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Peace requires sustained efforts at every level: President Zardari

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The International Day of Peace reminds us that lasting peace can only be achieved through dialogue, diplomacy, justice and full respect for international law and the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. This year's theme, "Invest in Peace: For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day", reminds us that peace requires sustained efforts at every level.

Pakistan remains firmly committed to international peace and security and to a strong, effective and inclusive multilateral system with the UN at its core. We support the peaceful settlement of disputes and a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and resolution based on dialogue, diplomacy and collective action.

For decades, Pakistani peacekeepers have served in UN missions across the globe, helping protect civilians, support communities affected by conflict and create conditions in which peace can take root. Their service, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances, reflects Pakistan's enduring commitment to international peace. We honour those who have given their lives in this cause and remain committed to supporting UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts.

Pakistan's diplomatic efforts to end the conflict between Iran and the United States have been acknowledged internationally. The Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding opened a path towards de-escalation and a negotiated settlement. The subsequent high-level talks at Bürgenstock, Switzerland, carried that effort forward by focusing on its implementation. Pakistan remains engaged in efforts to sustain dialogue and achieve a durable peace for the people of the region and the wider world. The unanimous adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2788, sponsored by Pakistan during its Presidency of the Council last year, was a significant reaffirmation of the Security Council's commitment to strengthening mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Pakistan believes that there can be no durable peace where the right of peoples to self-determination is denied and Security Council resolutions remain unimplemented, including in situations of foreign occupation such as Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

On this Day of Peace, Pakistan calls upon the international community to shoulder its responsibility by upholding the UN Charter.



QUETTA: A view of sewerage water accumulated near a hospital on Double Road creates problems for commuters.



LAHORE: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani addressing the Pakistan international auto show gala dinner organized by the Pakistan Association of automotive parts and accessories manufacturers (Paapam)

Outstanding regional issues should be addressed through dialogue: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has called on the international community to make dialogue, diplomacy, justice and respect for national sovereignty the foundations of a peaceful world.

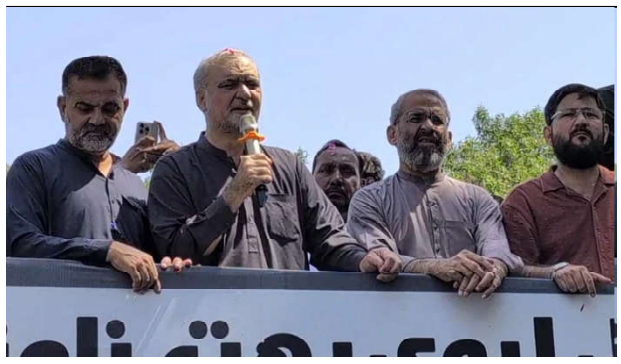
In his message on World Peace Day, Bilawal said conflicts in different parts of the world had demonstrated that military confrontation could not provide sustainable solutions to political disputes. He stressed the need to strengthen diplomatic mechanisms and resolve conflicts through negotiations rather than war.

Referring to the recent US-Iran conflict and Pakistan's diplomatic efforts, he said Pakistan had demonstrated its commitment to peace by facilitating communication and encouraging the parties to pursue a negotiated settlement.

Bilawal said the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Iran had reinforced the message that dialogue was preferable to war and diplomacy could offer a stronger path to resolving conflicts.

He said Pakistan, having itself suffered the consequences of war, terrorism and regional instability, understood the human and economic costs of conflict. Pakistan's efforts to facilitate communication between the United States and Iran, he added, reflected its stated policy of supporting peaceful resolution of disputes.

The PPP chairman also reiterated his call for "permanent peace in South Asia", saying outstanding regional issues, including the Kashmir dispute, water-related matters and terrorism, should be addressed through dialogue and diplomacy rather than military confrontation.



KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman addresses party workers at Cantt Station

Whole world witnessing rise in fuel prices due to global tensions, says Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Sunday that over 2.2 million people have so far signed up for the Prime Minister's Special Fuel Scheme, highlighting its successful rollout across the country, including Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Addressing a news conference here, he said 92 per cent of those registered are users of bikes, Qingqis and rickshaws.

Around 1.9 million tokens have been issued so far under the targeted fuel subsidy, of which 1.8 million are for bikes, rickshaws and Qingqis, while 152,000 have gone to 800cc cars.

The minister noted that the whole world is witnessing a rise in petrol and diesel prices due to global tensions, and Pakistan is no exception. However, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif brought the relevant departments and institutions on board and issued timely directives to design a scheme that would benefit the common and poor man.

The scheme, he said, is the result of the prime minister's planning, engagement and close supervision with all stakeholders.

On the Prime Minister's instructions, the Ministry of IT developed a digital dashboard to support the scheme, with a proper IT mechanism on the backend generating tokens for eligible applicants, he said, adding the scheme's successful implementation across the country reflects the Prime Minister's vision for public welfare.

He said public and media feedback has also shaped the scheme as the prime minister, at their request, relaxed eligibility for those bikes, Qingqis and rickshaws that were registered after 2006. SMS charges for registration have also been waived on public request, and the earlier condition limiting subsidised fuel to five liters per token per week for two and three wheelers have likewise been relaxed.

Every eligible person nationwide can now benefit from the scheme, he noted.

The minister expressed gratitude, on the Prime Minister's behalf, to the provincial governments including those of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan for their role in implementing the scheme.

Under the current terms, bike, Qingqis and rickshaw users can avail the token once a week and four times a month to receive Rs 500 in relief each time.

Enduring strength of peace depends on collective social consciousness: PM

ISLAMABAD, (APP): On the International Day of Peace, Pakistan, together with the international community, renews its commitment to the constructive values of peaceful coexistence, global stability and security, equal opportunities for development and prosperity, and justice and fairness.

Pakistan takes pride in its constructive role in advancing regional and international peace. We have made sincere and consistent efforts towards the resolution of conflicts, de-escalation of tensions, and promotion of global peace. Pakistan has also consistently served as a vanguard in United Nations peacekeeping missions, a contribution that remains a source of immense national pride.

This year, the International Day of Peace is being observed under the theme, "Invest in Peace, For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day."

The theme underscores that peace is not merely the absence of armed conflict rather its true dividends are manifested at both the global and national levels through the economic and social well-being of people, protection of fundamental rights, dignity and respect, equal opportunities, and inclusion.

Meaningful development underway in Balochistan: Zahoor Buledi

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Minister for Planning and Development Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi has said the province is moving towards meaningful change, with greater attention being given to improving access to quality healthcare and education and expanding opportunities for dignified employment. In a statement on social media platform X, Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi said access to quality health and education services, together with decent employment opportunities, formed the foundation for sustainable development and a prosperous Balochistan.

Referring to a social media post by Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti regarding the successful completion of 100 major surgeries at Mir Ghulam Qadir Bugti Memorial Hospital in Baiker, he described the development as an important step towards extending specialized healthcare services to people living in remote areas of the province.

According to a recent report, the Baiker hospital has completed 100 major surgeries, including emergency and complex cases, strengthening the availability of specialized medical and surgical services at the local level.

Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi said the availability of quality healthcare in remote areas would reduce the difficulties faced by residents who otherwise have to travel long distances to major cities for treatment.

JI kicks off long march towards Islamabad against petroleum levy

KARACHI, (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami chief Hafiz Naeem ur Reehman on Sunday said that the long march has started, "Now, the government have only way out to provide relief to people". JI leader was leading the train march from Karachi Cantt railway station. The Jamaat's march has entered in its second phase as hundreds of the party's activists accompanied to Hafiz Naeem. Before launching the march to Islamabad, the party ended its protest sit-in at the Press Club Chowk and workers moved to the Cantt railway station. "The protest will only end when the levy's extortion will be ended," talking to media JI leader said. The Jamaat-e-Islami has launched a protest campaign against the Petroleum Development Levy (PDL), with sit-ins across the country, while a long march to Islamabad has been started from today to press for the demand.

Hafiz Naeem said, "no obstacle would stop us". "If the extortion levy will continue, our protest would intensify with it", he warned. "It is not necessary that the situation remains under control after reaching to Islamabad," JI chief said.

PM praises security forces for killing five terrorists, rescuing 23 hostages in N-25 operation

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday paid rich tribute to the security forces for conducting a successful operation against terrorists near Kalat along the N-25, connecting Chaman and Karachi. The prime minister, in statement, commended the security forces for their timely and effective action, which resulted in the elimination of five terrorists and the safe rescue of 23 abducted individuals from a terrorist hideout. He lauded the security forces for timely thwarting the terrorists' nefarious plot to disrupt public movement, carry out kidnappings for ransom, extort citizens, and snatch vehicles along the national highway. The prime minister also praised the professional capabilities of the security forces for recovering a large cache of arms and explosives from possession of the terrorists.

Nefarious designs of terrorist elements to be thwarted at every level: CM Bugti

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has commended security forces for their successful operations against militants in Panjgur and Chagai under Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3, saying the killing of 11 terrorists demonstrated the forces' resolve to safeguard national security and thwart militant designs.

The chief minister paid tribute to the security personnel involved in the operations, describing their professional capabilities and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism as commendable.

He said the successful actions in Panjgur and Chagai had disrupted the plans of militant elements, adding that the country's security personnel were continuing to confront terrorism with courage and determination despite the risks involved.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said the nation deeply valued the services and sacrifices rendered by security forces in combating terrorism. He maintained that operations against what he referred to as Fitna al-Hindustan and Fitna al-Khawarij would continue in the interest of national security.

The chief minister said state institutions and the nation remained united in efforts to eliminate terrorism and that the designs of militant elements would be thwarted at every level.

He also paid tribute to the personnel who participated in Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3, saying the nation stood alongside its security forces in the fight against terrorism.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb addresses news conference.

Marches, sit-ins might cause Rs120 bln daily loss to exchequer: Finance Minister

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has termed planned marches and sit-ins "self-inflicted pain", warning they could cause a Rs120 billion daily loss to the national exchequer.

His remarks came as opposition parties, including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), stepped up separate protest campaigns against the government.

The PTI has announced a protest movement scheduled for September 27, with demands including the release of PTI founder Imran Khan and upholding constitutional supremacy and the rule of law. The JI has announced a march on Islamabad over the petroleum development levy and rising fuel costs.

In his message on Sunday, Aurangzeb said such protests were difficult to understand at a time when Pakistan had made considerable efforts to achieve economic stability, warning that disruption to economic activity could undermine the country's transition from stability towards economic development. He said Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves had reached $21.4 billion, the highest level in the country's history.

The finance minister said the government was reducing expenditure, while the fiscal deficit had declined significantly and the current account was in surplus. He said remittances were continuously increasing and exports were moving in the right direction. FinMin Aurangzeb expressed hope that the pace of economic growth would accelerate further. Aurangzeb said GDP growth stood at 3.7% during the last financial year, while economic growth was expected to exceed 4% during the current fiscal year. He said large-scale manufacturing was undergoing a recovery, while corporate profits and investment in the stock market had increased.

The finance minister said 11 initial public offerings (IPOs) were conducted last year, compared with five in the first two months of the current year, describing the increase as a sign of confidence in the country's business and investment environment.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for State and Chairman Pakistan Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority, Bilal Bin Saqib, meets with U.S Charge d'Affaires Natalie Baker

THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

Monday September 21, 2026

Mere promises

What is a UNSC resolution worth if it is never implemented? Pakistan and China felt compelled to convene an informal meeting of the UN Security Council earlier this week to discuss implementation of the body's own resolutions. The session was aimed at discussing how the Council "can ensure the full, effective and non-selective implementation of its resolutions". As Pakistan's permanent representative to the UN pointed out, UNSC resolutions are legally binding under the UN Charter. Other experts noted that the implementation of resolutions "lies at the heart of the Council's credibility, authority and effectiveness". They suggested that resolutions be accompanied by "realistic mandates, clear implementation pathways, sustained reporting, adequate resources, political will and follow-up mechanisms" to ensure they are acted upon. Pakistan also proposed some practical measures, including an annual review of progress on passed resolutions, clearer implementation pathways, and stronger follow-up. As our ambassador pointed out, "selective or prolonged non-implementation weakens the Council's authority, prolongs unresolved disputes and deepens human suffering". India-occupied Kashmir and occupied Palestine are both cases in point.

However, helpful as these suggestions are, the deeper problem is one that no procedural fix can address. The Security Council does not fail to implement its resolutions because of administrative difficulties; it fails repeatedly because its permanent members have diverging views on a number of issues, and the veto power allows any one of them to shield a favoured party from the consequences of disregarding the body's resolutions. In other words, the UNSC's dysfunction arises from politics rather than technical limitations. Of course, this does not detract from the effort by Pakistan and China to push a constructive, multilateral approach to addressing the dysfunction.

At a time when powerful states increasingly seem to be abandoning it, they have signalled that the rules-based order, for all its shortcomings, is still worth defending. However, perhaps expectations should be tempered with the realisation that the gap between resolutions and realities can only be plugged when the powerful close it.

No number of annual reviews and follow-ups will generate the great-power consensus needed to enforce UNSC resolutions. Where that consensus is absent, as has been the case in occupied Kashmir and Palestine, no amount of follow-up can get results. Closing that gap calls for a harder, more patient diplomacy aimed at the powers that hold the resolutions hostage.

Hand to page

Muna Khan

The fear I keep hearing about AI isn't the one that makes headlines. It isn't about robots taking jobs or machines making humans obsolete. It's quieter than that. It's the worry that dependency might make us forget how to think for ourselves.

Some doctors say even young adults may not be spared 'brain atrophy' so forgetting is normal. But what I'm increasingly witnessing isn't the forgetfulness of age. It's something more voluntary. A willingness to hand over the thinking.

Don't get me wrong. I am on team AI. It's no different to assistant tools like Cliff Notes in the late 1980s when we needed help understanding the AP literature heavyweights. You still had to read Joseph Conrad but Cliff Notes could help you understand him better. Now you could probably get AI to write like Joseph Conrad. We're blaming AI for generating writing but not looking at the person making it do the generating. There's always been, and will be, shortcuts to everything in life. Sometimes I think we are mad at the wrong thing.

But let's be precise about who benefits from our dependency. Big Tech is already telling us how we should look — the same stick thin, filled lip, cat-eyed faces that scroll past us on every platform, until we forget what an ordinary human face looks like. In 2019, Jia Tolentino called it the cyborgian look — a single beauty ideal engineered not by culture but by algorithms optimised for engagement. I wrote about it for this paper when I noticed rows of women with big lips and 'snatched' jawlines at a dermatologist's office in Karachi in 2018.

We are morphing into versions of each other, and we have barely noticed.

Now Big Tech is coming for our voices too. The same companies profiting from our insecurity about our faces are also profiting from our diminishing capacity to think and write without their tools. Almost perfect AI-generated sentences, frictionless and indistinguishable, are becoming the norm. The result, if we are not careful, will be a literature of

sameness. Content that sounds like everything else because it was made the same way. That is not a coincidence. It is a business model.

I have a simple suggestion that I'm now teaching: Write with your hand. Keep a notebook to record your thoughts, your grocery list, the phone number of someone you met. Stop using your phone for this. Think of it as a small act of resistance.

The forgotten art is not writing itself. It is observation. To look up from a screen and notice the room you are sitting in. To register the specific detail — the light, the object, the thing that makes you stop. Ten people in a room will never write the same thing about it. That irreducible difference is your voice. AI cannot replicate it because AI was not there. You were.

Which raises a question nobody in our education system is asking: are we teaching young people to observe at all? We are already teaching children through rote. Our syllabi are hardly designed to encourage independent thinking, let alone critical thinking. If students with access to AI can submit generated essays without consequence, if the skill of noticing is never tested or rewarded, we don't just produce incurious adults. We produce people who have nothing original to say.

And a society builds on itself through its people's stories. If we don't teach our children to notice their lives, we deny them the very material from which those stories are made. That is not AI's fa--ult. It is ours. And as always, those wi--thout access to these tools will fall further behind — the disparity betw-een those who can af--fo--rd to think origin-a-l-ly and those still catching up will only widen.

Unintended consequences

Quatrina Hosain

The illegal and ill-advised US and Israeli war in Iran has apparently led to a major rethink in Arab capitals as they examine the post-ceasefire scenario. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian gave the first public hint of a new, embryonic security architecture emerging for West Asia and the Middle East during his recent state visit to Pakistan.

Calling for a 'united front' of Muslim nations, he elaborated on extending a "hand of friendship" and a new regional security structure. His statement follows a series of diplomatic moves and countermoves after the war in Iran left a security vacuum in the region, particularly in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

The political and military dynamic in the region is moving at its own pace, separate from the sporadic and fractious negotiations between the US and Iran, taking shape in the form of quiet discussions between regional players. A regional security architecture comprising Pakistan, Iran, Turkiye, the GCC, and Egypt, perhaps later extending to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Jordan and others, would be a historic paradigm shift in the geopolitical landscape. The thaw in relations between Iran and the Gulf Arab states comes after decades of mutual hostility, but it is clear that Saudi Arabia has paved the way for the warming ties. Iran repeatedly struck US bases across the region, wholly or partially destroying major facilities, as well as damaging civilian infrastructure, but maintained it was responding to military attacks launched from US bases in the GCC countries.

The US has not revealed the extent of the damage to radars, communications hubs, aircraft and other key facilities, but it was soon evident that US forces, that had established a foothold in the region after the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, were now acting as lightning rods drawing Iranian drone and missile fire, instead of being a security shield. And the US supplied Israel with substantial air defence missiles, perhaps leading to resentment from the GCC that they were left partially unprotected.

Political concerns are also heightened and have led to the establishment of the R4 (Regional 4) in the early days of the war, comprising Pakistan, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The group has already met four times, indicating urgency and commitment. Pakistan has been the epicentre of the regional push for a ceasefire between Iran and the US and appears to have assumed a quiet role in reshaping the post-war regional order. In addition to extensive diplomatic outreach, there were also two unique visits by military leaders to Pakistan just days before the formal signing of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding.

On June 9, Gen Rodolphe Haykal, Commander of Lebanon's Armed Forces met Field Marshal Asim Munir, followed two days later by Gen Metin Tokel, Commander of Turkiye's Land Forces. Field Marshal Munir also visited Iran at least twice during the war, meeting the political leadership and the Iranian military high command.

But it has been growing anger at Israel's continuing savagery in Gaza and the West Bank, the invasion of Lebanon, its threats to other countries, and the relentless pushing of its ideological imperative of establishing Greater Israel that has forced the Gulf States, Turkiye and other nations in the Middle East to accept that Israel is actively undermining regional stability. It is clear the US can no longer contain or control Israel. And President Donald Trump's bizarre atte-m-pt to link peace negotiations with Arab countries sig-ning the Abraham Accords likely tip-ped the balance.

Dams on Chenab - a target?

Ahmer Bilal Soofi

India is fast-tracking at least four major hydro projects on the upper stretches of the Chenab, including Pakal Dul, Kiru, Kwar, Ratle and the massive Sawalkote project. Tenders have been issued. Several private consultants and contracting companies have entered the process, such as Afcon Infrastructure, Bharat Heavy Electricals, Andritz Hydro, Patel Engineering and others.

A legal question often asked by our think tanks is: can Pakistan carry out a strike against any dam, pondage or water tunnel that India says it will construct on the Chenab? The question is raised in the context of the very specific protection accorded to dams, dykes and similar sites during armed conflict under Article 56 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

The reply is simple: such a structure, though civilian property, loses its protection rights when it is itself being used as a tool to achieve the military objective of subjugating a lower riparian. In this case, civilian infrastructure under construction, like a dam, is no longer protected because it is being built for military purposes.

India's openly owned narrative will help Pakistan argue successfully that the dams on the Chenab are being made with stated belligerent intent. For instance, India's own minister for water resources, C.R. Patil, recently said "It is certain, not a single drop of water will go [to Pakistan] in the coming years". This statement reflects the Indian government's policy position. Neither recalled nor corrected by India's foreign ministry or the Prime Minister's Office, these remarks leave no doubt about India's belligerent intent and hostile action, accompanied by its position that Operation Sindoor is not over.

According to its version, holding the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in abeyance is one of several belligerent actions it can take during this ongoing self-declared war. Thus, an armed conflict situation continues between Pakistan and India.

India is not holding back its belligerent actions and is continuing to wagewar through multiple means on Pakistan, including through its proxies launched from Afghanistan. This was the backdrop to the water minister's statement, which is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to divert water and prevent it from flowing to the lower riparian.

It is an outright threat to Pakistan that forceful means will be employed to deny Pakistanis their right to agriculture and subsistence. That's how measures to prevent the construction of dams or diversion tunnels by India are justified under the well-known right of anticipatory self-defence. Pakistan will thus be justified if it chooses to act within the parameters of international law, or jus ad bellum, to take all necessary measures to stop, delay or fully prevent any such construction.

However, let's also see whether under jus in bello the dam can enjoy traditional protection during an armed conflict launched and continued by India. Article 56(1) of Additional Protocol I states that "works or installations containing dangerous forces, namely dams, dykes and nuclear electrical generating stations, shall not be made the object of attack, even where these objects are military objectives, if such attacks cause the release of dangerous forces and consequent severe losses among the civilian population".

A careful reading shows that while the protection is in general terms, there is an exception where the protected dam itself is likely to function or is actually functioning to achieve the enemy's military objective. That is exactly the case for Pakistan.

This is further clarified in the same article where Para 56(2) intimates us that the special protection "shall cease (a) for a dam or dyke only if it is used for other than its normal functions in regular, significant and direct support of military operations and if such attack is the only feasible way to terminate support".

Article 52 of Additional Protocol 1 likely underpinned the position of Pakistan's defence minister when he stated that the construction of a dam would be considered an act of war and that Pakistan would respond. Its description of military objectives would certainly include any hydro project "which by their nature, location, purpose or use make an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture or neutralisation, in the circumstances ruling at the time, offers a definite military advantage".

As mentioned, India links the dam's construction to the military objective of punishing Pakistan. Had it planned to build any dam pursuant to the IWT, then Pakistan could not have objected to its purpose. Ironically, by holding the treaty in abeyance, India itself has withdrawn the traditional protection accorded to dams and dykes in the law of war since it has declared that its construction is linked to achieving a military objective against Pakistan. In preventing the construction of these controversial dams and other hydro projects, Pakistan seeks a military advantage that would reduce and degrade the capacity of the Indian army and Indian government to break the will of the people of Pakistan.

Climate budget

Aisha Khan

As Pakistan navigates intense climate vulnerability, the federal budget for FY26-27 allocates Rs2.478 billion to the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). While this allocation signals a policy acknowledgement of environmental threats, an objective examination reveals a disconnect between financial inputs and tangible outcomes. By analysing funding lines (afforestation, capacity building and urban strategies) against realities on the ground, we can evaluate whether these public funds serve genuine ecological preservation or merely fuel profit loops.

The centrepiece of the ministry's portfolio is the 'Upscaling Green Pakistan Prog-r-amme', consuming Rs2.335bn (over 94 per cent of the budget). On paper, massive tree plantation drives are laudable. However, evaluating this expenditure requires looking beyond the number of saplings planted to assess the broader ecosystem.

Pakistan suffers from one of the highest rates of deforestation in Asia, driven by timber mafias, unregulated urban sprawl and agricultural conversion. While the government spends billions planting fragile saplings, mature forests which possess superior carbon sequestration capacities, established root systems for flood mitigation and rich biodiversity are cut down at alarming rates. A sapling takes decades to replicate the ecological services of a single mature tree. By failing to halt deforestation, the state is effectively emptying a sinking boat with a thimble.

Without strict survival-rate audits, afforestation drives risk becoming cyclical commercial operations where dead saplings are repeatedly replaced using public funds, benefiting commercial interest groups while yielding negligible long-term ecological returns.

The remaining budget lines follow a similar pattern of administrative expenditure outstripping concrete outcomes. The 'Green Skills for Sustainable Development' initiative, allocated Rs51.6 million, aims to train youth for eco-friendly jobs. However, without a structural shift in Pakistan's economy to create green industries, training programmes remain isolated workshops. The output becomes a certified but underemployed cohort, turning the allocation into a public relations metric rather than an economic transformation tool. Similarly, Rs50m is earmarked for the 'Formulation of the National Urban Strategy and Guidelines' to prevent urban flooding. Pakistan already possesses an abundance of policy documents, frameworks and strategy papers. Funding yet another guideline document while municipalities lack basic financial resources to upgrade drainage systems, stop wetland encroachment or enforce building codes is an analytical failure.

Given the country's repeated exposure to floods, droughts, heatwaves, and glacial hazards, the budget remains small compared to the scale of climate risks. For strengthening coping capacity, it will be important that future budgets place greater emphasis on adaptation and resilience alongside mitigation and tree-planting initiatives.

A review of the climate change ministry's PSDP allocations over the past five years shows that despite growing climate risks and stronger international commitments, federal development spending on climate action has generally declined in real terms.

Inflation in Pakistan has remained elevated during much of the period from 2022 to 2026. Even if the ministry's budget had remained constant, its purchasing power would have declined. Instead, the nomi-nal PSDP allocation itself has fallen from Rs9.6bn in FY 2022-23 to Rs2.48bn in FY 2026-27. In real terms, therefore, federal climate development spe--nding appears to have contracted sig-nificantly.

The federal ministry's allocation rem-ains an important signal of national priorities, and a declining PSDP trend suggests that climate governance is increasingly expected to rely on external finance and cross-sectoral spending rather than a growing dedicated federal climate budget.

From the perspective of climate governance, the budget is heavily weighted towards an ecosystem with comparatively limited resources dedicated to adaptation planning, climate resilience infrastructure, early warning systems and climate risk management.

For a country with growing risks, transparency is essential to determine whether its climate budget is genuinely mitigating a national emergency, or simply operating as a subsidised mechanism for elite enrichment. True climate resilience is not built on unverified metrics but proven by an outcome-based financial model. This will require us to shift to independent public audits, open-data monitoring and decentralised accountability.

UN reports 1,004 verified cases of sexual violence in Ukraine war

GENEVA, (Agencies): Russian forces committed widespread sexual violence against civilians and prisoners of war in Ukraine, including gang rape and electric shocks to the genitals, while Ukrainian authorities were also responsible for a smaller number of violations, the U.N. human rights office said.

The report documented 1,004 verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence between Feb. 24, 2022, when Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and July 31, 2026. The U.N. said the cases included rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, genital mutilation, forced nudity, beatings and electric shocks to the genitals.

Of the verified cases, 89% were attributed to Russian authorities, including members of the armed forces, prison service and security agencies. The remaining 11% were attributed to Ukrainian authorities, including members of the armed forces, prison service and security service.

The U.N. said the findings were based on confidential interviews with hundreds of victims and survivors, as well as court documents, official records and other evidence. It stressed that the figures do not represent a comprehensive account of sexual violence in the conflict, which remains significantly underreported.

Russia's permanent diplomatic mission in Geneva declined to comment on the report.

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry said it welcomed the report, saying it demonstrated the scale of human rights violations perpetrated by Russia while also highlighting measures taken by Ukrainian authorities to prevent sexual violence and provide compensation to victims.

The statement did not directly address the report's findings of abuses allegedly committed by Ukrainian forces.

The report said Russia's refusal to grant the U.N. Human Rights Office access to occupied Ukrainian territory, prisoners of war and civilian detainees meant the figures likely underestimate the true scale of the violations.

In occupied areas of Ukraine and within Russia, Russian authorities carried out sexual violence against Ukrainian prisoners of war and detained civilians at various stages of captivity, including during capture, transfer, interrogation and detention, the report said.

The violations included gang rape, rape, genital mutilation and electric shocks to men's genitals using a Soviet-era field telephone known as a "tapik." The findings were based on interviews with victims of sexual violence committed by both sides.

Most victims in detention were men, particularly prisoners of war and detainees, although women and children were also affected, mainly in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine.

"Sexual violence in conflict is often misunderstood to be mainly affecting women and girls, whereas in the Ukraine war context, the majority of survivors are men," Danielle Bell, head of the U.N. Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, said.



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attended the 'Lottery Ceremony for the Placement of Relatives of Martyrs, Veterans and Relatives of Veterans in Public Institutions'.



The annual military parade for Army Day was held at O'Higgins Park in Santiago, the capital of Chile. Various units of the army and navy participated in the parade, which also included a demonstration flyover by F-16 jets.

President, DPM extend condolences to China and Nepal over flood losses

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday extended their deepest condolences to the leadership and people of China and Nepal over the tragic loss of lives and destruction due to flash floods and landslides that struck their border region.

In a condolence message on the official X wall of the President of Pakistan, the president said the immense loss of precious lives and the many still missing were a tragedy of profound magnitude. "Pakistan shares the grief of its Chinese and Nepali brothers and sisters during this hour of sorrow," he said. He saluted the bravery and dedication of search and rescue teams operating under extreme conditions and said Pakistan stands ready to extend every possible support to assist the relief efforts. The president said his thoughts and prayers are with all those who have lost loved ones, and he prayed for the safe return of the missing.

Trump imposes new sanctions designed to pressure Russia over war in Ukraine

WASHINGTON, (Monitoring Desk): US President Donald Trump signed a bill authorising new sanctions designed to pressure Russia over its war in Ukraine, after Congress gave its approval after months of delay.

Washington is pushing to revive a mediated path towards ending the conflict as Moscow intensifies attacks against Ukraine, even though much of its attention — and munitions — are focused on the ongoing war against Iran.

The legislation, which US lawmakers approved this week, takes aim at Russia's energy and defense sectors, alongside President Vladimir Putin and other senior officials.

It also targets Moscow's so-called shadow fleet of tankers used to evade Western sanctions, and allows Trump the authority to impose tariffs of up to 100 percent on major buyers of Russian oil and gas.

That could potentially cover China and India, and further efforts to cut off revenue financing Moscow's war. The Republican-led House of Representatives passed the package by a 262-159 vote on Wednesday.

The bill would also target companies and foreign actors supporting Russia's military, and extend sanctions involving Iran.

But the broad powers to impose tariffs sparked an unusual split among Democrats, who largely support Ukraine but have resisted handing Trump wider authority over trade.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky earlier hailed the legislation as "symbolic" and thanked US lawmakers.

US warns of Mideast escalation after Houthis strike Saudi capital

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): The U.S. has warned that hostilities between Saudi Arabia and Iran-backed Houthis could "escalate rapidly" after a Saturday missile targeted Riyadh for the first time since Yemen's civil war resumed.

President Donald Trump cut short a weekend at Camp David, a secluded presidential complex in rural Maryland, to return unexpectedly to the White House on Saturday.

The White House gave no explanation for the early return, which came as the conflict between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis crossed a new threshold. The Houthis control a large part of Yemen and are fighting government forces backed by a coalition led by Riyadh.

Loud explosions rang out twice Saturday in the Saudi capital, where a fuel tank bearing the logo of oil giant Aramco was on fire near the airport, according to Agence France-Presse (AFP). "This military conflict has the potential to escalate rapidly," the U.S. State Department warned, adding American citizens outside the Middle East should "seriously reconsider travel to and through the region." The Houthis' lightning offensive seizing large areas of Yemeni territory in recent weeks has left hundreds killed and, according to the U.N., displaced over 110,000 people.

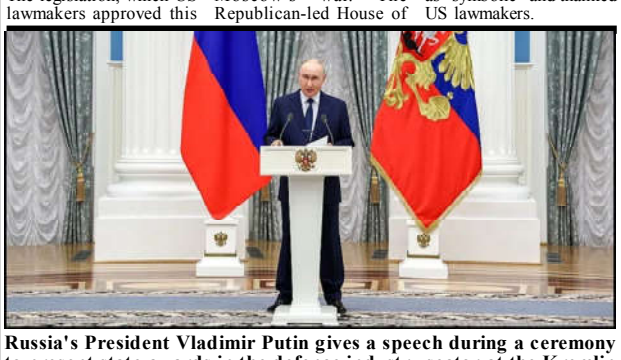
These clashes and the subsequent hostilities with the kingdom have already disrupted Saudi Arabia's exports – the world's leading supplier of crude oil – as well as maritime traffic.

The Riyadh-led coalition confirmed Saturday evening in a post on X that a ballistic missile launched by the Houthis toward the capital was "successfully intercepted and destroyed." The coalition added that the pro-Iranian fighters had tried to target "civilians and civilian infrastructure" in several cities in the west of the kingdom, including the port of Yanbu on the Red Sea, an important export hub for Saudi oil. It said these attacks were "thwarted by the kingdom's air defenses."

Saudi Arabia has responded with scores of airstrikes on Houthi-held areas but failed to stop the advance. The Houthis said they had responded to recent Saudi attacks by carrying out "two successful military operations using a large number of ballistic and cruise missiles and drones," Houthi military spokesman Yahya Saree said in a statement on Telegram. "The first targeted sensitive sites in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, and the second targeted Aramco facilities in Yanbu."

Hours after the early morning alert, residents told AFP anonymously that they heard what sounded like a round of explosions echoing through parts of the Saudi capital.

This is the first time since Yemen's civil war resumed that strikes have threatened the Saudi capital, piling further pressure on a global economy already rocked by seven months of war between the U.S. and Iran. Riyadh residents received a message just before 3 a.m. urging them to stay indoors and warning, "The area is under a hostile aerial threat."



Russia's President Vladimir Putin gives a speech during a ceremony to present state awards in the defence industry sector at the Kremlin in Moscow.

11 killed in explosion at army site in Syria

SYRIA, (Agencies): Eleven soldiers have been killed in an explosion at an army site in Syria's eastern province of Deir Az Zor, according to the Ministry of Defence. Syria's military held a funeral procession for the soldiers, a day after they were killed in the blast, the ministry said. The explosion struck a weapons cache within a Syrian Arab Army position in the town of Ayyash, in western Deir Az Zor, the official SANA news agency reported, citing the defence ministry. Nine other soldiers were wounded, according to a statement from the provincial government.

The cause of the blast has not been determined, and an investigation is under way, the statement added.

This was the second blast at a Syrian military site in less than two weeks. Videos of the funeral ceremony broadcast on state broadcaster Al Ikhbiriya showed mourners gathered outside the National Hospital in Deir Az Zor city on Saturday, where the bodies, wrapped in Syrian flags, were carried in the funeral procession. Al Ikhbiriya said the soldiers were killed while transporting heavy ammunition at the site.

The blast follows a September 9 explosion at a temporary weapons and war-remnants depot in Sarmada, in the northwestern province of Idlib, which the Syrian Defence Ministry said killed 14 soldiers and wounded more than 10 people, including some civilians. The ministry said at the time it took responsibility for that incident and that the depot had been used to collect weapons and munitions left over from Syria's civil war in advance of their transfer



GAZA CITY, GAZA, PALESTINE: Relatives and mourners react with grief outside the mortuary of al-Shifa Hospital.

Araghchi hits back at France over human rights criticism

TEHRAN, (Agencies): Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi hit back at recent statements by his French counterpart Jean-Noël Barrot where Barrot accused Iran of human rights violations, criticising Paris for its silence over the killing of Iranian schoolchildren by the United States. Addressing Barrot in a post on X, Araghchi said, "1.5mn Algerians were slaughtered by France in their War of Independence. Less than 1/10 of them have been recorded by Paris, which refuses any apology for its colonial crimes." "Stop your crocodile tears @jnbarrot. Your silence when the US massacred our schoolkids said it all," he added. The Minab school strike killed 168 people, including 120 students and 26 teachers. More than 110 people were wounded. Investigations indicate three precision-strike Tomahawk missiles hit the school. The school was struck three separate times, according to Press TV. South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun on Friday reiterated Seoul's willingness to contribute "substantively" to efforts to restore freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz in a meeting with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio at the State Department.

Huckabee urges 'severe consequences' over West Bank violence

RAMALLAH, (Agencies): The U.S. ambassador to Israel said there was no plan to forcibly remove Palestinians from Gaza, seeking to draw a distinction between voluntary departure and proposals by Israeli far-right ministers to relocate the territory's roughly 2 million residents.

Ambassador Mike Huckabee made the comments during a visit to Palestinian-American families in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where he also called on Israel to protect Palestinian residents from settler violence.

"I can tell you categorically there is no plan of the Israelis to displace people out of Gaza against their will," Huckabee told reporters.

His remarks came after two senior Israeli ministers publicly discussed plans that would involve Palestinians leaving Gaza.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir said Thursday that he wanted to see about 250,000 Palestinians leave Gaza during the first year, followed by the departure of the rest of the population over the next six years. Defense Minister Israel Katz said a day earlier that Israel was prepared to facilitate the departure of Palestinians from Gaza by sea and land, but was waiting for the United States as discussions continued over where those Palestinians could go. Katz also claimed, without providing evidence, that about 80% of Gaza's residents wanted to leave but were being prevented from doing so by Hamas. Huckabee said the administration of President Donald Trump supports Palestinians having the option to leave Gaza if they choose, but rejected any suggestion that they should be forced out. "There is an open-mindedness if people wish to leave, that they should have the right to leave," Huckabee said, describing it as a "disgrace" to "incarcerate" Palestinians inside Gaza. "Nobody is suggesting there would be forced displacement," he added.

Iraq calls coalition mission exit a 'sovereign milestone'

BAGHDAD, (Agencies): Iraq said that the September 30 end of the military mission of the US-led international coalition against ISIS (Daesh) will pave the way for bilateral relations with coalition member states based on respect for Iraqi sovereignty and mutual interests. Government spokesman Haider al-Aboudi told the Iraqi News Agency (INA) that the date represented a "sovereign milestone" for the Iraqi state based on official understandings and commitments. He said it would pave the way for Iraq's relations with coalition countries to transition to bilateral ties based on respect for Iraqi sovereignty and mutual interests. Al-Aboudi said Iraq had constitutional, political and diplomatic tools, as well as the ability to manage security through its institutions and armed forces. "The government is proceeding with completing the termination of the coalition's military mission according to the agreed timelines and mechanisms, and there will be no change to this course outside the will of the Iraqi state," he said.



The traditional costume and archery parade, held annually on the first Sunday of Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany, took place this year.



The 74th San Sebastian International Film Festival has begun in San Sebastian, Spain.

Killings of nine women reignite anger over gender-based violence in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG, (Agencies): South Africans gathered for memorial runs and protests this week after the killings of nine women near Johannesburg reignited anger and fear over violence that many say mirrors the dangers women face every day. Police have found the bodies of nine in Ekurhuleni, east of Johannesburg, over the past two months and are investigating whether the killings are linked.

Most of the victims were in their 20s and 30s. Some were found stripped of their clothes and showed signs of sexual assault. A memorial run in Johannesburg honoured one of the victims, Elizabeth Moselakgomo, who disappeared after going for a run and was found dead days later.

Yemen war escalates as Houthis report 26 Saudi attacks in 24 hours

SANAA, (Agencies): Yemen's Houthi rebels have said Saudi Arabia carried out 26 attacks against areas under the group's control in the past 24 hours, as the two sides continue trading fire amid an escalating war in Yemen, according to the AFP news agency.

On Friday, the group claimed Saudi attacks on Houthi-held territory had reached 300 over the past week alone, hitting positions across the areas it controls, AFP reported.

Yemen's government, backed by Saudi Arabia, said on Friday its forces had killed 30 Houthi rebels and wounded more than 60 in clashes in the al-Waziiyah district of Taiz province, one of several fronts where combat has picked up this week.The exchange has come on the heels of a widening escalation of fighting in Yemen between the government's military and the Houthi fighters.

Tens of thousands marched through Sanaa on Friday in a show of support for the Iran-backed Houthis and against Saudi Arabia, as the rebels press gains that have brought large stretches of Yemen's Red Sea coast, including the strategic Bab al-Mandeb Strait, under their control.

Earlier this week, the intensifying attacks between the Yemeni government and the Houthi rebels killed at least five people, including three children, according to reports from both sides.

Saudi Arabia said one person was killed in the Taif governorate after a Houthi drone was intercepted, while Houthi-linked media reported deaths from Saudi attacks in Taiz and the town of Abs.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) condemned the Houthis' continuing attacks on Saudi Arabia, saying they had caused civilian casualties, including women and children.

No one to be allowed to play with country's peace, stability: Ahsan

NAROWAL (Agencies): Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal called for stability in Pakistan, saying the country needs unity, peace and economic strength rather than anarchy and long marches.
Addressing a ceremony at Mahmood Khan Polytechnic College in Narowal, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) stalwart said that no international investor would turn to Pakistan if there was unrest and disorder.
He said investors choose countries where there is peace, stability and economic strength.
Iqbal said rising oil prices in the international market also led to higher prices in Pakistan, adding that the fuel prices would fall in the country once the global oil crisis ended and international prices came down.
Iqbal alleged that India was trying to weaken Pakistan through terrorism after facing defeat in conventional and missile warfare. He said India had been defeated in the conventional field during the recent conflict and that Pakistan would also face the non-conventional challenge.
He said the enemy was trying to divert attention from the Pakistan's international achievements, adding that no one would be allowed to play with the country's peace and stability. "Today Pakistan needs unity, peace and stability, not long marches and disorder," Iqbal said.
He urged young people to become a voice for peace and stability and said those spreading hatred and disorder must be rejected, hoping that the talented young people would become a source of pride and an identity for the country.
Iqbal said the government's mission was to make the country one of the world's strongest economies. He said young people were being provided with quality technical education and digital skills instead of being limited to schemes involving chickens, eggs, goats and sheep.
The planning minister said that the country had been brought away from fears of bankruptcy towards economic stability. He also referred to Pakistan's role in hosting talks between Iran and the United States, calling it a diplomatic success. He said the defence agreement between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye had given Pakistan a new identity at the international level.
Iqbal said the next task was to succeed in the "battle for development", adding that the young people sitting before him were its soldiers.
He said young people were the guarantee of Pakistan's future development and that they had been given better opportunities for education. He urged them to work hard and build their future.
"Failure is not falling; failure is losing the courage to rise after falling," Iqbal said. He said every successful person had fallen several times in life but had refused to accept falling as defeat. Difficulties would come, he added, but young people should not lose courage and should continue towards their goals.



PESHAWAR: Qaumi Watan Party Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao addresses media at Sherpao House.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal chairing a multi-party consultative session on civil service reforms.

Mustafa Kamal calls for new provinces, criticises 18th Amendment

KARACHI, (Monitoring Desk): Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader and Health Minister Mustafa Kamal said the 18th Amendment had created "four new countries" within Pakistan, rather than empowering the four provinces. "I say again and again that this 18th Amendment has not given power to four provinces, but has made four countries. This 18th Amendment has made four new countries," Kamal said while speaking at a press conference at the MQM headquarters in Bahadurabad, Karachi.
Lamenting the impact of the 18th Amendment, Kamal said that it had "completely liberated" Sindh, questioning why the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) would declare independence when it received Rs2.5 billion annually from the federal treasury. "You say the country will break, but the country is broken. Your 18th Amendment has broken the country. We want to re-establish this country," he said.

Pakistan warns against resource cuts to UN peacekeeping missions

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has called for a strengthening of UN Peacekeeping Operations, emphasizing that the integration of advanced technologies must be utilized to modernize mandates, enhance safety, and boost operational efficiency without diminishing the physical human presence on the ground. Speaking at the UN Security Council debate on Peacekeeping Operations, Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, warned that peacekeepers are operating in increasingly complex and hostile environments with expanding tasks but shrinking resources. He added that peacekeeping, a flagship UN activity, requires political support, credible mandates, sustainable resources, adequate capabilities, host-State cooperation and sustained commitment from the wider membership. "For over six decades, Pakistan has remained amongst the largest troop contributors to UN peacekeeping," the Pakistani envoy said, noting that more than 170,000 Pakistanis have served the UN, 183 of whom have made "the ultimate sacrifice in the cause of peace". Pakistan is also host to United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), which is mandated to observe ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir. Ambassador Asim Ahmad said that this "experience gives us a practical appreciation of what peacekeeping requires". Peacekeeping today "is actually under real pressure", he said

Major developments to occur if Tehran fails to change conduct: Trump

Iran warns regional states will be 'considered complicit' if US strikes resume

WASHINGTON?TEHRAN, (Agencies): US President Donald Trump warned on Sunday that he had entered a critical decision phase in the ongoing war with Iran, cautioning that major developments would occur if Tehran failed to change its conduct.
"My question is if and when do I blow the entire nation up? They had better behave," Trump told Fox News, detailing his approach to the war.
The US president described his current options as wiping the country out, allowing it to "rot" economically, or negotiating a deal, adding that "very big things are going to be happening in the not-so-distant future."
When asked about the UN General Assembly high-level week, which starts on Monday, Trump signalled a willingness to engage diplomatically, saying he would "probably be open" to meeting with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian.
Addressing wider regional hostilities, Trump said Washington remained in constant communication with Yemen's Houthis following their recent ballistic missile attacks targeting Saudi Arabia, asserting that the group agreed to avoid fighting American forces.
Iran warns regional states will be 'considered complicit' if US strikes resume
Iran received information that the United States, with the backing of some regional countries, was preparing to resume actions against Tehran, the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' (IRGC's) joint military command, said in a statement on Sunday, according to state media.
The military said that any US had been given a "green light" by unnamed regional countries at a joint meeting in Europe to resume action against Tehran. According to state media, the military added that any US attack would lead to Iranian retaliation "without any limitations or considerations" on US bases and interests. Regional countries involved in any US attack on Iran, the military said, should not expect restraint from Tehran's armed forces and would be considered complicit and parties to the conflict. Separately, Iran's Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Mohsen Rezaei, stated that US President Donald Trump had waged a foolish war on Iran and was foolishly continuing it, IRNA reported.
Rezaei added, however, that Iran "stands ready to give a stronger and more painful response should the US resume military aggression."
"We have fully prepared ourselves for a decisive war, and the US' military vulnerabilities are completely known to us. And we are far better prepared this time," he said, according to IRNA.
The secretary further noted, "Netanyahu plunged Trump into a quagmire." It was and is in the benefit of the US to accept Iran's conditions and end the war because the more the conflict drags on, the worse the US' situation will become, IRNA quoted him as having said.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Board of Investment Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh addressing media persons at Karachi Press Club.

Balochistan govt to align development spending with public requirements: Khosa

QUETTA (ANN): Balochistan Communications and Works Minister Mir Saleem Khoso has said effective monitoring of ongoing development projects is being carried out across the province, with efforts focused on ensuring that the benefits of the development budget reach every area according to public needs and ground realities.
In a statement, the provincial minister said the Communications and Works sector was central to Balochistan's development, as a reliable road network connects districts, urban centres and remote communities while also supporting trade, agriculture, employment and other economic activities.
He said work on roads and other infrastructure schemes was under way in various parts of the province.
Additional projects would be pursued in areas where infrastructure gaps persist after assessing local needs and development priorities, he added.

Afridi for resolution of all issues through serious dialogue instead of confrontation

ISLAMABAD (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Sohail Afridi strongly reacted to the Federal government's threats to stop the protests, saying that the September 27 long march is a peaceful, democratic and constitutional struggle. He said every Pakistani citizen has the full right to raise their voice for their fundamental rights and protest within the framework of the Constitution, adding that PTI would exercise this constitutional and democratic right to convey the people's voice to the relevant institutions.
On social media platform X, Sohail Afridi strongly criticized the federal ministers, saying that the ministers' persistent threatening statements were a matter of serious concern for any democratic society. He said rulers should listen to public demands, respect constitutional rights and seek solutions to all political issues through serious dialogue, the law and the democratic process instead of confrontation.
The PTI leader further said that every sensible Pakistani citizen was currently demanding the restoration of the Constitution to its original form, the immediate release of all unjustly imprisoned political detainees, including PTI founder Imran Khan, free journalism and constitutional freedoms.
He added that the country's youth were striving for employment, workers for their economic rights and farmers for fair compensation for their labor.



GWADAR: MPA Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch distributing prizes amongst the children during Out of School Children Program annual result ceremony.

Balochistan's health sector reforms yielding significant results

QUETTA (APP): The Balochistan's health sector reforms have begun to yield significant results, with the historic completion of 100 major surgeries at Mir Ghulam Qadir Bugti Memorial Hospital, Baiker.
For the first time, complex and emergency surgical cases were successfully handled at the hospital, marking a milestone in the province's healthcare services. The hospital's 24/7 operational theatre is now fully functional, providing patients with emergency and specialized surgical facilities at the local level. Officials noted that the availability of surgical services within Baiker has enabled patients from remote areas to access timely treatment without traveling long distances to major cities. Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti expressed satisfaction over the achievement, terming the completion of 100 surgeries a major advancement in the hospital's medical services.
He praised the administration, doctors, nursing staff, and operation theatre teams for their dedicated efforts in reaching this milestone.
The Chief Minister emphasized that the provision of quality healthcare facilities in remote areas is the government's responsibility. He added that expanding healthcare services to underserved regions ensures better medical care for the people of Balochistan. "This achievement reflects our commitment to improving healthcare in far-flung areas. Emergency and complex surgeries being performed locally mean patients are receiving timely treatment close to home," said CM Bugti.
He said the 24-hour availability of the operation theatre represented an important medical facility for residents of the area and reflected the government's efforts to expand healthcare services beyond major urban centres. Mir Sarfraz Bugti reiterated that the government was extending healthcare facilities to remote parts of the province so that people would not have to undertake unnecessary journeys to major cities for medical treatment.

Every citizen entitled to basic facilities without discrimination: MPA Zarak

QUETTA (ANN): Member of the Balochistan Assembly Sheikh Zarak Khan Mandokhail has said addressing the problems of constituents is a fundamental responsibility of elected representatives, stressing that issues faced by the Hazara community and all other sections of society in his constituency are equally important to him.
In a statement, he said efforts were being made to improve basic public facilities and address problems relating to roads, electricity, water supply, healthcare, education and other essential services. He added that he remained in contact with relevant departments and authorities to pursue public grievances and seek practical solutions.
Sheikh Zarak Mandokhail said public service should not be confined to any particular community, group or locality, as every citizen was entitled to basic facilities without discrimination. He said elected representatives had a responsibility to raise the voice of the people before the assembly and relevant forums.

GAZA, PALESTINE: Health workers at Kuwait Field Hospital in Khan Yunis hold signs during a protest over a worsening fuel shortage



HUB: Commissioner Lasbella Division Saira Atta being briefed by NRSP District Manager Jehangir regarding rehabilitation of flood affectees.

Students advised to benefit from teachers' guidance

GWADAR: Member of the Balochistan Assembly from Gwadar Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch has urged children to make education a central goal of their lives, work with dedication and use their abilities to bring pride to their families, Gwadar and the country.
He was speaking as chief guest at the annual Result Day ceremony held at an LC Centre in Gwadar under the Out-of-School Children Programme. Children, parents and teachers attended the event.
Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman said educated and talented young people could play an important role in the future development and prosperity of Gwadar. He stressed that encouraging children and creating opportunities for them to progress was a shared responsibility of society.

Pakistan's rich cultural heritage showcased at Baku's Clothing Day event

BAKU, (APP): The Embassy of Pakistan in Baku participated in the National Clothing Day event and showcased Pakistan's rich and diverse cultural heritage and traditional attire. The event was organized by the "Icherisheher" State Historical-Architectural Reserve Administration which was well attended by Azerbaijani dignitaries from the government, representatives of the arts and literary communities, and members of the diplomatic corps.



Pakistan's colourful traditional and regional costumes, truck art, jewellery, and handicrafts received great appreciation from participants and visitors.
Diplomatic missions, including those of China, Korea, Iraq, Tajikistan, Malaysia, Indonesia and Russia, also presented their national dances and traditional costumes, creating a rich and diverse celebration of cultures and highlighting the importance of cultural exchange and mutual understanding.
The participation of Pakistan embassy in the event further contributed to promoting the close and historic cultural bonds between Pakistan and brotherly Azerbaijan.

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