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UN chief praises Pakistan's peace efforts on regional conflicts

CDF Munir reaffirms Pakistan's commitment to int'l peace

RAWALPINDI, (Monitoring Desk): Outgoing United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres praised Pakistan's efforts towards the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts during a meeting with the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Field Marshal Asim Munir, the military's media wing said on Wednesday.

According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Guterres met CDF Munir at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, where the two exchanged views on "matters of mutual interest, the prevailing regional security environment and the United Nations' role in promoting international peace and security".

"Guterres paid tribute to the sacrifices and contributions of Pakistan and its Armed Forces in the war against terror and in UN peacekeeping missions. He also acknowledged Pakistan's continued commitment to international peace and security, specifically appreciating Pakistan's efforts towards the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts," the statement said.

The ISPR further stated that CDF Munir and Guterres exchanged views on regional stability, the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, India's abeyance of the Indus Waters Treaty, and terrorism emanating from Afghanistan. "The CDF Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to international peace and highlighted its contributions to UN peacekeeping missions," the statement said, adding that CDF Munir "also lauded the United Nations' role under the leadership of Guterres, in advancing peace, stability and humanitarian cooperation."

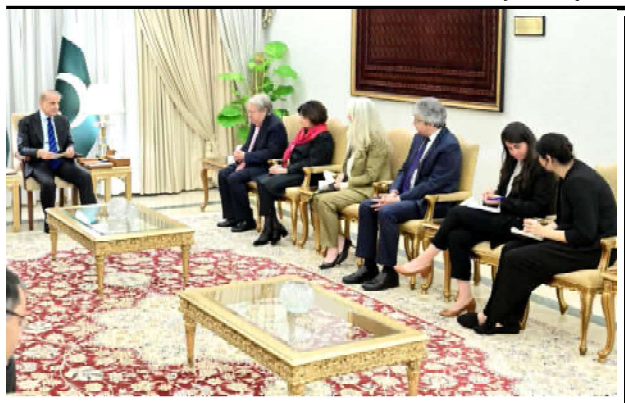
Guterres, who arrived in Islamabad on Tuesday, held a joint press conference with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, commending Pakistan's leadership "in helping to create the conditions for dialogue between the United States and Iran and mediating the conflict."

The outgoing UN chief stated, "Your efforts helped deliver the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding, the subsequent ceasefire, and the framework for future negotiations," adding that "every Pakistani should be proud of that pivotal role."

Guterres also said that Islamabad's contribution "has been on full display as a member of the UN Security Council these past two years."



RAWALPINDI: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres calls on Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir at the General Headquarters



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a meeting with United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who is on an official visit to Pakistan

Youth of Balochistan full of creative abilities: Governor

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail met with a delegation of the Youth Leaders Parliament led by Asmatullah. The meeting discussed familiarizing young people with parliamentary affairs, the democratic process, and policymaking, as well as establishing an effective platform for youth in the province and making it more active.

The delegation briefed the Governor of Balochistan about the organizational structure, aims, and objectives of the Youth Leaders Parliament. According to the delegation, the structure of the Youth Leaders Parliament has been modeled on Pakistan's elected Parliament, with the objective of practically familiarizing young people with parliamentary procedures, legislation, debate and discussion, and the functioning of democratic institutions.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Balochistan said that young people are a valuable asset of the country and that providing them with awareness about decision-making, democratic values, and the parliamentary system is an important need of the time. He said that young people are provided with opportunities for positive and constructive dialogue on political and social issues so that they can play the role of responsible citizens and thoughtful leaders in the future. The Governor directed the Youth Leaders Parliament to make this platform more active and vibrant throughout Balochistan and to expand its scope to different districts of the province. He also emphasized organizing training programs, debates, mock sessions, and educational activities to promote leadership, research, dialogue, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills among young people.



GADDANI: Representatives of Ship Breakers Association presenting souvenirs to D.G ILO Gilbert F. Hiungbo, Provincial Minister Mir Zahoor Buledi and Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain.

Development of Balochistan integral to progress of Pakistan: Syedaal

Acting Senate Chairman meets CM Balochistan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Acting Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar met Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti and discussed the province's security, economic development and public welfare.

The meeting also covered the overall political and economic situation in the country, law and order, development projects and measures for providing relief to the people, said a news release issued by the Senate secretariat here Wednesday.

The two sides reviewed steps being taken by the provincial government to improve security, promote development and accelerate ongoing projects across Balochistan.

The acting chairman said that Balochistan's development and socio-economic uplift were among the government's key priorities.

He said that the province had talented and hardworking people and was rich in natural resources and mineral wealth.

He stressed the need for transparent and sustainable use of these resources to create economic opportunities and improve living standards.

He also called for greater participation of local communities in the development process so they could benefit from the province's natural wealth.

The acting chairman said that the government, in coordination with the military leadership, was taking steps to improve the security situation in Balochistan. He said that peace and stability were essential for development and expressed confidence that the province would see greater peace and economic opportunities with the elimination of terrorism.

Syedaal Khan Nasar said that Balochistan had great potential to contribute to Pakistan's economic development.

He said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Gwadar could become major economic hubs and benefit both Balochistan and the country as a whole.

He stressed that political differences should be set aside in the larger national and provincial interest.

He called for joint efforts by the federal and provincial governments, political leadership and relevant institutions to bring Balochistan at par with other developed regions of the country.

President Zardari commends Pak Navy for successful anti-narcotics operations in Arabian Sea

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari, Wednesday, commended Pakistan Navy for its successful anti-narcotics operations in the Arabian Sea.

The president extended his congratulations to the Pakistan Navy; its officers and personnel for two successful anti-narcotics operations conducted by PNS Yarmook, President Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release.

He also lauded the Navy's continuous surveillance, readiness, and unwavering commitment to countering illegal drug trafficking at sea.

The president further highlighted the vital role of Pakistan Navy in curbing illicit maritime activities and safeguarding regional maritime security.

Pakistani troops present in KSA for decades: DG ISPR

Says Makkah alliance has not emerged "in a vacuum"

RAWALPINDI, (Monitoring Desk): Pakistani troops are already present in Saudi Arabia across multiple capabilities and domains, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director-General (DG) Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said on Wednesday.

Asked by CNN whether Pakistani troops or personnel were already on the ground in Saudi Arabia as part of the Makkah alliance, the ISPR DG said the forces had been there for decades. "Pakistani troops have been there for decades […] in Saudi Arabia," Lt Gen Chaudhry said. He said the Makkah alliance had not emerged "in a vacuum", pointing to the longstanding diplomatic, political, military and people-to-people ties between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye.

"So I can share with you that Pakistani troops, in multiple capabilities and domains, are already there," the ISPR DG said.

The remarks come after Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye agreed to immediately implement their collective defence commitments and ensure the "rapid deployment" of agreed military forces and capabilities in Saudi Arabia. The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement in Riyadh on Monday, according to a joint statement shared by Pakistan's Foreign Office.

Defence Minister describes PTI's planned long march as "attack on Islamabad"

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Wednesday said the government was trying to avoid imposing governor's rule in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, but warned that it could resort to the option if no other way was left.

Speaking to reporters in Islamabad, the minister said that there was nothing impeding the imposition of governor's rule in the province, but the government was trying not to use what he described as the "last option".

"If there is no other way left, then we can use that option," he said.

Asif also criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), urging it to "play the role of a political party rather than a terrorist organisation".

"We cannot leave the capital at their mercy so that every two or three months they join hands with the Taliban and march on the capital," he said.

The minister described the Taliban as an "anti-Pakistan power" and said that if the PTI allied with it and attacked the capital, the government had the right and responsibility to protect Islamabad.

He referred to the PTI leadership's alleged failure to attend the funerals of people killed in Taliban attacks and its failure to condemn explosions, claiming that these factors indicated, in his view, that the Taliban had a militant component within the K-P government.

Sincere intentions lead to new avenues: Ayaz Sadiq

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Wednesday called on Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief and MNA Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence, where he congratulated him on performing Umrah and conveyed his best wishes.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman thanked the Speaker for his visit and for conveying his felicitations and good wishes. Talking to the media after the meeting, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said his longstanding relationship with Maulana Fazlur Rehman transcended political affiliations, describing him as a brother and emphasizing that their bond is rooted in mutual respect, sincerity and brotherhood.

The Speaker said he remained in regular contact with Maulana Fazlur Rehman and that they continued to meet and consult each other from time to time.

Calls for UN reform

Dialogue only viable path to resolve disputes: PM

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday called for a more effective, inclusive and representative United Nations and reiterated Pakistan's position that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute must be resolved peacefully in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

The prime minister made the remarks while welcoming United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who is on an official visit to Pakistan, during a meeting here, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz welcomed the Secretary-General's UN80 Initiative and emphasized that reform of the United Nations should remain responsive to the priorities of developing countries, while strengthening conflict prevention, peaceful settlement of disputes, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's longstanding commitment to UN peacekeeping and its contribution to international peace and security.

The prime minister also highlighted Pakistan's diplomatic efforts to promote dialogue and de-escalation, including its mediation role between the United States and Iran, stressing that dialogue and diplomacy remained the only viable path to resolving disputes and preventing escalation.

On regional issues, Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated the need for a peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

He also emphasized that the Indus Waters Treaty was a binding international agreement and maintained that India's unilateral decision to place it in abeyance had no legal basis.

On Afghanistan, the prime minister said a peaceful and stable Afghanistan remained in Pakistan's interest.

He expressed serious concern over terrorism emanating from Afghanistan and the presence of terrorist groups on Afghan soil, emphasizing the need for concrete and verifiable action against such groups.



QUETTA: A delegation of the Youth Leaders Parliament, headed by Asmatullah presenting shield to Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

CM Bugti vows to completely eliminate terrorism from Balochistan

Says the elimination of five terrorists during the security forces' operation in Mastung marks a significant development in the ongoing campaign against terrorism

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has reaffirmed the provincial government's resolve to confront militant elements, saying no concessions would be made to those attempting to disrupt peace and stability in the province.

The chief minister expressed appreciation for the security forces following an operation in Mastung in which five militants were killed, describing the outcome as evidence of their operational preparedness and counterterrorism capabilities.

He also highlighted the recovery of a substantial quantity of weapons and ammunition during the operation, terming it an important development in efforts to disrupt militant activities and prevent further violence. Bugti said the government would continue mobilizing all available resources to protect peace and maintain stability across Balochistan. He made it clear that militant groups would not be permitted to advance what he termed their "nefarious designs" in the province. "The enemies of peace and stability will be given no leniency in Balochistan," the chief minister said, reiterating that counterterrorism operations would continue until the threat posed by militants was brought to an end.

He said the provincial government and people of Balochistan stood firmly behind the security forces in the fight against terrorism, acknowledging the sacrifices made by personnel in protecting citizens and safeguarding the province.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar meets Belarusian National Security Adviser Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Volfovich at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

Thursday October 08, 2026

No talks with terrorists

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

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

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

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

Valley of the shadow of death

FARRUKH KHAN PITAFI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Impending Pak-Afghan talks and the way forward

IMTIAZ GUL

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Geopolitical Trap

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

Pakistan's Options And Way Forward

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

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

Key Principles Going Forward

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

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

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

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

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

Bottom Line

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

The great corporate exit

MOHSIN SALEEM ULLAH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Unfolding the question of one's place & spirituality

ZORAIN NIZAMANI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I don't know, yet.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

No one's better or worse, Bulla.

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

US Vice President Vance ties ending war to Iran cutting enrichment

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): US Vice President JD Vance has said that Iran must "meaningfully" reduce its nuclear enrichment capacity to end the seven-month war, though he noted Washington remains uncertain how Tehran reaches negotiating decisions.

Vance, a longtime skeptic of U.S. involvement in foreign wars, has taken a leading role in negotiating a settlement to the conflict and brokered a provisional peace agreement in June that quickly fell apart.

The war has jolted global energy markets and become a political liability for President Donald Trump and fellow Republicans ahead of November midterm elections.

Speaking to Reuters after a campaign trip in Alaska Monday, Vance said any agreement would require Iran to reduce its nuclear enrichment capacity, rather than offer assurances of future nuclear drawdowns.

"If you don't want a nuclear weapon, then why do you need 60% enriched fuel? And if you want to show commitment to not building a nuclear weapon, don't build highly enriched fuel. That's a very basic threshold issue," Vance said.

"I think if they want to show a commitment to not building a nuclear weapon, they would do something meaningful on their enrichment capacity."

Iran and the U.S. have exchanged proposals in recent weeks aimed at ending the war and reopening the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global energy shipping route. Trump rejected Tehran's latest offer and has warned that military operations could intensify after the midterms.

Vance said the U.S. remained open to an agreement but would require concrete Iranian nuclear concessions.

"We're not going to trade words for actions," Vance said.

'Unclear how Iran makes decisions'

Complicating matters, Vance said Washington is uncertain who makes decisions in Tehran. Vance said the U.S. was in talks with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. But it was unclear how much authority they wield within Iran's power structure, he said, after joint U.S.-Israeli strikes at the start of the war killed then Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"One of the things we picked up on is it's not totally clear how their country makes decisions," Vance said. Separately, Trump said on Tuesday his "biggest problem" is no one knows who is running Iran.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Sunday that U.S. officials are well aware of who their Iranian counterparts are and how Iran's decision-making system works.

"The problem is actually the opposite: it lies in the contradictory positions and mixed messaging from U.S. officials," Esmaeil Baghaei told a weekly press conference.

Vance told Reuters he has held personal conversations with field commanders to gauge battlefield conditions.



Indian Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi (C) and Priyanka Gandhi (R), along with other Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) bloc members of Parliament, take part in a protest march in New Delhi, India

War-displaced Gazans fear another winter without shelter, aid

GAZA, (Agencies): Gaza's war-displaced population faces yet another winter with little to no shelter and dwindling aid due to Israeli stranglehold on the Palestinian territory.

Displaced people in the southern Gaza Strip appealed Wednesday for tents, blankets and basic supplies ahead of winter.

They warned that shelter shortages and dwindling humanitarian aid could leave thousands exposed to rain, cold and strong winds.

Dozens of displaced residents staged a protest in the Fash Farsh area in Khan Younis, urging international organizations and donors to provide shelter materials, food and essential supplies amid Israel's blockade.

"Our tents are torn and our stomachs are empty. Do not leave us to the unknown," read one of the signs by protesters.

Families said they fear a repeat of previous winters, when heavy rains flooded and damaged tents, leaving them exposed to harsh weather. Deaths, including mostly children, were also reported during periods of severe cold and after damaged buildings collapsed.

"We are heading into winter and we need tarpaulins, tents, food and health supplies so we can withstand the heavy rain and winds," Iyad Zomor told Turkish Anadolu Agency (AA). Iyad al-Shaer said many tents offered little protection from cold, rain or wind, urging humanitarian organizations to provide shelter materials before weather conditions worsen.

Ahmed Hassan al-Najjar, who oversees Fash Farsh, told AA that 35 displacement camps there shelter 6,000 families, or about 40,000 people.

He said residents were facing shortages of tents, tarpaulins, food parcels and medical supplies and called for urgent assistance. Israel's genocidal war in Gaza has killed more than 74,000 Palestinians and injured over 175,000 in Gaza since October 2023, while 90% of the enclave's infrastructure has been reduced to rubble.

Over 20,000 unaccompanied minors reached Europe in 2025

GENEVA, (Agencies): More than 20,000 unaccompanied minors reached Europe through mixed migration routes in 2025, making up nearly two-thirds of the 31,100 children who arrived during the year, U.N. agencies said.

A joint report by the International Organization for Migration, International Organization of Migration (IOM), UNHCR and UNICEF found overall child arrivals by sea and land fell 25% from 2024.

The share recorded as unaccompanied, however, rose to 67% from 51% a year earlier, according to the report.

The highest proportions were recorded in Italy and Spain, where 86% of child arrivals were unaccompanied.

IOM Director General Amy Pope warned that limited safe pathways leave children exposed to smugglers, violence and exploitation.

"Children are making difficult and dangerous journeys without a parent or guardian by their side," Pope said, calling for greater cross-border cooperation to protect them.

"No child should have to face these risks alone," she said. "Our shared responsibility is to work across borders to protect them, uphold their rights, and provide the care and support they need."

Among more than 4,600 adolescents and young adults interviewed along Mediterranean, West African Atlantic and Western Balkan routes, nearly half of those asked about their experiences reported physical violence.

On the Central Mediterranean route, 28% said they had been held against their will, while 17% reported being forced to work, according to the report.

Meanwhile, the number of children undergoing refugee resettlement procedures to Europe fell to 3,400 in 2025 from 8,900 a year earlier. Separately, only 199 children were relocated between European states under the Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism, down 67%, the report said. None of the relocated children was unaccompanied.



U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee meets a resident of Turmus Ayya, a Palestinian town near Ramallah, West Bank, Palestine



U.S. Vice President JD Vance arrives at a campaign rally in Fairbanks, Alaska, U.S.

Iran's Pezeshkian says negotiations with US 'meaningless'

TEHRAN, (Agencies): Negotiations with the U.S. are "meaningless," Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said Monday, arguing that attacks continued even after talks, as little progress was achieved on ending the Middle East war that began earlier this year.

"So far, they have attacked us three times after talks, and this shows that they are not seeking dialogue; rather, their goal is to overthrow the Islamic Republic of Iran," Pezeshkian was quoted as saying by the state news agency IRNA.

"With an enemy that every day resorts to assassination, sanctions, pressure and threats, and that breaks its commitments, negotiations are meaningless."

The Middle East war was started in late February by the U.S. and Israel when they launched a wave of surprise attacks on Iran, even as Washington and Tehran were in the midst of negotiations on Iran's nuclear program.

The warring parties agreed on a memorandum of understanding in June that spelled out a framework for a permanent resolution to the conflict but Iranian attacks on vessels in the Strait of Hormuz prompted a return to U.S. military operations.

Negotiations have effectively been at an impasse since then, and recent indirect talks between the U.S. and Iran on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly failed to produce a breakthrough.

Washington in recent weeks has dialled back military operations in favour of economic pressure, and has not struck Iran since Sept. 1.

On Sunday, Iran's top diplomat insisted the United States' war against the country would not be resolved by military means.

Vowing a stronger defense if any attacks resumed, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said: "There is no military solution, nor any solution based on new sanctions." "Only negotiations based on justice and fairness" could end the conflict, he added.

India opposition mounts protest after 130M deleted from voters list

NEW DELHI, (AFP): India's opposition leader Rahul Gandhi was briefly detained by police during a protest march demanding the election chief's resignation over large-scale voter list revisions.

Gandhi, a senior leader of the main opposition Congress Party, was standing on a police barricade and waving the national flag, according to Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Officers detained him along with other lawmakers but released them soon after.

The revision of voter lists has drawn criticism over alleged irregularities in the decision-making process, with opposition politicians accusing the election commission of acting at the behest of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Critics also say the drive has disproportionately affected marginalized and minority communities, especially Muslims.

The Election Commission of India has rejected allegations of wrongdoing, saying the revision process is aimed at ensuring the accuracy and integrity of electoral rolls. On Tuesday, opposition members began a march from parliament towards the commission's headquarters, but were stopped by a heavy police presence. Gandhi and his lawmaker sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra later camped inside the public radio's offices adjacent to the election commission.

"The country has been hijacked by Narendra Modi through vote theft," Gandhi told reporters from behind the iron gates of the public radio building.

"What has been done to our country is called treason. Nobody is going to escape." Modi's party has defended the drive.

"Some opposition parties, particularly the Congress, are making a concerted effort to change the government and install Rahul Gandhi in power," party spokesman Sambit Patra told reporters Wednesday.



A resident takes shelter inside a metro station with her dogs during a Russian missile strike, in Kyiv, Ukraine

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

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

At least 6,000 seafarers aboard some 400 vessels remain stranded in the Strait after being unable to evacuate during the ceasefire, according to information from the International Maritime Organization, Shabia Mantoo told reporters in Geneva. The office has also received reports that some shipowners have abandoned crews at sea without food, water, fuel, medical care, electricity, repatriation or even payment of wages.

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

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

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

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

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

Massive Russian overnight strikes kill at least 20 across Ukraine

KYIV, (Agencies): Massive Russian drone and missile barrage killed at least 20 people across Ukraine overnight into Wednesday, damaging residential buildings, industrial facilities and infrastructure, officials said.

Emergency services picked through the rubble of the flattened five-story building in Pryluky, in the Chernigiv region, in a frantic search for survivors.

But hopes faded as the toll jumped by early afternoon. "The death toll ... has risen to 14, including four children," the state emergency services said. "Fifty people were wounded, including seven children."

Fifteen people, including a child, were rescued, they wrote on Telegram.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had warned the public Tuesday night that Russia was planning "massive" strikes, particularly against the country's energy infrastructure. "The Russians wanted to strike painfully and demonstratively," he said Wednesday, calling it "one of the most vile strikes" in the nearly five-year conflict.

Two people were killed when missiles slammed into high-rise buildings in Dnipro and Kremenchuk in central Ukraine, while two others lost their lives in Oleksandriya, he added.

In the capital, Kyiv, strikes killed two people.

Kyiv has come under increased attack in recent weeks as winter approaches, with air raid sirens wailing nearly constantly to warn of incoming Russian strikes.

Residents hunkered down in subway stations overnight, hauling duffel bags, sleeping mats and blankets, after air alerts sounded warning of attacks. "We grabbed our things and came here, we live right next door," Iryna Rybalchenko, who works in a bank, told AFP, sitting on the platform wrapped in a dark hoodie and surrounded by bags. "The whole of Kyiv is in a state of fear. We were stuck at work today and everyone – our group chats, our bosses – were messaging us to be careful."



Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov attends a joint press conference with his East Timorese counterpart following their talks in Moscow

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

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

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

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

Trump also said Russian President Vladimir Putin had given similar assurances despite the ongoing war in Ukraine, and told him that Russia would not sell weapons to Iran. "He understands that I do not sell Weapons to Ukraine, but to NATO Countries. They pay full price, and how those Weapons are distributed, I have no idea. "Therefore, two major Countries that people speak of often in terms of Iran are, in my opinion, not participating.

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Tender Fee 2000 PKR

S.No	Name of Work/s	Bid Security
1	RESIDENTIAL UNIT AT PLOT B1 & B2 DR BANO ROAD QUETTA	2%

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules – 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required The bidder must have completed 3 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of at least 125,372,776 PKR Amount in3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm Registration with Pakistan Engineering council (PEC) C-4 and above (Upto 200 million) In Relevant Category And Specialized Code is CE10(I) (General Civil Engineering Works) , CE10(v) (Landscaping & Horticulture), CE10(vii) (General Buildings and Maintenance), EE11(vi) (General Electrical Works Only). BPPRA EPPS Challan. Original must be submitted to the undersigned office on last date and time of bid submission Bidding Document Fee in shape of Green Challan. Original must be submitted to the undersigned office on last date and time of bid submission. Bid security of 2% of the estimated cost in shape of CDR. Original must be submitted to the undersigned office on last date and time of bid submission Bidder must have completed 03 similar assignments as main contractor (not subcontract) worth 70 % of estimated cost in last 3 years. Audit Reports of last 3 years upto June 2026 (Registered Auditor with ICAP QCR Rated) Non-performance of the contract did not occur in the last 10 years. Details of pending litigation (if any), to be provided. Bidders shall not have conflict of interest **Procedure Of Procurement:** Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Gurantee,Deposit at Call of 2 % specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gob.pk **Issuance of tender Documents:** Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gob.pk **Last Date of bid submission:** Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 22 October, 2026till 10:00 AM through supplier dashboard. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at 11:00 AM on EPPS System Address: EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MAINTENANCE I DIVISION QUETTA C&W Complex NEAR CHAMMAN PATAK MIR JAFAR KHAN JAMALI ROAD QUETTA Phone no: 0812920243 Email: owaispervaiz64@gmail.com

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Pak–Tanzania relations should be driven by parliamentary diplomacy: Gilani

Chairman Senate calls for the establishment of a resident Tanzanian diplomatic mission in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, during his meeting with Mussa Azzan Zungu, Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania, on the sidelines of the 153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Arusha on Wednesday, proposed concrete measures to strengthen Pakistan–Tanzania relations, with a focus on diplomatic presence, trade, technology and parliamentary cooperation.

The Chairman of the Senate called for the establishment of a resident Tanzanian diplomatic mission in Islamabad, noting that a permanent diplomatic presence would strengthen bilateral engagement while facilitating visas, business travel, tourism and greater people-to-people interaction.

He also stressed the need to substantially enhance bilateral trade and investment, including stronger linkages between the ports, business communities and chambers of commerce of the two countries.

He highlighted the potential for cooperation in information technology, digital innovation, agriculture, education and skills development, and encouraged greater private-sector engagement to translate the goodwill between Pakistan and Tanzania into tangible economic cooperation.

As another concrete step, the Chairman Senate called for the activation and strengthening of Parliamentary Friendship Groups in both countries, with regular parliamentary exchanges and closer institutional cooperation between the Senate of Pakistan and the National Assembly of Tanzania.

The Chairman of the Senate also welcomed greater cooperation in education, including scholarships and academic exchanges for Tanzanian students, and emphasised the importance of building stronger links between the youth and educational institutions of the two countries.

He congratulated Mussa Azzan Zungu, Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania, on the successful hosting of the 153rd IPU Assembly in Arusha, and appreciated Tanzania's role in bringing parliamentarians from across the world together to advance dialogue, parliamentary diplomacy and international cooperation.

The Chairman of the Senate said Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Tanzania and the wider African continent, and stressed that the next phase of Pakistan–Tanzania relations should be driven by trade, technology, parliamentary diplomacy and stronger people-to-people connectivity.



Chairman Senate of Pakistan Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, in a meeting with Hon. Mussa Azzan Zungu, Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania, on the sidelines of the 153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Arusha



RAWALPINDI: A high-level delegation from Republic of Belarus led by Lieutenant General Aleksandr Volfovich, State Secretary of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), here at General Headquarters (GHQ)

High-level Belarusian delegation calls on CDF Asim Munir

COAS reiterates Pakistan's desire to further deepen defence and security cooperation with Republic of Belarus

RAWALPINDI, (APP): A high-level delegation from Republic of Belarus led by Lieutenant General Aleksandr Volfovich, State Secretary of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), here at General Headquarters (GHQ) on Wednesday.

During the meeting, both sides discussed evolving regional and global security, matters of mutual interest and existing scope of bilateral defence cooperation, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

The COAS reiterated Pakistan's desire to further deepen defence and security cooperation with Republic of Belarus.

Devastating earthquake of Oct 8, 2005 painful tragedy for entire nation: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Wednesday said the devastating earthquake of October 8, 2005, remained a painful memory for the entire nation, with the loss of precious lives and widespread destruction in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other affected areas constituting an unforgettable national tragedy.

In a message on the 21st anniversary of the earthquake, the Speaker expressed solidarity with the families affected by the tragedy and shared their grief over the loss of their loved ones and the hardships they endured.

He said the unity, compassion and collective sense of responsibility demonstrated by the Pakistani nation in the aftermath of the disaster represented a proud chapter in the country's history.

Ayaz Sadiq said people from across the country, relief organizations, volunteers, the armed forces and civil society actively participated in rescue and relief operations.

He particularly appreciated the role of the Pakistan Army, saying its personnel played a vital part in rescue and relief efforts and provided all possible assistance to people in the affected areas.

The Speaker said the collective efforts and unwavering commitment demonstrated during the reconstruction and rehabilitation process played a significant role in restoring normal life in the affected areas.

PTI consistently pursuing confrontational political agenda: Rana Sana

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah on Wednesday said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was consistently pursuing a confrontational political agenda, insisting political parties could not be allowed to place their political interests above national security and the lives of citizens.

Addressing a press conference here, he said PTI's political strategy, particularly its repeated marches towards Islamabad, had contributed to intolerance and confrontation in the country.

He said the trend had its roots in the PTI's 2014 Islamabad sit-in, when the party staged a prolonged protest in the federal capital, adding that Islamabad had since remained a central point of its political mobilisation.

"From 2014 onwards, the PTI has pursued this political course continuously. Islamabad has repeatedly been made the focus of its protests, including in 2022 and 2024, and now another attempt is being made in 2026," Sanaullah said.

He alleged that the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) had been using its resources to facilitate the planned march towards Islamabad instead of concentrating on governance and the security situation in the province.

The adviser said the timing of the political mobilisation was particularly concerning as security personnel and civilians continued to lose their lives in terrorist incidents in KP.

"On one side are the bodies of martyrs, including police personnel, members of the armed forces and civilians from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while on the other side the provincial government is encouraging people to gather for a march towards Islamabad," he said.

Sanaullah said the PTI's disagreement with the policy appeared to be rooted in its political position rather than any substantive difference over counter-terrorism.

He said the armed forces and law-enforcement agencies had been making enormous sacrifices in the fight against terrorism.

"Look at the profile of our martyrs. Many of them were young men in their twenties, some were newly married and some had infants at home. They sacrificed their lives for the security of this country," he said.

Sanaullah said the role of provincial governments was crucial in sustaining the gains made by security forces after intelligence-based operations.

He explained that the security forces were primarily responsible for clearing areas of terrorists, while the civil administration and police were required to take over and maintain law and order once an area had been cleared.

"The armed forces clear an area through intelligence-based operations, but after that the civil administration and police have to hold the area. If the civilian law-enforcement structure is absent, the gains of the operation cannot be consolidated," he said.

He claimed that a major problem in KPK was the inadequate presence and capacity of the police and civilian law-enforcement structure in several areas.

He said political activity was a constitutional right, but using government machinery and resources for confrontation at a time when the province was facing a serious security challenge was unacceptable.

"Prioritising a personal or political agenda over the national interest is neither permissible under the Constitution nor consistent with political ethics," he said.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding reforms in Pakistan Railways and Upgradation of ML-1

Young people vital stakeholders in determining direction of Pakistan's future: Mashhood

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan on Wednesday attended the Change Makers Conference and Awards as Chief Guest at Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), Islamabad, where he said the first draft of Vision 2047 would be prepared based on proposals and suggestions from the country's youth, giving them a direct role in shaping Pakistan's long-term development vision.

He said the government wanted to ensure that the aspirations, ideas and priorities of young people are reflected in the framework for the country's future.

"Vision 2047" is being developed with the participation of the country's youth, he said, emphasising the importance of providing young people opportunities to contribute to national policymaking.

Young people are not merely beneficiaries of government policies but important stakeholders in determining the direction of Pakistan's future, he added.

The chairman said the government is pursuing a youth-focused agenda aimed at expanding opportunities in education, skills development, employment, entrepreneurship and innovation.

He said the Prime Minister's Youth Programme was providing young people platforms to develop their skills, pursue entrepreneurship and contribute to national development.

Rana Mashhood stressed that ideas and recommendations from young people should be translated into practical policies and initiatives, adding that Vision 2047 would provide a long-term framework for Pakistan as the country approaches the centenary of its independence.



A funeral ceremony was held at Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis for 61-year-old Palestinian Hisham Abu Mustafa, who died in an Israeli airstrike on the city. His daughter, Azza Abu Mustafa, a healthcare worker, attended the ceremony and was overcome with grief.

PTI igniting political instability in Pakistan: Hanif Abbasi

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Railways, Hanif Abbasi on Wednesday said the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI)' stance was contributing to igniting political instability in the country backed by external conspiracy.

Addressing a press conference, Abbasi said those pursuing the agenda knew Pakistan, being a nuclear power, could not be defeated through conventional means and therefore sought to create internal instability and law-and-order problems.

The minister warned political workers against becoming "fuel" for political leaders, saying workers had repeatedly suffered during political confrontations. Referring to incidents including October 10, 2014, May 9, October 4-5, 2024, and November 26, he questioned whether PTI leaders had remembered the workers who lost their lives or faced imprisonment during such incidents. "Did they ever go and apologise to their families? Did they make any arrangements for their children or elderly parents?" he asked. Abbasi said political workers who were jailed after violating the law and Constitution had been left to face their cases on their own. He urged workers of all political parties to consider whether they were sacrificing their lives for leaders who did not even remember their names.

The minister said political parties had the right to organise campaigns and hold protests, but they must remain within the law and Constitution. He said some political activities had targeted state institutions responsible for protecting the country and its people. Abbasi said India and Israel, along with elements based in Afghanistan, were involved in a nexus aimed at promoting terrorism in Pakistan. He said militants operating from Afghanistan were receiving financial and intelligence support from outside the country and were being used to carry out attacks in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD,: Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq called on Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief and MNA Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence

Jinnah Peoples Train public asset, no damage will be tolerated: Yousafzai

Legal action to be taken against those endangering or damaging the train, says Balochistan Special Assistant for Home Affairs.

QUETTA, (APP): Balochistan Special Assistant for Home Affairs Babar Yousafzai said that Jinnah Peoples Train is a public asset and project for people convenience, those who damage it would be dealt with an iron hand.

He said that immediate legal action would be taken against those who damage or endanger the Jinnah Peoples Train, saying that damaging a project intended for public convenience would not be tolerated under any circumstances. He said that the Jinnah Peoples Train is for the public, the people should benefit from it rather than attempting to damage it. Babar mentioned that cases would be registered against those who damage the Jinnah Peoples Train and strict action to be taken in accordance with the law.

He said that miscreants are intimidated by the popularity of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, which is why they have resorted to such despicable acts.

"The legal noose will be tightened around elements that damage public projects", he said and added that the Jinnah Peoples Train is a positive step for public convenience and the people of Balochistan, no obstruction to it would be permitted.

He said that let miscreants take note, every attempt to damage public property to be met with a response in accordance with the law adding that there would be no leniency for those who sabotage projects aimed at peace, development, and public convenience in Balochistan.



QUETTA: Director General, Public Relations Balochistan, Askar Khan chairs a meeting regarding outdoor publicity.

Killing of two Afghan nationals in Kurram Operation uncovers new proof of cross-border terror network

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Fresh evidence of Afghan nationals' involvement in cross-border terrorism within Pakistan has come to light following a security operation in the Kurram district. Two foreign terrorists neutralized during an intelligence-based operation against Fitna-al-Khawarij on October 5 were identified as Afghan nationals, security sources said on Wednesday.

The deceased terrorists were identified as Sifat Ullah, alias Saifullah Jamshid, son of Tajalli, a resident of Janikhel in Afghanistan's Paktia province, and Omar Fidai. Their identification brings the documented count of Afghan citizens involved in terror activities inside Pakistan to over 257.

Reports indicate that the condolence gatherings were held in their home provinces in Afghanistan. During a memorial for Sifat Ullah in Rabát village, Janikhel district, posters featuring the Fitna-al-Khawarij flag were publicly displayed.

The incident is part of a broader pattern of cross-border involvement. Hafiz Muhibullah, alias Khalid, a resident of Kandahar, was among seven terrorists killed five days ago in North Waziristan. Additionally, Abdullah Jan—an associate of the Gul Bahadur group and close aide to Commander Gohar—was killed in a separate security operation three days ago.

Family Courts cannot dissolve marriages by labelling every unhappy marital relationship as shiqaq: SC

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Supreme Court has held that where a marital relationship has been marked by severe and persistent discord, all meaningful efforts at reconciliation have failed, and the fundamental objectives of marriage can no longer be fulfilled, shiqaq (serious marital discord) may constitute a valid ground for dissolution of marriage under Muslim law, even if cruelty or mistreatment by the husband is not proved.

A five-member bench headed by Justice Shahid Waheed and comprising Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan, Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar, Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Mian Gul Hassan Aurangzeb issued a detailed judgment while deciding two separate cases filed by Zainab Bibi and Iram Naz Begum.

The court held that khula and dissolution of Muslim marriages under the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, are two distinct legal avenues. Where a wife seeks dissolution of marriage on the ground of cruelty or other statutory grounds and does not opt for khula, the court cannot, on its own, convert her claim into khula without her clear and voluntary choice, particularly where such conversion affects her legal right to dower. The Supreme Court observed that even where cruelty is not established, a wife has the right to pursue her legal claim for dissolution or voluntarily opt for khula. She cannot be forced into khula and thereby deprived of her entitlement to dower. The court noted that in both cases, the Family Courts had dissolved the marriages on the basis of khula after finding that cruelty had not been proved and reconciliation efforts had failed, although the wives had neither sought nor opted for khula. Such orders could not legally be sustained.

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