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79 terrorists neutralized in Balochistan operations

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Security forces have killed 17 more Indian-backed terrorists during an ongoing operation in Balochistan, bringing the total number of terrorists killed in Operation Shabaan to 43, security sources said.

The joint operation by the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps (FC) and Balochistan Police was launched in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on the Mangi Dam Police Station and remains underway, with forces intensifying action against terrorists across the province.

Terrorists ambushed police personnel deployed in the Kach Mangi Phase III area of Ziarat on Tuesday, triggering hours-long gun battles that left nine police officers, including two station house officers, dead. Terrorists also abducted several civilians and police personnel after the attack. The military subsequently launched a series of counterterrorism operations across Balochistan.

In a statement issued today, security sources said the ongoing operation had further tightened the cordon around terrorists hiding in the region's rugged mountainous terrain, adding that multiple ground and aerial operations were continuing.

It said that in the past 24 hours, security forces killed another 17 terrorists, taking the total number of those killed in Operation Shabaan to 43.

The sources said an attack on a police station in the Zehri area of Khuzdar earlier today was repulsed.

They said swift action by the Pakistan Army and FC troops resulted in the confirmed killing of eight terrorists, while reports suggested that five to six more were killed during helicopter operations.

The joint operation by the Pakistan Army, Balochistan FC and police later continued, with security forces targeting terrorists hiding in the mountains using heavy weapons, the sources said.

During the latest phase of the operation, four more terrorists were killed, while several others were reported injured, according to the sources. According to the sources, security forces had already killed 26 terrorists during operations conducted on July 6 and 7.

The sources added that since July 5, a total of 79 terrorists had been killed in Operation Shabaan and other intelligence-based operations conducted in the area.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti talking to relatives and protestors during his visit to protest camp of Hanna Urak incident.



ISLAMABAD: Candidate for the Position of United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Every conspiracy to sabotage peace of Balochistan to be foiled: PM

President says state would defeat scourge of terrorism at all costs

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif paid tribute to the security forces for the successful execution of Operation Shaaban by the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps (FC) and Balochistan Police after the Mangi Dam Police Station incident. The president commending the professionalism of the security forces and law enforcement agencies underlined that the Operation Shaaban has once again proven that the forces are fully capable of dealing with every threat, a Presidency's news release said.

President Zardari underlined that the inimical elements employing proxy elements against Pakistan would not succeed in their nefarious designs as national resolve was stronger than any conspiracy. "Anti-Pakistan elements and inimical institutions of India and some other countries want to tarnish Pakistan's recent diplomatic achievements by using some anti-national elements as hired killers and demoralize us. We will take Pakistan's recent achievements to their logical conclusion and defeat terrorism with the help of the nation," the president resolved.

President Zardari underlined that there would be no compromise on defending the homeland and the state would defeat the scourge of terrorism at all costs. In a separate news release from the Prime Minister's Office, PM Shehbaz Sharif also praised the courage and valour of the security forces.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr. Musadik Malik discussing with the environmental activists at Climate Action Centre.

Parliamentary panel to visit Quetta as Balochistan security tops agenda

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Signaling growing parliamentary concern over the country's security landscape, the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Interior and Narcotics Control decided to hold a special meeting in Quetta to undertake an on-ground assessment of the law and order situation in Balochistan, marking a significant shift from the proposal to receive a briefing within Parliament House.

The decision came during the committee's 28th meeting, chaired by Raja Khurram Shahzad Nawaz, MNA, at Parliament House, where lawmakers also reviewed key legislative proposals, infrastructure delays in Islamabad, the regularization of illegal housing schemes, and longstanding land record disputes affecting residents of the federal capital.

The committee confirmed the minutes of its previous meeting held on June 9, 2026, and expressed satisfaction over the implementation of its earlier recommendations after reviewing the compliance report submitted by the relevant authorities.

Security issues dominated the proceedings as members deliberated on the prevailing law and order situation in both Balochistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. While some lawmakers suggested an in-camera security briefing in Islamabad, the committee ultimately agreed that a visit to Quetta would provide members with firsthand insight into the situation and enable them to formulate informed recommendations for the government. On the legislative front, the committee considered three government-sponsored measures: the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2025, the West Pakistan Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill, 2025, and the Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government (Amendment) Bill, 2026.

Following detailed discussions, the committee deferred consideration of both the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill and the ICT Local Government (Amendment) Bill for further examination. Officials from the ICT Excise and Taxation Department informed members that the Ministry of Law and Justice had advised that the objectives of the West Pakistan Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill had already been incorporated into the Finance Act, 2026-27.

Writ of state to be maintained in Balochistan at all costs: CM Bugti

QUETTA (ANN): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said that Operation Shaban, launched after the terrorist attack on the Mangi Dam Police Station, is progressing successfully, and security forces are carrying out full-scale operations against terrorists.

He said that the writ of the state would be maintained in Balochistan at all costs and that terrorists cannot escape their fate.

The Chief Minister stated that the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps, and Balochistan Police are tightening the noose around terrorists through joint ground and aerial operations in difficult mountainous areas.

Paying tribute to the professionalism, bravery, and sacrifices of the security forces, he said that operations to eliminate terrorism would continue with full force.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that, according to security sources, 39 terrorists have been killed so far during Operation Shaban, while a total of 75 terrorists have been killed in various intelligence-based operations conducted since July 5. He said these successes are evidence of the high morale and effective strategy of the security forces. The Chief Minister further said that on Friday, security forces also foiled a terrorist attack on a police station in the Zaidi area of Khuzdar through a timely and effective response, demonstrating the complete preparedness and professional competence of law enforcement agencies.

Balochistan govt announces compensation of Rs 11 million each to families of police personnel martyred in Ziarat

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan for Information and Political Affairs Shahid Rind said that on special directive of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, release orders have been issued for the payment of compensation of Rs 11 million each to the families of the police personnel martyred in Ziarat.

He said that the payment of compensation to the families of all the martyrs at their doorsteps is being ensured so that immediate relief could be provided to the affected families.

Shahid Rind mentioned that on the special instructions of the Chief Minister, all administrative and financial proceedings for the payment of compensation have been completed at a very fast pace.

He stated that the government of Balochistan would bear the maintenance of the families of the martyrs, the welfare of the families and all the educational expenses of the children of the martyrs.

Rind said that financial compensation is no substitute for human lives, however, the Balochistan government stands with the families of the martyrs in this hour of difficulty and all possible cooperation would be continued in the future.

High-level Polio eradication delegation visits Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan hosted a high-level delegation of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative's (GPEI) Polio Oversight Board (POB) this week. The delegation's visit was organized reiterating the country's unwavering commitment to seizing the historic opportunity to end the global and regional public health threat of paralytic polio. Discussions emphasized that the poliovirus is being further confined – mainly in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – and the next six months will be critical for taking a further step towards ending polio in Pakistan and worldwide.

Since 1994, thanks to medical science and life-saving vaccines, Pakistan has reduced polio cases by 99.8% – from 20,000 estimated cases in the early 1990s to 31 in 2025, and 3 so far in 2026.

The delegation members lauded the Government's strengthened oversight of polio eradication efforts and reiterated that global support and confidence in Pakistan's polio operations remains strong.

Balochistan enters new era of development, prosperity

QUETTA, (APP): Vice Chairman of the Balochistan Board of Investment and Trade (BBoIT), Bilal Khan Kakar said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, the province has entered a new era of development, prosperity, and investment.

Speaking to members of the business community at his office, Kakar said that isolated incidents should not overshadow the broad-based development initiatives, investment promotion efforts, and economic reforms currently underway across the province. He stated that the present provincial government has taken effective measures to restore investor confidence, create a business-friendly environment, and promote industrial and commercial activities. These initiatives, he said, are already producing encouraging results and strengthening the province's economic outlook.

CM Bugti urges patriotic people of Balochistan to reject anti-state narratives

Reaffirms support for bereaved families, promises to honor every commitment

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti has warned that while terrorists are engaged in violence, unrest, and the killing of innocent citizens, they are simultaneously spreading misleading propaganda by blaming the state and its institutions for these crimes.

He urged the patriotic people of Balochistan not to fall prey to such narratives and instead stand shoulder to shoulder with state institutions for national unity, peace, and stability.

Sarfraz Bugti made these remarks during a meeting with participants of the ongoing sit-in near BA Mall and the families of martyrs. Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar, Commissioner Quetta Division Shahzaib Kakar, and other senior officials were also present.

The Chief Minister said he had been in constant contact with the sit-in committee from the very beginning and worked tirelessly for a peaceful, dignified, and lasting resolution.

He emphasized his longstanding relationship of mutual respect with the affected families and elders, assuring them of continued support.

He stressed that the same state institutions being maligned are sacrificing their lives daily for the protection of the people. He cited the example of soldiers martyred in Lasbela, noting they were sons, husbands, and family breadwinners who gave their lives for the peace of Balochistan and Pakistan.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail presides over the 8th senate meeting of University of Loralai.

Governor seeks modern skills, better opportunities for Balochistan's youth

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail presided over the 8th Senate meeting of the University of Loralai at Governor House Quetta, where Chief Justice of Balochistan High Court Justice Kamran Khan Malakhail and Provincial Minister for Education Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani were also present. Their participation underscored the leadership's unwavering commitment to the province's youth and the promotion of higher education.

Governor Mandokhail praised the University of Loralai for maintaining academic discipline and advancing wisely into allied sciences. He noted that within a short span since its establishment, the university has embarked on a path of quality education and modern skill development. "Our goal is to ensure that students receive high-standard education in both scientific fields and practical skills, enabling graduates to become economically self-reliant and competitive in their professional lives," he said.

The meeting was attended by Vice Chancellor Dr. Ehsanullah Kakar, Provincial Secretary Higher Education Saleh Baloch, HEC representative Noor Amna Malik, Principal Secretary to Governor Abdul Nasir Dotani, Pro-Vice Chancellor Adil Zaman Kasi, Registrar Dr. Khalid Khan, and all Senate members.

Governor Mandokhail highlighted the role of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) as a national pillar of knowledge and expertise, providing valuable support and intellectual guidance to universities for promoting quality education and advanced research. He stressed the urgent need to strengthen the financial stability of public sector universities through a dual approach: generating new sustainable sources of income and minimizing unnecessary expenditures. He directed the Vice Chancellor to ensure that the complete agenda and relevant documents for each Senate meeting are shared with members at least a week in advance to allow thorough deliberation and better decision-making.

Women must 'fearlessly' report all gender-based discrimination at workplace: Fauzia Waqar

ISLAMABAD, (Agencies): Federal Ombudswoman for Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Fauzia Waqar said that women must report all kinds of gender-based discrimination at the workplace, including physical misconduct, denial of equal opportunities, disregard for merit, and ban on senior roles. The amendment to the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 passed by the senate on January 4, 2022 expanded the scope of the legislation by defining harassment as (i) any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours, stalking or cyber stalking or other verbal, visual or written communication or physical conduct of a sexual nature or sexually demeaning attitudes, including any gestures or expression conveying derogatory connotation causing interference with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, or the attempt to punish the complainant for refusal to comply to such a request or is made a condition for employment; or (ii) discrimination on basis of gender, which may or may not be sexual in nature, but which may embody a discriminatory and prejudicial mind-set or notion, resulting in discriminatory behavior on basis of gender against the complainant

Inculcating awareness regarding the law, Fauzia urged the women to report all incidents of workplace harassment sans fear.

THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

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Balochistan's vast mineral potential

The recent meeting of the Mineral Investment Facilitation Authority (MIFA), chaired by Provincial Finance and Minerals Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani, reflects a decisive and forward-looking approach by the Balochistan government to unlock the province's vast mineral potential while safeguarding the interests of its people. At a time when economic resilience and sustainable development are paramount, this initiative signals both clarity of vision and seriousness of purpose.

Balochistan's mineral wealth has long been recognized as one of its greatest assets, yet for years it remained underutilized due to outdated frameworks and inconsistent policy direction. The government's renewed focus on reforming the mining sector demonstrates a clear commitment to turning this potential into tangible prosperity. By prioritizing mining as a cornerstone of economic policy, the provincial leadership is not only acknowledging its importance but actively working to modernize and strengthen it.

A particularly noteworthy aspect of the meeting was the discussion on revising mineral royalty rates and associated fees, which have remained unchanged since 2017. Updating these rates is both timely and necessary. It reflects an understanding that economic conditions evolve, and policies must adapt accordingly to ensure fairness, competitiveness, and increased revenue generation. The unanimous recommendation by MIFA to move forward with these adjustments underscores a rare and commendable consensus among stakeholders.

Equally important is the government's balanced approach toward growth and responsibility. The emphasis on developing a comprehensive strategy to protect mine owners and workers highlights a progressive shift toward inclusive development. Economic expansion without worker safety and welfare is unsustainable, and the government's recognition of this reality strengthens confidence in its reform agenda. By integrating labor protection with economic planning, the authorities are laying the foundation for a more stable and equitable mining ecosystem.

The presence of key policymakers, technical experts, and industry representatives at the meeting further reinforces the credibility of this initiative. It reflects a collaborative governance model where decisions are informed by diverse perspectives, ensuring that reforms are both practical and impactful.

This session of MIFA marks more than just a routine policy discussion—it represents a meaningful step toward institutional reform and economic transformation. By modernizing regulatory frameworks, enhancing revenue streams, and prioritizing the well-being of workers, the government is positioning Balochistan as a more attractive and responsible destination for investment in the mining sector.

In a province where a significant portion of the population relies on mining for their livelihood, such reforms carry profound implications. They promise not only increased economic activity but also improved living standards and greater social stability. If implemented effectively, these measures could serve as a model for resource management across the country.

The government's proactive stance deserves recognition. By aligning economic ambition with social responsibility, it is charting a path that is both pragmatic and visionary—one that holds the promise of long-term prosperity for Balochistan and its people.

US-Iran stand-off: conflicting perspectives

INAM UL HAQUE

The impasse in the second round of peace talks stems from Iran exhibiting intransigence and the US considering these parleys as a waste of time, for Iran not conceding on the core demand of halting uranium enrichment. The US proposals envisage a concurrent two-stage process, including ending the war first, and simultaneously addressing more contentious issues, like Iran's nuclear programme.

The Iranian proposition spans a sequenced framework; ending hostilities first, followed by CBMs like removing the maritime blockade, and thereafter the broader negotiations. Tehran wants the removal of the blockade as a precondition for further talks. Its approach comprises immediate de-escalation, while preserving the leverage (SoH) for the longer-term settlement.

Contrarily, the US considers postponement of nuclear discussions a risk, which weakens its centrality. Washington also cites 'tremendous infighting and confusion' within Iranian leadership, where the IRGC/Pasdaran is considered to be calling the shots, and not the political leadership, after the killing of the country's civil and military leadership. In a nutshell, Tehran seeks phased relief and recognition of its position, whereas Washington requires comprehensive guarantees upfront. Pakistan is trying hard to 'narrow the differences' before a second formal meeting. However, there seems to be an agreement on keeping the ceasefire open-ended, allowing time for diplomats to address complex issues.

President Trump cancelled a planned Islamabad trip by envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, announcing that Iran could call, once ready. Iran has, for now, shunned a face-off with the US and instead prefers dealing through intermediaries, due to a trust deficit and President Trump's eroding credibility. Consequently, the SoH remains closed in double blockade by US CENTCOM and IRGC, choking most of the Gulf LNG supply and around 20% of the global oil shipments, destined mainly for Asia, comprising 85% of its energy needs.

In global markets, major US stock indices (S&P 500 and Nasdaq) have hit record highs, due to robust energy trading, whereas the broader global market is pressured because of supply inconsistency and risks. With global oil prices hovering over $100-$109 a barrel, companies like Exxon and Aramco have reaped hefty profits; however, gas station inflation has hit international and US consumers hard.

Defence stocks have surged, and companies like Lockheed Martin, Raytheon and Boeing are primary beneficiaries of this conflict. Chip stocks have registered gains for AI firms like Intel. Likewise, yields on the 10-year US Treasury bonds have risen. Gold has edged higher, as investors are increasingly shifting towards safer stocks.

Against this backdrop and despite no immediate prospects of direct talks, backchannel diplomacy remains active. Iran's FM Abbas Araghchi returned to Islamabad on April 25 after visiting Oman, travelling on a Pakistani aircraft, and later meeting Gen Asim Munir. Araghchi carried written messages outlining Tehran's position on key issues, like its 'nuclear red lines and SoH'. He later travelled to St Petersburg, where he met President Putin, Iran's close ally. Several regional countries are also actively involved in de-escalation. Araghchi also made separate contacts with Qatari and Saudi counterparts. GCC and Saudi Arabia want their concerns to be 'reflected' in the peace process. Turkey is also engaging the US, Iran and Oman.

President Trump has desisted from incendiary posts on social media, and has not indicated resuming hostilities; and the fragile ceasefire is so far holding. It seems that, given the stakes, both sides do not want to return to a shooting war – the US for domestic political costs, due to depleting ammunition stocks, and given the world reaction; and Iran because of attrition it has suffered and the economic fallout from the maritime blockade.

Although Iran publicly sticks to defiance and declares not to enter 'imposed negotiations' under threats or blockade. As a side development, Hezbollah in Lebanon refuses to be part of the ceasefire with Israel, brokered last week in Washington. Hezbollah's five peace conditionalities include: a) halt to Israeli aggression; b) withdrawal from occupied lands; c) prisoner release; d) displaced Lebanese returning to their homes; and e) reconstruction.

This seemingly is an over-ask, given the military situation on the ground, and the crushing blows suffered by Hezbollah in this war. Hezbollah, as an indispensable powerbroker, is trying to raise the 'stakes for parties mediating the conflict' and is simply bypassing the Lebanese government, which is eager for a settlement with Israel. That conflict, hence, will likely complicate the US-Iran mediations.

On the Iranian side, the sentiment seems more confident, hawkish and understandably angry. After absorbing and retaliating to the US-Israeli onslaught for over a month, the IRGC, with residual military capability, could perhaps continue the combat for up to three more months. Besides, the IRGC and most of the world consider restoration of peace squarely a US responsibility which, along with its protégé Israel, started this unnecessary war of choice.

Internally, IRGC is in the driving seat; however, ironically, generals are not known as great peacemakers and compromisers, given their training and outlook. Their world is a binary of black and white, with little or no shades of grey, and that remains the hallmark of politicians. Aligning the IRGC's worldview and conflict outlook with political reality would be a tough ask and lengthy process, especially after the stalemate that the IRGC has imposed on the mighty US-Israel coalition.

Ayatullah Mojtaba Khamenei was severely wounded on the first day of the war, suffering injuries to one hand and one leg and burn wounds to the face and lips. He is now awaiting a prosthetic leg. He reportedly speaks with difficulty and will eventually need to undergo plastic surgery. His own ties to the IRGC, his appointment as an IRGC favourite, his health, his reclusiveness due to security concerns, and the imperatives of regime survival bring the IRGC to the forefront as a lead player in deciding strategy and resource allocation.

Attacks on Israel and US interests in the Arab world, besides the blockade of SoH, are the Guards' strategic interests. Additionally, the generals reckon that they have contained the threat, hence the continued defiance. It was they who agreed to the ceasefire and who prevailed upon the Iranian government not to send their delegation to the Islamabad Peace Talks 2.0. Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, too, has an IRGC background, and several Guard generals participated as delegates in Islamabad Talks 1.0. Some fringe firebrands, like the ultra-hardline Saeed Jalili, continue to influence the media.

So, fingers are still crossed!

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Skills, not slogans: rethinking Pakistan's education divide

MEHAK ANWAR

Pakistan's education crisis no longer hides behind dense policy documents or statistical abstractions; it is laid bare in a stark and persistent divide. While urban literacy rates have climbed past 70%, rural Pakistan continues to fall dangerously behind. This is more than a disparity; it is a structural failure that speaks of years of uneven governance, weak delivery mechanisms, and policy priorities that rarely translate beyond paper. Successive governments have pledged reform, backed by rising allocations and an expanding institutional footprint.

Yet in districts like Tharparkar, the ground reality remains stubbornly unchanged. Access to education particularly for girls is still uncertain, shaped by geography, poverty and systemic neglect. Schools may exist in official records, but meaningful opportunity remains out of reach for many.

The issue, therefore, is not a shortage of policy ambition. It is the chronic failure of implementation, the absence of sustained follow-through, and an inability to convert investment into measurable, lasting impact.

Pakistan produces thousands of graduates each year, yet far too many remain unemployed or underemployed.

According to recent labour force estimates, youth unemployment in Pakistan hovers around 8–10%, with the rate significantly higher among young women.

The problem is not simply job scarcity, but a system that continues to prioritise degrees over skills. Technical and vocational education has yet to receive the sustained attention it demands. And despite Pakistan requiring nearly two million skilled workers annually, formal training systems produce only a fraction of that, leaving a widening gap between education and employability.

Provincial bodies such as STEVTA and federal initiatives under PSDP continue to receive funding.

However, structural inefficiencies, weak oversight and a disconnect from market realities limit their effectiveness.

The result is a cycle where investment does not translate into employability, particularly in rural and underserved regions.

And yet, within this broader failure, there are signs of what works.

In Tharparkar, a targeted intervention funded by a private firm and implemented by Thar Education Alliance, is quietly challenging this status quo. The Girls Pathway to Skill Development programme focuses on something many public initiatives overlook: practical, market-relevant skills for young women who would otherwise remain excluded from economic participation.

By training girls in computer graphic design, sewing and embroidery, the programme goes beyond conventional literacy.

It equips participants with tools to earn, contribute to household income, and, crucially, shift longstanding social dynamics that have historically limited women's roles in such communities.

What sets this initiative apart is not just its intent, but its design. It is localised, outcome-driven and directly linked to economic opportunity.

Participants are not merely trained; they are prepared for independence, with tangible support such as equipment and continued mentorship.

This is where the contrast with public policy becomes stark.

While government programmes often struggle with scale and delivery, this collaboration demonstrates the effectiveness of focused, well-executed interventions. It shows that when funding is paired with accountability and on-ground understanding, results follow - even in the most challenging environments.

However, isolated success stories cannot carry the weight of a national crisis.

Pakistan's youth bulge often described as a demographic dividend will become a liability if the country fails to invest in skills at scale. Bridging the rural-urban divide requires more than budget increases; it demands systemic reform, stronger monitoring, and a shift in priorities from access alone to employability.

Public-private partnerships offer a practical way forward. Initiatives like this one provide a blueprint that the state can learn from and replicate.

For millions of young Pakistanis, the cost of inaction is measured in lost opportunities, constrained choices, and unrealised potential.

And unless that changes, Pakistan will not just fall short of its ambitions, it will actively hold back the very generation meant to achieve them.

The writer is a Mass Communication graduate and a human rights activist

Self-inflicted energy crisis

BENAZIR SAMAD

In the Karimabad valley of Chitral, Abdul Rahim's monthly electricity bill came to Rs1,500. The power comes from a community hydropower project run by the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) in Pakistan's Hindu Kush mountains. Some 20 kilometers down the valley, families on the national grid pay between Rs6,000 and Rs7,000 for the same month. In that short stretch of road, Pakistan's energy crisis stops being a mystery.

The Economist recently ranked Pakistan among the world's biggest losers from the Gulf energy shock. Fossil fuels account for more than 30% of its total import bill, nearly 90% of that oil sourced from the Middle East, making energy shocks a direct trigger for current account crises. We saw this after the Ukraine war.

We're seeing it again after the Iran war. That chronic vulnerability points to a deeper question: how did a country with 60,000 MW of untapped hydropower potential, Chinese investment on its doorstep, and rivers, sun and wind in abundance, end up this exposed? The answer isn't resource scarcity. Political economy already determined the investment – and it chose wrong.

When China arrived with CPEC, a $60 billion infrastructure programme with energy at its centre, Pakistan had a once-in-a-generation opportunity. CPEC's first phase poured more than $33 billion into the energy sector. Nearly two-thirds of that generation capacity went to coal. Coal dominated CPEC not because it was the best energy solution or Pakistan lacked alternatives but because coal served a different purpose entirely.

Nawaz Sharif won the 2013 election on a promise to end load-shedding - coal could be built within an election cycle. Hydro couldn't. Punjab was the electoral base; hydro potential sat in smaller regions like Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan. Sindh was no different. The PPP government, sitting on one of the world's great wind corridors in Jhimpir-Gharo, also prioritised coal. Both major parties, both major provinces, made the same calculation.

Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan together hold over 45,000 MW of identified hydropower potential, which is 75% of Pakistan's total. Both received a fraction of CPEC's energy investment. In Gilgit-Baltistan, the shelving of a single $14 billion hydropower plant wiped out 98% of CPEC funds to the province – the same region that holds Pakistan's greatest hydropower potential.

Poor planning is another key factor. Even where the national grid did arrive, it arrived badly. Grid connectivity in topographies like Chitral, with its narrow valleys, is uniquely challenging. It needed to be done once, with proper planning. Chitral's Golan Gol project feeds 436 million units annually into the national grid, but captures only a fraction of the valley's actual estimated hydropower potential of 6,000 to 7,000 MW. To go back now means new transmission towers, new environmental disruption, new costs that careful planning could have avoided entirely.

The consequences are already being lived. Chitral residents took WAPDA to court over high-tension transmission lines running directly over their homes - a safety and health hazard that made the property beneath them worthless. They won. WAPDA was ordered to move the lines. It couldn't. The lines had been laid without accounting for what surrounded them, and there was no viable path to correct the mistake. A court order remains unimplementable. That is what short-term or bad planning looks like.

Meanwhile, the Sahiwal coal plant, CPEC's flagship energy project built in Punjab on imported coal, today operates at 41% utilisation while consumers pay for electricity it isn't producing. According to a CSIS analysis of CPEC's first five years, only 34% of energy projects were completed overall, and wind and solar received just 8% of generation capacity. Pakistan chose this.

The numbers make the case. Pakistan has a 10 to 12 GW surplus of generation capacity. Consumers pay Rs2.5 to 2.8 trillion every year for idle plants not producing a single unit of electricity. Yet millions of households remain without electricity, and millions more face 12 hours or more of daily load-shedding.

The rapid rise of solar in Pakistan is often celebrated as progress, but the boom is not a policy success story either. It is what happens when a state fails so completely that people opt out of it entirely. Electricity tariffs rose 155% in three years. People bought solar panels in desperation. Pakistan became the world's third-largest market for Chinese solar panels almost overnight, as solar became affordable for the middle class.

Now the government is cutting buyback rates and imposed an 18% import tax on panels, which was later reduced to 10% after public backlash, to protect the broken grid those same people abandoned. Also, there were reports of the government going further, requiring licences for solar users and introducing additional fees, even for smaller systems that were previously exempt. The Ministry of Power Division has, however, denied such reports. Anyway, as a matter of fact, the state built overcapacity with the wrong technology, priced people off the grid, watched them leave, and is now penalising them for leaving. That is not a solar success story. It is a governance failure in another form.

Pakistan's energy crisis is self-inflicted, a clear example of how short-sighted government policies play politics with essential human needs instead of solving them. The Pakistani government cynically used coal as a primary energy source despite the fact that it was polluting and required coal imports. The contracts that govern Pakistan's LNG terminals follow the same logic and so does every other energy decision Pakistan has made in the last two decades.

The government apparently felt that a longer-term strategy, properly communicated, which gives greater emphasis to renewables will not work politically because people want more power now regardless of the cost or inefficiencies. That is not mismanagement. That is a choice about who the system is designed to serve. It is time for the government to realise that decades of neglect cannot be addressed through short-sighted fixes that often create more problems than they solve. Pakistan cannot afford to abandon the pursuit of a sustainable energy future built on hydropower, solar and wind, even as it works to meet immediate demand. Pakistan will never get out of its "developing country" status unless it learns, as Americans say, to walk and chew gum at the same time.

US-Iran agreement 'never been closer': FM Araghchi

TEHRAN, (Agencies): The United States and Iran have "never been closer" to a deal on ending the war in the Middle East, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday.

"The Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding has never been closer," Araghchi wrote on the social media platform X, referring to the Pakistani capital, which hosted previous U.S.-Iran talks.

The apparent breakthrough in negotiations comes after Iran exchanged fire with the U.S. and Israel over three days this week, threatening to return the Middle East to full-scale war.

"Pending its finalization, the media should refrain from entering speculation about its content," Araghchi added, after purported details of the accord were published by Iranian media.

"In line with our responsible and transparent approach, all details will be shared with the public in due course," Araghchi added.

U.S. President Donald Trump has said multiple times in recent weeks that the countries were on the cusp of a deal. The war launched by the U.S. and Israel on Feb. 28 has rattled the Middle East and virtually shut down oil and natural gas shipments from the Persian Gulf. A fragile cease-fire has been in place since April 7.

The regional officials said the emerging deal is expected to pave the way for reopening the Strait of Hormuz, the phased lifting of sanctions on Iran, and the release of frozen Iranian assets. These officials, who spoke to media on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the negotiations, declined to discuss further details.

A senior U.S. official said key terms in the emerging agreement include the removal and destruction of Iran's nuclear material and the dismantling of Tehran's nuclear program.

The U.S. official spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to provide details about the sensitive talks. Underscoring the fragility of the talks, Trump on Friday lashed out at Iranian officials on social media and said: "They better get their act together, and FAST!"

Iran's nuclear program has been a key point of division. That's the main reason the U.S. and Israel cited for going to war. Tehran has insisted its nuclear efforts are for peaceful purposes.

Also critical is Iran's effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital shipping lane for oil and natural gas. Disruption of transit through the strait has crimped global energy supplies, driven up fuel prices and made food and other basics more expensive well beyond the region. The U.S. has responded since mid-April with a naval blockade of Iranian ports to choke off Iran's own oil exports.



UNITAR Executive Director Michelle Gyles-McDonnough (L) and Majed Al-Mazyed, governor of Saudi Arabia's National Cybersecurity Authority, at the launch of the UNITAR cybersecurity hub in Riyadh



The mother (C) of Air India Flight 171 plane crash victim Akash Patni grieves at the crash site on the first anniversary of the disaster, Ahmedabad, India.

Epstein tried to amass money, power, women in Africa: Report

MIAMI, (News Desk): Before his 2019 death in a Manhattan jail cell, convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein built connections across Africa's elite. According to a report by Miami Herald on Wednesday, Epstein tried to amass money, power and women across the continent. When Senegal investigated former President Abdoulaye Wade's son for corruption, Epstein supported him with his Palm Beach mansion and extensive legal funding, even hiring a top firm to lobby US officials for his release, the report said.

"[V]ery glad to have you back," Epstein wrote to Karim Wade, son of Abdoulaye Wade, shortly after he was released from prison. "[W]e can skype when you like … we can share incarceration stories," the report said.

He also pursued ties with Libya's Muammar Gaddafi in 2010, then shifted to anti-regime figures as Gaddafi's power faded, the report said.

Bill Gates rejects wrongdoing amid scrutiny over Epstein ties

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates defended himself against questions from U.S. lawmakers regarding his past association with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, insisting he had "never victimized anyone" as scrutiny over the relationship resurfaced.

Gates, one of the world's richest men and a leading philanthropist, was appearing before the House Oversight Committee for a transcribed interview about the disgraced financier, who died in a New York jail cell in 2019 while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges involving underage girls.

"I never witnessed nor had any indication that Epstein was engaged in ongoing criminal conduct. I never went to his island, his ranch, or his Florida home. I have never victimized anyone," Gates said in prepared testimony to the closed-door hearing that was posted on his personal website. Gates described his meeting with Epstein as "a grave error in judgment" and added, "if the time I spent with Epstein lent him any credibility, I am deeply sorry." The panel asked Gates to appear after documents released by the Justice Department raised new questions about his contacts with Epstein.

Several other high-profile figures have also appeared before the committee, including Bill and Hillary Clinton, and Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick.

Simply appearing in Epstein-related documents does not indicate evidence of a crime. The Epstein files include a 2013 draft email in which the financier appeared to suggest he had helped Gates manage the fallout from extramarital affairs, including by seeking antibiotics after a sexually transmitted infection.

Iranians to safeguard nuclear, missile technologies as national assets: Mojtaba

TEHRAN (TASNIM) – Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Mojtaba Khamenei emphasized the Iranian nation's determination to safeguard the country's achievements in the nuclear and missile fields as national assets.

"… Ninety million honorable Iranians, both inside and outside the country, … regard all identity-based, spiritual, human, scientific, industrial, and technological capacities—from nano and bio to nuclear and missile technologies—as national assets and will safeguard them just as they defend their land, sea, and air borders," the Leader said in a message issued on Thursday on the occasion of National Persian Gulf Day.

The Leader also said Iran will ensure the security of the Persian Gulf and eliminate the misuse of this waterway by hostile enemies. Ayatollah Khamenei's message is as follows: In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful One of the unparalleled blessings of Almighty God for the Muslim nations of our region, especially the noble people of Islamic Iran, is the gift of the "Persian Gulf." A blessing beyond a body of water, it has shaped part of our identity and civilization. In addition to connecting nations, it has created a vital and unique route for the global economy through the Strait of Hormuz and onward to the Sea of Oman. This strategic asset has, over past centuries, provoked the greed of many devils. The repeated invasions by European and American outsiders, along with insecurity, damages, and numerous threats imposed on regional countries, represent only a part of the malicious schemes of global arrogance against the inhabitants of the Persian Gulf—of which the latest example was the recent acts of aggression by the "Great Satan." The Iranian nation, possessing the largest share of the Persian Gulf's coastline, has made the greatest sacrifices for its independence and in confronting foreign aggressors—from expelling the Portuguese and liberating the Strait of Hormuz, which forms the basis for naming the 10th of Ordibehesht as National Persian Gulf Day, to resisting Dutch colonialism and the epics of resistance against British imperialism. The Islamic Revolution, however, marked a turning point in these struggles by cutting off the hands of arrogant powers from the Persian Gulf region. Today, after two months since the largest military aggression by global bullies in the region and the humiliating defeat of the United States in its plans, a new chapter for the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz is unfolding.

The nations of the Persian Gulf region, long accustomed to the silence and submissiveness of rulers before aggressors, have in the past sixty days witnessed remarkable displays of strength, vigilance, and bravery by the naval forces of the army and the IRGC, alongside the honor and courage of the people and youth of southern Iran in rejecting foreign domination.



Authorities in the French city of Toulouse announced a curfew for under-16s during "high risk" World Cup matches, after unrest marred celebrations of the recent Paris Saint-Germain Champions League victory.



The 79th Cannes Film Festival, held in the city of Cannes in southern France, is continuing. As part of the festival, actress Kamara Al Mawla, Palestinian producer Rakan Mayasi, and actress Rim Al Mawla (from left to right) attended a photocall event for the film "La Bola Negra."

Israel arrests 175 Gaza flotilla activists in int'l waters off Greece

ATHENS, (Monitoring Desk): The Israeli military arrested some 175 activists from a Gaza-bound aid flotilla after intercepting it in international waters off Greece, the country's Foreign Ministry and the flotilla's organizers said Thursday.

"Approximately 175 activists from more than 20 boats … are now making their way peacefully to Israel," the ministry said in a statement.

The statement included a video of the activists aboard an Israeli navy ship.

The organizers of the latest flotilla of pro-Palestinian activists seeking to break Israel's blockade on Gaza had announced shortly beforehand that their boats were surrounded by Israeli military ships while off the coast of the Greek island of Crete.

"At the time of publishing this statement (06:30 Paris time, 04:30 GMT), at least 22 of the flotilla's 58 boats have been stormed by Israeli forces in complete violation of international law," the Global Sumud Flotilla said in a statement.

The flotilla set sail in recent weeks from Marseille in France, Barcelona in Spain and Syracuse in Italy.

Overnight from Wednesday to Thursday, the flotilla said its boats had been "illegally surrounded" by Israeli vessels.

The remaining boats in the flotilla are currently near Crete, according to the organization's live tracking on its website.

'Lasers, assault weapons'

"Our boats were approached by military speedboats, self-identified as 'Israel,' pointing lasers and semi-automatic assault weapons, ordering participants to the front of the boats and to get on their hands and knees," the organization had said.

Pentagon official says Iran war costs US military $25B

WASHINGTON, (Monitoring Desk): U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth sharply criticized congressional Democrats as "the biggest adversary we face" during a heated hearing today, as the Pentagon disclosed the war with Iran has already cost an estimated $25 billion.

Hegseth told the House Armed Services Committee that boosting next year's Pentagon budget to an unprecedented $1.5 trillion will "maintain the world's most powerful and capable military."

Gwyneth Paltrow under fire for complicity in Israeli occupation

NEW YORK, (Agencies): Hollywood actress Gwyneth Paltrow has come under fire after appearing in a promotional campaign for a high-end residential development in Israel, drawing criticism from activists and social media users amid heightened scrutiny of public figures' ties to the country.

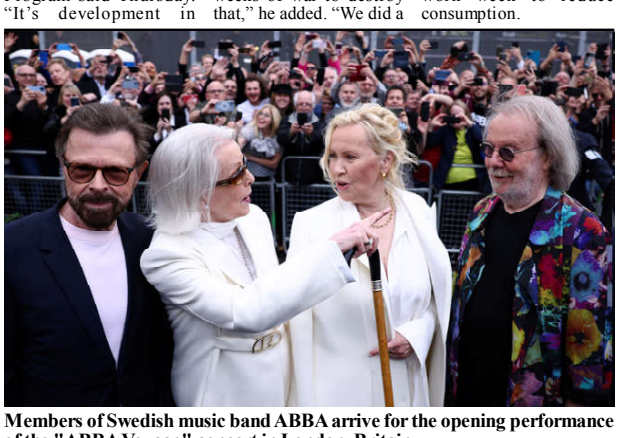
Paltrow, 53, is the face of the "51 PARK" project, a high-end residential development in the coastal city of Herzliya, developed by Israeli real estate company Aviv Melisron.

UN warns Iran war could plunge 30 million people into poverty

PARIS, (Monitoring Desk): The U.S.-Israeli war on Iran has caused a surge in energy and fertilizer prices and could push more than 30 million people into poverty, the head of the U.N. Development Program said Thursday.



"It's development in reverse," Alexander De Croo told media on the sidelines of a G7 development meeting in Paris. "It took decades to build stable societies, to develop local economies, and it took only several weeks of war to destroy that," he added. "We did a study after six weeks of war and estimated that even if the conflict ended at that point, 32 million people would be pushed into precarity in 160 countries," said De Croo. The war has led to closure of the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas flows in peacetime. Gulf nations are also important for many oil products and feedstocks to make fertilizer. A shortage of supplies and high prices has led to countries in Africa and Asia imposing a range of measures that include fuel rationing and shortening the work week to reduce consumption.



Members of Swedish music band ABBA arrive for the opening performance of the "ABBA Voyage" concert in London, Britain

Trump's rating tanks further as Iran war drives up domestic prices

WASHINGTON, (Monitoring Desk): President Donald Trump's approval rating has fallen to its lowest point of his current term as Americans grow more dissatisfied with his handling of the cost of living and the unpopular war with Iran, a new Reuters/Ipsos poll found.

The four-day poll completed Monday showed 34% of Americans approve of Trump's performance in the White House, down from 36% in a prior Reuters/Ipsos survey.

The majority of responses were gathered prior to the Saturday night shooting at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner, where Trump was due to speak. Federal prosecutors have charged the accused shooter with attempting to assassinate the president.

Trump's standing with the U.S. public has trended lower since taking office in January 2025, when 47% of Americans gave him a thumbs-up.

His popularity has taken a beating since the U.S. and Israel launched a war against Iran on Feb. 28 which has led to a surge in gasoline prices.

Only 22% of poll respondents approved of 's on the cost of living, down from 25% in the prior Reuters/Ipsos poll.

The survey, which was conducted nationwide and online, gathered responses from 1,014 U.S. adults and had a margin of error of 3 percentage points.

Trump renews pressure on Israel's Herzog to pardon Netanyahu

WASHINGTON, (Monitoring Desk): US President Donald Trump has renewed his "pressure campaign" on Israeli President Isaac Herzog to pardon Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Trump told Axios on Wednesday that Netanyahu had raised his corruption trial when they spoke Tuesday night and told him he'd be back in court on Wednesday, instead of focusing on Iran.

"In the middle of a war? Give me a break," Trump said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu cut short a court session in his corruption trial on Wednesday to hold security consultations related to an aid flotilla heading to the Gaza Strip.

Before the trial session began in Tel Aviv, Netanyahu asked to shorten Wednesday's hearing to three hours, but judges rejected the request.

He then asked to leave the courtroom for one hour to hold security consultations at the Defense Ministry and then return later, which the judges approved.

TENDER NOTICE

TSE-2627071121353 Only electronic bid will be submitted, No physical bid is required. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. The EXEC ENGINEER IRRIGATION DIV: DERA BUGTI invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2026 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates

Tender Fee 1500 PKR

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Wazgado Dam District upper Dera Bugti	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 1 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of at least 160,199,045 PKR Amount in3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm Registration with Pakistan Engineering council (PEC) C-3 and above (Upto 500 million)In Relevant Category And Specialized Code is CE04(i) (Dams/Water Retaining Structures) , CE04(iii) (dams only). The Bidder must Submit tender fees Rs. 1500 in shape of Green Challan from NBP. The Bidder must Submit Bid Security of 2% of the estimated cost in shape of Call Deposit / Bank Guarantee. The Bidder must have Completed Similar Nature of work in the last 3 years with the minimum cost value of 70% of the project cost **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 27 July, 2026till 09:00 AM through supplier dashboard. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at 10:00 AM on EPPS System Address: Irrigation Department Dera Bugti Phone no: 0835410564 Fax no: 03456070155Email: nisarahmedmugheri650@gmail.com

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Local economy to be further strengthened by utilizing natural resources: PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, terming the development of Gilgit-Baltistan a priority of the federal government, said that special attention was being paid to improve infrastructure, communications, energy, education, health, and tourism sectors besides increasing employment opportunities in the region.

The prime minister, in a meeting with the newly-elected members of the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly belonging to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), who called on him here, said that the local economy would be further strengthened by utilizing the natural resources, tourist destinations, and mineral reserves of Gilgit-Baltistan.

Moreover, he said that providing quality education, modern technical training, and dignified employment to the youth was a key priority of the government, enabling them to play a role in national development.

He said that elected representatives served as a direct source of awareness of public expectations, problems, and priorities, and emphasised that, regardless of political affiliations, the sole purpose of leadership must be public service and creating ease in people's lives.

Appreciating the people of Gilgit-Baltistan for practically proving their love, loyalty, and national unity with Pakistan, the prime minister told the lawmakers that the construction of four Daanish Schools in the region was in the final stage, and classes would commence there from next year.

Additionally, he said that the work was underway at a rapid pace on a solar power project of 100 megawatts and assured that the federal government was utilizing all available resources to ensure the timely completion of ongoing development projects in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that an early warning system for climate change and Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) had been installed in Gilgit-Baltistan to provide timely information to the residents and help them cope with adverse situations caused by weather conditions.

He said that effective communication between the federal government and local leadership was indispensable for resolving public issues, and ensuring better governance, and promoting transparency.

Assuring the delegation of considering their suggestions, the prime minister said that the government would work in coordination with them for the welfare of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan.

He also urged the parliamentarians to play a constructive role.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of newly elected members Gilgit Baltistan Assembly belonging to the PML-N meet Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



QUETTA: Vice Chancellor University of Loralai Dr Ehsaan Ullah Kakar presenting a shield to Governor Balochistan Jafar Khan Mandokhel.

Pakistan, Bangladesh vows to combat cybercrime, online fraud

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi, met with Bangladesh's Interior Minister, Salahuddin Ahmed in New York to discuss bilateral cooperation and regional developments.

During the meeting, both ministers agreed to expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest, including training and exchange programmes for police officers.

They also discussed strengthening collaboration to combat cybercrime and online fraud.

The two sides exchanged views on the Iran–US conflict and the current situation in the Middle East.

According to the statement, the Bangladeshi Interior Minister appreciated Pakistan's role in promoting regional and international peace.

Speaking after the meeting, Mohsin Naqvi said Pakistan should make use of new opportunities to further strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation.

All challenges can be effectively addressed through strategic policymaking: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq emphasized that empowering people, particularly the youth, and adopting inclusive, forward-looking policies are essential for transforming demographic challenges into opportunities for sustainable development and national progress.

In his message on the occasion of World Population Day, observed globally on 11 July, the Speaker highlighted this year's theme, "Realizing the hopes and aspirations of young people – today and for the future," and stated that the empowerment of youth through quality education, accessible healthcare, skills development and meaningful employment opportunities is vital for building a prosperous and resilient Pakistan.

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that the observance of this day aims to raise awareness about population-related challenges, highlight the importance of sustainable development, and encourage collective efforts to ensure a better future for all.

He said that Pakistan, being among the world's most populous countries with a significant population growth rate, faces considerable challenges in ensuring adequate provision of education, healthcare, housing and employment opportunities.

Nation stands united with victims of Balochistan terror attacks

PESHAWAR, (APP): The entire nation stands united with the victims of terrorism in Balochistan and remains steadfast in its resolve to eliminate terrorism in all its forms, experts said while lauding the decisions of Provincial of Apex Committee (PAC) chaired by the Prime Minister in Quetta.

The arrival of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Quetta, accompanied by the country's top civil and military leadership following the recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan, was widely viewed as a powerful demonstration of national solidarity with the people of Balochistan.

The important visit underscored the government's unwavering commitment to supporting the victims and their families while intensifying efforts to restore lasting peace in the province.

Chairman International Relations Department at University of Peshawar Professor Dr. Hussain Shaheed Soharwardi said the Prime Minister's visit reflected the state's strong resolve and determination to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Balochistan during this difficult period and eradication of terrorism.

He said that while chairing the PAC meeting in Quetta, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has reaffirmed that the state would continue its counterterrorism operations until the last terrorist was eliminated.

He emphasized that all available national resources would be mobilized to restore sustainable peace and stability across the country.

Dr. Soharwardi also paid tribute to the security forces for their swift and effective response during recent operations in which 54 terrorists were eliminated. He said the professionalism and sacrifices of Pakistan's armed forces had once again demonstrated their unwavering commitment to safeguarding the country's sovereignty and protecting its citizens.

Referring to regional security challenges, he claimed that hostile elements, particularly Pakistan's eastern neighbour, were providing financial and military support to terrorist organizations, while militants were also using Afghan territory to launch attacks against Pakistan.

He termed such nefarious activities unacceptable and called for stronger regional cooperation to prevent cross-border terrorism.

According to Dr. Hussain Soharwardi, Pakistan's adversaries were attempting to undermine the country's growing international standing, diplomatic achievements, and recent strategic successes. However, he expressed confidence that such negative designs would ultimately fail due to the resilience of the Pakistani state and its institutions.

He welcomed the decisions taken during the PAC meeting, particularly the resolve to intensify intelligence-based operations against terrorist groups and utilize every available resource to restore peace across Balochistan and the rest of the country. Defence and political analysts described the Apex Committee's decisions as significant steps toward strengthening Pakistan's counterterrorism strategy and enhancing coordination among civil and military institutions in Balochistan.

Senior defence analyst Brigadier (Retd.) Mahmood Shah said the Prime Minister had conveyed a clear and uncompromising message that the government had adopted a policy of zero tolerance against terrorism and would continue to take decisive action against terrorists and those supporting them.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti talking with the participants of the ongoing sit-in near BA Mall and the families of martyrs.

Families demand accountability in Ziarat martyrs case

QUETTA/ZIARAT (ANN): Protest sit-ins demanding justice for the Ziarat martyrs continue at two locations. One sit-in is being held in front of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Office in Ziarat district, while the second sit-in is taking place in Quetta alongside the bodies of the Ziarat martyrs. The families of the Ziarat martyrs and the leaders of the sit-in committee have stated that both protests will continue until all of their legitimate demands are accepted and justice is provided to the martyrs. They said that the Pashtun belt of South Pashtunkhwa, particularly Ziarat, has the distinction that five years ago, in 2021, the people of Ziarat staged a historic 11-day sit-in alongside the bodies of their martyrs and entrusted the bodies to the entire Pashtun nation.

They added that today, too, the bodies of the Ziarat martyrs are a trust of the Pashtun nation. "From day one, we have maintained the same position: whatever decision the Pashtun nation makes regarding these martyrs will be our decision as well, because we have entrusted these bodies not as our personal responsibility but as a national trust to the entire Pashtun nation."

They further stated, "Our only intention and wish is that these be our last martyrs.

We do not want to see any more Pashtuns become victims of oppression, terrorism, and continuous bloodshed. The continued loss of Pashtun lives and what we describe as genocide has become unbearable."



REBRENICA, BOSNIAAND HERZEGOVINA: More than 6,300 participants in the Peace March arrive at the Srebrenica Memorial Center in Potocari after a three-day, 100-kilometer hike to attend the commemoration marking the 31st anniversary of the 1995 Srebrenica genocide

DPM Dar directs to ensure best Pakistani hospitality, enjoyable stay for OIC Conference delegations

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister (DPM/ FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar appreciated the relevant officials for their hard work in managing the preparations for hosting the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Women, and directed them to ensure enjoyable stay and the best of Pakistani hospitality to the foreign delegations arriving from around the world to attend this important event.

The deputy prime minister chaired the 8th meeting of the High-Level Committee overseeing preparations for the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Women, to be held in Islamabad on 12–13 July 2026, a DPM's Office news release said.

The Committee reviewed the final preparations for the Conference.

The Secretary, Human Rights, gave a detailed briefing on the arrangements for the conference programme, delegate facilitation, protocol, security, logistics, media arrangements, and inter-ministerial coordination, to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the Conference.

Female teachers' harassment cannot be ignored, SC restores 5-year service forfeiture

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Supreme Court has ruled that heads of educational institutions are legally bound to provide a harassment-free working environment for female teachers and must take immediate and effective action on complaints of workplace harassment, warning that failure to do so may render them accountable for administrative negligence.

According to the detailed judgment, a two-member bench comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali allowed the appeals filed by the Punjab government and Shazia Iqbal, setting aside the Punjab Service Tribunal's order that had reduced the penalty of forfeiture of five years' past service to one year. The Court restored the original departmental punishment of forfeiture of five years' past service. The Court observed that a departmental inquiry had established that Shazia Iqbal, Headmistress of the Government Special Education Centre in Faisalabad, failed to take effective action despite receiving complaints that a speech therapist posted at the institution had been harassing female teachers. She was found to have neglected her supervisory and administrative responsibilities. The inquiry also found that she had unlawfully allowed the employee to reside on the institution's premises, causing financial loss to the public exchequer.

The Supreme Court held that the departmental inquiry had been conducted in accordance with the law. Female teachers testified before the inquiry, the accused was given full opportunity to cross-examine the witnesses, and their testimony remained unrebutted. The Court observed that extending undue leniency in such serious misconduct cases would be inconsistent with the interests of justice. The judgment stated that educational institutions are not merely places of learning but are also obligated to provide a safe and dignified environment for female employees and all staff members.

APNS welcomes appointment of Raisa Adil as PIO; hopes for resolution of print media issues

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) welcomed the appointment of Raisa Adil as the new Principal Information Officer (PIO) of the Press Information Department (PID).

In a joint statement, APNS President Senator Sarmad Ali and Secretary General Muhammad Athar Kazi expressed optimism that during her tenure, the newly appointed PIO would play a pivotal role in safeguarding the freedom of the press and addressing the challenges faced by the print media industry.

They expressed confidence that the ideal working relationship and mutual cooperation between the government, PID, and the print media would continue to flourish under her leadership.

Meanwhile, the APNS office-bearers also acknowledged and appreciated the services of the outgoing PIO, Mubashir Hassan, thanking him for the extensive support and cooperation extended to the newspaper industry throughout his tenure.



HOUSTON: Federal Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal held important meetings in Houston with NASA officials and representatives of leading US aerospace companies.

Karim condemns terrorist attacks on police personnel, civilians in Balochistan

QUETTA, (APP): Prime Minister Youth Program Focal (PMYP) Person and senior leader of PML-N Chaudhry Naeem Karim strongly condemned terrorist attacks on police personnel and civilians in Ziarat and Hanna Urak area.

He said that terrorist elements wanted to sabotage peace and stability in Balochistan to fulfill their nefarious design, but the security agencies would foil their every plot.

In a statement issued here, he condemned the martyrdom of police personnel in the terrorist attack on a police post in Mangi Phase-3 and said that the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the sake of peace and their eternal sacrifices could never be forgotten.

He paid tribute to the personnel of the police, FC and other security forces for killing 15 terrorists during the clearance operation of the security forces after the attack. He also condemned the martyrdom of five civilians in a terrorist attack on tribesmen in Hanna Urak, a suburb of Quetta.

He said that the entire nation stands by its brave police and security forces in the war against terrorism and terrorists would not be allowed to succeed in their nefarious objectives under any circumstances.

FCCP withdraws Supreme Court's general orders in Karachi illegal constructions case

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Federal Constitutional Court (FCCP) has withdrawn the Supreme Court's general directions imposing restrictions on land conversion in Karachi and ordering the demolition of illegal constructions, holding that building regulations and their enforcement fall within the jurisdiction of the provincial government, not the courts.

In a 10-page written judgment authored by Justice Aamer Farooq, the court observed that the Constitution and relevant laws require the Sindh Building Control Authority and the Sindh government to take action against illegal constructions.



Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and Senators in a group photo with H.E Dr. Mohammad Bin Abdul Karim Al-Issa, Secretary General of Muslim World League (MWL) at Parliament House in Islamabad.



LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Emir Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman addresses anti-inflation protest rally.

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