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Govt committee briefs PM Shehbaz on Fazlur Rehman's conditions and message as mediation efforts continue to resolve political deadlock

No relief' for Imran if PTI tries to blackmail govt, warns Khawaja Asif

■ Defence minister accuses PTI of joining hands with TTP against Pakistan

STAFF REPORTER
ISLAMABAD



Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has warned that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan would not receive relief if PTI sought to pressure the government through its long march.

Speaking to Geo News at Parliament House in Islamabad, Asif said the government would not yield to pressure and accused PTI of acting in concert with the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

"PTI has declared war against Pakistan together with the TTP," the defence minister said, adding that it was the party's "wishful thinking" that it could blackmail the government by holding a long march."The government cannot be blackmailed by them under any circumstances," he said, adding that it had become a practice for PTI to "attack Islamabad" every two or three months.

Asif also questioned PTI's position on the TTP and its Afghan patrons. "Show me a statement of theirs against the TTP or those who sponsor them," he said, referring to the Afghan Taliban leadership. "The rulers of Kabul are patrons of the TTP. Show me one statement of theirs against them."He alleged that terrorists were being financed and said they were operating openly in several districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"Terrorists roam freely in different districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," Asif said, adding that the provincial government had no writ in those areas.

"Isn't the current chief minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa present there" he asked.

The defence minister described the situation as a matter of "dishonesty against the country and Pakistan", saying that the alleged links and planning between the groups were becoming apparent.

PM directs all federal ministries to timely complete digitization of relevant data

■ PM Shehbaz Sharif directs federal ministries to complete data digitization and ensure timely provision to the central data centre under Digital Nation Pakistan initiative.

Staff Reporter
ISLAMABAD



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed all federal ministries to complete, within the stipulated time frame, necessary measures for digitizing relevant data in coordination with provincial governments and concerned institutions and ensuring its provision to the central data centre.

Chairing a progress review meeting on implementation of Digital Nation Pakistan initiative, the prime minister said that the national-level central data centre under the Digital Nation Pakistan Programme would play a key role in the delivery of government services and provision of facilities to citizens.

He said clearly defined responsibilities of federal ministries, along with the provision of relevant data to the central data centre, would help bring the government system in line with modern requirements.

PM Shehbaz Sharif said the Digital Nation Pakistan Programme was essentially aimed at ensuring efficient and convenient services for citizens at the national level.

He observed that making useful data from all sectors and government institutions available at one place could contribute significantly to the country's economic development.

Referring to the fuel subsidy scheme for deserving segments of society, the prime minister said data sharing among institutions had played a key role in its successful implementation.

He said digitization of the performance of ministries and relevant data was important for preventing corruption and institutional mismanagement.

The prime minister appreciated the Ministry of Health for taking commendable steps, in collaboration with provincial governments, towards establishing universal medical records at the national level.

He also appreciated the implementation of QR codes to ensure the availability and verification of quality medicines across the country.

The Ministry of Information Technology briefed the meeting that, with the active cooperation of all relevant ministries, comprehensive measures were being taken for sector-specific digitization.

Naqvi, meet UN chief Antonio Guterres to discuss global security, peace missions

CITY REPORTER
ISLAMABAD

UN Secretary-General António Guterres met Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Minister of State Talal Chaudhry in Islamabad, with the two sides discussing the global and regional situation and matters related to peace missions.

During the meeting, Mohsin Naqvi said Pakistan was fighting a global war against terrorism and claimed that 25 terrorist organisations were currently operating in Afghanistan, posing a major threat to world peace.

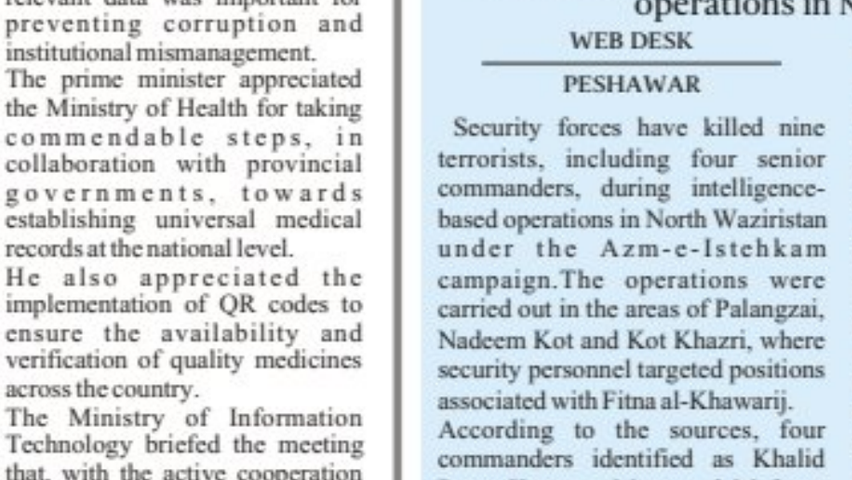
He said the international community needed to work together to counter the threat of terrorism.

The interior minister said Pakistan would continue playing its full role in United Nations peacekeeping missions. He added that Pakistani police officers and personnel were also serving in the UN Police.

Pakistan, Bahrain agree to boost trade, economic cooperation

■ Two sides discussed improving coordination on matters of mutual interest at multilateral international forums

STAFF REPORTER
ISLAMABAD



Pakistan and Bahrain have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral trade and economic relations, with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar expressing Islamabad's desire to take economic ties with the Gulf kingdom to a new level.

Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, who arrived in Pakistan on Wednesday for a two-day visit, co-chaired the third session of the Pakistan-Bahrain Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) with Dar in Islamabad.

Speaking at a joint press briefing, Dar thanked his Bahraini counterpart and his delegation for their constructive participation in the JMC meeting.

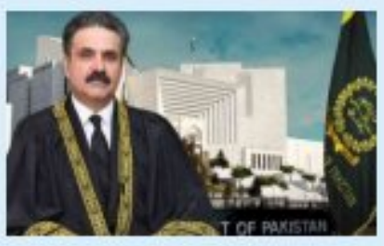
He described Pakistan and Bahrain as brotherly countries with longstanding relations and said the two sides regularly cooperate on international platforms.

"Pakistan-Bahrain friendship remains strong and forward-looking," Dar said, expressing Islamabad's commitment to building a more prosperous future with Bahrain and taking bilateral trade and economic ties to "a new height".

The deputy prime minister also said Pakistan was looking forward to hosting the next JMC session in Bahrain in 2027. He noted that the latest meeting had taken place after a gap of five years and said the next session should be convened within the coming year.

Dar said Pakistan remained committed to increasing bilateral trade with Bahrain to the target of $1 billion. He pointed out that the two countries had aimed to double trade within three years, with one year of the period already having passed.

Referring to the challenging regional environment, Dar said any delay in achieving the target could be attributed to the "very turbulent" period the region had experienced.



JCP meeting on Oct 13 to discuss SHC constitutional benches

Staff Reporter
ISLAMABAD

The Judicial Commission of Pakistan has scheduled a meeting to consider extending the tenure of constitutional benches at the Sindh High Court.

The meeting will take place on October 13 at 1:30pm in the Supreme Court conference room and will be chaired by Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi.

The extension of the constitutional benches in the Sindh High Court will be among the key matters on the agenda, according to the information provided.

The current term of the constitutional benches is due to expire on October 25, making the upcoming Judicial Commission meeting significant for deciding whether their tenure should be extended.



Pakistan Army completes 66km road track linking Astore, Skardu

Staff Reporter
ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan Army has completed a 66-kilometre road track between Astore and Skardu in Gilgit-Baltistan, overcoming challenging terrain in a short period.

The newly completed route has significantly reduced travel time between the two areas, bringing the journey down to just a few hours.

The Shagma Astore-Mantho Skardu road track will facilitate transportation between Astore and Skardu and improve connectivity for local communities.The project has also restored direct connectivity between eight villages in the Phothaks Valley of Gultari and their district headquarters.The new road is expected to boost local trade, agriculture and livestock transportation between Astore and Skardu while reducing travel time between the two areas.



Four terrorist commanders among 9 killed in North Waziristan operation

■ Pakistan security forces killed nine militants, including four commanders, in intelligence-based operations in North Waziristan

WEB DESK
PESHAWAR

Security forces have killed nine terrorists, including four senior commanders, during intelligence-based operations in North Waziristan under the Azm-e-Istehkam campaign.The operations were carried out in the areas of Palangzai, Nadeem Kot and Kot Khazri, where security personnel targeted positions associated with Fitna al-Khawarij.

According to the sources, four commanders identified as Khalid Raza, Kamran, Musa and Maftoon were among those killed during the operations. A significant quantity of weapons and ammunition was also recovered from the militants, while several of their hideouts were destroyed.

The operations were conducted following intelligence inputs and resulted in the elimination of what the sources described as key militant figures operating in the area.

President Asif Ali Zardari praised the security forces for what he described as a successful operation against the militants in North Waziristan.

In his statement, the president commended the forces for eliminating nine militants, including four important commanders, saying the operation demonstrated their professional capabilities and courage.

Scanned with CamScanner

17 women among 26 arrested for cyber frauds through honey-trap call centres



SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD

The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has arrested 26 individuals including 17 women involved in cyber frauds through honey-trap call centres in Lahore,
According to the NCCIA, as many as 35 mobile phones and two laptops seized during raid on call center.
Women used to obtain financial gains by luring men into video calls through online contacts.
The women ensnared citizens in their trap through indecent conversations and video interactions.
Action taken against a call center in Allama Iqbal Town that was defrauding foreign nationals.Money was collected from foreign nationals under the pretext of providing mobile phones and communication packages. After collecting the money, the mobile phones were never delivered, and victims were put off with various excuses and rescheduled dates.
Nine men arrested from the other fraudulent call center and 10 mobile phones and five laptops were seized.
Cases registered regarding both operations; interrogation of the arrested individuals and forensic examination of the seized equipment are underway.

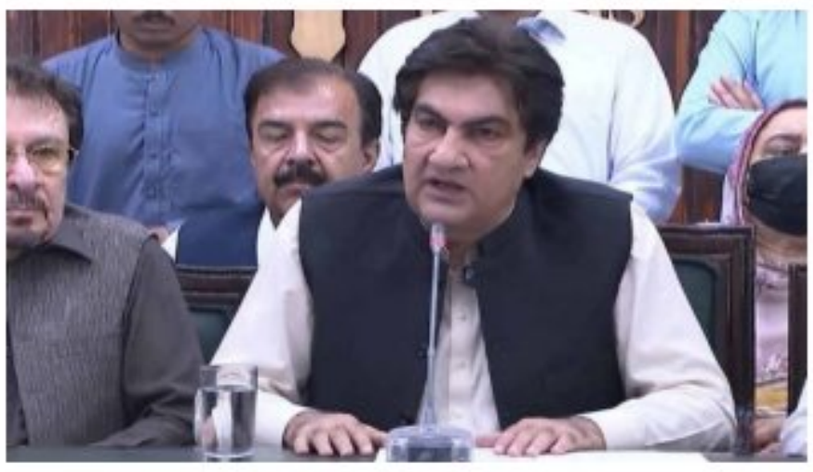


Stagnant sewage water accumulates on a road near Khuda Hafiz Board Chowk, causing inconvenience to commuters.

PTI focusing on politics instead of KP's key issues, says PPP leader

PPP KP President Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha criticised PTI for prioritising political activities over terrorism, governance, corruption and development issues in the province.

SPECIAL REPORTER
LAHORE



Pakistan Peoples Party Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha criticised PTI on Wednesday, saying the party was focusing on political activities and Imran Khan's narrative instead of addressing terrorism, law and order, corruption, development and governance issues in the province.
Addressing a press conference in Peshawar, Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha said PTI leaders were visiting different districts of the province, with plans to travel to Charsadda and Bajaur after setting up camp in their home constituencies, while visits to other areas were also being planned.
He said other political parties could neither hold rallies, protests nor public gatherings in districts where PTI leadership was visiting, and questioned who was ultimately suffering because of the situation.
The PPP leader said the province was facing terrorism, law and order concerns, governance problems and corruption, but instead of focusing on these issues, PTI was allegedly misleading young people and creating hatred and divisions among them.
Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha said the condition of the province was evident to everyone, with employment and development declining while funerals were being held daily and security forces and police personnel were being martyred.
He said the people had elected PTI representatives after placing their trust in them, but they had still failed to deliver.
The PPP provincial president said PTI's statements gave the impression that the PPP or the government was attempting political interference or a change in the province.
He said if PTI believed that the government wanted to impose an emergency or governor's rule in KP, the question was why it would want to do so. He urged PTI to focus on eliminating terrorism, promoting development, ending corruption and addressing governance issues in the province.

Van with Rs285,000 fine for traffic violations impounded in Lahore

SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD



A van has been impounded for repeated signal violations and fined Rs285,000 in Manga Mandi area of Lahore,
According to a traffic police spokesperson, the Lahore Traffic Police maintained zero-tolerance policy regarding traffic enforcement and regulations.
Sector In-charge Shafiq Gujjar stopped the wagon for traffic violations and was checked via the 'One App' revealed 54 instances of traffic violations.
Wagon driver was fined Rs285,000 and impounded at the police station.
In this regard, CTO Lahore Syed Abdul Rahim Sherazi said crackdown against e-challan and digital challan defaulters to continue to ensure orderly traffic.
He said Lahore Traffic Police sent formal notices to government departments with outstanding e-challans, urging clearance.
E-challans are being issued in Lahore for over 20 types of traffic violations using ANPR cameras.
Citizens should observe traffic laws to avoid e-challans.
Indiscriminate crackdown underway against those tampering with number plates

Direct Europe shipping service restored to facilitate exporters: Junaid Anwar

SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD



Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry on Thursday said that direct shipping connectivity between Karachi and major European ports had been restored, providing relief to exporters facing longer transit times and increased freight costs due to disruptions on international shipping routes.
In a statement, the minister said that Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) had reinstated its PREMIUM IPAK service in response to the demand of exporters for a dedicated and direct Europe service. Under the restored service, the MSC will make a weekly call at Karachi Gateway Terminal International (KGTI), connecting Karachi with key European destinations through Colombo, Felixstowe, Rotterdam, Hamburg, Bremerhaven, Antwerp, Le Havre and London Gateway, he said and added, "The restoration of a dedicated Europe service is an important development for our export-oriented industries, particularly the textile sector, which has been facing increased transit times and logistics costs because of disruptions to international shipping routes.
He said that textile exporters had recently apprised him of the difficulties caused by changes in shipping routes, particularly those linked to the situation in the Red Sea. "Exporters told me in a recent that longer vessel journeys were increasing.

PTI Plan B in disarray as parliamentary committee spars over resignations

PTI parliamentary leaders oppose resignations from NA and Senate: Long march camp in Bara left without senior party leaders overnight

SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD



Political tensions over the possibility of imposing an emergency or governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) remain high, while divisions have emerged within Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) over whether lawmakers should resign from parliament.
According to the report, PTI had prepared a plan to resign from both the National Assembly and Senate if governor's rule was imposed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
PTI chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Junaid Akbar, Sohail Afridi and Asad Qaiser had announced the proposed plan, according to the report. However, party sources said the PTI parliamentary committee had opposed the leadership's proposal to resign from parliament.
The committee argued that the party should not leave the government with an open field under any circumstances.
According to the sources, the parliamentary committee also opposed resignations from standing committees, saying such a move would effectively give the government a free hand to legislate without parliamentary resistance.
The committee also expressed concern over the option of resigning from parliament and taking the political struggle to the streets.
Party sources said the PTI's ability to organise long marches and protests was partly linked to its government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
They claimed that in other provinces, including Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan, PTI workers faced arrests, making it more difficult for the party to organise similar protests there.
According to the TV channel, local parliamentarians and party office-bearers left the participants at the camp and did not stay with them overnight.
PTI leaders Shafi Jan, Shahid Khattak and Abdul Ghani Afridi reportedly recorded symbolic videos of themselves lying down at the camp before leaving.



A worker paints a donkey cart at his workplace near Peer Sher Road

33,190 intending Hajj pilgrims deposit second installment

The deadline for paying the second installment of Hajj dues under the government scheme is October 20.

SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD



The collection of the second installment under the government Hajj scheme is underway and so far 33,190 pilgrims have deposited their dues
According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, 17,600 pilgrims made the payment from the comfort of their homes via 1-LINK, while the proportion of online payments made through the digital Hajj portal has exceeded 59 percent.
Over Rs20 billion received as the second installment of Hajj dues.
The deadline for paying the second installment of Hajj dues under the government scheme is October 20.
Payment of dues is to be completed via the National IT Board's Hajj portal using 1-Link, a bank card, or a manual bank challan. Under the government Hajj scheme, 103,000 pilgrims have uploaded their medical fitness certificates to the app.
Pilgrims who have not yet done so are required to have the medical fitness form available on the Hajj portal certified by a doctor.

Scanned with CamScanner

Pakistan's Debt Burden Eases To 15 Year Low, As Fiscal Overhaul Takes Hold



By Khurram Shahzad,
Advisor to the Finance Minister
, vide X Account Post

For years, Pakistan's public finances seemed trapped in a punishing cycle. Borrow to survive. Pay ruinous interest. Borrow again. Now, by several significant measures, that cycle appears to be breaking.

Pakistan's central government debt grew at just 5 percent in the current fiscal year.

That is the slowest pace recorded in at least 15 years. It is also a sharp retreat from the 23 percent growth posted as recently as fiscal year 2023, according to data from the State Bank of Pakistan.

Officials say the deceleration reflects a deliberate and sustained effort to restructure how the country borrows — and at what cost.

The numbers have been scrutinized by economists and international creditors alike.

They suggest a country that has spent the better part of three years rewiring its fiscal architecture from the ground up.

At the center of the debate is a figure that has circulated widely on Pakistani social media.

That figure claims the country's debt has ballooned to between 97 and 100 trillion rupees.



Officials push back sharply on that characterization. That figure, they say, conflates central government debt — currently sitting at approximately 81.9 trillion rupees — with a broader accounting category that includes private sector liabilities.

The distinction matters enormously.

Sovereign debt sustainability is not assessed by headlines or aggregate totals. It is assessed by how much a country owes relative to the size of its economy.

On that measure, Pakistan is moving in the right direction. The debt-to-GDP ratio has declined from roughly 76 percent in fiscal year 2019–20 to approximately 68 percent in fiscal year 2026.

More notably, external debt — the portion denominated in foreign currencies and most susceptible to exchange rate shocks — has fallen from around 28 percent of GDP to roughly 21 percent over the same period.

The government has also restructured the terms on which it borrows.

Average domestic debt maturity has extended from 2.8 years to 3.8 years.

That change buys breathing room by spreading repayment obligations further into the future.

It also reduces what economists call refinancing risk — the danger of being caught unable to roll over short-term debt in a hostile market.

Pakistan also recently issued a foreign bond at what officials described as the lowest rate in the country's history — at 2.5 percent.

That development signals renewed, if cautious, confidence among international investors.

Separately, the government has retired 4.7 trillion rupees in expensive existing debt.

This includes 2.47 trillion rupees owed to the central bank. It also includes 2.3 trillion rupees of market debt bought back before maturity.

Officials say early debt retirement at this scale is without precedent in Pakistan's history.

Perhaps the most consequential shift for ordinary Pakistanis is the change in how much of the federal budget is consumed by interest payments alone.

At their peak in fiscal year 2023, those payments absorbed roughly 64 cents of every rupee of gross federal revenue.

That left almost nothing for roads, schools, hospitals, or public services.

That ratio has since fallen to approximately 40 percent.

This has freed up fiscal space that analysts say the government is beginning to deploy toward development spending.



By: Amina Sardar

Energy Insecurity and Crisis Diplomacy: Pakistan's Foreign Policy Behavior in the Iran-Gulf Strategic Conflict (2020-2026)

Energy Insecurity and Crisis Diplomacy: Pakistan's Foreign Policy Behavior in the Iran–Gulf Strategic Conflict (2020–2026)Analysts, while considering foreign policy of Pakistan, take into account security coalitions, religious empathies or great-power politics but energy insecurity, which is the foremost component of Islamabad's political conduct sparks very little of their interest. Pakistan foreign policy is largely determined by preservation of its struggling economy and its fuel supplies as evidenced by role it played during current Iran–Gulf crisis.Energy crisis, in modern political landscape of low as well as high income countries, is challenge not only for economy but also for internal peace and security alongside its immense contribution to foreign policy. Energy security is the sustained provision of energy at a budget-friendly cost as explained by International Energy Agency (IEA).Shifts in global power trade and prices guide and curtail policy options and political decisions of power-reliant states like Pakistan. There could be no bigger and compelling proof to this than the way regional conflict of Iran-Gulf turmoil directed International policy planning of Pakistan and persuaded it to harmonize conflicting regional goals with maintenance of its power demands.Irrespective of the fact, that Pakistan enjoys homegrown energy supplies,it hugely depends on foreign energy imports of Gulf states and is a major contributor to their fuel exports. During fiscal year 2025, Pakistan imported 12.53 million metric tons of petroleum products worth of $8.4 billion. Overall Pakistan depends on imports for 70-80% of its oil, 100% of its LNG from Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar through the Strait of Hormuz, the main route for Pakistan's oil and LNG imports, which carries approximately 20 million barrels of oil per day and 20% of global LNG trade, making it a critical chokepoint for Pakistan's energy security.Consequently, this heavy dependence leave Pakistan to external shocks originating from the gulf region with direct implications for Pakistan's economic stability which is already fragile, widening fiscal deficits, increasing

inflationary pressures, national security and independent foreign policy decisions. The gravity of this vulnerability is evident in the current regional conflict, which Bloomberg and International Energy Agency assessments termed the current oil supply disruption as the largest in the history of the oil market as the war has hit 7.5% of global output and an even bigger swath of exports. Pakistan acquired highly diplomatic stance during intensified Iran and Gulf conflict. Pakistan keeps close religious ties with Gulf royal states which are home for millions of Pakistani international employees alongside offering appreciable monetary aid. The mutual collaboration and capital allocation suggests stronger affiliations with Saudi Arabia and Gulf states, if viewed from power-politics approach. But nonetheless, to boost cross-border integration, territorial security and energy alliance, it strives for keeping harmonious ties with its neighboring brother Islamic state Iran. Even so, these are not the only factors which influence its decision of favoring one over the other during state of political catastrophe.From idealist perspective, this seems more plausible when energy crisis is viewed as strong factor influencing international ties. Pakistan Vision 2025, National Security Policy 2022–2026 and National Electricity Plan 2023–2027 clearly demonstrate that sustainable energy security is no longer a theortical belief rather legally validated principal policy goals .When considering energy imports via Strait of Hormuz, which is currently narrowing policy alternatives ,governing leadership needs to focus on international benefits in conjunction with appraisal of vulnerabilities related to supply breakdowns and growing energy expenses.Pakistan strategic stance during Iran-Gulf tension is less suggestive of political uncertainity, rather it seems to be part of threat handling tactics. Pakistan's calls for mediation and de-escalation are not simple conventional pledges to peace, instead it reflects a pragmatic diplomatic effort to protect national economic and energy security by reducing the risk of regional conflict that may jeopardize essential energy sources. In this way, national economic interests were safeguarded through diplomacy.Pakistan's

response to the Iran–Gulf crisis reflects a broader pattern observed in energy-dependent states. Instead of relying on political inclinations and religious empathies, Islamabad employed a practical threat-management tactics intended to protect national economic interests and preserve continuous energy provisions. The observation of New Delhi and Japan case is also an evidence that regardless of enormous influence from the West both placed their national preferences ahead of ideological accord and made policy adjustments intended to defend national economic priorities. In the first scenario, during the Russia-Ukraine war as part of a realistic scheme, New Delhi maintained their import of Russian oil. Correspondingly, Japan's reaction to the 1973 Arab Oil Embargo illustrates how energy turbulence can affect and limit foreign policy sovereignty. Japan altered its foreign policy approach toward Arab countries for the purpose of ensuring availability of energy resources after encountering severe energy susceptibilities.This approach is very much in line with the notion of economic security, where states give precedence to security and endurance amid external challenges. In addition to this,it is clearly indicative of the truth that energy provision is a leading factor in shaping foreign policy coupled with strategic security concerns, ideology and coalitions..The strategic stance adopted by Pakistan during Iran Gulf tension is clear indication of the fact that it believes that deterioration of their relations will affect cost of imports, other escalating prices and will present many more hurdles in way of economic restoration. Therefore, Pakistan's strategic stance appears more to be an economic need than a political priority.Pakistan therefore needs a Shift from Reactive Crisis Management to Preventive Energy Security.As The most effective long-term solution is not simply diplomatic balancing but reducing structural dependence itself by drawing lessons from China's long-term approach to energy security. Pakistan should broaden its energy partnerships, reduce excessive dependence on a limited group .

of suppliers, expanding domestic energy production, strengthening strategic reserves and accelerating renewable energy development. Through these efforts Pakistan can ensure that future regional crises have a limited impact on its foreign policy autonomy.Energy insecurity is not the only factor shaping Pakistan's foreign policy nor does it overriding the other traditional strategic considerations such as military etc. However, Pakistan's dependence on imported oil and LNG increased the risks associated with regional instability. As a result, Pakistan preferred neutrality, diplomatic balancing and calls for de-escalation during the Iran-Gulf conflict. Therefore, energy insecurity emerged as an important factor influencing Pakistan's foreign policy behavior during the crisi



Leh Boils: BJP's Policy of Divide And Rule Backfires

Nothing is normal in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The Leh district of Ladakh—once showcased by New Delhi as a "one-sided saga" of its unilateral annexation—is now in open revolt. The BJP may have fêted the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A as its crowning triumph, parading the illusion that calm had returned and resistance was crushed. Yet today, that illusion lies shattered. The very policy of brute force has backfired, igniting the flames of dissent in places once deemed passive, even masses of .Leh—the Buddhist and Muslim heartland of Ladakh—has risen. Generation Z of Leh, born in the shadow of occupation but unshackled in spirit, has declared in unison: "Nothing is normal." The ground does not whisper peace—it trembles, it boils. The myth of normalcy, crafted in Delhi's corridors, has collapsed under the weight of its own falsehood.

The streets of Leh are soaked in anger. Four young lives have been lost, seventy injured, and thousands more stand in defiance of Indian might. What New Delhi once claimed to have pacified has erupted with a vengeance. This is not an isolated disturbance—it is the inevitable consequence of policies that treat people as subjects to be ruled rather than citizens to be heard. The BJP gambled that by stripping Jammu and Kashmir of its special status, by dividing it into two Union Territories, and by flooding the region with military garrisons, it could impose a "peace of silence." Instead, the youth of Ladakh, once seen as apolitical or submissive, are now the vanguard of democratic demanding justice, dignity, and democratic rights.

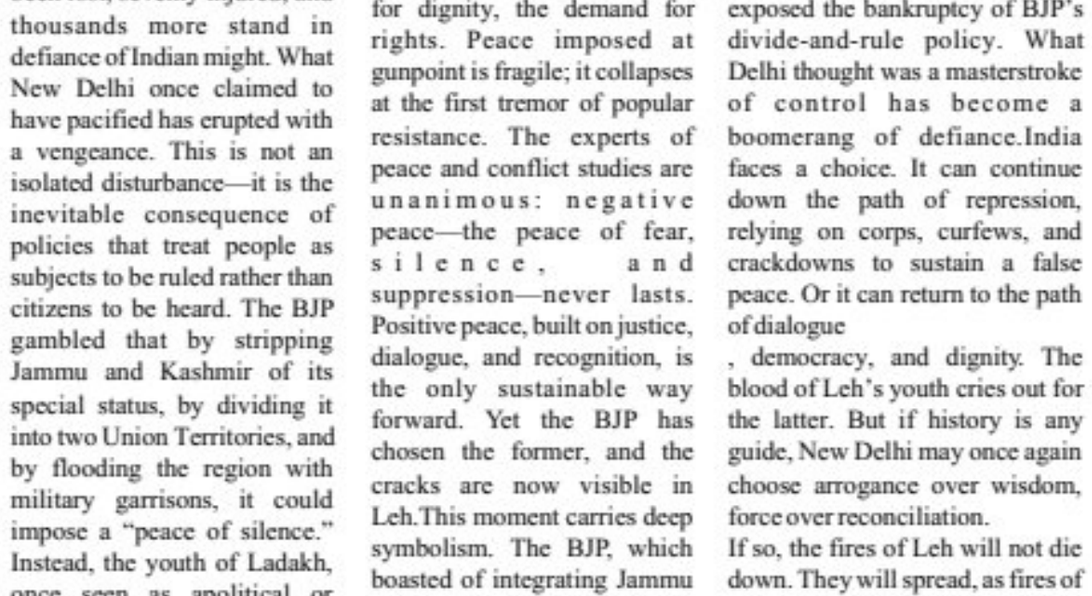
The Ladakhis are not asking for the moon. They are demanding what was promised, what was theirs, and what has been unjustly snatched away—statehood, Sixth Schedule protections for their land and resources, and a dignified voice in governance. They tried every peaceful avenue. Their leaders traveled the long distance to Delhi, knocked on doors, pleaded for justice. They opposed the dismemberment of the state, urging instead that Jammu and Kashmir remain intact. But their cries fell into a wilderness. Delhi responded with arrogance, with adamance, with the cold indifference of rulers convinced that military camps are more effective than democratic negotiations.Today, the 13th Corps, raised after the Kargil war and stationed in Leh, stands as a symbol of India's heavy-handedness. But even 100,000 soldiers cannot run a territory forever. No military, however mighty, can govern the human soul, the yearning for dignity, the demand for rights. Peace imposed at gunpoint is fragile; it collapses at the first tremor of popular resistance. The experts of peace and conflict studies are unanimous: negative peace—the peace of fear, silence, and suppression—never lasts. Positive peace, built on justice, dialogue, and recognition, is the only sustainable way forward. Yet the BJP has chosen the former, and the cracks are now visible in Leh.This moment carries deep symbolism. The BJP, which boasted of integrating Jammu and Kashmir into the Indian Union, is now confronted by an uncomfortable truth: integration by force is disintegration in spirit. The more it tries to hold Ladakh through the iron fist of Indian rule, the more it alienates the people. The youth of Leh are not afraid. Their slogans are not anything new but democratic right. They speak of rights, not the Indian label. They demand representation, not subjugation. And therein lies the tragedy—India, which calls itself the world's largest democracy, is crushing the most democratic of demands with the most undemocratic of means.

The blood spilled on the streets of Leh is not just a statistic. It is a stain on the conscience of a India that celebrates Gandhi but rules with the mindset of colonial masters. It is a reminder that every bullet fired at an unarmed protester carries the echo of history—the echo of empires that thought they could silence people forever, only to collapse under the weight of their own arrogance.

The Ladakh movement is a turning point. It signals that resistance in Jammu and Kashmir is no longer confined to the valley. It has spilled into the mountains, deserts, and passes. It has united communities across religious lines. And most of all, it has exposed the bankruptcy of BJP's divide-and-rule policy. What Delhi thought was a masterstroke of control has become a boomerang of defiance.India faces a choice. It can continue down the path of repression, relying on corps, curfews, and crackdowns to sustain a false peace. Or it can return to the path of dialogue

, democracy, and dignity. The blood of Leh's youth cries out for the latter. But if history is any guide, New Delhi may once again choose arrogance over wisdom, force over reconciliation.

If so, the fires of Leh will not die down. They will spread, as fires of injustice always do. For you can silence a generation, but you cannot erase their dream.



A vendor cutting paye (cow trotters) for customers at Bani Market.

Scanned with CamScanner

IMF reaches staff-level agreement with Pakistan on $1.21bn disbursement

■ An IMF team led by Iva Petrova held discussions with Pakistani authorities in Karachi and Islamabad from September 23 to October 7 under the latest programme reviews



Web DESK

ISLAMABAD

The International Monetary Fund has reached a staff-level agreement with Pakistan on reviews of some of its lending programmes, potentially unlocking about $1.21 billion in financing pending board approval, If the board approves the deal, Pakistan could access about $1 billion under the Extended Fund Facility and $210 million under the climate-focused Resilience and Sustainability Facility, bringing total disbursements under the two programs to around $5.7 billion.

An IMF team led by Iva Petrova held discussions with Pakistani authorities in Karachi and Islamabad from September 23 to October 7 under the latest programme reviews as well as the 2026 Article IV consultation.

The Fund said Pakistan had maintained macroeconomic stability despite the impact of the Middle East conflict, with strong policies helping the economy withstand higher energy prices and supply disruptions.Real GDP growth reached 4% during the first three quarters of FY26, while full-year growth is estimated at 3.6%. Headline inflation moderated to about 10.3% in September after peaking in May, while core inflation remained contained.



Workers clean and sort best-quality peanuts for market supply at a processing site in Iqbal Colony.

PSX maintains positive trend as KSE-100 gains over 500 points

■akistan's stock market opened higher on Thursday, with the KSE-100 Index gaining over 500 points to reclaim the 169,000-point level after closing at 168,580 points a day earlier.

Web Desk

KARACHI

Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) opened on a positive note on Thursday, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index regaining the 169,000-point level.

During early trading, the index gained more than 500 points, climbing to 169,095 points as buying activity pushed the market higher.

The latest rise follows a positive close in the previous trading session, when the KSE-100 Index increased by 120 points to settle at 168,580 points.

A day earlier, the benchmark KSE-100 continued its positive momentum, gaining 120.30 points, a positive change of 0.07 percent, to close at 168,580.41 points against 168,460.11 points recorded in the previous trading session.



The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 586.861 million shares, compared to 432.015 million shares traded in the previous session, while the traded value increased to Rs 22.365 billion from Rs 20.139 billion.

On the other hand, Asian shares slid as strains in sovereign bond markets were aggravated by reports some major tech companies were seeking to raise billions in debt in direct competition for limited funding.

Oil prices jumped anew amid an increase in attacks on shipping in the Gulf and added to the pressure on Treasuries, even as a strong auction of US 10-year debt overnight helped pull yields back from 24-year peaks.

The steady climb in borrowing costs put equities on the defensive and Japan's Nikkei (.N225) skidded 1.1%, while South Korea (.KS11) slumped 2.1%. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan (.MIAPJ0000PUS) shed 1.2%.

On Wall Street, S&P 500 futures and Nasdaq futures both dipped 0.1%. In Europe, EUROSTOXX 50 futures , DAX futures and FTSE futures were all flat after sliding on Wednesday.

Dollar edges back from 18-month high after FOMC minutes

● Dollar holds near 18-month high after hawkish Fed minutes flag inflation as the biggest risk, while markets see little chance of another rate hike at the October meeting.

Web Desk

KARACHI

The dollar held near its strongest level in a year-and-a-half in subdued trading at the start of the Asian session on Thursday, after hawkish minutes from the Federal Open Market Committee signaled policymakers ?at the US central bank viewed inflation as the biggest risk to their outlook.

The dollar index , which measures its strength against a basket of six currencies, was steady at 102.23 after rising 0.3% on Wednesday. The greenback remains within a few pips of ?its strongest levels since April 9, 2025, following the market turmoil ?that accompanied the so-called Liberation Day tariff announcement the previous week.



Federal Reserve policymakers voted unanimously to raise interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point ?at the US central bank's September 15-16 meeting, but minutes released Wednesday indicated divisions over their rationale for doing so.

"The FOMC's minutes reinforced the hawkish tone accompanying the Fed's September rate hike, ?with most participants still viewing further tightening as appropriate and almost all seeing ?inflation risks tilted to the upside at the time of the meeting,"

The minutes did ?little to shift expectations that the Fed will refrain from hiking at its meeting later this month. Fed funds futures are pricing an implied 19% probability of a 25-basis-point hike at the US central bank's next two-day meeting ending Oct ?28, unchanged from a ?day earlier, according ?to the CME Group's FedWatch tool.

Against the yen , the US dollar was down 0.2% at 157.815 yen after data released ?on Thursday showed Japan's current account surplus stood at 4.062 trillion ?yen ($25.7 billion) ?in August, higher than economists' median forecast for a surplus of 3.19 trillion yen.

The Australian dollar and its kiwi counterpart were both flat at $0.6960 and $0.5600 respectively.

Against the Chinese ?yuan , the US dollar was flat at 6.7015 yuan in ?offshore trade.

The euro was flat at $1.1201, while the British pound was also unchanged at $1.3215.

Bitcoin slipped 0.2% to $83,233.40 ?while ether nudged 0.1% lower to $2,571.07.

FBR sets new benchmark for taxing social media creators

■ The new mechanism comes as Islamabad seeks to bring the country's rapidly expanding digital economy into the formal tax system

Web Desk

ISLAMABAD

Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has introduced a new mechanism to tax income earned by social media creators, using a benchmark of Rs195 ($0.71) earnings for every 1,000 YouTube views, officials said.

The new mechanism comes as Islamabad seeks to bring the country's rapidly expanding digital economy into the formal tax system.

It follows an April regulatory order by the FBR that introduced a new tax framework for individuals earning from content on social media platforms.

As part of the same framework, the tax authority issued a new notification on Sept. 23 to create a special procedure for taxing people earning income from "remunerative social media content." It allows creators to deduct expenses of up to 30 percent of their revenue when calculating taxable income under the mechanism.

On Tuesday, an FBR official said the new rules did not apply to content that received views but generated no income, clarifying that the mechanism is intended for remunerative or monetized social media content.

"Once it is clear that the content is monetized, the formula multiplies Rs195 by the 'total number of views in 1000s'," the official, who requested anonymity as he was not authorized to speak to media, told Arab News.

Asked about the rationale behind the benchmark, the official said: "This figure of PKR195 was used because our research and interactions with people making monetized content in Pakistan lead us to this figure. This is the below average amount normal Pakistani content fetches per 1000 views on YouTube across different types of content and different types



of content creators."

For platforms other than YouTube, where creators may be paid according to different systems or may not be paid according to views, creators would declare their total remunerations earned during a specified period.

According to the FBR notification, remuneration is calculated as the higher of two amounts: the revenue-per-thousand-view benchmark multiplied by total views divided by 1,000, or the actual remuneration received by a creator, whether in cash or kind.

It allows content creators to demonstrate if their actual remuneration was below the Rs195-per-1,000-view benchmark.

"If a person is of the view that the total remuneration received is less than the threshold prescribed... the person is required to demonstrate evidence to this effect to the satisfaction of the Commissioner," the notification read.

Speaking to Arab News, the FBR official said acceptable evidence could include platform revenue reports, payout statements matched to bank credits, withholding certificates and contracts or invoices relating to sponsorships and goods received.

"The tax commissioner can also ask a creator to provide access to their social media dashboard under relevant legal provisions," the official said, adding a creator whose post simply attracts views but is not monetized, sponsored or otherwise remunerated would not be subject to the view-based estimate.

Output of sugarcane, rice, maize & moong bean grew: FCA told

■ Federal Committee on Agriculture (FCA) on Wednesday was informed that crops including sugarcane, rice, maize, mung bean and chillies showed a significant increase during Kharif season as compared to the output of the previous year.

Web Desk

ISLAMABAD

Federal Committee on Agriculture (FCA) was informed that crops including sugarcane, rice, maize, mung bean and chillies showed a significant increase during Kharif season as compared to the output of the previous year.

The FCA, which met here with Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain in the chair, reviewed the performance of the Kharif crops and set the production targets for the different major and minor crops during Rabi season 2026-27, said a press release.

The performance of the seven Kharif crops was reviewed and five out of the seven crops including sugarcane, rice, maize, mungbean and chillies showed an increase in production as compared to the output of the same period of the previous year.



The meeting was also attended by the provincial agriculture departments, State Bank of Pakistan, ZTBL, Pakistan Meteorological Department, Indus River System Authority and senior officers of the Ministry of National Food Security & Research and attached departments.

The Committee was informed that sugarcane production for 2025-26 is provisionally estimated at 97.2 million tons from an area of 1.358 million hectares, showing an increase of 18.5% and 21.1% in area and production, respectively.

The rice production for 2025-26 is estimated at 10.182 million tons from an area of 3.902 million hectares, showing an increase of 28.4% in area 11.0% in production. The maize production for the period under review is estimated at 9.97 million tons from an area of 1.83 million hectares, showing an increase of 21.0% in area and 3.2% in production.

It was informed that the mung bean production during the season is estimated at 171.02 thousand tons from an area of 225.70 thousand hectares, showing an increase of 32.3% in area and 14.8% in production over the targets fixed by the FCA.

The chillies have also shown growth in area, production and yield as compared to the previous year. It was also decided that the targets of the crops for Rabi 2026-27 will be finalized after the announcement of illustrativeThe Committee also discussed the situation of inputs for Rabi Crops (2026-27) and the seed availability for Rabi Crops was also discussed. The DG, FSC&RD informed that availability of certified seed for Rabi, 2026-27 will remain satisfactory.

For Rabi 2026-27, IRSA Advisory Committee, with the consensus of all stakeholders, based on Rim station Inflows of 21.268 MAF, indicated an anticipated shortage of 22% for Punjab and Sindh. Provinces are allocated 29.18 MAF of water.

The Meteorological Department informed that soil moisture stress is expected during September to November due to below-normal rains reported during the last three months, including monsoon season and expected below-normal precipitation during September.

Scanned with CamScanner

China border town can't shake the blues despite promise of bridge to North Korea

- While China completed the bridge in 2014, hoping to boost trade ties, North Korea left its approach roads and customs facilities unfinished as relations soured over Pyongyang's nuclear tests



Web Desk

WASHINGTON/RIYADH

Chinese taxi driver Wang peered through binoculars at a North Korean flag fluttering beyond a soon-to-open bridge linking his city of Dandong with the secretive nation.

"They finally finished their side," said the 40-year-old, one of dozens who gathered this week near the New Yalu River Bridge in the northeastern city, amid rumours that its opening will soon end a 12-year delay.

Coffee shops, a fun fair and a Little Yellow Duck theme park are springing up nearby, suggesting the struggling city hopes to cash in on the new link, but some residents and shopkeepers saw it more as a curiosity than an economic boon.

"It won't bring much new business here as regular citizens can't visit, but they're still our friends," Wang told Reuters during a visit on Tuesday, the 77th anniversary of the neighbours' diplomatic ties, referring to North Koreans.

While China completed the bridge in 2014, hoping to boost trade ties, North Korea left its approach roads and customs facilities unfinished as relations soured over Pyongyang's nuclear tests and the U.N. sanctions that followed.

Work resumed after ?a thaw in ties led to a June visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping, with both capitals having restored train services and direct flights, though neither has set a date to open the bridge.

The North Korean customs house appeared complete, while green signs were lit up over the gate on the Chinese side, though no traffic crossed.

The opening of the new bridge would show progress in ties, within weeks of North Korea opening its first road bridge with Russia.

The bridge delay was a setback for Dandong, whose economy thrived in the early 21st century as the primary trade gateway to North Korea's isolated economy.

For now, most goods still cross about 10 km (6 miles) upstream at an 83-year-old bridge with a rail track and a single-lane road. That remains the busiest of about 15 crossing points along the roughly 1,350-km (840-mile) border.

Trump says he deserves Nobel Peace Prize but has doubts he will get it

- Trump said he should get the prize after wading into eight conflicts since taking office last January



WEB DESK

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates

US President Donald Trump, who waged war with Iran and has yet to broker peace in Ukraine, said on Wednesday that he should win the Nobel Peace Prize but acknowledged doubt about his chances. "I don't know what their decision is going to be," Trump said of the 2026 award, which the Norwegian Nobel Committee will announce on Friday.

"They have a reputation for maybe not giving it to people like me." Since his return to the White House last year, Trump has repeatedly said he deserves what may be the world's most prestigious award.

"It is about that time," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office. "But I was very honoured to receive it indirectly last time by the recipient, who said nobody in history deserves it more than President Trump." Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado gave her 2025 Nobel Peace Prize medal to Trump in January as she sought US support for her efforts in Venezuela.

Trump said he should get the prize after wading into eight conflicts since taking office last January.

The leaders of Cambodia, Israel and Pakistan have said they nominated Trump, though there is no way of verifying that.

Parties to some conflicts Trump claims to have resolved dispute the US president's diplomatic role, and fighting has flared again in some of those regions, including the Democratic Republic of Congo and along the border between Cambodia and Thailand.

A resolution to Russia's war in Ukraine has eluded Trump, who promised to end it on the first day of his second White House term. US-Israel strikes on Iran have led to a seven-month simmering conflict that has upended global energy supplies and driven gas prices up before November's midterm elections.

Pope Leo, the International Criminal Court, and the special rapporteur for the Palestinian Territories are among the favourites to win this year. .



India opposition parties rally for election chief's exit over voter list changes

- Houthis said their ?forces carried out missile and drone strikes on two Saudi oil tankers in the Red Sea

Web DESK

NEW DELHI

Opposition parties held protests in India's capital New Delhi demanding the resignation of the country's election chief over a contentious revision of voter lists as hundreds of police personnel were deployed across the heart of the city. demonstration is the latest in a series of near-daily protests beginning last week by student groups, opposition parties and India's "Cockroach" youth movement.

The protesters have demanded the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, accusing the polling body he oversees of manipulating voter registrations to benefit Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

The commission and government deny any wrongdoing. Modi's party on Tuesday defended the Election Commission, calling the opposition's allegations completely misleading."

Opposition lawmakers shouted slogans against Modi and called for Kumar's resignation as they marched toward the Election Commission headquarters in central Delhi. Authorities blocked the march with barricades, closed roads and issued travel advisories around the area. Several protesters were detained.

The opposition has increasingly adopted Gen Z-style language to appeal to younger voters after the "Cockroach" movement drew large numbers of young people to its protests. The outreach has become a key part of broadening support and challenging Modi.

"Gyanesh, it's done, bro. Time to resign," opposition leader Rahul Gandhi of the Congress party wrote on X ahead of the march.

India began its Special Intensive Revision of voter lists in Bihar last year ahead of state elections. The exercise has since expanded to most states and federally administered territories.

Critics say the process requires documents that are confusing and difficult to obtain, risking the exclusion of millions of eligible voters.

US expulsions to Africa 'instrumentalise human suffering': HRW

WEB DESK

New Delhi



The US policy of deporting migrants to third-party African countries is against international law and exploits suffering to deter immigration, Human Rights Watch said in a report Thursday.After Donald Trump's return to the White House in January 2025, his administration signed accords with countries in Latin America, Africa and the Pacific to accept foreigners who could not legally be expelled to their own countries.

Since then, the United States has deported more than 500 people to African countries that were not their own, according to data from the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) cited by HRW.

An investigation published in September by the Forbidden Stories consortium estimates that 25,000 people have been expelled worldwide under the programme.The policy "violates international human rights law and is designed to instrumentalise human suffering as a deterrent to migration", HRW said.

Houthis attack Aden airport as fighting intensifies in Yemen

- One missile landed near the runway minutes before a flight from Cairo was due to land, the ministry said. The airport is the main international gateway for parts of Yemen outside Houthi control.

WEB DESK

ADEN

Yemen's Houthis attacked Aden's international airport with ballistic missiles and explosive-laden drones , the country's Transport Ministry said, as fighting between the Iran-aligned group and Saudi-backed government forces intensified.

One missile landed near the runway minutes before ?a flight from Cairo was due to land, the ministry said. The airport is the main international gateway for parts of Yemen outside Houthi control.

Battles have focused in recent days on areas around the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a shipping route that has become more crucial for energy exports since the conflict between the US and Iran restricted trade through the Strait of Hormuz.

This week, Yemeni government forces with Saudi-led coalition air support launched a counteroffensive to recapture strategic territory near the strait and ?around the town of Mocha that the Houthis had captured in September, but it is unclear if their advance will hold.

The fighting, a spillover from the wider US-Iran conflict, has revived ?a complex 12-year war in Yemen that led to one of the worst



humanitarian crises globally and fragmented the Arab world's most impoverished country. The number of ?people displaced since the latest round of fighting began has risen to more than 200,000, the International Organization for Migration said on Wednesday.

"People are running for their lives and finding nowhere safe to go," said ?IOM Director General Amy Pope, who called for more funding amid rising needs for food and shelter. Both sides allege that hundreds of people have been killed in fighting, without providing details. The UN says three in four families are going hungry in parts of Yemen.

The Houthis have repeatedly targeted infrastructure including airports, oil refineries and pipelines in Saudi Arabia, a US ally.One person was killed and eight wounded in an attack on King Khalid International Airport in the Saudi capital Riyadh, and two were killed and 28 wounded in an attack on facilities at Abha airport, Saudi civil aviation authorities said in a statement issued .

People in Russian-occupied Ukrainian town risk 'road of death' to get food

- Residents say the last food deliveries to a local store took place in May

WEB DESK

KYIV/LONDON

Trapped and facing starvation, residents of the Russian-occupied town of Oleshky in southern Ukraine risk their lives to travel for hours by foot and bicycle along mine-strewn roads to get food and water.

The main route out of the town, lying near the front line east of the Dnipro River, heads deeper into Russian-controlled areas. It is littered with burned-out cars and charred by blasts, according to witnesses, relatives, humanitarian groups and video footage verified by Reuters. Attack drones prowl overhead.

Residents say the last food deliveries to a local store took place in May.

"What on earth could possibly be left in your house when you haven't been to the shop for half a year?" a woman living in the town told Reuters, asking not to be identified for fear of reprisals from Russian occupying forces.

She had recently attempted the trip to Radensk, some 20 km (12.5 miles) to the southeast. On her way back, she was injured by a landmine.

"There is no safe way out," she said afterwards, adding that a few days earlier three people had been killed on the same route, which some locals call "the road of death".

Reuters was not able to verify the woman's account independently, although it chimes with those from other witnesses, officials and aid workers familiar with the humanitarian crisis in Oleshky.

That people are even attempting these journeys points to growing desperation.

"The choice Russia forces on civilians every day: to stay — and starve to death; or to leave - and risk being blown up by a landmine," Ukraine's human rights ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets said.He also said Kyiv had offered a local ceasefire and evacuation routes to residents who wanted to leave but that Russia had rejected the proposal.

Russia has acknowledged critical problems with food and medical supplies in Oleshky and said its military was working to resolve them. It blamed Ukraine for the crisis.



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Yumna Zaidi Shares Emotional Struggle of Leaving Family Behind

■ Actress Yumna Zaidi Reveals Emotional Side of Stardom, Says Tears Follow Her Flights

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

Pakistani television star Yumna Zaidi has offered a rare glimpse into the emotional side of her life away from the screen, revealing that leaving home and family for work still brings tears despite years of adapting to the demands of her career.

The actress shared a candid moment on Instagram, posting a picture of herself sitting on an airplane. Yumna appeared to be smiling gently with teary eyes while wearing wired earphones as she reflected on the emotional challenges that come with



travelling for work.

"Flights and my tears share a long history. I still tear up leaving home for work, stepping away from family to face the world and hold it all together," Yumna wrote.

She added that although the tears continue to fall, she has gradually become accustomed to those emotional moments and, in an unexpected way, has learned to embrace them.

"Even though the tears still fall, I've grown used to them and strangely, I've grown to love them. Life is a profound teacher," she said. Yumna's heartfelt reflection highlighted a quieter and more vulnerable side of an actress whose professional journey has brought her widespread recognition and success.

Behind the glamour of showbiz, her words revealed the emotional cost of repeatedly leaving loved ones behind to fulfil professional commitments and pursue career opportunities.



Celebrity Makeup Artist Hung Vanngo Shares Five Tips for Round Faces

● Hung Vanngo Reveals Five Makeup Tricks to Define Round Faces

WEB DESK

KARACHI

Celebrity makeup artist Hung Vanngo, known for working with stars including Selena Gomez, has shared his most effective makeup techniques for defining and contouring round facial features.

In a recent YouTube video, Vanngo explained that round faces naturally have soft and youthful characteristics, but carefully applied makeup can add dimension and create a more balanced, lifted appearance.

Rather than using harsh contour lines, his technique focuses on highlighting the centre of the face while creating soft, gradually blended shadows around the outer edges.

Vanngo outlined five key principles for achieving a naturally sculpted look.

Vanngo recommends keeping two shades of the same foundation on hand throughout the year. By mixing the shades in different proportions, users can achieve a more precise match to their skin tone as it changes with the seasons, avoiding an overly flat or mask-like finish.

He suggests using an under-eye concealer around two shades lighter than the natural complexion and applying it to areas including the nose, corners of the mouth and centre of the chin.

Your camera, your circus': Shaan Shahid questions TikTokers entering showbiz

● Senior star also addresses young actors seeking opportunities across the border

SHOWBIZ DESK

ISLAMABAD

Pakistani actor, writer and director Shaan Shahid has questioned the growing presence of social media personalities in the country's mainstream entertainment industry, saying instant popularity does not necessarily translate into a lasting career.

Speaking in a recent podcast on Dunya TV's The Anchorman, hosted by Ali Sohail, the veteran actor discussed the changing dynamics of Pakistan's entertainment landscape, where TikTokers, YouTubers, influencers and other digital creators are increasingly moving from social media platforms into television and cinema.

Shaan said he did not believe he could control who was being cast in films or television projects, stressing that individuals were free to make their own professional choices.

However, he raised questions about whether sudden online popularity could provide the



foundation for a sustainable career in acting and entertainment.

Addressing the increasing crossover between social media and mainstream showbiz, Shaan took a blunt approach to the issue.

"Your camera, your circus," he said, adding that people could do what they wanted because he had no control over their decisions.

His comments came while discussing the emergence of a new generation of public . figures whose careers have been built largely through digital platforms. According to the discussion, many young people now identify themselves as public figures, content creators, influencers or personalities associated with fashion and online entertainment.

The actor questioned why so many members of the younger generation appeared eager to pursue these routes, particularly when social media platforms can offer a quick path to recognition.

He suggested that the attraction of online fame should not be confused with the acquisition of professional expertise.

For Shaan, popularity can create an immediate opportunity, but the ability to remain relevant depends on whether an individual develops the necessary skills and understanding of the craft. He argued that people who become successful without learning their art may eventually find themselves questioning why their careers lasted only a year or a few years.

Hania Aamir's Arabic tattoo draws attention, carries message of self-love

■ Hania's tattoos have become a notable part of her personal style, with the actress often sharing photographs on social media



SHOWBIZ DESK

LAHORE

- Pakistani actress Hania Aamir's latest Arabic tattoo has caught the attention of fans, with the inscription carrying a meaningful message about self-love.

Known for her acting, fashion choices and distinctive style, Hania enjoys a large following both in Pakistan and abroad.

The actress made her film debut with Janaan in 2016 and has since established herself as a prominent name in the entertainment industry. Alongside acting, her fashion choices, jewellery and short hairstyle frequently attract attention on social media.

Her tattoos have also become a notable part of her personal style, with the actress often sharing photographs on social media in which her tattoos are visible.

In her recent pictures, an Arabic inscription can be seen near the wrist on her left arm. The Arabic tattoo translates to "Love yourself first."

No plague cases detected in Siberia, Russia claims



WEB DESK

KARACHI

Russia's health watchdog said on Tuesday that no cases of plague had been detected among anyone who had come ?into contact with a Siberian plague institute laboratory worker who died last week, and locals said their lives had barely been disrupted.

Authorities say the 28-year-old woman died on Friday from pneumonia of an as-yet unestablished origin, in a case that has prompted international concern, including from US President Donald Trump.

Rospotrebnadzor, the watchdog, said in a ?statement that no infectious diseases had been reported among the staff of the same plague research institute in Irkutsk over ?the past 10 days and that extensive testing had found no microorganisms in the deceased woman's body linked ?to her work.

"A comprehensive set of anti-epidemic measures was immediately organised and implemented in full in accordance with public health legislation," the ?watchdog said.

Momina Iqbal's sister Rimsha gets major relief from Lahore High Court

■ Lahore High Court accepts Rimsha Iqbal's appeal and sets aside the order directing registration of a case against Momina Iqbal's sister.

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

The Lahore High Court has set aside a decision directing the registration of a case against Rimsha Iqbal, sister of actress Momina Iqbal, providing her major relief in an ongoing legal dispute.

Justice Abher Gul announced the reserved verdict on Rimsha's appeal and accepted her petition challenging the earlier order passed by the sessions court.

Rimsha, who is a lawyer, had approached the high court after a sessions court directed authorities to register a case against her. The dispute involves Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) MPA Saqib Chadhar and allegations surrounding Rs8 million allegedly deposited into Rimsha's bank account.

During earlier proceedings, counsel



representing Chadhar told the Lahore High Court that Rs8 million had been deposited into Rimsha's bank account at different times. The court questioned the nature of the transactions and asked whether the money had been provided as a loan or in connection with a personal relationship.

According to the counsel, the amount was deposited because Rimsha intended to travel abroad and required funds to show in her bank statement. The lawyer also told the court that Chadhar and actress Momina Iqbal had previously been engaged.

The court further asked whether any written agreement had been made concerning the money. Chadhar's counsel responded that the amount had been given as a deposit or entrusted money rather than as a loan.

Rimsha, however, maintained that the money in question had already been withdrawn from her bank account in 2022. These competing positions formed part of the legal dispute before the court.

The latest ruling follows several months of litigation involving Rimsha and Chadhar. In September, the Lahore High Court had summoned counsels for the parties to present arguments on a petition challenging proceedings against Rimsha. At that stage, replies from Chadhar and Bhowana police in Chiniot district had been submitted and made part of the judicial record.

The case involving Rimsha is linked to a wider and highly publicised dispute surrounding her sister Momina Iqbal and Chadhar.

Shakira, Pique return to court over children visit arrangements

Scanned with CamScanner

Pakistan to Face Sri Lanka in Three-Match T20I Series from Friday

■ The 15-member Pakistan squad includes uncapped players Razaullah and Muhammad Imran Randhawa

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI



Pakistan will take on Sri Lanka in the first of a three-match T20I series at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Friday, with Sahibzada Farhan set to lead the national side on home soil for the first time.

The first T20I will be played on October 9, while the second and third matches are scheduled for October 11 and 13 at the same venue. All three matches will begin at 6pm Pakistan Standard Time, with the toss scheduled for 5:30pm.

Pakistan enter the series after winning a silver medal in the men's cricket event at the recently concluded Asian Games. The team held a three-hour training session at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Wednesday and will have another practice session on Thursday.

The 15-member Pakistan squad includes uncapped players Razaullah and Muhammad Imran Randhawa. Fast bowler Naseem Shah is also in line to return to T20I cricket after his last appearance against Sri Lanka in February.

Abrar Ahmed, ranked second in the ICC T20I bowling rankings, will lead Pakistan's spin attack alongside Shadab Khan, Sufiyan Moqim and Arafat Minhas. Saim Ayub also provides an additional off-spin option.

Khawaja Mohammad Nafay is expected to take wicketkeeping duties, while the batting department has been strengthened by the return of experienced batter Fakhar Zaman. Maaz Sadaqat, Sahibzada Farhan, Hasan Nawaz and Abdul Samad will also be key figures in Pakistan's batting line-up.

Pakistan and Sri Lanka have faced each other 30 times in T20I cricket, with ended in draws. Sri Lanka's only bilateral series victory came in 2019 when they defeated Pakistan 3-0 in Lahore.

Friday's opening match will also mark the 250th international cricket fixture between Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Pakistan captain Sahibzada Farhan said leading the national side in front of home fans was both a responsibility and an exciting challenge.

"We have got a good blend of youth and experience in the squad with all bases covered. It is going to be an exciting series against Sri Lanka and we hope to high-intensity contest.

The series will be broadcast live on PTV Sports in Pakistan, while fans can also stream the matches through the PCB Live app, Tapmad and Tamasha. The PCB Live app will also provide coverage in the United Kingdom, North America, Caribbean, Europe and Africa.

The commentary team will feature former Pakistan captains Aamir Sohail, Salman Butt and Urooj Mumtaz Khan, along with former Pakistan international Bazid Khan and Sri Lankan commentator Roshan Abeysinghe.

Pakistan T20I squad: Sahibzada Farhan (captain), Abdul Samad, Abrar Ahmed, Arafat Minhas, Fakhar Zaman, Hasan Nawaz, Muhammad Imran Randhawa, Khawaja Nafay (wicketkeeper), Maaz Sadaqat, Naseem Shah, Razaullah, Saim Ayub, Mohammad Salman Mirza, Shadab Khan and Sufiyan Moqim.

Sri Lanka T20I squad: Kusal Mendis (captain), Kamil Mishara, Sineth Jayawardena, Lahiru Udara, Sahan Arachchige, Kamindu Mendis, Dasun Shanaka, Chamindu Wickramasinghe, Dunith Wellalage, Maheesh Theekshana, Vijayakanth Viyaskanth, Dushmantha Chameera, Binura Fernando, Nuwan Thushara and Eshan Malinga.

PSL 12 dates unveiled: Mega event to be played from 18 March to 2 May 2027

● Eight-team format returns for second successive season: Direct signings, retention, trade window and player auction announcements to follow

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD



Pakistan's biggest cricket event is coming back as HBL PSL on Thursday confirmed that the 12th edition of the tournament will be held from 18 March to 2 May 2027, with all eight franchises returning to compete for the coveted title,

The window was determined following extensive consultation with all key stakeholders after the PSL Governing Council meeting held in London on 1 September 2026, attended by owners and representatives of all eight HBL PSL franchises.

HBL PSL 12 will build on a landmark 2026 season that broke new ground — eight teams competed for the first time, a first-ever player auction replaced the draft system and the final at Gaddafi Stadium drew a record crowd of 32,461.

Peshawar Zalmi were crowned champions after beating debutants Hyderabad Kingsmen by five wickets on 3 May 2026, ending a nine-year wait for the title.

With the window now confirmed, a series of marquee milestones will follow including Direct Signings, Retention announcements, the Trade window and the Player Auction, each one a moment for fans to look forward to as the competition takes shape.

"HBL PSL 11 showed the world what this league is capable of – thrilling moments that had the whole nation transfixed, record crowds, record broadcasts. HBL PSL 12 will raise the bar further.

"We are committed to delivering another outstanding season and look forward to seeing all eight franchises compete once again for the title."

"Last season changed what people expect from this league and we intend to meet every one of those expectations in 2027. Today's announcement is only the first step, Direct signings, retentions, the trade window and the auction will each bring their own excitement in the months ahead.

"Eight teams, eight squads hungry to go one better and millions of fans across Pakistan and the world already counting down the days. Naye Daur ka Aghaaz ho chuka hai. #NewEra"

Full details on the schedule, venues, player auction and ticketing arrangements will be announced in due course.

Brewers KO Padres in Game 4, set up NLCS rematch vs. Dodgers

SPORTS Desk

ISLAMABAD

Jackson Chourio delivered the tiebreaking single and Garrett Mitchell robbed a potential game-tying homer in the eighth inning to help the Milwaukee Brewers advance to the National League Championship Series with a 3-1 road victory over the San Diego Padres in Game 4 Aaron Ashby (1-0) ?tossed three innings of scoreless, hitless relief for the Brewers, who halted their major-league-record-tying 12-game postseason road losing streak dating ?back to 2018.

Ashby struck out three and walked two in a 38-pitch effort as Milwaukee finished off the best-of-five NL Division Series with a three-games-to-one edge.

Milwaukee will face the Los Angeles Dodgers in the NLCS for the second straight season. The Dodgers swept the four-game set last year when the Brewers scored just four runs."I think it is different this year. ... We're going in to beat them," Brewers manager Pat Murphy told Fox Sports. "We earned it in the ?regular season to get home-field advantage. We're going in to beat them, we don't care who they have."

Mitchell had two hits, an RBI and a run in addition to his big defensive play. Sal Frelick scored once and had an RBI, William ?Contreras had two hits, and Jake Bauers went 1-for-1 with three walks and a run.

Fernando Tatis Jr. homered in the third inning for the Padres. ?The only other San Diego hits came in the first inning, when Jackson Merrill singled and Manny Machado followed with a bunt single. The Padres wound up leaving the bases loaded without scoring in that frame.

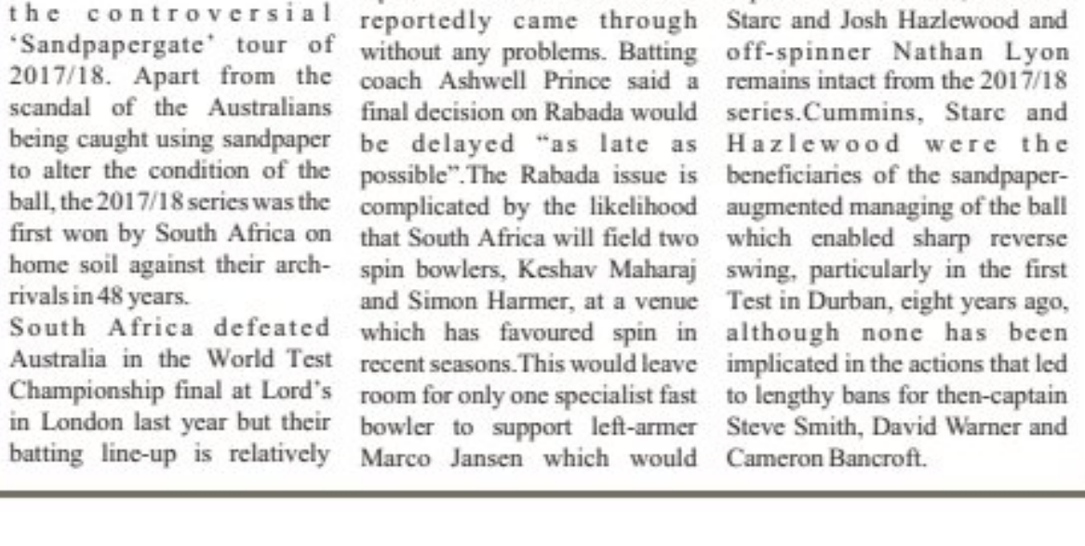
"You're facing the best team in baseball, and one of the best pitching staffs in all of baseball, if not the ?best," Machado said. "We had opportunities there and we didn't come up with the clutch hit and they did."

San Diego had one on and one ?out in the eighth inning when Machado hit a deep drive to center off Abner Uribe.



South Africa host Australia for first time in Tests since sandpaper scandal

■ Apart from the scandal of the Australians being caught using sandpaper to alter the condition of the ball, the 2017/18 series was the first won by South Africa on home soil against their arch-rivals in 48 years.



WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

World Test champions South Africa meet current championship leaders Australia in Durban on Friday at the start of the first Test series between the two countries in South Africa since the controversial 'Sandpapergate' tour of 2017/18. Apart from the scandal of the Australians being caught using sandpaper to alter the condition of the ball, the 2017/18 series was the first won by South Africa on home soil against their arch-rivals in 48 years.

South Africa defeated Australia in the World Test Championship final at Lord's in London last year but their batting line-up is relatively inexperienced, while their fast bowling stocks have been depleted by what coach Shukri Conrad described as a "pandemic" of hamstring injuries.Star fast bowler Kagiso Rabada is a particular concern, having not bowled in an official match since May.

He took part in a two-day intra-squad match last weekend and reportedly came through without any problems. Batting coach Ashwell Prince said a final decision on Rabada would be delayed "as late as possible".The Rabada issue is complicated by the likelihood that South Africa will field two spin bowlers, Keshav Maharaj and Simon Harmer, at a venue which has favoured spin in recent seasons.This would leave room for only one specialist fast bowler to support left-armer Marco Jansen which would make the team vulnerable to any injury breakdown.

Australia have already ruled out batsmen Josh Inglis with a broken finger and Cameron Green with an abdominal injury.

Australia will also have to make a call on the balance of their attack if the conditions favour spin, although the quartet of captain Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood and off-spinner Nathan Lyon remains intact from the 2017/18 series.Cummins, Starc and Hazlewood were the beneficiaries of the sandpaper-augmented managing of the ball which enabled sharp reverse swing, particularly in the first Test in Durban, eight years ago, although none has been implicated in the actions that led to lengthy bans for then-captain Steve Smith, David Warner and Cameron Bancroft.



Ushna, Mahin make history with Pakistan's first World Tennis Futures doubles win

Web Desk

LOS ANGELES

: Pakistan's leading women tennis players Ushna Suhail and Mahin Aftab Qureshi on Wednesday created history by becoming the first Pakistani pair to win a doubles match at a World Tennis Women's Futures tournament.

Ushna, Mahin make history with Pakistan's first World Tennis Futures doubles win

Competing in the W15 Islamabad–World Tennis Women's Futures Championships 2026 at the PTF Tennis Complex, Islamabad, Ushna and Mahin defeated compatriot Romisa Malik and South Africa's Nissa Finnigan 6-0, 6-0 in the opening round of the doubles event.The victory enabled the Pakistani duo to advance to the second round and earn valuable WTA ranking points, marking a significant milestone for women's tennis in the country.Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) President Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, Secretary General Col. Zia-ud-Din Tufail (Retd) and the PTF management congratulated Ushna and Mahin on their historic achievement.



Ronaldo hails Messi after Argentina great says he already misses national team

Web Desk

ISLAMABAD

Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo set aside one of soccer's great rivalries to pay tribute to Lionel Messi after the Argentine said he already missed representing his country following his emotional international retirement.

Messi, 39, delivered one final masterclass in ?Argentina's blue and white on Tuesday, scoring once and setting up two goals in a 3-0 friendly win over Benin before more than 85,000 fans at Buenos Aires' Monumental Stadium, where his farewell ?became a celebration of an extraordinary 21-year international career."Yesterday was my last game, and I already miss wearing the blue and white. I know ?I'm making the right decision," Messi said in a lengthy Instagram post. "It's been an ?incredible journey, full of joy and also some sadness, but I know for sure ?that every step I took was worth it...

"I don't want to forget Diego (Maradona), who put our country where it deserved to be and who, as I always say, I know helped us both by ?being here with us and also from heaven, with every step we took."Thank you to the clubs where I played, for always respecting my feelings and allowing me to dedicate myself to ?my country whenever it was time to put on the national team jersey..."

Messi captained Argentina to the 2022 World Cup title and Copa America triumphs in 2021 and 2024, while also helping them win the 2022 Finalissima.

"I am grateful. I love you all very much; I'm going ?to miss you, ?and I will always thank you for having been by our side, by my side," the Inter Miami playmaker added.

Messi and Ronaldo ?have vied for recognition as the greatest player of their generation ?throughout their ?illustrious careers, with the 41-year-old Portuguese forward among those to respond to the post.

ہیڈکوارٹرز فرنٹیئر کور بلوچستان
(ساؤتھ) تربت

ٹینڈر نوٹس
کی تاریخ میں توسیع

بحوالہ اشتہار ''ٹینڈر نوٹس'' PID(Q)93/26 ''ہیڈکوارٹر فرنٹیئر کور بلوچستان ساؤتھ تربت نگرانی اور سیکورٹی آلات کی خریداری کیلئے برائے مالی سال 2026-27 '' بتاریخ 14/09/2026 کو روزنامہ ایکسپریس، ساحل، پبلک، انتخاب میں شائع ہوا تھا جس میں ٹینڈر کھلنے کی تاریخ 08/10/2026 تھی۔ کچھ ناگزیر وجوہات کی وجہ سے اب ٹینڈر کھلنے کی تاریخ میں توسیع کی جارہی ہے۔

نئی تاریخ 15/10/2026 ہے۔

PID(Q) 119 / 26

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Two Policemen, Including SHO, Martyred in Armed Attack in Karak

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

Two police personnel, including a station house officer (SHO), were martyred when armed assailants opened fire on police personnel in Karak district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to police officials, the incident took place in the New Karpah area of Karak, where armed men targeted police personnel. As a result of the firing, SHO Banda Daud Shah Daud Khan and his gunman, Farhad, sustained fatal injuries and were martyred.

Following the attack, a heavy contingent of police personnel reached the area. District Police Officer (DPO) Karak Imran Khan also arrived at the scene along with additional police officials to assess the situation and oversee the response to the attack.

Police officials said that a search operation has been launched in the surrounding area to trace and arrest the armed suspects involved in the attack. Security personnel are conducting searches in the area, while efforts are underway to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident.

$1.2b clears key hurdle as Pakistan, IMF strike staff-level agreement

- IMF Executive Board will give final approval: Mission chief Iva Petrova says Islamabad has successfully navigated impact of Middle East impact and strong policies help preserve macroeconomic stability: Real GDP growth in first 2026 quarters was seen at 4%

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

The Government of Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have reached a staff-level agreement on reviews ?of some of the country's lending programmes, potentially unlocking about $1.21 billion in financing pending board approval.

The agreement, which would give Pakistan access to about $1.2 billion, still requires approval from the IMF Executive Board.

If the board approves ?the deal, Pakistan could access about $1 billion ?under the Extended Fund Facility and $210 million ?under the climate-focused Resilience and Sustainability Facility, bringing ?total disbursements under the two programmes to around $5.7 billion.

IMF negotiator Iva Petrova said Pakistani officials "have successfully navigated the impact of the Middle East conflict, and strong policies have helped preserve macroeconomic stability."

Pakistan, a key mediator between the United States and Iran, has seen



soaring prices that threatened an already fragile economy during months of fighting and disruptions to global energy shipments.

In the past year, demonstrators have held protests in major cities, calling for relief from spiking food, fuel and rent prices, and help finding secure employment.

The South Asian country has seen real GDP growth of 4 percent in the first three quarters of fiscal year 2026, Petrova said, "although higher energy prices and supply disruptions weakened somewhat the momentum."

The fiscal year's overall growth is estimated at 3.6 percent.

"Headline inflation, after peaking in May, moderated to about 10.3 percent in September, while core inflation remained contained," Petrova added.

At the conclusion of Fourth Review of Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and Third review of Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF), IMF Mission Chief Ms. Iva Petrova held a wrap up session with the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, at the Q Block Pak Secretariat Islamabad. Secretary Finance Mr. Imdad Ulalh Bosal and IMF Resident Representative Mr. Mahir Binici were also present.Following is the text of the IMF statement released in Washington on Wednesday:Washington, DC: An International Monetary Fund (IMF) team, led by Ms. Iva Petrova, held discussions under the 2026 Article IV consultation and on the fourth review under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and the third review under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) in Karachi and Islamabad from September 23 to October 7, 2026. At the conclusion of the discussions, Ms. Petrova issued the following statement:"The IMF team has reached a staff-level agreement with the Pakistani authorities on the fourth review of the 37-month Extended Arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and the third review of the 28-month arrangement under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF).

Pakistan's Education Crisis: Investing in Human Capital for Sustainable Development

- CASS Lahore Roundtable Highlights Learning Gaps, Education Governance and the Need for Long-Term Reform

SPECIAL REPORTER

LAHORE

The Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS), Lahore, organised a roundtable discussion titled "Human Capital at Risk: Education, State Capacity and Pakistan's Development Challenge" on 7 October, 2026. As an independent think tank, CASS Lahore regularly organises academic engagements for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to deliberate on critical regional and international security issues. The event was attended by academics, intellectuals, and domain experts. Ms Faiza Abid, a Research Assistant at CASS Lahore,



delivered the opening address. Dr Soufia Anis Siddiqi, Assistant Professor at LUMS school of Education, examined Pakistan's education crisis, highlighting 25–26 million out-of-school children, a Human Capital Index of 0.41, and education spending of just 0.8 percent of GDP, alongside profound learning deficits. She argued that the challenge goes beyond access and learning outcomes to how education itself is conceptualised, questioning its narrow human-capital focus and limited broader social purpose. She also highlighted the undervaluing of teachers and vocational pathways, alongside gaps in communication, adaptability, and digital skills. She called for a broader vision of education aligned with Pakistan's demographics and social, economic, and technological needs.Dr Fouzia Khan, Chief Executive Advisor, School Education & Literacy Department, Government of Sindh, highlighted the central role of effective education governance in advancing Pakistan's long-term human capital development. She framed human capital development as a continuous education pipeline encompassing four interconnected stages



Pakistan tells UN India backing terrorism through Afghan proxies

- Diplomat said that India's expanding engagement with the Taliban authorities was not merely aimed at providing humanitarian assistance

SPECIAL REPORTER

QUETTA

Pakistan has told the United Nations that India is providing material and logistical assistance to Afghanistan's Taliban government to facilitate attacks against Pakistan.

Ajmal said Pakistan was aware of the challenges posed by Indian-sponsored terrorism and said that New Delhi was using Afghanistan as a base to support militant groups operating against Pakistan.

He said India's expanding engagement with the Taliban authorities was not merely aimed at providing humanitarian assistance, adding that such support was also being used to facilitate attacks against Pakistan."Under the garb of humanitarian aid, they have been actively supporting the Taliban regime with material and logistical support for carrying out terrorist attacks against Pakistan," Ajmal said.

The Pakistani diplomat further stressed that India was backing groups including the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) through proxies operating from Afghanistan.

"Their newfound love for the Taliban regime is no accident," Ajmal said, saying that India was providing material and logistical support for attacks against Pakistan.

Ajmal said Islamabad had repeatedly drawn the international community's attention to Indian efforts to create instability and discord in the region.

He also said that India was involved in human rights violations, saying New Delhi had mainstreamed Islamophobia and extremist ideologies and was seeking to engineer demographic changes in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) "in gross violation of international law and UN Security Council resolutions".

Pakistan disputes India's position on Jammu and Kashmir and maintains that the territory is subject to international law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions.The diplomat also referred to the case of Indian national Kulbhushan Jadhav, whom Pakistan says was a serving Indian naval officer involved in espionage, sabotage and terrorist activities on Pakistani territory.

Pak-Saudi ties built on trust and mutual interests: Sindh CM

- The chief minister said the presence of Pakistani troops in Saudi Arabia was a continuation of historic defence agreements between the two brotherly countries.

Staff Reporter

KARACHI

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has welcomed the statement of the Director General Inter Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) regarding Pakistan's defence relations with Saudi Arabia, describing the longstanding ties between the two countries as a relationship built on trust, history and mutual interests.

The chief minister said the presence of Pakistani troops in Saudi Arabia was a continuation of historic defence agreements between the two brotherly countries.

He noted that Pakistan-Saudi relations had stood the test of time and were not limited to



diplomatic ties but represented a deep bond between the peoples of both nations.

Murad Ali Shah said the presence of Pakistani troops under the Makkah Alliance was a symbol of unity among the Muslim Ummah.

He appreciated the DG ISPR for providing a clear perspective on bilateral defence matters and highlighting the historical facts surrounding Pakistan-Saudi relations.

He reiterated that the security and sovereignty of Saudi Arabia had always remained a top priority for Pakistan. The people of Sindh and the government of Pakistan, he added, highly valued the historic and strategic partnership between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

The Sindh chief minister further said that the development, stability and security of Saudi Arabia were closely linked with Pakistan's own security and strategic interests.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to maintaining strong and enduring relations with Saudi Arabia and said the two countries would continue to stand by each other in matters of mutual security and interest.

Memon takes swipe at CM Afridi for ignoring security issues in KP



WEB DESK

KARACHI

Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Memon has criticised the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government over the province's security situation, saying the chief minister should focus on governance rather than political matters related to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder.

Reacting to remarks by KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, Memon said KP was facing terrorism-related challenges and alleged that the chief minister was more focused on pursuing the PTI founder's political agenda than addressing issues confronting the province.

Memon said Afridi should concentrate on his responsibilities as chief minister instead of acting as a spokesperson for the PTI founder. He added that, since taking oath, Afridi had remained focused on the founder's "mission."

The Sindh minister further said the KP chief minister should address the deteriorating security situation rather than blaming others for the province's problems.

Memon also criticised what he described as the use of the fall of Dhaka for political point-scoring, saying such references were an insult to history, the martyrs and the nation.



Member of Punjab Assembly Malik Aitbar Khan called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

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