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Terrorists attempting to undermine development; infrastructure projects in Balochistan: DG ISPR

Says Pakistan has clear and comprehensive strategy to counter terrorism, which includes eliminating terrorists and their facilitators

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, has said that Pakistan has a clear and comprehensive strategy to counter terrorism, which includes eliminating terrorists and their facilitators operating inside the country.

In an interview with Reuters, the DG ISPR said that a key component of the strategy was to eliminate all facilitators of terrorism operating within Pakistan. He said that the incompetent and indifferent provincial government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had also been among the factors facilitating terrorism.

He said security forces were conducting around 200 intelligence-based operations daily against terrorists, stressing that Pakistan would continue its efforts along this course.

He said Pakistan did not subscribe to the approach of attributing all its internal problems to external factors, unlike India, acknowledging that some aspects of terrorism needed to be addressed domestically. Afghanistan was the primary base from which terrorist activities against Pakistan were being carried out, he added.

He said terrorist leadership, training camps and launchpads were present in Afghanistan, adding that Pakistan also needed to tackle certain internal factors contributing to terrorism.

Referring to the security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the DG ISPR said security forces were conducting intelligence-based operations (IBOs) rather than any large-scale military operation in the province. He said Pakistan had accumulated extensive counterterrorism experience over the past 20 years, which was unmatched by that of any other country or military.

He said the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had suffered the most from terrorism and deserved lasting peace and stability.

Paying tribute to the people of the province, he described them as courageous and an important part of Pakistani society.

He said no one in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa opposed counterterrorism operations



RAWALPINDI: Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China Central Committee (IDCPC) Mr Liu Haixing called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ at General Headquarters (GHQ)

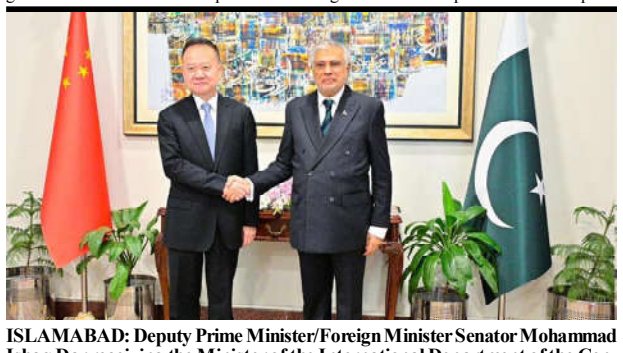


ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairing a review meeting regarding Access to Finance for SME, Housing and Agriculture sectors.

Agriculture sector backbone of country's economy: PM

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Monday said improvement in the economy and employment provision to youth through development of small and medium enterprises, housing and agriculture sectors was the top priority of the government.

He was chairing a review meeting on facilitation of credit provision to priority sectors. In his remarks during the meeting, he said, "Banks that are performing well in facilitating credit provision to agriculture, housing and small and medium enterprises under government initiatives are commendable." "The State Bank and the Ministry of Finance should not give concessions to banks that are slow in providing loans to farmers, small and medium enterprises and consumers under the Prime Minister's Apna Ghar scheme, a part of government initiatives," he added. He said, "Banks are of key importance for the development of the private sector. Banks should extend cooperation in providing loans to priority sectors in the same way as the government and its agencies cooperate with banks." "Small and medium enterprises have great potential to grow the economy, promote exports and create employment opportunities. The agriculture sector is the backbone of the country's economy and efforts are being made to increase exports through value addition of agricultural commodities," he remarked. He said, "Apna Ghar scheme will promote many industries related to the housing and construction sector." The Prime Minister directed the Finance Minister to resolve issues related to financing of stakeholders of the SME sector, agriculture and housing sectors and formulate a comprehensive action plan.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar receiving the Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPC (IDCPC), Liu Haixing, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Digital service delivery cornerstone of modern governance: Dr Rubaba

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Adviser to the Chief Minister of Balochistan on Women Development, Dr Rubaba Khan Buledi, on Monday underscored the importance of digital service delivery, describing it as a fundamental requirement of modern governance that can enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public service provision while strengthening citizens' trust in government institutions.

Addressing the inaugural workshop on digital service delivery at the Balochistan Civil Services Academy, Dr Rubaba Buledi said the promotion of modern technology and digital systems was particularly important for a vast province like Balochistan, where remote and geographically dispersed populations often faced challenges in accessing public services. She said digital service delivery could help bring government services closer to citizens, reduce bureaucratic hurdles and improve coordination among government departments, thereby ensuring more effective and timely public service delivery.

Dr Rubaba Buledi emphasized that digital governance was not merely about adopting technology but represented a comprehensive approach aimed at introducing reforms, accountability, transparency and citizen-centric service delivery within government institutions.

"The present era is driven by data and modern technology. It is essential for government officers to continuously enhance their professional capabilities in digital governance, administrative innovation and the use of artificial intelligence to make public administration more efficient, responsive and people-friendly," she said.

She noted that the Balochistan government was actively pursuing the digitalization of official processes and modernizing public service systems. According to her, expanding digital services would help bridge the gap between citizens and government institutions while enabling departments to align traditional administrative practices with contemporary requirements.

The adviser also stressed the need to incorporate women's needs into the planning and delivery of digital services so they could gain easier access to healthcare, education, social protection and other essential government services.

Pakistan to further strengthen strategic, cooperative partnership with China: DPM Dar

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Monday, reaffirmed Pakistan's continued commitment to further strengthening the 'All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership' with China. The DPM/FM held a bilateral meeting with Liu Haixing, Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee (IDCPC), the Foreign Office Spokespersons said in a press release.

The two sides discussed ways to enhance cultural ties and people-to-people exchanges. Both leaders expressed their resolve to maintain close coordination and carry forward the positive momentum in bilateral relations.

Previous rulers misled people through slogans: Tarar

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday said more than 15 million people had so far benefited from the Prime Minister's Fuel Relief Scheme, with Rs27 billion disbursed to provide subsidised petroleum products to eligible consumers.

Addressing a press conference here alongside Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik, he said the government, on the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, had prevented an increase of Rs15 per litre in petrol prices, shifting the additional burden to oil refineries instead of passing it on to consumers.

He said the prime minister's vision from the outset had been to minimise the financial burden on the people, adding that the refineries would bear an estimated monthly burden of Rs15 billion. The information minister said the international situation, particularly developments in the Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb, had put pressure on global economies and energy markets. Pakistan had also been affected by regional developments, but its macroeconomic indicators remained positive, he added.

He said the prime minister had issued clear instructions that the impact of the evolving international situation should not be passed on to the public. Describing the fuel relief initiative as a major public welfare measure, Tarar said the scheme provided petrol at subsidised rates to motorcycles, Qingqi rickshaws and vehicles with engine capacity of up to 800cc.

Pakistan could learn valuable lessons from China's development experience: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Monday proposed establishing five political corridors between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Pakistani political parties, including youth and leadership exchanges, to strengthen institutional cooperation and promote continuity in national development policies.

Addressing the Symposium on Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building here, he emphasised that Pakistan could learn valuable lessons from China's development experience, particularly its focus on public service, organisational discipline, self-reform, effective governance and long-term national planning.

He said Pakistan had paid a heavy price for abandoning sound development policies with changes in government, stressing that national development plans must transcend electoral cycles to ensure sustainable progress.

Balochistan govt working to improve living standards of people: Chief Secretary

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan has said that the provincial government is continuously working within the available resources to improve public welfare, provide all basic facilities, and further enhance the standard of living of the people.

He stressed that government officers should consider resolving public issues as their personal responsibility, perform their duties with transparency and a sense of accountability, and ensure that the benefits of government initiatives reach the people at the district level. He said that development, the availability of affordable essential commodities, and the prompt resolution of public complaints are among the provincial government's top priorities. He expressed these views while addressing a Deputy Commissioners' Conference. The conference reviewed in detail the pace of development projects, monitoring of food prices, the repatriation of illegally residing migrants, the holding of open courts (Khuli Katcheries), and the cleanliness situation in local councils, along with other important public issues.

During the briefing, the meeting was informed that the Monitoring and Evaluation Section had visited 2,632 out of a total of 2,935 development projects, of which 90 percent had been completed.

Pakistan, China vows to further strengthen all-weather strategic cooperative partnership

Chinese Minister Liu Haixing and CDF Munir deliberate on evolving regional, international security dynamics

RAWALPINDI, (APP): Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China Central Committee (IDCPC) Mr Liu Haixing called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ at General Headquarters (GHQ) here on Monday.

"During the meeting, both sides discussed matters of mutual interest, evolving regional and international security dynamics and bilateral relations.

They expressed their shared resolve to further strengthen the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between Pakistan and China," said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

The COAS highlighted the historic and time-tested bonds between the two countries and emphasised the importance of sustained high-level engagement, stronger institutional linkages and expanded cooperation across areas of mutual interest.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's contributions to regional peace and stability and expressed confidence in further advancing the longstanding strategic partnership between Pakistan and China.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail addressing participants of a national conference titled "Pakistan's Emerging Role in Global Mediation, Strategic Diplomacy, Conflict Resolution and Economic Opportunities in the Post-Marka-e-Haq Era".

Dialogue, unity pillars of Pakistan's internal stability: Governor

Says concrete measures are required to ensure internal stability through political dialogue

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail said that he has always been a strong supporter of political dialogue. He said that just as Pakistan secured victory in the Battle for Truth (Marka-e-Haq) and earned a distinguished position in the fields of defence and global diplomacy by playing its role in bringing the United States and Iran to the direct negotiation table, similar concrete measures are now required to ensure internal stability through political dialogue, building public confidence and engaging youth in constructive activities.

He said that the country must remain mindful of the fact that the enemy could exploit its internal weaknesses at any time. Pakistan has achieved significant successes in eliminating terrorism and religious sectarianism, and now, through political harmony, national unity and collective efforts, the country is confident of overcoming the existing challenges very soon.

He expressed these views while addressing participants of a national conference at the Governor House Quetta.

The conference was organized by the International Research Council for Religious Affairs in collaboration with the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) and the Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism (CoE-CVE) Balochistan. It is worth mentioning that the national conference, titled "Pakistan's Emerging Role in Global Mediation, Strategic Diplomacy, Conflict Resolution and Economic Opportunities in the Post-Marka-e-Haq Era," was held at the Governor House Quetta. The event was attended by government representatives, policymakers, academics, religious scholars and leaders from the development sector.

The conference deliberated on Pakistan's evolving role in global diplomacy, peacebuilding, conflict resolution and regional economic cooperation.

While addressing the conference, Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail appreciated the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund for organizing the event and emphasized the importance of dialogue and mutual understanding in resolving conflicts, promoting peace and fostering social harmony.



QUETTA: Former chief minister Balochistan and MPA Dr Abdul Malik Baloch is addressing the participants of an event.

THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

Tuesday November 03, 2026

Balochistan's future lies in education

Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has presented a clear and forward-looking vision for the province, emphasizing that lasting peace and prosperity can only be achieved through education, democratic engagement and national unity rather than violence and extremism.

Addressing the convocation of the University of Management and Technology (UMT) in Lahore, the Chief Minister reaffirmed that the loyalty of the people of Balochistan to Pakistan is unconditional and stressed that the province's genuine challenges should be addressed through constructive dialogue and development instead of misleading narratives and separatist propaganda.

The Chief Minister rightly pointed out that Balochistan is confronting three major challenges: the spread of narratives that attempt to justify violence, the threat posed by armed terrorist groups, and the growing influence of misinformation targeting young people through social media. His assessment reflects the realities faced by the province, where terrorists have repeatedly attacked innocent citizens and damaged critical infrastructure, undermining development and public welfare.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti made it clear that political differences and socio-economic grievances can never justify violence. Instead, he advocated education, dialogue, democratic values and constitutional political processes as the only sustainable solutions to the province's issues. His message reinforces the government's commitment to resolving problems through peaceful and democratic means while safeguarding the lives and rights of the people.

Equally significant was his emphasis on responsible public discourse. He urged analysts, observers and opinion-makers to present facts objectively and avoid narratives that indirectly legitimize terrorism or create confusion about the province's realities. Such a balanced approach is essential to counter misinformation and strengthen national cohesion.

The Chief Minister also highlighted the growing challenge of digital misinformation, particularly among young people. His call for youth to critically examine information through research and facts underscores the importance of developing informed, responsible and resilient citizens capable of resisting extremist propaganda.

Recognizing the transformative role of educational institutions, Mir Sarfraz Bugti praised UMT for extending higher education opportunities to students from Balochistan. He welcomed the university's scholarship initiative as a valuable investment in the province's future and appreciated the Punjab government's allocation of Rs1 billion annually to promote education in Balochistan, describing it as a shining example of inter-provincial harmony and national solidarity.

The Balochistan government's own commitment to expanding educational access further demonstrates its determination to empower the province's youth. By striving to provide scholarships to more than 80 percent of students, the provincial government aims to ensure that financial hardship does not prevent talented young people from pursuing higher education. This policy reflects a long-term vision of investing in human capital, equipping youth with modern skills and creating equal opportunities for progress.

The Chief Minister's belief that education is the strongest safeguard against extremism and violence carries profound significance. By encouraging young people to pursue knowledge, innovation and constructive participation in society, the government is laying the foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and progressive Balochistan.

Congratulating the graduating students, Mir Sarfraz Bugti reminded them that graduation marks the beginning of a new journey of responsibility and service. He encouraged them to pursue excellence, uphold integrity and utilize their education for the betterment of Pakistan.

The Chief Minister's address delivered a message of hope, resilience and national unity.

It reaffirmed that the future of Balochistan lies in empowering its youth, defeating terrorism through education and opportunity, and strengthening the bonds that unite all provinces under one national vision.

With continued investment in education, development and democratic values, Balochistan is well-positioned to move toward lasting peace, stability and shared prosperity.

ME's geopolitical conundrum

IMRAN MALIK

The kaleidoscope of Middle Eastern (ME) geopolitics continues to throw up fascinating, intriguing patterns, colours and combinations. The geopolitical spectrum is getting increasingly off-kilter and chaotic. All efforts to somehow stabilise and bring it to an even keel are failing. Crucially, what started off as the US-Israel Combine's ostensibly short, decisive war against Iran has instead morphed into a prolonged, unwinnable one. The theatre of war has expanded uncontrollably from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea. It is a virtual double envelopment of the Arabian Peninsula and all Arab states therein. The Gulf War has now degenerated into a multi-front, regional conflagration with no plausible closure, mutually acceptable or otherwise, in sight. All focus and attention have now shifted to the Yemen Front, as the US apparently takes an operational and logistics pause, pending its own midterm and Israel's elections. These elections have further complicated an already very complex regional geopolitical environment. If PM Netanyahu loses, his legal woes may even send him to jail. US midterm elections will define President Trump's legacy in US history, too. The further conduct of the Gulf War will thus be determined by how both incumbents fare in the elections. Period. Could sanity yet prevail? The US-Israel Combine set out to precipitate a regime change in Iran. Could these elections ominously turn the tables and reverse fortunes?

However, the hostilities of the Gulf War and the myriad existential threats to regional regimes/governments are causing a massive flux in the ME's geopolitical environment. The US-led West's credibility stands brutally exposed and irrevocably scarred due to its duplicitous, self-serving, stridently pro-Israel policies during this Gulf War. A crucial wake-up call may have been registered by the regional states. A subtle but very meaningful struggle has since ensued. The US-led West is scrambling to retain its control over the destinies and wealth of the Gulf Arab states, which, in turn, have started looking for ways and means to wriggle out of its domineering, suffocating, exploitative chokehold. They now seek alternative security and defence arrangements, independent of their erstwhile benefactors. The ME's geopolitical architecture is thus in the throes of a basic paradigm shift, a realignment, though chaotic and haphazard at present.

However, simultaneously, a number of other geopolitical and geostrategic developments are afoot in the ME. Its reaction, as a whole, to the emerging geopolitical environment is perplexing. It does not seem to have a very well-crafted, well-considered collective policy/approach to deal with this overwhelming, steadily evolving regional geopolitical conundrum. There appears to be no method to its reaction to this war and its evolving consequences. The region, the GCC and even the individual states do not seem to have configured a well-defined end state to pursue or the compatible ways and means to get there. They have not thus far demonstrated any unambiguous strategic vision, foresight, clarity or direction either that meets their national and security interests decisively. They seem to be moving haphazardly to create reliable, trustworthy, largely self-reliant security and defence configurations that not only secure them and their regimes but also their national interests, independent of their ostensible benefactors of yore!

The KSA appears to be the focus of many countries. The Makkah Defence Alliance (MDA), created during this Gulf War, was perhaps designed to act as a potential net stabiliser and security provider in the region. It seeks to usher in collective security, defence and deterrence, deterring war and preserving peace in the region! However, it needs to move fast to not only lay down its policy and decision-making protocols, terms and conditions, create the required strategic organisation, infrastructure, articulation of command, marshal forces and formulate strategies, operational strategies, etc., but above all, give the MDA the strategic reach, clout and deterrence power it is planned to exude/exercise. Egypt is also considering sending forces to help defend the KSA, while the UK is sending a squadron of fighter jets, perhaps the Eurofighter Typhoon, to only help defend the airspace of the KSA against a foe that has no Air Force! It is most likely to perform the same (non)role that the many US bases have performed in the Gulf War!

Furthermore, President Macron of France is on a visit to the region and has visited Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE and KSA, ostensibly to show French support for the region/Kingdoms. Is Europe, in connivance with the US, already hedging against a probable egress of the latter from the region, post this gross military failure in Iran? Do they fear China making a strong ingress into such a potential strategic vacuum? The KSA, however, must show absolute strategic clarity in how it intends to secure and defend itself now and in the future. A plethora of players will only breed chaos and confusion at the strategic level and do more harm than good! To add to this influx of "supporters", Qatar has announced a Global Security Forum, essentially with regional states but without losing contact with the US, UK and France! Furthermore, a Badr Memorandum of Understanding has also been signed between Qatar, Pakistan, Turkiye and Indonesia that is primarily intended to improve their mutual defence capabilities, capacities and competencies. Mediation efforts continue unabated. Pakistan and Qatar continue to seek ways to end the Gulf War. Iran has offered to mediate between the KSA and the Houthis to bring this conflict to a mutually acceptable closure. To top it all, President Trump has come out with an incredulous and outrageous "piece of advice" for the KSA. He wants it to take Israel's help in fighting off the Houthis!

All these efforts combine together to make for a very chaotic, confused and uncertain geopolitical environment in the ME with untold, ominous ramifications!

President Trump ought to have considered the geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic implications of his rather outrageous advice to the KSA. The ramifications of such an unusual development are numerous and could severely vitiate and polarise the geopolitics of the ME!

One, despite the setbacks suffered in the Gulf War and its deleterious effects on US foreign policy, President Trump remains fixated upon getting the KSA (and other Arab-Muslim states) to sign the Abraham Accords. This "sagacious advice" reflects a very deep geopolitical manoeuvre by the US-Israel Combine, designed primarily to secure numerous combined interests in one fell swoop. The KSA must be wary of giving Israel an ingress into the country and must remain cognisant of the famous fable of the Arab and his Camel, in particular in the context of Greater Israel!

Two, a Muslim versus Muslim clash, with Israel in some background, will be unacceptable to the Arab-Muslim World at large. Period. It is a lose-lose proposition.

Three, the US-Israel Combine perhaps feels that were the KSA to sign up for the Abraham Accords, it would encourage other Arab-Muslim states to do likewise, too.

Four, such a development would split the Muslim World even further and create conditions for malign forces to continue dividing and ruling them, exploiting regional, sectarian and other fissures.

Five, the duplicitousness of the US-led West and the US-Israel Combine's astounding failure in the Gulf War against Iran have already made the Gulf Arab states aware of the multifarious limits to the US-led West's and Israel's powers. They are now extremely wary of signing the Abraham Accords. Iran may have broken many myths and pretensions to superpowerdom, for good!

Six, what sort of a compelling quid pro quo can the US-led West or even the US-Israel Combine actually offer any Arab-Muslim state for it to disregard all its national aspirations and interests and join the Abraham Accords? What incomparable benefits have those who have already joined it gained? Seven, was the MDA created to essentially obviate such a critical development: the submission of the entire region to the Abraham Accords and, by implication, to Israel's hegemony? It must be expanded to include Iran, all Gulf Arab states, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, even UAE. Eight, the KSA is least likely to let its eminent and exceptional position as the de facto leader of the Arab-Muslim World be compromised for any reason.

Nine, regardless, the basic chasm between the Gulf Arab states and Iran would persist, and conditions would prevail for a debilitating Shia-Sunni divide and its exploitation by well-known malign, hostile forces. It must be forestalled by the Arab-Muslim World.

Ten, Israel would be the biggest beneficiary were the KSA to sign the Abraham Accords. It could possibly become the undisputed leader, hegemon, net security provider, net stabiliser, and the centre of all power in the region. It would have an unmatched sphere of influence as well as a critical strategic reach. It would continue to be maintained as the strongest military-nuclear-missile force in the ME and could start determining the geopolitical, geostrategic and even geoeconomic imperatives of the region. The hold of the US-Israel Combine on the ME would thus be complete, total and decisive!

Eleven, the strategic and geopolitical environment for the creation of an ostensible Greater Israel would thus be facilitated, much to the detriment of the vital national interests of all Arab-Muslim states.

Twelve, the US-Israel Combine would thus get a controlling oversight of the oil and gas supply chains that go through the Suez Canal-Red Sea-Bab el Mandab complex, assuming that Iran retains control of the Hormuz Straits.

It could have a controlling oversight of most regional and global economies!

On the diplomatic front, Pakistan (and Qatar) must continue to mediate between Iran and the US and seek to bring them to the negotiating table without further resort to war-fighting. Pakistan (in coordination with Iran) must also take the initiative and seek to mediate between the Houthis and KSA. It is well placed to do so. Crucially, Pakistan must endeavour to expand the MDA into a regional forum including all GCC countries, Iran, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and UAE. A united front like this will forestall all malign intrusions and influences from the West into the ME and engender peace between them. Eventually, this expanded MDA must get the direct support of and involve China and Russia to give it extra-regional dimensions. At some stage, the expanded MDA could become a partner of the SCO and acquire global dimensions as well.

Most crucially, this expanded MDA must bring all countries in this forum onto a common platform. They must unite to have a joint strategic vision for the region as a whole. It must have a well-defined policy, an achievable end state, and practical ways and means to get there. They must seek collective defence, security and deterrence at the regional level, with recourse to the article "an attack on one member state will be considered an attack on all".

Such a forum will deter all sorts of malign intrusions and influences in the region and forestall hegemony by some and all forms of aggression, coercion and exploitation by known hostile forces. This is an ideal opportunity for the region to not only secure its future but that of its coming generations too. It is up to the Arab-Muslim World now to show strategic vision and foresight and move to unite, pool resources, overcome its weaknesses, exploit and enhance its inherent strengths to become the formidable power it was always meant to be.

The prospects, options, and opportunities are limitless. United, this region will prosper and rise; divided, it will continue to be exploited, raped and ravaged ruthlessly!

The writer is a retired brigadier of the Pakistan Army. He can be reached at im.k846@gmail.com and tweets @K846Im.

The crucible of soldiering

SALEEM QAMAR BUTT

"It is the soldier, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of the press. It is the soldier, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech. It is the soldier, not the campus organiser, who has given us freedom to demonstrate."
–Father Denis Edward O'Brien, USMC

There exists a profound, almost unbridgeable chasm between those who discuss war from the comfort of civilian life and those who must wage it. The hardships and perils endured in the crucible of hardcore soldiering—the raw, unvarnished existence of the fighting arms—cannot be fully captured in literature, nor can they be adequately imagined by those who have never worn the uniform. As the ancient Greek historian Thucydides famously observed: *"The society that separates its scholars from its warriors will have its thinking done by cowards and its fighting done by fools."*

To stand on the sharp end of the spear is an experience defined by hardship, where sweat and blood spilt in relentless training culminate either in the supreme sacrifice of life—*'Shahadat'*—or in the lifelong physical and psychological scars borne by the survivors, the *'Ghazi'*. Throughout history, nations have recognised that the true shield of a sovereign state rests upon its frontline warriors. Whether it is the revered ethos of the Pakistani Armed Forces, who view themselves as guardians forged in fire, or the legendary fighting arms of martial traditions across the world, the combat soldier occupies a sacred position. They are the individuals entrusted with carrying the lethal responsibility of state power on their shoulders.

For over two decades, since 2002, the Pakistan Army has been locked in an unrelenting, multi-front war to blunt the scourge of terrorism. The fighting arms have endured an unprecedented operational tempo, spending years—and in many cases, decades—deployed continuously in hostile, high-altitude and treacherous combat zones. Alongside them, the supporting arms and services have shared in this demanding burden, ensuring that the frontline remains steadfast. Yet, the cost of such prolonged engagement extends far beyond the immediate threat of enemy fire. The constant state of hypervigilance wrecks the nervous system over time, creating an invisible burden. Extended separations from families mean missing important social milestones, both sad and happy, and the daily joys of loved ones, causing psychological strain. Upon returning home, soldiers often feel like strangers in a world that moves on without realising the price paid for its tranquillity. Sadly, the social toll and the crucible of modern combat remain unnoticed.

As the Latin proverb reminds us: *Si vis pacem, para bellum* ("If you want peace, prepare for war"). But peace is never free; it is continuously purchased with the youth, vitality and health of those who serve.

What hurts a veteran most deeply is not the physical rigour of service nor the scars left by battle. The deepest wound is inflicted when the society for whose safety those sacrifices were made remains indifferent, or worse, when sacred duty is exploited for transient gain. In many robust democracies and military traditions, the frontline soldier is afforded elevated societal reverence—not out of blind militarism, but out of a sober acknowledgement that civilised life exists only because brave men and women stand ready to confront violence on their behalf.

The clash between sacred sacrifice and political opportunism is a current reality that needs to be addressed. When political actors, including those with a history of anti-military rhetoric or disdain for defence institutions, pay mere lip service to the ultimate sacrifices of soldiers, it trivialises the sacred concept of *Shahadat*.

To treat the blood of martyrs as currency for political mileage is an affront to every soldier who ever stood a post in the freezing mountains or scorched deserts.

A nation that forgets or disrespects its defenders risks eroding its own foundational strength. To preserve the dignity of the military institution and honor those who serve, therefore, a shift in collective mindset is required.

For that, public acknowledgment of soldiers must move beyond superficial speeches to tangible support for veterans and their families. There is a need for insulation from politics, i.e., the sacrosanct nature of national defense and martyrdom must remain entirely above political scoring and partisan exploitation.

To restore honour to the guardians, through a well-orchestrated societal awareness strategy, civilians must be educated on the true, unglamorized realities of frontline combat so that empathy replaces apathy.

The presence and deployment of Armed Forces soldiers for traffic police duties and for protection and protocol-related duties involving police and paramilitary forces on roads and streets need to be done away with. Let's stay focused on the external threats along the international borders. The fighting soldier asks for neither luxury nor unearned praise. They ask only that their sacrifices be recognised with sincerity, that their families be cared for, and that the cause for which their comrades gave their lives is treated with the reverence it rightfully commands.

As Sun Tzu wrote in *The Art of War*, "The moral law is that which causes the people to be in complete accord with their leaders, so that they will follow them regardless of their lives."

That moral trust is fragile.

It is sustained only when those who risk everything know that their country honours their service not just in words, but in deed and truth. Pakistan Zindabad, PAK Army Paindabad!

The writer is a retired senior army officer with experience in international relations, military diplomacy and analysis of geo-political and strategic security issues.

US could strike Iran's remaining nuclear sites in '10 minutes': Trump

US president says Washington is in no hurry to reach agreement with Tehran, refuses to rule out renewed military action amid Qatari-mediated negotiations

WASHINGTON DC, (Agencies): US President Donald Trump said that Washington could strike Iran's remaining suspected nuclear facilities in "10 minutes," signaling the possibility of further military action despite ongoing diplomatic negotiations.
Speaking to reporters at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida, Trump claimed that US military operations had severely weakened Iran's armed forces and nuclear infrastructure, leaving only a few sites to be targeted.
"We still have to take care of, I would say, one or two sites, but we can do that in 10 minutes. So, we have that plan," Trump said.
"You probably could look at Pickaxe Mountain, you have to take care of that. We can do that all very quickly," he added, referring to a suspected Iranian nuclear facility.
Trump made the remarks when asked whether there was a timeline for ongoing Qatari-mediated negotiations between Washington and Tehran.
He said the US was not in a hurry to reach an agreement, claiming that American military operations had destroyed much of Iran's navy, air force, air defenses, military equipment and nuclear infrastructure.
Asked whether Washington could resume military operations against Iran as soon as this week, Trump declined to provide a direct answer.
"Why would you ask such a stupid question?" he said, before adding: "I can't tell you."
- Trump says Iran will 'never have a nuclear weapon'
Trump reiterated Washington's opposition to Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. "Iran will never have a nuclear weapon. They want to make a deal; we'll find out about that," he said.
Asked about the progress of negotiations, Trump expressed skepticism about Tehran's reliability despite describing the talks as progressing.
"They're going fine, but they're not very reliable. I will tell you, they make a deal and then they back out. They want to make a deal. We'll see if they make a deal," he said.His remarks came after Iranian negotiators met Qatari mediators in Doha on Saturday, following talks in Tehran on Friday aimed at finding a diplomatic solution to the conflict.



Voting has begun in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, for the second round of the presidential and vice-presidential elections. President and presidential candidate Iliana Yotova (pictured) cast her vote. Following the voting process, Yotova made statements to the press.



Demonstrators carrying banners, flags and various costumes, clash with police as tensions escalate during protests by the Gilets jaunes (Yellow Vests) movement in Paris

Qatar condemns attack on LNG tanker in Gulf, warns of threat to global energy supplies

DOHA, (Agencies): Qatar on Monday strongly condemned an attack on the liquefied natural gas (LNG) tanker Al Mayeda while it was sailing in the Gulf, warning that the incident threatened maritime navigation and global energy supplies.
In a statement, the Foreign Ministry said the vessel belonged to Qatar Gas Transport Company, known as Nakilat.
The ministry described the attack as "a dangerous act that threatens the safety of maritime navigation and the security of global energy supplies." Qatar "reserves the right to take all necessary measures under international law and the UN Charter to protect its property, safeguard its interests and ensure the safety of its vessels and crews," it said.The ministry added that the relevant authorities had begun investigations to establish the circumstances of the incident and identify those responsible.

Iran boosting military capabilities to respond 'without geographical limits': Ketabchi

TEHRAN, (Agencies): Iran is rapidly strengthening its armed forces' combat capabilities to enable them to respond "without geographical limits," Defense Minister Mehrdad Akhlaghi Ketabchi said Monday.
Speaking to reporters, Akhlaghi said Iran was moving "resolutely" to enhance its armed forces' smart combat capabilities under directives from Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei.
"We are rapidly increasing our armed forces' combat capabilities to be able to respond without geographical limits," he said.
Iran "will not be caught off guard, nor will we be stopped, and any type of attack will receive an appropriate, decisive and effective response," he added.
Akhlaghi stressed that Iran "would not be surprised by threats, halted by pressure or dependent on the will of others in pursuing scientific and technological progress."
His remarks come as Qatar and Pakistan continue mediation efforts to revive negotiations between Washington and Tehran, amid reports of progress in indirect talks in Doha. The efforts seek understandings on Iran's nuclear program, sanctions relief and the security of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz.
Tensions in the Middle East have remained high since the US and Israel launched attacks against Iran on Feb. 28, triggering Iranian retaliation across the region.
Despite subsequent diplomatic efforts and a memorandum signed by Washington and Tehran in June, tensions have persisted over security arrangements and navigation through the Strait of Hormuz.

Saudi-led coalition launches operation to 'neutralize' Houthi military resources in Yemen

SANAA, (Agencies): The Saudi-led coalition said Sunday that it had carried out a military operation to "neutralize vital resources" used by the Houthi group to support its war effort and strengthen its military capabilities, particularly ballistic missiles and drones.
Coalition spokesman Turki al-Maliki said in a statement on Monday that the operation took place Sunday morning following continued Houthi attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure in Yemen and Saudi Arabia.
The coalition's joint forces command had monitored the Houthis' "continued use of vital resources to support their war effort and bolster their military capabilities, especially ballistic missiles and drones," he said.
Al-Maliki said the continued attacks posed a direct threat to civilian lives and the safety of civilian infrastructure.
The operation sought to "neutralize" resources used by the group to carry out repeated attacks and threaten the security of Saudi Arabia and Yemen, as well as shipping lanes in the southern Red Sea, he added.
The statement did not identify the targeted locations or specify the nature of the resources it said had been neutralized.
It also provided no details on casualties or material damage.
There was no immediate comment from the Houthis.
Since Oct. 5, Yemeni government forces have launched Operation "Dawn of Yemen" to restore state institutions from Houthi control and retake the capital, Sanaa.
Military escalation between government forces and the Houthis resumed in July, killing and wounding thousands and displacing more than a quarter of a million people, according to UN reports.
The escalation ended a period of relative calm that had prevailed in Yemen since April 2022, while the humanitarian crisis has worsened amid continued fighting and displacement.
Yemen has been at war since the Houthis seized Sanaa and several provinces in September 2014, prompting a Saudi-led coalition to intervene in March 2015 in support of the internationally recognized government.



Displaced Palestinians inspect damaged tents following an Israeli attack on Al-Thawra Street, west of Gaza City, Gaza, Palestine



Participants in colorful costumes took part in the 30th Annual Haunted Halsted Halloween Parade held in Northalsted, a neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois.

Putin has never refused talks with Ukraine's Zelenskyy, would answer his call: Kremlin

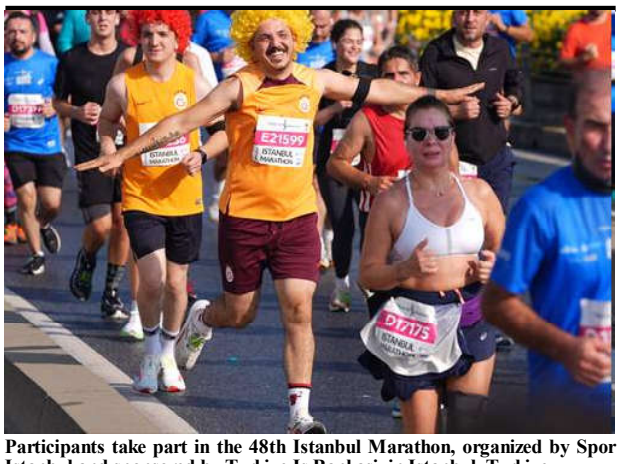
MOSCOW, (Agencies): Russian President Vladimir Putin has never refused talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and would answer his call, Kremlin foreign policy aide Yury Ushakov said in an interview published Monday. Speaking to a Vesti journalist, Ushakov said the Russian leader remained open to direct communication with his Ukrainian counterpart.
"I think he will answer, of course. Putin has not once refused talks," Ushakov said.
He also said Zelenskyy was welcome to travel to Moscow for talks with Putin.
"He is sending signals through various sources. He wants to talk, and if he wants to talk so much, let him come," Ushakov said.
- Kremlin proposes trilateral talks with US, Ukraine
Addressing negotiations aimed at resolving the conflict in Ukraine, Ushakov said the initial rounds should involve Russia, Ukraine and the US.

UN chief warns of escalation in Western Sahara after peacekeeping mandate ends

UNITED NATIONS, (Agencies): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned of potential military escalation across Western Sahara on Sunday following the termination of the global body's 35-year-old peacekeeping mission in the disputed territory. "The Secretary-General remains concerned about the security situation throughout the Territory and the risk of escalation of hostilities," spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said, urging all parties to exercise "maximum restraint and to refrain from actions that could further increase tensions or undermine regional stability." The United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) formally ceased operations after the UN Security Council failed to extend its mandate beyond Oct. 31. A reduced team under the UN Department of Operational Support began a liquidation phase to repatriate equipment belonging to troop-contributing countries and oversee the disposal of UN-owned assets. Self-determination, diplomatic mediation
Guterres stressed that the departure of peacekeepers does not diminish or eliminate the "inalienable right to self-determination" of the people of Western Sahara. He also paid tribute to Special Representative Alexander Ivanko and honored 20 personnel who lost their lives during the mission, which was established in 1991 to monitor a ceasefire between Morocco and the pro-independence Polisario Front.
While peacekeeping operations have ended, political negotiations will continue under the auspices of the UN chief's personal envoy, Staffan de Mistura.

Zelenskyy claims Russia lost record 54,400 troops killed or wounded in October

KYIV, (Agencies): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Monday claimed that Russia lost 54,400 troops killed or seriously wounded in October, calling it the highest monthly figure since the start of the war.
On US social media company X, Zelenskyy said Ukrainian forces had recaptured 96.2 square kilometers (37.1 square miles) of territory in October, 10.4 square kilometers more than Russian forces had captured during the same period.
He also said Russian forces suffered 2,250 casualties on Oct. 21, setting a "record" for daily losses.
"Russia is suffering losses. We are holding our positions, liberating territory, and making every day of the war as costly as possible for the aggressor," he said.
"To stop these insane losses, all Russia needs to do is choose a ceasefire and diplomacy."
Russia has not commented on Zelenskyy's statement, and independent verification of the claims remains difficult due to the ongoing war.



Participants take part in the 48th Istanbul Marathon, organized by Spor Istanbul and sponsored by Turkiye Is Bankasi, in Istanbul, Turkiye

TENDER NOTICE

TSE-2627101218593 Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. The EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PHE DIVISION KHUZDAR invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2026 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates

Tender Fee 1500 PKR and Bid Security 2%

S.No	Name of Work/s	E/Cost
1	CONSTRUCTION OF SOLAR W.S.S AT KILLI SHAHIBAGH AND KILLI LIZO MC KHUZDAR UNDER (PPL CSR) DISTRICT KHUZDAR. SOLAR	3,706,140

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules – 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required The bidder must have completed 1 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of at least 2,594,298 PKR Amount in1 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm **Procedure Of Procurement:** Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Gurantee,Deposit at Call of 2 % specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed 1,500 PKR **Issuance of tender Documents:** From the date of publication of NIT to 17 November, 2026during office hours on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The Tenders must be submitted latest by 17 November, 2026till 11:00 AM. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 12:00 PM
Address: Irrigation Colony Khuzdar Phone no: 0848412523
Fax no: 0848412523Email: phedudr@gmail.com

Executive Engineer
PHE Division
Khuzdar

DPRQ/PRQ No.2231/02-11-2026

www.dpr.gob.pk @dpr_gob dpr.gob @dgpr.balochistan



In Tirana, the capital of Albania, a demonstration was held in front of the Ministry of Education to protest the government's economic and education policies. Protesters, who gathered to demand the Prime Minister's resignation, clashed with police during the demonstration.

Insecurity displaces 1,150 people in Sudan's North Darfur in 3 days

KHARTOUM, (Agencies): Some 1,150 people fled four villages in Sudan's western North Darfur state over three days due to worsening insecurity, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said Monday.
In a statement, the UN agency said its field teams estimated that an additional 1,150 people were displaced from the villages of Muzbat, Oreri, Tari and Umm Haraz in Um Baru locality between Oct. 29 and 31.
Some affected families moved to other locations within the locality, while others crossed the border into Chad, it said. The security situation remains highly tense and volatile, the agency added. On Monday, the IOM reported that 895 people had been displaced from three villages in Um Baru on Oct. 24. The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Sudanese army have been fighting since April 2023 following a dispute over integrating the paramilitary group into the military. The conflict has killed tens of thousands of people and displaced 13 million.

Pakistan's friendship with China represents shared national consensus: Gilani

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani emphasized the importance of strengthening parliamentary cooperation, institutional exchanges and mutual learning between Pakistan and China.

While addressing the inauguration of the Pakistan-China Research Center for Party and State Govemance he said that China's experience in governance, institutional development, long-term planning and economic transformation offers valuable insights for strengthening Pakistan's legislative and policy institutions. Gilani also accepted the honorary chairmanship of the research center which will contribute towards strengthening multidimensional cooperation through research and development.

The Chairman Senate warmly welcomed Leo Hye-shing, Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, and his distinguished delegation to Pakistan. He congratulated the Pakistan-China Economic and Cultural Council (PCECC) on establishing the Research Center and expressed gratitude for being invited to serve as its Honorary Chairman, a responsibility he accepted with humility and commitment.

Referring to the photo exhibition showcasing the history of Pakistan-China relations, Gilani said the photographs reflected much more than diplomatic milestones, depicting an enduring friendship rooted in mutual respect, trust and people-to-people connections. Recalling his family's historical association with China, he noted that his father had visited China in 1956 as a member of Pakistan's first Constituent Assembly, describing this connection as a cherished legacy that must be carried forward by future generations.

Highlighting the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China, the Chairman Senate said that the Senate of Pakistan had commemorated this historic milestone through a unanimous resolution, reaffirming that the friendship between the two countries transcends political affiliations and social backgrounds. He stressed that Pakistan's commitment to its all-weather friendship and iron brotherhood with China represents a shared national consensus. Recalling his engagements with Chinese leadership, Gilani mentioned welcoming Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to the Parliament of Pakistan in 2010 during his tenure as Prime Minister, as well as receiving a high-level delegation of the National People's Congress during his tenure as Chairman Senate. He said such high-level parliamentary exchanges reflected the depth and continuity of bilateral relations. Referring to the Communist Party of China's 105th anniversary, the Chairman Senate said that China's institutional continuity, long-term planning and development experience deserved serious academic and institutional study. He highlighted China progress in poverty reduction, rural development, digital governance, industrial growth and public administration.



QUETTA: Provincial Advisor for Women Development Dr Rubaba Khan Buledi in a group photo with the participants of national conference.



Malik Sultan Mahmood Hanjra, Senior Politician of PML (N) calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

President welcomes Pakistan assuming G-24 Presidency

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari, welcomed Pakistan's assumption of the presidency of the Group of 24 (G-24).

The president congratulated Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and his team on the achievement, President Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release.

He said Pakistan's G-24 presidency presents a significant opportunity to ensure effective representation of developing countries in global economic affairs.

He expressed the confidence that Pakistan would effectively utilise the G-24 platform to promote the common interests of developing economies.

The opportunity would enable Pakistan to play a significant role in advancing development financing, addressing climate challenges and strengthening global financial cooperation, the president added.

Development of Gilgit-Baltistan directly linked to Pakistan's progress: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has felicitated the people of Gilgit-Baltistan on the 79th anniversary of their independence from Dogra rule and accession to Pakistan, paying rich tribute to the heroes and martyrs of the freedom movement.

In his message on the occasion, he said that November 1, 1947, was a glorious chapter in the history of Gilgit-Baltistan, when its people secured freedom from Dogra rule through extraordinary courage, determination and sacrifices.

He said the people of Gilgit-Baltistan had demonstrated remarkable commitment and unwavering love for Pakistan, which was a source of pride for the entire nation. Ayaz Sadiq paid glowing tribute to the Ghazis and martyrs who played a historic role in the freedom movement, saying their sacrifices would always be remembered with respect and gratitude.

Highlighting the strategic geographical importance and abundant natural resources of Gilgit-Baltistan, the Speaker said the region had tremendous potential for promoting regional trade and tourism.

He emphasized that the development and prosperity of Gilgit-Baltistan were directly linked to the progress and prosperity of Pakistan.

The Speaker said providing better educational and healthcare facilities, along with expanded employment opportunities, remained among the foremost national priorities for the region.

Pakistan explores carbon markets to finance clean-air transition

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan is exploring carbon-market mechanisms to mobilise financing for air pollution control, with a conference presentation identifying potential for generating 984,050 carbon credits and 35.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent over 10 years across transport, agriculture and other sectors.

The proposed approach could open new financing avenues for cleaner transport, agricultural practices and industrial improvements, while linking Pakistan's air quality agenda with international climate finance mechanisms.

The potential was outlined during the two-day Pakistan National Clean Air Conference, where participants discussed opportunities to attract investment through carbon markets and strengthen the financial foundations of the country's clean-air transition.

Dr Waqas Ahmed Khan of the World Bank said Pakistan needed to develop a pipeline of investable projects capable of generating carbon credits and attracting financing.

The conference presentation estimated a potential value of $5.9 million to $8.85 million, while emphasising the need for credible baselines, measurement, reporting and verification systems, safeguards and federal-provincial approvals to ensure the integrity of carbon credits.

It also highlighted the importance of engaging prospective buyers at an early stage to establish market demand and develop appropriate financing arrangements. Explaining the international carbon-market framework, Muhammad Abid of GIZ distinguished between compliance markets, where credits are used under legally binding emissions-reduction frameworks, and voluntary markets, where organisations purchase credits on a voluntary basis.

He also discussed Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement, which allows countries to transfer internationally recognised emissions reductions through cooperative arrangements, subject to accounting rules designed to prevent double counting. The discussions placed carbon finance within a broader proposed framework for mobilising resources from public budgets, fiscal transfers, climate and green finance, development partners and private investment.

Andrew McCarthy of the Asian Development Bank called for a consensus statement defining responsibilities between federal and provincial governments and the establishment of a National Clean Air Financing Framework to support large-scale air quality improvements. Beyond carbon markets, the conference examined investment opportunities in transport, agriculture, industrial emissions control and clean cooking.

Proposed transport interventions included electric-vehicle charging infrastructure, electric ride-sharing, improved vehicle inspection systems and expanded mass transit, while longer-term measures envisaged greater use of rail for freight movement and the integration of transit-oriented development into urban planning.



US President Donald Trump speaks to members of the press as he arrives for a Halloween party at his Mar-a-Lago residence in Palm Beach, Florida, U.S

Overseas Pakistanis valuable national asset; vital pillar of country's economy: Syedaal

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar, while meeting delegations of overseas Pakistanis from the United States and Japan, tribal elders, lawyers, intellectuals, representatives of social organizations and people from various walks of life, underscored the vital role of overseas Pakistanis in Pakistan's economic development and national progress. The meeting discussed issues faced by overseas Pakistanis, their welfare and protection, as well as the country's economic and political stability, national security and the prevailing regional and international situation.

The Deputy Chairman Senate said that overseas Pakistanis are a valuable national asset and an important pillar of the country's economy. Through their hard work, expertise and substantial remittances, they are making a significant contribution to Pakistan's economic stability, development and prosperity. He said the government is fully aware of the challenges faced by Pakistanis living abroad and is taking several important initiatives to address their concerns, safeguard their rights and provide better facilities. Efforts are also underway to encourage overseas Pakistanis to contribute further to national development and investment.

Syedaal Khan Nasar emphasized that economic stability, political harmony and a secure environment are essential for Pakistan's sustainable development. He stressed the need for all political parties and national institutions to work together in the larger national interest and adopt a collective approach to overcome the country's challenges. He further said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Pakistan is moving towards greater economic stability, political strength, improved national security and enhanced international standing.



QUETTA: Pakistan Muslim League (N) Member of the National Assembly Akhtar Bibi, Prime Minister's Youth Programme Focal Person Sajjad Raisani, and other social workers are expressing condolences over the death of Akash Azeem, the brother of Sana Intizar, son of Intizar Masih.

D-8 Secretary General stresses unity against global health threats

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, has called for stronger cooperation among member states to develop resilient health systems, promote joint research and ensure access to affordable and sustainable healthcare.

He made the remarks while delivering keynote comments at the opening ceremony of the 12th Turkish Medical World Congress, held in Türkiye under the theme "Resilient Health Systems in the Face of Global Health Threats", said a press release received here on Sunday.

The congress, organised by Türkiye's Ministry of Health and the Health Institutes of Türkiye (TÜSEB) under the auspices of the country's presidency, brought together more than 2,000 participants, including health ministers, senior officials, scientists, medical professionals and experts from various countries. In his keynote remarks, the Secretary-General extended felicitations on the 103rd anniversary of the Founding of the Republic of Türkiye. He noted that the Turkish World Congress, being organized by Türkiye since 2014, had evolved into a valuable platform for accumulation of scientific knowledge, sharing of experiences and best practices, working on innovative and sustainable solutions to common problems, and contributing to efforts for building a more resilient global health system. The Secretary-General commended Minister Memisoglu's leadership in healthcare transformation, including the Productive Health Model, and lauded TÜSEB's contributions.

Highlighting global health threats posed by pandemics and infectious diseases, climate-induced disasters, and pervasive armed conflicts, he emphasized the importance of solidarity and international cooperation, effective preparedness, and resilient health systems.

Healthy population essential for sustainable development: Khosa

SOHBATPUR (ANN): Balochistan Minister for Communications and Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa has said every child in Sohbatpur must have access to essential immunization, stressing that protecting children from preventable and potentially fatal diseases remains a government priority.

He made the remarks while inaugurating a mobile vaccination van aimed at taking immunization services to children in remote villages, rural settlements and communities with limited access to healthcare facilities. During the ceremony, Khosa handed over the vehicle to District Health Officer Dr. Mir Murtaza Khosa in the presence of officials and staff of the Health Department.

The minister said the mobile unit would enable healthcare teams to reach underserved populations and ensure children receive vaccinations without having to travel long distances to established health facilities.

He underscored the importance of timely immunization in safeguarding children against infectious diseases, limiting their transmission and reducing the risk of serious health complications. "Our priority is to ensure that no child in any part of Sohbatpur district remains deprived of essential vaccination services," Khosa said.

Khosa said a healthy population was essential for sustainable development, adding that the government had a responsibility to improve access to healthcare, education and other basic services, particularly for communities in remote areas.

He reaffirmed the provincial government's commitment to expanding healthcare delivery in underserved parts of Balochistan and said measures to strengthen public health services would continue.

Health Department officials and staff were also present at the inauguration ceremony.



SOHBATPUR: Deputy Commissioner Fareeda Tareen chairs a meeting to review arrangements for the anti-polio campaign.

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia closely concerned about developments in region: Tahir Ashrafi

LAHORE, (APP): Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC) Chairman and Secretary General International Tazeem-e-Haramain Sharifain Council Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi has called upon Muslim countries to set aside their differences, strengthen mutual cooperation and forge a united strategy to address regional and international challenges.

Addressing a Tazeem-e-Haramain Sharifain Conference here, he said collective efforts were essential for peace, stability and security across the Muslim world.

The chairman said the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs were playing an important role in bringing Muslim countries closer and promoting unity within the Muslim Ummah amid the prevailing regional situation. He said Israel, India and their allies were pursuing designs to destabilise the Muslim world, stressing that unity and collective action were necessary to counter such challenges.

He appreciated Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir's diplomatic efforts to strengthen solidarity among Muslim countries, particularly amid tensions involving Iran, Israel and the United States.



Photo shows the inside of the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, which arrived in Islamabad

Unplanned urbanization contributing to expansion of informal settlements

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Deputy Programme Manager (DPM) UN-Habitat Pakistan Hamid Mumtaz Khan has said that Pakistan needs affordable, adequate and climate-resilient housing solutions to address its growing housing deficit, rapid urbanization and recurring natural disasters.

In an interview with APP, he said that rapid and often unplanned urbanization was contributing to the expansion of informal settlements and slums, while recurring disasters had further intensified the country's housing challenges, with millions of houses affected since the 2005 earthquake.

Addressing the growing housing crisis required a comprehensive approach that focused not only on increasing housing supply but also on ensuring affordability, adequate basic services and the resilience of existing and future homes, he added.

Khan emphasized the need for affordable and incremental housing solutions, access to serviced land, appropriate financing mechanisms and the upgrading of existing informal settlements through meaningful community participation.

He said adequate housing must provide access to safe drinking water, sanitation, essential services and a secure living environment, particularly for low-income communities.

Highlighting the importance of disaster-resilient construction, he said resilience should be incorporated into housing planning, design and construction to protect communities against earthquakes, floods and the growing impacts of climate change.

He stressed that new housing developments should comply with appropriate building standards, while vulnerable existing structures could be strengthened through cost-effective retrofitting.

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