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CDF Munir, Malaysian PM underscores importance of sustained engagement to promote regional peace, stability, security

RAWALPINDI, (Agencies): Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Asim Munir, met Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim during an official visit to Malaysia, with both sides reaffirming their commitment to strengthening bilateral defence ties, enhancing military cooperation and maintaining dialogue on regional and international security issues, the military's media wing said on Monday.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the meeting with Anwar took place at Perdana Putra in Putrajaya, where both discussed bilateral relations, defence and security cooperation, and regional and global security developments. "Both leaders exchanged views on matters of mutual interest and underscored the importance of sustained engagement to promote regional peace, stability and security," the ISPR said. It added that Anwar "warmly welcomed the CDF Munir and acknowledged the longstanding bonds of friendship, mutual trust and cooperation between Pakistan and Malaysia".

The Malaysian prime minister also reaffirmed his country's commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations, particularly in defence and security. CDF Munir appreciated Malaysia's "constructive role in promoting peace and stability in Southeast Asia" and reiterated Pakistan's resolve to deepen defence cooperation and institutional links between the armed forces of the two countries, the ISPR said. "Both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to strengthening bilateral defence ties through regular high-level exchanges, enhanced military cooperation and sustained dialogue on regional and international security issues," the statement added. Earlier, upon his arrival at Malaysia's Ministry of Defence in Kuala Lumpur, CDF Munir was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour. Malaysia's Chief of Defence Force General Tan Sri Haji Malek Razak Sulaiman, along with the chiefs of the Malaysian Army, Royal Malaysian Navy and Royal Malaysian Air Force, were present on the occasion. During his meeting with Malaysian Defence Minister Mohamed Khaled bin Nordin, the two sides discussed matters of mutual interest, with particular emphasis on "expanding bilateral defence cooperation, strengthening military-to-military engagements and exploring new avenues of collaboration between the armed forces of the two countries", the ISPR said.



Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim speaks with Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir during a meeting in Putrajaya.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari in a meeting with Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal, Mr. Paulo Rangel, at Aiwan-e-Sadr

No deserving family to be left without a home: PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday declared that there is no limit on the number of homes the government will build for the poor, vowing to construct millions if needed so that no deserving family is left without a roof over its head, and set an ambitious target of Rs1,000 billion in disbursements under the Apna Ghar Programme over the next six months.

Addressing the ceremony held to mark the milestone of over Rs100 billion in loans reaching citizens under the Apna Ghar Programme, the prime minister said it was a matter of deep concern that while a few enjoy every comfort, a vast number of people are deprived of shelter, education, healthcare and dignified employment. This, he said, was not the Pakistan envisioned by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The prime minister recalled how a visit to a widow's one-room rented home in Lahore, early in his career as a member of the Punjab Assembly, changed him and led to the Ashiana housing schemes in Punjab. The woman, who stitched clothes to feed her children and care for a seriously ill daughter, represented, he said, the reality faced by millions of families.

He said that housing schemes in the past had mostly served the elite, who did not need bank loans, while the real need was among labourers, widows, orphans and low-income families across Pakistan, including Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. If the state could not provide even a roof to such families, he said, it had no right to rule. The prime minister said the programme was launched in April 2026. In about six and a half months, he said, banks had disbursed Rs112 billion against loan sanctions of about Rs500 billion.



QUETTA: Representatives of UNICEF Zia ur Rehman Sumalani and Umar Durrani called on Acting Balochistan Governor Captain (R) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.

Apna Ghar Scheme manifestation of PM Shehbaz's vision for public welfare: Tarar

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday highlighted the successful disbursement of loans worth more than Rs 100 billion under the Apna Ghar Scheme which is a practical manifestation of the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for public welfare. Addressing a ceremony held here at the Jinnah Convention Centre to mark the milestone of massive loans disbursement under the Prime Minister Apna Ghar Scheme, Tarar said disbursement of loans worth over Rs 100 billion is an outcome of effective policy framework which was worked out in consultation with all stakeholders.

Every child deserves safe environment; protection from all forms of abuse, exploitation: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has called for collective national efforts, effective implementation of existing legislation and stronger institutional mechanisms to ensure the safety, protection and welfare of children across Pakistan.

He expressed these views while addressing the National Seminar on Child Safety, titled "Strengthening the Legal Framework for Child Protection in Pakistan," as chief guest at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS). The seminar was organised by the Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR) of the National Assembly, under the Convenorship of Dr. Nikhat Shakeel Khan, MNA, in collaboration with Save the Children.

In his keynote address, Ayaz Sadiq underscored that the protection, welfare and rights of children constitute a collective national responsibility.

Highlighting disparities in access to education, nutrition, healthcare and essential facilities, he stressed that every child, irrespective of background or geographical location, deserves a safe environment and protection from all forms of abuse and exploitation.

He emphasised the role of parents and educational institutions in imparting moral values, civic sense and ethical responsibilities alongside formal education.

Hafiz Naeem encourages Balochistan youth to embrace innovation and digital learning

QUETTA (ANN): Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Emir and Bano Qabil Program Patron-in-Chief Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman has stressed the need to equip Balochistan's young population with modern information technology and digital skills to improve employment prospects and promote economic self-reliance.

During a visit to the Bano Qabil IT Lab in Quetta, Hafiz Naeem interacted with students and reviewed various educational and technical activities being conducted at the facility. He appreciated the trainees' performance and encouraged them to make the most of the opportunities available to them.

He said Balochistan had a large pool of talented youth, but inadequate opportunities and facilities often prevented them from developing their abilities and securing sustainable livelihoods.

CM Sarfraz Bugti announces 25,000 jobs for Balochistan youth under merit-based mechanism

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has announced employment opportunities for more than 25,000 young people across the province under a transparent and merit-based mechanism, describing the initiative as an important move towards economic empowerment of the province's youth.

Speaking in the Balochistan Assembly, the chief minister said the federal government had taken significant measures to expand employment opportunities and provide young people with avenues for dignified livelihoods.

He conveyed his gratitude to the President, Prime Minister and senior military leadership for their support for the employment initiative, saying the leadership had recognized the need to create greater opportunities for Balochistan's young population.

Bugti said talented youth from across the province would be considered on the basis of merit, transparency and equal opportunity. He expressed confidence that the programme would help strengthen economic independence and contribute to the province's long-term development.

He added that the initiative had received a positive response from Balochistan's youth, who were looking towards improved employment prospects.

Meanwhile, National Party chief and former chief minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch drew the assembly's attention to problems confronting the transport sector, calling for stronger government protection for buses, trucks, oil tankers and other commercial vehicles. Speaking on a point of order, Dr Malik alleged that transporters in different parts of the province were facing vehicle seizures, kidnapping threats and ransom demands, while reported extortion at certain checkpoints was creating further difficulties for the sector.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets citizens who benefited from Prime Minister's Apna Ghar Program

Zmarak Achakzai vows to highlight provincial concerns at every relevant forum

QUETTA, (ANN): Awami National Party Parliamentary Leader Engineer Zmarak Khan Achakzai has rejected attempts to suppress voices advocating Balochistan's constitutional rights and control over its coastal and natural resources, vowing to continue highlighting provincial concerns at every relevant forum.

Addressing a protest demonstration by journalists in Quetta, Achakzai said several resolutions on public grievances and the rights of Balochistan had been tabled in the provincial assembly, but many of them failed to receive the attention they deserved at the national level.

He said the province's struggle for its legitimate rights would continue despite efforts to weaken or marginalize its voice.

Expressing solidarity with the protesting journalists, the ANP parliamentary leader described the media as the fourth pillar of the state and acknowledged the continued professional efforts of journalists in Balochistan despite challenging working conditions and security concerns.

He warned that undermining independent journalism would deprive citizens of an important channel for raising their issues with the authorities and ensuring institutional accountability.

Achakzai called upon owners of television channels and other media organizations operating in Balochistan to safeguard the employment and financial interests of journalists and media workers.



THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

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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!

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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.



Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar delivering concluding remarks at the Pakistan–Portugal Business Forum


Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari speaks during the Youth Card ceremony in Karachi

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.


Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi (left) speaks during a joint press conference alongside KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi in Peshawar


QUETTA: MPA Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman presenting a resolution during the assembly session.

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.


MULTAN: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani distributes certificates among students during the ICMA 2026 convocation held on late Sunday night


ISLAMABAD: A journalist of Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) gives her thumb impression as a team of National Press Club led by President Abdul Razzaq Sial visits APP Headquarters for the biometric verification of members

TENDER NOTICE

The Assistant Director Local Govt, Quetta invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. **TSE-2627111227391 Only electronic bid will be submitted, No physical bid is required. 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. Tender Fee 1000 PKR**

1 Medical Equipment and Accessories (Total Item(s) Count: 2)	3 %

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules – 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 3,713,038 in Previous 3 Years Turn over of at least 4,331,877 PKR in 3 Subsequent Previous Years Presence in Active Tax Payer List Sales Tax Certificate The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan JV is not permissible Submission of the required Bid Security In case Bid Security is not found as required during financial evaluation the bidding firm shall be declared as in-eligible and non-responsive Submission of the required Bidding document Fee **Procedure Of Procurement:** Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Gurantee,Deposit at Call of 3 % specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gob.pk **Issuance of tender Documents:** Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gob.pk **Last Date of bid submission:** Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 10 December, 2026till 09:45 AM through supplier dashboard. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at 10:45 AM on EPPS System Address: Assistany Director, Local Govt & Rural Development Deppt Quetta Phone no: 0081920209 Email: sadlgrdquetta@gmail.com

Senior Assistant Director
LG &RD District Quetta East

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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.

Balochistan's harsh climatic conditions require greater energy availability than other regions

QUETTA (APP): Speaker of the Balochistan Provincial Assembly, Captain (Retd.) Abdul Khaliq Khan Achakzai, has taken strong notice of persistent public complaints regarding unannounced electricity and gas load-shedding, low voltage, and deteriorating utility services across Balochistan, particularly in Quetta.

An important meeting was held in the Assembly Committee Room under the chairmanship of the Speaker, where senior officials of the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) and Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (SSGC) were summoned to explain the ongoing energy crisis and the measures being undertaken to provide relief to consumers.

The meeting was attended by Members of the Provincial Assembly, including Ali Madad Jatak, Hadiya Nawaz Bahrani, Farah Azim Shah, Salma Bibi, Kulsoom Niaz Baloch, Shahida Rauf, Zarak Khan Mandokhail, Malik Naeem Khan Bazai, Liaquat Ali Lehri, Safia Bibi, and Muhammad Khan Lehri.

During the meeting, legislators voiced serious reservations regarding QESCO's performance, citing widespread complaints from their constituencies. They stated that prolonged and unannounced power outages, extremely low voltage, and unreliable electricity supply have severely affected daily life across the province.

Members noted that citizens are being deprived of basic necessities such as electricity and gas despite the harsh winter season. They stressed that elected representatives are facing increasing pressure from constituents who demand explanations for the continued service disruptions. Lawmakers further pointed out that several electricity-related development schemes funded through the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) remain incomplete despite the allocation of funds. They maintained that if project funds had already been released, responsibility for delays largely rested with the concerned utility authorities. They also expressed concern over the lack of responsiveness from some field officers, alleging that in certain areas Sub-Divisional Officers (SDOs) fail to answer calls from public representatives, while assurances given during official meetings rarely translate into practical results. Assembly members emphasized that Balochistan's harsh climatic conditions require greater energy availability than many other regions. They warned that further drops in temperature in the coming weeks could worsen public suffering unless immediate measures are taken.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets citizens who benefited from Prime Minister's Apna Ghar Program



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, and Uganda's Minister of State, Desire Muhooza inaugurates the 4th International Food & Agro Exhibition, FoodAg Pakistan 2026, at the Expo Centre Karachi.

Pakistan committed to combat counterfeit medicines

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan is set to launch a digital medicine verification application on November 24 to combat counterfeit medicines.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will inaugurate the Mehfooz Dawa App in Islamabad on November 24, sources said.

The application is designed to help identify and curb the circulation of counterfeit medicines by enabling consumers to verify the authenticity of pharmaceutical products through the two-dimensional (2D) barcode printed on medicine packaging. Using the application, consumers will be able to access verified information about a medicine's authenticity, expiry date, usage instructions and retail price by scanning the barcode on its packaging.

The sources further said, the implementation of the Track and Trace System has been made mandatory for human and veterinary pharmaceutical companies

Veteran journalist Naqi rendered invaluable services for promotion of freedom of expression and democratic values: CM Bugti

CM Bugti and Shahid Rind expresses deep sorrow and grief over sad demise of veteran journalist Husain Naqi

QUETTA (APP): Chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti and the Chief Minister's Aide on Media and Political Affairs Shahid Rind have expressed deep sorrow and grief over the passing of veteran journalist Husain Naqi, paying tribute to his longstanding contributions to journalism, freedom of expression and democratic values. In separate condolence messages, both leaders described Husain Naqi as a principled and highly respected journalist whose work left a lasting impact on Pakistan's media landscape.

Expressing condolences to the bereaved family and the journalistic community, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that Husain Naqi's death has deprived journalism of a principled, seasoned and influential voice.

The Chief Minister noted that the late journalist rendered invaluable services for the promotion of freedom of expression and democratic values throughout his distinguished career.

He added that Husain Naqi's journalistic contributions and unwavering commitment to principles would always be remembered.

Korea–Pak launches joint initiative to strengthen global heritage conservation in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan and the Republic of Korea have launched a joint initiative to strengthen the country's capacity for the conservation and management of World Heritage Sites, marking a new phase of bilateral cooperation in cultural heritage preservation.

Under the initiative, the Department of Archaeology and Museums (DOAM), Ministry of National Heritage & Culture, in collaboration with the Korea Heritage Agency (KHA), commenced a four-day Capacity Building Programme for the Conservation and Management of World Heritage in Pakistan, running from November 23-26.

The opening ceremony was attended by Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Pakistan, Han Sung-ho, and Secretary, Ministry of National Heritage & Culture, Asad Rehman Gilani, along with federal and provincial government representatives, international experts and other stakeholders.

The programme aims to enhance Pakistan's institutional, technical and professional capabilities in safeguarding its World Heritage properties through international expertise, knowledge-sharing and improved coordination among relevant institutions.

A key feature of the opening day was a Town Hall Meeting, bringing together federal and provincial representatives, international experts and stakeholders to review the existing conservation and management framework for Pakistan's

World Heritage properties and discuss challenges and priorities for their effective protection.

Over the next three days, participants will attend specialised lectures, technical discussions and practical training sessions conducted by three international experts. The sessions will cover the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), management planning, conservation methodologies and threat analysis. The programme marks the first year of a three-year cooperation framework between Pakistan and the Republic of Korea (2026–2028), designed to develop sustainable professional expertise and strengthen long-term institutional capacities for World Heritage conservation and management.

The initiative also forms part of broader Korea–Pakistan cooperation in the cultural heritage sector, supported by the Korea Heritage Agency through funding and technical assistance for the period 2026–2030.

This wider collaboration includes support for the proposed establishment of the National Institute of Cultural Heritage in Pakistan and the development of specialised professional expertise in the country's heritage sector. Through this partnership, Pakistan and the Republic of Korea are working to promote international knowledge exchange, strengthen institutional capabilities and develop a more systematic and sustainable approach to the conservation of Pakistan's rich archaeological and cultural heritage for future generations.



QUETTA: Former chief minister and MPA Dr Abdul Malik Baloch expressing his views on point of order during the assembly session.

Dummar for practical steps to strengthen Balochistan's healthcare infrastructure

SANJAVI, (VoM Report): Provincial Minister for Commodity Management and Chairman Balochistan Food Authority Haji Noor Muhammad Khan Dummar has said improving access to quality healthcare in remote areas remains a key priority of the provincial government.

He made the remarks while inaugurating a newly established emergency unit and labor room at Sanjavi Hospital. Officials from relevant departments, local elders and residents attended the ceremony.

Dummar said the government was taking practical steps to strengthen the province's healthcare infrastructure so that people, particularly women and children, could obtain essential medical services without having to travel to other cities.

He said the new emergency unit would enable the hospital to provide prompt medical assistance, while the labor room would enhance maternity services and improve access to maternal and newborn care for residents of the area.

The provincial minister said a healthy population was fundamental to sustainable development and stressed that expanding healthcare access and improving medical infrastructure were among the government's key responsibilities. He reaffirmed his commitment to extending healthcare development initiatives to underserved areas and said available resources would be utilized to improve medical services for local communities.

Dummar said efforts to enhance public welfare and healthcare delivery would continue, enabling residents of Sanjavi and surrounding areas to receive essential medical treatment closer to their homes.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal H.E. Paulo Rangel called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

World could face third global food crisis in six years after COVID

UNITED NATIONS (APP): The UN World Food Programme (WFP) will require $12.1 billion to assist 91 million people next year but warned that millions more will go hungry as funding shortfalls continue and another global food crisis looms.

The agency will continue "to go the extra mile to reach the most displaced, the most vulnerable, people who are starving each day," said Assistant Executive Director Matthew Hollingworth, presenting WFP's Global Outlook for 2027 to reporters in Geneva. The report reveals that at least 266 million people worldwide face acute hunger as conflict, economic shocks and climate change continue to drive food insecurity and humanitarian needs. Roughly 39 million are at emergency levels or worse.

This is happening as aid budgets continue to be slashed, forcing WFP to prioritize only the most critical cases. "Our teams are having to make very difficult decisions on the ground. Inevitably, that means we're leaving people behind," said Hollingworth, speaking from headquarters in Rome.

"What's even more concerning is that in the current environment, the gap between those we can and cannot reach is probably going to grow larger."

He highlighted how conflict "has created triple choke points to three crucial shipping lanes", referring to the Strait of Hormuz, the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Black Sea.

Furthermore, the Super El Nino climate pattern is disrupting harvests while fuel and transport costs are rising, impacting food prices.

"And we could soon be facing a third global food crisis in six years after COVID and obviously when the war began or re-started in Ukraine," he warned. WFP called for flexible, predictable funding that allows it to direct resources to areas with the greatest needs and ensure every dollar has maximum impact.

Promotion of mutual understanding vital for country's development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC) and Coordinator of the National Paigham-e-Aman Committee, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, on Sunday welcomed the issuance of a presidential ordinance concerning the registration of religious seminaries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, describing it as a landmark step towards resolving longstanding administrative and financial difficulties faced by seminaries across the country. In a video statement, Ashrafi said following similar measures in Islamabad and Punjab, the issuance of the ordinance for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had further advanced efforts to address registration-related complications and banking issues that had persisted for approximately 26 years.

He expressed gratitude to President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for their leadership and personal attention towards resolving the longstanding concerns of religious seminaries. Ashrafi particularly acknowledged the role of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, saying he had taken a personal interest in facilitating the process, while the prime minister and the president had also played important roles in bringing the matter to this stage. He said addressing the problems and difficulties of religious seminaries was among the government's foremost priorities and appreciated the collective efforts of the country's political and military leadership, religious scholars and madrassa representatives.

Highlighting the contribution of the National Paigham-e-Aman Committee, Ashrafi said the committee had played a pivotal role not only in promoting interfaith harmony, social tolerance and countering extremism and terrorism but also in facilitating communication and coordination between religious seminaries and the government.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar witnessing the signing of an MoU between Pakistan's Board of Investment (BOI) and the Portuguese Trade and Investment Agency (AICEP)

SCO diplomatic engagement offers hope for regional peace: Ramesh Kumar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, Patron-in-Chief of the Pakistan Hindu Council and Member of the National Assembly, has termed Pakistan's active participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Civilizational Dialogue in New Delhi as a fresh ray of hope for all those seeking peace in South Asia on both sides of the border.

In a statement issued on Pakistan-India relations, Dr Vankwani described the current development a significant diplomatic achievement and urged the leadership of both countries to avail this opportunity to move beyond formal engagements towards restoring mutual trust and establishing lasting peace in the region. Dr Vankwani particularly highlighted the extensive media coverage given to Pakistan's participation in the SCO event by prominent Indian newspapers as well as television channels and digital media platforms. He observed that Indian media is viewing this development not merely as participation in an international conference but also in the context of a possible revival of diplomatic engagement between the two neighbouring countries following the military escalation of May 2025.



QUETTA: MPA Farah Azeem Shah presenting a resolution during the assembly session.

Russia, Pakistan to strengthen friendship; mutual understanding through culture, diplomacy

ISLAMABAD (APP): A meeting between Honorary Advisor to the Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Syed Usman Tahir and Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Pakistan Albert P. Khorev was held here.

The meeting focused on strengthening cultural relations between Pakistan and Russia, promoting cultural diplomacy, and exploring new opportunities for bilateral cooperation through cultural exchange programmes, joint activities, educational initiatives and creative industry partnerships.

During the discussion, Ambassador Albert P. Khorev appreciated the visionary leadership of Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi and acknowledged the positive role being played by the Ministry in promoting cultural activities and strengthening international relations. The Ambassador particularly highlighted the importance of the Ministry's initiatives, noting that its vision and ongoing efforts to promote cultural exchange and bilateral engagement are making a positive contribution to strengthening relations between Pakistan and the Russian Federation.

Syed Usman Tahir emphasized that culture can serve as a powerful bridge between nations, bringing people closer through shared traditions, artistic collaborations, educational exchanges, and people-to-people connections. Both sides discussed the importance of expanding Pakistan–Russia cultural cooperation and exploring further opportunities for joint cultural programmes, festivals, exhibitions, and creative economy initiatives.

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