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Pakistan enters space

■ Zeeshan Ali says he carries the hopes of 250m Pakistanis ■ Shenzhou-24 lifts off from China's Jiuquan launch centre





Zeeshan Ali was named a crew member of China's Shenzhou-24 space mission on Tuesday, which is scheduled to launch on November 25, with Ali set to become the first Pakistani to undertake an orbital space mission.

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, who is in China, referred to Ali on X as "Pakistan's first astronaut". Ali will also be the first foreign national to board Beijing's Tiangong space station, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) announced.

"Pakistani astronaut Mohammad Zeeshan Ali is the first foreign national to visit Tiangong," CMSA Spokesperson Zhang Jingbo said during a press conference.

And the Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said the Pakistani astronaut was also the first international crew member to join China's manned space programme.

Jingbo said that the Long March-2F rocket that will carry the crew into space will soon be filled with propellant. "The crew is in good condition and the space station is functioning normally, meeting all requirements for the mission," said Zhang.

According to the CMSA, the Pakistani astronaut will serve as a payload specialist during the mission and return aboard the Shenzhou-23 spacecraft, which docked with the Tiangong space station in May. The crewed spaceship is scheduled to be launched at 8:18am (Beijing Time and 5:18am Pakistan Time) on Wednesday from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China.

Ali is expected to spend around a week in space, conducting various experiments alongside the Chinese crew. CMSA said that during the mission, the crew will conduct around 90 experiments. The Chinese space agency said the mission's objectives included conducting an orbital rotation with the crew of the earlier Shenzhou-23 mission, carrying out routine operations and maintenance of the Chinese space station, and continuing space science research, including experiments involving space payloads. Speaking at a press briefing in Jiuquan, Ali said he was "deeply grateful" to the Chinese government for helping "us realise our dream of going into space". He said he arrived at the Astronaut Centre of China a few months ago, carrying with him the hopes of 250 million Pakistani people.

Detailing his experience in China, he said what he gained had far exceeded his initial expectations. "First, I have acquired space flight skills. The management, staff and instructors at the Astronaut Centre of China have provided me with comprehensive training [...] Day after day, I take another step upward." Moreover, he continued, "I have learned the Chinese language and developed a friendship with my Chinese colleagues. Now, I can communicate with my Chinese crewmates in Chinese."

'A moment that belongs to every Pakistani': Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif took to X to wish the crew his best for Wednesday's liftoff.

"Today, Pakistan will look to the skies with anticipation, pride and deep gratitude," he said, adding that as the Shenzhou-24 prepared to carry a Pakistani astronaut to Tiangong Space Station, the nation stood on the "threshold of a historic first".

"It is a moment that belongs to every Pakistani," he wrote and paid tribute to Suparco as well as academic institutions, scientists, the armed forces and national institutions whose efforts reflected "Pakistan's growing capabilities and our determination to reach new frontiers in space exploration and scientific advancement".

President Asif Ali Zardari also congratulated the nation on "historic" participation in the Chinese mission, calling it a "landmark achievement" and a "moment of immense national pride", according to a statement issued by his office. He said the mission reflected Pakistan's "growing commitment to science, research and technological advancement", lauding the role of Suparco, Pakistani scientists and China's cooperation. President Zardari expressed hope that the mission would open new horizons for Pakistan's space programme and the scientific experiments undertaken during the mission would contribute to advancing research and knowledge. NEWS DESK

Fazl holds ground in Lahore as 'siege' ends

■ JUI-F chief says 'state siege' kept me from LHCBA seminar ■ Section 144 imposed in Lahore



Police began removing barriers around Maulana Fazlur Rehman's place of stay in Lahore on Tuesday evening, with the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief claiming he had been put under an hours-long "state siege" to restrict his movement.

In a post at 10:40am, JUI-F said Fazl reached Lahore on Monday night and was scheduled to address lawyers at a seminar at the invitation of the Lahore High Court Bar Association (LHCBA). However, due to police deployment, he was restricted from leaving his accommodation, JUI-F said.

JUI-F spokesperson Hafiz Ghazanfar Aziz said police began removing the hurdles by 7pm and informed Fazl that he was free to leave. However, the senior politician decided to stay in the city for the night.

Aziz condemned the alleged government action, calling it an attack on civil liberties and constitutional rights.

A city police officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity, also confirmed that police began "removing the barriers" by evening.

Meanwhile, a plea challenging the alleged "siege" of Fazl's place of stay was filed in the Lahore High Court (LHC). On the other hand, the district administration also placed a three-day ban on public gatherings and "unlawful assemblies".

In an earlier video message, the JUI-F chief alleged that he was under a "state siege" and that roadblocks and checkpoints across Lahore were preventing him from attending a multi-party seminar organised by the LHCBA.

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Centre stands firmly behind KP in anti-terror fight: PM

■ Premier bars ministers from public criticism of cabinet colleagues ■ KP governor briefs President Zardari on security ■ Shehbaz pledges AJK uplift



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday assured KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi of all possible cooperation on behalf of the federal government for the complete eradication of terrorism, durable peace and the welfare of the public in the province. The premier made these remarks as he met with Kundi in Islamabad on Tuesday, according to a statement by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

During the meeting, he said that the sacrifices of the security forces and KP police in the war against terrorism in the province would not go in vain.

The federal government would continue to "fully support the implementation of the decisions taken at the apex committee meeting to completely eliminate terrorism", he was quoted as saying.

He reaffirmed the federal government's commitment to providing full support for the development of KP and the welfare of its people, saying that all possible resources would be mobilised to provide them with healthcare, education and other basic facilities, according to the PMO.

The premier directed that special attention be given to improving social development indicators in KP, including healthcare and education.

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Balochistan announces Rs 250m bounty on wanted terrorists

■ Three terrorists killed in Bannu operation ■ Five TTP miltants eliminated in Peshawar

The Balochistan government has announced rewards ranging from Rs500,000 to Rs250 million for providing authentic information about most-wanted terrorists in the province.

According to an official advertisement issued by the provincial government, a reward of Rs250m has been fixed for information about Bashir Zeb of the banned Balochistan Liberation Army and Abdul Rehman alias Rehman Gul. Balochistan Home Affairs Adviser Babar Yousafzai affirmed that the provincial government was determined to eradicate terrorism and protect the lives and properties of citizens.

The list of most-wanted terrorists and the announcement of rewards were, therefore, part of the ongoing government measures against terrorism. Yousafzai stressed that public cooperation was of utmost importance in the war against terrorism. The adviser appealed to the public to contact the relevant institutions of the government if they had any authentic information regarding the wanted terrorists.

He said the identity of informants would be kept anonymous, and immediate action would be taken against the terrorists. Payment of rewards would be made according to the rules and regulations fixed by the government. Separately, security forces, Bannu Police and the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) killed three militants linked to the Zargul alias Uncle group during a major joint operation in different areas of Bannu district. The operation, titled Operation Sarbulandi, targeted militant hideouts in Gharira Shah Jahan, Kangar and adjoining villages, according to a statement issued by the Director Public Relations, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police.

The joint forces also recovered weapons and ammunition and detained several suspected individuals and alleged facilitators during the operation.

Police officials said the slain militants belonged to a local faction of a banned militant organisation led by Zargul alias Uncle. One of those killed was reportedly his nephew. Police alleged that the group was involved in attacks on police personnel, security forces, members of local peace committees and civilians. Its members were also accused of extortion, looting and other serious crimes. Moreover, five terrorists were killed during an intelligence-based operation conducted by the counter-terrorism department (CTD) in the Badaber area of Peshawar, while a TTP commander and two to three of his associates managed to escape, the department said in a statement on Tuesday.

According to the statement, the operation was conducted at Janna Khor Meera Bachakhel in the jurisdiction of Badaber police station after the CTD received credible intelligence that Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) commander Taj Muhammad alias Sheenay, son of Almas and a resident of Tirah, Khyber district, was present in the area along with other armed associates. The terrorists were planning attacks on law enforcement agencies, it added. NEWS DESK

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Traffic mess around PIDC junction due to road closure

Commuters in Karachi's Saddar area faced traffic congestion on Tuesday after authorities closed some roads around the PIDC junction for a few hours in response to a sit-in call by the Sindh Indus Lawyers Forum (SILF). In an alert issued at 1:16pm, Karachi Traffic Police said both roads from PIDC Chowk towards the State Life Building, as well as Dr Ziauddin Ahmed Road, were closed to traffic.



In an update at around 6pm, the traffic police said the cut from PIDC Chowk towards State Life Building and both sides of Dr Ziauddin Ahmed Road have been reopened to commuters.

As an alternative route, traffic was previously being diverted from PIDC Chowk towards Club Road and from the State Life Building towards Beaumont Road. According to a statement issued by SILF, lawyers staged a sit-in outside the Sindh High Court.

They also staged a rally from Shahrah-i-Liaquat towards CM House through Court Road, Sindh Secretariat Chowk, Sindh Assembly and Aiwan-i-Sadr Road.

The forum has put forward 16 demands under the banner of 'Sindh Demands', including opposition to the division of Sindh and the construction of Jalalpur Canal.

The protest call comes as a debate over a "system reset" in the country has intensified over the past few months. In July, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi stirred a political storm by calling for the creation of new administrative units, arguing that the current system of governance had "collapsed" and needed a "reset".

The PML-N-led federal government has insisted on holding a referendum across the country on the establishment of new provinces or administrative units.

However, the suggestion has faced severe backlash from its ally PPP, with party chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari saying that any "forced" attempt to divide provinces, particularly Sindh, could lead to bloodshed.

SILF said its demands also include "opposition to constitutional amendments and the proposed amendment", apparently referring to the 26th and 27th Amendments, though no new amendment has been officially proposed.

Moreover, SILF's demands, according to its statement, include stopping alleged irregularities in the Sindh Public Service Commission and alleged government intervention in lawyers' bars. "Corporate farming and mining in Karoonjhar mountain should be stopped and political prisoners should be released," SILF further said.

On Sunday, a large number of people from across Sindh took to the streets of Karachi in a rally organised by the Jeay Sindh Rahbar Committee, an alliance of four nationalist parties, to protest against any plan for the creation of new provinces or administrative units in Sindh. NEWS DESK

SBCA orders demolition of illegal constructions across Karachi

Director General of the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA), Dr Wasim Shamshad, has ordered the immediate identification and demolition of illegal constructions, unauthorised structures and additional floors across all 25 towns of Karachi, warning that no violation of building regulations will be tolerated.

He also warned that strict departmental action would be taken against officials found facilitating, supporting or allowing illegal construction activities. The directives were issued during a high-level meeting chaired by the SBCA chief on Tuesday, attended by Additional Directors General, directors of all 25 towns and heads of the Demolition, Vigilance, Technical Committee for Dangerous Buildings (TCDB), Structure, Administration and One Window departments, along with other senior officials.

The meeting decided to hold daily review sessions on all working days at the authority's conference room to monitor progress on illegal constructions, the condition of dangerous buildings across Karachi and the ongoing demolition operation at Gul Plaza.



According to an official statement, all Additional Directors General, Town Directors and relevant departmental heads have been directed to ensure their attendance at the daily meetings.

Town Directors, Directors of Vigilance and Demolition, and the Director of Structure have specifically been instructed to present updated progress reports and comprehensive performance details during these sessions.

The meeting also reviewed demolition operations underway at various locations across Karachi, with particular attention to the ongoing operation at Gul Plaza. In addition to enforcement measures, participants discussed a roadmap for digitising various challans, expediting the resolution of public complaints received through the Smart Complaint Redressal Mechanism (SCRM) portal and improving coordination with the Association of Builders and Developers (ABAD).

Dr Wasim Shamshad directed the relevant departments to ensure timely implementation of these measures and strengthen the authority's administrative and operational efficiency. He also instructed officials to arrange effective media coverage of the SBCA's enforcement operations and departmental performance to keep the public informed about the authority's activities. The SBCA chief reiterated that action against illegal constructions would remain a priority and that accountability would also extend to officials responsible for negligence or violations of their professional duties. NEWS DESK

New KU facility to promote research in poultry

The University of Karachi (KU) has strengthened its industry-academia collaboration by establishing a mini-feed mill facility, named the Shaikh Muhammad Anwer Animal Nutrition Research Facility (SMAANRF), under its Department of Physiology's BS Poultry Science Programme in partnership with Sind Feed and Allied Products (SFAP).

The facility, with a production capacity of up to five tons of finished feed products, was formally handed over to the BS Poultry Science Programme on Tuesday at a ceremony held at the Vice Chancellor Secretariat under the chairmanship of KU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Wasim Qazi. The project follows a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Department of Physiology and SFAP in October 2025, under which the company agreed to install the mini-feed mill on the university campus.

The facility will enable students to complete at least 80 hours of supervised practical training and project work as part of their laboratory curriculum during the four-year degree programme.



Speaking at the ceremony, Coordinator of the BS Poultry Science Programme Professor Dr Taseer Ahmed Khan said the initiative was aimed at bridging the gap between classroom learning and practical industry experience through collaborative research and technical training in animal and poultry nutrition.

He described the facility as one of the first industry-supported projects of its kind established within a university in Pakistan.

He said students would gain hands-on experience in feed formulation, processing techniques, quality assessment and modern manufacturing practices. In the second phase, a flock of 2,000 broiler chicks would be introduced to enable students to study the relationship between feed composition, nutrition, growth performance and poultry health under practical conditions.

SFAP Production Manager Dr Munawar Hussain said the partnership would support the academic and research objectives of SMAANRF by creating opportunities to develop indigenous feed formulations, evaluate alternative raw materials and conduct applied research in animal, dairy and poultry nutrition. NEWS DESK

Pakistan, Aga Khan Trust plan revamp of National Museum

The Federal Government and Aga Khan institutions have taken a significant step towards the revitalisation of the National Museum in Karachi, with a comprehensive proposal presented to transform it into a modern cultural institution focused on heritage preservation, research, education, tourism and public engagement.

The proposal was discussed during a meeting between Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi and a high-level delegation from Aga Khan University (AKU) and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) at the National Heritage and Culture Division. Appreciating the detailed planning and efforts of the Aga Khan institutions, the Federal Minister described the proposed initiative as an important opportunity to strengthen Pakistan's cultural landscape and promote its rich historical heritage.

He said the transformation of the National Museum into a modern cultural institution could provide an important platform for showcasing the country's historical legacy while expanding opportunities for research, education and public access to cultural resources.

The minister emphasised the importance of public-private partnerships in advancing major cultural projects and assured the government's support in facilitating the proposed initiative.

He also appreciated the vision of combining heritage conservation with contemporary museum facilities, research activities and educational programmes. He stressed that the project should move forward through close coordination between the government and Aga Khan institutions, with due consideration given to its financial, legal and institutional framework.

Presenting the proposal, Luis Monreal, General Manager of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, outlined a comprehensive plan for restoring and revitalising the National Museum through modern infrastructure and specialised facilities. The proposed project envisages upgrading the existing museum building, establishing general and specialised conservation laboratories, introducing paper conservation and digitisation facilities, and improving storage arrangements.

It also includes plans for a dedicated research centre and library, educational programmes, curriculum-linked school visits, public engagement initiatives and improved visitor facilities. The proposed visitor amenities include a modern entrance hall, café, museum shop and enhanced online presence to improve accessibility and the overall visitor experience.

The plan also emphasises the recruitment and development of a professionally trained team to manage the museum and oversee its specialised operations.

Welcoming the delegation, Federal Secretary for National Heritage and Culture Asad Rehman Gilani appreciated the involvement of Dr Sulaiman Shahabuddin, President of Aga Khan University, in cultural initiatives. He highlighted the role of public-private partnerships in heritage preservation, saying collaboration between the government and leading academic and cultural institutions could make an important contribution to protecting and promoting Pakistan's historical legacy. To advance the proposal, the Federal Secretary suggested allocating three months to finalise funding arrangements and examine the project's legal requirements.

It was also proposed that two separate teams comprising representatives of the government and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture be constituted to review and finalise the financial and legal aspects of the initiative.

The Aga Khan delegation included Dr Sulaiman Shahabuddin, President of Aga Khan University; Luis Monreal, General Manager of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture; Professor Anjum Halai, Vice Provost of Aga Khan University; and Professor Shahzad Bashir, Dean of the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations at Aga Khan University.

The meeting was also attended by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Huzaifa Rehman, Director General of the Department of Archaeology and Museums Syeda Tanzeela Sabahat, and Amanullah.

The proposed collaboration aims to give Karachi's National Museum a renewed role as a centre for heritage conservation, research, education and cultural tourism, while improving public access to Pakistan's historical and cultural assets. NEWS DESK



Petroleum dealers threaten strike over pricing mechanism

The Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) has threatened to suspend operations across the country if the government fails to introduce a system under which fuel prices remain unchanged for 30 days, on Tuesday.

Addressing a joint press conference at the Karachi Press Club on Monday, the PPDA officials said the government has been given 15 days to resolve the issue.

They warned that daily changes in petroleum prices are rapidly depleting the working capital of petrol pump owners. If their capital ran out, petrol pumps could run out of fuel. This, they said, may potentially create a law-and-order situation.

The association demanded that the government immediately increase dealers' profit margins to 8.0%. It also claimed that refineries have reduced petrol and diesel supplies, while one refinery has completely suspended diesel supplies. The representatives said petroleum dealers collectively deposit Rs5.74 billion into the national exchequer every day. They added that the government has previously promised to increase dealers' margins and should honour its commitment.

PPDA Chairperson Malik Khuda Bakhsh said daily adjustments in petroleum prices has become unbearable for dealers and warned that if the situation continued, dealers will face severe financial difficulties, potentially forcing petrol pumps to shut down. He urged the government to introduce a 30-day pricing mechanism. Bakhsh further pointed out that refineries and oil marketing companies already have the benefit of a 30-day pricing mechanism, adding that petroleum dealers should also be given the same facility.

He said the association fully supported the government's digitalisation and deregulation initiatives and is willing to cooperate with the proposed reforms. However, he stressed that dealers must be consulted before petroleum prices are deregulated. He also called for the PPDA to be included in the petroleum policymaking process. According to Bakhsh, an earlier meeting with the petroleum minister resulted in an understanding that dealers would be consulted during the formulation of policies. He maintained that the authority to determine petroleum product prices should remain with the government and that no petroleum-related policy or decision should be made without consulting dealers. NEWS DESK

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Balochistan youth to benefit from digital reform: CM Bugti



Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said that merit-based opportunities, transparency and modern technology are essential for integrating the province's youth into the national mainstream and ensuring their participation in the country's socioeconomic development.

He said the provincial government was taking practical measures to keep Balochistan aligned with global technological advancements by promoting digitalisation, innovation and technology-driven governance.

Speaking at the inauguration of the National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) Data Centre in Quetta on Tuesday, the Chief Minister highlighted the growing importance of Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital systems and advanced technologies in shaping the modern world.

He said Balochistan was also embracing technological change through reforms aimed at improving governance, strengthening institutions and ensuring transparency in public-sector operations.

Bugti described the establishment of the province's first data centre as an important milestone in Balochistan's digital development. He appreciated the Federal Government and the NTC for bringing the state-of-the-art facility to Quetta, terming it a significant addition to the province's technological infrastructure.

"The world is rapidly moving towards Artificial Intelligence, digitalisation and technology-driven governance. It is essential for Balochistan to adapt to these modern requirements and ensure that its people are not left behind," he said.

Reflecting on the pace of technological advancement, the Chief Minister recalled how his generation had witnessed a transition from traditional learning tools, such as writing slates, to modern digital tablets, illustrating the scale of technological transformation taking place globally.

He emphasised that merit, transparency and effective action against corruption were essential to providing equal opportunities to young people. He said the provincial government was pursuing institutional reforms and adopting modern technologies to ensure that talented individuals could advance on the basis of merit rather than personal influence or favouritism.

Highlighting the government's digital governance agenda, Bugti directed the Secretary of the Information Technology Department to maintain close coordination with the NTC and the Federal Government to develop a unified framework for digitising and securely storing data from all provincial government departments.

He stressed that protecting government information and official communications was particularly important from a national security perspective, adding that the highest standards of cybersecurity and data protection must be maintained to safeguard sensitive records and digital assets.

The Chief Minister said the establishment of a modern data centre in Quetta offered the provincial administration an opportunity to centralise, secure and efficiently manage government information through advanced technological systems. He also expressed the provincial government's interest in strengthening cooperation with the NTC and expanding collaboration with other data centres operating across the country.

Bugti thanked the NTC team and the Federal Government for establishing the facility and inviting him to its inauguration. He expressed confidence that continued cooperation between federal and provincial institutions would strengthen digital governance, enhance institutional capacity and improve public service delivery across Balochistan.

Earlier, the Chief Minister formally inaugurated the NTC Data Centre and visited various sections of the facility. He was briefed on its operations, infrastructure and role in supporting the province's digital transformation agenda. NEWS DESK

Bangladesh's Speaker Hafizuddin Ahmed arrives in Pakistan



Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Tuesday warmly welcomed Hafiz Uddin Ahmad, Bir Bikram, Speaker of the Bangladesh Parliament, upon his arrival in Pakistan along with a high-level parliamentary delegation.

The visit is being undertaken at the special invitation of Ayaz Sadiq, said a news release.

The visit marks a historic milestone in parliamentary diplomacy between Pakistan and Bangladesh, as it is the first-ever visit to Pakistan by a Speaker of the Bangladesh Parliament. The visit is expected to open new avenues of parliamentary cooperation and further strengthen the longstanding bonds of friendship between the two brotherly countries.

Speaking on the occasion, Ayaz Sadiq said that the arrival of the Bangladesh parliamentary delegation marked a new beginning in parliamentary relations between the two countries.

He warmly welcomed the Speaker and members of the delegation, expressing his pleasure at hosting them in Pakistan.

Ayaz Sadiq said that Pakistan and Bangladesh share deep-rooted historical and cultural ties, which provide a strong foundation for enhanced bilateral cooperation.

The Speaker emphasized that strengthening parliamentary linkages would play a vital role in further consolidating bilateral relations.

He said that exchanges of parliamentary delegations and regular high-level interactions would provide valuable opportunities for both sides to benefit from each other's parliamentary experiences and promote mutual understanding and cooperation.

Hafiz Uddin Ahmad, Bir Bikram expressed his gratitude to Ayaz Sadiq for the warm and gracious welcome. He said that visiting Pakistan was both a pleasure and an honour for him and that his arrival had revived fond memories of the past. NEWS DESK

Naqvi visits FC HQ, police lines in Peshawar



Federal Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday visited the Federal Constabulary (FC) Headquarters and police lines in Peshawar, where he addressed a farewell ceremony for 34 police officers of the 49th Common who completed their posting tenure with the FC.

Addressing the officers, the interior minister said young police officers were a valuable asset of the country and nation.

He appreciated their dedication, enthusiasm and professional skills demonstrated during their service with the Federal Constabulary.

The interior minister said the nation had high expectations from young police officers and urged them to live up to public aspirations while discharging their professional responsibilities.

He asked them to take on their new assignments with renewed commitment and determination.

"Go to every possible extent to provide justice to the oppressed and never spare the oppressors under any circumstances," he emphasized.

Earlier, the interior minister inaugurated the Safwat Block at the FC Headquarters and visited its meeting halls, offices and gymnasium. He also inspected newly inducted armoured vehicles and buses of the Federal Constabulary.

Inspector General Federal Constabulary Nazir Ahmed Gara briefed the interior minister on the institution's facilities, operational capabilities and ongoing initiatives. NEWS DESK

Govt to strengthen cybersecurity framework: Shaza



Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja has stressed the need to strengthen Pakistan's cybersecurity infrastructure and enhance public awareness, warning that rapidly evolving cyber threats pose growing challenges to digital security.

Addressing the opening ceremony of PAK-CRYPT - International Symposium on Cybersecurity 2026, themed "Advancing Cybersecurity Innovation, Research and Skills Development", at Air University on Tuesday, the minister said cybersecurity had become an integral part of every aspect of modern life.

She said the government had invested billions of rupees in establishing the National Cyber Security Academy and the National Cyber Security Centre, while introducing policies and initiatives to strengthen the country's overall cybersecurity framework.

The minister expressed hope that the Higher Education Commission (HEC) would establish similar cybersecurity operations centres at other universities to promote research, develop technical expertise and strengthen institutional preparedness against emerging cyber threats.

Highlighting the government's digital transformation agenda, Shaza Fatima said the Digital Nation Pakistan Act had been passed and the relevant authority established, while work on digital governance was progressing under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

She revealed that 92 per cent of government payments, amounting to Rs3.7 billion over the past few months, had been processed digitally. She added that the government was also working towards establishing a national data registry to strengthen digital governance and improve the management of public-sector information. "The government is now operating through e-office, and government operations have become digital," she said, reiterating the commitment to advancing the Prime Minister's Digital Nation Pakistan vision.

The minister observed that recent cybersecurity developments across the world had raised serious concerns and highlighted the need for stronger digital protection mechanisms.

She said that while technological advancements were creating new opportunities, malicious actors were also becoming increasingly sophisticated, making cybersecurity preparedness essential for individuals, institutions and governments.

Emphasising the role of technology in national development, she said modern digital solutions were important not only for economic growth but also for achieving sustainable development.

Shaza Fatima said Pakistan had made considerable progress in cybersecurity and was among the leading countries in the field. Referring to the country's achievements during Marka-e-Haq, she said progress on the cybersecurity front had contributed to strengthening national confidence.

The minister announced that the government would implement an Information Security Framework across all institutions to improve protection against cyber threats and strengthen the security of official information and digital systems. NEWS DESK

Punjab govt reaffirms commitment to minority rights, religious freedom



Punjab Minister for Minorities Affairs, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora on Tuesday said that the provincial government was committed to safeguarding minority rights, ensuring religious freedom and preserving the historical religious heritage of minority communities across the province.

Addressing the concluding ceremony of the 557th birth anniversary celebrations of Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji at Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Nankana Sahib, he said Pakistan held exceptional spiritual significance for the Sikh community, as several of its most sacred religious sites were located in the country.

He added Pakistan was a sacred land for Sikhs and the Sikh community worldwide had a longstanding desire to visit its holy places, particularly Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur.

The minister also urged India to immediately reopen the Kartarpur Corridor, saying Sikh devotees around the world wanted access to their sacred religious site to perform their religious obligations and pay homage to their spiritual heritage.

He said facilitating religious pilgrimages was essential for promoting interfaith harmony, mutual understanding and people-to-people contacts between communities.

Appreciating the role of the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), the provincial minister said the board was making efforts to protect minority religious places, restore historic Gurdwaras and provide facilities to visiting pilgrims.

He appreciated ETPB Chairman Qamar Zaman for ensuring arrangements for the accommodation, transportation, food, medical assistance and security of thousands of Sikh pilgrims attending the birth anniversary celebrations. He said the preservation of religious heritage and provision of facilities to pilgrims reflected the importance of religious freedom and peaceful coexistence.

The minister said the ETPB's efforts to protect, preserve and maintain minority places of worship would help safeguard the country's rich religious heritage for future generations.

He also appreciated the government and ETPB administration for facilitating Sikh pilgrims from across the world and making comprehensive arrangements for the successful conclusion of the birth anniversary celebrations.

The 557th birth anniversary celebrations of Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji concluded at Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Nankana Sahib, with the participation of Sikh pilgrims and religious leaders from Pakistan and abroad.

The Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) made comprehensive arrangements for the reception, accommodation, meals, transportation, medical facilities and security of the pilgrims. ETPB Secretary Nasir Mushtaq personally supervised the arrangements, while board officers and staff remained engaged in providing services round the clock. Special Siropas were also presented to the distinguished guests.

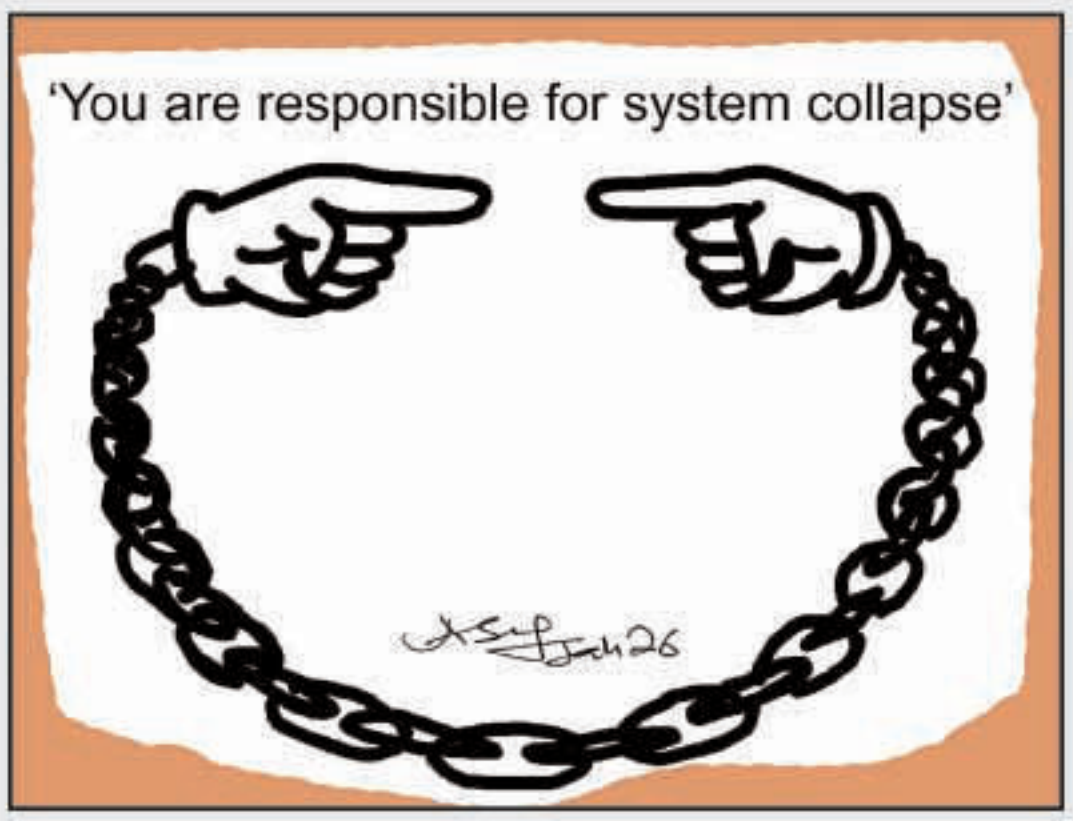
Meanwhile, former chief minister Hamza Shehbaz Sharif called for strengthening bonds of love and brotherhood between the Muslim and Sikh communities, saying all citizens, irrespective of their religion, enjoyed equal rights in Pakistan.

He said the teachings of Baba Guru Nanak promoted love, peace, equality, selfless service and respect for humanity.

He said the message of love had become more important in a world facing conflicts, adding that dialogue and mutual understanding were essential to resolving disputes. NEWS DESK

EDITORIAL

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Time to seize maritime opportunity

The US-Iran conflict has disrupted shipping routes and increased pressure on regional trade, but it has also created an opportunity for Pakistan to strengthen its ports and attract international shipping companies. The government appears keen to turn this crisis into an economic advantage by making Karachi, Port Qasim and Gwadar more attractive for global trade. A committee led by Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry has introduced several changes to remove obstacles that have discouraged shipping companies from using Pakistani ports. These include reducing port charges, easing customs procedures and improving cargo handling. One important step allows transshipment cargo to be stored at off-dock terminals, reducing pressure on port facilities. Customs authorities have also replaced compulsory scanning of all containers with a risk-based inspection system. This could make Pakistani ports more competitive. The government has also allowed auctioned containers to be shifted to licensed off-dock facilities and introduced arrangements for less-than-container-load transshipment, allowing smaller shipments to be combined and processed for onward delivery. Gwadar Port has handled more than a dozen vessels carrying around 200,000 tonnes of cargo in just three months, exceeding its activity during the previous three years.

These developments offer Pakistan a rare chance to increase its share of regional and international trade. The government estimates that each transshipment container could generate around $150 in wider economic activity. It aims to attract an additional 500,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) within one to three years and potentially reach one million within five years. Plans for an automobile import and re-export zone and an energy city for petroleum storage outside the Strait of Hormuz could further strengthen the country's maritime position. However, policymakers must understand that temporary shipping disruptions alone cannot guarantee long-term success. Shipping companies will not shift their operations to Pakistan simply because other regional routes face difficulties. They need lower costs, reliable services, transparent charges, modern facilities and consistent government policies. Complaints about emergency and war-risk surcharges must also be addressed fairly.

Pakistan celebrates rice export boom

Pakistan's rice exports have recorded an impressive increase during the first four months of the current fiscal year, offering welcome news for the country's struggling economy. Exports rose by 353,000 tonnes to reach 1.351 million tonnes between July and October 2026, reflecting strong international demand for both Basmati and non-Basmati rice. The biggest achievement came from Basmati exports, which increased by 62 per cent year-on-year to 301,000 tonnes, adding 116,000 tonnes compared with the same period last year. Non-Basmati exports also performed well, rising by 16 per cent to 1.049 million tonnes, an increase of 140,000 tonnes. This growth is particularly encouraging because Pakistani exporters faced serious challenges from disruptions to international shipping routes, tensions in the Middle East, higher freight charges and rising marine insurance costs. Competition from major rice-producing countries, including India, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar, also remained strong. However, Pakistani exporters managed to increase their shipments, supported by higher production, favourable weather, improved per-acre yields and increased cultivation.

The export figures also reveal the growing reach of Pakistani rice across different regions. In October, the Philippines emerged as the largest buyer, importing 87,478 tonnes, followed by Tanzania with 43,747 tonnes and Kenya with 33,078 tonnes. The United Arab Emirates purchased 25,305 tonnes, while the European Union imported 21,200 tonnes. Central Asia, China and Saudi Arabia also remained important markets. This performance deserves recognition, particularly at a time when Pakistan is struggling to increase its foreign exchange earnings and improve its trade balance. Rice is not merely an agricultural commodity; it is an important source of export revenue and employment for farmers, millers, transporters and traders. However, celebrating this success should also encourage policymakers to do more. They must support farmers with better seeds, modern farming methods, reliable water supplies and access to affordable inputs. Exporters also need improved storage, processing and transport facilities to compete with international rivals. Pakistan has demonstrated that its rice industry can perform well despite difficult conditions.

COP31 and the US' Climate Divide — Part II

Other proposals would require companies to recycle servers, semiconductors and rare metals, reducing e-waste from frequently replaced equipment. Some policymakers have proposed carbon-pricing or cross-border measures that could affect high-emission digital services, but no such measure for data centers has been established as a COP31 negotiating proposal. Regulation may need to keep pace with the industry's rapid growth.

The best outcome at COP31 would be practical safeguards for data centers, including clearer reporting of energy and water use, stronger efficiency standards and cleaner power for new facilities. Governments could also protect households from unfair grid costs and communities from water shortages.

Big Tech turns to nuclear power

Technology companies are seeking reliable, low-carbon electricity to meet the rising demand. Google has partnered with Kairos Power to support small modular reactors, with commercial deployment expected starting in 2030. Meta aims to secure up to 6.6 gigawatts of reliable, carbon-free power by 2035 through companies such as TerraPower and Oklo, and has supported efforts to keep Illinois's Clinton nuclear plant open. Amazon acquired infrastructure tied to Pennsylvania's Susquehanna nuclear plant to power its data centers. Microsoft backed a 20-year deal to restart Three Mile Island to supply its data centers. Nuclear power could ease supply shortages, but raises safety concerns.



LUIZ VILLARES

Luiz Villares is an environmentalist and project expert with 20 years experience in the Amazon

Nuclear plants can be operated under stringent safety standards, but no reactor is risk-free. The key question is whether each new or remodeled plant meets its specific safety review, inspection, and operating requirements. The answer requires determining whether a permit or environmental finding constitutes approval to operate. Regulators must confirm that each plant is fit to operate despite pressure from a Big Tech company with a signed contract to buy its energy. Nuclear power avoids the air pollution and carbon emissions associated with fossil-fuel generation, but accident risks, radioactive waste, security, aging equipment and emergency preparedness still require oversight.

Water use becomes a central concern

African and Latin American countries, including Uruguay and Chile, are urging limits on using drinking water to cool AI infrastructure amid drought and water competition. The United Nations warns that, by 2030, global data centers could use as much water as the annual basic needs of 1.3 billion people in sub-Saharan Africa. It also cites a World Economic Forum estimate that a quarter of data centers already operate in areas under severe water stress.

Proposals would restrict aquifer and drinking-water use for evaporative cooling, favoring closed-loop air cooling or treated wastewater. Underwater data centers, inspired by Microsoft experiments, use seawater to cool servers and wind power for electricity. The source claims they can cut freshwater use by over 90% and energy use by more than 20%, but they account for little global data center energy use.

New and sustainable technologies are exciting, but AI (and cryptocurrency mining) follow a familiar Anthropocene pattern: Impacts arrive first, followed by efforts to contain them. The question is whether solutions can be deployed at the speed and scale required, or whether they will again come too late. Regulations, at the state, national or global level, always come after the damage.

Data centers are becoming part of international climate discussions; however, at a slower pace given their environmental impact. Proposals include energy-efficiency standards based on power usage effectiveness (PUE) and restrictions on using drinking water for evaporative cooling in water-scarce regions.

The emissions challenge is already substantial. A Harvard study of 403 large US data centers estimated that their electricity use produced 25.7 million metric tons of CO2 between May 2024 and April 2025, with more than half of their electricity coming from fossil fuels. The estimate relies on available data and modeling, underscoring a central problem: Companies' limited disclosure makes it difficult to measure the sector's footprint consistently. After all, there is no clear access to sustainability indicators for Big Tech's fast-growing operations.

Other proposals would require companies to recycle servers, semiconductors and rare metals, reducing e-waste from frequently replaced equipment. Some policymakers have proposed carbon-pricing or cross-border measures that could affect high-emission digital services, but no such measure for data centers has been established as a COP31 negotiating proposal. Regulation may need to keep pace with the industry's rapid growth.

The climate agenda at COP31 is late to the data centers issue. We are far from answering key questions, such as whether international rules will be cross-border and enforceable under US state and local laws, or remain voluntary. Voluntary targets risk weak annual reviews that encourage better practices without requiring emissions cuts. As UN Executive Secretary for Climate Change, Simon Stiell, put it, "Claims about future emissions savings cannot excuse rising pollution now." Credibility will depend on transparency, measurable reductions and, eventually, enforceable rules.

COP31's best outcome

As the US climate debate is increasingly defined by a split between federal policy and state action, State governments are pushing ahead with clean-energy initiatives, but rising fossil-fuel production and the electricity needs of AI data centers are putting those gains under pressure. As international discussions turn to the energy and water demands of digital infrastructure, the challenge will be to align technological growth with climate targets and local resource limits.

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The best outcome at COP31 would be practical safeguards for data centers, including clearer reporting of energy and water use, stronger efficiency standards and cleaner power for new facilities. Governments could also protect households from unfair grid costs and communities from water shortages. By aligning technological growth with climate goals, COP31 can encourage progress through cooperation among national and local governments, businesses and international partners.

COP31 cannot bridge Washington-state divides, but it can set shared expectations for technological growth to advance a cleaner, more reliable, equitable energy transition.

Practising Islam Beyond Social Media

One important reason is the example set by parents and elders. Children learn much more from watching people around them than from listening to lectures. They observe how their parents speak to others, how they treat workers, whether they follow traffic rules and how they react when faced with difficult situations. If parents teach children to speak the truth but regularly lie in front of them, their words lose their value. If elders advise children to respect others but themselves behave rudely with neighbours or domestic workers, children are likely to copy their actions rather than their advice.

Social media has become an important part of our daily lives. From homes and offices to markets, parks and public transport, people are constantly looking at their mobile phone screens. Some even use their phones while walking, shopping or driving. With the growing use of social media, sharing messages, photographs, videos and greetings has become a common habit. People exchange birthday wishes, seasonal greetings, health updates and religious messages throughout the day.

Among the most widely shared content are verses from the Holy Quran, Hadith, Islamic teachings, historical accounts and quotations from religious scholars. People often forward these messages to express their love for Islam and remind others of their religious responsibilities. At first glance, this appears to be a positive practice. However, an important question needs to be asked: are we actually following the teachings that we share so frequently?

Pakistan's social media platforms are full of religious messages. Thousands of people share Islamic quotations and sermons every day. Yet, our society continues to struggle with dishonesty, injustice, intolerance and a lack of respect for others. There is a clear difference between what we say online and how we behave in our daily lives. This contradiction deserves serious attention.

Most people read a forwarded religious message for a few seconds and then move on to something else. Some simply press the forward button without even reading the complete text. The message reaches dozens or hundreds of people, but its actual impact on their behaviour remains limited. Sharing religious knowledge is not wrong, but repeatedly forwarding the same material without understanding or practising it does little to improve society.

Islam teaches honesty, patience, kindness, justice, respect and responsibility. These values are not new to Muslims. We have heard religious speeches and sermons since childhood. Most people already know that following the Quran and Sunnah is the foundation of a good Muslim's life. The real problem is not a shortage of religious information but a lack of practical action.



MUHAMMAD SHAFIQ

Muhammad Shafiq is a retired Lieutenant Colonel of the Pakistan Army

A person who shares messages about honesty but cheats others in business is not practising the values he promotes. Someone who forwards quotations about kindness but treats domestic workers badly is failing to follow the same message. Similarly, a person who posts about justice but uses personal influence to break rules is creating a contradiction between words and actions.

Our society faces many such problems. People refuse to stand in queues, violate traffic rules, ignore the rights of others and misuse their power whenever possible. Lying, cheating and breaking rules have become common in many areas of daily life. Some people believe that having money, influence or authority gives them the right to do whatever they want. These attitudes cannot be changed through social media messages alone.

Another issue is the influence of customs and superstitions that have little connection with the basic teachings of Islam. Many people follow traditions without questioning their purpose or religious value. Some customs performed at marriages, childbirth and shrines are based more on social pressure and inherited beliefs than on religious guidance. Even educated and wealthy people sometimes follow superstitions. For example, some car owners tie black ribbons or other objects to their expensive vehicles because they believe these will protect them from accidents or bad luck.

Such practices show that religious awareness must go beyond emotional attachment and traditional habits. People need to understand the actual teachings of Islam and apply them in their lives.

The Holy Quran is available in almost every Muslim household. Many people recite it regularly, particularly during Ramadan, and consider the spiritual reward of recitation important. However, reading the Quran should also involve understanding its message and following its guidance. Its teachings about honesty, justice, compassion and human rights should influence our behaviour at home, in offices, on roads and in public places.

During a television speech last Ramadan, I heard Maulana Tariq Jameel share an observation about honesty. He recalled spending two months in New Zealand without coming across anyone telling a lie. He then compared that experience with travelling across Pakistan, where finding people who always speak the truth can be difficult. His observation raises an uncomfortable question: why do societies that may not openly display religious messages sometimes demonstrate values that we frequently discuss but fail to practise?

One important reason is the example set by parents and elders. Children learn much more from watching people around them than from listening to lectures. They observe how their parents speak to others, how they treat workers, whether they follow traffic rules and how they react when faced with difficult situations.

If parents teach children to speak the truth but regularly lie in front of them, their words lose their value. If elders advise children to respect others but themselves behave rudely with neighbours or domestic workers, children are likely to copy their actions rather than their advice.

This contradiction can create confusion in young minds. Children hear one set of values but see completely different behaviour. Gradually, they may begin to believe that religious and moral teachings are only meant for speeches, books and social media posts, not for practical life.

The responsibility, therefore, lies with every adult. Parents, teachers, religious scholars, government officials and community leaders must understand that their behaviour influences the younger generation. A child who sees honesty and kindness in everyday life is more likely to develop these qualities than one who only hears long speeches about morality.

We must also recognise that good manners and civic sense cannot be forced upon people through government orders alone. Laws are necessary to maintain discipline, but personal responsibility is equally important. A society becomes civilised when people willingly respect rules, protect the rights of others and understand their duties as citizens.

Instead of spending hours forwarding religious messages, we should spend more time practising their teachings. Instead of posting quotations about charity, we should help people in need. Instead of sharing messages about respect, we should treat everyone with dignity. And instead of lecturing children about honesty, we should demonstrate it through our own conduct.

Islam does not need to be promoted through empty words or repeated messages. Its beauty becomes visible through the character and behaviour of those who follow it.

The real change will begin when our actions match our words. Our children, neighbours, colleagues and friends need practical examples of honesty, kindness, tolerance and responsibility. A forwarded message may attract attention for a moment, but a good example can influence someone for a lifetime.

We should remember that practising Islamic values is far more important than simply displaying them on social media. A better society will not emerge from the number of religious messages we share, but from the values we demonstrate every day.

OPINION

DTM



RAWALPINDI: Vendor pushes cart loaded with eggs and chickens to eke out a living. ONLINE

Letters To The EDITOR

Makran highway cannot remain deadly

The Makran Coastal Highway has become a source of serious concern for passengers travelling between Karachi, Turbat and other parts of Balochistan. Repeated deadly road accidents, particularly those involving passenger buses and heavy vehicles, raise serious questions about traffic enforcement and passenger safety. A road that connects communities and supports economic activity should not become a place where people fear losing their lives.

Recently, another tragic accident involving a passenger bus and two gas-carrying trucks, one reportedly coming from Iran, resulted in a devastating fire. The collision was so severe that both vehicles caught fire, with fewer than six people reportedly surviving. Several injured passengers were also said to be in critical condition. Such incidents should not be treated as routine road accidents. Every major tragedy must lead to an investigation and practical measures to prevent similar incidents. Reckless driving, overspeeding, dangerous overtaking and the use of unqualified drivers are among the major concerns on this route. Some drivers overtake without checking oncoming traffic or using proper signals. Others drive at excessive speeds despite carrying dozens of passengers. On a highway shared by passenger buses, trucks and other vehicles, a single careless decision can cost many innocent lives.

The authorities must stop relying on temporary responses after accidents and introduce a proper road safety system. Transport companies should be required to verify the licences, experience and fitness of their drivers. Bus owners must also ensure that their vehicles are regularly inspected and meet safety standards. They should be held responsible for hiring drivers who put passengers at risk through careless driving.

Traffic police must increase monitoring along the highway and take strict action against overspeeding, illegal overtaking and other dangerous practices. Regular checkpoints and vehicle inspections can help identify violations before they result in another tragedy. Heavy vehicles carrying gas and other dangerous materials should also be subject to proper safety checks.

MUHAMMAD NASEER
Turbat

Drug crisis threatens youth

Drug addiction has become a serious problem in Turbat, Kech, and is destroying the lives of many young people. Families are losing their sons to drugs, while communities are watching helplessly as addiction spreads. The situation requires urgent attention from the government, police and relevant departments before more lives are lost.

As a young student from this region, I feel deeply concerned about what is happening around us. Almost every day, we hear about the death of another young person. Some are only 18, 20 or 25 years old. Their families are left in pain, and their parents have to bury their own children because of drug addiction.

Different substances, including ice, heroin and cannabis, are affecting young people. What makes the situation more worrying is that drugs appear to be easily available in different parts of the city. Residents often know the places where these substances are sold. They also know that young people are becoming victims of this growing problem.

This raises an important question: if ordinary citizens know where drugs are being sold, why are the authorities unable to stop the dealers?

People rarely hear about major drug dealers being arrested or large supply networks being dismantled. Instead, the community continues to hear about young people dying from addiction. Drug users are suffering, but those who sell and distribute drugs must also be held accountable.

The Anti-Narcotics Force and police have an important responsibility in dealing with this crisis. There may be honest officers making efforts to control drug trafficking, but the situation on the ground remains deeply worrying. The easy availability of drugs suggests that stronger and more effective action is needed.

The authorities should identify and investigate the major dealers, suppliers and those involved in drug trafficking. Regular raids should be conducted at known locations in Turbat and nearby areas. Action should not be limited to small users while the people supplying drugs continue their activities.

MUHAMMAD ASIM
Quetta

Humans and Machines Shaping the Future Together — Part II

Overall, The Cybernetic Society is an ambitious and thought-provoking book that offers a useful framework for understanding the growing integration of humans and machines. Husain effectively shows that technological change is also a question of power, agency, and control, although some of his predictions are speculative and insufficiently scrutinised.

One of the salient features of this book is that it bridges many disciplines within the single framework of cybernetics. Husain illustrates the impact of AI on organisational design, urban planning, warfare, human cognition, political stability, and individual freedom. The use of real-life examples like Neom, autonomous UAVs, AI-based business models, and BCIs makes the discussion accessible and applicable in the real world.

The book further examines the concept of human augmentation. Husain discusses personal AI, neural interfaces and, in particular, brain-computer interfaces (BCIs) in the context of education, employment, health and entertainment. His fictional case study of Ava demonstrates the possibility of a BCI to offer continuous adaptation to the user in an immersive learning environment. More importantly, Husain argues that AI should not be viewed as a tool that's external to the organisation. Humans and machines will begin to co-evolve so that technology will become an integral part of how humans think, learn and act. This raises questions about identity and agency: if machines become deeply integrated with human cognition, what does it mean to remain human?



ABDUL WASSAY

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The implications of cybernetics for warfare are explored through the idea of "hyperwar." Husain argues that AI and autonomous weapons could make military decision-making much faster, reducing the time humans have to make decisions. He believes this could lead to a race between countries to develop more advanced autonomous systems. Some early signs of this are evident in the conflict in Ukraine through the use of drones, swarms, and machine learning. According to the author, future wars will be fought with low-cost precision systems that allow machines to target accurately and rapidly. Husain, however, is aware that technology will not prevent war because conflict is the product of human behaviour. Rather, the future war will be a more intimate and complicated relationship between man and machine.

Beyond technological and military applications, Husain introduces Peter Turchin's concept of cliodynamics to examine how technological developments may affect political stability. He believes that AI and automation could create vast wealth but also make society more unequal by giving those with high skills greater opportunities. Existing political tensions may deepen if technological progress leaves many people in society behind while empowering a small elite. Technology then is not necessarily positive; it must be distributed and governed in a way that makes it so. To assist societies in managing these risks, Husain suggests using adaptive governance, social resilience, public education, and early-warning mechanisms.

While concluding the book, Husain asserts that society is "already opted in" to the cybernetic environment. Husain argues that individuals are no longer able to completely avoid forms of data collection, surveillance and networked technologies. He thus introduces "technologies of freedom" like decentralisation, the open-source approach, personal data ownership, community networks and participatory governance. The book focuses on "Cybernetic Synthesis," which states that humans, machines, organisations, cities, and states are becoming increasingly interconnected. But Husain is guardedly optimistic, acknowledging that technology is not inherently oppressive or liberating; it's what humans do with it that matters.Learn AI Tools

One of the salient features of this book is that it bridges many disciplines within the single framework of cybernetics. Husain illustrates the impact of AI on organisational design, urban planning, warfare, human cognition, political stability, and individual freedom. The use of real-life examples like Neom, autonomous UAVs, AI-based business models, and BCIs makes the discussion accessible and applicable in the real world. Husain's personal technological experience also provides the book with a sense of realism.

Its applications are, however, limited due to its wide scope. Some topics are treated more superficially than others, as Husain moves quickly across cybernetics, smart cities, human augmentation, warfare, cliodynamics, blockchain, privacy, and climate change. He sometimes jumps from what technology can do to what technology is likely to be able to do without making a concerted effort to explain the technical, institutional, and political constraints. His thoughts about autonomous warfare and AI-powered cities are very interesting. Still, some of his suggestions are more of a guess, and problems like bias in algorithms, inequalities, cybersecurity, and accountability can be improved upon.Political analysis subscription

A tension between control and freedom is also uncovered in the book. Husain acknowledges the dual merits of technologies in both improving efficiency and fortifying surveillance and manipulation. Still, questions of data ownership and technological leverage are not entirely answered by solutions like "decentralisation" or "digital literacy." This makes this book more important as a model of what the future might look like, rather than a blueprint of what it should be. Its central contribution is demonstrating how humans are embedded in technological systems that influence how societies are organised.

Overall, The Cybernetic Society is an ambitious and thought-provoking book that offers a useful framework for understanding the growing integration of humans and machines. Husain effectively shows that technological change is also a question of power, agency, and control, although some of his predictions are speculative and insufficiently scrutinised. Ultimately, he argues that the cybernetic future is inevitable, but its outcome depends on whether humans actively shape technology or become controlled by the systems they create.

Building New Global Networks

Global governance is shifting from universal institutions to minilateral coalitions as post-1945 structures fail to adapt to multipolar realities. Nations now build parallel platforms like BRICS and the G20 to bypass institutional paralysis and address urgent strategic interests. Because these new bodies now shape international trade and security, the question becomes: Can these competing networks learn to cooperate, or will they institutionalize permanent geopolitical rivalry?



RAGHU GURURAJ

Raghu Gururaj has specialized in multilateral economic and political work, particularly during his stints in Vietnam, Singapore, Kazakhstan and Indonesia

For nearly eight decades, global governance rested on a simple assumption: that universal institutions such as the UN, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) could tackle international problems. Designed in the aftermath of the Second World War, this architecture was built for a unipolar moment dominated by Western powers and a global belief in the benefits of open trade. However, shifting geopolitical realities have quietly begun to erode that assumption. Nations around the globe are now building parallel institutions, regional blocs and issue-specific coalitions because they no longer believe those universal institutions alone can tackle the realities of a multipolar world.

This movement goes beyond traditional debates over UN Security Council reform. Post-1945 power structures are constraining existing institutions, leaving them slow and divided. When institutions cannot adapt, countries do not wait indefinitely for reform. Instead, they seek out alternatives in the form of bilateral free trade agreements, regional trade blocs, strategic economic partnerships and supply-chain coalitions among trusted partners.

For example, BRICS has expanded rapidly and created institutions such as the New Development Bank (NDB); the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) addresses security issues without Western leadership; the QUAD coordinates maritime security without being a formal alliance; the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a vibrant trading platform; and the G20 has become more influential than the G7 in representing the global economy.

The G20 represents the world economy's center of gravity, bringing together the world's 20 largest and most consequential economies. That means the forum includes virtually every economy whose policies can materially affect global trade, energy markets, food security, financial stability, supply chains, etc. The G7 can discuss these issues, but it simply lacks the same breadth. It cannot by itself represent the countries whose economies increasingly drive global growth. The rise of mini-lateral arrangements such as I2U2 (India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and the US), AUKUS (Australia, the UK and the US) and various Indo-Pacific partnerships reflects the same trend. To ensure the future of global governance, these organizations must be able to work together in an interconnected system that balances competing interests while upholding shared international norms.

International governance has transformed before. The League of Nations - the UN's predecessor - gave way to the UN after the Second World War, while the Bretton Woods institutions underpinned the era of globalization. Victorious powers designed post-war institutions for a world dominated by the US and its allies. Designers also built them for an era that believed countries broadly accepted globalization, lower tariffs and common trade rules. They also assumed that major powers wanted to resolve disputes through multilateral institutions.

But great-power competition has challenged these assumptions, such as with the US and China, which increasingly view trade as an instrument of national security. Industrial policy, export controls, technology restrictions and tariffs have become strategic tools. However, the emergence of a more multipolar world also stems from four other major problems: institutional paralysis, the redistribution of global power, a growing preference for smaller, more flexible coalitions, and a fundamental crisis of trust in institutions designed for a world that no longer exists.

Institutional paralysis

Institutional decision-making paralysis has afflicted global multilateral institutions. Vetoes by the five permanent members frequently deadlock the UN Security Council. The WTO is ineffective as its dispute settlement system has become dysfunctional. The Appellate Body, which is the second and final stage of WTO litigation, has been unable to function since December 2019. The US has objected to its functioning, arguing that it had exceeded its mandate, failed to observe the required deadlines and treated previous rulings as binding precedent. Without the required quorum, the WTO has been unable to hear appeals since 2020.

In short, even though the WTO has rules and dispute panels, it lacks a fully operational mechanism to give those rulings finality. As a result, consensus-based negotiations have become extremely difficult with more than 190 UN members. Nations have to increasingly ignore or work around UN and WTO rules whenever national security or strategic industries are involved. Despite all of this, the UN will likely remain important for humanitarian aid, peacekeeping, international law and diplomacy, but it is unlikely to be the sole center of global decision-making.

Redistribution of power

Since the end of the Cold War, economic power has shifted steadily toward Asia and the Global South. India has become the world's fourth-largest economy and China the second-largest, while countries such as Brazil, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye have emerged as influential regional powers. Yet the architecture of global governance continues to reflect the geopolitical realities of 1945 rather than those of the 21st century.

The UN Security Council's permanent membership remains unchanged, voting rights in the Bretton Woods institutions have evolved only gradually and established powers continue to dominate leadership in key international organizations. Faced with slow reform, emerging powers have increasingly chosen not merely to seek greater representation within existing institutions, but to build alternative platforms through which they can exercise greater influence.

Smaller groups often find it easier to agree than organizations like the UN, which has over 190 member states. That is one reason minilateral arrangements have become popular: They speed up decision-making. Countries can choose the forum that best serves their interests. Governments address trade issues through FTAs, security issues through the Quad, development finance through BRICS institutions and climate initiatives through another coalition. In other words, global governance is becoming networked rather than centralized. Universal institutions pursue universal consensus. Minilateral groups pursue practical outcomes.

A crisis of trust

Perhaps a deeper reason is that trust in universal institutions has weakened. It's less about inequality per se among nations, but more about the widening gap in relative power. Historically, rules-based systems function best when the major powers broadly accept that they benefit from them. When great powers become sufficiently strong, they are more willing to bear the diplomatic costs of acting unilaterally. The United States increasingly bypasses institutions it considers ineffective. Its unilateral tariffs and extraterritorial sanctions are a good example of this trend.

China seeks alternatives to Western-dominated financial structures and has also become assertive in the South China Sea despite international legal rulings against it. On its part, Russia views many international institutions through the lens of geopolitical confrontation. Middle powers such as India pursue strategic autonomy rather than dependence on any single bloc. When the most powerful countries selectively comply with the very rules they helped create, countries increasingly place their trust in smaller coalitions where interests are more closely aligned.

The new rules of the game

There is no simple answer. The old model was relatively straightforward: one set of global institutions set one broad set of rules, and just one or two primary forums resolved disputes. The emerging model has multiple institutions laying down multiple rulebooks and creating multiple centers of influence. The consequences are both positive and negative.

On the positive side, parallel institutions can make global governance more representative and responsive. As a result, emerging economies have more financing options, countries depend less on a single source for critical goods and supply chains have become more resilient after the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical conflicts.

At the same time, competition among institutions can also encourage innovation in infrastructure financing, technology partnerships and regional economic integration. Yet these benefits come with high costs. Businesses increasingly face competing regulatory standards, trade rules and technology regimes across different blocs. Global coordination on issues such as climate change, pandemics, financial crises and nuclear proliferation becomes more difficult when countries operate through overlapping and sometimes competing institutions.

Governing without a leader

The future may consequently depend less on creating new "global" institutions and more on building bridges between existing ones. The UN, WTO, G20, BRICS, regional organizations and minilateral groupings need not compete for primacy. Instead, they could evolve into interconnected layers of governance, each doing what it does best while remaining compatible with broader international norms.

The defining question of the next phase of globalization, therefore, is not who will lead the world, but whether the world can learn to govern without a single center of authority.

NATIONAL

Lawyers call for repeal of 26th, 27th amendments

A hundred members of the legal fraternity and civil society have called for the 26th and 27th Constitutional Amendments to be repealed, reacting to remarks by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, whose party had made their enactment possible.

The 26th and 27th Amendments, enacted in October 2024 and November 2025 respectively, were passed by both houses of the Parliament amid outcry from the PTI-led opposition.

Last week, Bilawal - a strong advocate for both Amendments when they were passed - said the 27th Amendment was "passed neither through political consensus nor mutual agreement; it was passed with brute majority", and that the previous one did have mutual agreement.

He also questioned the current status of the judiciary, particularly in the wake of the 27th Amendment, noting that resignations of senior judges followed the legislation.

Later, the PPP chairman clarified that he was "not disowning" the 27th Amendment, but rather noting that it did not enjoy the same "unanimous consensus" as the 18th Amendment and the 1973 Constitution.

In an open letter on Tuesday, 100 individuals - mostly lawyers and also including activists and academics - called for both the 26th and 27th Amendments to be repealed.

"Pakistan's constitutional order belongs to its people. It cannot be



seized by a majority that its own members admit was never theirs to wield," read the letter, also signed by retired Supreme Court Justice Manzoor Ali Shah.

The letter recalled that Bilawal "admitted that the 27th Amendment was passed neither through political consensus nor through agreement, but a 'brute majority'".

It demanded that the "constitutional order that existed prior to the 26th Amendment must be restored", adding that any future reform of the judiciary must come through an "open and consultative process".

The 26th Amendment carved a constitutional bench out of the SC, with its members chosen by a reconstituted Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) in which judges no longer held a majority.

A year later, the 27th Amendment turned those benches into an entirely separate court, the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC), which is said to have effectively dethroned the SC as the country's highest judicial forum.

It also made significant changes to the judicial system and the military's chain of command, and granted immunities to government officials. Two of the SC's senior-most judges, including Shah, resigned in protest the day it became law.

Tuesday's letter also called for reserved seats in the legislative houses to be returned to their "lawful claimants", in an apparent reference to the opposition. The PTI was deprived of its reserved seats in the 2024 elections following the revocation of its electoral symbol.

Although an SC bench declared the PTI eligible for the seats, the order was not implemented and later overturned by the constitutional bench created via the 26th Amendment, which handed them to the coalition parties that challenged the 2024 ruling.

"The government cannot continue exercising parliamentary authority derived from a process that the governing coalition's own leadership has now publicly called into question," Tuesday's letter read.

"These seats must be restored to their rightful claimants through the appropriate legal and constitutional mechanism," it added.

The letter noted that Bilawal "described the way the opposition was stripped of its reserved seats as 'a joke' and said the treasury benches had simply put those seats 'in their pockets'".

"Most damning of all, he accused the ruling government of amending the Constitution using seats that are 'not yours'," the document added.

The signatories pointed out that these words came "from the government's key coalition partner whose votes were required to pass both the 26th and 27th Amendments".

It continued: "The treasury benches face a question they can no longer evade. Their own coalition partner says reserved seats were taken by parties that had no right to them.

"On what constitutional, legal or moral basis does the government then keep claiming the numbers through which the 26th and 27th Amendments were passed?"

The lawyers and activists noted that a two-thirds majority was the safeguard the Constitution demands so that "it cannot be changed without the genuine and lawful representation of the people's will".

However, a majority "made up with seats that were unjustly denied to the opposition is not the majority the Constitution demands", they contended.

"An amendment passed on that basis holds no constitutional, legal, or democratic validity. An amendment passed without a legitimate two-thirds majority is void from its very inception," the letter asserted.

It further said that these questions applied directly to the FCC, which "owes its existence wholly to the 27th Amendment".

"Its jurisdiction, its composition and its authority all come from a constitutional change whose legitimacy is now openly repudiated by the very people who brought it into being. NEWS DESK

Pakistan, China to establish maritime institute in Gwadar

Pakistan is planning to establish a specialised maritime and engineering institute in Gwadar in collaboration with Chinese educational institutions to equip local youth with technical skills required by the port, shipping and maritime industries.

The proposed Pakistan Overseas Engineering and Technology Institute will offer specialised training in marine engineering, navigation, shipping technology and port operations, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Tuesday.

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry said technical training programmes must be aligned with the evolving requirements of the maritime industry to prepare skilled professionals for employment opportunities in the sector.

He was speaking at a pre-board meeting of the Gwadar Port Authority (GPA), which reviewed ongoing development projects and initiatives aimed at strengthening technical education and human resource capacity in the port city.

During the meeting, GPA Chairman Noorul Haq Baloch informed participants that the Gwadar Port Authority,

Pak-China



Technical and Vocational Institute (PCTVI), University of Gwadar and China's Qingdao Harbour Vocational and Technical College had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for establishing the proposed institute.

The agreement outlines a five-year cooperation framework covering 2026-2030, under which the partner institutions will work together on academic programmes, curriculum development, professional training, faculty development, joint research and practical learning opportunities.

The proposed curriculum will cover a range of specialised disciplines, including navigation technology, marine engineering, maritime safety, ship technology and port machinery.

The programmes will focus on developing practical and technical expertise to meet the operational requirements of modern ports, shipping companies and maritime industries.

The proposed institute is expected to strengthen technical education in Gwadar while providing local youth with specialised skills and professional training relevant to employment opportunities in Pakistan's growing maritime sector.

The collaboration also aims to promote academic and technical cooperation between Pakistani and Chinese institutions through joint research, knowledge-sharing and faculty development. NEWS DESK

Pakistan, Türkiye discuss university exchanges

Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training Ms. Wajiha Qamar underscored the importance of strengthening educational cooperation between Pakistan and Türkiye through institutional partnerships, academic exchanges and joint research initiatives.

She expressed these views during a meeting with Ambassador of Türkiye to Pakistan, Irfan Neziroglu, who called on her at the Ministry along with Education Counsellor Mr. Mehmet Toyran and a high-level delegation from Yasar University, Izmir, Türkiye.

The delegation comprised Prof. Dr. Aylin Güney, Vice Rector (International Relations); Prof. Dr. Yigit Kazan oglu, Vice Rector (Business); and Mr. M. Hasan Atasoy from the International Office.

During the meeting, matters pertaining to bilateral educational cooperation, student and faculty exchange programmes, joint research



and institutional linkages between Pakistani and Turkish universities were discussed.

The minister of state highlighted the historic and brotherly relations between Pakistan and Türkiye and emphasized the need to translate these longstanding ties into meaningful and sustainable educational partnerships.

She reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to promoting international academic collaboration and creating greater educational and professional development opportunities for Pakistani youth.

Both sides expressed keen interest in further strengthening bilateral cooperation in higher education and exploring new avenues for institutional collaboration. NEWS DESK

Kundi directs action against hoarders

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has chaired a meeting of the Advisory Council to review the performance of provincial departments, service delivery, administrative affairs, ongoing development projects and progress towards achieving the 100-day and 180-day targets.

Members of the Advisory Council briefed the Governor on the performance of their respective departments, ongoing projects and future plans. The meeting reviewed measures aimed at improving governance and public service delivery across the province.

The Governor directed the authorities to take strict action against hoarders and those selling flour at inflated prices, and stressed transparent implementation of the transfer policy in government departments strictly on merit. He also called for legal action against individuals involved in spreading fake news and organised propaganda.

The meeting also discussed a proposal to construct a hospital near the motorway in Peshawar in collaboration with Peshawar Zalmi. Governor Kundi emphasised the need for effective measures for the restoration, preservation and beautification of the shrine of Rehman Baba.

Finance Adviser Tariq Mahmood Pasha briefed the meeting on the province's financial position and related matters, while Interior Adviser Kifayatullah informed participants about service delivery, progress on the Safe Cities Authority Bill, the Police Amendment Act and other proposed legislative reforms.

The Interior and Food Adviser also presented details regarding the province's wheat requirements, consumption, procurement from Punjab and PASSCO, and the existing wheat stocks.

The Health Adviser briefed the meeting on progress towards the health sector's 100-day and 180-day targets, saying an agreement with UNICEF was being finalised to provide nutritional support for children up to one year of age in selected districts. He also informed the meeting about the shortage of 1,326 vaccinators in the province.

Education Adviser Aamir Abdullah highlighted ongoing education sector initiatives, teacher shortages and administrative issues. He said an agreement for providing meals to students in government schools in Peshawar would soon be signed, adding that transfers of teachers would remain suspended until completion of the academic session. The meeting also discussed salary-related issues of employees working in Panah Gahs and Zamung Kor.

Information Adviser Samar Haroon Bilour said an awareness campaign on smog had been launched through digital media and radio, while a dedicated cell had also been established to effectively counter fake news and negative propaganda.

The Industry Adviser briefed the meeting on industrial development, measures to attract investment and progress on matters related to the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

The Auqaf Adviser informed the meeting about welfare initiatives for minority communities, scholarships for students and other social welfare programmes. The Governor directed the adviser to present a detailed briefing on the Auqaf Department and Auqaf land.

Energy and Planning Adviser Usman Saifullah, Law Adviser Aamir Javed and Minerals Adviser Dr Sarfraz Ali Shah also briefed the meeting on administrative affairs, ongoing projects and measures taken to achieve the targets set for their respective departments. NEWS DESK

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FISHERIES SUKKUR
NEAR NEW BUS TERMINAL SHIKARPUR ROAD SUKKUR

SITUATIONS VACANT

APPOINTMENT AGAINST THE POSTS OF (BPS-01 TO 04) NON-TECHNICAL POSTS IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FISHERIES SUKKUR.

Applications are invited for appointment against below mentioned posts from candidates having Domicile of District Sukkur in the office of Deputy Director Fisheries Sukkur.

S.#	Name of Post	BPS	Age Limit	Qualification / Experience	Domicile & PRC
1.	Driver	04	18-28	1. Possessing of valid LTV Driving Licenses. 2. Must be able to maintain the log book. 3. At least (03) years' experience in the relevant field.	District Sukkur
2.	Fisheries Watcher	01	18-28	Middle Pass	
3.	Fisherman	01	18-28	Middle Pass	
4.	Naib Qasid	01	18-28	Middle Pass	

TERMS AND CONDITIONS / GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The application alongwith two passport size photographs, attested copies of testimonials of academic qualifications, CNIC, Domicile, PRC and experience certificate (if required) should be submitted to the office of Director of Fisheries Sukkur Division Sukkur near new Bus Terminal Shikarpur Road Sukkur
2. The last date of submission of applications is **30-11-2026.**
3. As per rules, 15% quota for Women, 05% quota for Minorities and 0.5% quota for Transgender shall be applicable.
4. Appointment under the 5% quota for differently abled persons/ persons with disabilities were already been carried out under the meeting of DSC held earlier under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Sukkur.
5. The applicants already in Government Service shall apply through their respective Department / proper channel.
6. The general age relaxation will be applicable as per rules and latest notification of (SGA&CD), Govt: of Sindh.
7. The canvassing in any from or manner will disqualify the candidates.
8. The number of vacancies may be increased or decreased as per policy and decision of the Government of Sindh, nobody will have the right to challenge the same.
9. Only eligible / short listed candidates will be called for test / interview.
10. The selected candidates / appointees will remain on probation for two years extendable by further period of one year.
11. No TA/DA is admissible for appearing in test / interview.

(RIAZ AHMED MEMON)
DEPUTY DIRECTOR FISHERIES SUKKUR

INF-KRY/5312/26
WORK FOR SINDH JOB PORTAL BY

NATIONAL DTM

Govt cuts diesel price by Rs 4 per litre, petrol by Rs 1

The government on Tuesday reduced the price of petrol by Rs 1 per litre and high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs 4 per litre, according to a notification issued by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA). Following the latest revision, petrol will be available at Rs 318 per litre, while the price of diesel has been fixed at Rs 353 per litre, effective November 25 (Wednesday). Despite the reduction, petroleum products continue to carry substantial government taxes and duties. The government is currently collecting Rs 114 per litre in taxes and duties on petrol and Rs 100 per litre on diesel. Under an arrangement announced on November 2 for a period of 30 days, oil refineries will contribute towards the petroleum levy by absorbing a cumulative financial impact of Rs 15 billion. According to the government, this arrangement has enabled a reduction of Rs 14.71 per litre in the consumer price of petrol.

The latest adjustment provides limited relief to consumers, particularly motorists and transport operators, amid continued pressure from fuel costs. NEWS DESK

Centre stands firmly behind KP in anti-terror fight: PM

Continued from Page 1

He said that attention would also be given to promoting sports facilities in the province and providing young people with opportunities for constructive activities, the PMO added. Meanwhile, Governor Kundi briefed the prime minister on the ongoing efforts by himself and the KP Advisory Council to improve law and order in the province. The meeting between the two comes weeks after the Centre imposed emergency and governor's rule in KP on Oct 11, citing the provincial government's "deliberate disengagement" from the fight against terrorism. The decisions were also endorsed by the Parliament amid protests by the opposition.

Moreover, Kundi held a separate meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari wherein he briefed the latter on the security situation in the province.

Separately, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed federal ministers to refrain from making public statements against one another, urging members of the cabinet to resolve their differences through mutual understanding and consensus.

The directive apparently came after a recent exchange of criticism between Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi over the proposal to create new provinces.\

In a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office, Shehbaz said the federal government's focus remained on public welfare and development projects, adding that the country was moving from economic stability towards sustainable growth.

He also referred to Pakistan's diplomatic achievements, saying the government had consistently promoted politics centred on development and progress.

The prime minister instructed all federal ministers to avoid political statements against their colleagues, warning that such remarks created a negative impression and diverted attention from the government's development agenda.

"Cabinet members were performing well and should remain focused on public service and development," he said. Shehbaz also urged representatives of provincial governments to avoid such statements and promote constructive dialogue. He said all political leaders had a responsibility to play their part in ensuring political stability.

Moreover, Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reaffirmed the federal government's commitment to extending all possible support for the development of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), the welfare of its people, and the provision of basic facilities.

He made these remarks during a meeting with Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Syed Iftikhar Gilani, at the Prime Minister's Office.

During the meeting, PM Shehbaz said Pakistan will continue its moral, political, and diplomatic support for the people of Kashmir until they achieve their right to self-determination. The Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for his recent visit to Azad Kashmir.

He also briefed the prime minister on the progress of the recently announced 100-day development programme in Azad Kashmir. NEWS DESK

Fazl holds ground in Lahore as 'siege' ends

Continued from Page 1

Fazl thanked the bar association, its president and members for inviting him to address the seminar, but regretted that "state-imposed restrictions" had prevented him from attending in person. He said the entire city had been "choked" by road blocks and checkpoints, adding that peaceful citizens were being stopped from entering an environment of "intellectual discussion". "God willing, these sieges will break, these obstacles will be removed. Oppression never achieves permanence, but patience has always enjoyed permanence throughout history," he said.

Fazl said his party had always worked for peace and had put its workers' lives at risk for the country. He added that JUI-F did not need "a certificate of patriotism" from the rulers or any state institution. "Neither from the rulers nor from any state institution have we come to obtain a certificate of loyalty to the homeland. In fact, I believe that perhaps we should be the ones issuing this certificate to people now. Their loyalties are questionable, whereas our loyalties are above all suspicion," he said. Claiming arrests of party workers and leaders in different areas, the JUI-F chief said his party would go ahead with its planned public conference in Sargodha on Nov 26. Fazl alleged that the state had intensified its actions against JUI-F after the party exposed its role in matters concerning mineral resources in tribal areas. NEWS DESK

PM sets up body for public services



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed the establishment of an Asaan Khidmat Authority to ensure uniform standards of public service delivery at Asaan Khidmat Centres planned across the country.

The directive was issued during a meeting with a four-member Azerbaijani delegation led by Ulvi Mehdiyev, Chairman of Azerbaijan's State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations (SAPSSI), under the President of Azerbaijan, according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

The prime minister also instructed the relevant authorities to coordinate with provincial governments to establish Asaan Khidmat Centres throughout Pakistan.

Describing the Islamabad centre as a landmark public service initiative, Shehbaz Sharif said it had transformed service delivery by providing citizens access to multiple government services under one roof. He welcomed the findings of a recent fact-based third-party audit of the facility, saying its recommendations would help improve efficiency and bring services in line with public expectations. He directed officials to address the shortcomings identified in the report on a priority basis.

Emphasising the longstanding brotherly relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan, the prime minister conveyed his best wishes to the Azerbaijani president and appreciated Baku's support in establishing the centre and conducting its independent audit.

He said the broader objective was to develop a digitally enabled society, economy and governance system through technology-driven public services. Both sides agreed to establish a Joint Working Group to maintain regular engagement and strengthen cooperation for expanding the initiative.

The meeting was informed that the Islamabad Asaan Khidmat Markaz had processed 244,230 applications between its establishment in January 2026 and November 2026, with demand for its services continuing to increase.

FBR reforms, orders action against tax irregularities

The prime minister chaired a weekly review meeting on Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) reforms, where officials briefed him on plans to establish separate sales tax zones in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad and Multan to improve revenue collection.

The government is reversing the functional integration of sales tax and income tax administration introduced in 2009, following concerns over weak enforcement and an estimated sales tax revenue gap of Rs3.4 trillion.

The meeting was also informed that a modern digital cargo tracking system was being developed to monitor goods from loading to delivery and curb smuggling. The proposed system would include electronic consignment notes, risk management, field enforcement and an analytics dashboard.

Shehbaz directed authorities to expedite customs clearance and immigration procedures at airports and make smart baggage scanning systems operational at all international airports. The technology would automatically direct passengers' baggage towards green or red channels.

Officials also informed the meeting that an FBR office was being established at Karachi's Korangi Industrial Estate to provide services directly to industrialists.

The prime minister was further informed that an audit of bonded warehouses operated by oil marketing companies had uncovered irregularities worth Rs24.4 billion. He directed authorities to ensure recoveries and take action without discrimination.

The meeting also reviewed enforcement operations by the Indus Collectorate, which had seized illegal goods worth Rs1.849 billion through 302 operations.

Shehbaz stressed the need to strengthen tax administration, improve transparency, accelerate digitalisation and take effective action against tax evasion and smuggling to increase government revenue and facilitate trade and investment. NEWS DESK

Houthis hit tower in Riyadh

The Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Houthis said on Tuesday that one of the towers in Riyadh's business district was targeted in a "cowardly terrorist attack."



"Relevant authorities are currently on-site at the location of the attack," coalition spokesman Turki al-Maliki wrote on US social media company X.

Al-Maliki did not provide further details as to who carried out the attack or the damage.

The incident marked the second time in less than a week that a tower in the district came under attack.

On Thursday, Saudi authorities said a Houthi attack targeted a tower in the capital's business district, damaging several floors and neighboring buildings.

Moreover, the Saudi-led coalition said early on Tuesday that it intercepted and destroyed a drone launched by Yemen's Houthi group toward southern Saudi Arabia.

Coalition spokesman Turki al-Maliki announced the interception in a statement on X. He did not specify where the drone was intercepted or provide details on potential casualties or damage.

On Sunday, the coalition reported intercepting a Houthi drone launched toward southern Saudi Arabia and a Houthi ballistic missile fired toward western Saudi Arabia. Yemen's Houthis also said on Sunday they carried out an operation targeting Saudi Arabia's Rabigh oil refinery on the kingdom's western Red Sea coast, as they continued to claim attacks on Saudi energy infrastructure.

Saudi authorities did not immediately comment.

The interceptions came amid escalating hostilities between the Houthis and the coalition and attacks targeting Saudi airports and energy facilities.

Saudi Arabia has led a military coalition supporting Yemen's government against the Houthis since 2015. The group has controlled the capital Sanaa and other parts of Yemen since 2014. NEWS DESK



Maryam slams former regime, says Punjab now on path of progress

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has claimed that her government has transformed the province's administrative and development landscape, saying that merit, hard work and public service have replaced personal influence and recommendations.

Addressing the Honhaar Scholarship and Laptop Distribution Ceremony at Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University during her visit to Rawalpindi, the chief minister said she had completed 1,000 days in office and that significant changes had taken place across Punjab during this period.

Criticising the previous government, Maryam Nawaz alleged that the province she inherited had been run through witchcraft, spiritual practices and supernatural influences. She said her administration was steering Punjab towards modern governance and development.

She further claimed that criminal gangs had been eliminated and that ordinary citizens were now being given opportunities based on merit and hard work rather than personal recommendations.

The chief minister said Punjab had emerged as a trendsetter among provinces, with other regions adopting initiatives introduced by her government. She maintained that development projects were being implemented without discrimination and that every city and village was equally important to the provincial administration.

Highlighting improvements in public transport, she said around 1,100 green buses were operating across Punjab, while 80 electric buses had arrived in Rawalpindi. She announced plans to introduce another 5,000 green buses across the province.

She added that women students could travel free on green buses and that free transport facilities were also being provided to women, students and senior citizens under the Green Bus Service.

Maryam Nawaz said the government was also expanding public welfare initiatives, including the Suthra Punjab Programme, which had equipped cities with dedicated machinery and arrangements to improve sanitation and cleanliness.

Turning to education, the chief minister described education as essential for national development and said the Honhaar Scholarship and Laptop Schemes were aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for talented students.

She maintained that scholarships would be awarded strictly on merit, while laptops would provide students with access to modern technology and digital learning facilities.

Acknowledging the financial challenges faced by many families, she said paying tuition fees and meeting other educational expenses was difficult for numerous parents. She appreciated their sacrifices and congratulated students receiving scholarships and laptops, saying their achievements reflected their hard work and their families' support.

The chief minister also announced the expansion of the Apni Chhat Apna Ghar housing programme to 500,000 houses and the construction of a new student hostel at Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University.

She said Rawalpindi was witnessing significant development, with several projects under way to improve infrastructure and public facilities. Referring to her government's performance, she said, "The daughter of Nawaz Sharif fulfils the promises she makes."

Following the university ceremony, Maryam Nawaz visited Murree Road, Rehmanabad, Commercial Market and Raja Bazaar, where PML-N leaders and party workers welcomed her with flower petals.

During the visit, she formally inaugurated the Rawalpindi Green Bus Service and beautification projects at Commercial Market and Raja Bazaar.

The announced initiatives, including additional green buses, housing expansion and university infrastructure, form part of the provincial government's broader development and public welfare agenda. NEWS DESK

Police service rules, welfare and administrative reforms reviewed

Inspector General of Police Punjab Abdul Kareem has chaired a meeting of the Police Executive Board at the Central Police Office (CPO), reviewing key administrative, policy and welfare matters aimed at improving police performance and public service delivery across the province.

The meeting was attended by Additional Inspectors General, the Managing Director of the Punjab Safe Cities Authority, heads of various departments and field units, Deputy Inspectors General, Assistant Inspectors General and other senior police officers.



During the meeting, participants reviewed measures to ensure prompt responses by police stations, strengthen supervisory mechanisms, improve law enforcement and provide better facilities to citizens.

Various administrative and policy issues, including the probation period of police employees, existing service rules and proposed amendments to relevant laws, also came under discussion.

The board reviewed matters concerning police personnel's welfare, service structure and departmental administration. Progress on the construction and upgradation of police stations and police check posts was also examined, particularly in view of the expansion of residential areas and the resulting need for improved policing infrastructure.

Heads of different police units presented practical proposals and observations on the agenda items to improve departmental efficiency and address operational challenges.

IG Abdul Kareem directed supervisory officers to ensure effective management of administrative matters and complete ongoing development projects within the prescribed timelines. He further instructed the relevant departments to refine and improve the proposals discussed during the meeting before presenting them at the next session.

Emphasising the importance of consistent policy-level coordination, the provincial police chief directed that Police Executive Board meetings be held regularly to ensure timely decisions on important administrative and operational matters.

Separately, IG Punjab Abdul Kareem met police personnel and their family members at the Central Police Office and listened to their individual complaints and requests, directing the concerned officers to take immediate steps to provide relief. NEWS DESK

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DTM

Banned JAAC linked to Afghan militants: Talal

Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry on Tuesday presented what he described as evidence of links between the proscribed Joint Action Committee in Kashmir and Afghanistan-based militant groups, alleging that individuals associated with the committee were involved in weapons transportation, recruitment, funding and coordination of violent activities.

Addressing a press conference, Talal Chaudhry said this was his third briefing on the matter. He recalled that he had held two earlier press conferences in September and October 2026, during which audio recordings and other evidence were presented. He said the first set of recordings identified three individuals: Zia, Akbar and Zarshad. According to the minister, Zarshad transported weapons from Afghanistan to border areas, while Akbar, who was a government employee, moved the weapons to other locations under the cover of his employment. Zia had allegedly been involved in such activities for eight years. The minister said Zia was in contact with Majid, who served as a special aide or personal assistant to Sardar Aman. Majid allegedly maintained contact with Zia on Sardar Aman's behalf to facilitate the movement of weapons.



Talal said further investigation revealed additional individuals, including Nazim, who had links with Ammar Sohail. He said an intelligence-based operation led to the arrest of three people, identified as Waqar Hameed, Muhammad Ali and Ammar Sohail, who were allegedly involved in receiving weapons in Kashmir. Their audio recordings, videos and other material were subsequently presented.

Introducing another individual, Imtiaz Aslam, the minister said he was a member of the committee's core committee and allegedly acted as a link between Sardar Aman, Khawaja Mehran and individuals operating in the field. He also coordinated with another person named Shahzad.

Referring to open-source intelligence, Talal said Shahzad was based in Afghanistan, originally belonged to Kashmir and was associated with a group involved in recruitment and other activities. He described Shahzad as a member of the Khawarij and said he had worked with several extremist groups. The minister also played a video to inform the media about Shahzad and his alleged activities.

Talal said the government had repeatedly maintained that the movement was not solely about public rights. He questioned why a movement with 38 demands, 37 of which had reportedly been fulfilled, was being pushed towards unrest and armed struggle.

He alleged that the platform was being used to turn a rights movement into an armed movement. According to him, Afghanistan-based groups were involved in weapons supply, training, recruitment, planning and funding. He also accused India of supporting proxies to target vulnerable locations after facing Pakistan directly. The minister then presented two audio recordings allegedly belonging to Imtiaz Aslam. He said intelligence information and evidence collected from arrested individuals had also been shared with the relevant institutions.

He recalled that the organisation had been declared proscribed on the basis of intelligence information and evidence available to the government of Azad Kashmir. This was the third press conference in which the government had presented individuals, their alleged roles and evidence relating to activities linked to the organisation.

Talal further alleged that quadcopters, automatic weapons and sniper rifles had been used during violent incidents. He said officers and soldiers had been martyred by weapons that were later recovered. He also claimed that shooters had been brought from outside the country and that funds were collected both locally and internationally in the name of public rights. NEWS DESK

No curbs on dissent, but terror online won't be tolerated



Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday asserted that freedom of speech should not become a shield for those who cross "red lines".

He made the remarks while addressing a seminar organised by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI).

At the outset of his speech, the minister said that there were four "red lines" for the state: terrorism, hate speech, incitement to violence and sexual exploitation of children.

"On these four points, there is no compromise. Pakistan has paid for terrorism in blood. As interior minister, I have attended the funerals of martyrs. And very often, the hate that killed them began on a mobile phone," he said. He alleged that only 47 per cent of the complaints made by the Counter Terrorism Department were acted upon by social media platforms.

"This is not about technology, this is about people. We are not saying that free speech must be curtailed [...] journalists must report, citizens must question, dissent must be heard, including against the government, but freedom of speech can never become a shield for those who cross these red lines," he said.

He went on to say that Pakistan had "limited manpower", resources and technology. Giving the example of Punjab, he said that the province had a population of 140 million against a strength of 61 people in the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA). "And these 61 people include drivers, clerks and officers. We cannot do this alone. That is why we have established a Social Media Protection Regulatory Authority," he said.

The minister called for moving from policy towards enforcement.

"To begin with [social media] platforms, OTT services and major content creators must register with the authority. Registration is not a licence to silence anyone, it tells us who is accountable when something goes wrong," he said.

He said that every social media platform "must name an empowered representative for Pakistan, who can actually take decisions". "Similarly, citizens need one complaint channel they can track. We are moving all NCCIA complaints onto the Pak ID app and the authority is building a single fully tracked complaint system," he said.

Naqvi then went on to recount a recent town hall meeting, where he met five girls who were on the verge of ending their lives due to someone about to release "sensitive material" on social media platforms.

"We don't have any pathway for approaching those platforms. It's their responsibility to react immediately to save these innocent lives," he said. The minister said that the social media authority would verify whether action had been taken or not. "Finally, enforcement will be step by step: engagement, then notice, then penalties. Blocking a whole [social media] platform will remain a last resort ... our request will be clear, lawful and open to review," he said.

"The state should not feel helpless. Yet, we see terrorist groups still recruiting, still raising terrorist funds, still spreading fear on these very platforms," he said.

Giving an example, Naqvi said that the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) was a declared terrorist organisation, yet "many of their officials are still using these platforms".

"If it is a declared [terrorist] organisation, then who allows them to move around and use all these platforms? Someone needs to stop [them]. This is our request," he said.

"If you are not doing it, what meaning should we take? If it is declared by your country that this organisation is a blacklisted organisation, is a terrorist organisation and then you don't take action, there's a big question mark," he said. He added that the government was focusing on the capacity building of the NCCIA.

"Today, I extend an open hand to all these platforms. Let us sit together, not across the table. Operate globally, be accountable globally and never let Pakistani citizens feel unheard," he concluded.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi called for striking a balance between freedom of expression and responsible use of digital platforms, warning against the misuse of social media for spreading hatred, extremism, disinformation and divisive narratives.

Addressing the concluding session of the International Seminar on "Social Media Platforms (SMPs) and the Post-Truth Era" as the special guest at a local hotel, the Governor said that distinguishing facts from misinformation had become one of the biggest challenges of the digital age. Speaking before diplomats, policymakers, media professionals, researchers and representatives of civil society, he said the people and security forces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had rendered immense sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, adding that violence often began with hateful rhetoric, divisive propaganda and deliberate misinformation aimed at misleading and radicalizing young people. NEWS DESK

CDF inducted into Malaysian Hall of Fame

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday congratulated Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir on his induction into the Hall of Fame at Malaysia's National Defence Studies Centre.

"This distinction also reflects the enduring friendship between Pakistan and Malaysia," the premier said on X.



"Field Marshal's resolute leadership during Marka-i-Haq, unwavering commitment to national defence, invaluable contributions to promoting peace, and enhancing Pakistan's standing internationally makes this honour truly befitting," he added. CDF Munir is on an official visit to Malaysia. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the visit aims to further strengthen bilateral defence and military cooperation between the two countries. On Monday, ISPR said CDF Munir would also visit the National Defence Studies Centre, where a formal ceremony would be held to induct him as the 21st member of its "prestigious" Hall of Fame.

According to PM Shehbaz, the recognition belongs equally to the "brave" men and women of Pakistan's armed forces, "whose courage, dedication and sacrifices safeguard our beloved homeland, and to the people of Pakistan, whose resilience and unwavering support remain our greatest strength".

Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has congratulated Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir on receiving the prestigious Hall of Fame honour from Malaysia's National Defence Studies Centre.

In her message, the chief minister extended her felicitations to Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and the Pakistan Armed Forces on the recognition.

She expressed gratitude over the honour conferred upon the Field Marshal, describing the recognition as a moment of pride for Pakistan. NEWS DESK



A 'Beaver' supermoon lights up the sky over Karachi on Tuesday. It is one of the year's largest and brightest celestial displays. REUTERS

Safe City cameras must deliver safer streets: Murad

■ CM directs SSCA to ensure zero downtime and strict upkeep of surveillance gear, control rooms

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the Sindh Safe Cities Authority (SSCA) to strengthen the operational capacity of the Karachi Safe City Project, ensuring that modern surveillance technology translates into safer streets, effective policing and better protection for citizens.

Presiding over a meeting of the Sindh Safe Cities Authority at the CM House on Tuesday, the Chief Minister reviewed the project's progress, operational arrangements, financial requirements, institutional strengthening, and performance during January-October 2026.

The meeting was attended by Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Home Secretary Iqbal Memon, IG Police Javed Odho, PSCM Agha Wasif, Chairman P&D Najam Shah, Secretary Local Govt Waseem Shamshad, Secretary Excise Ali Ahamd Baloch, Secretary Finance Asghar Memon, DG SSCA Sarfraz Shaikh, DG PDMA Salman Shah, MPAs Syed Sarfaraz Shah, Ali Hassan Hingorjo, Ms Sumeta Afzal and others. The Chief Minister said the Safe City Project was an important investment in modern, technology-driven policing and stressed that its infrastructure must deliver tangible results for the people.

He directed the Authority to ensure uninterrupted functioning and professional maintenance of cameras, communication networks, control rooms and other surveillance facilities. DG Sindh Safe City Sarfraz Shaikh, briefing the meeting, informed that Phase-I, installed by the National Radio and Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC), comprises 300 pole sites and 1,300 cameras, supported by 18 Points of Presence (PoPs), a Data Centre and a Network Operations Centre.

The CM considered and approved the revised six-month operation and maintenance proposal of Rs189.75 million, with an overall annual financial ceiling of Rs213.03 million, including spares and optical fibre charges. The project will commence on January 1, 2027.

The Chief Minister stressed that the agreement must ensure transparency, financial discipline and measurable performance, with no escalation in fixed costs, monthly verification of services and deductions for failure to meet agreed standards.

Reviewing operational performance, the meeting was informed that the system had helped trace and hand over 1,631 vehicles, hand over 84 wanted persons to law enforcement agencies and provide 642 instances of digital evidence to investigating formations during the first ten months of 2026. Of the 751 evidence-search requests received from 23 formations, 642 were facilitated. The system also processed 408 vehicle-arming and 32 person-arming requests, while 52 vehicles were traced through arming alerts. Fourteen government vehicles were handed over to police stations.



Highlighting the practical impact of the system, the meeting was informed that surveillance footage and automated number plate recognition had helped police solve a house robbery in Gulistan-e-Johar, apprehend suspects involved in robberies by impersonators posing as police officers, recover a stolen vehicle within two hours and 15 minutes, and trace and intercept a vehicle wanted by a court.

The Chief Minister appreciated these results and directed the police and Safe Cities Authority to strengthen coordination so that technology increasingly supports crime detection, timely response, vehicle recovery and evidence-based investigations. The Authority also approved a 275-position organisational structure, comprising 48 administrative and management positions, 97 in command and control, 112 for mobile surveillance and 18 technical and ICT positions.

The Chief Minister emphasised that the Authority must have professionally qualified personnel, particularly in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, software development, network engineering and digital forensics, with recruitment carried out in phases according to available funds. The Chief Minister further decided on recruitment against three new technical positions - Chief Technology Officer, Chief Information Security Officer and SOC Analyst/Digital Forensics and Incident Response specialist. The CM directed the Authority to recruit for the positions through an HR company. The meeting reviewed progress on earlier decisions, including approval of the Phase-II PC-I by the Provincial Development Working Party, recruitment and notification of service regulations, and the Authority's Rs575 million budget for 2026-27. The provision of emergency response vehicles and the proposal for divisional Safe City projects were also reviewed.

Concluding the meeting Shah said the Karachi Safe City Project must evolve into a fully functional public safety and law enforcement system rather than remain merely an infrastructure initiative. He directed the concerned departments to ensure timely implementation of pending decisions, strengthen coordination with Sindh Police and maintain the highest standards of operational efficiency.

He reiterated that the real success of the project would be measured by safer communities, stronger police response, effective crime investigations and greater public confidence in law enforcement. NEWS DESK

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GLAMOUR DTM

Matty Healy's Wife Reportedly Pregnant



The 1975 frontman Matty Healy is reportedly preparing to welcome his first child with his wife, model Gabbrietta Bechtel, just four months after the couple tied the knot.

The 37-year-old singer and his 29-year-old wife were recently spotted together outside a supermarket in West Hollywood, Los Angeles. Bechtel appeared to be showing a baby bump while wearing a fitted black dress, sparking speculation about the couple's pregnancy news.

Healy was seen carrying several shopping bags as the pair left the store. However, neither the musician nor Bechtel has officially confirmed the reports. Their representatives have also been approached for comment.

The reported pregnancy comes shortly after the couple's wedding in July 2026. They exchanged vows at a Los Angeles estate previously owned by pop superstar Madonna.

Healy and Bechtel have been romantically linked since September 2023, following the singer's brief relationship with pop star Taylor Swift earlier that year. Their relationship progressed quickly, with the couple announcing their engagement in 2024.



Before gaining recognition as a model and social media personality, Bechtel was the lead vocalist and songwriter of Nasty Cherry, a punk-pop band formed by singer Charli XCX.

Following their engagement, Healy's mother, British actress Denise Welch, publicly expressed her happiness about the relationship. She described Bechtel as everything she could have hoped for in a daughter-in-law and said the family was delighted about their engagement.

Welch also revealed that her son had commissioned a customised engagement ring featuring a black diamond and pavé diamonds.

The couple are reportedly expected to remain in Los Angeles to stay close to Bechtel's family. NEWS DESK

Billy Ray Attends Miley's Wedding With Hurley



Singer Billy Ray Cyrus made a stylish appearance at his daughter Miley Cyrus's wedding, arriving with his girlfriend, actress Elizabeth Hurley, and her son Damian.

Miley, 33, married musician Maxx Morando, 28, during an outdoor ceremony in Palm Springs, California, surrounded by close friends and family members.

Hurley, 61, attracted attention in an elegant outfit as she joined the wedding celebrations alongside her 24-year-old son. The actress was also seen holding hands with Billy Ray as the couple left the reception together.

The couple later posed for a family photograph with the newlyweds, Miley's sister Noah and other relatives, making the occasion a special moment for the blended family.

The wedding took place at an estate formerly owned by legendary singer Frank Sinatra. Musician Wayne Coyne of the Flaming Lips, who has previously collaborated with Miley, officiated the ceremony.

Miley looked stunning in a white satin gown featuring long sleeves, an open back and a short train. The singer appeared emotional while exchanging vows with Morando, at one point wiping away tears. Her mother, Tish Cyrus, also attended the celebration with her husband, actor Dominic Purcell. Hurley's appearance at the wedding comes amid growing interest in her relationship with Billy Ray. NEWS DESK

Miley's Fairytale Wedding Revealed

Miley Cyrus has reportedly married her longtime boyfriend, musician Maxx Morando, in a private ceremony in Palm Springs, California.

The couple tied the knot on November 21, according to reports. Their wedding came after several months of speculation about their relationship status, including rumours that they had secretly married earlier this year. Marriage rumours first gained attention in May 2026 during Miley's Hollywood Walk of Fame induction ceremony. Her mother, Tish Cyrus, was reportedly heard referring to Maxx as Miley's "husband", leading fans to wonder whether the pair had already exchanged vows.

Miley and Maxx began dating in 2021 after meeting on a blind date. They kept much of their relationship away from public attention but occasionally shared affectionate moments and spoke about their connection.

The couple confirmed their engagement at the premiere of Avatar: Fire and Ash in early December 2025. Miley was photographed wearing a diamond ring on her left hand, which attracted attention and fuelled engagement reports. Jewellery expert Olivia Landau previously estimated that the ring could feature a three-to-four-carat diamond and be worth between $75,000 and $150,000.

Miley, 33, and Maxx, 28, have largely maintained a low-profile relationship. NEWS DESK

Megan Shares Taylor's Handwritten Note



Taylor Swift made a special gesture towards rising country music star Megan Moroney by leaving her a handwritten note backstage at the 2026 Country Music Association (CMA) Awards.

Moroney shared a glimpse of the personal message in an Instagram post on Friday, reflecting on the memorable night. The note was left in her dressing room after she sent flowers to Swift ahead of the awards ceremony.

Written on a black-and-white photograph of Swift, the message thanked Moroney for the thoughtful gift and wished her well for the evening. Swift also added a playful touch, joking that she would have returned the gesture with flowers but had only merchandise available in her dressing room. She encouraged Moroney to enjoy the night and signed the message with affection.

Moroney appeared delighted by the gesture and also showed her admiration for Swift by sharing a photograph of herself wearing a black T-shirt featuring the pop star.

The exchange came as Swift returned to the CMA Awards stage for the first time in 13 years. NEWS DESK

Mystery Over Meghan's Missing Ring

Meghan Markle's engagement ring has not been seen in public for nine months, prompting speculation about its whereabouts and possible changes to its design. The Duchess of Sussex was last photographed wearing the £120,000 ring in February while attending an NBA All-Star Game with Prince Harry in Inglewood, California. Since then, she has appeared at several public events without the engagement ring, wearing only her wedding band.

A jewellery expert has suggested that repeated alterations may have weakened the ring's structure and could even have caused its band to break. However, there is no confirmation that the ring has been damaged.

The ring was designed by Prince Harry with the help of royal jewellers Cleave & Company. He proposed to Meghan in 2017 with a three-diamond ring featuring a central stone sourced from Botswana, a country that holds special meaning for the couple. The two smaller diamonds came from a bracelet belonging to his late mother, Princess Diana.

The original design featured a substantial yellow gold band. However, the ring is believed to have undergone several changes over the years, including the addition of small diamonds along its band and changes to its central setting.

James Constantinou, founder of Prestige Pawnbrokers, said repeated alterations could affect the strength of a jewellery piece. He explained that cutting, heating and reshaping gold can weaken its structure, particularly when the band is already thin.

He also pointed out that micro-pavé designs, which feature tiny diamonds set closely together, can be more delicate because small holes are drilled into the metal to hold the stones.

Another jewellery expert, Nilesh Rakholia, said the ring's original design offered greater structural strength because of its thicker gold band. He suggested that the later diamond-set version may have gained extra sparkle at the expense of durability.

Meghan's ring has attracted attention over the years because of its changing appearance. In 2019, she was seen wearing it with a thinner band. NEWS DESK



Kim's Bold Looks Steal Vegas Spotlight

Reality television star Kim Kardashian grabbed attention in Las Vegas with two eye-catching leather outfits as she showed her support for boyfriend and Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton.

The 46-year-old SKIMS founder stepped out in a striking red leather ensemble before changing into a matching black outfit during her appearance in the city over the weekend. ardashian highlighted her figure in the fitted looks, pairing them with pointed heels and dark sunglasses. She completed her appearance with sleek, straight hair and glamorous makeup.

Her visit to Las Vegas was part of her continued support for Hamilton, whom she has been romantically linked with since February 2026. The couple have since made their relationship public and have been spotted together at several international destinations and Grand Prix events. Hamilton recently opened up about his relationship with Kardashian and revealed that he enjoys spending time with her four children from her previous marriage to rapper Kanye West.

The seven-time Formula One world champion also shared that he had bought a dog for the children, describing the pet, named Halo, as a new addition to their family.

Kardashian has also spoken positively about their relationship. During an episode of her reality show, The Kardashians, she admitted that she was extremely happy with how things were progressing. While discussing her ideal partner with comedian Nikki Glaser, the reality star revealed that Hamilton appeared to meet the more than 50 qualities she had previously listed for her future partner.

She avoided directly confirming his identity at the time but said she was genuinely happy with her personal life.

The couple have also travelled together to Japan, Paris and the Cotswolds. They previously made a public appearance at the 2026 Super Bowl, where they were spotted together on the stadium's big screen.

Kardashian recently revealed that she had remained single for five years before entering a new relationship. NEWS DESK



DTM MONEY

OICCI SURVEY

Foreign investor confidence plunges into negative territory

Overall business sentiment drops 36 points amid US-Iran conflict, high taxes, and energy costs



Business confidence in Pakistan has deteriorated sharply amid heightened geopolitical tensions, including the US-Iran war and wider instability in the Middle East, alongside the persistent mounting pressures within the domestic economy.

Foreign investors have registered an even steeper decline in sentiment than the wider business community, according to the latest Business Confidence Survey released by the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI).

The survey, conducted across Pakistan during September and October 2026, shows that the overall business confidence fell by 36 percentage points, moving from a positive 13 percent in the previous wave to negative 23 percent.

More significantly, confidence among OICCI members declined by 55 percentage points, from positive 28 percent to negative 27 percent, reversing the historical trend of foreign investors being more confident than the broader business community.

The findings are particularly significant given that the survey covers businesses collectively representing nearly 80 percent of Pakistan's GDP, with respondents drawn from the manufacturing, services and retail sectors across the metro and non-metro cities.

"The deterioration in sentiment reflects growing concerns over the cost of doing business, particularly due to high energy and fuel prices, inflation, global peace situation, security, and policy uncertainty. While some macroeconomic indicators have shown improvement, the findings suggest that these gains have yet to translate into a meaningful improvement in business conditions or investor sentiment," read the survey.

Confidence has turned negative across all three major sectors. Retail and wholesale recorded the steepest decline of 45 percentage points, falling from positive 20 percent to negative 25 percent. Manufacturing declined by 34 points to negative 25 percent, while services fell by 31 points to negative 17 percent.

The survey also highlights a marked weakening in expectations for investment and employment.

The capital investment results declined by 16 percentage points, moving from positive 2 percent to negative 14 percent, while the results for employment expectations fell by 23 points to negative 6 percent. Although business expansion expectations remained marginally positive at 3 percent, this represented a decline of 27 points from the previous survey.

The shift in sentiment is also evident in businesses' assessment of the country's economic environment.

As many as 78 percent of respondents reported a negative assessment of Pakistan's business situation over the preceding six months, compared with 47 percent in the previous wave.

Looking ahead, 44 percent expect business conditions to decline over the next six months, up from 34 percent previously, while only 23 percent anticipate an improvement, compared with 47 percent in the earlier May 2026 survey.

Commenting on the findings, OICCI President Umar Ahsan Khan said the survey should serve as an important signal for policymakers, particularly as Pakistan seeks to attract investment and move towards sustainable, private-sector-led economic growth.

"The sharp decline in confidence, particularly among foreign investors, highlights the need to address the underlying structural issues affecting investment decisions. Businesses need a predictable policy environment, competitive taxation, affordable and reliable energy, and greater consistency in government decisions. Restoring confidence will be essential to unlocking fresh investment, supporting expansion and generating employment," he said.

OICCI Secretary General M. Abdul Aleem expressed concern at the extent of the deterioration in sentiment among the Chamber's members, noting that foreign investors had traditionally maintained a relatively stronger outlook despite the challenges of operating in Pakistan.

"It is indeed surprising to see the level of disappointment reflected in the responses of OICCI members. These are established foreign investors with a long-term presence in Pakistan, and historically their confidence levels have remained higher than those of the wider business community. The fact that this has now reversed warrants serious attention.

Their concerns should not be viewed simply as a reflection of prevailing global uncertainties; they also point to domestic business environment challenges that require a timely response," he said.

The survey identifies rising inflation and high taxation as the two biggest threats to business growth, cited by 84 percent and 81 percent of respondents, respectively. Energy costs and fuel price adjustments have emerged as particularly significant drivers. NEWS DESK

PSX stays bullish, gains over 1,068 points

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bullish trend on Tuesday, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index gaining 1,068.42 points, a positive change of 0.60 percent, to close at 178,542.28 points against 177,473.86 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 644.770 million shares, compared to 551.451 million shares traded in the previous session. The traded value of the ready market stood at Rs23.066 billion, up from Rs22.500 billion a day earlier.

Meanwhile, total market capitalisation increased to Rs19.385 trillion from Rs19.254 trillion recorded in the previous session.

Out of 498 companies that traded in the ready market, 281 posted gains, 195 suffered losses, while 22 remained unchanged.

WorldCall Telecom led the volume chart with 77.200 million shares, followed by TPL REIT Fund I with 41.429 million shares and TPL Properties with 31.620 million shares.

Among the top gainers in the ready market, Pakistan National Shipping Corporation surged by Rs47.44 to close at Rs672.01, while Sapphire Textile Mills Limited advanced by Rs25.86 to settle at Rs1,550.37.

On the losing side, PIA Holding Company LimitedB declined by Rs280.00 to close at Rs14,000.51, while Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited fell by Rs271.50 to Rs26,247.50.

In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 572.741 million shares with a traded value of Rs21.682 billion, compared with 528.280 million shares worth Rs14.682 billion in the previous session.

Of the 306 companies traded in the DFC market, 218 advanced, 86 declined, and two remained unchanged. NEWS DESK

SIFC pitches key investment sectors to foreign envoys



Pakistan on Tuesday pitched its investment potential across key sectors to foreign diplomats, assuring resident Heads of Mission of streamlined one-window facilitation, regulatory support, and seamless profit repatriation.

The briefing session on Pakistan's economic diplomacy and the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to attract foreign direct investment.

Chaired by the Foreign Secretary, the session was attended by the SIFC National Coordinator, Director General, Secretary, and other senior officials.

During the session, SIFC Apex Committee Secretary Dr Jehanzeb Khan gave a detailed briefing on Pakistan's improving macroeconomic environment, highlighting ongoing efforts to provide one-window facilitation and transform the country's business ecosystem.

He outlined targeted incentives and investment opportunities across priority areas, including mines and minerals, agriculture and livestock, information technology and IT-enabled services, health, infrastructure, tourism, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and human resource development.

The attending envoys were also provided with sector-specific investment pitch-books. During an interactive question-and-answer session, the SIFC leadership assured foreign investors of full facilitation while addressing diplomats' queries regarding SEZ tax exemptions, regulatory frameworks, and mechanisms for profit repatriation.

In his concluding remarks, the Foreign Secretary reaffirmed that Pakistan is "open for business to all" and remains committed to welcoming international investors. He noted that the Foreign Office, SIFC, and allied state institutions are working in close coordination to remove bottlenecks and drive sustainable economic growth.

He also urged the resident Heads of Mission and their commercial teams to play a proactive role in connecting businesses in their respective countries with emerging opportunities in Pakistan to deepen bilateral economic ties. NEWS DESK

Romanian wheat boosts Pakistan's food security

Pakistan has received another major shipment of Romanian wheat, bringing total imports from Romania to 273,603 metric tonnes in five consignments, as the two countries strengthen agricultural trade ties and Pakistan diversifies its sources of essential food supplies.

The bulk carrier MV Alex arrived at Port Qasim on Monday, November 23, carrying 54,983 metric tonnes of Romanian wheat for Punjab, according to a Romanian Embassy press release. The shipment is part of the Trading Corporation of Pakistan's (TCP) efforts to supply wheat to Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh.

Earlier, on Saturday, November 21, the MV Zhong Chang arrived at Karachi Port carrying approximately 50,000 metric tonnes of Romanian wheat for Punjab. According to the Karachi Port Trust (KPT), the vessel berthed at berths 13 and 14.

Before the latest arrival, four TCP shipments carrying more than 200,000 metric tonnes of Romanian wheat had reached Pakistan. Two consignments were allocated to Punjab, one to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and one to Sindh. The MV Alex carried the third consignment for Punjab.

Romanian Ambassador Dr Dan Stoenescu said the shipments demonstrated the practical benefits of bilateral trade, providing Pakistan with an additional source of wheat amid pressure on international markets.

He said the five consignments also offered Romania a foundation for developing longer-term trade relations with Pakistani buyers.

The ambassador highlighted a memorandum of understanding signed between the Karachi Port Trust and Romania's Port of Constanta, saying it could pave the way for new maritime trade corridors and strengthen commercial links between the two countries.

He added that the deliveries had increased wheat availability in Pakistan, contributing to food security and efforts to keep prices affordable for consumers. NEWS DESK

National Savings hits Rs 700b milestone ahead of schedule

The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has realized Rs700 billion between July 1 and November 23, achieving its target for the period and positioning itself to pursue an ambitious resource mobilisation target of Rs1.53 trillion for the fiscal year 2026-27.

The strong performance reflects sustained investor interest in government-backed savings schemes and the institution's efforts to strengthen domestic savings, broaden its investor base and provide accessible investment opportunities to citizens, official sources said.



The annual mobilisation target forms part of the government's broader strategy to channel household savings into formal investment avenues while offering secure options for individuals seeking financial stability and long-term planning.

CDNS is also focusing on improving operational efficiency, enhancing service delivery and expanding access to its savings products through improved digital services.

A key area of focus is the expansion of Shariah-compliant investment opportunities to attract investors seeking financial products aligned with Islamic principles. The institution has been gradually strengthening its presence in the Islamic finance segment by diversifying its investment offerings.

For fiscal year 2025-26, CDNS had set a mobilisation target of Rs60 billion for Islamic savings instruments. Earlier, during fiscal year 2024-25, it had fixed an overall mobilisation target of Rs1.65 trillion, including Rs170 billion from Islamic investment products.

The institution has demonstrated a strong mobilisation record in previous years. During fiscal year 2023-24, CDNS surpassed its target of Rs1.7 trillion by mobilising Rs1.742 trillion. It also achieved its Rs1.6 trillion target in fiscal year 2022-23.

In fiscal year 2021-22, the institution initially set a target of Rs1.3 trillion, which was later revised upward to Rs1.4 trillion amid favourable market conditions and improved resource mobilisation.

Officials attributed the institution's performance to institutional reforms, better customer services and initiatives aimed at making National Savings schemes more accessible and attractive to investors.

With Rs700 billion already mobilised during the first five months of FY27, CDNS is now working towards achieving its annual target of Rs1.53 trillion.

Expanding the investor base, introducing diversified savings products, promoting Islamic investment options and accelerating digital transformation are expected to remain key priorities as the institution seeks to maintain its growth momentum. NEWS DESK

Jam Kamal pitches agri-food sector to global investors

Highlights untapped potential in processing, livestock, and halal exports; 826 buyers from 75 countries gather at FoodAg Pakistan 2026 in Karachi

Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, emphasizing the country's potential as a major player in the global agri-food market, invited international investors and business communities to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan's agriculture and food sectors, particularly in processing, packaging, branding and livestock.

The Federal Commerce Minister was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the fourth edition of International Food and Agro Exhibition (FoodAg) Pakistan 2026, organized by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) at Sindh Governor House late Monday night.

The ceremony was attended by Sindh Governor Syed Muhammad Nihal Hashmi, Coordinator to PM for Industry and Commerce Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan, members of parliament, foreign diplomats and business delegates as well as leadership of REAP, FPCCI, KCCI, LCCI and other trade and industrial associations and chambers.



The Federal Commerce Minister, at the occasion, welcomed international delegates and visitors and conveyed the special regards of the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Highlighting Pakistan's rich agricultural heritage, the federal minister observed that the region had sustained agricultural production for nearly 4,000 years, owing to the Indus River and the ancient Indus Civilization.

He noted that the global agricultural landscape was continuously evolving, with changing market dynamics, emerging ideas and new requirements shaping international trade.

He emphasized the importance of incorporating global experiences, suggestions and innovations into Pakistan's trade exhibitions.

Jam Kamal highlighted that FoodAg provides an important platform for connecting international buyers with Pakistani producers, particularly small-scale businesses that otherwise face difficulties in accessing international markets. He stressed that smaller businesses, including those operating in smaller cities, should have the same opportunities to connect with international buyers as businesses in major commercial centres.

Emphasizing the growing importance of sustainability and regulatory compliance in international trade, he noted that global buyers increasingly require detailed information about every stage of production, while new laws and regulations were becoming essential considerations for exporters. He underscored the need for Pakistani producers to adapt to these changing requirements to remain competitive in international markets.

The Federal Minister also identified emerging opportunities in olive oil, aquaculture, pink salt and meat processing, while highlighting Pakistan's competitive advantage in the global halal food market as a Muslim-majority country. He observed that halal food requirements were expanding across international markets, including countries such as Hong Kong. He further highlighted Pakistan's role in facilitating regulatory requirements for around ten countries through the presence of relevant regulatory bodies.

Underscoring the importance of value addition, the Minister stressed that Pakistan must enhance the value of its agricultural products before exporting them.

He invited international investors to explore opportunities in Pakistan's agricultural economy, particularly in processing, packaging and livestock. Referring to changing global market conditions over the past eight months, he emphasized the need for greater international collaboration and partnerships.

Highlighting Pakistan's geographical and climatic advantages, including its four seasons, diverse landscapes and connectivity with Central Asia, the Minister expressed hope for stronger cooperation with international partners and investors, saying that the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was ready to assist the investors in the identified sectors. NEWS DESK

WORLD DTM

UK Heatwave Toll Reaches 5,258

Britain recorded its highest number of heat-related deaths in 2026, with an estimated 5,258 fatalities linked to extreme temperatures during the summer, according to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA).

The figure is the highest since the agency began monitoring heat-associated mortality in 2016. It is significantly above the 2,985 deaths recorded during the hot summer of 2022.

The latest toll follows another summer of prolonged extreme heat across Europe. Scientists have warned that climate change is making heatwaves more frequent and intense, increasing risks to public health.

According to the UKHSA, Britain experienced seven separate heat episodes lasting a combined 41 days during the summer. This was the highest number recorded since annual monitoring began.

The most deadly period was between June 21 and June 28, when an estimated 2,401 deaths were associated with extreme heat. More than 3,000 heat-related fatalities were recorded across heat episodes in May and June alone.



The impact was not limited to Britain. Researchers from Imperial College London and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine estimated that more than 50,000 heat-related deaths occurred in urban areas across 30 European countries during the summer. They described the toll as the highest recorded since 2000.

Extreme heat can cause serious health complications, including heatstroke and dehydration. It can also worsen existing cardiovascular and respiratory conditions, particularly among vulnerable people. Ross Thompson, principal environmental health scientist at the UKHSA, stressed the importance of long-term preparation for rising temperatures. NEWS DESK

NATO On Alert Over Russian Satellite



NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte has pledged that the alliance will defend its territory against potential threats in space following reports that Russia is preparing to launch a nuclear-armed satellite.

Speaking at a press conference in Berlin, Rutte said NATO would take all necessary measures to protect its members, including addressing emerging threats beyond Earth's atmosphere.

"We will always make sure we defend every inch of NATO territory, and that includes making sure we are safe when it comes to the space element," he said.

Reports published by German broadcasters NDR and WDR, along with the newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung, suggested that Russia could launch a satellite carrying a nuclear warhead within the next 60 days.

Citing unnamed German military and intelligence sources, the reports identified the proposed satellite as "Sputnik-S". It could potentially disrupt or destroy other satellites, including those used for communications, surveillance and observation.

Rutte said NATO had several options available to respond to developments in the military domain. He added that the alliance regularly assessed its deterrence and defence capabilities and would make adjustments when necessary.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who appeared alongside Rutte, did not confirm or deny the reported Russian plans. However, he said the allegations reflected the level of escalation Russia appeared prepared to pursue.

Merz described reports of nuclear weapons being placed in space as deeply alarming, adding that similar concerns had emerged previously.

A German government spokesman also declined to confirm the reports but said authorities were treating them seriously. He cautioned against creating unnecessary public anxiety over potential threats that had not been established.

Russia rejected the allegations. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said he had not seen the latest reports and dismissed claims based on unnamed sources.

The Russian embassy in Berlin described the accusations as unfounded and called them part of a propaganda campaign.

The reports have renewed concerns over the militarisation of space. The 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which Russia has signed, prohibits countries from placing nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in orbit.

However, military powers are increasingly exploring ways to target or disable rival satellites. Such systems could threaten critical infrastructure used for military communications, navigation and intelligence gathering.

In 2024, the United States accused Russia of developing a space-based anti-satellite weapon equipped with a nuclear warhead. Moscow rejected the allegation, with President Vladimir Putin stating that Russia opposed deploying nuclear weapons in space. NEWS DESK

Japan Backs ICC Amid US Sanctions



Japan has pledged to pay its full 2027 contribution to the International Criminal Court (ICC) by the end of this year, offering financial support to the court ahead of US sanctions expected to take effect in April 2027.

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi informed ICC President Tomoko Akane of the decision on Tuesday. The announcement followed a request from the court for early payments from major contributors to help secure its finances amid growing pressure from Washington.

Japan is the ICC's largest financial contributor, accounting for around 15 per cent of the court's budget. Germany, France, South Korea, Italy, Canada and the United Kingdom are also among its major financial supporters.

Tokyo's decision comes despite its close security relationship with the United States. Washington has taken measures against the ICC and sought to weaken its position through sanctions and efforts to withdraw support.

Japan's early payment is expected to provide the court with access to funds before the US sanctions come into force in April 2027. Analysts say other member states could follow Japan's example by paying their contributions ahead of schedule, helping the ICC build a financial reserve. NEWS DESK

Scientists Discover Oldest Known Quasar

Scientists have discovered the most distant quasar yet, the core of a galaxy with a slow-chomping black hole at its center dating back to nearly the dawn of the universe.

The quasar formed within 630 million years of the universe-forming Big Bang, a German-led team reported Tuesday. That's considered a very early development in the 13.8 billion-year history of the cosmos, and it smashes previous records.

"This time the leap in cosmic time is huge!" the European Southern Observatory's Julien Wolf, who led the study, said in an email. "The previous two records each took us back by about 15 million years or less. This one takes us back by nearly 40 million years, the biggest advance in nearly a decade!"



Wolf and his team spotted the quasar while digging through millions of observations made by the European Space Agency's Euclid telescope. Launched in 2023, Euclid is surveying galaxies in an effort to shed light on the dark matter and dark energy that fill so much of the universe and keep it expanding. Finding a quasar so early in the universe is rare, according to Wolf. What makes this one even rarer, he said, is the massive size of its black hole, despite being such a relatively slow eater of everything around it. Scientists are seeing it as it was 13.1 billion years ago - when the universe was less than 5% of its current age.

Wolf nicknamed the quasar Dun Aonghasa after the prehistoric stone fort in Ireland's Aran Islands. His wife and daughter are Irish, and he was awestruck when they visited the fort - a frontier holding "the promise of a vast horizon still to explore," just like this quasar.

His team's findings were corroborated by the Hubble and Webb space telescopes as well as other observatories on and off Earth. Thanks to Webb, scientists learned that the black hole powering this quasar is equivalent in mass to 360 million of our suns, an astounding amount so early in time. The final results appear in the journal Astronomy & Astrophysics.

"Dun Aonghasa gives us a new deadline" for the early universe, Wolf said. "About 630 million years after the Big Bang, its black hole had already grown to about 360 million times the mass of the sun. But how?" AP

14 Nations Back Rohingya Genocide Ruling



Fourteen countries from Europe, Africa and Oceania have recognised a landmark International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling that Myanmar committed genocide against its Rohingya minority, urging the country to fulfil its obligations under international law.

The joint statement was issued by the foreign ministers of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, The Gambia and the United Kingdom.

The countries said Myanmar had violated its obligations under the Genocide Convention and called on its government to fully comply with the court's binding decision.

Separately, the United Kingdom formally recognised the genocide and announced sanctions against five senior Myanmar military figures.

British Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband said the violence and persecution inflicted on the Rohingya population could not go unanswered.

The sanctions include asset freezes and travel bans. London also plans to introduce legislation restricting the export and supply of aviation fuel to Myanmar.

The British government further announced £5 million in additional funding to provide essential assistance to around 350,000 Rohingya and other vulnerable communities in Rakhine state.

Another £3 million will support efforts to strengthen accountability and justice for survivors of human rights abuses across Myanmar.

The developments follow a historic ICJ ruling on November 19, which found that Myanmar committed genocide against the Rohingya during a military crackdown in Rakhine state in 2017.

The decision marked the first time in the court's 80-year history that it had determined a state was responsible for committing genocide.

Myanmar's government rejected the ruling, describing it as unfair and a major disappointment. NEWS DESK

EU Targets Russia With Fresh Sanctions



The European Commission has proposed a new package of sanctions against Russia, targeting 60 additional banks, cryptocurrency networks, oil tankers and the country's participation in European sports and cultural events.

The proposed measures mark the European Union's 22nd round of sanctions against Moscow since the start of the war in Ukraine. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen unveiled the package in Strasbourg on Tuesday, saying the bloc would continue increasing economic and diplomatic pressure until Russia demonstrates a genuine commitment to lasting peace in Ukraine. Under the financial measures, 60 more Russian banks would face full transaction bans and be cut off from the SWIFT international payment system. The move aims to further restrict Russia's access to international financial networks and limit its ability to conduct cross-border transactions.

The Commission has also proposed establishing a Crypto Sanctions Task Force to tackle the use of digital currencies to bypass Western restrictions. The initiative would target cryptocurrency and payment networks, including platforms in third countries suspected of helping Russia evade sanctions.

The energy sector is another major focus of the proposed package. More than 70 additional vessels linked to Russia's shadow fleet would be blacklisted. The plan also includes a ban on tankers insured in Russia and restrictions on European companies providing repair services to Russian refineries or supplying electricity-related services. NEWS DESK

Beijing Targets Taiwan Candidate

Taiwan is preparing for key local elections on Saturday, with voters set to choose mayors and county chiefs. Although the campaign is largely focused on domestic issues, China has become increasingly involved in the political debate, particularly over the ruling party's candidate for Taipei mayor.

Puma Shen, a lawmaker from the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), is seeking to win control of the capital for the party for the first time in nearly three decades. However, his candidacy has drawn strong criticism from Beijing, which accuses him of promoting Taiwan independence and portraying China as a threat to gain votes.

Chinese authorities have labelled Shen a separatist and issued a wanted notice against him. Beijing has also imposed sanctions on his business interests in China, adding to previous restrictions against him. China's state broadcaster CCTV accused him of exploiting anti-China sentiment during the campaign.

The controversy has intensified concerns in Taiwan about possible interference in the election. Taipei has repeatedly accused Beijing of increasing military activity, cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns ahead of local polls. Taiwan's top China policy official, Chiu Chui-cheng, said Beijing had linked its Taiwan policy to the outcome of the island's elections for years. He warned that attempts to influence voters could instead increase public resentment towards China.

China's Taiwan Affairs Office did not respond to requests for comment. Beijing has consistently rejected accusations that it interferes in Taiwan's elections.

Despite the controversy, Shen has largely kept China-related issues out of his campaign speeches. He has focused instead on urban renewal and detailed policy proposals for the capital. NEWS DESK



SPORTS

DTM

Gyokeres Faces Arsenal Setback

Viktor Gyokeres is facing growing questions over his role at Arsenal after managing managing just two goals in 15 appearances across all competitions this season.

The Swedish striker arrived at the Emirates Stadium in a £64 million move and enjoyed a successful debut campaign, scoring 21 goals as Arsenal ended their 22-year wait for a Premier League title.

However, his second season has proved considerably more challenging. The 28-year-old is yet to score in eight Premier League appearances and has started only one league match this season.



Despite featuring in three Champions League matches and two Carabao Cup games, Gyokeres has struggled to establish himself as Mikel Arteta's first-choice striker.

His limited playing time has also revived questions about whether his playing style is ideally suited to Arsenal's attacking approach.

A major factor behind Gyokeres' reduced involvement has been the return to fitness of Kai Havertz.

Last season, Havertz's recurring knee and hamstring injuries provided Gyokeres with more opportunities to lead Arsenal's attack. The Swedish international consequently became an important figure in the team's title-winning campaign.

However, Arteta has consistently shown confidence in Havertz, particularly in high-pressure fixtures. The German forward is valued for his movement, link-up play and ability to contribute beyond scoring goals.

Gyokeres, meanwhile, is regarded as a more natural goalscorer. However, his ability to hold up the ball, compete physically with defenders and connect with teammates has attracted criticism.

Some supporters have questioned his effectiveness when Arsenal need a striker to operate with his back to goal and create opportunities for other attackers.

Arteta has acknowledged that the forward is working to improve these aspects of his game.

There have also been encouraging signs. Gyokeres delivered one of his strongest performances of the campaign in Arsenal's Champions League victory over Slavia Prague, assisting the opening goal before scoring the winner.

Arteta has played down concerns about Gyokeres' reduced playing time, insisting that several members of his squad have experienced similar situations because of rotation across competitions.

The Arsenal manager said the club had distributed opportunities among players to ensure everyone received sufficient playing time.

He also indicated that Gyokeres had not personally approached him to complain about his limited involvement.

Arteta added that he regularly communicates with his players to understand their feelings and explain their roles within the squad. He described his conversations with Gyokeres and other players as positive.

The striker's signing also attracted attention because Arsenal had previously explored a move for Benjamin Sesko, who subsequently joined Manchester United. The club eventually changed direction following the arrival of sporting director Andrea Berta and pursued Gyokeres instead.

There had reportedly been questions within sections of the club about whether the Swedish forward represented the traditional profile of striker Arsenal usually targeted.

Gyokeres finished last season with 14 Premier League goals, although his overall contribution was not always reflected in Arsenal's results.

His goals directly helped secure two additional league points, including a decisive penalty in the 1-0 victory over Everton. NEWS DESK

Pakistan Down S. Korea To Keep Final Hopes Alive

Pakistan kept their Sultan Azlan Shah Cup final hopes alive with a hard-fought 3-2 victory over South Korea on Tuesday. Hannan Shahid hit a fine brace to help his side register their third win in four matches at the tournament in Ipoh, Malaysia.

Rana Waheed Ashraf was also on target for Pakistan while Chun Semin and Lee Minhyeok scored for South Korea in an encounter that went down to the final minute.

Pakistan made an ideal start to the contest, taking the lead in the fifth minute when Rana Waheed scored a field goal to give the Abu Mahmood-led side an early advantage. South Korea failed to find an equaliser in the opening quarter as Pakistan took a 1-0 lead into the first break.

Hannan doubled Pakistan's advantage in the 23rd minute with another field goal, putting Herman Kruis's side in a commanding position heading into halftime.

South Korea reduced the deficit five minutes into the third quarter when Chun scored a field goal to bring his side back into contention. Pakistan maintained their slender advantage until the end of the third quarter, setting up a tense final 15 minutes.

Hannan struck again in the 53rd minute, restoring Pakistan's two-goal cushion with his second field goal of the match.

Pakistan suffered a setback a minute later when Sufyan Khan received a yellow card, leaving them a player short during the closing stages of the encounter.

South Korea reduced the margin once again in the 60th minute when Lee converted a penalty corner, but Pakistan held on to secure three crucial points. NEWS DESK



Shaheens Fly High As Pakistan Rout Nepal In Rising Stars Asia Cup

Rohail Nazir's fighting half-century and a collective bowling effort powered Pakistan Shaheens to a 96-run victory over Nepal in the 11th match of the ACC Men's Asia Cup Rising Stars Championship 2026 at the West End Park International Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. The defending champions, already guaranteed a semi-final spot, opted to bat first in their last league-stage fixture, but the decision initially appeared to have backfired as they were bowled out for a below-par 168 in 42 overs despite wicketkeeper batter Rohail's unbeaten half-century.

Rohail, who walked out to bat at No.6 with the scoreboard reading 66/6 in 16.5 overs following the dismissal of all-rounder Mohammad Imran (zero), soon took the reins of the holders' batting charge and ultimately bolstered their total past the 160-run mark with a valiant knock.



The wicketkeeper batter remained the top-scorer for Pakistan Shaheens with an unbeaten 64 off 83 deliveries, studded with four fours and three sixes. He also shared a one-sided 70-run partnership for the eighth wicket with Ahmed Daniyal, who contributed with a 35-ball 16.

Besides them, middle-order batter Hasan Nawaz made a handy contribution to the Green Shirts' total, making a cautious 28 off 59 deliveries, while Haider Ali (15), Maaz Sadaqat and captain Abdul Samad, both 13, could amass double figures.

Rashid Khan was the pick of the bowlers for Nepal as he registered a five-wicket haul, for which he conceded 39 runs in eight overs, followed by Abhishesh Gautam with two, while Sandeep Lamichhane and Kushal Bhurtel made one scalp apiece. NEWS DESK

De Bruyne Backs Man City Owners

Kevin De Bruyne has reaffirmed his affection for Manchester City, insisting that the club's financial controversy has not changed his feelings towards its owners or affected his pride in his achievements.

The Belgian midfielder is set to return to the Etihad Stadium on Tuesday when Napoli face Manchester City in the Champions League, marking his first appearance at his former home since leaving the English club after a decade-long spell.

De Bruyne enjoyed a remarkable career at City, winning six Premier League titles and the Champions League while establishing himself as one of the club's greatest players. However, his achievements have come under renewed scrutiny following a ruling that found Manchester City guilty of breaching more than 100 Premier League financial regulations between 2009 and 2018. The club has challenged the findings, and the outcome of its appeal could have significant consequences, including potential points deductions or relegation. Speaking ahead of the Champions League encounter, De Bruyne said his relationship with City's leadership remained unchanged despite the controversy.

He expressed continued affection for the club's owners and chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak, recalling the positive treatment he and his family received during their 10 years in Manchester.

The former City captain also dismissed suggestions that the financial allegations had diminished the value of his achievements on the pitch.

De Bruyne stressed that his responsibility as a footballer had been to compete within the rules of the game. He said the memories, teammates and experiences from his time at the club remained what mattered most to him. The midfielder also revealed that he had discussed the possibility of buying a football club with City's chairman, highlighting his continued relationship with the club's leadership.



Meanwhile, Manchester City's financial case continues to cast uncertainty over the club's future. The potential consequences of an unsuccessful appeal could include a substantial points deduction and even relegation from the Premier League.

City's domestic form has also suffered amid the uncertainty, although their European campaign has remained relatively strong.

Napoli, meanwhile, face pressure to improve their Champions League position after losing three of their opening four matches. The Italian side are 27th in the 36-team standings, with only the top 24 teams advancing to the knockout phase. NEWS DESK

Marco Penge Wins Maiden PGA Title

England's Marco Penge secured his first PGA Tour title after overcoming a difficult year marked by illness and family challenges. He claimed victory at the RSM Classic in Georgia on Monday, earning a place on the PGA Tour for the 2027 season.

The 28-year-old birdied the first extra hole in a four-man play-off to seal the title at Sea Island Resort. His victory also earned him the $1.3 million top prize and a two-year exemption on the tour.

Penge entered the tournament 120th in the FedExCup standings. He needed at least a top-four finish to break into the top 100 and retain his PGA Tour card.

His season had been disrupted by several personal and health problems. He struggled with his form after contracting a virus late last year. His son was also born in February with underdeveloped lungs and spent several weeks in a neonatal intensive care unit.

Penge later suffered a sinus infection and vertigo symptoms. The problems forced him to take a six-week break after the US PGA Championship in May.

Reflecting on the difficult period, Penge described the season as a nightmare. He said he had started the campaign while still unwell and faced further challenges following his son's birth.

Despite the setbacks, the English golfer remained determined to save his tour card. He said he had committed himself to working as hard as possible over the final weeks of the season.

Penge produced a five-under-par 65 in the delayed final round to finish at 16 under. He was tied with American golfers Max Greyserman and Michael Thorbjornsen, along with China's Li Haotong.



The four players went into a play-off, where Penge delivered a superb iron shot before sinking a birdie putt from close range to secure the title.

He said the victory had proved to him that he could perform under immense pressure. Penge added that he had previously faced similar challenges on the DP World Tour, where he had fought to retain his playing status. NEWS DESK

Saud Stresses Run-Scoring Focus

Pakistan's senior batter Saud Shakeel has advised young cricketers to focus on scoring runs rather than becoming overly concerned with batting techniques.

The left-handed batter stressed the importance of making practice sessions relevant to match situations. He said players should understand how their preparation can translate into runs on the field. Speaking on a Pakistan Cricket Board digital show, Straight Drive with Salman Butt, Shakeel discussed the progress of emerging players, the transition from first-class cricket to Test matches and the need to turn promising starts into big scores.

He welcomed the performances of young cricketers who have earned opportunities in Pakistan's Test team after progressing through the first-class circuit. Shakeel described their successful introduction to international cricket as a positive development. He said the youngsters had made good use of their opportunities and could build on these performances in the future. Discussing the link between practice and match performances, he said mental and technical preparation should support a batter's ability to score runs. Shakeel admitted that he had previously become too focused on technical details during his own career. However, his experience in Test cricket taught him that scoring runs remains the ultimate objective of batting. He advised young players to structure their training around finding effective ways to score rather than concentrating excessively on technical adjustments. NEWS DESK

