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September 6 holds "memorable place" in national history: President Zardari

PM Shehbaz Sharif says Makkah Joint Defence Agreement is a manifestation of Pakistan's growing role in regional security

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday paid tribute to the martyrs and veterans of Pakistan's armed forces, and to their families, on Defence and Martyrs' Day, reaffirming the country's commitment to national unity, sovereignty, security, and peace. In separate messages on September 6, the prime minister said the day was "a glorious chapter in our national history", reminding the nation of the "unparalleled resolve, unity and sacrifices" demonstrated by the Armed Forces and people in defence of the homeland.

He said Defence and Martyrs' Day provided an opportunity to honour martyrs and veterans who made immense sacrifices to safeguard Pakistan's security, sovereignty and independence.

"Despite the enemy's undeclared aggression and numerical superiority on 6 September 1965, the professionalism and operational preparedness of Pakistan's Armed Forces inflicted a humiliating and resounding defeat upon it on all fronts," Shehbaz said.

Zardari said September 6 held a "memorable place" in national history, recalling the sacrifices made to safeguard Pakistan's freedom, sovereignty and national security.

He said the martyrs of 1965 demonstrated "unparalleled resolve, courage and devotion" in defending the homeland and defeating the enemy's "nefarious designs on every front".

National unity

Shehbaz said history bore witness to the exceptional professionalism and courage of the Armed Forces during the 1965 war, while the Pakistani nation demonstrated "remarkable unity, resilience and steadfastness".

"Together they created a proud and enduring legacy in our national history," he said.

Zardari said the unity and spirit of faith demonstrated by the Armed Forces and nation on September 6, 1965, remained a manifestation of collective strength.

"This day reminds us that when a nation stands united in defence of its freedom, sovereignty and homeland, no power can defeat its resolve," he said.

Recent victory

Both leaders linked the spirit of the 1965 war to Operation Bunyanum Marsoos and Marka-e-Haq.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Corps Commander Balochistan Lieutenant General Rahat Naseem Ahmed offering dua at Yadgar-e-Shuhada on the eve of Defence and Martyrs' Day.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti presenting a souvenir to NACTA's National Coordinator Major General Faisal Naseer.

Sept 6 symbol of national resolve, unity, patriotism: Governor

Says building strong Pakistan is shared responsibility

QUETTA, (VoM Report): In his message on the occasion of Defence Day of Pakistan, Governor Balochistan Jafar Khan Mandokhail said that September 6 is a memorable day in our national history that reminds us of the nation's unwavering resolve, unity and sacrifices for the defence of the motherland. The day is also a shining example of bravery in our national history.

In 1965, our brave armed forces confronted the enemy's aggression with courage and firm determination, which remains a proud chapter of our history. This proves that national unity, faith, determination and patriotism are the greatest strengths to face any challenge.

Defence Day is not merely a day to remember a historic war of the past; rather, it also provides us with an opportunity to renew our resolve to preserve national unity, the security and sovereignty of the country.

Today, we pay tribute to our armed forces, martyrs, veterans and their families who made countless sacrifices for the defence and security of the country.

In the present era, the concept of national defence is not limited only to the protection of borders. National cohesion, economic stability, education, development, peace and strong institutions are also important pillars of national security. The elevation of Pakistan and protection of national dignity are our shared responsibility. We must play our role in building a strong, peaceful, developed and united Pakistan while carrying forward the mission of the martyrs.



Demonstrators carrying banners and placards displaying anti-abortion messages march from Tufton Street to Parliament Square as March for Life UK holds its annual 'March for Life' anti-abortion march in London

Defence Day rally in Quetta highlights national unity, patriotism

QUETTA, (VoM Report): On the occasion of Defence Day of Pakistan, a special rally was organized today, September 6, by the Quetta district administration, in which a large number of citizens, along with officers and personnel of the district administration, participated.

The rally began from the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Quetta, where a large number of district administration officers, government employees and citizens gathered. The participants carried national flags, while citizens filled with love for the country



and national spirit raised slogans of "Pakistan Zindabad" and in support of the Pakistan Army.

The rally was led by Assistant Commissioner (City) Muhammad Amir Hamza, Assistant Commissioner (Sariab) Musawir Achakzai and Assistant Commissioner (Sadar) Muhammad Yousaf Hashmi.

The rally departed from the Deputy Commissioner's Office and passed through various major roads of the city before reaching Serena Chowk, where the participants paid tribute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the defence of the country.

Pakistan advocates women's leadership in global peace initiatives

UNITED NATIONS (APP): At a High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace, Pakistan has called for an expanded role for women in peace and security, emphasizing the theme of women's leadership. "Let's invest in women leadership, let's invest in peace, let's invest in future," Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told the forum held on Wednesday to commemorate the adoption of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace by the UN General Assembly on 13 September 1999.

He also lauded Bangladesh for sponsoring the annual follow-up resolution adopted by the 80th session of the 193-member Assembly.

"This landmark document affirmed that peace does not merely lie in the silence of guns but, in fact, flows from the protection of human rights, celebration of plurality, and promotion of the rule of law," the Pakistani envoy said.

Security Forces kill 21 khwarij in multiple engagements in KPK

RAWALPINDI, (APP): Security Forces have killed 21 khwarij belonging to Indian sponsored Fitna Al Khwarij in multiple engagements in Khyber Pakhunkhwa (KPK) province in last three days.

"Following the successful engagement by security forces on the night 31 August / 1 September 2026 along Pakistan-Afghanistan Border in North Waziristan District, 10 more khwarij holed up in the area were sent to hell, increasing the total number of khwarij who were trying to infiltrate and effectively neutralised by security forces to twenty five," said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

In another encounter in North Waziristan District, movement of another group of khwarij along Pakistan-Afghanistan border was picked up by the security forces. Own troops effectively engaged this group of khwarij. As a result of precise and skillful engagement, seven khwarij were neutralized, it further said.

Four more khwarij were also effectively neutralized in two different encounters in Kohat and Dera Ismail Khel Districts during joint operations.

CM Bugti, NACTA National Coordinator vow stronger coordination against terrorism

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti met here on Sunday with NACTA National Coordinator Major General Faisal Naseer. The meeting discussed the overall law and order situation in Balochistan, measures against terrorism, intelligence coordination and a coordinated strategy for establishing lasting peace.

During the meeting, matters relating to cooperation between NACTA and the Balochistan government in counter-terrorism, enhancing the capacity of law-enforcement agencies and making mutual coordination more effective to prevent terrorism were also discussed.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti appreciated the valuable services of Major General Faisal Naseer in the field of counter-terrorism and paid tribute to him.

Pakistan committed to peaceful coexistence, dialogue: DPM Dar

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Sunday, reaffirmed the unwavering national resolve to defend Pakistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and national interests.

"The courage of our martyrs, the strength of our armed forces and the determination of our people remain our greater assurance that Pakistan will meet every challenge with confidence, dignity and resolve," the DPM/FM said in a message on 'Defence & Martyrs Day. On Defence & Martyrs Day, he said they paid solemn tribute to the valiant members of their armed forces who defended the motherland with exceptional courage and sacrifice on 6 September 1965. "Their bravery, steadfastness and devotion to duty remain an enduring source of pride and inspiration for the nation. We also honour our Shuhada and Ghazis and salute their families for their immeasurable sacrifices in the service of Pakistan," the Foreign Office Spokesperson, in a press release, quoted him as saying. The DPM/FM said the same spirit of courage and professionalism was once again demonstrated during Marka-e-Haq and Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos, adding with the firm support of the people of Pakistan, their armed forces resolutely defended the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, reaffirming their national resolve and preparedness to respond decisively to any aggression.

Armed forces "fully prepared" to defend Pakistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity

CDF Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, pays tribute to the country's martyrs on the 61st Defence and Martyrs' Day

RAWALPINDI, (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's armed forces on Sunday warned that any aggression would draw a "swift and decisive response", as military leaders, including the Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, paid tribute to the country's martyrs on the 61st Defence and Martyrs' Day.

In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the military's media wing, said the armed forces remained "fully prepared" to defend Pakistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and national interests.The military reaffirmed that Pakistan seeks "peace, stability and prosperity in the region" and remains committed to "responsible conduct and peaceful coexistence". "This commitment, however, must never be mistaken for weakness," the military said, adding that any aggression against Pakistan would be met with a "swift and decisive response".

CDF Munir, along with Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Commander National Strategic Command General Syed Aamer Raza and the armed forces, paid "profound tribute" to the Shuhada of Pakistan.

They also extended their "deepest respect and gratitude" to the Ghazis and families of the martyrs, according to ISPR.

The military said September 6 remained an "enduring symbol of national unity, courage and resolve", recalling how the Pakistani nation stood as one in defence of the motherland during the 1965 war.

"The Shuhada of Pakistan embody the highest ideals of honour, duty and sacrifice," ISPR said, paying tribute to generations of defenders who made the ultimate sacrifice across the battlefields, skies and seas.



QUETTA: Defence Day rally passing through Airport Road organized by Parliamentary Secretary for Minority Affairs in Balochistan Assembly Sanjay Kumar.

Defence and Martyrs Day observed with national spirit in Quetta

Governor Balochistan, Chief Minister Balochistan, Corps Commander Balochistan and other civil and military officials lays floral wreaths at the Martyrs' Memorial and offers Fateha

QUETTA, (VoM Report): A dignified central ceremony was held in Quetta on the occasion of Defence and Martyrs Day, attended by Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jafar Khan Mandokhail, Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, Commander Corps Balochistan Lieutenant General Rahat Naseem Ahmed Khan and other senior civil and military officials. On the occasion, a smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Army presented a salute at the Martyrs' Memorial, while the Governor Balochistan, Chief Minister Balochistan, Corps Commander Balochistan and other civil and military officials laid floral wreaths at the Martyrs' Memorial and offered Fateha.

Paying tribute to the eternal sacrifices of the martyrs, homage was paid to the brave sons of the soil who sacrificed their lives for the defence, security and sovereignty of the motherland.

At the ceremony, national resolve, patriotism and devotion to the martyrs were expressed, and the pledge was renewed that the sacrifices made for the defence and security of Pakistan would always be remembered and that the great struggle and sacrifices of the martyrs would be passed on to the new generation.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail offering fateha for the departed soul of Haji Mir Juma Khan Badini, father of MPA Mir Ghulam Dastagir Badini.

10th death anniversary of late Mir Ghulam Qadir Bugti observed with glowing tributes

QUETTA, (VoM Report): The 10th death anniversary of the late Mir Ghulam Qadir Bugti, a veteran political and tribal leader, champion of knowledge and awareness, and a prominent figure who rendered notable services for promoting political and social awareness, was observed with great respect and devotion at Pakistan House, Sui. On the occasion, Mir Aftab Khan Bugti, younger brother of Chief of Bugti and Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti and younger son of the late Mir Ghulam Qadir Bugti, Wadera Muhammad Bakhsh Mondrani, Mir Attaullah Kalpar, Wadera Shah Murad Khan Masori, Mir Jamal Khan Kalpar, along with other political and tribal notables and a large number of people, participated. During the condolence reference, participants paid tribute to the political and social services, principled character, self-respect, love of knowledge and democratic struggle of the late Mir Ghulam Qadir Bugti.

THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

Monday September 07, 2026

No talks with terrorists

Pakistan's enigma, as it faces an uptick in terrorism, is owing to its failure to implement the National Action Plan. A spokesperson for the military yesterday pointed out that the gap in governance process in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, in particular, is responsible for the revulsion and its "cost is being paid by the blood of security forces". The comments from the Director General ISPR came as there were reports of sorties being flown over Kabul to target TTP leader Noor Wali Mehsud. The reports, not confirmed by the military leadership as well as Foreign Office, came a day after 11 armed forces personnel were gunned down in Kurram Agency, amidst an uptick in terror activities.

The causes behind the soaring terror activities, as listed by the military spokesperson, include non-implementation of NAP; politicisation the issue of terrorism; India's hoodwinking in Afghanistan; and the US-abandoned modern weapons falling in the hands of non-state actors. This surely has bred a nexus between crime and terrorism, and stands multiplied with Taliban 2.0 looking the other way and not being able to act against the disgruntled elements holed up in Afghanistan. The DG ISPR rejected prescriptions from a political party that insists on entering into talks with these elements.

Afghanistan, being the epicenter of terrorism, poses a serious security risk to the entire region. The onus rests with Kabul to act against the TTP operatives, and the likes, who have been operating on both sides of the divide. That strata of terror not only goes unchecked inside Afghanistan but also enjoys the patronage of extra-territorial forces, especially India, with the apt strategy to push the region over the brink. The involvement of Fitna-Al-Khawarij i.e. Indian proxies in terror activities in the restive provinces of Balochistan and K-P is a case in point.

Pakistan has no choice but to go after the terrorists. At the same time, there is a need to exhaust the diplomatic opportunity by making it crystal clear to Kabul and other regional entities that broad-based cooperation in counterterrorism is the way to go.

Valley of the shadow of death

FARRUKH KHAN PITAFI

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for you are with me; your power to protect and your presence to guide, they comfort me." - Psalms 23:4

"As I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I take a look at my life and realise there's nothin' left." - Coolio, Gangsta's Paradise

James Jesus Angleton, the celebrated CIA counter-intelligence czar, codenamed Mother, called the world of espionage "a wilderness of mirrors". That is true. However, I prefer to call it the valley of the shadow of death because of the existential nature of the threats spies face. But not all spies are created equal. Some can live to tell the tale. Others may face exposure, capture or death. The most interesting cases are those of agents facing a burn notice, which is issued when an agent, asset or source is officially disavowed for being unreliable or making an unforgivable mistake. Bear this in mind, as it will prove useful.

Ironically, all of this is happening in the dying months of 2025. Later, I will tell you why. However, I first heard of his name in 1999, and it was in connection with something monumental. Oh wait. Now you feel you are missing something. You are not. The missing piece has not yet been provided. I am not burying the lede. Just a tease, a weapon in a writer's arsenal. For a good reason, as you will see.

Before introducing the trigger for this piece, a reminder of our current position. Pakistan faced a flurry of activities and attacks this month. Suddenly, the TLP, which was sleeping during the entire length of the Gaza tragedy, woke up right when a peace plan had already come into effect. It wanted to protest in front of the US embassy. The US, under President Trump, has brokered a tense peace, which has seen a dramatic reduction, if not total cessation, of violence there. Was the purpose just to protest, to gain attention, or to create a Benghazi-like situation? Incidentally, this was happening when the Afghan Taliban had decided to send its acting foreign minister (he has been acting for four years) and send proxies into Pakistan to wreak havoc. As if that were not enough, they decided to attack Pakistan. As you read these lines, a tense ceasefire is ending, and talks between Pakistani and Taliban officials are reportedly set to begin. The PTI, in its infinite wisdom, decided to remove and replace its chief minister in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. Sounds like a sequel to "Everything Everywhere All at Once", right?

This suggests someone powerful is unhappy, angry or in a hurry due to a looming change. This brings us to the state of play in India. The Modi government is facing a three-body problem: the looming Bihar elections, growing Pakistani influence, partly due to its own flawed policies and a misguided war, and the rising cost of its foreign policy mistakes. Could it unleash elements on Pakistan as a punitive measure?

Meanwhile, in the US, buoyed by his successful diplomacy in the Middle East, President Trump has set his eyes on the intractable problem of the Ukraine war. His foreign policy is coming together, and he has assembled a strong national security team. He is also trying to fulfil one of his 2016 campaign promises of "draining the swamp". The swamp, for the uninitiated, is the army of lobbyists, influencers and middlemen whose job it is to influence policy outcomes, even at the cost of bringing an administration to its knees. His India policy is interesting because, even when he does not intend to rile up New Delhi, he manages to do so, due to the Indian government's hypersensitivity.

For a leader who ran on the platform of challenging the obsessive political correctness of the DC elites, to tiptoe around the growing circle of this hypersensitivity is a big ask.

Amidst all this comes the story that triggered this piece: the arrest of the Indian American defence expert Ashley Tellis, the man I mentioned earlier. As I was saying, his name came to my attention in 1999 when an Indian outlet boasted about a wargame report called "Asia 2025". It was a forward-looking study of various postulated geopolitical shifts in the next 25 years. The scenario the publication celebrated was the dismemberment of Pakistan and Afghanistan, their merger with India and the emergence of a powerful Indian superstate. Now you get the irony, too. And Mr Tellis was one of the contributors. Since then, I have been following his career. Born in a Christian family in Mumbai, he had come a long way. His career was devoted to two things: American national interest, and finding ways to convince the US of the importance of an alliance with India. This report has fuelled the imagination of the Hindutva dream of Akhand Bharat for the past quarter of a century. And I have quoted many BJP leaders predicting that after 2025, Pakistan will become a part of India.

However, Mr Tellis has not been arrested for passing on information to India, which he frequently visited. No. It is a case of stolen classified documents and at least one meeting with Chinese officials, in which he is accused of leaving behind a manila envelope. Intriguing, right? Why would a card-carrying Indophile, unpaid adviser to the State Department, and a paid contractor of the Defence Department pass on critical information to China? Could this be a trap?

But the plot thickens. He had started writing against the Indian government and the country as an ally since 2023. Looks like Mr Modi's policies were not sitting well with his constitution.

Now there are two distinct possibilities: that all of this is true, and he was caught with his hand in the proverbial cookie jar, or that he was framed.

The Indian intelligence community's influence operations function in such a way that it would kill your loved ones, frame you for their murder, and if I tried to help you and was successful in proving you innocent, frame me for framing you. Could Mr Tellis be an Indian asset who was issued a burn notice because he reacted as any conscientious minority member would when asked to defend an extremist government of the country of his origin, instead of the country itself? Only time will tell.

One thing is for sure: India under Modi is capable of doing such a thing. Pakistan is the last place where its influence should be felt, but it is. I have illustrated that many times, and the above-mentioned flurry of attacks is one such example. Indophiles and Indian expatriates in the world, beware. Your long service to India will amount to nothing if you cannot carry water for Modi's regime.

Impending Pak-Afghan talks and the way forward

IMTIAZ GUL

Regardless of the outcome of the impending Doha talks, the current state of relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan signals the onset of another prolonged and complex conflict. This situation must be assessed from four key perspectives: humanitarian, security, internal stability, and geopolitics.

Life along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border has come to a virtual standstill - for the third time this year - due to border closures stemming from rising political tensions. These shutdowns have disrupted the lives of thousands, halted commercial activity and strained cross-border relations. Each episode carries a direct human and economic cost, particularly for border communities that rely heavily on daily movement and trade.

The continued presence of terrorist groups in Afghanistan - particularly the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is not just a concern for Pakistan, but for the wider region and the international community. These groups operate with relative impunity, often launching attacks across the border, triggering standoffs and military responses.

Equally concerning is the presence of non-state actors within Pakistan. Their domestic influence - combined with historic links to Afghanistan - highlights the urgent need for an approach based on rule of law. The state's renewed resolve to counter such actors is a welcome and necessary development.

For too long, extremist groups centred on Kashmir and Afghanistan have been allowed to disrupt public life. Their religio-political ideologies were weaponised, resulting in repeated crises. Groups like Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), for example, have paralysed public life multiple times since 2017. The recent violent episode, which resulted in tragic loss of life, underlines the danger of allowing such actors to operate unchecked. The government crackdown in Muridke was not only necessary - it was overdue. Those defending the TLP should instead hold its leadership accountable for inciting violence and targeting diplomatic missions.

If this marks the beginning of a serious policy shift, it must be rooted in the principle that no individual or group should be allowed to endanger public safety or national stability.

The Geopolitical Trap

Once again, Pakistan appears to be getting drawn into the vortex of Afghan geopolitics - this time with more bitterness and public polarisation. Hatred and distrust are hardening, fueled by both mainstream and social media platforms amplifying external narratives and domestic frustrations. The long-term consequences of this dynamic could be deeply damaging to regional stability and national cohesion.

Pakistan's Options And Way Forward

The Pakistani military has demonstrated its technological and operational superiority during recent confrontations. However, history provides a sobering lesson: superior firepower does not guarantee strategic victory. NATO's failure to subdue the Taliban, despite massive technological and intelligence advantages, should not be forgotten. Even a poorly equipped force like the Afghan Taliban can cause persistent harm through asymmetric warfare, as it did for two decades.

Pakistan must adopt a long-term strategic framework rather than reacting tactically to each border provocation. Infiltration, subversion and low-intensity conflict - reminiscent of the 1970s and 1980s - must not be allowed to define current policy.

Key Principles Going Forward

No knee-jerk reactions: Minor provocations by rogue border officials or skirmishes must not result in suspending visa services or closing border crossings.

Keep borders open: Even amid political tensions, Pakistan must avoid closing the border. Such actions harden public opinion, fuel resentment and generate longlasting mistrust.

Avoid public humiliation of Afghans: Publicly mocking or taunting Afghan counterparts, particularly Pashtuns, is counterproductive. It may momentarily assert dominance, but it will only deepen resentment and hostility. Dignity and mutual respect must underpin all official engagements.

As the larger and more stable neighbour, Pakistan must maintain the moral high ground while firmly pursuing its strategic interests. Let trade continue. Let people cross borders. At the same time, non-state actors must be dealt with decisively, and national policy must be guided by law, not ideology or short-term political expediency.

Instead of weaponising vis services or trade concessions under the transit trade agreements, Pakistan must preserve the high moral ground by letting the people and goods flow across the border. The best bet is to keep all neighbours on board – regional consensus for any engagement with Afghanistan or action against TTP – because almost all are wary of terrorist groups that are using the Afghan soil.

Bottom Line

Engage with Afghanistan diplomatically and economically, but never allow extremists - whether domestic or external - to dictate the national agenda. For too long have the religio-political groups enjoyed a privileged status for multiple, shortsighted considerations. That has undermined the rule of law and exposed common citizens to intimation of all sorts. TLP tried to precisely do that and this must stop for good.

The great corporate exit

MOHSIN SALEEM ULLAH

When a global consumer giant like Procter & Gamble (P&G) shuts down its local manufacturing in a country of 240 million consumers, it sends a message louder than any statistic: Pakistan is losing investor confidence. P&G's decision to exit manufacturing as part of its global restructuring strategy might sound routine, but in a market of this size, such moves reflect more on the host country's business environment than on corporate plans. In recent years, a steady stream of multinationals – Shell, Microsoft, Careem, Telenor, Uber and several pharmaceutical and energy firms – have either downsized or departed entirely. While corporate exits happen globally, the pace and scale of withdrawals from Pakistan reveal deeper structural flaws. Once viewed as a promising emerging market, Pakistan is increasingly seen as a high-risk, low-return destination.

The departure of these companies carries real consequences, such as loss of jobs, tax revenues and technology transfer, as well as the loss of local manufacturing erodes employment and supply-chain opportunities. Over time, this shrinks the industrial base and discourages future investment. The pattern spans sectors. Microsoft closed its office in 2025 after 25 years, while Careem suspended ride-hailing services, citing unsustainable conditions, and Telenor sold its Pakistan stakes. These departures signal a growing trust deficit between Pakistan and international investors. Macroeconomic instability, erratic policymaking and governance failures have made operations increasingly difficult. Since 2021, the rupee has lost over half its value, while inflation has averaged above 25%, wiping out profit margins for firms reliant on imported inputs. Taxation is another deterrent. With a corporate tax rate of 29% among the region's highest, plus an additional 10% super tax and 18% sales tax, Pakistan's fiscal framework discourages investment rather than incentivising it. Policy reversals, sudden import restrictions and arbitrary price controls create uncertainty that few multinationals can tolerate. Even exiting the market is complicated. Delayed profit repatriation, blocked remittances and prolonged liquidation procedures make leaving Pakistan a bureaucratic ordeal. As investors often note, "If it's hard to exit, it's harder to enter."

Undoubtedly, weak infrastructure and regulatory unpredictability deepen investor frustration. Power shortages inflate costs, while frequent internet disruptions undermine Pakistan's ambitions as a digital hub. The IT sector reportedly lost around $300 million in 2023 due to shutdowns.

Venture capital funding, once a bright spot, has collapsed from $355 million in 2022 to just $43 million in 2024. Meanwhile, thousands of Pakistani firms have re-registered in Dubai, drawn by lower taxes, smoother regulations and stable policies. As global companies consolidate into regional hubs, Pakistan's failure to compete for such roles is glaring.

Reversing this corporate flight requires real reform, not rhetoric. Profit repatriation and business closure processes must be transparent and time-bound, ideally completed within 90 days. The SBP should ensure predictable access to foreign exchange for legitimate corporate remittances.

Tax reform is critical. Gradually reducing corporate tax to 25% and harmonising sales tax at 15% would align Pakistan with regional peers. To safeguard the IT sector, the government should declare no-shutdown zones in technology parks and stabilise internet access. Offering return packages, tax holidays and regulatory fast-tracking for firms that relocated abroad could also help restore confidence.

The exodus of global firms is more than a business concern; it is a verdict on Pakistan's economic governance. Left unaddressed, it risks triggering wider disengagement by both foreign and domestic investors. Yet, the crisis also presents an opportunity. If Pakistan can restore predictability, ensure fair taxation and uphold investor rights, it can still reclaim credibility as an investment destination. The message must be clear: Pakistan is open for business, and this time, it must mean it. Fail to act now, and the "exit" signs flashing across corporate Pakistan could soon mark the fading of an economy once full of promise.

Unfolding the question of one's place & spirituality

ZORAIN NIZAMANI

This question seems to garners similar replies. When asked, people tend to start talking about their profession, "I am a doctor, I am a lawyer, I am an engineer, I am a psychiatrist." But that particular answer might be incorrect. It only tells us what you do for a living but it doesn't tell us who you are.

Some may say they are Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist. But is that really who they are? Merely products of their God and nothing else? Is your religion your only identity?

Who you bow down before is who you believe in and for some, it becomes their entire identity. They dress a certain way and look a certain way. No harm in that. Each to their own.

But sometimes, you can learn a lot about someone from where they're headed in life or what their goals in life are.

Some may be working towards a great discovery; some might be prophesying with their pen, and some might just be surviving.

Interestingly, the holy Quran also poses this rhetorical question, it asks 'So, where are you going?' (81:26)

A piece of advice. Hang this verse in front of your work desk and each time you begin to think too much, read it again and again until things start falling in place. Where are you headed?

But my philosophically futile question remains. Who are you? And to add to the misery, where are you going?

This allows for a moment of self-reflection. You don't have to be of a certain religion to self-reflect. You have to be human. Each time you find yourself in a fix, ask yourself who you are and what your destination is? Sometimes the most difficult questions have the simplest of answers. You're just seeking them in the wrong place.

Who am I, you ask? Here's the answer to the question you probably did not inquire into.

I don't know, yet.

I am as oblivious, unfounded and incomplete as you are.

I've spent some time here on what they call the earth and where they say humans allegedly reside. But so far, I haven't come across any humanity. Maybe little pockets of kindness here and there but the rest has been a terrible ride, to put it mildly.

But who am I? I am still on the journey where I seek an answer to this question. I have travelled a handful of countries but I did not find myself there.

I wandered the battered streets of Rome; did as the Romans do. I trotted along the Freedom Trail of Boston, Massachusetts. I strolled along the West 42nd and Broadway Street in New York City, and amongst the chaos, I found only silence and its accompanying stillness.

On a damp, snowy night in the woods of Northeast America, what did I find? The abyss.

In the deepest jungles of Balochistan, camping around the fire, I found myself feeling quite small under the vast sky full of stars.

I found something else too. The eerie leisure of nothingness. Oh, the longing to attain nirvana.

When was the last time you sat down quietly in a room and ruminated over these things? When was the last time you wrote your thoughts down to answer questions which you just could not answer?

As Bulleh Shah said in his poem, "I am neither a believer in the mosque nor do I follow the way of the infidels. I am not Adam or Eve, nor do I carry any name given to me, neither water, nor air, neither earth nor fire. Bulla, who am I?".

I am a believer, Bulla. That's all I am. As disappointing as that may sound. I might be different from the one you believed in, but hey, they all wanted us to be kind human beings, right?

No one's better or worse, Bulla.

Bulla, you yourself said, "Nor am I in the argument of pure or impure". Then why should I be?

Houthis attack Saudi tankers to open likely new front in Iran war

SANAA, (Monitoring Desk): Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels said they attacked two Saudi oil tankers in the Red Sea, potentially opening a new front as the U.S. military conducted a 12th night of strikes against Iran.

The Houthis have threatened to shut down another key trade route, with the world economy already reeling from Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran and the U.S. have meanwhile stepped up their attacks as they vie for control of the strait, through which a fifth of the world's oil and gas passed in peacetime, setting off a scramble for alternative routes.

U.S. President Donald Trump threatened "major military punishment" against the Houthis if their attacks on ships continue. "If they do this again, the U.S. will hold Iran responsible, in that the Houthis are a Surrogate and/or Proxy of Iran, and major military punishment will be inflicted upon Iran and, of course, the Houthis, themselves," Trump wrote on social media. As the rhetoric escalated, so did the economic fallout. The price of a barrel of Brent crude oil, the international standard, spiked 4.3% to $98.16, its highest level since early June, before the two sides reached a preliminary peace agreement that has since collapsed. Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi of Iraq, which has close ties to both the U.S. and Iran, was in Tehran to call for peace and dialogue, a spokesperson said. Al-Zaidi met with Trump earlier this month in Washington. An Arab diplomat said Gulf states are increasingly pessimistic about finding an off-ramp. The diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the situation, said regional countries, in addition to Pakistan and Türkiye, continue to push for de-escalation. The Houthis' SABA news agency said the rebels had struck two tankers, the Encelia and the Layla, in the Red Sea, leading to fires on both. There were no reports of casualties.

It was their first reported attack on a vessel since they announced a blockade of Saudi-linked shipping through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait earlier this week in retaliation for the kingdom's blockade on Yemen and a recent attack on the international airport in Yemen's rebel-held capital, Sanaa.

'Double whammy'

Bab el-Mandeb, at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is a vital shipping chokepoint connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden.

Around 12% of the world's trade, including a fourth of global container traffic, passes through there, moving between Europe and Asia via Egypt's Suez Canal. The state-run Saudi Press Agency reported an attack set the Encelia ablaze overnight in the Red Sea. It did not mention the Layla.



A drone strike on a warehouse belonging to Wildberries, Russia's largest e-commerce platform, in the Leningrad region

Gaza hunger crisis eases, but aid cuts threaten renewed surge

GAZA, (Monitoring Desk): The humanitarian situation in Gaza has improved since famine conditions were declared in parts of the territory last year, but millions remain trapped in a deep food crisis, with aid agencies warning that funding shortages and reduced humanitarian access could erase recent gains by the end of 2026.

A new report released Wednesday by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), the global authority that assesses food insecurity, found that improved aid deliveries and reduced fighting following the October 2025 cease-fire between Israel and Hamas significantly lowered acute malnutrition rates, particularly among children.

However, the organization warned that the recovery remains fragile and could quickly unravel if humanitarian assistance continues to decline.

The IPC estimates that between April and June, about 1.2 million people, or 59% of Gaza's population, experienced acute food insecurity classified as Phase 3 "Crisis" or worse. Of those, more than 212,000 were living under Phase 4 "Emergency" conditions, one step below famine.

Unless aid levels are sustained, the number of people facing acute hunger is expected to climb to more than 1.4 million, roughly 67% of Gaza's population, by the end of the year.

Although famine conditions identified in parts of Gaza in August last year have eased, the IPC stressed that food consumption remains insufficient for most households. Many families continue to skip meals, rely on charity kitchens, beg for food or scavenge for anything edible as the territory struggles to recover after nearly two years of war, repeated displacement and widespread destruction.

The report credited increased humanitarian deliveries after the cease-fire with driving measurable improvements, but emphasized that those gains have been uneven across Gaza and remain heavily dependent on continued international assistance.

"Even small disruptions to humanitarian access could rapidly reverse recent gains," the IPC warned.

Children remain among the most vulnerable. While acute malnutrition has declined to levels considered acceptable by international standards.

Ebola outbreak tops 1,000 deaths as containment efforts intensify

DAKAR, (Monitoring Desk): The deadliest and fastest-growing Ebola outbreak on record has claimed more than 1,000 lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where health authorities are struggling to contain a strain of the virus that has no approved vaccine or treatment.

The latest update from Congo's public health institute reported 2,536 confirmed infections and 1,033 deaths since the outbreak was declared on May 15. At least 738 patients remain hospitalized or in isolation as health workers race to curb transmission across the country's east.

Unlike previous Ebola emergencies, the current epidemic is driven by the Bundibugyo strain, a rare variant for which no licensed vaccine or proven treatment exists. The absence of medical countermeasures has made the outbreak especially difficult to control.

Most infections are concentrated in the remote eastern province of Ituri, which accounts for nearly 90% of confirmed cases. However, the virus has spread to five provinces, including the major city of Kisangani, and crossed into neighboring Uganda.

Congolese health officials say the explosive increase in infections appears to be easing, but they warn the outbreak has not yet reached its peak. The country's latest epidemiological report says transmission remains widespread, with recent fluctuations in case numbers partly reflecting reporting delays and ongoing data verification.

One of the biggest concerns remains contact tracing. Officials say only about 77% of known contacts are currently being monitored, far below the 95% threshold considered necessary to interrupt transmission. Health responders also continue to grapple with major gaps in understanding how widely the virus has spread, as many infections cannot be linked to known transmission chains.

Researchers at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently used computer modeling to examine the epidemic's trajectory.



In northern Nigeria, societal prejudices that limit women's participation in the workforce are being overcome through the production of goods by entrepreneurial women.



A Palestinian university applicant celebrates with family members after the results of the Tawjihi secondary school examination, which determines admission to universities, were announced at a tent camp in Gaza City, Gaza

Trump returns for correspondents' dinner address after shooting

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): U.S. President Donald Trump is set to address the White House Correspondents' Association at its rescheduled annual dinner, nearly three months after a shooting outside the original venue forced the event to be canceled.

The black-tie gathering of journalists, politicians and administration officials was called off April 25 after a man attempted to breach a security checkpoint and fired a shotgun outside the ballroom at the Washington Hilton, where Trump and members of his Cabinet were taking their seats.

The suspect, Cole Allen, pleaded not guilty in May to multiple charges, including attempting to assassinate the president.

The dinner has since been relocated to the Waldorf Astoria and will be held under heightened security. Secret Service Director Sean Curran said Wednesday that an advance team had put a comprehensive security plan in place to protect attendees and secure the venue.

"We do expect bad people to show up," Curran said. "It's just a reality of where we are, but we're treating it no differently than any other site that the president goes to."

Trump has said the April shooting demonstrated the need for a $400 million ballroom being built at the White House, arguing that holding such events there would improve the president's security.

The dinner will honor Secret Service officer Victor Gonzales, who was shot at a security checkpoint outside the ballroom in April and is credited with helping stop the attack. He was wearing a protective vest and was the only person injured that night. Washington Hilton staff members who assisted guests also will be recognized, the WHCA said.

The gala, an annual fixture on Washington's calendar for more than a century, raises money for journalism scholarships and celebrates the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which protects freedom of speech and the press.

Bangladesh president to resign as Hasina prepares return from exile

NEW DELHI, (Monitoring Desk): Bangladesh President Mohammed Shahabuddin will resign, clearing the last senior state official closely associated with ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from office just months before she plans to return from exile.

Shahabuddin's resignation comes days after Hasina told media she intended to return to Bangladesh around December and surrender following her conviction by a war crimes tribunal.

The president's spokesperson, Sarwar Alam, said Shahabuddin would submit his resignation to Parliament Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad upon the speaker's return from Thailand on Friday.

"According to the Constitution, the president's resignation becomes effective upon submission of a signed letter to the speaker," Alam said.

Under Bangladesh's Constitution, the parliamentary speaker will serve as acting president until lawmakers elect a successor.

Alam did not specify why Shahabuddin was stepping down. However, three sources familiar with the matter told media the government had urged him to resign because of his longstanding ties to Hasina after the former prime minister announced plans to return from exile.

The resignation removes Hasina's last remaining ally from high office as Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's government seeks to consolidate power following February's election victory.

Hasina's Awami League has been banned since the 2024 student-led uprising that toppled her government. Many senior party members have since been jailed or gone into hiding.

Last November, Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal sentenced Hasina to death in absentia for ordering a crackdown on protesters during the 2024 uprising. A U.N. report said nearly 1,400 people were killed in the unrest. Hasina, who has been living in India, denies the charges.



The excitement in the Formula 1 World Championship continues with the Hungarian Grand Prix, the 11th stage of the season.

Volker urges action as thousands of seafarers remain stranded in Strait of Hormuz

GENEVA, (Agencies): UN human rights chief Volker Turk has called for urgent action to protect thousands of stranded seafarers facing a worsening humanitarian and human rights crisis in the Strait of Hormuz, a human rights spokesperson said.

At least 6,000 seafarers aboard some 400 vessels remain stranded in the Strait after being unable to evacuate during the ceasefire, according to information from the International Maritime Organization, Shabia Mantoo told reporters in Geneva.

The office has also received reports that some shipowners have abandoned crews at sea without food, water, fuel, medical care, electricity, repatriation or even payment of wages.

"We are aware of at least nine ships, with 93 crew members, abandoned by their owners in the Strait of Hormuz since the start of the war," Mantoo said.

She warned that stranded crews remain exposed to ongoing hostilities, noting that 17 seafarers have been killed since the conflict began, including five in recent attacks in and near the Strait.

Turk is calling on states, shipowners and all relevant actors to ensure stranded seafarers receive consular assistance, essential supplies and safe evacuation and repatriation, she said.

The UN rights chief also voiced concern over attacks on civilian merchant vessels in the Black Sea, where the UN has verified four attacks in Ukraine's Odesa region this month that killed or injured 34 vessel workers, as well as another attack in the Sea of Azov that killed one vessel worker.

"Seafarers should not be forced or compelled to endanger their lives by sailing through conflict zones," the spokesperson said. "Nor should they face the risk of reprisal by shipowners if they decline these assignments."

US extends Iran strikes into 13th night as Gulf tensions escalate

WASHINGTON, (Monitoring Desk): The United States carried out a 13th consecutive night of airstrikes on Iran, targeting military infrastructure linked to Tehran's operations in the Strait of Hormuz, while air raid sirens sounded in Bahrain and the widening conflict threatened to further disrupt global energy supplies and key shipping routes.

The latest wave of strikes lasted just over two hours, ending around 4:30 a.m. local time, according to U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM).

The military said it struck Iranian military command centers, drone storage facilities, communications networks, coastal surveillance sites and maritime assets in an effort to weaken Iran's ability to threaten commercial shipping in the Gulf.

CENTCOM said the operation was intended to further reduce the danger posed to civilian vessels traveling through the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important energy corridors, while insisting that the waterway remains open under U.S. military protection despite recent Iranian attacks.

Iranian media reported explosions across several parts of the country, including areas near Ahvaz, Andimeshk and Omidiyeh in the southwestern province of Khuzestan.

Blasts were also reported near Bandar Abbas, Iran's largest commercial port, and on Qeshm Island, a strategically important base overlooking the Strait of Hormuz that houses Iranian naval assets, including drone boats.

Air defenses were activated in Tehran, according to Nur News, a media outlet close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

Iranian state media said at least four people were killed and nine others were injured in the overnight bombardment. Separate reports said four people died and five were wounded in a missile strike outside Ahvaz, while additional attacks left two people injured in Lorestan province and two more wounded in Bandar Abbas. Other strikes reportedly hit Isfahan, home to a major air base.



German national football team player Antonio Rüdiger (right) participated in an event at United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York City, USA, as part of the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees' symbolic Gamechanging Team, comprised of footballers with refugee or displaced backgrounds.

Trump warns China, Russia against providing arms to Iran, says it 'would be very bad for them'

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): US President Donald Trump warned that it would be "very bad" for China or Russia if either country were to provide weapons to Iran, saying he believes both governments have pledged not to do so.

Trump said Chinese President Xi Jinping assured him during their recent meeting in Beijing that China would neither supply nor sell weapons to Iran, including through Chinese companies.

"President Xi, at our recent meeting in Beijing, China, told me that he would not, under any circumstances, give or sell Weapons to the Islamic Republic of Iran — And that statement included Chinese Companies. Considering our relationship, I take him at his word and, besides, I am doing him very big favors, also," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

Trump also said Russian President Vladimir Putin had given similar assurances despite the ongoing war in Ukraine, and told him that Russia would not sell weapons to Iran.

"He understands that I do not sell Weapons to Ukraine, but to NATO Countries. They pay full price, and how those Weapons are distributed, I have no idea.

"Therefore, two major Countries that people speak of often in terms of Iran are, in my opinion, not participating.

Pentagon suddenly lowers reported US troop death toll from Iran war: New York Times

NEW YORK, (Monitoring Desk): The Pentagon abruptly lowered the number of US troops it reports were killed during the Iran war on its website from 18 to 14, with military officials and a Pentagon spokesman providing conflicting explanations for the change, The New York Times reported.

The Times report said that, the Pentagon listed a total of 18 American service members who had been killed during the war, but today, the Defense Department had reduced the number of troops killed on its casualties website to 14.

Three military officials told the Times that "one reason behind the change was that the Trump administration decided to remove four service members killed this past weekend from the list (3 in Jordan, 1 in northern Iraq) because their deaths occurred after President (Donald) Trump declared a ceasefire in the war in April." However, the acting press secretary for the Pentagon, Joel Valdez, cited a different reason, telling the Times that "temporary data disruptions" contributed to the change in the number of deaths reported on the website and suggested that the information would be "quickly fixed."

Trump himself continued to refer to the higher number of US troop deaths during a press briefing Thursday, comparing the toll from other American wars to the war against Iran, saying that even one death "is too many, but it's 18." According to the Times, since the ceasefire collapsed, "the Pentagon has provided little information about the American military strategy and has been slow to release information about troops' injuries," saying that the last major Pentagon briefing on the war was held in early May.

The Defense Department previously said that disclosing Iranian strikes on bases where US troops are housed "would compromise operational security." The lack of information being disseminated from the department falls in line with information given to the Times from sources within the Trump administration who said the "Pentagon withheld information about three Iranian strikes last week in Jordan.



QUNEITRA, SYRIA: Families of Syrians detained by Israel demonstrate in front of a United Nations (UN) military base in the Nabaa Favvar region to demand the release of their relatives

Pakistan, seven Muslim nations condemn 'inflammatory' Israeli remarks calling to displace Palestinians from Gaza

ISLAMABAD, (News Desk): The foreign ministers of Pakistan, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates on Sunday warned that any move to forcibly displace Palestinians from the Gaza Strip would undermine regional stability, as they condemned proposals by senior Israeli ministers to remove Palestinians from their land.

The joint statement followed separate calls by Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz and far-right Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir for the removal of Palestinians from Gaza. Katz said there was "no real solution for Gaza in the end without this migration" and that Israel was prepared to move Palestinians "by sea, by air, by every way possible." Meanwhile, Ben-Gvir proposed a seven-year plan for what he described as "voluntary emigration" and called for a dedicated government ministry for emigration.

In a joint statement shared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the foreign ministers strongly condemned the remarks by Katz and Ben-Gvir. "Such inflammatory statements and proposals flagrantly violate principles of international law, including international humanitarian law, and pose a direct threat to the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people," the joint statement said. The ministers reaffirmed their "unequivocal rejection and condemnation" of attempts or plans to displace Palestinians, whether within or outside the occupied Palestinian territory, under any pretext. "They warn against the grave consequences of turning calls for forced displacement into declared policy or concrete measures aimed at uprooting Palestinians from their land," the statement said. The ministers said such actions would constitute a "direct challenge to international efforts aimed at achieving peace," particularly United States President Donald Trump's Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, which included an unequivocal rejection of forced displacement. They warned that such moves would "gravely risk undermining prospects for stability in the region." The ministers also stressed that "the Gaza Strip is an integral part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory," underscoring "the imperative of preserving the unity of the Palestinian territory in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem." Further, the ministers noted that a two-state solution remained the only route to a just and lasting peace, with an independent Palestinian state established along the lines of June 4, 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with relevant international legitimacy resolutions. The eight countries called on the international community, particularly the United Nations Security Council, to fulfil its responsibilities by confronting attempts to impose a "new demographic or geographic reality" in the occupied Palestinian territory and ensuring respect for international law.



ISLAMABAD: On directions of Prime Minister of Pakistan, NDMA dispatched humanitarian assistance for flood affected Nepal from Islamabad International Airport



ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani addressing the Safari Club International, Pakistan Chapter's International Conservation Fundraiser Gala Dinner 2026

Pakistan dispatches 100 tons of humanitarian assistance to Nepal

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan on Sunday dispatched a 100 ton consignment of humanitarian assistance to flood affected Nepal on the directions of the Prime Minister, with a chartered cargo flight carrying family tents, blankets, mats, hygiene kits and essential medicines departing from Islamabad International Airport for Kathmandu to provide vital relief to people impacted by the floods. The humanitarian assistance, coordinated by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), is intended to extend timely support to the flood affected population of Nepal and alleviate the hardships confronting communities in the aftermath of the disaster.

A send off ceremony was held at Islamabad International Airport, graced by Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhary and Chairman NDMA Lt Gen Inam Haider Malik, alongside the Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan and senior officials from the NDMA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Federal, provincial institutions must work together for protection of Pakistan's biodiversity: Gilani

ISLAMABAD, (INP): Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has said Pakistan is blessed with extraordinary biodiversity and some of the world's most remarkable wildlife, stressing that protecting this natural heritage is a shared responsibility.

Addressing an international conservation fundraiser gala dinner hosted by Safari Club International, Pakistan Chapter, Gilani said experience had shown that conservation efforts succeed when parliament, government, local communities, hunters, hunting outfitters and conservation organisations work together.

He said ethical and responsible hunting, when carried out lawfully and sustainably, can contribute to wildlife conservation by generating meaningful benefits for communities living alongside wildlife.

Gilani stressed that to make a real difference on the ground, the legislative and policy framework must take into account the views and experience of communities, wildlife professionals, hunters, hunting outfitters and other legitimate stakeholders. "We all must work in close coordination and understanding to ensure responsible hunting in sync with biodiversity and conservation imperatives," he said. The acting president also emphasised the need to recognise the legitimate role of responsible hunters who respect the law, uphold ethical hunting standards and contribute to conservation and community development.

He said their rights must go hand in hand with their responsibilities towards wildlife and future generations.

Any aggression against Iran to receive 'faster, heavier, more painful' response, warns Ghalibaf

TEHRAN, (Monitoring Desk): Iranian parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf on Sunday said the United States had realised that the era of "proportionate responses" had come to an end, the ISNA news agency posted on X.

"From now on, any aggression against Iran's interests and security will receive a 'faster, heavier, and more painful' response," Ghalibaf said.

He said powerful strikes by Iranian military forces against US bases had left American leaders "in a state of utter helplessness", IRNA news agency wrote on X.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said on early Sunday that it targeted a US aircraft carrier and a navy destroyer with ballistic missiles, claiming both were damaged and withdrew from the area.

The IRGC said in a statement published by IRNA news agency that its Aerospace Force launched the missiles at the two warships. It claimed the vessels had harassed Iranian ships and were taking part in a maritime blockade, adding that both warships left the "engagement area" after sustaining damage. The IRGC said the US military's Central Command (CENTCOM) acknowledged that two navy warships were targeted, describing its statement as confirmation of the operation. It also warned that continued US military action would draw "heavier" responses from Iran's armed forces.

In a separate statement early Sunday, the IRGC said its navy attacked a remotely operated US military vessel that it claimed was attempting to enter a protected area of the Strait of Hormuz.

The IRGC did not provide details about the type of attack or whether the vessel was damaged.

The Guards also reiterated Tehran's position that the Strait of Hormuz is under Iranian management and said the US should leave the region. Earlier on Saturday, the IRGC Navy said it targeted three oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz and three US-linked vessels elsewhere in response to American attacks on Iranian tankers. CENTCOM said Iran launched ballistic missiles toward two US Navy warships patrolling regional waters, and that both vessels evaded the attacks, with no American personnel harmed. It said US forces subsequently struck three Iranian crude oil tankers.

Lebanese president condemns renewed Israeli strikes on Nabatieh, urges international action

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on Sunday condemned renewed Israeli attacks on the southern city of Nabatieh and surrounding towns, saying the targeting of state institutions and health facilities marked a "dangerous escalation." In a statement posted by the Lebanese presidency on X, Aoun said the attacks caused civilian casualties, severely damaged a finance ministry building and destroyed Ghandour Hospital. He said the attacks went beyond repeated violations of the cessation-of-hostilities arrangement and the framework agreement by attacking Lebanese state institutions, public service facilities, a hospital and health centers. Aoun said the attack on the finance ministry building, following an earlier strike on a State Security centre that caused fatalities, demonstrated "a continuing pattern" of attacks extending beyond alleged military targets to civilian government and health facilities.



HYDERABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi leads a rally as part of mobilization campaign for PTI's upcoming street movement

National unity essential for stronger, prosperous Pakistan: Magsi

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Khalid Hussain Magsi Sunday said September 06 reminded the nation of the great sacrifices of the martyrs and the spirit of national unity demonstrated for the defence of the motherland.

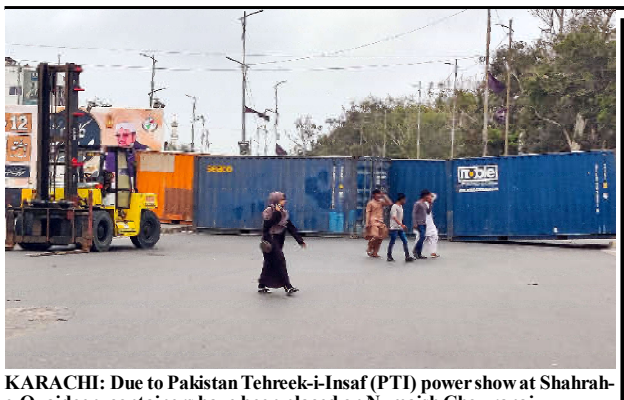
He said Defence Day was a proud day in the national history, recalling that in 1965 the Pakistani nation and armed forces had demonstrated exemplary unity, courage and determination in defending the country.

The federal minister paid rich tribute to the martyrs and Ghazis who sacrificed their lives for the defence of Pakistan, saying their sacrifices represented a shining example of national character, resolve and commitment.

Khalid Hussain Magsi said the Pakistan Armed Forces had demonstrated courage and professional capabilities in the "Battle for Truth" and their role in defending the country and protecting national interests was highly commendable.

He also lauded the leadership capabilities of Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, saying the mutual trust between the people and state institutions was the foundation of national stability.

The federal minister stressed that the promotion of quality education and science and technology was essential for building a strong Pakistan.



KARACHI: Due to Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) power show at Shahrah-e-Quaideen, containers have been placed on Numaish Chowrangi.

Pakistan strongly condemns demolition of mosque in India

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan Sunday strongly condemned the demolition of the century-old mosque in Saharanpur, India, on Saturday. While responding to media queries regarding reports of the demolition of a century-old mosque in Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India, the Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sajjad Haider Khan, stated: "This reprehensible action against a historic Islamic place of worship is yet another manifestation of the broader Islamophobic and Hindutva-driven campaign to erase the Islamic heritage. The demolition of the historic Babri Masjid in 1992 remains an enduring symbol of this ideology of religious intolerance, prejudice and hatred."

"Pakistan calls upon the international community to take immediate cognizance of the systematic persecution of Muslims by Indian authorities.

Law minister terms September 6 as memorable day in national history

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, on the occasion of Defence and Martyrs' Day, paid tribute to Pakistan's Armed Forces, martyrs and ghazis, saying that September 6 is a memorable day in the national history when the entire nation stood alongside its Armed Forces and reaffirmed its resolve to defend the motherland and safeguard national sovereignty.

In a statement, the Federal Minister said that during the 1965 war, officers and soldiers of Pakistan's Armed Forces demonstrated extraordinary courage, determination and bravery.

The great sacrifices of the martyrs and the bravery of the ghazis remain an unforgettable chapter of the country's national history.

He said the entire nation remembers with reverence and respect those who laid down their lives in defence of the motherland. He also paid tribute to the sacrifices, courage and steadfastness of the families of the martyrs.

Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar said that Pakistan's Armed Forces continue to discharge their responsibilities with unwavering commitment to the security, sovereignty and defence of the country.

He said the professionalism and services of the present military leadership and Pakistan's Armed Forces in defence of the country were highly commendable.

The Federal Minister said Pakistan is a peace-loving country and believes in dialogue and diplomatic means for lasting peace in the region. However, he added, the entire nation remains united and determined to safeguard the country's security, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Makkah pact symbol of trust between Pak, Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President and Acting Rector of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Prof Dr Ahmed Saad Alahmad, paid tribute to Pakistan's Armed Forces on Defence Day, praising their courage, professionalism and sacrifices for the country.

In his message, Prof Alahmad said the day was an opportunity to honour the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the defence of Pakistan and its people.

"As a Saudi and as the President and Acting Rector of the International Islamic University Islamabad, this tribute is deeply personal for me. Pakistan has come to feel like home," he said. Prof Alahmad said the recent Makkah Joint Defence Agreement had further strengthened the close ties between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. He described the agreement as a symbol of the trust, brotherhood and shared commitment to security between the two countries. "I cannot regard Pakistan's Armed Forces as Pakistan's alone; they are partners in our shared security," he said, adding that he saluted the armed forces with a deep sense of pride and fraternity.

He also appreciated Pakistan's commitment to peace and sustainability and prayed for the protection and prosperity of Pakistan, its people and defenders.

"May Allah protect Pakistan, its people and its defenders, and strengthen the bonds that unite our nations and the Muslim Ummah," he prayed.



ISLAMABAD: A large number of citizens participate in a rally organized by Top City on the occasion of Defence Day, paying tribute to the Pakistan Armed Forces

People still deprived of basic amenities: Aleem Khan

Says country continued to face a serious shortage of clean drinking water, while the condition of hospitals has deteriorated significantly and millions of children remained out of school

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Abdul Aleem Khan on Sunday said that people were still being deprived of basic necessities of life and no one who genuinely loved the country could be satisfied with the system.

In a message posted on X, he said that the country continued to face a serious shortage of clean drinking water, while the condition of hospitals had deteriorated significantly and millions of children remained out of school.

He said that people were still deprived of basic facilities while their hardships were increasing day by day.

The IPP President questioned "If the provinces were delivering effectively under the existing system why would the people be in such a condition?" He said there was a need to remove the lens of prejudice and look at the actual situation of the people as the reality is that the public is frustrated and deprived of basic amenities.

Aleem Khan questioned how long the common people would continue to be placated with slogans and be forced to travel hundreds of miles to have their problems addressed.

He said the time had come to ensure that basic facilities were provided to people at their doorsteps and that this required demand of the creation of new administrative units and a restructuring of the existing system is fulfilled in true manner.



TUNIS, TUNISIA: Hundreds of Tunisians protested living conditions and restrictions on freedom of expression during a demonstration called by the opposition Nafas movement

Ishaq Dar conveys Pakistan's condolences over death of Norway's King Harald V

ISLAMABAD, (INP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a telephone conversation with Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide and conveyed Pakistan's heartfelt condolences over the death of King Harald V of Norway. According to the Foreign Office spokesperson, Ishaq Dar expressed condolences to the royal family and the people of Norway on behalf of the President, Prime Minister, Field Marshal, himself and the people of Pakistan. The deputy prime minister informed the Norwegian foreign minister that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has nominated Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan to represent Pakistan at the funeral of King Harald V, scheduled to be held in Oslo on September 9.

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