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Oil prices among major causes of inflation, says Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said the new auto policy would promote local vehicle manufacturing and exports, ensuring affordable, quality and environment-friendly vehicles for a common man.

Addressing a press conference along with the Prime Minister's Adviser on Industry Haroon Akhtar, the minister said the new auto policy had been awaited with great anticipation. He said all stakeholders were consulted during its preparation, technical data was analysed, and models followed in different countries were studied and compared.

He said that for decades Pakistan kept import duties on vehicles high to protect the local industry. Unfortunately, despite all the protection, the industry failed to introduce the innovation and features available to ordinary consumers elsewhere. The purpose of protection was to improve the quality and facilities of vehicles for the common man.

The minister said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed that facilities be created for the middle class in the auto sector. He noted that girls and women are increasingly using electric scooters to reach schools, colleges and offices, and that the use of electric motorcycles and scooters is growing fast, which he called a need of the hour.

Tarar said the prime minister has paid special attention to the sector, and that promoting EVs will benefit the environment.

He added that it will also reduce the country's growing oil import bill, the burden of which ultimately falls on the poor. He said the nation is aware of fluctuations in petroleum prices, but prices are now coming down and the fuel relief scheme is continuing.

If the oil import bill falls, he said, the savings can be spent on public facilities, infrastructure, health and education.

He described the new auto policy as comprehensive, with special incentives for EVs, while promoting local manufacturing is also essential. He said the local industry cannot be fully beneficial until vehicles are exported after manufacturing and jobs are created.

The minister said the policy does not affect petrol-driven vehicles of up to 800cc used by the common man, which remain under existing facilities. He said it takes into account the environment, the import bill and the economy.

To promote clean energy, those setting up charging stations have been exempted from customs duty, and sales tax on them has also been reduced. Tarar said Pakistan has big opportunities in fully electric vehicles.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti chairs the inaugural meeting of the Board of Directors of the Balochistan Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases.



LARKANA: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari talking to media persons during Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of the New 600 Bed Civil Hospital Equipped with Modern Facilities.

CM Bugti vows to provide tangible relief to public; address longstanding healthcare challenges

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan has moved a significant step closer to establishing its first modern, specialised cardiac care facility, with the Balochistan Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (BICVD) entering the final stages of completion.

The 150-bed state-of-the-art hospital is expected to be inaugurated later this month, according to Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti. The announcement was made during the inaugural meeting of the Board of Directors of the Balochistan Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases, chaired by the chief minister. The meeting reviewed progress on the hospital's completion, the provision of medical services, the administrative framework, and measures required to make the institution fully operational.

Speaking on the occasion, Sarfraz Bugti described the project as a landmark development for the province's healthcare sector, particularly for the diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular diseases. He said the establishment of the institute would enable patients to access advanced cardiac care within Balochistan, reducing the need to travel to other provinces for specialised treatment. "The people of Balochistan will soon have access to modern facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of heart diseases within the province," the chief minister said, adding that the project would ease both the financial and logistical burdens often faced by patients seeking treatment outside Balochistan. During the meeting, the board approved the appointment of renowned cardiologist Dr Jalal Khan as the interim head of BICVD.



LAHORE: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail in a meeting with Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan.

Diwali symbolises triumph of light over darkness of hatred: PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif extended his heartfelt felicitations and warmest wishes to the Hindu community across the world, particularly those residing in Pakistan, on the joyous and auspicious occasion of Diwali.

In a message on the occasion of Diwali, he said, "Diwali symbolises the triumph of light over the darkness of hatred, intolerance and despair."The festival of lights conveys a profound message of promoting peaceful coexistence in human relations and social life. The enduring belief in a bright, prosperous and hopeful future is one of the most cherished attributes of Diwali," he added.

He said, "The Hindu community of Pakistan is a valued and integral part of our national fabric. Its invaluable contributions to the social, cultural and economic development of our country are worthy of the highest appreciation."

He said, "The diverse cultural and religious traditions within our society constitute a valuable social asset. Pakistan takes immense pride in its religious and cultural diversity."

"The Constitution of Pakistan guarantees the protection of the religious and civil rights of minorities. The Government remains firmly committed to safeguarding the rights, dignity and religious freedoms of all citizens, irrespective of religion, faith, colour or ethnicity. Promoting religious harmony, mutual unity and respect is our shared responsibility," he noted.

He said, "Our collective resolve is to build a peaceful, inclusive and prosperous nation. A society that embraces diverse cultures and traditions and upholds the principles of peaceful coexistence is one that ensures equal educational and economic opportunities for all its citizens." He said, "On this special occasion, let us renew our collective commitment to fostering interfaith harmony, strengthening the bonds of fraternity and brotherhood, and working together towards a brighter future founded on peace, tolerance and mutual understanding."

He expressed hope that all Pakistani Hindus celebrating Diwali will enjoy the vibrant and festive traditions of this joyous occasion to the fullest and share with society a message of peace, goodwill, happiness, prosperity and hope.

Pak, IMF agree to extend 200-unit electricity subsidy for protected consumers

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has agreed to extend electricity subsidies for protected consumers using up to 200 units per month for another six months, sources said.

According to sources, the understanding was reached during negotiations between Pakistan and the IMF last month, following the government's efforts to provide further relief to consumers on the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Under the proposed arrangement, the subsidy on electricity consumption of up to 200 units, scheduled to end on December 31, 2026, may now remain in place until June 30, 2027. This means the government could delay the withdrawal of the subsidy to July 1, 2027.

The IMF had previously set a target for ending subsidies on electricity consumption of up to 200 units from January 1, 2027. However, the government reportedly succeeded in securing a six-month extension.

Educated youth true architects of Pakistan's bright future: Syedaal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasir has emphasised that education is the cornerstone of national progress, prosperity and economic stability, stressing the need to nurture young talent and provide opportunities for knowledge and skills development.

He said educated and talented youth were the true architects of Pakistan's bright future and national development.

He expressed these views while presenting the first-ever degree of Alhamd Islamic University to Rubab Tabassum.

He congratulated her on the academic achievement and extended his best wishes for her bright and successful future.

On the occasion, the deputy chairman also congratulated President of Alhamd Islamic University, Prof Dr Shakeel Roshan, the university administration, faculty members and staff on achieving an important milestone in the institution's academic journey.

He appreciated the university's efforts to promote quality education in the country, saying educational institutions not only equip young people with knowledge and awareness but also prepare them to meet future challenges and play an effective role in national development.

Syedaal Khan Nasir observed that Pakistan's youth possessed immense talent, competence and creative potential. He emphasised the need to provide them with greater access to quality education, modern knowledge and practical training so they could demonstrate their capabilities at national and international levels and emerge as valuable assets to the country.

He further said the government was focusing on reforms and initiatives to promote education, improve the education system and increase the literacy rate.

He stressed that cooperation and collective efforts between public and private educational institutions were essential to achieving this national objective.

Pakistan, IMF agree to extend 200-unit electricity subsidy for protected consumers

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has agreed to extend electricity subsidies for protected consumers using up to 200 units per month for another six months, sources said on Saturday. According to sources, the understanding was reached during negotiations between Pakistan and the IMF last month, following the government's efforts to provide further relief to consumers on the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Under the proposed arrangement, the subsidy on electricity consumption of up to 200 units, scheduled to end on December 31, 2026, may now remain in place until June 30, 2027. This means the government could delay the withdrawal of the subsidy to July 1, 2027.

The IMF had previously set a target for ending subsidies on electricity consumption of up to 200 units from January 1, 2027. However, the government reportedly succeeded in securing a six-month extension. Sources said the IMF wants the electricity subsidy for consumers using up to 200 units to be gradually restricted only to beneficiaries registered with the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP).

A similar condition has been proposed for government subsidies on low gas consumption, which would also be limited to BISP-registered beneficiaries. Government Plans Changes to Electricity Slab System Last month, Power Minister Awais Leghari informed the Senate that the government had decided to abolish the existing electricity slab system.

PPP's position rests on respect for democratic mandate; unwavering resolve against terrorism, says Bilawal Bhutto

LARKANA (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari he urged the federal government to keep its doors open for talks with the opposition, give up its habit of picking fights with everyone, and engage with all stakeholders. He laid foundation of 600-Bed hospital in Chandka Medical Hospital Larkana and talking with media person and said that when he was first elected to the National Assembly from Larkana, his meetings with doctors and staff at Chandka Medical Hospital made him realise how heavily that hospital, established by Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto for the people of Larkana in 1970, was now burdened. A growing population, a vast catchment area, and patients coming from Balochistan had stretched its capacity to an extraordinary degree. It was with this need in mind He said, that he decided to give Larkana the gift of a new hospital. He said he was pleased to see the project for himself today and to learn that construction of the 600-bed hospital is on course to finish a month ahead of schedule. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that providing free, quality healthcare, and especially bringing world-class treatment to underprivileged communities and deprived areas, has always been among the PPP's priorities.

He pointed out that the Sindh government has given special attention to the health sector across the province. He expressed hope that the proposed SIUT facility in Larkana will also play an important role in providing free treatment to the people of the city and surrounding areas.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and his Sudanese counterpart Lieutenant General Babiker Samra Mustafa Ali shake hands after formalising the visa-free travel agreement for official and diplomatic passport holders of both countries.

Pakistan, Sudan ink visa-free pact for holders of official, diplomatic passports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry held talks with Sudanese Interior Minister Lieutenant General Babaker Samra Mustafa Ali, agreeing to expand cooperation between Pakistan and Sudan in security, internal affairs, cybercrime, police training, institutional coordination and civil registration.

The agreement was reached during a meeting between the two sides, followed by delegation-level talks. Both countries also decided to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen cooperation in cybercrime.

Speaking during the meeting, the Sudanese Interior Minister said his country wanted to benefit from Pakistan's experience and expertise in tackling cybercrime. He described Pakistan as a brotherly country and said Sudan attached great importance to cooperation with Pakistan in all fields. He expressed his country's desire to expand bilateral cooperation and thanked Pakistan for its willingness to assist in different sectors. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said Pakistan was ready to extend all possible support to Sudan in maintaining peace and supporting its reconstruction process.

He said that, with the assistance of NADRA, 36 million citizenship cards, nine million national identity cards, 18 million birth certificates and 500,000 death certificates had been issued in Sudan. Naqvi said NADRA was ready to continue supporting Sudan's civil registration system in the future. Responding to a query from his Sudanese counterpart, the interior minister directed the authorities to immediately resolve visa-related issues faced by Sudanese women married to Pakistani nationals. Naqvi also offered professional training for Sudanese police officers in Pakistan, saying the country was ready to share its training facilities and expertise. He further said Sudanese citizens could benefit from medical facilities in Pakistan and that the country would provide them with all possible assistance.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar and Adviser to the Prime Minister for Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan addressing a news conference.

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United Nations unable to restore global trust

The United Nations was established in 1945 by the victorious powers of World War II. Despite the confrontational nature of the bipolar world system, it established a relatively successful world order. However, its collapse began at a time when expectations for the organization were at their peak. The United States, the architect of the organization, turned its back on the U.N. because it believes the organization no longer serves its interests.

The most recent U.N. General Assembly (UNGA), held in New York from Sept. 22 to 28, showed that the prospect of making the U.N. functional and effective again is diminishing day by day. The theme of the 81st session of the UNGA was "Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: A United Nations That Delivers for All."

Today, the U.N. is unable to restore global trust because it has failed to find solutions to major regional and global crises. Furthermore, it is unable to effectively manage the ongoing global transformation. As every state is preoccupied with saving itself and maximizing its national interests, states have started to ignore global interdependence. Unfortunately, the projects developed under this mandate, such as "Make America Great Again" (MAGA) and "Make Europe Great Again" (MEGA), are mostly destructive rather than constructive.

More than 130 heads of state and government attended the meeting to deliver their message to the world. The primary goal of world leaders is to announce their states' agendas to the global public. They want to be understood. However, the global powers, namely, the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, do not want to relinquish their privileged positions. Consequently, the U.N. Security Council has lost much of its effectiveness and, therefore, much of its significance. The UNGA has taken its place; however, the decisions it adopts are not binding. As a result, the U.N. has lost much of its meaning and effectiveness. Overall, the U.N.'s executive power has been destroyed.

The reality of today's world is simple. The threats facing humanity as a whole can only be met and overcome through collective efforts. No state can overcome the threats it faces on its own. On the other hand, if the boundless wealth of one state is achieved at the cost of the unbearable poverty of others, no one will be safe. Therefore, all states, whether small or large, will need a global order in which the behavior of key actors is predictable.

All states know very well that the worst peace is better than the best war. The world and the international public opinion are exhausted and fed up; they want to be free of these hardships. Most leaders have emphasized the importance of the U.N. and the global order it established. However, the recent meeting indicated that it is unlikely that the U.N. will change its stance in the near future. The host country, the U.S., did not allow Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas to attend the meeting. Denying Abbas a visa, the leader of the most suffering nation in the world, is one of the greatest acts of lawlessness and lack of conscience on earth. Palestinians subjected to genocide were not allowed to make their voices heard by the world. It was ironic to see that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, against whom the International Criminal Court has issued an arrest warrant, was allowed to speak at the UNGA. This is also an indication that the U.N. has gone bankrupt. Therefore, one of the biggest ironies of today's world is that global powers call for a predictable global order. They do not want international norms and rules to constrain their foreign policies. They do not want to be constrained. Despite being the ones who violate international rules and norms, the global powers continue to use the U.N. system as a tool against weaker parties.

As several leaders have stated in numerous speeches, this situation will persist until a more just world order is established. This is a main precondition for global interdependence and the implementation of a win-win strategy. It seems that the world will continue to need greater fairness in international organizations.

Proxy wars reality

DR ANUM NAZ

Understanding Middle Eastern politics through slogans, emotional claims and a single narrative of "secret conspiracies" may be convenient, but history is rarely that simple. One question, however, deserves serious consideration: did the balance of power in the Middle East change after Iran's 1979 revolution in a way that weakened the possibility of a united Arab front against Israel?

To answer that question, we need to move beyond slogans and examine history, wars and developments on the ground.

It would be historically inaccurate to suggest that Arab states never fought Israel. In 1948, the armies of Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq participated in the war, while Saudi Arabia also dispatched a military contingent that fought under Egyptian command. In 1956, Egypt confronted Israel, Britain and France during the Suez Crisis. In 1967, Egypt, Jordan and Syria went to war with Israel. Within six days, Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

Then came the 1973 war. Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel, placing the Israeli military under considerable pressure during the initial phase. By the end of the war, however, Israel had regained much of its military position. The conflict also had consequences far beyond the battlefield: Arab oil-producing states imposed an oil embargo on the United States and some Western countries, sending shock waves through the global economy.

The first historical lesson, therefore, is clear: Arab states did fight Israel, but Arab unity was neither permanent nor uniform.

What changed in 1979?

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 represented a fundamental geopolitical and political transformation in the Middle East. The pro-Western monarchy of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was overthrown and replaced by an Islamic Republic under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The new Iranian leadership made the projection of the revolution and opposition to Western influence important elements of its foreign policy. A new form of regional competition began to emerge. Rather than relying exclusively on conventional warfare, Iran expanded its regional influence through relationships with armed groups, providing varying degrees of financial support, training, weapons and political backing. This network is now commonly described as Iran's regional armed network or the "Axis of Resistance".

It has included Hezbollah in Lebanon, several armed groups in Iraq, the Houthis in Yemen and some Palestinian groups.

But an important qualification is necessary.

It would be an oversimplification to claim that Iran simply created proxies in every Arab country that had fought Israel. Hezbollah, for example, emerged in Lebanon during the 1980s amid the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and the particular political and social circumstances of the Lebanese Shia community. Iran and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps subsequently provided it with substantial financial and military support. Similarly, Iran's role in Syria became closely associated with its support for Bashar al-Assad's government. In Iraq, the influence of Iran-aligned militias was shaped by the political and security vacuum following the 2003 US invasion and later by the war against the Islamic State. In Yemen, the roots of the Houthi movement lie in local Zaydi politics and a prolonged conflict with the Yemeni state. Iran later provided the Houthis with varying forms of support, including technology and training. To describe the Houthi movement simply as an "Iranian creation", however, would ignore its complex local origins.

Did Iran's proxy strategy make Israel safer?

This is an important question, but it cannot responsibly be answered with a simple "yes" or "no".

On the one hand, Iran has supported armed groups that have carried out attacks against Israel. Its relationships with Hezbollah and Hamas are prominent examples. The Houthis have also launched missiles and drones towards Israel and attacked shipping in the Red Sea linked to Israel. On the other hand, Iran itself has directly attacked Israel. In April 2024, Iran launched a large-scale drone and missile attack directly against Israeli territory for the first time.

Regional groups aligned with Iran also became involved in the wider confrontation. It is therefore inaccurate to claim that Iran has never fired a shot at Israel.

The more meaningful question may be different: Has the confrontation between Iran and Israel contributed to diverting Arab states from the possibility of a common anti-Israel front towards dealing with their own competing security concerns?

There is a strong case for viewing this as one of the significant regional consequences.

Lebanon: Resistance or a State Within a State?

Hezbollah emerged in the name of resistance to Israel and developed into a powerful military force opposing Israeli presence in southern Lebanon. Over time, however, it also became a major actor within Lebanon's political system.

This creates a fundamental dilemma. When a country has an exceptionally powerful armed organisation operating alongside the regular state military, questions of sovereignty and decisions about war and peace become considerably more complicated.

Lebanon's predicament, therefore, is no longer simply a matter of Israel versus Hezbollah. It involves the Lebanese state, domestic politics, Iran, Israel and a range of regional actors whose interests intersect and often conflict.

Syria: From the Israeli Front to Civil War.

Syria fought Israel in 1948, 1967 and 1973. But after 2011, Syria itself became engulfed in a prolonged and devastating civil war.

Iran supported the government of Bashar al-Assad, while Hezbollah and other armed actors also fought on the government's side. The conflict severely damaged Syria's military and economic capabilities.

It would nevertheless be an unjustified attribution of motive to claim that Iran "destroyed Syria simply to prevent it from fighting Israel". Such a claim would require compelling evidence.

The reality was considerably more complex. Syria's war involved the government, opposition groups, Islamic State, Russia, Iran, Turkey, the United States and Israel, among others, with different actors pursuing different objectives at different stages.

The fall of the Assad government in 2024 also represented a major setback for Iran's regional network.

Iraq and Yemen: What Is the Real Story?

Iraq fought Israel in the 1948 war and also participated militarily in the conflicts of 1967 and 1973. But the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 transformed the country's political and security structure.

In the resulting environment, Iran-aligned Shia militias acquired considerable influence. Their importance increased further during the war against the Islamic State.

Yemen presents another complicated picture. The Houthi movement emerged from local political and social conflicts, but its military relationship with Iran subsequently deepened. Houthi missiles and drones have been used against regional targets, including Saudi Arabia, and against Israel.

It is therefore difficult to sustain the argument that Iranian-aligned armed groups target Muslims but never Israel. The available record shows otherwise.

Qatar Raises a New Question.

Recent tensions involving Iran and the United States have highlighted another reality: the costs of war are not merely military. They are economic as well.

Damage to Qatar's Ras Laffan LNG infrastructure following Iranian missile attacks led QatarEnergy to invoke force majeure on gas supplies. Severe disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz also affected the global LNG market.

By September 2026, QatarEnergy had warned that the Hormuz crisis could affect the schedules of new LNG projects, while disruptions were also affecting gas availability and prices in Asian markets.

The question, therefore, is not simply: "Who is whose agent?"

The more important question is: Who ultimately pays the economic price of regional wars?

The answer is straightforward. Wars are not fought only by armies. Ports, energy routes, industries, employment and ordinary citizens also bear their costs.

Is "Greater Israel" Becoming a Reality?

This is another subject that requires an examination of facts rather than emotion.

The term "Greater Israel" has been used in different ways by religious, historical and political movements. Some extremist and nationalist groups have advocated visions of expanded Israeli borders. But treating such visions as a settled, universally accepted or operational policy of the Israeli state would be misleading.

More importantly, drawing a territory on a map and permanently controlling that territory are two very different things.

The 1967 war provides an important example. Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Yet the Sinai was subsequently returned to Egypt under the Egypt-Israel peace treaty.

Even today, permanently controlling a large territory requires much more than advanced aircraft, drones, missiles and technology. Governance, population, water, infrastructure, economic sustainability, local resistance and long-term political administration are fundamental challenges.

The war in Gaza has also demonstrated that military superiority and a political settlement are not the same thing. A military force may inflict enormous damage on a territory, but establishing sustainable political control is a fundamentally different challenge.

By September 2026, the humanitarian situation in Gaza remained severe, with a large proportion of its roughly 2.1 million inhabitants displaced or facing shortages of essential services and other serious humanitarian difficulties.

The real danger may not be the map, but the fragmentation of power.

The central problem of the Middle East may not simply be whether a particular country dreams of reaching "from the Nile to the Euphrates".

The deeper problem is that regional states have struggled to translate their collective potential into effective power because of internal divisions, sectarian conflicts, economic dependencies, weak institutions and external intervention.

Israel, on one side, enjoys strong military and political support from the United States. Iran, on the other, has expanded its regional influence through non-state armed groups. The Gulf Arab states have relied heavily on the United States, advanced weapons systems and diplomatic partnerships for their security. The result is that the traditional model of state-versus-state warfare has increasingly been supplemented—and in some cases displaced—by multi-layered conflicts involving proxies, missiles, drones, cyber operations, economic pressure and political competition.

And in this entire process, ordinary people often pay the highest price.

What really changed after 1979?

Israel did not suddenly become invincible after 1979. Nor can it be established that Iran entered into a secret arrangement with Israel to eliminate the military power of the Arab states. But a major historical transformation did take place.

The Arab-Israeli conflict ceased to be the Middle East's only central strategic confrontation.

It became intertwined with the Iran-Saudi rivalry, Shia-Sunni political competition, the US-Iran confrontation, Turkey-Arab tensions, domestic civil wars and the growing power of non-state armed groups.

That transformation made the regional balance of power far more fragmented and complicated.

If the question is whether the Arab states presented a more unified state-based front against Israel before 1979 than they did afterwards, the historical record suggests that the regional power structure became considerably more fragmented after 1979.

But if the question is whether Iran is secretly protecting Israel, such a claim would require credible evidence. The available record instead shows a prolonged and intense confrontation between Iran and Israel, involving both direct attacks and proxy warfare.

Perhaps this is the bitterest lesson of the Middle East's long conflict:

The problem is not only the strength of one's adversary. It is also the fragmentation of one's own strength. If the Arab world genuinely seeks to play an effective role in advancing Palestinian interests and protecting its broader collective interests, slogans alone will not be enough. It will require stronger state institutions, greater economic self-reliance, political stability, regional diplomacy and sustained cooperation.

History also teaches us that wars are not won only on battlefields.

Sometimes nations lose when they become so consumed by the urge to settle solvable political problems through force that they leave no room for negotiation.

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Pakistan's climate hazards

DR. ZAMURRAD AWAN AND DR. DIEGO F. CISNEROS-HEREDIA

Pakistan's 2026 monsoon season has once again hit the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) particularly hard. Now incorporated into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), these communities face flash floods and landslides on landscapes already shaped by decades of conflict, displacement, weak infrastructure and environmental degradation. According to Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the unprecedented monsoon season, which began earlier this year in June 2026, caused widespread damage to standing crops, overflowed seasonal waterways and flooded villages and towns, including urban centres. As of 21 August, fatalities exceeded 163 and injuries surpassed 483, with KP being the most affected among all provinces. The normal monsoon cycle runs from mid-July, but this early heavy rainfall played havoc. According to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), following last year's pattern, the 2026 monsoon has once again caused loss of life, along with rain-related incidents such as flash floods, roof collapses and landslides in KP. The main tribal districts included North and South Waziristan, Kurram and Bajaur. In Lower South Waziristan, flash floods washed away large tracts of agricultural land as seasonal streams overflowed. All of these areas were part of the erstwhile FATA.

Although many factors contribute to this situation, including the global climate crisis, extreme rainfall alone does not explain the disaster's scale. In the conflict-affected tribal areas of KP, climatic hazards interact with damaged infrastructure, displaced communities, poverty, weakened institutions, environmental degradation, and accelerated resource exploitation. The prolonged conflict has damaged agricultural land, irrigation systems and soil conservation structures, accelerating pressure on natural resources and ecosystem services. For example, security forces deliberately cleared hillside vegetation to deny militants cover, compounding a broader deforestation crisis. This has posed a severe threat to the subtropical forest, especially in the tribal agencies, where forest loss accelerated from about 74,600 hectares between 1990 and 2000 to about 95,600 hectares between 2000 and 2010. A substantial share of that loss is concentrated in the North/South Waziristan and Kurram districts, where deforestation in remote mountainous regions has been identified as a key driver of change in the local biophysical environment. This vegetation loss in the tribal belt is not isolated or incidental but a sustained, measurable trend. The loss and degradation of forest and scrub vegetation can reduce ground cover and root systems that stabilise soil, alter runoff and fragment habitats for the region's insects, birds, mammals and other organisms. Although habitat degradation and biodiversity loss are clearly occurring, we still know remarkably little about their extent, patterns and long-term ecological consequences in the former FATA, as decades of insecurity have severely constrained ecological research and long-term biodiversity monitoring. According to the Inter-Agency Early Recovery Need Assessment (IAERNA), the livestock population declined by 35%, while mortality increased due to disrupted veterinary services. Such losses may also threaten locally adapted livestock genetic resources, although their genetic consequences in the former FATA remain largely undocumented. Forest depletion has been particularly severe, with over 70% of coniferous forests lost, driven by militancy, illegal timber smuggling, and reliance on wood for fuel and construction. Although the flagship Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Project (TBTTPP) planted 150 million trees in the erstwhile FATA



Iranian lawmaker says indirect talks with US continuing through Qatar, Oman

Tehran, Washington have exchanged conditions for negotiations as Iran awaits US response, says parliamentary committee member

TEHRAN, (Monitoring Desk): Indirect talks between Iran and the US are continuing through mediation by Qatar and Oman, an Iranian lawmaker said, as Tehran-Washington tensions remain high, according to local media.

Yaqoub Rezazadeh, a member of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, told the ILNA news agency that both sides had presented conditions through the mediators.

"We have presented a set of conditions, and the other side has also presented a set of conditions. We are now waiting to see whether the conditions we announced will be accepted by the Americans," Rezazadeh said.

He said the contacts were being conducted with the involvement of Qatar and Oman.

Rezazadeh said the negotiations were being overseen by Iran's Supreme National Security Council, adding that issues under discussion were handled with the council's approval.

The lawmaker also played down speculation about an imminent new conflict between Iran and the US, saying predictions based on betting markets or reports of a possible preemptive Iranian attack were unfounded.

He said he did not expect another war before US congressional elections and elections in Israel, while acknowledging that renewed fighting remained possible.

Rezazadeh said Iran would not launch a preemptive attack but would respond if attacked, claiming that Tehran's military, air defense, and naval capabilities had significantly improved compared with the previous two rounds of fighting.

The latest reported contacts come after Iran and the US reached an understanding in Islamabad in June aimed at ending hostilities and opening the way for negotiations, with Pakistan and Qatar involved in mediation.

Under the understanding, the sides were expected to pursue further talks, but tensions subsequently resurfaced amid disputes over implementation and continuing military activity in the region.

Qatar and Oman have also maintained diplomatic contacts with Tehran and Washington as regional actors seek to prevent another escalation between the two sides.



WASHINGTON: U.S. President Donald Trump walks to speak to press members as he departs the White House South Lawn. Trump is traveling to Cape Canaveral, Florida, to address the UP.Summit technology showcase at NASA's Kennedy Space Center before spending the weekend at his Mar-a-Lago club.



Venezuelan opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner Maria Corina Machado met with the families of political prisoners near Rodeo 1 Prison in Miranda state, Venezuela.

Yemen coalition downs 4 drones over Riyadh, eastern, southern KSA

SANAA, (Agencies): The Saudi-led coalition in Yemen said on Sunday that its forces intercepted and destroyed four drones.

"We intercepted and destroyed four drones over the past few hours in the Riyadh, Eastern and Southern regions," spokesman Turki al-Maliki wrote on the US social media platform X.

No additional details were immediately available.

Yemen has been engulfed in conflict since the Houthis seized the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, and several provinces in 2014. That prompted the Saudi-led coalition to intervene in 2015 in support of the internationally recognized government.

Fighting has escalated since July and spilled into neighboring Saudi Arabia, where Houthis have targeted energy and aviation sites including airports.

EU asks Israel to reverse illegal settlement plans, warns businesses

BRUSSELS, (Agencies): European Union leaders called on Israel to immediately reverse plans to expand illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and warned businesses against bidding for construction contracts, citing serious legal, economic and reputational risks, according to a statement issued following a two-day summit in Brussels.

In conclusions adopted at the European Council meeting, EU leaders condemned Israel's continued expansion of illegal settlements and escalating violence by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians in the occupied West Bank.

The leaders specifically demanded that Israel abandon plans for new settlement construction in the E1 area, a controversial development project that threatens to further fragment Palestinian territory and undermine prospects for a viable Palestinian state.

The European Council also urged companies and financial institutions to refrain from participating in construction projects linked to illegal Israeli settlements, warning that involvement could expose them to serious consequences under international law.

"It reiterates that businesses should not bid for construction contracts for E1 or other settlement developments," the declaration said.

The statement highlighted the legal, economic and reputational consequences facing businesses and financial institutions involved in illegal settlement construction, including the risk of serious violations of international law.

Moscow welcomes Trump's sanctions waiver as Ukraine voices alarm

MOSCOW, (Agencies): Russia welcomed U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to waive new sanctions targeting Moscow, calling it a historic move as Ukraine warned that easing economic pressure would encourage Russian President Vladimir Putin to continue the war.

Trump signed an executive order Saturday suspending the application of sanctions provisions under the Lindsey Graham Act, a law designed to increase pressure on Russia's energy and defense sectors, its officials and the network of tankers Moscow uses to circumvent Western restrictions.

The decision comes as Russian forces intensify attacks on Ukrainian cities and diplomatic efforts led by Washington remain deadlocked, raising concerns among Kyiv and its European allies that the Trump administration is easing pressure on Moscow without securing meaningful concessions.

Kirill Dmitriev, Putin's special envoy for investment and economic cooperation, praised the decision on social media, describing the suspension of the law as an "important and truly historic moment."

Dmitriev argued that the sanctions would have caused serious damage to the U.S. economy and global markets. The Kremlin and Putin had not publicly commented on the decision as of Saturday.

The waiver followed an arrangement between Trump and Putin under which Moscow agreed to release substantial quantities of diesel onto global markets amid mounting pressure on fuel prices. Trump's decision to suspend the new measures marks a diplomatic gain for Russia as Washington struggles to broker an end to the war.

The Graham Act, named after the late Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham, was designed to tighten restrictions on Russia's energy and defense industries, officials linked to Putin and its so-called shadow fleet of tankers. It also included provisions targeting countries that continue to buy Russian oil and gas.

Trump's order suspends the application of the new measures under a national-interest waiver. It does not automatically remove sanctions imposed on Russia under earlier U.S. measures.

The decision has intensified concerns in Kyiv that Washington could weaken its leverage over Moscow while Russian forces continue their offensive.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy criticized the waiver Saturday, arguing that easing sanctions would reward Russia despite its continued attacks.

"A U.S. sanctions blackout, easing pressure on the aggressor, financial rewards for Putin, all of this only encourages him to keep attacking," Zelenskyy said on social media, urging Ukraine's allies to maintain pressure on Moscow.

The sanctions decision came as Russia stepped up its attacks on Ukraine, including repeated strikes on the capital, Kyiv, as the war enters its fifth year.

Russian forces struck the southern city of Kherson on Saturday, killing one person and wounding 22, local officials said.



Activists, affiliated with the environmental movement Geef Tegengas, demonstrate at the construction site of a Microsoft data center to protest against the facility's build and call for an immediate halt to the project, in Amsterdam, Netherlands

Cockroach Janta Party emerges as source of political pressure on Modi

NEW DELHI, (Agencies): Indian police arrested Abhijeet Dipke, founder of the youth-led Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), according to multiple media reports, a day after detaining him ahead of a rally in Delhi that drew hundreds of protesters waving national flags and demanding the resignation of the country's election chief.

Dipke was arrested to prevent a breach of the peace and was due to appear before a special executive magistrate. Delhi police did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment. The CJP, opposition groups and student organizations have staged near-daily protests this month, calling for Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar to resign over a revision of voter lists that they allege favors Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP. More than 130 million voters were deleted from the lists during the revision. The Election Commission has denied favoring any party and said voters who were wrongly removed can re-enroll. The BJP has accused its rivals of trying to undermine democracy by questioning legitimate electoral processes. Student activist Neha Bora, a prominent face of the protests, was also detained as she tried to reach central Delhi with dozens of supporters. She was released later. "Please, spare the people of India. Impeach Gyanesh Kumar and halt SIR (special intensive revision), so that the ordinary citizens of this country can breathe a sigh of relief, feel at ease, and have their voting rights ensured," Bora told the media after her release.



People gather at Osloer Street and march to Wedding as they stage a demonstration in solidarity with Palestine in Berlin, Germany

Iran denies role in Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia, offers mediation

TEHRAN, (Agencies): Iran dismissed Saudi Arabia's accusations that Tehran was involved in Houthi attacks targeting the kingdom, with its Foreign Ministry offering to mediate between Riyadh and the Yemeni group to help ease tensions.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran rejects any claim that Iran has played a role in Yemeni (Houthi) operations," foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said in a statement, reiterating Tehran's offer to act as a bridge between the Houthis and Riyadh.

Baqaei said Tehran "has always been ready to use its good offices to help end the hostilities" and remained prepared to use "all its capacities for this purpose at the request of both sides".

The Houthis are part of Iran's so-called "Axis of Resistance," which also includes Lebanon's Hezbollah and Iran-backed armed groups in Iraq, all united in opposing Israel.

Tehran has repeatedly denied directing Houthi operations, saying the Yemeni group acts according to its own interests.

The Houthis have repeatedly attacked Saudi targets in recent weeks, including vessels in the Red Sea, oil facilities and Riyadh's international airport, where 13 people were killed in a single attack last week.



Couples are seen during a mass wedding ceremony supported by the United Arab Emirates in Gaza City, Gaza, Palestine

Bangladesh struggles to contain world's worst measles outbreak

SYLHET, (Monitoring Desk): Bangladesh is struggling to contain the world's largest measles outbreak this year, with more than 1,100 deaths exposing serious gaps in vaccination coverage, emergency planning and efforts to reach vulnerable children.

The country reported 202,000 suspected measles cases, including 22,000 laboratory-confirmed infections, between mid-March and Oct. 9, according to the World Health Organization. Of the 1,147 reported deaths, 94% were children younger than 5.

The outbreak follows a decline in routine immunization coverage in 2025, reversing years of progress against a highly contagious disease that vaccines can prevent. Experts say unreliable data, inadequate preparation and failures to reach parents have further weakened the response.

A review of WHO documents, combined with interviews with more than a dozen scientists, health workers and officials, found that millions of children may have been missed by an emergency vaccination campaign launched in April.

The crisis offers a warning to other countries about the consequences of declining vaccination rates and underprepared health systems.

"This is a real warning to every country," said Mark Jit, a WHO vaccine adviser and professor at New York University's School of Global Public Health.

Preventing an outbreak through vaccination is easier, cheaper and safer than responding after infections spread, Jit said.

"The response will stop the outbreak eventually, but in the meantime, many will have had measles, and some will have died," he said.

Ziauddin Hyder, special assistant on health affairs to Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, told Reuters in September that the government was doing everything possible to end the outbreak.

US Rep. Ilhan Omar challenges legality of FBI home search

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): The defense of US Congresswoman Ilhan Omar have challenged the legality of a search of her Washington home, demanding that federal prosecutors immediately return all seized property and provide recordings made during the operation, The Wall Street Journal reported on Sunday.

In a letter sent late Saturday, the Minnesota Democrat's legal team argued that the search, conducted by Homeland Security Investigations agents early Monday under a federal judge-approved warrant, was "neither justified nor lawful."

According to the Journal, the investigation focuses partly on how Omar, 44, obtained US citizenship after arriving from Somalia decades ago.

"There is no legitimate basis for any suggestion that she has violated any law concerning her citizenship status," the letter said.

Her lawyers alleged that agents failed to follow the judge's instructions, including a requirement to notify the US House general counsel before executing the warrant. They also said Omar and her attorneys were not given a copy of the warrant beforehand, as ordered by the judge.

The letter claimed agents prevented Omar from contacting her lawyers for more than an hour after the search began.

A Justice Department spokeswoman rejected the allegations, describing the letter as "riddled with false allegations and inaccuracies. Our attorneys and law enforcement partners complied with all court orders and legal obligations, as they always do."

Jeanine Pirro, the US attorney for Washington, defended the operation earlier this week, saying it had been approved by a federal judge mindful of constitutional protections.



ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attends 'TRT World Forum 2026 Official Opening Ceremony' at the Istanbul Congress Center.

Illegal Israeli settlers attack European diplomatic delegation in West Bank

RAMALLAH, (Agencies): Illegal Israeli settlers attacked a European diplomatic delegation visiting the occupied West Bank, injuring several people as representatives from France, Belgium and Poland toured the Palestinian town of Taybeh.

The attack took place after an official ceremony marking the signing of a twinning agreement between the Palestinian town of Taybeh and the French town of Saint-Pierre, Taybeh Mayor Suleiman Khourieh told media.

The ceremony was attended by the French and Belgian consuls, a Polish representative whose name was not disclosed, and Saint-Pierre Mayor Christian Ravain.

The attack targeted the delegation in the western part of the town, as well as Palestinians who were picking olives.

It left several town residents injured and shattered the window of a vehicle belonging to the Belgian delegation, Khourieh added.

Israeli Army Radio, citing witnesses and footage, also said that the occupiers hurled stones at one of the diplomatic vehicles, smashing its window.

A Washington Post journalist was also attacked by violent Israeli occupiers, in an incident condemned by the U.S. State Department.

Footage showed a member of the delegation lying on the ground after the attack. The person shown lying on the ground beside the diplomatic vehicle was Bernard Boudot, a French politician and mayor of Aulnoy-lez-Valenciennes in northern France, the broadcaster said.

Israel's Channel 12, citing the Israeli military, reported that the incident was "under review" and none had been arrested immediately.

Khourieh described the attack as "a flagrant violation of the sanctity of diplomatic and humanitarian work" and part of ongoing restrictions imposed on Palestinian farmers.

Pakistan's Hindu community integral part of our national life: President Zardari

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari extended his warm greetings to the Hindu community in Pakistan and around the world on the auspicious occasion of Diwali. In a message on the occasion of Diwali, he said, "The festival of lights celebrates the symbolism of triumph of good over evil, light over darkness and hope over despair. Its message of compassion and renewal reminds us that each of us can bring light into the lives of others through kindness, understanding, compassion and care."

He said, "Pakistan's Hindu community is an integral part of our national life. Its contributions to education, healthcare, business, public service, social welfare, arts and culture have enriched our country." He said, "On this occasion, I pay tribute to these contributions and reaffirm that Pakistan belongs equally to all its citizens."

"Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah envisioned a country where faith, caste or creed would be no barrier to equal citizenship and equal rights. We must honour that vision by ensuring that every citizen can practise their faith freely, live in dignity and enjoy equal protection under the law," he stressed.

He said, "For me, Quaid-e-Azam's promise of equal citizenship is a sacred national commitment. The Pakistan Peoples Party's tradition, carried forward by Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, also calls upon us to defend that promise without fear or favour. No Pakistani should ever have to prove their belonging because of their faith. This country is their home, its freedoms are their right, and its future is theirs to shape."

"Diwali is also an occasion to strengthen the bonds that unite us as Pakistanis. By sharing in one another's celebrations, standing together in times of difficulties and rejecting prejudice and discrimination, we can build a more just and compassionate society. Our diversity is not our weakness but a great strength. It should be clear to all of us that protecting the rights of religious minorities is our shared responsibility," he remarked.



LAHORE: PML-N Senior Leader Khawaja Saad Rafique meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar addresses the audience during a traditional tent pegging competition at F-9 Park as part of the three-day Pakistan Tourism, Sports and Family Festival.

Constitution of Pakistan guarantees equal rights; religious freedom to all citizens: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Deputy Speaker National Assembly Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah have extended their heartfelt greetings to Hindu Members of Parliament and the Hindu community across Pakistan on the auspicious occasion of Diwali.

In his message, Ayaz Sadiq said that Diwali is an important religious festival of the Hindu community, symbolizing the triumph of light, happiness and hope. He said the festival provides an opportunity for the Hindu community to celebrate its religious traditions and cultural values and to share the message of peace, harmony and goodwill. The Speaker said that Pakistan is a diverse country enriched by different religions, cultures and traditions, where every citizen has the right to practice his or her faith freely.

Pakistan ready to extend all possible support to Sudan in maintaining peace: Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry held talks with Sudanese Interior Minister Lieutenant General Babaker Samra Mustafa Ali, agreeing to expand cooperation between Pakistan and Sudan in security, internal affairs, cybercrime, police training, institutional coordination and civil registration. The agreement was reached during a meeting between the two sides, followed by delegation-level talks. Both countries also decided to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen cooperation in cybercrime. Speaking during the meeting, the Sudanese Interior Minister said his country wanted to benefit from Pakistan's experience and expertise in tackling cybercrime. He described Pakistan as a brotherly country and said Sudan attached great importance to cooperation with Pakistan in all fields. He expressed his country's desire to expand bilateral cooperation and thanked Pakistan for its willingness to assist in different sectors. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said Pakistan was ready to extend all possible support to Sudan in maintaining peace and supporting its reconstruction process.

He said that, with the assistance of NADRA, 36 million citizenship cards, nine million national identity cards, 18 million birth certificates and 500,000 death certificates had been issued in Sudan.

Naqvi said NADRA was ready to continue supporting Sudan's civil registration system in the future.

Int'l law can't be invoked vigorously in one situation, disregarded in another: Pakistan

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Denouncing ongoing foreign occupations, Pakistan has called on the United Nations to implement its long-standing resolutions guaranteeing the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir and Palestine.

"International law cannot be invoked vigorously in one situation and disregarded in another," Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, told the General Assembly's Third Committee, which deals with social, humanitarian and cultural issues. The Pakistani envoy spoke as the Committee began a general debate in which speakers focused on the threats to human rights and warned of poverty and climate pressures affecting social development.

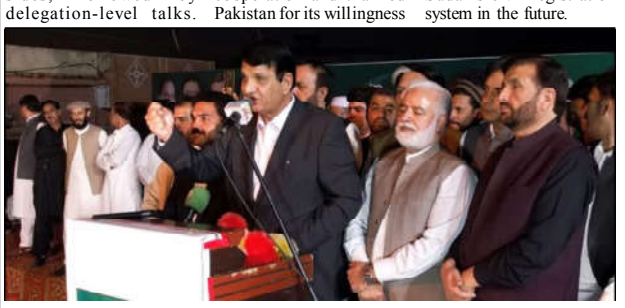
"For nearly eight decades," Ambassador Jadoon said, "Kashmiris have awaited implementation of Security Council resolutions providing for the final disposition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir through a free and impartial plebiscite under UN auspices."

Since 5 August 2019, when India illegally annexed Jammu and Kashmir, repression and restrictions have intensified on fundamental freedoms as also attempts to alter the demographic and political character of the occupied territory. "Arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, restrictions on expression and peaceful assembly, and demographic engineering cannot become acceptable merely because they persist over time," Ambassador Jadoon said, adding, "Rights delayed for generations do not become rights denied."

Ambassador Jadoon's remarks drew a predictable response from an Indian delegate who, while exercising his rights of reply, insisted that the Kashmir dispute was India's "internal matter", a claim that a Pakistani representative swiftly countered, saying that the State was an internationally recognised disputed territory, whose final status remains to be determined in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people, as enshrined in numerous UN resolutions. In his remarks, Ambassador Jadoon also drew attention to the suffering of the Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza, saying it remains a "defining test of our collective conscience."

Civilians, he said, must be protected; humanitarian assistance must reach those in need without impediment; international law must be upheld; and accountability must be ensured. "Above all, the Palestinian people must finally realize their inalienable right to self-determination," the Pakistani envoy added.

On human rights, Ambassador Jadoon said that the developing countries confront shrinking fiscal space, unsustainable debt, climate shocks and widening technological divides, with the international financial architecture often perpetuating rather than correcting these inequalities. The right to development must occupy its rightful place on the human rights agenda, he said



SWAT: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON, Engineer Amir Muqam addressing a Jirga in Swat.

Pakistan moving towards new heights on diplomatic, economic fronts: Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said that traditional sports like tent pegging reflect Pakistan's cultural identity and soft image, attracting attention of global influencers.

Addressing the tent pegging competitions held at F-9 Park under the Pakistan Tourism, Sports and Family Festival, he said extensive activities are underway to promote sports, culture and tourism in the country.

Flanked by Prime Minister's Coordinator on Tourism Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, the minister told the media that Pakistan is moving towards new heights on the diplomatic and economic fronts under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision and the efforts of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir.

He thanked the tent pegging clubs and participants and praised Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan for organizing a splendid tourism festival, which, he said, is giving the people of Islamabad and surrounding areas a chance to take part in healthy activities.

Tarar said the prime minister stressed on arranging more events of this kind, adding the major events will take place in the future, including meetings of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).

Describing tent pegging as a traditional sport and cultural symbol, he said such games connect the younger generation with its heritage.

"Whether it is horse riding or other sports, Pakistanis are second to none, and in several fields they hold the edge," he said. He added that the skill with which women and girls are competing in tent pegging sends a positive message to the world and serves as a guiding light for millions of women.



KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Emir Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman addresses a Press Conference in Idara Noor-e-Haq.

Hafiz Naeem urges govt to scrap petroleum levy to ease burden on consumers

KARACHI (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman demanded that the government abolish the petroleum levy, warning that JI would launch another protest movement if no concrete steps were taken to provide relief to consumers.

Addressing a press conference at Idara Noor-e-Haq in Karachi, Hafiz Naeem alleged that oil refineries' profits had increased by 1,000 per cent despite worsening economic conditions for the public and the country.

He said the government should review the extraordinary profits earned by refineries. He said the JI highlighted refineries' windfall levy, under which any profit exceeding a prescribed threshold would be used to provide relief to consumers. "The people's conditions have deteriorated to their worst, while their profits have increased by 1,000 per cent," he said.

The JI chief alleged that a handful of owners of refineries and oil marketing companies (OMCs) were benefiting at the expense of 250 million people, accusing them of working in collusion with the government and bureaucracy.

He described the prevailing economic structure as an exploitative capitalist system that benefited a few at the expense of the wider population.

Hafiz Naeem said the government was collecting approximately Rs150 billion every month through the petroleum levy and urged it to abolish the charge to reduce the burden on consumers.

He said the government had resisted the proposal, arguing that the petroleum levy had already been incorporated into the federal budget.

The JI chief said his party had presented both short-term and long-term alternatives to the government

Pakistan urges ethical AI adoption to safeguard journalism's credibility

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Dr Syed Ali Asad Gillani, highlighted the significant role of Xinhua News Agency in strengthening Pakistan-China friendship and promoting mutual understanding between the two countries, while underscoring the need for responsible use of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies in journalism.

Addressing the 7th World Media Summit, held under the theme "Media in the Intelligent Age: From Consensus to Action," on the occasion of Xinhua News Agency's 95th anniversary, the ambassador congratulated the Chinese news agency on its remarkable milestone on behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan.

He acknowledged Xinhua's longstanding contribution to international journalism and communication, particularly its role in connecting China with the world and fostering greater understanding among nations.

Dr Gillani said that throughout the 75 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China, Xinhua had played an important role in nurturing the enduring friendship between the two countries. He highlighted Xinhua's longstanding institutional partnerships with the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV) and Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation



In Paris, the capital of France, protesters gathered in Place de la Republique Square for a demonstration organized as part of the ongoing social unrest in the country.



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