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Dialogue possible with political forces, not armed groups: CM Balochistan

CM Bugti calls for fact-based understanding of Balochistan's challenges

LAHORE, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said that the province's fundamental problem is not underdevelopment but a false narrative. There is a need to understand the difference between facts and perception. Unfortunately, in the present era, the correct history of Balochistan is not being presented. Underdevelopment exists in every province of Pakistan; however, on this basis, nowhere is there talk of taking up arms against the state or eliminating the state. "The dream of breaking up Balochistan can never be fulfilled. Article 5 of the Constitution teaches unconditional loyalty to the state. To reduce the gap between the younger generation and the state, we are listening to our youth at every level."

He expressed these views while addressing participants at the National School of Public Policy here on Monday.

The Balochistan Chief Minister said that they are always ready to hold negotiations with political people; however, negotiations cannot be held with those who take up arms.

He said that the issue of Balochistan needs to be understood in the light of facts and its historical context, because it is not possible to correctly analyze the situation in the province on the basis of a false narrative.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that historical facts regarding Balochistan's accession to Pakistan also need to be viewed in their proper context.

He said that the Khan of Kalat himself wrote in his book that Balochistan's accession took place with his consent. He said that understanding Balochistan's history requires studying historical facts and original sources.

The Balochistan Chief Minister mentioned certain reservations among the bureaucracy regarding serving in the province and said that some bureaucrats from Punjab do not like coming to Balochistan. He said that unless officers come to the ground and observe the situation themselves, how will they have proper knowledge of the ground realities?

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that awareness of ground realities is essential to understanding Balochistan's problems and the needs of its people.



RAWALPINDI: A delegation of the US Afghanistan War Commission, led by its Co-Chairs Shamila N Chaudhary, called on Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir at the General Headquarters (GHQ).



LAHORE: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti expressing his views during an event at National School of Public Policy.

'Nawaz Sharif rendered valuable services to Pakistan': Governor

Says services of democratic leaders must be recognized

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Governor Balochistan Jafar Khan Mandokhail has said that Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has served as the Prime Minister of Pakistan three times, made Pakistan a nuclear power, and made great sacrifices for upholding democracy, political struggle, and the continuity of the democratic process in the country. He has rendered valuable services to Pakistan. The services and sacrifices of Leader Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif for democracy and the strengthening of democratic institutions are commendable.

He expressed these views while addressing the launching ceremony of the "The Real Democrat Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif International Civil Award", organized by the Balochistan International Think Tank, Friends of Universe, and Pakistan Muslim League (N) Balochistan at Governor House, Quetta.

On the occasion, Governor Balochistan Jafar Khan Mandokhail said that among political and democratic leaders, after Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is a major political leader who has played a prominent role in the politics of the country. He said that he himself has also believed in principled politics and has been in favor of pleasant and respectful relations with all political leaders, including Pashtun and Baloch nationalist leaders.

He said that at the time of forming the government in Balochistan, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had clearly instructed that everyone in Balochistan should be taken along and progress should be made together.



ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar and Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry addressing a press conference

Balochistan govt committed to resolve financial issues of universities: Shoaib Nosherwani

QUETTA, (VoM Report): A meeting of the Universities Finance Commission (UFC) was held under the chairmanship of Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani. Secretary Finance Jahangir Kakar, Secretary Colleges Hashim Ghalzai, vice chancellors and representatives of various universities of the province, and other relevant officials participated in the meeting.

The meeting held a detailed discussion on the mechanism and proposed formula for the distribution of Rs. 8 billion in funds allocated to universities for the financial year 2026-27. The financial problems and requirements faced by various universities of the province were also reviewed in detail on the occasion. Representatives of the universities, at the forum of the Universities Finance Commission, apprised the participants of the financial difficulties and other issues faced by their respective universities. On the occasion, Provincial Finance and Minerals Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani assured that all relevant matters concerning the resolution of the universities' issues would be brought to the notice of the higher authorities and every possible effort would be made for their resolution.

During the meeting, representatives of the universities thanked the Provincial Finance Minister, the Universities Finance Commission, and the Government of Balochistan for resolving issues related to salaries and pensions. They said that, due to timely measures taken by the government, the universities are currently facing no significant issues regarding the payment of salaries and pensions.

The meeting was also briefed on progress, particularly regarding the pension liabilities of the University of Balochistan. With the approval of the Government of Balochistan, the Finance Department has provided Rs. 500 million as a loan to the University of Balochistan to help resolve the university's long-standing pension liabilities.

Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani said that the Government of Balochistan would continue to extend all possible cooperation, within the available resources, to resolve the financial difficulties faced by the universities of the province and to promote higher education.

Sexual element essential for harassment law to apply: FCC

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Federal Constitutional Court has held that the presence of a sexual element is essential for harassment to be actionable under the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, and that merely undesirable, inappropriate or harmful conduct does not constitute sexual harassment under the law.

The court set aside the Islamabad High Court's judgment and restored the order passed by the President in a harassment matter. A three-member bench comprising Chief Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Ali Baqar Najafi and Justice Syed Arshad Hussain Shah allowed petitions filed by Usman Shahid and Aqeel Abbas in a case concerning Nadia Sarwar, an employee of the National Bank of Pakistan.

In its detailed written judgment, the court held that the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 could not be applied to every form of inappropriate conduct or complaint. It said the presence of a sexual element was necessary for harassment to be actionable under the law.

TTAP to 'fully participate' in PTI's Oct 4 protest

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Opposition alliance Tehreek-i-Tahafuz-Ayin-i-Pakistan (TTAP) said on Monday it would "fully participate" in the PTI's protest that had been rescheduled to Oct 4.

The PTI has announced a nationwide protest, including a march to Islamabad, to demand the release of former prime minister and party founder Imran Khan. The protest was originally scheduled for Sept 27 but was postponed to Oct 4 last week. The leadership of the TTAP, which includes the PTI, was not fully on board with the decision to delay the march. However, once the decision was taken, they agreed to abide by it, but made it clear that they would not own the decision. A statement released by TTAP spokesperson Akhunzada Hussain Ahmad Yousafzai appeared to be implying the same.

"The PTI is part of the opposition alliance and and the call for the Sept 27 protest unanimously declared as a joint call of the opposition alliance in a TTAP meeting," he recounted. In that meeting, he continued, a strategy was also finalised regarding protests in Sindh and Balochistan while detailed consultations on it were also been held with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi and the PTI leadership. "The KP CM clearly stated that the decision regarding Sept 27 was of the PTI's political committee. Before the decision's announcement, [PTI Chairperson] Barrister Gohar Ali Khan visited the opposition leaders and it was clearly communicated to him that every single day after Sept 27 is crucial for us and this time will not come again," Yousafzai's statement said.

Ideological terrorism more dangerous than physical terrorism: Ashrafi

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Monday emphasised that ideological terrorism poses a greater danger than physical terrorism.

He noted that scholars, religious leaders, universities, seminaries, religious organizations and governments must take effective joint measures on an urgent basis to counter it.

Addressing an international conference at the Islamic University of Madinah, Ashrafi said elements misleading Muslim youth in the name of Islam and Jihad had caused irreparable damage to the Muslim world.

He said it was essential to intellectually and academically expose the ideologies, objectives and conduct of extremist and terrorist groups in order to protect the younger generation from misleading narratives.

Trump willing to offer Iran sanctions relief for nuclear progress

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): US President Donald Trump is willing to offer economic sanctions relief and release frozen funds to Iran in exchange for concrete progress related to its nuclear program, a US official told American news outlets Axios and CNN on Monday. Washington is engaging in "positive and constructive" talks via mediators, CNN quoted a US official as saying, emphasizing that negotiators would not finalize an agreement unless nuclear-related concerns received full resolution. The White House did not immediately respond to a request by Anadolu for comment on the remarks. The prospective diplomatic opening comes after Trump on Saturday rejected an Iranian proposal aimed at easing tensions.

CDF Munir shares Pakistan's perspective on Afghanistan war with US delegation

RAWALPINDI, (Monitoring Desk): Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Asim Munir has shared Pakistan's perspective on the security dynamics that shaped the conflict and highlighted the challenges faced by Pakistan during the prolonged conflict in Afghanistan with a visiting US delegation, the military's media wing said on Monday.

According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the field marshal shared the perspective during a meeting with a delegation of the US Afghanistan War Commission, led by its Co-Chairs Shamila N Chaudhary and Dr Colin F Jackson, who called on him at the General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi.

CDF Munir underscored the importance of incorporating the regional perspective and Islamabad's experience in assessing the strategic, diplomatic and operational dimensions of the conflict.

The delegation is undertaking a review of the United States' 20-year engagement in Afghanistan. "Discussions covered matters of mutual interest including Pakistan's support, the regional security environment and developments in Afghanistan, with focus on perspectives relevant to the commission's work," read the statement.

The visiting team also acknowledged Pakistan's longstanding role and sacrifices during the conflict in Afghanistan and appreciated its continued contribution to regional peace and stability.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail addresses a ceremony for the Real Democrat Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif International Civil Award 2026–27 at the Governor House

Tarar for coordinated efforts to eliminate terrorism

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday demanded a year-wise account of funds allocated to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the National Finance Commission (NFC) framework for counterterrorism, questioning their utilisation amid continuing security challenges in the province.

Addressing a press conference alongside Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry, Tarar said the entire country had provided additional resources to the provincial government specifically for counterterrorism measures, and it must explain how the funds received each year had been spent. He questioned why Safe City surveillance systems had not been established across the province and why a forensic laboratory had not been set up, forcing samples to be sent to Lahore for examination. He said surveillance cameras could help investigators trace suspects and vehicles used in terrorist attacks.

Recalling the martyrdom of Captain Mubeen and SSP Zahid Gondal in Punjab, Tarar said Safe City cameras had helped investigators trace the facilitators involved in the attacks.

The minister said the provincial government should disclose whether the counterterrorism funds had been spent on strengthening police, improving security infrastructure or other purposes. He asked whether the money had been used for political activities, distributed among members of the provincial assembly or diverted for personal gain.

Atta Tarar said despite governing the province for around 12 and a half years, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led government had failed to take adequate ownership of counterterrorism efforts and strengthen the security apparatus. He also questioned the continued use of non-custom-paid and unregistered vehicles in the province, saying an effective registration system and computerised database could help law-enforcement agencies identify vehicles used in terrorist attacks, including vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs).



Thousands of people have been evacuated due to flooding in Bangkok, Thailand.

THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

Tuesday September 29, 2026

Ceasefire depends solely on restraint

The latest exchange of fire between the US and Iran reminds us once more that ceasefires are sustained not by signatures alone but also political restraint. The reported US strikes, following a dispute over Iran's actions against a commercial vessel in the Strait of Hormuz, illustrate how quickly a single incident can place the broader peace process in jeopardy. While Washington described its response as limited and consistent with preserving the ceasefire, Tehran insisted that its own actions in the Strait of Hormuz were compatible with the MoU. Yet the episode exposed just how fragile the recent agreement had become. Rather than allowing military exchanges to dictate the trajectory of relations, both sides should now activate the deconfliction mechanism envisaged in their MoU. Its purpose is to clarify incidents, reduce the risk of miscalculation and prevent localised confrontations from escalating into a wider conflict. Countries that facilitated the process, particularly Qatar and Pakistan, along with other regional stakeholders, should intensify their diplomatic engagement to ensure negotiations remain on track. A ceasefire that depends solely on restraint is inherently fragile; one reinforced by constant communication and active mediation stands a far better chance of enduring. This challenge is not unique to the US-Iran dialogue. The recently announced framework agreement between Israel and Lebanon illustrates both the promise and vulnerability of diplomacy in today's Middle East.

The agreement seeks to replace recurring conflict with phased security arrangements and greater Lebanese state authority in the country's south. But its implementation has already encountered political resistance and remains vulnerable to renewed violence.The lesson is clear. Diplomatic breakthroughs are only the beginning of a much longer process that demands sustained political commitment, patience and confidence-building if agreements are to survive the inevitable shocks that follow their signing. If the region is moving towards dialogue rather than confrontation, those efforts must be protected rather than undermined by every new incident. This is also why Washington's public messaging, and its private diplomacy, matter. Secretary of State Marco Rubio's recent assurances to Gulf allies appear intended to calm understandable concerns that engagement with Tehran will come at their expense. Such reassurance has its place, but preserving regional confidence requires more than public statements.

Behind closed doors, both Washington and Tehran must demonstrate equal determination to prevent isolated military incidents from derailing negotiations. The alternative is a return to the familiar cycle of retaliation that has left the Middle East less secure and diplomacy weaker.

The latest exchange should therefore be treated not as proof that dialogue has failed, but as a warning of how easily it could if both sides fail to show diplomatic discipline.

Guardians or captors: the two faces of humanity

Athar Minallah

On May 26, 2026, an elephant named Happy died at the Bronx Zoo in New York after more than 50 years in captivity and over two decades in effective solitude. Her death marked the end of a difficult life, but it also invites reflection on a legal and moral journey that connected a captive elephant in New York to a constitutional courtroom in Islamabad.

To understand Happy's significance, it is necessary to begin not with animals, but with human beings.

When I assumed office as chief justice of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in 2018, one of my foremost concerns was ensuring that the court remained accessible to the vulnerable. Soon, the court became a forum for petitions involving enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, suppression of dissent, persecution of journalists and abuse of state authority.

These cases exposed a paradox at the heart of human society. The same intellect that enables justice and compassion can also be used to dominate and oppress. Authority entrusted for public good can become an instrument of suffering when left unchecked. Yet they also reinforced a foundational principle of constitutionalism: the law exists to protect the vulnerable from the abuse of power.

As these cases accumulated, a deeper question emerged: Why do human beings possess rights? The answer appeared straightforward. Every human being possesses life. Regardless of status, identity or circumstance, no life is inherently more valuable than another. Human dignity and equality arise from that simple truth. But another question followed. Is life valuable because it is human, or because it is life?

While this question was taking shape, three unusual petitions came before the court. One concerned Kaavan, an elephant confined for decades in Islamabad's Murghazar Zoo. Another involved a black bear. A third related to the cruel treatment of stray dogs. A simple fact became unavoidable. They all possessed life. Like human beings, they experienced fear, pain, distress and deprivation. Their capacity to suffer arose from the same foundation that gives meaning to human rights: the possession of life itself.

It was at this stage that I encountered the case of Happy. Born in Asia around 1970, Happy was captured as a calf, separated from her family, and transported to the US. In 1977, she was placed in the Bronx Zoo, where she ultimately spent decades in isolation despite belonging to a species defined by deep social bonds.

Her confinement became the subject of litigation brought by the Nonhuman Rights Project, which asked courts in New York to consider whether an elephant could be entitled to liberty through a writ of habeas corpus. Although relief was denied, the case marked a turning point in legal discourse. Serious constitutional arguments were advanced on behalf of a non-human being seeking freedom, forcing courts and society to confront assumptions long taken for granted.

The arguments advanced on Happy's behalf reinforced a conviction already forming in my mind: rights cannot depend upon resemblance to human beings. If rights depend upon intelligence, autonomy or cognitive capacity, then many human beings would fall outside their protection at different stages of life. Human rights are grounded in something more universal — life. Why, then, should life be treated differently when it exists in a non-human form?

Happy's case also highlighted the limitations of existing law. Her confinement was recognised as an ethical concern, yet no remedy was granted. Recognition without remedy is incomplete justice. When a court acknowledges the existence of injustice and yet fails to provide an effective remedy, it ceases to be merely a passive observer and beco-mes complicit in the perpetuation of that injustice.

When the IHC later addressed the case of Kaavan and 878 other animals confined in the Murghazar Zoo, it was not sufficient merely to acknowledge their suffering. Their rights had to be given practical effect. Kaavan was transferred to a sanctuary in Cambodia. Bears were relocated to Jordan. Hundreds of animals were moved to appropriate facilities, and the Murghazar Zoo was ultimately closed. These outcomes were not driven by emotions. They were grounded in a legal principle: if life has intrinsic value, then every living being has interests deserving protection. The law cannot recognise suffering in one living being while remaining indifferent to identical suffering in another merely because of species.

Happy never came to Pakistan. She never app-e-ared before the IHC. Yet her case travelled across continents and contributed to a jurisprudence that restored liberty to hundreds of captive animals.

Happy's story forces us to confront two competing visions of humanity. One is the vision of dominion. It treats other living beings as objects to be used, confined or controlled. The other is the vision of stewardship. It recognises that power carries responsibility and that intelligence imposes an obligation of care rather than a licence for domination.

Throughout my judicial experience, whether in cases involving human suffering or the confinement of animals, I encountered the same underlying question: how should power be exercised? The answer defines not only constitutionalism, but civilisation itself.There is also an irony that should not be overlooked. In the Global South, Kaavan and 878 other non-human beings were granted liberty through judicial intervention and transferred to environments consistent with their welfare and dignity.

Happy, whose case inspired legal debate across jurisdictions and helped shape that jurisprudence, remained confined in a zoo in the Global North. She endured years of isolation and captivity and ultimately died without experiencing the freedom that so many argued she deserved. The contrast reminds us that progress is not measured by geography, wealth, or institutional prestige, but by the willingness to translate recognition of suffering into meaningful protection.

Dreaming of connectivity

M. Amir Rana

Gwadar has long remained Pakistan's geoeconomic dream.

Whenever officialdom thinks of extracting economic advantage from geopolitics, Gwadar is the first image that comes to mind. Yet the port has not realised its promised potential, and the adjoining economic zone still awaits investors.

Pakistan's facilitation of the Tehran-Washing-ton contact generated cautious optimism about a possible geoeconomic opening with Iran. Under the 2008 bilateral agreement on international road transport of passengers and goods, Pakistan has already offered Iran multiple trade routes, including Gwadar-Gabd, Karachi/Port Qasim-Ormara-Pasni-Gabd, Karachi/Port Qasim-Khuz-dar-Dalbandin-Taftan, and extended corridors lin--king Gwadar, Turbat, Panjgur, Khuzdar, Quet--ta and Taftan. If used, these routes can reduce logistics costs and reconnect Makran with regional trade flows.

Soon after Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's visit to Islamabad, the FBR introduced procedures allowing cross-stuffing of Iran-bound cargo at Pakistan's seaports and off-dock terminals. The move is expected to benefit Gwadar, Makran and Pakistan's border trade with Iran.

It can be assumed that such facilitation featured in bilateral discussions. Iran has used the Strait of Hormuz as geopolitical leverage, but chokepoints also impacted Iran as the US naval blockade was costing Iran $500 million daily, resulting in billions in lost oil revenues in just the first few weeks of the tightening restrictions.

The Gulf crisis has reminded all regional states of the need to diversify trade routes. Iran, already facing regional and global constraints, needs alt-e-rnative corridors; Pakistan is geographically plac--ed to provide them. This opportunity can also be--nefit Pakistan.

Yet, Pakistan is part of emerging alignments in West Asia that may not always sit comfortably with deeper economic cooperation with Iran. Still, in a region covered in strategic haze, Pakistan's advantage lies in keeping its options open, building corridors and allowing economics to create space when politics is constrained.

Apart from rapidly changing West Asian geopolitics, Pakistan's growing economic engagem-ent with Iran is driven by several strategic considerations. Afghanistan remains the first; the need for a more controlled border regime in the context of the Baloch insurgency the second; the long-delayed gas pipeline the third; and the search for alternative routes to Central Asia the fourth.

For decades, Afghanistan appeared to be Pakistan's natural gateway to Central Asia. However, terrorism and deteriorating relations with Kabul have pushed this ambition to the background. Rawalpindi has lost patience with the security situation across the western border, and, if not abandoned, the dream of reaching Central Asia through Afghanistan has at least been placed on the back-burner.

Interestingly, Pakistan's strategic community has repeatedly produced grand ideas capable of energising the power elite. Since the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, and even during the war itself, Pakistan envisioned expanding its economic, energy, defence and political relations with Central Asia. Numerous transnational energy and trade corridors were proposed, yet few materialised.

Perhaps Uraan Pakistan is another manifestation of this tendency. The federal government's National Economic Transformation Plan (2024-29) seeks to place Pakistan on the path to a trillion-dollar economy by 2035 and a higher-income economy by 2047. Within the current power structure, a new strategic vision is echoing. It is titled 'Three Routes to the World'.

The first, the Blue-Gold Corridor, links Gwadar to Central Asia through Chagai, Herat and Tashkent, offering the shortest land route to the region and a potential corridor for minerals and agriculture. The second connects Gwadar to Mashhad through Iran, relying on existing Iranian infrastructure and offering the fastest and least expensive option. The third, the CPEC-China route, stretches from Gwadar to Kashgar via Islamabad, linking the port to China's western regions and giving Gwadar renewed strategic relevance in an increasingly uncertain region.

Such visions look good in PowerPoint presentations, but many may not have the capacity to see the constraints and evolve a plan to implement the idea. The power elite is not ready to acknowledge that the Chinese now have reduced enthusiasm for Gwadar and even for CPEC because of security concerns, bureaucratic red tape-ism, and, most importantly, the lack of plans and vision to assess future prospects for the venture.

There is a gap between dreaming and thinking big. The former may involve conceiving grand ideas, but the latter requires plans, institutions and sustained strategies to transform those ideas into reality.

Perhaps the roots of this tendency to dream lie deep in the psychology of Pakistan's power and intellectual elites. They continue to believe that Pakistan was primarily the product of poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal's imagination, yet they remain hesitant to appreciate the pragmatism of the country's founder Mohammad Ali Jin-nah. From Iqbal, they extract utopianism; from Jinnah, they borrow only fragments of realism.

Dreamers possess a certain luxury. When one dream shatters, another can easily replace it. Yet the strategic vision that dominates sections of the power elite often fails to complement the country's geoeconomic ambitions. Forget India, with whom Pakistan's political leadership once envisioned expanding trade and economic cooperation. Afghanistan presents a more revealing case.

Following the Taliban takeover in 2021, Pakis-tani strategists became optimistic about connectivity with Central Asia through Afghanistan. Central Asian states also appeared receptive to the idea. However, terrorism intervened. Pakistan's failure to persuade the Taliban to curb the TTP and other terrorist groups gradually transformed optimism into frustration.

Islamabad has not only put aside the idea of reaching Central Asia via Afghanistan, but has also distanced itself from its former partner, the Afghan Taliban.

Iran has now emerged as an alternative gateway to Central Asia. Strategists are no longer merely discussing this option; they have begun implementing it, as evidenced by the first cargo shipments to Uzbekistan via Iranian territory.

Israel's mission impossible

By Qamar Bashir

Israel is discovering a hard strategic truth: the country that wants absolute freedom of military action cannot easily free itself from the very superpower that makes that military action possible. For decades, Israel has depended on the United States not only for diplomatic protection, but also for the aircraft, bombs, interceptors, missiles, spare parts, emergency resupply, and financial aid that sustain its defensive shield and offensive reach. Now, as Washington tries to restrain Israeli escalation against Lebanon in order to preserve a wider regional ceasefire and protect its own diplomatic understanding with Iran, some Israeli voices are arguing that Israel should reduce or end its military dependence on America. It is an emotionally attractive slogan, but economically and militarily it is close to a mission impossible.

The facts are stark. The United States provides Israel with about $3.8 billion annually under the 2019–2028 military aid memorandum. But the real value of American support is much larger than that figure. It includes access to advanced aircraft, precision-guided munitions, air-defense cooperation, intelligence sharing, emergency replenishment, and direct U.S. military support during regional crises. In recent wars, American forces have helped intercept drones and missiles aimed at Israel, while U.S. political backing has shielded Israel from far greater diplomatic isolation.

Israel is not a weak military power. It has one of the world's most advanced defense industries. Its cyber capabilities, drone technology, radar systems, electronic warfare, missile defense, and intelligence tools are globally respected. Israeli defense exports reached record levels in recent years, showing that the country can design and sell sophisticated military technology. But exporting advanced systems is not the same as independently sustaining a multi-front war, replacing U.S. aircraft, producing deep stocks of precision bombs, and maintaining strategic air dominance without Washington.

The most important vulnerability is air power. Israel's offensive doctrine relies heavily on U.S.-made F-35s, F-15s, and F-16s. These aircraft are the backbone of Israel's ability to strike Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Iran-linked targets, and other distant theatres. Israel can modify these aircraft with domestic systems, but it does not independently manufacture them. Nor does it independently control the full supply chain for engines, advanced components, spare parts, and future upgrades. If the United States stops supplying or servicing these systems, Israeli offensive capability would not collapse overnight, but it would steadily degrade.

The numbers explain the dilemma. Israel's military expenditure surged to about $46.5 billion in 2024, equal to roughly 8.8 percent of GDP. That is already one of the highest defense burdens in the world. To become meaningfully independent from the United States, Israel would likely need to spend around 12 to 15 percent of GDP on defense for many years. That means an additional annual burden of roughly $18 billion to $35 billion, depending on the level of independence pursued. Such money would not come from the sky. It would come from taxes, borrowing, civilian cuts, reduced welfare, delayed infrastructure, pressure on education, and weaker investment in health, housing, and productivity.

In simple terms, Israel would have to choose between becoming a more militarized economy and remaining a prosperous civilian economy. The deeper the pursuit of military independence, the greater the sacrifice imposed on ordinary citizens. Hospitals, schools, universities, transport networks, housing programs, technology investment, social services, and family support would all face pressure. Israel could build more factories, more missile plants, more ammunition lines, and more domestic systems, but every shekel moved into permanent militarization would be a shekel removed from civilian development.

Time is another obstacle. Israel could reduce some dependence in five to eight years by expanding domestic production of ammunition, drones, interceptors, electronic systems, and some missiles. It could reduce dependence further in 10 to 15 years with a massive industrial program. But true independence in combat aircraft, stealth technology, strategic engines, large precision weapons, satellites, and wartime resupply could take 20 to 30 years, and even then may remain incomplete. No small country can easily replicate the industrial depth of the United States.

This is why the idea of cutting loose from Washington in one year is unrealistic. If Israel attempted it suddenly, its economy could face an additional 3 to 6 percent of GDP in defense pressure. Its offensive capability could be weakened by 40 to 60 percent over one to two years, especially if precision munitions, aircraft parts, and resupply pipelines were disrupted. Its defensive sustainability in a prolonged multi-front war could fall by 25 to 40 percent. Its ability to sustain occupation, control hostile territories, and conduct repeated military operations across several fronts could become 30 to 50 percent harder.

This is the central contradiction of Israeli strategy. Some Israeli hardliners want complete freedom to strike Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, Iran-linked groups, and other regional adversaries without American restraint. They also want to pursue a maximalist vision of regional dominance, sometimes expressed through the dangerous idea of a "Greater Israel." But such ambitions are possible only because the United States has historically supplied the military oxygen. Remove that oxygen, and the same expansionist project becomes far more costly, risky, and perhaps unsustainable.

This is also why many Israeli analysts and strategic thinkers warn against alienating Washington.

Iranian delegation at UN planning no further talks with US

TEHRAN, (Monitoring Desk): Iranian state media reported Monday that the country's U.N. delegation has no plans to talk with the United States, following President Donald Trump's comments that he expected further negotiations.

"Iran's delegation in New York has no plans for negotiations with the United States," said the official IRNA news agency, citing an unnamed source close to the group.

Trump told media outlet Axios Sunday that he expected talks to resume soon, a day after he rejected a proposal by Tehran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz within seven days.

"Iran's views and positions were conveyed clearly and explicitly to the U.S. side ... via a Qatari mediator," IRNA said, adding that the Iranian delegation would return to Tehran Tuesday.

Iran says it presented seven conditions for ending the war and reopening the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic waterway through which roughly 20% of the world's oil and gas flowed before the war.

The strait lies at the heart of the conflict that began with U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran in February.

Following that attack, Tehran placed a chokehold on the waterway, and Washington responded with a blockade of Iranian ports.

Axios said indirect talks mediated by Qatar could take place as early as Monday, less than a week after similar discussions between U.S. envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

Iran demands a seven-day cease-fire across the Middle East, including in Lebanon, where its ally Hezbollah is regularly bombarded by Israel.

It also demands the unfreezing of its foreign assets, lifting sanctions on its oil sector, and an end to the U.S. naval blockade.

Trump rejected their demands Saturday.

But fighting has once again slowed as the U.S. has not struck Iran since Sept. 1, although vessels have regularly been struck in the Strait of Hormuz.



A firefighter works at the site of a Russian jet drone strike in Kyiv, Ukraine.



Queen Mathilde of Belgium and the spouses of several world leaders in a group photo during a UN panel organized by Turkiye's Ministry of Family and Social Services in New York.

Yemeni govt forces bomb Houthi positions in Taiz as conflict escalates

SANAA, (Agencies): Yemeni government forces bombed Houthi positions west of the city of Taiz in southwestern Yemen on Monday as fighting continues to escalate in the war-torn country.

The media center of the Taiz Military Axis said airstrikes targeted Houthi sites in the Al-Rubaie area west of Taiz. It did not immediately provide details on casualties or damage resulting from the strikes. There was no comment from the Houthis on the attack. On Sunday, Yemeni government forces said that they targeted Houthi gatherings and positions in Taiz, Lahij and Al-Dhalea in the country's southwest. Yemen has been mired in conflict since the Houthis seized Sanaa and several provinces in 2014, prompting a Saudi-led coalition to intervene in 2015 in support of Yemen's internationally recognized government. Fighting intensified in September, with the Houthis taking control of several key areas in Al-Hudaydah and Taiz provinces.

Monsoon floods, landslides kill 68 across India, Nepal in 72 hours

LUCKNOW, (Agencies): At least 68 people were killed in northern India and Nepal in the past 72 hours after heavy rain triggered floods and landslides across the region, authorities said Monday.

In India's most populous state of Uttar Pradesh, 56 people died and more than 1,000 houses were damaged over the past three days, the Relief Commissioner's office said in a statement.

Neighboring Nepal, already reeling from the catastrophic Aug. 26 flood, was hit by new flooding and landslides that killed 12 people since Thursday.

"Since Thursday, 12 people have died in rain-related disasters such as floods and landslides," Shanti Mahat, spokesperson for Nepal's disaster authority said, adding that seven more were missing.

Scientists have warned in recent years of an increase in extreme weather events across South Asia, linking them to rising temperatures and changing climate patterns. The flooding in Nepal last month, triggered by a glacial mountain collapse on the China-Nepal border, killed more than 1,400 people and left thousands missing.

Uttar Pradesh, home to more than 240 million people, frequently experiences rain and thunderstorms during the annual monsoon season from June to September.

The Relief Commissioner's office said the latest deaths occurred during a spell of "exceptionally heavy rain" after a "depression over the Bay of Bengal moved inland and intensified rainfall across the region."

Israeli extremists call to renew Gaza settlements, West bank war

GAZA, (Agencies): Israel has continued to violate the U.S.-backed truce in Gaza Strip, killing at least four people late Sunday, according to medical sources, while extremist groups demanded the Palestinian enclave be opened up to illegal settlements.

In the latest attack, a Palestinian was killed and two others were injured when an Israeli quadcopter opened fire on tents housing displaced people in the al-Tawam area in northwestern Gaza, a medical source told media.

Earlier, Palestinian Shadi Abu Hasira was killed when an Israeli drone struck a civilian vehicle in the al-Sinaa area south of Gaza City, according to a medical source at al-Shifa Hospital.

In southern Gaza, 17-year-old Tariq al-Masri died from serious wounds sustained in Israeli gunfire in central Khan Younis, while 28-year-old Uday Adli al-Assar was killed in an Israeli drone strike on the al-Mawasi area west of the city, earlier Sunday.

Seven Palestinians were injured in separate Israeli drone strikes in Gaza City, including two near the White Mosque in the al-Shati refugee camp and five near tents housing displaced people around the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood market.

Also Sunday, several Israeli ministers and lawmakers joined thousands of Israeli illegal settlers in a vehicle convoy toward the Gaza border, demanding the reestablishment of illegal Israeli settlements in the Palestinian enclave, Israel's Channel 7 reported.

The convoy, led by the Nachala Settlement Movement alongside other right-wing groups, was heading to a gathering point in northern Gaza before a rally near the enclave's northern border.

Organizers are pressing the Israeli government to restore settlements in Gaza, arguing in a message to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that a long-term security solution requires a settlement presence there.

Nachala leader Daniella Weiss, who joined the convoy, said thousands were arriving with housing equipment and preparing to reestablish a presence at Nisanit, an Israeli settlement in the northern Gaza Strip that was dismantled and evacuated in August 2005, as well as elsewhere in the enclave.

Israel evacuated its illegal settlements in Gaza in 2005 under a unilateral disengagement plan.

Smotrich calls for war on W. Bank

Separately, far-right Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich called Sunday for launching a war in the occupied West Bank, similar to Israel's genocidal war in the Gaza Strip.

Tel Aviv "should do there (West Bank) what we did in Gaza," Smotrich told Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth.

Smotrich repeated his call to dismantle the Palestinian Authority, which exercises limited control over parts of the West Bank. His remarks come amid tighter Israeli restrictions on Palestinian movement in the West Bank, including checkpoint closures and roadblocks that isolate communities and hinder access to work, homes and essential services.

Since Israel began its war on the Gaza Strip in October 2023, the Israeli army and occupiers have stepped up attacks in the West Bank, killing over 1,206 Palestinians, injuring more than 13,300 and arresting nearly 26,000, according to Palestinian figures.

The attacks include demolishing homes and other structures, burning mosques, bulldozing farmland, preventing farmers from accessing their land, displacing Palestinians and expanding illegal settlements.



Security measures were put in place and counter-demonstrations took place around Medinah Country Club in Medinah, Illinois, where US President Donald Trump visited to watch final round of the Presidents Cup golf tournament.

Germany vows strong support for Int'l Criminal Court amid US attacks

BERLIN, (Agencies): Germany on Monday pledged strong support for the International Criminal Court (ICC) amid recent attacks by US President Donald Trump against the UN court.

"International rules are only as strong as the willingness to stand up for them. Especially at a time when international institutions are increasingly being called into question, we must clearly stand by them together with our global partners," Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul said in a statement.

"Germany will do its part to ensure that the ICC remains capable of acting even under pressure," Wadephul added. He was scheduled to visit the ICC in The Hague later in the day and meet his Dutch counterpart, Tom Berendsen. The ICC ensures justice precisely where national justice systems are unable or unwilling to do so, according to Wadephul.

The US does not recognize the ICC and has increasingly imposed sanctions on the court and its representatives. Since 2002, the ICC has prosecuted the most serious crimes, including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The US has accused the court, among other things, of acting out of political motives. Last week at the UN General Assembly, Trump called on ICC member states to withdraw from the court.

Wadephul said Germany knows from its own history where it can lead when state power disregards the rule of law and humanity, referring to the Nazi era.



A woman from Ukraine reacts as she receives a hug from a volunteer after arriving at Berlin's central station

US military rejects Iranian claims of controlling Strait of Hormuz

WAWSHINGTON, (Agencies): The US military on Monday rejected an Iranian commander's claim that Tehran maintains operational control over maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf. "Iran has no navy because American forces sank it," US Central Command (CENTCOM) said on US social media company X. The command maintained that Tehran exercises no authority over the vital chokepoint, saying thousands of commercial vessels had passed through and more than 1 billion barrels of crude had transited in recent months.

The statement came after Iranian state media cited Army Chief of Staff and Deputy Coordinator Rear Adm. Habibollah Sayyari as saying that naval forces under the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps exercise full control over the waterway and the Gulf. Sayyari asserted that the army's naval forces oversee the eastern approach into the Indian Ocean, warning that the forces would not permit maritime transit. Both nations have traded accusations over blockades in the vital corridor amid the seven-month Iran war that began with large-scale strikes by the US and Israel in late February.

British-US relationship "closest alliance of two nations on earth: Wes Streeting

LONDON, (Agencies): UK Defense Secretary Wes Streeting on Monday described the UK-US relationship as "the closest alliance of any two nations on earth."

He made the remarks at the Labour Party conference in Liverpool, a day after a suspected terror plot targeting RAF Fairford, a UK military airbase in Gloucestershire, in southwestern England.

A major incident was declared Sunday in a village near the base that hosts US Air Force operations, with 85 households evacuated after police arrested five men in connection with an investigation involving suspected offenses under the Explosives Act.

"There is a live police investigation and I can't provide much further detail than that which is reported," Streeting told the conference. "But I do want to say that our friendship with America is the closest alliance of any two nations on earth, and we will always stand together against those who hate our freedom and those who wish us harm." He praised British security services, armed forces and police for their response to the incident. Streeting also announced a £6 billion ($8 billion) contract to build docks for Britain's nuclear submarines, describing it as "one of the biggest defense procurement decisions in a generation." "There is neither an economic nor a moral justification for Britain's defense sector hiring thousands of workers from abroad when we have one million young people out of work here at home," he said. "But solving that problem needs more than words; it demands bold action, and that's why today the chancellor and I are taking one of the biggest defense procurement decisions in a generation: the contract to build the docks for our nuclear subs, our ultimate deterrent, £6 billion worth of work," he noted.

"Today, we commit to that contract staying in this country, supporting thousands of British jobs for years," he said.

Pope Leo warns against 'illusion' of rearmament

METZ, FRANCE, (Agencies): Pope Leo XIV warned Monday against the "illusion" of rearmament and denounced the "senseless slaughter" claiming countless lives around the world.

"Today, sadly, war has returned, even to Europe: a new 'senseless slaughter,' claiming countless civilian lives every day," the pope said at the Robert Schuman Conference Centre in Metz, France.

He stressed the need for patient dialogue and negotiations while being willing "to give up some positions for the greater good of peace." The pontiff acknowledged that Europe's search for peace should not be confused "with a naive form of pacifism."

"However, we must also guard against the illusion that rearmament is the answer," he added. Underlining that promoting peace is an active task, he urged people to ask whether they were truly making "creative efforts" for world peace.

"We must also ask whether we are simply seeking to 'stem the tide of war' and better prepare ourselves for wars that we assume are still to come," he added.

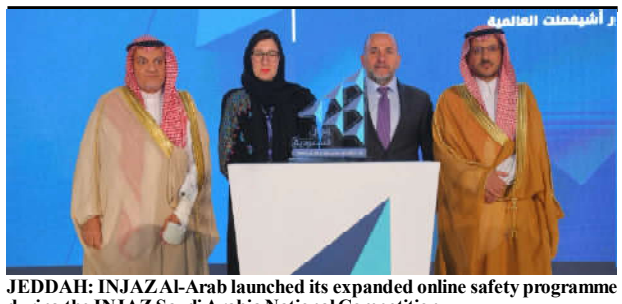
"Today, relations between individuals and States are becoming increasingly uncivilized. The value of keeping one's word is dismissed; instead, people boast of lies and deceit," the pope said.

He pointed to Europe's role in breaking such a cycle, highlighting that the continent had demonstrated over the years the possibility of articulating different opinions, claims and interests "through encounter rather than conflict."

"Do not give in to the mentality of violence and oppression," the pope added.



GAZA CITY, GAZA, PALESTINE: Civil defense teams carry out work to recover the bodies of Palestinians left under the rubble of a building destroyed as a result of Israeli army attacks in the Nuseirat Refugee Camp



JEDDAH: INJAZ Al-Arab launched its expanded online safety programme during the INJAZ Saudi Arabia National Competition.

Sudanese authorities accuse paramilitary RSF of attacking civilian facilities in El-Obeid

KHARTOUM, (Agencies): Sudanese authorities in North Kordofan on Monday accused the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) of carrying out drone strikes on civilian facilities in El-Obeid, the state capital.

"Targeting civilian, educational and sports facilities constitutes a blatant attack on citizens and their resources and a violation of international humanitarian law," the state government said in a statement.

It said the targeted sites included the sports city and the private Shikan University College in the state.

No casualties or material damage were reported.

The state government called on the international community and rights and humanitarian organizations to condemn the RSF attacks on civilian objects, provide protection to civilians, document the alleged violations and hold those responsible accountable.

There was no immediate comment from the paramilitary group on the accusation.

Last month, the UN said that 1,100 civilians were killed in drone attacks in Sudan between January and June.

Sudan's three Kordofan states, North, West and South, have witnessed clashes between the army and the RSF since Oct. 25, 2025. Sudan has been engulfed in a war between the army and the RSF since April 2023 that has killed tens of thousands of people and displaced around 13 million, according to UN and international estimates.

Citizens must be able to obtain reliable information from credible sources: President Zardari

Says the 18th Constitutional Amendment strengthened the constitutional framework for freedom of expression

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the right of every citizen to access information, particularly on matters of public importance.

In a message on the International Day for Universal Access to Information observed on September 28, he said, "In a democracy, citizens can participate meaningfully in public life only when they have access to information that is timely, credible and reliable."

"The Constitution of Pakistan provides a clear foundation for this right. The 18th Constitutional Amendment strengthened the constitutional framework for freedom of expression and inserted Article 19-A, which gives every citizen the right to access information in all matters of public importance, subject to regulation and reasonable restrictions imposed by law. The Right of Access to Information Act, 2017 further provides a legal framework for access to information at the federal level," he added.

"Today, however, the right to know has become more complex. The rapid growth of digital platforms, artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies has changed the way information is produced, distributed and consumed," he said, adding, "The challenge is no longer only whether information is available. It is also whether citizens can distinguish reliable information from content that is false, manipulated or deliberately designed to mislead."

The President said, "Information can be distorted or weaponised by a range of actors, including state and non-state actors, terrorist and criminal networks and out-of-control and too powerful tech giants. This makes access to accurate and credible information more challenging and an extremely important part of an informed democracy. It also calls for greater attention to the role of pro-people journalists, media organisations, communication professionals, researchers and other experts in helping citizens navigate this fast-changing information environment."

"Our response must therefore be to protect the citizen's right to know while ensuring that the efforts to address monetised misinformation and disinformation do not become the vehicle to suppress legitimate public interest journalism, fair criticism and meaningful public debate," he remarked.



ISLAMABAD: Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi presenting a souvenir to Han Sungho, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Korea to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan at the Supreme Court.



LAHORE: Officials presenting shield to Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti during his visit to National School of Public Policy

President Zardari condoles death of Dr Mahathir Mohamad's wife

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday expressed deep sorrow and condolences over the passing of Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, wife of former Prime Minister of Malaysia Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The president conveyed his heartfelt condolences to Dr Mahathir Mohamad, his family and the people of Malaysia on the sad occasion. President Zardari said that Tun Dr Siti Hasmah's long and distinguished service in the fields of medicine, public health and social welfare would be remembered with respect.

He prayed to Allah Almighty to bless the departed soul and grant strength and patience to Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss, according to a statement issued by the President House Media Wing.

'Anything can happen':

Muqam warns of possible governor's rule in KP

PESHAWAR, (Monitoring Desk): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Muqam on Monday said all legal requirements for imposing governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been fulfilled due to what he described as the "illegal" actions of Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, warning that "anything can happen at any time".

Speaking to journalists in Peshawar, Muqam said the situation in the province was evident to everyone, with the KP's people having faced terrorism for a long time and made significant sacrifices. He said the entire country was witnessing the hardships and sacrifices of the people of the province.

Criticising the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led provincial government, he said the "change" government had only changed chief ministers but had failed to change the fate of the people. Muqam said the KP people had given PTI a mandate and that the party had governed the province for 13 years, but the objectives for which people had voted for it were not visible.

He questioned the experience of the incumbent chief minister, saying that Afridi had effectively been given two targets — to "loot as much as possible" and secure the release of a prisoner. He said education, healthcare and basic facilities were not being adequately provided in the province.

Pakistan voices concern over potential expansion of opium cultivation; synthetic drug production in Afghanistan

Socio-economic inequalities, underdevelopment, misuse of digital and artificial intelligence technologies are creating new challenges

ABU DHABI, (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates, Shafqat Ali Khan, delivered Pakistan's National Statement on Monday at the 15th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, being held in Abu Dhabi from 26 September to 1 October 2026.

Ambassador Khan congratulated the UAE on hosting the Congress and commended its warm hospitality and excellent arrangements.

Highlighting the evolving global crime landscape, Ambassador Khan stressed that socio-economic inequalities, underdevelopment and the misuse of digital and artificial intelligence technologies are creating new challenges.

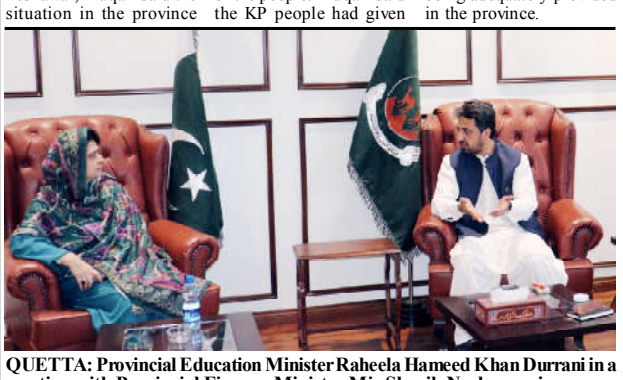
He called for renewed commitment to the SDGs, underscoring the mutually reinforcing relationship between sustainable development and the rule of law. Pakistan called for stronger international cooperation, greater national capacity-building, and meaningful technical assistance and technology transfer for developing countries. The Ambassador also emphasized the safe, secure and responsible development and use of emerging technologies.

Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to combating transnational organized crime and the world drug problem, Ambassador Khan highlighted Pakistan's longstanding counter-narcotics efforts, including major drug seizures and its poppy-free status. He voiced concern over potential expansion of opium cultivation and synthetic drug production in Afghanistan, as well as the growing nexus between narcotics and terrorism and its implications for regional security.

He called for stronger international action against corruption, money laundering and illicit financial flows, including effective asset recovery and measures to deny safe havens to criminals.

Ambassador Khan reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling, and noted that safe, regular and affordable migration pathways can also help address these challenges.

Expressing concern over rising acts of Islamophobia, racism and xenophobia, the Ambassador called for credible measures to counter hate speech.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani in a meeting with Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani.

One should not act as complainant and judge in same matter: Justice Jamal Mandokhail

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Supreme Court on Monday granted senior research officer Dr Waseem Tariq more time to submit additional documents in a petition concerning his alleged harassment, observing that one should not act as both the complainant and the judge in the same matter.

A bench comprising Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan heard the petition.

The petitioner submitted that he had been accused of harassment and that the complainants were employees of the Estate Office. He said an inquiry had also been conducted against him, but nothing adverse was found against him in the inquiry.

Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan observed that the actual issue concerned allotment of a house, adding that the petitioner might have exerted pressure in the matter.

Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail said it would be better for the petitioner to focus on his work.

During the hearing, the court expressed displeasure with the research officer for repeatedly speaking instead of remaining silent.

"If you are not remaining silent before us, what would you have been doing there? You must have been a king there," the judge remarked.

The petitioner said he was pursuing the matter because of an allegation concerning the office of the Chief Justice. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail observed that one should not be both the complainant and the judge, adding that the impression should not be created that the court had favoured him.



ISLAMABAD: Ethan Sun, CEO Huawei Pakistan presenting a shield to Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja during her visit to Huawei's Global Support Center

Pak Navy safeguarding country's maritime frontiers, national interests: Gilani

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has congratulated the officers and personnel of the Pakistan Navy and the nation on the first successful live weapon firing of the Pakistan Navy's new Hangor submarine, describing the achievement as a significant milestone in strengthening Pakistan's maritime defence capabilities. The Chairman Senate said that the successful live weapon firing demonstrated the high professional competence, advanced combat capabilities and operational readiness of the Pakistan Navy. He said the Pakistan Navy has consistently played a vital role in safeguarding the country's maritime frontiers and national interests. Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani appreciated the professional performance of the Pakistan Navy under the leadership of Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf, particularly its efforts to enhance operational capabilities and modernise maritime defence in line with emerging requirements.

Pakistani professionals delivering digital services to int'l markets: Shaza Fatima

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja visited Huawei's Global Support Center (GSC) in Islamabad, where she was given a briefing on its operations, toured the centre and interacted with young Pakistani engineers and technology professionals supporting global ICT operations.

The Minister was received by Ethan Sun, CEO Huawei Pakistan, Ahmed Bilal Masud, CEO AI & Cloud, Huawei Pakistan, and senior management of GSC.

Speaking on the occasion, Shaza Fatima stated that Huawei GSC demonstrated Pakistan's growing potential as a global hub for technology and IT-enabled services.

Describing the model as "exports without shipping containers," she said Pakistani professionals were increasingly delivering high-value digital services to international markets from within the country.

She highlighted Pakistan's young workforce, noting that around 68 percent of the population is under the age of 30, and emphasized the need to translate this demographic strength into skilled human capital and global economic opportunities. Recalling Huawei-Pakistan training partnership agreed during the Prime Minister's visit to China, Shaza Fatima appreciated Huawei's commitment to train 300,000 young Pakistanis in ICT skills.

She stressed stronger collaboration among government, industry and academia to build a sustainable technology talent pipeline and connect young Pakistanis with international opportunities.

The Minister appreciated Huawei's contribution to technical capacity building through its ICT Academies and encouraged the company to further expand investment, knowledge transfer, mentoring and explore opportunities for establishing an R&D centre in Pakistan.

Interacting with women engineers at the Centre, the Minister appreciated their contribution to Pakistan's digital economy.

Pakistan to strengthen cooperation among SCO member states

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Under Pakistan's Chairmanship of the SCO Council of Heads of State (CHS) for 2026–27, the first meeting of the Council of National Coordinators (CNC) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) would be convened in Islamabad from 28–30 September 2026.

The meeting would be chaired by the National Coordinator of the SCO for Pakistan and attended by National Coordinators from SCO Member States, along with representatives of the SCO Secretariat. The National Coordinators would discuss a wide range of issues relating to SCO cooperation and coordination, including the programme of activities under Pakistan's Chairmanship, preparations for upcoming SCO meetings and events, and other matters on the agenda of the Organization.

As the Chair of the SCO CHS for 2026–27, Pakistan would seek to advance the organization's objectives under the theme "Turning Vision into Action: Connectivity, Innovation and Shared Prosperity."



PARIS: Ambassador of Pakistan to France Mumtaz Zahra Baloch participates in a High-level Panel at the Global Youth Diplomacy Forum at the French Senate.

Salman Akram Raja questions detention of Imran's sisters

LAHORE, (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Secretary General Salman Akram Raja on Monday questioned the detention of party founder Imran Khan's sisters, saying they were being deprived of fundamental rights without any specific charges and urged courts to order their immediate release.

Imran's three sisters were detained under Section 3 (Power to arrest and detain suspected persons) of the Punjab Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) Ordinance 1960 in Lahore ahead of the party's planned September 27 march towards Islamabad. Aleema was taken into custody on September 20, while Uzma and Noreen were detained a day later. Authorities issued 30-day detention orders, citing concerns related to public order. On September 21, PTI challenged the detentions in the Lahore High Court (LHC).

Talking to the media outside the LHC today, Raja said Aleema had been in custody for nine days and questioned the legal basis of her detention. He said the arrests were made "based on an apprehension". "What is the justification for the cruel treatment being meted out to Imran's sisters?" Raja asked, adding that detentions under the MPO were based on apprehensions rather than formal charges.

The PTI leader further argued that restricting access to family members and lawyers, as well as food and medicines, did not have any justification under the Constitution and law. Speaking to the media, Raja further stated that excessive force was used during the arrests, claiming that more than 100 police officials entered the residence and broke doors during the arrests. He asserted that such actions crossed "all limits of brutality and authoritarianism".



LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Secretary General Salman Akram Raja talking to media

23 olive oil extraction units established in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan has planted 7.637 million olive trees across 60,456 acres in 131 districts as part of efforts to promote olive cultivation on a commercial scale.

According to documents available with Wealth Pakistan, olive plantations have spread across Balochistan, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sindh, Islamabad Capital Territory and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Balochistan leads the national plantation drive with 3,199,393 olive plants over 24,620 acres in 31 districts, giving it the largest plantation base among the regions covered by the data.

Punjab ranks second with 2,235,962 olive plants over 17,000 acres across 31 districts.

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