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PM Shehbaz, Bill Gates vows to eradicate polio from Pakistan

NEW YORK, (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday met Chair of the Gates Foundation Bill Gates wherein he reiterated his government's unwavering commitment to ensure complete eradication of polio from the country.

During the meeting held on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly here, the prime minister thanked the Gates Foundation for its longstanding assistance in the important endeavor and expressed his personal commitment to polio eradication.

Recalling Gates Foundation Team's recent visit to Pakistan earlier this month, the prime minister appreciated the Foundation's engagement with Pakistan in support of polio eradication, maternal and child health, nutrition, immunization, digitization, and financial inclusion.

Acknowledging Pakistan's efforts under the prime minister's leadership and his guidance to the provincial governments for the countrywide polio vaccine program, Bill Gates stressed that polio eradication was vital to protect future generations from the crippling disease.

Prime Minister Shehbaz complimented the Gates Foundation for being a trusted partner in Pakistan's socio-economic development and expressed interest in broadening collaboration in areas including public health, agriculture, digital innovation and artificial intelligence.

He also apprised Bill Gates of the agricultural reforms being undertaken by his government, with particular emphasis on innovation, biotechnology, climate resilience, research, and capacity-building for farmers.

The two sides agreed to explore opportunities for collaboration in the development of improved seeds, livestock genetics and emerging agricultural technologies.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to continued and constructive engagement with a view to further strengthening and expanding partnerships that support sustainable development, technological advancement and improved social sectors outcomes for the people of Pakistan.

While recalling his earlier visits, the prime minister extended an invitation to Bill Gates to undertake a visit to Pakistan at his earliest convenience.



NEW YORK: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Bill Gates, Chair of the Gates Foundation on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 2026) Session



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail in a group photo with the tribal elders on the eve of Pashtoon Culture Day.

Govt committed to completely eliminate terrorism from Balochistan: CM Bugti

Says elimination of 19 terrorists and clearance of multiple terrorist hideouts is result of professional capabilities of security forces and effective IBOs

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has praised the successful operation carried out by the security forces against terrorists in the Kanak Valley area of Mastung, saying that the killing of nine terrorists during the operation is a demonstration of the professional capabilities and effective strategy of the security forces.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that the security forces foiled the cowardly action of the terrorists in a timely and effective manner.

The recovery of weapons, ammunition and three motorcycles from the possession of the killed terrorists was also an important achievement of the operation.

He prayed for the speedy recovery of the security forces personnel who was injured during the operation against the terrorists, saying that the sacrifices of security forces personnel in the war against terrorism are a matter of pride for the nation.

The Chief Minister said that they stand with the security forces until the complete elimination of terrorism from Balochistan.

Terrorist elements will never succeed in sabotaging peace in Balochistan.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that operations against terrorists under Radd-ul-Fasaad 3 will continue until the last terrorist is eliminated.



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani in a group photo with the delegation of tribal elders of Toba Kakari Barshore.

BHC seeks comprehensive report on development work on N-25, N-50

QUETTA, (VoM Report): A two-member bench comprising Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court Justice Muhammad Kamran Khan Malakhail and Justice Muhammad Najamuddin Mengal, while hearing a constitutional petition, directed the National Highway Authority (NHA) to take effective measures for the convenience of travelers, plantation, and provision of drinking water on national highways, particularly N-25 and N-50.

During the hearing, Member (West Zone) NHA Balochistan Basharat Hussain appeared before the court in compliance with the court's order dated April 9, 2026. He informed the court that the Chairman NHA had recently been transferred and that the position of Chairman was currently vacant. He sought further time to submit a comprehensive report regarding the physical progress of ongoing development work on N-50 and N-25, as well as compliance with the orders and directions issued by the court on various dates.

During the hearing, the court observed that there was a considerable distance between the two proposed rest areas, making further measures necessary to provide basic facilities to travelers on the national highways. The court directed that solar-powered tube wells be installed along the highways so that plantation could be ensured on both sides of the roads, while clean drinking water could also be made available to travelers and the local population.

The court further directed that, at suitable locations, separate spaces should be allocated for the rest and prayer of travelers, and that all these facilities should be provided in such a manner that disadvantaged sections of society, particularly residents of remote areas, could also benefit from them.

The court also ordered that wherever the said project is ongoing, the installation of solar-powered tube wells, provision of drinking water facilities, and plantation work should be started on a priority basis. For this purpose, an appropriate, comprehensive, and practicable policy guideline should also be formulated so that, including the leasing or renting of land adjacent to the proposed tube wells and rest areas under appropriate terms, small business centers and other necessary facilities could be provided according to the needs of travelers.

PM Shehbaz lauds security forces for killing 19 terrorists in Balochistan IBOs

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Wednesday lauded the security forces for eliminating 19 militants in their various anti-terrorism operations in Balochistan. The prime minister praised the security forces for killing 13 terrorists during an operation in Shaban area of Quetta district. He said the militants were affiliated with Fitna al-Khawarij and Fitna al-Hindustan and were operating with Indian patronage, a Prime Minister's Office news release said. He also said six more terrorists were killed during intelligence-based operations in Kech district and Quetta West, describing the operations as evidence of the security forces' strategy against terrorism. Prime Minister Shehbaz paid tribute to Subedar Muhammad Jameel, who was martyred while defending the country. He said the sacrifice of the army officer was a source of pride for the nation and expressed condolences to his family.

Pashtoon culture vital, beautiful part of Balochistan's cultural identity: CM Bugti

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti congratulated the Pashtoon community on the occasion of Pashtoon Culture Day, saying that Pashtoon culture is an important and beautiful part of Balochistan's cultural identity.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that Pashtoon culture is distinguished by its high traditions of hospitality, tolerance, bravery, brotherhood and humanity, which have played an important role in shaping society and promoting collective values. He said that Balochistan is a beautiful blend of different nations, languages and cultures, and this cultural and linguistic diversity is the province's true beauty and strength. All communities, with their unique cultural identities, further strengthen the collective identity of Balochistan.

The Chief Minister said that the Pashtoon community has played an important role in the social, literary, political and economic development of Balochistan, which is viewed with appreciation and respect.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that protecting cultural heritage is an important means of connecting the younger generation with its history, values and identity. He said that it is our responsibility to preserve our cultures, languages and traditions and pass them on to future generations. He said that the cultures and languages of all communities living in Balochistan are part of the province's shared cultural heritage.

All possible measures to be taken to ensure peace in Balochistan: Shahid Rind

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister's Adviser on Information and Political Affairs Shahid Rind has paid tribute to the security forces for their successful operation against terrorists of Fitna al-Khawarij in the Kanak Valley area of Mastung, saying that the security forces are continuing effective and decisive operations for the complete elimination of terrorism from Balochistan.

Shahid Rind said that terrorists of Fitna al-Khawarij made a cowardly attempt to attack a check post in the Kanak Valley area of Mastung, upon which the security forces took immediate and effective action and killed two terrorists.

He said that the security forces pursued the fleeing terrorists and, during the operation, another seven terrorists were killed, bringing the total number of terrorists killed in the operation to nine.

Commissioner reviews medical facilities at Trauma Center

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Commissioner Quetta Division Zeeshan Lashari visited the Trauma Center, Spiny Road, Quetta, where he reviewed the center's various wards, operation theaters, ICUs, and other medical facilities.

On the occasion, MD Dr. Arbab Kamran gave the Commissioner a detailed briefing regarding the medical facilities being provided to the public at the Trauma Center. He said that modern medical facilities are being provided to the people of Quetta and the province at the Trauma Center, and doctors, paramedics, HR personnel, and other necessary staff remain available 24 hours a day for the immediate and effective medical treatment of patients.

Dr. Arbab Kamran said that the Trauma Center consists of approximately 150 beds, while a separate ward has been established for female patients so that they can receive treatment in a better and dignified environment.

19 India-backed terrorists killed in Balochistan IBOs: ISPR

RAWALPINDI, (Agencies): Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Wednesday that 19 terrorists had been killed and a soldier was martyred in several operations across Balochistan. In a statement, it said intelligence agencies had reported the presence of multiple hideouts of Indian-sponsored Fitna al Khawarij and Fitna al Hindustan in Quetta district's Shaban area "posing a threat to the local population". The state uses the term Fitna al Khawarij for the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and refers to designated Balochistan-based groups as Fitna al Hindustan to highlight India's role in terrorism and destabilisation across Pakistan. "In order to safeguard the local populace and clear the area of terrorists, security forces have been conducting a clearance operation in the general area of Shaban since Sept 21. During the operation, security forces effectively engaged and cleared multiple terrorist hideouts," it said. "Following an intense exchange of fire, 13 Indian-sponsored terrorists have been killed so far. Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the cleared hideouts. The ISPR statement went on to say that security forces also conducted "pre-emptive intelligence-based operations" in Kech and Quetta West, during separate engagements on Sept 22 and 23. "During the operations, troops effectively engaged the terrorists and, following an intense exchange of fire, six terrorists were killed," it said, adding that weapons and ammunition were also recovered. Earlier in the day, Radio Pakistan had reported that security forces killed two terrorists affiliated with Fitna al Hindustan during an intelligence-based operation in the Jausak area of Turbat. In Mastung, nine terrorists were killed after they attempted to attack a checkpost, according to the state broadcaster. Heavy weapons, ammunition and three motorcycles were also recovered, it added.



Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar in a meeting with Minister for European and International Affairs of Austria, Beate Meinl-Reisinger, on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the UNGA in New York.

History of Pashtoon nation custodian of ancient, glorious traditions: Governor

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, while congratulating the entire Pashtoon nation, particularly the youth, on the occasion of Pashtoon Culture Day, said that they should draw light from their history, identity from their culture, strength from knowledge, and hope from their future.

"We have to build a society where attachment to our cultural roots and harmony with the demands of the modern world are not contradictory to each other, but rather complement one another."

The journey of human civilization is, in fact, the story of humanity's continuous creative, intellectual, and social development. The roots of the word "culture" are associated with the Latin word cultûra, whose basic meaning relates to the cultivation and fertility of land. Over time, this concept expanded to encompass the development and growth of the human mind, society, and civilization. Human beings continuously developed their way of life, knowledge, arts, economy, and social institutions, and thus journeyed from culture to civilization. Today, information technology and modern means of communication have brought the world even closer together and have multiplied the pace of the evolution of global civilization. In his message on the occasion of Pashtoon Culture Day, he said that culture is a symbol of the identity, collective memory, and historical continuity of any nation. Pashtoon Culture Day provides us with an opportunity to renew our commitment that, while passing on the positive values of our traditions to future generations, we will also bring them in harmony with the demands of the modern era. The history of the Pashtoon nation is a custodian of ancient and glorious traditions, while the Pashto language is counted among the important and major languages of the region. Pashtoon society still possesses a unique cultural identity because of its distinctive traditional attire, delicious foods, traditional dances, judicial system of Jirga, generosity, humanity, and hospitality.



QUETTA: Managing Director of the Balochistan Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (BTEVTA), Abdul Kabeer Khan Zarkoon, in a group photo with Her Excellency the Ambassador of Germany to Pakistan, Ina Lepel.

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Thursday September 24, 2026

Houthis trying to defend regional policies of Iran

The latest wave of violence in Yemen started last July when Yemen's internationally recognized government forces prevented an aircraft from Iran from landing at Sanaa airport. In return, the Houthis, claiming that this intervention ended the U.N. mediated truce of 2022, launched a massive offensive against not only government forces but also Saudi Arabia in late August. Thus, the fighting restarted in the already de facto divided country.

The Houthis attacked the Saudi capital city, Riyadh, but the drones launched by the Houthis were successfully intercepted and destroyed by the Saudi-led coalition. Both sides of the conflict affirmed that many sensitive targets in Riyadh were hit by the Houthis, including the Aramco facilities in Yanbu, a strategic port on the Red Sea. Many civilian infrastructure sites were also targeted. Last week, Saudi authorities accused the Houthis of targeting Mecca, the most sacred city of Islam, with a drone that was successfully intercepted. Although the Houthis have strongly denied the claim, many governments denounced the attempt and the Houthis.

It seems that the Houthis want to expand their control in the country. On the one hand, the Houthis want to control the strategic Bab al-Mandeb Strait, one of the most strategic shipping lines, in order to increase their deterrence power. By taking over some of the most strategic cities such as Mocha, Marib, Taiz, al-Bayda and Lahj, the Houthis want to control the passages in the straits. Thus, they will be able to deter the United States and other Western countries from attacking Iran. Control over the Bab al-Mandeb Strait by the Houthis has increased security concerns about the free passage of the Hormuz Strait.

On the other hand, they are determined to continue their attacks against Saudi targets and thus to escalate the tension to change the regional balance of power in favor of Iran, which was recently severely weakened by the U.S. and Israel's attacks. Iran and its proxies blamed Saudi Arabia and other regional Arab states for being attacked by the U.S. and Israel. By mobilizing the Houthis, Iran attempts to expand the war's geographical scope and to diversify the fronts of the conflict. Eventually, Iran wants to open economic and political fronts in addition to the military one.

However, it seems that these "measures" taken by the Houthis are counterproductive. While they try to increase their deterrence against the attackers, they give excuses to other countries to attack Iran and the Houthis. Considering the upcoming elections in both the U.S. and Israel, it is highly likely that these two states will launch a massive attack against Iran to change the result of the elections in their favor. It seems that the only way that both Trump and Netanyahu can come out of the crisis that they face is the resumption of violence.

Similarly, the cost of the war increases for all countries involved, including the U.S. and Israel. Therefore, especially the U.S. does not want to open a new front that will influence not only the conflicting sides but the whole world. Therefore, the U.S. government negotiated with the Houthi officials in Oman and during the meeting, the Houthis assured the U.S. that they will not target American vessels.

The Houthis banned the passage of Saudi ships only. Thus, they want to put pressure on Saudi Arabia, which uses an alternative pipeline to the Strait of Hormuz. As a result of this thinking, the Houthis hit the East-West pipeline. These attacks ended up with the disruption of Saudi oil and thus increased the price of oil to over $100.

The eruption of violence in Yemen in the last two months demonstrates that the Houthis are a typical proxy actor. Although the Houthis have some independent interests, principles and objectives, they are heavily dependent on Iran. Instead of solving the humanitarian crisis in the country, they try to defend the regional policies of Iran. The Houthis gained international recognition, especially after they attacked Israel for its genocide in Gaza.

According to the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 22 million Yemenis, almost half of the country's population, are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. This makes the crisis the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The country is facing the world's worst cholera outbreak. Millions of Yemenis are unable to access food, water or health care. Therefore, it is expected that the Houthis should become a Yemeni national force and sever their ties with Iran. This is the only way to achieve political stability in the country and to prevent external interventions into the conflict.

The Makkah Defence Alliance

IMRAN MALIK

The Makkah Defence Alliance (MDA) is imbuing deep, multi-dimensional paradigm shifts in the regional-global geopolitical, geostrategic and geoeconomic domains. The regional-global balance of power is shifting very perceptibly away from the US-led West to emerging power structures, especially in Europe and the Middle East (ME). This has been precipitated by the US's waning clout, control, credibility and exceptionalism in regional-global affairs. It has been further compounded by the US-led West's obsessive, compulsive, irrational bias towards Israel, its horrendous genocide in Gaza-Palestine and its unjust, aggressive expansionist designs in the region. Furthermore, the Iran war has summarily exposed the limits of the US-Israel Combine's power in all its manifestations — moral, coercive, military, economic, diplomatic, technological, political, etc. Crucially, the core pillars and strategic direction determined by the US's National Security Strategy and National Defence Strategy now favour an "America First" policy, which is stridently isolationist in tone and tenor. It shifts the US's focus from enervating global interventionism towards the defence of the Western Hemisphere, the Indo-Pacific Region (IPR) and Continental USA. It seeks pronounced, meaningful burden-sharing by all its allies worldwide. Crucially, it intends to only deter China through strength. Period!

Are post-US regional and global geopolitical orders already crystallising?

In the geopolitical dimension, the US is clearly recoiling from its position as the sole, pre-eminent global leader as well as an imposing Asian and ME hegemon. The consequent strategic vacuum is being readily filled up by regional and extra-regional powers. The MDA, a fresh regional defence and security structure, has thus emerged as an alternative Centre of Power to the US in the larger ME region. It aims not only to deter war, aggression and coercion but to create, foster and preserve peace! A critical factor of the MDA is that it has been formed by three US allies of varying hues/commitments. Turkiye is a part of NATO, the KSA has always been inclined towards the US and Pakistan has been an on-again, off-again ally, contingent upon the US's strategic compulsions at any particular point in time. This state of affairs could potentially lead to varying geopolitical scenarios: one, the US could allow the MDA to emerge as an alternate Centre of Power; two, it could let it become the net stabiliser and net security provider of the ME but retain controlling oversight on its evolution, aims, objectives, strategic autonomy, sphere of influence, strategic reach and, in particular, relationships with China and Russia; three, allow a certain degree of strategic autonomy to the MDA but without prejudice to Israel's security and hegemony in the region; four, a fiercely independent MDA, with unrestrained strategic autonomy, will inevitably circumscribe Israel's hegemony and usher in the direly needed nuclear-strategic balance of power to restructure the regional order for good.

However, critical contradictions abound in the current geopolitical spectrum. If the US retains controlling oversight on the MDA, then where do its strategic autonomy and freedom of thought and action lie? Will it be deemed to be a veritable proxy of the US? If the MDA retains its strategic autonomy and freedom of thought and action, then where does this leave Israel in the region's geopolitical and geostrategic realms? Its arrogant hegemony and supremacy will be summarily thwarted/neutralised. Can the MDA and USCENTCOM co-exist in the now-congested strategic space in the ME?

Are they protagonists or antagonists? Do their aims, objectives, interests and spheres of influence complement one another, converge, diverge or clash? The MDA and US-USCENTCOM must have absolute, unambiguous strategic clarity on this aspect.

This complex and complicated geopolitical-geostrategic imbroglio will need to be comprehended, incisively rationalised and resolved as a prelude to the MDA emerging as a viable, potent, unimpeded, alternative Centre of Power! Period.

Regardless, many fundamental changes will inevitably emerge in the region's geostrategic domain. The Nuclear Factor will initiate the most critical ones. (The Nuclear Factor, by this scribe, The Nation, 16 & 17 May 26). One, by its mere presence in the MDA, nuclear Pakistan will generate its own dynamics to transform the entire geopolitical-geostrategic structure of the region at large; two, the nuclear-missile factor will become inescapable in regional geopolitics, reinforce deterrence manifold and bring the nuclear-strategic balance of power to an even keel; three, the stakes in the nuclear-strategic environment will rise, leading to a virtual balance of terror (and peace) in the region; four, Israel's nuclear exceptionalism will stand nullified; five, the nuclear shadow that reigned over the ME would be removed/countered and the prospects of nuclear blackmail, threats and aggression will be effectively scuttled; six, although the nuclear-missile factor lurks in the background, nuclear umbrellas, nuclear sharing and nuclear stationing will become real, relevant, viable and inevitable concepts in the region's strategic milieu; seven, hostile forces/powers will now have to consider the vital nuclear-missile factor in all their future operational strategies and hypotheses, conventional or otherwise, against any one or all regional states. This will become the most critical deterrent; eight, Israel's aggressive expansionist drives and ambitions, its vile freedom of action to violate international borders and its audacious hegemony will all be severely circumscribed; nine, the Abraham Accords could very well become redundant, isolating Israel in the region; ten, the very emergence of the MDA will thus deter war and stimulate peace dividends; eleven, the stability and security thus engendered could potentially create the strategic environment conducive to the peaceful resolution of the Gaza-Palestine issue as well as ending Israel's occupation of territories in Gaza-Palestine, the West Bank, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon; twelve, crucially, mainland Pakistan itself could come into the nuclear crosshairs of hostile forces and be vulnerable/subjected to first and/or second strikes in a potential nuclear environment, showdown or exchange!

The potential geoeconomic dimensions of the MDA are extremely phenomenal too. Assuming Egypt and Iran also join up, then the MDA will boast of a humungous sphere of influence and a compatible strategic reach to emerge as a very potent and effective Centre of Power in the region-at-large. Its sphere of influence could potentially cover Turkiye in the Euro-Asian context, Egypt in North Africa, the whole of the ME and Pakistan (Bangladesh potentially) in South Asia. In terms of its maritime sphere of influence, its expanse will encompass the Azov and Black Seas, the Bosphorus, the Mediterranean Sea, even Gibraltar, the Suez Canal, Red Sea, Bab-el Mandab, the Gulf of Aden, the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, the Hormuz Straits, and the Persian Gulf. The MDA could thus have control and oversight on the main trade routes and Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) in its sphere of influence. Critically, it will also exercise control over some of the most vital maritime choke points in the world. Turkiye controls two of the narrowest straits in the region; the Bosphorus Strait connects the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara, while the Dardanelles Strait connects the Sea of Marmara to the Aegean Sea and onto the Mediterranean Sea. Thus, every vessel moving from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea must pass through this route and these two straits. This makes them vital for global trade, energy transportation, foodgrains, fertilisers etc. Furthermore, the Montreux Convention (1936) gives Turkiye a unique role in regulating naval transit through these waters. Egypt controls the Suez Canal and thus has an oversight on most trade to and from Europe through the Mediterranean Sea to Asia and Africa, and all trade emanating from the Americas passing through Gibraltar and then going through the Suez Canal to Asia, Africa, Australia etc. Furthermore, most East-West trade especially oil, gas, critical minerals need to pass through the Suez Canal.

The choke points of Bab-el Mandab and Hormuz Straits will potentially remain under Iranian control, directly and/or indirectly. Thus, some MDA members will exercise decisive control over some of the major choke points in global maritime trade. Even more critically, some of the world's largest deposits of oil, gas, critical minerals etc lie in the regions which fall within the expanse of the MDA. It will thus control the availability of critical fossil fuels and minerals and their passage through international/intercontinental SLOCs, trade routes and unavoidable choke points vital for global trade. The MDA, once it emerges in its full form, could potentially become a very formidable regional power in its own right. It could have the requisite economic and financial clout through the KSA, Iran, and other GCC countries that join it. Turkiye brings in a world-class defence and industrial technological base to the alliance while Pakistan comes in with a battle-hardened, combat-ready military force backed by daunting nuclear-missile competencies!

At the grand geopolitical level, therefore, the contest between the US and China will now become more visible, evident and eventful. The hegemony or oversight on the geopolitics of the ME stands to be either "contested, shared or transited" between the two global powers. The China factor, however, will acquire increasing importance in the geopolitics of the ME. The US will find it hard to block China's ingress into the region. The BRI is the vehicle on which China will ride into the region. It is already sitting on the Mekran Coast of Pakistan with a potential controlling oversight on the SLOCs and oil, gas, and other trade routes to and from the Persian Gulf-Hormuz Straits and a probable, conceivable strategic reach that will surge deep into the ME-Greater Middle East Region (ME-GMER), Indian Ocean region, and beyond.

It has a twenty-five-year strategic partnership agreement with Iran worth USD 400 billion.

It has already entered the Arabian Peninsula, the Gulf Arab states, and even Israel. The geopolitical developments in the ME are becoming increasingly conducive to China's seamless, peaceful 'einmarsch' into the region and beyond. Thus, a very critical geopolitical environment is emerging where one global power seems to be egressing the region while the other is primed to replace it! The baton of regional supremacy, influence, and control is most likely to pass from one to the other, sooner than later. The MDA could possibly be caught between the conflicting, clashing interests of the two major global powers, the imperatives of its own strategic autonomy, Israel's rampant aggression and wanton hegemony, and the US' continuing military presence in the region!

In the final analysis, the MDA will have three options. One, accept US' hegemony, concede its collective independence and freedom of thought, choice, and action, and join the Abraham Accords. This might be undoable; unacceptable to any of its peoples. (Most unlikely). Two, the MDA breaks free of US control and oversight and moves independently with its strategic autonomy intact and effective. (Possible). Three, the MDA seeks the support of China and Russia and lays down the foundation of a larger, extra-regional-global geopolitical structure that eventually ushers in genuine multipolarity at the global level. (Most likely). The last option will become more feasible as other countries like Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Bangladesh, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait etc join the MDA. The diplomatic coup/masterstroke will be once Iran joins the MDA and gives it a genuine regional, potentially global context and adds phenomenally to its geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic stature!

The MDA could be viewed as the preliminary stage to ease and consummate this vital paradigm shift in the geopolitical order at the regional and global levels. The world awaits the outcomes of such a profound transformation with bated breath!

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Social protection

AMNA SAMAR

Women constitute nearly half of Pakistan's population. No nation can achieve sustainable development, economic stability, and social prosperity unless women are provided with equal rights, protection, and opportunities for advancement. Islam granted women dignity, education, inheritance rights, and economic independence more than fourteen centuries ago, while the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees equality between men and women. However, the effective implementation of these rights and the provision of a safe and enabling environment for women require the collective efforts of the state, institutions, and society.

Pakistan has made significant progress in promoting and protecting women's rights over the years. Various provisions of the Constitution ensure women's rights in education, employment, political participation, and social protection. In line with this constitutional vision, the government has enacted laws to address domestic violence, forced marriages, inheritance disputes, and workplace harassment. These legislative measures aim to create an environment where women can realise their full potential without fear of discrimination or exploitation.

One of the most important milestones in this regard was the enactment of the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010. This law requires both public and private institutions to adopt a code of conduct against harassment, establish inquiry committees, and provide effective mechanisms for addressing complaints. Under the law, organisations are required to constitute committees that include at least one female member, ensuring that women have a secure and accessible forum for reporting grievances. To further strengthen the protection of women's rights, the Government of Pakistan established the Women Ombudsman, formally known at the federal level as the Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment (FOSPAH). Established in 2011, the institution was mandated to hear and resolve cases related to workplace harassment and provide speedy justice to victims. Over time, its scope has expanded to include certain matters relating to women's property and inheritance rights, enabling women to seek protection and legal remedies in a broader range of cases.

The Women Ombudsman provides women with a more accessible, affordable, and expeditious alternative to lengthy court proceedings. Any woman facing harassment or discrimination in an office, educational institution, hospital, private company, or other professional setting can directly approach the Ombudsman. Upon receiving a complaint, the institution conducts an impartial inquiry, hears all parties involved, examines available evidence, and issues a decision in accordance with the law. Where allegations are substantiated, appropriate legal action is taken against the responsible individual or organisation. As a result, the Women Ombudsman has become a symbol of hope and justice for thousands of women across the country.

The Government of Pakistan has also launched various social protection and economic empowerment initiatives aimed at improving the lives of women. Through programmes such as the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and other social welfare schemes, financial assistance has been extended to millions of women, particularly those from vulnerable and low-income households. Additionally, vocational training programmes, entrepreneurship initiatives, and access to small business loans are helping women become financially independent and active contributors to the national economy.

Women's participation in politics has also increased significantly. Reserved seats in the National Assembly, Senate, and Provincial Assemblies have enabled women to play a meaningful role in legislation and public policy. Today, Pakistani women are making remarkable contributions in politics, healthcare, engineering, education, journalism, the judiciary, business, and the armed forces. Their achievements reflect both their talent and the growing opportunities available to them.

International and national reports indicate that women's participation in Pakistan's labour force remains around 30 percent, while gender-based wage disparities and limited access to economic opportunities continue to affect many women. In several parts of the country, women still face issues such as denial of inheritance rights, domestic violence, so-called honour crimes, and workplace harassment. Addressing these challenges requires more than legislation; it demands positive social attitudes, public awareness, moral education, and effective institutional enforcement.

Annual reports of the Women Ombudsman highlight that workplace harassment remains a significant obstacle to women's professional growth and economic empowerment.

This underscores the need for stronger awareness campaigns, legal support mechanisms, and efficient complaint-resolution systems to ensure that women can pursue their careers with dignity and confidence. Encouragingly, the Government of Pakistan, the National Commission on the Status of Women, the Women Ombudsman, the judiciary, and civil society organisations continue to work collectively to safeguard women's rights and promote gender equality. Their efforts have increased awareness among women regarding their legal rights and encouraged them to seek justice whenever they face discrimination or injustice.

The reality is that Pakistan's future progress is closely linked to the progress of its women. A society in which women feel safe, respected, empowered, and valued is a truly civilised and developed society. The promotion of equal rights and social protection for women is not merely a women's issue; it is a prerequisite for national development, social justice, and sustainable prosperity.

By working together, the state, institutions, and society can build a stronger, fairer, and more prosperous Pakistan for future generations.

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Macron slams Israel's 'shameful' Gaza aid restrictions, demands action

NEW YORK, (Monitoring Desk): French President Emmanuel Macron warned Tuesday that the international community risked losing its credibility by failing to act over Gaza, condemning continued restrictions on humanitarian aid to the enclave as "shameful."

Macron told the U.N. General Assembly that claims that peace has been achieved in Gaza had not been matched by an increase in humanitarian deliveries.

"Some claim that peace has been achieved, but this has not opened up humanitarian deliveries. The spectacle, it is shameful. Shame on all of us," he said.

He questioned the credibility of states that recognized Palestine but fail to take action on the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

"But what is our credibility worth if we remain inactive on Gaza?" he asked.

Macron also condemned what he described as continuing violations in the occupied West Bank.

"Look at what's happening in the West Bank, where day in, day out we are seeing violations, and in the name of what? Hamas was never very active in the West Bank," he said.

He said the international community must uphold the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people," including their right to exist, while stressing France's commitment to Israel's security.

Macron warned, however, against arguments that Israel's security requires violations of the sovereignty of neighboring states.

He also urged respect for Lebanon's sovereignty, saying a fully sovereign Lebanon would be necessary to address the presence of Hezbollah and restore security.

"Sovereignty for Lebanon and its people. Sovereignty for Palestinians. Their very basic and most basic rights are once again being violated," he said. Turning to Syria, Macron said France would continue supporting the country's sovereignty and unity.

"The revolution should not turn into a disappointment," he said. Macron also warned that international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions were facing a serious challenge amid conflicts around the world. "War crimes have been industrialized. We've seen the destruction of civilian infrastructure, human rights violations. It's a new era of barbaric acts," he said. "The Geneva Conventions offered a protective framework, but it is being dismantled." He also reaffirmed France's support for the International Court of Justice, saying Paris would continue to back its "central role." "We cannot simply accept this new order of impunity, which some are trying to erect," he said. The French leader also urged reform of the U.N. Security Council, saying France supports measures aimed at making the body more effective. "We must open up to new members, new regions."

He also urged greater international engagement on artificial intelligence (AI).



France's President Emmanuel Macron speaks during the 81st session of the United Nations (U.N.) General Assembly at U.N. Headquarters.



Britain's Prime Minister Andy Burnham shakes hands with U.S. President Donald Trump during a meeting on the sidelines of the 81st United Nations General Assembly, in New York City, U.S.

Iranian president rejects Trump's terrorism accusation, says Iran 'victim of terrorism'

NEW YORK, (Monitoring Desk): Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian rejected US President Donald Trump's characterization of Iran as a sponsor of terrorism Wednesday, saying Tehran is itself a victim of terrorism.

"Yesterday, Trump said we are terrorists. We are not terrorists — we are victims of terrorism," Pezeshkian told the UN General Assembly, referring to Trump's address a day earlier in which the US president described Iran as the "number one sponsor of terror." Pezeshkian said Iran's leader had been killed "without any justification," referring to the US-Israeli military attacks against Iran that began earlier this year.

He also accused Israel of targeting neighborhoods across Iranian cities and provinces and carrying out assassinations, describing such actions as "true terrorist" behavior.

Iran accuses European states of 'double standards' over regional developments

NEW YORK, (Monitoring Desk): Iran's foreign minister on Wednesday accused European countries of using double standards in their approach to recent regional developments.

Abbas Araghchi made the remarks during meetings with several European counterparts on the sidelines of the current UN General Assembly in New York, according to Iran's Foreign Ministry.

The ministry said in a statement that Araghchi met with the foreign ministers of France, the Netherlands, and Austria, as well as his Iraqi and Azerbaijani counterparts, during his stay in New York.

The meetings covered bilateral relations, regional and international developments, tensions between Iran and the US, and the Strait of Hormuz, according to the statement.

Araghchi said insecurity in the Strait of Hormuz was "entirely caused by the aggressive actions of the US and Israel," according to the ministry.

He said restoring security in the strategic waterway is "linked to Washington ending actions causing insecurity."

"European countries that claim to defend the rule of law and human rights cannot remain silent over, or support, overt military aggression against Iran," he said.

Araghchi called on all countries, particularly European states, to end "all forms of support for Israel" and work to "prevent its impunity."

The US and Israel launched a war against Iran on Feb. 28, which Tehran says has killed thousands of people.

UK ready to 'play part' in Middle East conflict: PM Burnham

NEW YORK, (Monitoring Desk): British Prime Minister Andy Burnham told U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday that the U.K. was prepared to "play our part" in the Middle East conflict as the two leaders held their first meeting in New York.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Burnham said the U.K. was prepared to help with efforts to stop the conflict and "open the Strait [of Hormuz]."

"We're with you that Iran must never be a nuclear power," he told Trump.

Burnham said the two discussed "issues on trade" and "the Falklands," as well as immigration. He said he had spoken about his "commitment to get [immigration] to a controlled approach."

The prime minister also welcomed Trump's earlier statement that progress was possible on peace in Ukraine.

Asked whether Burnham was "a man you can do business with" despite their political differences, Trump replied: "Yeah, I do."

"I think he's a natural business person, we've had a lot of discussions, even before this meeting we were talking with each other numerous times on the phone," Trump said.

"He gets it. He understands what he has to do."

Trump also spoke about immigration under his administration, while Burnham said it had been a "very big issue" at the Makerfield by-election that he won.

"Progress is being made," the prime minister said.

Trump said there was "tremendous patriotism in Britain" but that the country was "waiting for good leadership, waiting for success."

"It has been great to be with you and the team today," Burnham said. "This relationship matters so much to us. And we will build on that relationship.

"You and I have established a good connection in our early discussions, and we've taken that further today."

The two politicians have previously clashed sharply over policy, but are now seeking to establish a pragmatic working relationship.

In 2017, Burnham, then mayor of Greater Manchester, said the president would not be welcome in the city. Two years later, he said he would refuse to meet Trump if he visited.

Since becoming prime minister in July, however, Burnham has stressed the importance of finding areas of agreement with political opponents, saying he always tries to find "common ground."



NEW YORK: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian addressing the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly at U.N. Headquarters.

4 dead, 45,000 homes without power due to Japan typhoon downpour

TOKYO, (Monitoring Desk): Landslides triggered by a powerful typhoon lashing Japan's Pacific coast killed four people and left six missing Wednesday, public broadcaster NHK reported, as the storm cut power to about 45,000 homes.

Typhoon Dujuan is the latest extreme weather event in a year of unusually intense rain, floods and tropical cyclones that have hit regions across the globe, from East Asia to North America and Europe. Mud flowing into a home killed a woman in her 60s in the city of Yokosuka in the Kanto region, after landslides in the areas of Kanagawa and Chiba, the broadcaster said, adding that three other dead ranged in age from the 50s to the 80s.

Rescuers cleared away debris in the city of Miura, also in Kanagawa south of the capital Tokyo, as they searched for a missing person at a house hit by a landslide. A resident cleared heavy mud from a nearby street after the typhoon moved northeast away from Japan. About 45,000 households are without electricity in the region, Tokyo Electric Power Co. said on its website.

Richard Yonamine, 37, said water flooded his home in the Chiba city of Sakura after a nearby river overflowed, swollen by the rains, in his only such experience over than decades.

"I'm scared if it starts raining ... I worry that as as it starts pouring, it'll turn into a major problem," Yonamine said.

Heavy rain also caused widespread floods last month in Chiba.



Dozens of Palestinians children gathered at Rashad al-Shawa Square to protest the worsening water crisis in Rimal neighborhood of Gaza City, Gaza.

Jordan urges stronger int'l action to deter Israel

NEW YORK, (Agencies): Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said Wednesday that Israel will continue policies and measures that undermine prospects for peace unless it faces "effective international measures" to deter it. In a statement, Jordan's Foreign Ministry said Safadi made the remarks during a meeting marking the first anniversary of the New York Declaration Conference, organized by France, Britain, Canada and Saudi Arabia, held on the sidelines of the current 81st UN General Assembly in New York. Safadi said international support for the two-state solution must be "translated into practical steps that deter Israel," warning that its policies are "undermining the prospects of achieving peace." He said that "while the international community is working to achieve a just peace, the Israeli government is undermining the two-state solution" – which he described as the "only path to peace" – through measures that violate international law. "Israel claims it does not care about the positions of the majority of countries that support the two-state solution.



SAN SEBASTIAN: Brad Pitt, Olivia Hamilton and David Ayer attend the 'Heart Of The Beast' photocall during the 74th San Sebastian International Film Festival

Golan Heights not Trump's to give to Israel: Syria's Al-Sharaa

NEW YORK, (Agencies): Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa said that he had discussed the Israel-occupied Golan Heights with President Donald Trump last November, telling him it was not his to give to Israel.

The conversation took place during their meeting in Washington, where al-Sharaa made the light-hearted suggestion that the U.S. could offer New Jersey instead.

The Syrian leader made the revelation in New York during an event on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly, replying to a question about Trump's recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights. "Why do you give them the Golan Heights? You don't own it in the first place to give it to Israel. If you are keen to give them some land, I think New Jersey is a Democratic state, and it would be better to give them New Jersey rather than the Golan," al-Sharaa recounted their conversation with Trump at the White House.

He stressed that the Golan belongs to its people and that neither the Syrian president, the U.S. president, nor any other party has the right to give it away. Trump recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights in 2019, during his first term and renewed that recognition in 2025. Earlier this month, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said during a tour of the occupied Syrian Mount Hermon that Israel controlled the area stretching from Mount Hermon to the Yarmouk River and from there to the Mediterranean Sea, describing it as "absolute control."

Speaking at a discussion organized by the Atlantic Council's Syria Project, al-Sharaa also revealed that direct talks between Syria and Israel had come close to reaching a 90% agreement in several rounds of negotiations before Israel pulled back at the final stages for various reasons.

Al-Sharaa also reaffirmed Damascus' commitment to the diplomatic track.



Education workers stage a protest against education reforms outside the Palace of Justice in Brussels, Belgium.

TENDER NOTICE

The Executive Engineer (Roads) CW,PP&H Department District Sevi invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2026 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates **Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is mandatory for All Bidders to Get Registered at Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB.** The tender fee Rs.1000/- will be deposited through green Challan in National Bank of Pakistan Sevi Branch under the head of account **C-02716 (Communication Receipt) Earnest Money 2%**

S.No.	NAMEOF WORK	E/COST
1	CONSTRUCTION OF BT ROAD DEHPAL VILLAGE TO AIRPORT ROAD AND SIDE DRAIN SIBI DISTRICT SIBI PSDP **No.1463/ Z2026.3602 TSE No, 2627091197173**	Rs.19,900,497/-

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules–2014. **Eligibility of bidders**: - Criteria for Bidders may be seen in the Bidding Documents on BPPRA website **Procedure of Procurement:** Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of **Bank Guarantee ,Deposit at Call** of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from A scheduled bank.**Issuance of tender Documents:** From the date of publication of NIT to **08 October, 2026** during office hours on working days. **Last Date of bid submission:** The Tenders must be submitted latest by **08 October, 2026** till **11:00 AM** .**Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under- signed at 11**:00 AM.Executive Engineer (Road)C W, PP&H DepartmentDistrict Sevi Address: Office of the Executive Engineer(Roads) CWPP&H Department District Sevi**

Executive Engineer (Road), CWPP&H Department, District Sevi

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Turkish first lady highlights issues concerning humanity in New York engagements

NEW YORK, (Monitoring Desk): Turkish first lady and chair of the United Nations Advisory Board of Eminent Persons on Zero Waste Emine Erdogan said Wednesday that she concluded a busy agenda in New York covering issues that concern humanity. Emine Erdogan also shared a video highlighting the events she attended on her second day in New York during the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.



"On our second day in New York, we concluded a busy agenda covering issues that concern humanity today, as well as topics that will shape the future of our world," Erdogan said in a post on social media.

The video included footage from President Erdogan's address to the 81st UN General Assembly, as well as Emine Erdogan's participation in the International Energy Agency (IEA) High-Level Energy Transition Dialogue at UN headquarters.

UNSC condemns deadly suicide bombing at Pakistan mosque

DPM Dar urges OIC members to maintain unified position on Kashmir

UNITED NATIONS, (Monitoring Desk): The UN Security Council on Tuesday condemned a suicide bombing at a mosque in northwestern Pakistan that killed at least 24 people and wounded dozens.

"The members of the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the heinous and cowardly suicide bombing terrorist attack at a mosque in Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan," Council President Jerome Bonnafont of France said in a statement.

The Sept. 18 attack killed at least 24 Pakistanis, including seven civilians and 17 law enforcement personnel, and injured at least 88 others. An armed network affiliated with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) group claimed responsibility for the bombing.

Council members underscored the critical need to hold the "perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors" accountable, urging all countries to actively cooperate with the Pakistani government under international law and relevant council resolutions. Expressing its condolences to the families of the victims and the people of Pakistan, the council reaffirmed that terrorism remains "one of the most serious threats to international peace and security," emphasizing that such acts are "criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed."

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday highlighting the continuing restrictions on political and civic space in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, urged the OIC member states to maintain a unified position on Jammu and Kashmir at the United Nations and other international fora.

The deputy prime minister, in his address to the Ministerial Meeting of the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir on the sidelines of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly here, apprised the participants of the Indian attempts to alter its demographic, political, and cultural character.

He thanked the OIC Secretary-General, members of the Contact Group, the OIC Special Envoy on Jammu and Kashmir, and the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission for their steadfast and principled support to the Kashmiri people. The deputy prime minister recalled that Jammu and Kashmir remained an internationally recognized dispute on the agenda of the UNSC and stressed that no domestic legislation, judicial verdict, electoral exercise, or demographic manipulation could substitute for the Kashmiri people's inalienable right to self-determination.



NEW YORK: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Chairman of Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency Dr. Denis Becirovic



NEW YORK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar addressing the meeting of the OIC Contact Group on Afghanistan on the sidelines of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

PM praises Pakistan Navy, Coast Guards for foiling major smuggling bid in Balochistan

NEW YORK, (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday commended the Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Coast Guards for successfully foiling a major smuggling attempt in the Pashkan area of Balochistan.

In a joint anti-smuggling operation, a large cache of contraband items — including liquor and illegal medicines—was seized.

Appreciating the operation, the prime minister, who is currently in the United States to attend the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly, said that inter-agency coordination was important to root out the menace of smuggling from the country.

The prime minister also commended the professional competence, vigilance, and readiness of the personnel who participated in the operation.

Pakistan stands shoulder to shoulder with KSA to safeguard its sovereignty, security: PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterating strongest condemnation of the recent Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia, reaffirmed that Pakistan stood unwaveringly, shoulder to shoulder, with the Kingdom in safeguarding its sovereignty, security and the sanctity of Islam's holiest sites. The prime minister, in his message on the Saudi National Day annually observed on September 23, said that any threat to the sanctity and security of the Haramain Sharifain deeply wounds the sentiments of Muslims across the world, referring to the recent reprehensible attempted drone attack by Houthis on the Holy City of Makkah Al-Mukarramah. Extending his warmest felicitations to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and the brotherly people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, he said that the Kingdom's remarkable journey of progress and transformation was a source of pride and admiration not only for the Saudi nation, but also for Pakistan.

The prime minister, who is currently in New York to attend the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly, said that under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia continued to make impressive strides towards greater prosperity, modernization and innovation. He said that Pakistan took immense pride in its historic and time-tested brotherhood with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Afghanistan hub of terrorism:

Terrorism emanating from Afghan territory major challenge for Pakistan: Ayaz Sadiq

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Wednesday said that Pakistan has been grappling with the menace of terrorism, as neighbouring Afghanistan has become a hub of terrorism in the region.

Sophisticated weapons left behind by NATO forces in Afghanistan were being used against innocent Pakistani citizens and the country's security forces.

The Speaker expressed these views during a meeting with the European Parliamentary delegation led by Mary Khan, Member of the European Parliament, at Parliament House, a news release said.

He said that Pakistan had demonstrated considerable restraint in response to recent Indian aggression.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with the European Union and its member states.

He expressed Pakistan's desire to further strengthen parliamentary relations with the European Union and proposed the establishment of a Pakistan-European Union Parliamentary Friendship Group. He said enhanced parliamentary contacts would provide opportunities for exchanging experiences, information and best practices between the two sides.

Ayaz Sadiq also said that terrorism emanating from Afghan territory remains a major challenge for Pakistan.

He recalled that Pakistan had hosted Afghan refugees for four decades and reiterated that Pakistan desired peace and stability in the region.

He said that Pakistan wanted regional disputes to be resolved peacefully through dialogue and engagement.

Ayaz Sadiq has also said that Pakistan had demonstrated restraint in response to unprovoked Indian aggression and played a responsible role for regional peace and stability. He said Pakistan remains committed to peaceful resolution of Kashmir. The NA Speaker said that the world appreciated the efforts of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and CDF Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for promoting global peace, dialogue and stability.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that although Pakistan contributes less than 1 percent in ghg emissions yet Pakistan was severely affected by the adverse impacts of climate change, which emerged as a major challenge for the country.

He urged the international community to play its role in addressing climate-related challenges. The Speaker also said that Pakistan's Parliament is the world 1st green Parliament.

He said that the use of solar energy in Parliament is an environment-friendly initiative and reflects Pakistan's commitment to sustainable and green development. The speaker said that the Women Parliamentary Caucus is playing an active role in protecting and promoting the rights of women. He added that the Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights, SDGs Secretariat and Young Parliamentarians Forum of the National Assembly are also playing an active role for the betterment and welfare of the people of Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani departs for the Republic of Belarus on an official visit at the invitation of his counterpart, Ms. Natalya Kochanova, Chairperson of the Council of the Republic.

Chairman Senate departs for Belarus to further strengthen parliamentary, bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Wednesday departed for the Republic of Belarus on an official visit at the invitation of his counterpart Natalya Kochanova, Chairperson, Council of the Republic.

The visit is aimed at further strengthening bilateral relations and parliamentary cooperation between Pakistan and Belarus.

The visit carries particular significance in view of the growing momentum in Pakistan-Belarus relations and the shared desire to expand cooperation across political, parliamentary, economic and people-to-people domains.

During the visit, the Chairman Senate is scheduled to hold meetings with the President of Belarus, the leadership of the Belarusian Parliament and other senior officials, during which matters relating to bilateral relations, parliamentary exchanges and regional and international developments will be discussed.

Naqvi praises security forces for carrying out successful operations against militants in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday praised the security forces for carrying out successful operations against militants of Fitna al-Hindustan in Balochistan under Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3.

He particularly commended the forces for eliminating nine militants during an operation in the Kanak Valley area of Mastung. In a statement, Mohsin Naqvi lauded the professional capabilities of the security forces for successfully conducting the operation and neutralizing the militants.

He said the forces had once again demonstrated their commitment to protecting the country through effective action against terrorist elements.

The Interior Minister said the nation takes pride in the brave personnel of the security forces who thwart attempts aimed at undermining peace and security. He noted that the successful operations reflect the firm resolve of the security institutions to safeguard national security and maintain stability.

Mohsin Naqvi paid tribute to all personnel who participated in Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3, acknowledging their role and dedication in carrying out the mission. He said their efforts were part of the ongoing campaign against terrorism and those seeking to disrupt the country's security.



NEW YORK: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, speaking at the UN-hosted "Solutions Dialogue on Climate Finance," highlighting Pakistan's acute climate vulnerability and its diversified approach to climate finance, combining domestic resources, international support and private investment.

Energy security linked to food security, economic resilience: Aurangzeb

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held high-level meetings on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to advance partnerships in key economic sectors.

Accompanying the Prime Minister of Pakistan on the second day of his official visit, the Minister engaged international stakeholders to secure strategic cooperation in energy security, aviation development, healthcare delivery, and climate finance.According to a press release issued by finance minister here, the minister participated in a high-level dialogue hosted by the World Economic Forum (WEF) on "Powering Growth in the New Economy", where he highlighted that the global focus had shifted from energy transition to the more immediate challenge of energy security, particularly amid ongoing geopolitical conflicts and disruptions to fuel supplies. He noted that Pakistan had experienced a significant, largely private-sector-led expansion in solar energy, demonstrating the potential of renewable energy to reduce dependence on imported fuels.

He also emphasised that difficulties in securing energy supplies had wider economic consequences, as energy security was closely linked to food security and overall economic resilience. Aurangzeb also held a meeting with Dr Brendan Nelson, President of Boeing Global, where discussions focused on PIA's fleet modernization and broader cooperation in Pakistan's aviation sector.

Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb welcomed Boeing's confirmation that a revised proposal for the acquisition of new aircraft would be shared with PIA, while options for earlier delivery slots and interim leasing arrangements would also be explored. The discussion covered financing support from the US Export-Import Bank, engine procurement, spare parts, maintenance and restoration of grounded aircraft.

Natalie Baker appreciates Pakistan's sacrifices in fight against terrorism

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday met with US Ambassador Natalie Baker in Islamabad and discussed ways to strengthen Pakistan-US relations, investment opportunities, regional security and efforts for peace and stability.

During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on promoting bilateral relations and explored opportunities for increasing investment cooperation between Pakistan and the United States. They also discussed the latest regional situation and ongoing efforts aimed at maintaining peace and stability.

Regional security matters and Pakistan's role in promoting peace were also reviewed. The two sides agreed to strengthen mutual contacts in order to further enhance bilateral cooperation.

US Ambassador Natalie Baker appreciated Pakistan's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism and acknowledged the country's contributions in addressing security challenges.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with US Ambassador Natalie Baker



ISLAMABAD: PML-N MNA Babar Nawaz addressing a press conference along with ANP leader Samar Bilour and PML-N leader Saeeda Jamshed at the National Press Club.

Leaders of PTI misleading nation: MNA Babar Nawaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): PML-N MNA Babar Nawaz on Wednesday said the leaders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf were misleading the nation and pursuing the politics of unrest instead of focusing on the uplift of people.

Addressing a press conference at the National Press Club Islamabad along with ANP leader Samar Bilour and PML-N leader Saeeda Jamshed, Nawaz highlighted that the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was indulged in corruption in areas public welfare.

Babar Nawaz mentioned that the medical and education services in KP needed attention of the provincial government.

He pointed out that several hospitals in KP were in unsatisfactory condition while hundreds of schools had no teachers available.

ADB projects Pakistan's FY2027 growth at 3.7% as sustained reforms, stronger external buffers support economic outlook

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan's economic performance continued to strengthen in fiscal year 2026 (FY2026, ended 30 June 2026), with growth accelerating to 3.7% from 3.2% in FY2025, the Asian Development Bank said in a report on Wednesday.

The expansion was broad-based, supported by resilient services, a rebound in manufacturing, recovery in agriculture, and stronger private investment, although the Middle East conflict slowed economic activity in the final quarter of the fiscal year.

According to the Asian Development Outlook September 2026, Pakistan's gross domestic product growth is projected to remain at 3.7% in FY2027. Sustained implementation of economic reforms, improved external buffers, renewed access to international capital markets, and recent sovereign credit rating upgrades are expected to support investor confidence and private investment.

However, elevated energy prices and continued external uncertainty, including lingering effects of the Middle East conflict, are expected to constrain further acceleration in growth, it says.

"Pakistan's economy has made progress in strengthening macroeconomic stability over the past two years, with stronger growth, improved external buffers, restored market confidence, and sovereign credit rating upgrades reflecting the benefits of sustained reforms", said ADB Country Director for Pakistan Emma Fan.

"Maintaining reform momentum will be critical to unlock higher private investment, strengthen resilience to external shocks, and achieve stronger and more inclusive growth," Fan added.

Growth in FY2026 was supported by expansion in manufacturing and services. Agriculture grew by 2.9%, despite flood-related losses to major crops, while private investment increased by 8.6% amid lower borrowing costs and improved business confidence.

According to the report, fiscal consolidation continued during FY2026 as the gross international reserves increased, strengthening external resilience.

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