars' Mysterious Moons

A Japanese spacecraft rocketed toward Mars on Tuesday on a quest to explore its mysterious moons and bring back samples.

Five of the world's space agencies joined forces for the five-year mission that will attempt to land a robotic prospector plus a rover on Phobos, the larger and closer of Mars' two pint-sized moons.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, which is leading the bold sampling effort, launched the spacecraft before dawn from the country's main spaceport on Tanegashima Island. Officials declared success an hour later when the spacecraft separated as planned from the rocket's upper stage. Flight controllers burst into applause and jumped to their feet, shaking hands and embracing.

While NASA has successfully landed nine spacecraft on Mars over the past 50 years and China scored a 2021 touchdown, no one has ever reached

Phobos or its sidekick Deimos. And no one has managed to fetch samples from Mars, let alone its moons.

If successful, bits of dust, soil and rocks from Phobos will arrive on Earth in 2031.

"There's a lot of adrenaline and a lot of excitement and a lot of wow," said NASA astrophysicist Tom Statler, who's involved with the project.

Japan has an edge going in, with two asteroid sample returns already under its cosmic belt.

Phobos is a lumpy, potato-shaped rock just 22 kilometers (14 miles) or so across. Examining pieces of it can explain how Mars' moons - and possibly moons elsewhere - came to be.

Dubbed MMX for Martian Moons Exploration, the \$578 million mission features a hefty 5-ton spacecraft that should reach Mars by late next summer. It will sync up with Phobos' tight orbit around the red planet, before ejecting the French-German rover that's named Idex after the white terrier in the Asterix comics. *AP*



Trump Blames Immigration For France Chaos

US President Donald Trump on Monday again blamed immigration for protests and violence that have rocked France in recent days, urging Europe and French President Emmanuel Macron to tighten borders. "What's happening in France has to do with immigration, not schools, not anything," Trump told reporters in Washington, echoing his comments from the day before. "It's immigration, and I told President Emmanuel Macron, close up your borders."

Weekend demonstrations over soaring prices were held in Paris and other cities, degenerating into some of the worst street violence France has seen in recent years.

Trump recounted a conversation with Macron, telling him "a long time ago, you're making a big mistake in France. You're letting everybody from the world come in. The whole world was coming in."

"Paris is going to be a Muslim city very soon," the 80-year-old Republican added. "If Europe doesn't close its borders and bring the criminals out, like the people that are protesting, Europe is finished." Trump made combating illegal immigration a central pledge of his 2024 campaign, at times relying on false claims that played on racial fears. *AP*

Seoul To Withdraw Ukraine Staff Over POW Row

South Korea's foreign ministry said Tuesday it will withdraw some staff from its embassy in Ukraine, as a diplomatic row deepens over the transfer of North Korean prisoners of war to Seoul.

The announcement came more than a week after South Korea's ambassador to Ukraine returned home following President Volodymyr Zelensky's disclosure of the prisoner transfer last month, which Seoul said put their families in North Korea at risk.

The recall of Seoul's ambassador to Ukraine has met with "no positive response from the Ukrainian side", Park Doo-soon, the spokesperson for Seoul's foreign ministry, told reporters Tuesday.

And in "light of the persistent threat of air strikes throughout the country, which makes ensuring the safety of personnel difficult, the government has decided to withdraw some of its diplomatic mission staff", Park Doo-soon, the spokesperson for Seoul's foreign ministry said.

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung has demanded an official apology over the prisoner revelation. *AP*



SPORTS

Dream Cash In On Valkyries' Disaster

Angel Reese stole the ball from Kaila Charles and began dribbling when Tiffany Hayes tried to regain possession, fouled the Atlanta center and sent her to the floor. The Dream star repeatedly slapped her right hand on the court, finding yet another way to fire up her team.

Golden State's miscues kept coming, and Atlanta kept capitalizing - scoring 24 points off 19 turnovers to beat the Valkyries 79-65 in Game 2 of the WNBA Finals on Monday night and even the best-of-seven series at 1-all as it shifts to Atlanta.

"I think we were just a little too loose with the ball," Valkyries point guard Veronica Burton said. "Obviously that's what they're known for, and we're known for the opposite. It starts with me, I can't just be throwing the ball. It's one of the most important things is taking care of it and so I think just being organized, all being on the same page and then in fast break not getting too sped up, being decisive. I think we had a lot of times where we were hesitant or we weren't on the same page and that's where it led to turnovers."

Four of the five Golden State starters had two or more turnovers, with Kayla Thornton the only starter without one.

Rhyne Howard set a WNBA Finals single-game record with six steals and DeWanna Bonner chipped in four more off the bench. And Reese finished with 30 points and 16 rebounds.

Burton thought her team was outthrust by the determined Dream, who head home for Game 3 on Wednesday night. She committed three turnovers.

"You could tell that they ramped up their defense, so we've just got to stay focused, stay locked in," Golden State center Kiah Stokes said.

Valkyries coach Natalie Nakase credited the Dream for "their effort, their hustle, their fight," sprinting back on defense, getting their hands up and clogging the driving lanes. **AP**

UEFA Confronts FIFA Over Infantino

UEFA has sent a letter to FIFA seeking answers about Gianni Infantino's presidency, including questions over the FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE) project and the FIFA Peace Prize, by November 2, British media reported on Monday.

UEFA has led calls for Infantino to resign since he proposed the now-abandoned FFE project, which involved creating a company to run the commercial interests of FIFA competitions, including the World Cup, and selling a minority stake to private investors. The 756-year-old, who is up for reelection next year, apologized to the FIFA Council last week and told

attendees to submit any questions they had about his governance in writing so he could answer them at the next meeting on December 16.

However, Sky Sports and other British media reported on Monday that UEFA General Secretary Theodore Theodoridis had written to his FIFA counterpart Mattias Grefstrom seeking a swift response to 42 questions covering 12 topics.

"These questions require answers now," Theodoridis wrote.

"They cannot be deferred until the next meeting of the FIFA Council - nor can future governance reforms substitute for scrutiny of decisions already taken and accountability for them." **REUTERS**

Salah Scores in Trabzon's 2-0 Victory Over Besiktas

Mohamed Salah scored a goal in Trabzonspor's 2-0 victory over visiting Besiktas in the Turkish Super Lig today, Monday.

Ozan Tufan gave the home side Trabzon the lead in the 21st minute with a direct shot from inside the penalty area after following up on a rebound.

Salah scored the goal to secure the win with a low shot from inside the penalty area after a counter-attack in the 72nd minute.

The former Liverpool winger moved to the top of the league's scoring chart with eight goals. Trabzon raised its tally to 16 points in fourth place, one position and one point ahead of Besiktas. Galatasaray leads the standings with 19 points after eight matches. **REUTERS**

Thigh Injury Forces Swiatek Out Of Ningbo

Iga Swiatek has withdrawn from the Ningbo Open in China because of an injured left thigh, diminishing her chances of contesting the season-ending WTA Finals at Indian Wells next month. The six-time major winner lost to eventual champion Maja Chwalinska in the semifinals at the Wuhan Open last week and struggled at times in that match. "After careful consideration, I've decided to withdraw from the tournament," Swiatek said in a statement posted on social media Tuesday by the Ningbo tournament. "I've been experiencing an ongoing problem with my left thigh over the past weeks and I feel that giving myself the time to rest and recover is the right decision." **AP**



Portugal Ban Ronaldo 30 Days

Cristiano Ronaldo was suspended for 30 days by the Portuguese FA on Monday after leaving the national team camp following a rift with coach Jorge Jesus over his role in the side. The federation's disciplinary council said it had upheld the charge against the 41-year-old forward in full and imposed a fine of 255 euros (\$285.83). Ronaldo left Portugal's base in Copenhagen before their Nations League match against Denmark earlier this month, having accused Jesus of twice breaking his word about his role after he was an unused substitute against Norway. Jesus denied making any agreement with Ronaldo but left the door open for his return following Portugal's 2-1 win. The disciplinary council's non-professional section found Ronaldo had intentionally committed an offence under Article 160(1) of the Federation's disciplinary regulations. **REUTERS**



Spurs Finally Win In Premier League

Tottenham Hotspur fans have been crying out for a bit of quality this season and they finally got it on Monday as the North London side claimed their first Premier League win in 148 days with a 3-1 home success against Coventry City.

Tottenham are the last of the 92 clubs in England's football league to earn a victory this season and move off the bottom of the Premier League standings and into 16th with six points from seven games, one place ahead of Coventry.

"We are very happy for the result and we played much better than in other games. It was important to get this win," Tottenham manager Roberto De Zerbi said. James Maddison started for the first time since May 2025 and marked the occasion with a superb opening goal that had the home faithful off their seats.

But there was even better to come as Omar Marmoush netted his first for the club since his move from Manchester City with a rasping drive from 25 yards, before Ben Davies added a late third. "We knew we wanted to win and today was the day, so hopefully we can kick on from here," defender Jan Paul van Hecke said. "We needed to be patient. It was not an easy game for us with Coventry's low (defensive) block."

Perhaps the biggest cheer of the night came when winger Dejan Kulusevski was introduced off the bench on his return from a lengthy injury spell that was ended with his first competitive action in 526 days. A first win of the season, the return of key players and a little more swagger in the side made this a potential turning point in the season for Tottenham, who had only scored three goals in the campaign before Monday's win. Having spent upwards of 308 million pounds (\$409.70 million) in the last transfer window as part of a major rebuilding project under manager De Zerbi, there were finally signs of improvement for the side following last season's brush with relegation.

The question is now whether they can find consistency. Next up for Tottenham is an away trip to Chelsea. **REUTERS**

