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Govt increasingly hints towards imposition of emergency in KP

ISLAMABAD (INP): Reports have emerged that the Federal government has completed all administrative and security preparations to impose emergency or governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, citing political tensions and the province's fragile law-and-order situation.

According to media reports citing sources, administrative groundwork for changes involving deputy commissioners and secretaries has been completed, while lists for new appointments of regional and district police officers have also been prepared. The options under consideration reportedly include initially imposing emergency in 12 sensitive districts of the province.

Sources quoted in reports said the final decision depends on the success or failure of ongoing political talks between government and opposition delegations. Although no formal talks are taking place between the two sides, backchannel and secret contacts remain ongoing. In case these discussions succeed, the decision to impose emergency or governor's rule may be postponed. Meanwhile, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's central leadership has also reportedly become active in this regard. Barrister Gohar and other senior party leaders are reportedly holding a key meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi today, during which the chief minister will be briefed on backchannel messages and an offer received from the federal level. The consultative meeting is expected to produce important and final decisions by the chief minister and PTI leadership regarding the strategy for the long march and possible constitutional measures by the government. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari discussed the country's overall situation on Saturday amid intense friction between the Centre and the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government on the issue of terrorism in the province and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's long march to Islamabad that has led to threats of imposing federal rule.

In a post on X, the Presidency said the two leaders met at the Aiwan-e-Sadr where they "exchanged views on the country's overall political and security situation".

The meeting comprised senior government and PPP leaders, including Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah, Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi, Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, Senator Sherry Rehman and more.



ISLAMABAD: President Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at Prime Minister's House.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari in a meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi and Federal Minister for Interior Senator Mohsin Naqvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Governor vows to expand employment opportunities for youth of Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has said that providing quality education, employment opportunities and skills development to young people remains among the government's top priorities to enable them to contribute effectively to the country's development and prosperity.

He expressed these views while addressing a ceremony organised by the Progressive Climate Foundation in collaboration with the Pakistan Muslim League-N Youth Wing in Quetta. The event was attended by Provincial Minister Mir Asim Kurd Gello, Member of the National Assembly Akhtar Bibi, Member of the Provincial Assembly Zarak Khan Mandokhail, Prime Minister's Youth Programme Balochistan Focal Person Sajjad Raisani, and other political and social figures. Addressing the gathering, Governor Mandokhail said Pakistan had provided its citizens with dignity and opportunities, adding that the government was moving forward in accordance with the vision and mission of former Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif while focusing on public welfare and addressing the problems faced by the people of Balochistan.

He described youth as a nation's most valuable asset and the guarantors of a brighter future, stressing the need to create an enabling environment where young people can develop their skills, receive practical training and realise their full potential. The governor said he had also raised the issue of better educational and employment opportunities for youth at the United Nations Headquarters, expressing hope that ongoing efforts would yield positive results and open new avenues of progress for the young people of Balochistan.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail addressing the participants during a ceremony of PML-N Balochistan Youth Wing

People of KP cannot be kept hostage to politics of one individual: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said successive Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) governments had prioritised political agitation and the release of their incarcerated leader over public welfare, development and security in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the past 13 and a half years.

Addressing a press conference alongside Prime Minister's Coordinator on Information for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Affairs Ikhtiar Wali Khan and Peshawar Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Jalal Khan, he said the province, once known for its natural beauty, peaceful environment and tourist attractions, had been deprived of the development and facilities its people deserved.

Comparing the provincial government's performance with the federal government's initiatives under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Tarar questioned how much time Chief Minister Sohail Afridi had devoted to governance.

He cited the inauguration of an IT park as an example of the federal government's focus on development, saying the facility would support incubation centres, startups and private-sector growth while providing university students with opportunities to acquire technological skills. The project would also contribute to GDP growth and increase Pakistan's IT exports, he added.

The minister said such initiatives required regular supervision, project reviews, and accountability. He also cited the federal government's fuel relief scheme, saying more than 10 million people had benefited from it. Following public and media feedback, the government had removed the minimum fuel-purchase requirement and extended the motorcycle eligibility limit from 15 to 20 years. He added that repeat redemptions were counted separately from the number of beneficiaries.

In contrast, Tarar said, the KP government had failed to demonstrate comparable progress in healthcare, education, road infrastructure, and information technology. He asked the KP government to identify major hospitals, universities, highways, IT parks, skills-development centres, or other large-scale projects established for public benefit.

CTD kills 10 terrorists in Balochistan's Barkhan

QUETTA (INP): At least 10 terrorists belonging to Fitna al-Hindustan were killed during an intelligence-based operation conducted by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in Barkhan district of Balochistan, a CTD spokesperson said on Saturday.

The operation was carried out under Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3 in the Rarasham Valley after the department received credible intelligence about the presence of militants in the area, the spokesperson said.

According to the CTD, a significant quantity of weapons and ammunition was recovered from the terrorists killed during the operation.

Two CTD personnel were also injured during the operation, the spokesperson added.

CPEC most visible economic expression of Pak-China relationship: Ahsan

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan and China share a relationship that rests on mutual trust, respect for each other's core interests and a shared conviction that development and cooperation are foundations for peace and prosperity. Our "all-weather strategic cooperative partnership" occupies a special place not only in the foreign policies of our countries, but also in the hearts of our peoples.

These views were expressed by Federal Minister for Planning and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal in an article published by China Daily here.

He said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is the most visible economic expression of this relationship and an important pioneering project of China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative. Over the past decade, CPEC has translated strategic trust into power plants, transmission lines, highways, ports, jobs and economic connectivity. It has demonstrated that the Pakistan-China friendship is a partnership capable of delivering tangible development.

Having been associated with CPEC since its inception in 2013, my most important lesson is simple: CPEC's strength does not lie in any single project.

It lies in the ability of Pakistan and China to think long term, align their complementary strengths and find practical solutions together in the spirit of iron brotherhood, he added.

SC releases report on judicial reforms

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan has released a comprehensive report titled "Journey Through Reform and Innovation 2026", documenting judicial and institutional reforms undertaken from November 2024 to September 2026.

The report highlights progress in judicial reforms, effective case management, reduction of the backlog, digital transformation, institutional accountability and measures to improve public access to justice.

It outlines progress on the implementation of an 86-point Judicial Reforms Action Plan, supported by a structured monitoring mechanism, specialised working groups and regular review processes to ensure effective implementation of reform initiatives. According to the report, the Supreme Court has recorded a significant increase in case disposals, with particular attention given to the resolution of old and long-pending cases. It also highlights efforts to strengthen data-driven systems for monitoring judicial performance and evaluating institutional progress. The report documents significant advances in expanding the Supreme Court's digital services and modernising judicial procedures. It also covers progress on nationwide judicial reforms undertaken under the National Judicial Policy Making Committee. Key reform initiatives include the timely disposal of priority cases and the establishment of model trial courts. The report also highlights efforts to promote the responsible use of artificial intelligence in the justice system and develop judicial analytics systems.

DC Khuzdar vows to resolve women's complaints promptly

KHUZDAR, (VoM Report): Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razzaq Sasoli has reaffirmed the district administration's commitment to resolving women's complaints promptly and improving their access to essential public services, warning that negligence and unnecessary delays in addressing grievances would not be tolerated.

He made the remarks while chairing Khuzdar's first women-only open kacheri at the District Council Hall, organized on the directives of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti to provide women with a dedicated platform to present their concerns directly to the authorities. The forum attracted a large number of women from different parts of the district, including university and college students, who highlighted a range of civic and administrative issues requiring the attention of government departments.

Govt believes in equal development of entire Balochistan: CM Bugti

SUI, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said development initiatives under the Sui Master Plan are progressing with the aim of improving essential public services and bringing neglected areas into the province's broader development process.

During his visit to Sui, the chief minister held meetings with tribal elders, local notables and residents, who highlighted community concerns and identified pressing development needs in the area.

Bugti said several parts of Balochistan had remained deprived of adequate development opportunities since the establishment of Pakistan. He said the provincial government was directing attention and resources towards underserved areas to address longstanding gaps in public facilities.

Emphasizing the role of education in social progress and economic prosperity, the chief minister said the government was giving particular attention to girls' education.

He stressed the need to expand learning opportunities for girls, enabling them to participate more fully in society and contribute to a better-educated population.

He said the projects being undertaken under the Sui Master Plan were intended to improve basic amenities, address local difficulties and accelerate development in the area.

The chief minister reiterated that the provincial government would continue its efforts to resolve public grievances, strengthen educational facilities and extend development initiatives to remote and underserved communities across Balochistan.



SUI: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti talking to tribal elders during his visit to Sui area.

IT Park milestone for Pakistan's economic progress, says PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif formally inaugurated the newly renamed Daanish IT Park (National Technology Park), hailing the country's first national technology facility as a crucial milestone for Pakistan's rapid economic progress and prosperity.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, the prime minister emphasized that the state-of-the-art facility brings incubation centres, innovation hubs, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), startups, and industry leaders together under one roof.

He expressed strong optimism that the tech park would empower Pakistan's youth and play a pivotal role in steering the nation toward becoming a developed country.

He said that once the technology park becomes fully operational, similar facilities would be established across the country and in all provinces, helping industry, agriculture, mining and minerals, and other key sectors grow.

The prime minister said the facility would host AI experts and act as a catalyst to promote different skills in the IT sector.

He said the foundation of this project was laid down during 2017-18 but what happened after it was a part of history.

He also commended the hard work and tireless efforts of the Minister of IT and her team and relevant authorities, which transformed 'a sick project into a sound and healthy project'.

He further informed that he had directed the ministry to conduct transparent bidding, inviting renowned IT companies in the country and abroad to make the facility fully functional and keep it growing under internationally recognised SOPs without any interference from the government.

The prime minister said that Islamabad IT Park, would now onwards be called 'Daanish IT Park', highlighting the contributions made by Daanish schools in the education sector by providing quality education to talented students with poor backgrounds, and mentioned that due to their talents, those students had excelled in different fields.

He said moreover, Daanish University in Islamabad was also being established.

The ceremony was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, federal cabinet members.



NEW YORK: Thousands of people gathered at Foley Square to demand the withdrawal of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from the city

THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

Monday October 12, 2026

Proxy warfare

Much has been written in recent years about proxy wars. At its core, a proxy war is when one state – or a group of states – goes after its rival indirectly. Instead of fighting itself, it backs another actor that does the actual fighting. That support can come in many forms: money, weapons, training, intelligence, logistics or political backing. The proxy is often a non-state armed group, a militia or a rebel movement. What makes it a proxy war is that the main power tries to influence or fight its rival without going to war directly.

Iran extended proxy warfare further than most by building and backing a growing network of armed partners across the region to confront its rivals indirectly. Hezbollah is probably the clearest example: it grew into both a powerful military force in Lebanon and a political player, all the while acting as a key piece of Iran's regional strategy. Iran has done the same with armed groups in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

Afghanistan, of course, was also supported by the U.S. during its war with the Soviet Union. Proxy warfare subsequently entered a new phase as Iran effectively supported and strengthened various groups in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen.

But as the world moves toward what some describe as a World War III, proxy warfare has begun to change form. Ukraine, in a sense, is fighting Russia as a willing proxy of the Western states. The U.S. and its Western allies stand firmly behind this proxy, and Ukraine receives it consciously to defend its country against an aggressor, as Russia attacked in the first place.

The irony is that Iran, which had long fought Israel and the U.S. through its own network of proxies and used Hezbollah and other forces to keep the Syrian regime continuing, now finds itself serving as a proxy for the Eastern camp. This striking change shows how proxy warfare has expanded in scale, to the point where a former proxy boss, like Iran, is now dragged into the proxy roles of larger powers.

The U.S. is not entering a direct war of its own with Russia. Washington and Moscow are not fighting each other directly. Yet the U.S. and its allies are engaged in a broader confrontation with Russia in Ukraine.

Likewise, Russia is not fighting the U.S. directly. But as Iran confronts the U.S. and Israel, Russia stand behind Tehran as powerful partner. North Korea might also be part of this chain of alliances.

This is one way of reading the growing proximity of a World War III.

Whereas smaller militant groups once represented the proxies of great powers, today countries with substantial military and geopolitical weight, such as Ukraine and Iran, increasingly take that role.

While the entire West stands behind the Ukrainian front, the East stands behind Iran.

Looking at this course, we can say that before a major global war, proxy warfare itself has moved up a class.

Listening before legislating

AYESHA IRSHAD MIAN

Every World Mental Health Day arrives with a theme, a hashtag, and a flurry of panels. This year's call to centre the voices of people with lived experience deserves more than a single day. It requires an honest accounting of whose voices have shaped our mental health agenda, and whose have been absent from it.

In clinical practice, one learns that people rarely describe their distress in the language of diagnosis. Recent events shape, and at times fortify, age-old dogmas. A young woman laments that recent allegations of sexual assault on a university campus have reinforced the view for her parents that places of learning are not safe for girls and that she must rethink her dreams.

A teenage boy says he has not cried since he was nine, because he learned early what crying would cost him. A man in his 40s says he cannot tell his family he has stopped sleeping, because the word 'depression' would be heard as weakness, or worse, as madness. None of them is describing a disorder alone. Each is describing a world, and a mind adapting to it.

Mental health does not reside only within individuals. It is shaped by homes, classrooms, workplaces, streets, and the narratives a society sustains about who may be safe, who may be vulnerable, and who may speak. Pakistan ranks near the bottom of global gender parity indices; millions of girls remain out of school. When women fear pursuing an education, or when their aspirations are quietly renegotiated, the consequences extend well beyond the economic.

They appear as hopelessness, chronic anxiety, and a constriction of possibility. Boys raised to equate emotion with weakness and dominance with worth bear a different burden: silence, aggression turned inward or outward, and little vocabulary for distress. Patriarchy shapes the psychological lives of every gender.

Stigma compounds this. Mental illness is still widely seen as a moral failing, a spiritual affliction, a source of family shame. Public awareness of what depression, anxiety, psychosis, or trauma actually involves — and that they are treatable — is limited. People wait for years before seeking care, often turning first to faith healers, informal practitioners, or no one at all. Many of us carry a sense of heaviness at how slowly some things change. It is worth naming that feeling rather than suppressing it. Despair can be worked through collectively.

On this World Mental Health Day and beyond, people with lived experience must be heard.

Against this backdrop, the launch of the national mental health policy on Oct 1 was a necessary step. A policy places mental health on the public agenda, gives advocates a reference point, and offers the system a direction. The political will behind it must be acknowledged. A launch, however, is a moment, whereas implementation is the work of a decade. Pakistan has over 250 million people.

By most estimates, it has roughly 500 psychiatrists and a comparable number of psychologists, with no licensing body to regulate the practice of psychology, and, therefore, no uniform standard of training, scope, or accountability. The scarcity is sharper still in specialist areas. There are fewer than 10 child and adolescent psychiatrists in the country, and child psychologists are almost non-existent. Mental health has been under-resourced for decades.

This is not a criticism of any individual or institution. It is the arithmetic of a neglected field, with far-reaching consequences. Where specialists are scarce, implementation tends to fall on others: dedicated NGOs, short-course trainees, and well-intentioned professionals who have not had the opportunity to work with many patients over many years, often without regular supervision.

Nuanced, effective mental healthcare rests on the clinical judgement to distinguish grief from depression, trauma from defiance, and a cry for help from a pattern of behaviour that signals something more. That judgement is built through years of practice, mentorship, error corrected under guidance, and slow accumulation of patients' stories. Without it, even well-designed programmes can overlook those most in need.

The need for distinction is greater still given the context. Pakistan contends with floods and heatwaves, economic precarity, displacement, gender-based violence, and the effects of regional conflict — among the principal determinants of mental health.

Implementation in such conditions requires people who understand both the science and the street.

As we welcome the policy, and look forward to its implementation, some principles deserve consideration.

Implementation is best guided by practitioners with long front-line clinical and research experience in the country, supported by public health and systems expertise. Second, a rigorous, costed strategic plan is essential. The design must specify which services will be delivered in which districts, by whom, under whose supervision, and measured against what indicators. Aspiration must be translated into sequence and budget. Third, this must be directed by a coalition of experts. Psychiatrists, psychologists, mental health researchers, paediatricians, educators, social workers, legal experts, and people with lived experience should work at one table rather than in silos. Fourth, funding must match the stated priority.

Whether through government allocation or philanthropy, sustained investment in training, supervision, public awareness, and a licensing framework for psychologists is what converts intention into infrastructure. Expanding the specialist pipeline, from child and adolescent services to adult care, would be transformative.

International expertise is valuable, and Pakistan will continue to benefit from shared learning.

Yet the durability of any approach depends on its fit with local realities: the district hospital, the crowded clinic, the family weighing in insistent on joint management and care, the need for task shifting, etc. Those who practise here, and who remain once project cycles end, understand that terrain best. If this year's theme is to be taken seriously, clinicians and communities on the ground belong at the centre of this work and at the helm of it, not at its margins.

Above all, people with lived experience must be heard. The woman who wants to study, the boy who wants permission to feel, and the adult who has suffered silently for years are telling us what they need: safety, dignity, and to be believed. No policy will succeed if it is written about them rather than with them.

On this World Mental Health Day, we might resolve to build a system as thoughtful as the people it is meant to serve. The policy is a promise. Keeping it will require patience, expertise, and humility.

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Before she becomes a bride, let her be a girl

MEHAK ANWAR

On the International Day of the Girl, we are reminded of a simple but often overlooked truth: girls' rights cannot be separated from their right to childhood. This year's theme, "End Child Marriage. Invest in Girls' Rights", asks us to look beyond the progress we celebrate and confront the gaps that still shape millions of girls' lives. It ends with leaving school, being married too young or becoming a mother before the age of 18. We often tell girls they can become whatever they aspire to be, but what about those who are never given the space to aspire at all? Before we ask what a girl can become, we must first ask whether she has been given the freedom to imagine what she could be. According to UNICEF, around 650 million girls globally are living with the consequences of being married before the age of 18, while Pakistan is home to an estimated 19 million child brides. Child marriage remains one of the most painful manifestations of inequality. In parts of rural and tribal Pakistan, marriage is still treated as the expected destination for a girl as though she is simply born to become someone's wife. Poverty, limited access to education, concerns about girls' safety, social pressure and the belief that investing in a son's future matters more than investing in a daughter's can all push families towards early marriage.

It is a question of rights. When a girl is married before she is ready, society does not change her marital status; it changes the course of her childhood. Her right to education, health, protection, participation and economic opportunity becomes harder to exercise when adulthood is imposed on her.

Education is often one of the first rights a girl is asked to give up. When a household struggles financially, families may compromise on a daughter's education before a son. A girl learns early that her dreams can be treated as an expense while her brother's future is seen as an investment. Social pressures can then push her into early marriage, cutting short her education and limiting opportunities to earn an income. Child marriage can therefore close several doors at once, making it harder for her to escape the very poverty once given as the reason for marrying her off.

However, it can expose serious health risks for adolescent mothers due to early pregnancy. UNICEF-PK data shows that 18.3% of women aged 20–24 were married before turning 18, while 3.6% were married before 15. WHO reports that girls under 16 face four times the risk of maternal death compared with women over 20. Child marriage is therefore not only a social and educational issue, but also a public health concern affecting girls and the next generation.

These consequences also connect to the wider gender gap. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2026, Pakistan ranks 143rd out of 145 economies, with 59.5% of its overall gender gap closed. While Pakistan climbed five places from 148th in 2025, it remains among the world's three lowest-ranked countries. Notably, educational parity has reached 91.7%, while economic participation remains at only 36.4%. The contrast is clear: getting girls into education is one part of closing the gender gap, ensuring that education translates into economic independence and decision-making power remains a much larger challenge.

Investing in girls' rights means ensuring access to healthcare, safeguarding their rights and giving them the opportunities to earn, participate and make their own decisions. When we invest in a girl, we are not simply preparing her for a better future, we are giving her the tools to build one on her own terms.

Ending child marriage begins with changing what we have learned to accept as normal for girls. A girl should not have to prove that her education is worth investing in, or that her dreams deserve the same space as her brother's. The goal is not simply to delay marriage, but to give every girl the time, freedom and choice to decide who she wants to become.

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Securing every medicine

DR ZEESHAN KHAN

Pakistan's pharmaceutical sector is entering an important phase in its journey towards greater transparency, accountability and patient safety. The implementation of a pharmaceutical Track and Trace system, including 2-D Data Matrix barcodes and serialisation, is more than a technological upgrade. In my view, it represents a fundamental shift in how medicines can be identified, monitored and traced from the manufacturing floor to the patient.

I recently attended PPMA North training conducted in collaboration with the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) on the Online Pharmaceutical Track and Trace System. The discussions demonstrated that successful implementation requires much more than installing a barcode printer on a packaging line.

It demands coordination among Quality Assurance, Production, Engineering, IT, Regulatory Affairs, Warehousing and Distribution. The challenge is as much organisational as it is technical.

At the heart of the system is serialisation, which assigns a unique identity to individual saleable packs. Traditionally, medicines have been identified through product names, batch numbers and expiry dates. With serialisation, two packs from the same batch can carry different serial numbers. The GTIN identifies the product, while the serial number identifies the individual pack. Together with batch and expiry information, these elements create a more detailed digital identity.

The GS1 Data Matrix, a compact two-dimensional barcode, can carry this information. However, barcode implementation must be treated as a controlled manufacturing process, not merely a printing activity. A serialised packaging line may combine printers, cameras, verification software and automatic rejection mechanisms to ensure that each code is accurate, readable and associated with the correct product and batch. Packs failing verification must be rejected and accounted for.

This creates new responsibilities for Quality Assurance. In a batch of 100,000 packs, several hundred codes might be rejected. The manufacturer must reconcile the codes generated, printed, rejected, reworked, destroyed and ultimately accepted. Electronic records must correspond with physical production records. The system must explain discrepancies rather than simply record them. Data integrity is therefore essential. User access, record changes and system activities require controls, including audit trails and principles associated with 21 CFR Part 11 where applicable.

The objective is not another complicated database but a reliable system in which information is accurate, attributable, secure and retrievable. Aggregation adds another dimension: individual serialised packs can be linked to cartons and cartons to pallets. These relationships could help companies trace products during distribution and recalls without relying entirely on manual records. EPCIS, or Electronic Product Code Information Services, extends identification into event-based traceability, recording what happened to a product, when, where and during which business process.

Yet technology alone cannot guarantee success. The industry needs trained personnel, validated computerised systems, reliable infrastructure, effective SOPs and strong change control. Packaging equipment requires qualification and maintenance; deviations require investigation and recurrent problems effective corrective and preventive action. Regulatory Affairs must maintain accurate product information, Production must execute serialisation correctly, and IT must ensure security, backups and system availability. Warehouses and distributors also have responsibilities beyond the manufacturing site.

For QA, reconciliation may be the greatest challenge. Every physical movement should have an appropriate electronic counterpart, and important electronic events must be explainable through controlled records. There is also a wider public-health imperative. Counterfeit and falsified medicines can harm patients, while stronger traceability gives regulators and legitimate manufacturers tools to investigate suspicious products and strengthen oversight of the supply chain.

This matters when medicines are recalled.

Implementation must nevertheless remain practical and proportionate. Smaller manufacturers face substantial costs for printers, cameras, software, servers, integration and training. Clear regulatory guidance, standardised technical requirements and adequate implementation support are essential. Success should be measured not by the number of barcodes printed, but by how reliably medicines can be connected to their verified identities and movements through the legitimate supply chain.

Pakistan's pharmaceutical industry has an opportunity to turn serialisation from a regulatory obligation into a genuine quality-management tool. The humble 2-D barcode can become a digital link between manufacturer, regulator, distributor, pharmacist and patient.

The future of pharmaceutical quality depends not only on what medicine is made, but on whether its origin, batch, individual identity and movements can be trusted.

That is the real promise of Track and Trace: a more transparent, accountable healthcare system.

The writer is a pharmacist, LUMS alum, and a financial literacy expert. He tweets at: @DrZeeshanKhanA1

Trump takes Clinton lawsuit to Supreme Court after $1 mln sanctions

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): US President Donald Trump asked the U.S. Supreme Court on Friday to revive his dismissed lawsuit accusing his 2016 Democratic rival Hillary Clinton, former FBI Director James Comey and others of conspiring to undermine his campaign by linking it to Russia.

Trump filed the appeal after a federal judge dismissed the lawsuit and ordered him and one of his lawyers to pay nearly $1 million in sanctions for bringing what the court described as a "frivolous" case. A federal appeals court later upheld both the dismissal and the sanctions.

Trump filed the lawsuit in 2022, after leaving office following his 2020 election defeat. The lengthy complaint, filed in federal court in Florida, named Clinton, Comey, former British intelligence officer Christopher Steele, the Democratic National Committee and numerous other defendants. Trump, who has repeatedly pursued legal action against political opponents, alleged that Clinton and her allies conspired before the 2016 election to discredit him by promoting what he called a "false narrative" that his campaign had colluded with Russia.

The lawsuit included claims of racketeering and conspiracy to commit injurious falsehood, among other allegations. Trump defeated Clinton in the 2016 election despite losing the national popular vote. He served his first term as president from 2017 to 2021.

U.S. government officials have accused Russia of interfering in the 2016 election. An investigation led by former FBI Director Robert Mueller documented extensive contacts between the Trump campaign and Russian operatives who sought to influence the election in Trump's favor. Trump has dismissed allegations of Russian interference as a "hoax."

Since losing to Democrat Joe Biden in 2020, Trump has repeatedly made false claims of widespread voting fraud in that election. He regained the presidency by defeating Democrat Kamala Harris in 2024 and has continued to make those claims. U.S. District Judge Donald Middlebrooks dismissed Trump's lawsuit against Clinton, citing numerous deficiencies, including that Trump had waited too long to bring some of his claims. The judge likened the lawsuit to a "two-hundred-page political manifesto outlining his grievances against those that have opposed him." Middlebrooks later ordered Trump and his lead attorney in the case, Alina Habba, to pay nearly $1 million in fees and costs. He imposed the sanctions for bringing a lawsuit that he said was intended "to dishonestly advance a political narrative." The judge also criticized Trump and his lawyers for a "continuing pattern of misuse of the courts."



US President Donald Trump departs the White House by helicopter with former heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson as part of his midterm election campaign activities, in Washington.



Palestinian deceased bodies who lost their lives after an Israeli airstrikes are brought to Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, Palestine

Trump says US may join Saudi strikes against Houthis in Yemen

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): US President Donald Trump said Saturday that Washington may join Saudi strikes against the Houthis in Yemen following an attack on an airport in Riyadh.

Asked by reporters whether he had decided to take part in the strikes, Trump said: "We may. We're going to look at it. We just found out about the recent attack. We will make a decision. We move very quickly." His remarks came after King Khalid International Airport in the Saudi capital temporarily suspended operations Saturday following an attack that left several people injured, according to the country's civil aviation authority. The General Authority of Civil Aviation said in a statement that the airport was attacked Saturday afternoon, adding that authorities were still determining the number of people injured. The US and UK embassies in Saudi Arabia also urged their citizens Saturday to avoid the airport following attacks.

Magnitude 7.6 earthquake rocks Panama, tremors reach Colombia

PANAMA CITY, (Agencies): A magnitude 7.6 earthquake jolted Panama on Friday morning, forcing evacuations as buildings swayed in the capital and tremors spread across the border into neighboring Colombia.

The quake was centered about 10 kilometers (6 miles) southwest of the remote community of Pitaloza Arriba, in the central province of Herrera, the U.S. Geological Survey said. It struck at a depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles).

Visibly shaken residents of Panama City gathered outside as they waited for news of the quake's impact on Friday.

"We felt it very strongly. It knocked things over in the kitchen, but we're okay, though we're very scared," Rosendo Domínguez, 60, who is from Herrera province, where the earthquake struck, told The Associated Press by phone. "Everyone is outside, scared."

Aftershocks continued to shake the streets on Friday shortly after the quake. The National Weather Service issued a tsunami warning Friday for the coasts of Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Guatemala.

Panamanian President José Raúl Mulino called for calm on Friday, writing on X: "What happened should not be used to cause alarm or disorder."

Omar Smith of the National Civil Protection Service said on the Telemetro Reporta news channel that damage was concentrated in the central provinces of Veraguas, Herrera and Los Santos. He said there were no reports of damage in the capital, which is known for its hundreds of skyscrapers.

Video aired by local news outlets showed a Catholic cathedral collapsing and part of a hotel's facade falling onto a car in the city of Penonomé, in the central province of Coclé. No casualties were immediately reported.

Panama lies along the "Ring of Fire," a 40,000-kilometer (25,000-mile) arc of volcanoes and fault lines around the Pacific Basin, where most of the world's earthquakes occur.

Panama's Civil Protection said it was investigating possible damage in regions near the epicenter.

US sanctions on ICC spark global backlash, EU calls for action

BRUSSELS, (Agencies): The U.S. faced mounting international criticism Friday over its sweeping sanctions against the International Criminal Court (ICC), as European governments, Canada and Japan rallied behind the tribunal and warned that Washington's move threatened international justice and judicial independence.

In a joint statement, the foreign ministers of Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands and the U.K., alongside their counterparts from Canada and Japan, expressed strong opposition to the sanctions, warning of serious consequences for the court's operations and personnel. "We, the undersigned States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), reaffirm our continued and unwavering support for the independence, impartiality, and integrity of the ICC," the ministers said.

They cautioned that the restrictions, if implemented, would significantly affect the tribunal's work, its employees and their families, while welcoming preparations aimed at maintaining its operations.

The eight countries pledged to maintain dialogue with nations outside the Rome Statute, the treaty establishing the ICC, ahead of the Assembly of States Parties in December.

"We will continue to work together to support the Court's vital work, uphold the rules-based international system, and advance accountability," they said.

The ICC itself denounced the measures as an attempt to obstruct justice and intimidate those cooperating with the tribunal.

The sanctions represent "an assault on the rule of law and on the very foundations of the international legal order," the court said, warning that they undermine the principle that no individual is above the law.

The tribunal vowed to continue its work despite the restrictions but urged its member states to defend its independence.

"The Court, for its part, will not be deterred," it said, adding that its future also depended on the governments that established it.

The European Commission similarly criticized Washington's decision and pledged to consider measures to protect the tribunal and European businesses affected by the sanctions.

"The EU stands ready to take any necessary measures to enable the Court to carry out its work," the commission said, referring to investigations and prosecutions involving war crimes and crimes against humanity. Dutch Foreign Minister Tom Berendsen described the sanctions as deeply regrettable but emphasized that a six-month period before their implementation would allow time for negotiations.

"We will stand firm in defence of the Court," he said, adding that service providers could continue working with the tribunal during the transition period.

Belgian Foreign Minister Maxime Prevot called for more decisive European action, urging the EU to activate its Blocking Statute to shield the court from the effects of U.S. sanctions.

"Europe must act," Prevot said, announcing plans to raise the issue with EU foreign ministers and at the upcoming European Council meeting. German Justice Minister Stefanie Hubig also condemned the decision, highlighting Washington's historic role in establishing international criminal accountability following World War II.



People evacuated from a building gather in a square after a severe earthquake hit the country in Panama City.



People attend a pro-Palestine protest demanding to halt arms sales and impose sanctions to Israel, in London, United Kingdom

Yemeni army says over 1,150 Houthi fighters killed in 1,900 strikes

SANAA, (Agencies): The Yemeni army claimed Saturday that it killed more than 1,150 Houthi fighters in over 1,900 strikes across several fronts in the past 24 hours.

Staff Col. Majid Abdullah al-Nuzaili, spokesman for the Yemeni Armed Forces, said on US social media company X that the military carried out the strikes under Operation Dawn of Yemen across the eastern, western and southwestern fronts.

He said the strikes targeted weapons and ammunition depots, fortifications, military camps and positions, strategic high ground, reinforcements, assembly areas, artillery positions, transport and supply vehicles, and "high-value" military targets deep inside Houthi-held territory.

Citing preliminary battlefield assessments, Nuzaili claimed the operations "neutralized more than 1,150 militants," referring to Houthi fighters.

He said the strikes also destroyed or disabled more than 180 combat, transport and supply vehicles and other military assets.

The operations reduced the Houthis' ability to maneuver, provide support and sustain combat operations, he claimed.

Nuzaili said government ground forces continued to advance, retaking positions, seizing additional strategic high ground and consolidating gains made during the offensive. The Houthis have not commented on the army's statement. On Monday, Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council Chairman Rashad al-Alimi announced the launch of Operation Dawn of Yemen. Alimi said the operation aimed to retake the capital Sanaa, restore state institutions and end Houthi control.

Indonesia's wildfires endanger orangutans, scorch forests

JAKARTA, (Agencies): Wildfires raging across parts of Indonesia's Borneo island are threatening endangered orangutans, forcing rescuers to evacuate animals found injured, stranded or struggling to survive amid thick smoke and scorched forests.

Among dozens of orangutans rescued from fires across Sumatra and Borneo in recent months was a female Bornean orangutan known as Novita. Rescuers found her clinging to a nearly leafless tree as dense smoke engulfed the charred landscape of the Katune forest in Central Kalimantan province, said Jamartin Sihite, chairman of the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation.

"The palms of her hands and the soles of her feet suffered burns that were likely sustained when Novita crossed a burned area while trying to reach a tree," Sihite told The Associated Press in an interview. He said Novita, estimated to be 3 to 4 years old, was tranquilized, given oxygen and intravenous fluids, and taken to the rehabilitation center in Nyaru Menteng.

Once her burns have healed, Novita will be evaluated to determine whether she can climb and survive in her natural environment, Sihite said.

"We have previously released orangutans missing several fingers, and they were still able to survive in the forest, so we remain hopeful that Novita can eventually return to the wild." Forest and land fires in Indonesia have worsened this year as El Niño intensifies a prolonged dry season, affecting not only the Indonesian part of Borneo but also some regions of Sumatra.

Russian strikes kill 8 in Ukraine as Trump's diesel deal backfires

KYIV, (Agencies): Russian strikes killed at least eight people, including three children, in Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia region on Saturday, as President Donald Trump's announcement of a deal to import Russian diesel fuel drew sharp criticism from Kyiv over concerns that the shipments would help finance Moscow's war.

At least 16 people were wounded when Russian aerial bombs struck residential buildings in the southeastern region, Ivan Fedorov, co-chair of the regional defense council, said.

The attack came amid an intensifying Russian bombardment that has killed more than 55 people across Ukraine over the past four days, according to Ukrainian officials.

The two countries remain largely deadlocked along the front line more than 4.5 years after Russia launched its full-scale invasion, while their forces continue to wage a long-range aerial war. The latest casualties underscored the mounting pressure on Ukraine as it struggles to defend its territory against increasingly deadly Russian attacks.

They also came a day after Trump announced an agreement with Russian President Vladimir Putin to supply diesel to the United States and global markets, marking a significant shift in Washington's approach to Moscow as fuel prices rise ahead of the U.S. midterm elections on Nov. 3.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy condemned the deal, warning that allowing Russia to expand its petroleum exports would provide Moscow with additional revenue to sustain its military campaign. "Allowing Russia to sell petroleum products is an investment in the war, which must be ended, not prolonged," Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram on Friday.

Germany reaffirms Russia sanctions after Trump-Putin diesel supply agreement

BERLIN, (Agencies): Germany reaffirmed its commitment to sanctions against Russia on Saturday following an agreement between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin on diesel supplies, according to German media.

Government spokesperson Stefan Kornelius said in Berlin that Russian diesel would not be supplied to Germany despite the Trump-Putin agreement, German daily Die Welt reported.

"The German government stands by its sanctions decisions against Russia and is working with its European partners on further sanctions," Kornelius said.

He stressed that Germany's support for Ukraine "remains unbroken."

"The German government has taken note of the US decision regarding Russian diesel deliveries," Kornelius added.

A spokesperson for German Economy Minister Katherina Reiche also said in Berlin that Germany "fully supports" the sanctions packages.

"Our supply is diversified; we are independent of Russian oil," the spokesperson said.

Trump-Putin diesel agreement

Trump and Putin spoke by phone Friday, with the US president describing their conversation as a "highly successful discussion."

India detains 'Cockroach' leaders amid voter list protests

NEW DELHI, (Agencies): Indian authorities mounted a sweeping security crackdown across New Delhi, detaining thousands of protesters as the country's youth-led "Cockroach" movement sought to escalate a nationwide campaign against a contentious revision of voter lists.



The dispute has fueled anger at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government and election authorities. Police intercepted demonstrators before they could reach Jantar Mantar, the designated protest site in the heart of the capital. Officers chased away some protesters and detained many others, with several dragged away and bundled into police vehicles before being taken to temporary detention centers. Several leaders of the "Cockroach" movement were also detained before reaching the venue, severely disrupting the planned demonstration before it could begin. The security operation extended well beyond the protest site, with police setting up checkpoints on roads leading into the capital.



A 'Stop violence day of action' rally takes place in Foley Square, Manhattan, in the wake of Cornell University rape accusations in New York City

Pakistan's future greater than interests of political parties: Ahsan Iqbal

LAHORE, (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has stressed that political stability, national unity and continuity of policies are essential for Pakistan's development, warning that politics of confrontation and disorder ultimately thrusts the heaviest burden on ordinary citizens.

Addressing the launch of Hafiz Bakhtiar Ahmad's book "Shah Jahan's Royal City of Lahore," he said political differences were a democratic right, but violence, hatred and destruction of property weakened democracy and undermined national progress.

He said the closure of shops, loss of daily wages, postponement of examinations and difficulties faced by patients in reaching hospitals reflected how political confrontations directly affected ordinary households.

Ahsan Iqbal said the government and political leadership must keep the doors of dialogue open, listen to public concerns, strengthen constitutional processes and build public trust through their conduct. Sustainable stability, he added, could be achieved through justice, the rule of law, accountability and confidence in institutions.

He emphasised that Pakistan's future was greater than the interests of political parties and individuals, urging political leaders to compete democratically while maintaining continuity in pursuing national priorities, including education, economic growth, national security and development.

Drawing lessons from Mughal history, the minister said internal conflicts, power struggles, administrative weaknesses and failure to respond to changing circumstances could undermine even powerful states. When personal interests prevailed over collective welfare and national energies were consumed by confrontation instead of construction, he added, the foundations of progress became weak.

He said political uncertainty discouraged investment, reduced employment opportunities, harmed education and diverted national resources from development towards crisis management.

Highlighting Lahore's historical and cultural significance, Ahsan Iqbal said the city represented not only architectural grandeur but also the cultural consciousness, creativity and historical journey of its people. Its streets, gardens, mosques and historic gates reflected a civilisation shaped by knowledge, hard work and aesthetic sensibilities.

Congratulating the author, he said the book transformed his love for Lahore into research and writing, helping readers understand the cultural and historical significance of the city's architectural heritage.

The minister said Mughal-era architecture reflected a remarkable blend of local craftsmanship, Central Asian and Iranian influences, and the artistic traditions of the subcontinent.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chairing a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of National and International endocrinology and diabetes specialists called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

CM Bugti vows to eradicate terrorism from Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Saturday expressed satisfaction over a successful operation conducted by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in Barkhan against terrorists. In a statement, the chief minister termed the CTD action against terrorists associated with Fitna-ul-Hindustan as commendable and said the operation reflected the determination of law enforcement agencies to eliminate terrorism from the province. Mir Sarfraz Bugti said the performance of the CTD and security forces in the fight against terrorism was praiseworthy, adding that their professional capabilities and continued efforts were playing a vital role in maintaining peace and stability in Balochistan.

He said the resolve of security forces, police and the CTD to eradicate terrorism remained unwavering and that all available resources were being utilised to ensure lasting peace and law and order across the province.

PM for promotion of healthy lifestyles among young people

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Saturday directed the formulation of a comprehensive and effective strategy to prevent diabetes in Pakistan. The prime minister said a clear policy and actionable planning, aligned with national priorities, were essential to preventing diabetes, directing the relevant institutions to develop a coordinated strategy focusing on research, public awareness and preventive measures.

The prime minister issued the directives during a meeting with a delegation of international and national medical experts specialising in endocrinology and diabetes treatment.

The delegation of medical experts is visiting Pakistan to participate in an endocrinology seminar.

The delegation comprised medical experts from various countries and was led by President of the International Society of Endocrinology Dr. Syed Abbas Raza. The prime minister further said that along with treatment, special attention to disease prevention is essential to address the growing health challenge posed by diabetes. He asked the relevant authorities to take effective measures to promote healthy lifestyles among young people, particularly students in colleges and universities.

Ministers Ahad Khan Cheema and Syed Mustafa Kamal, Minister of State for Health Dr. Malik Mukhtar Bharath, and senior officials of the relevant institutions also attended the meeting.

Student allegedly dies by suicide after losing millions in US university admission scam

ISLAMABAD, (Agencies): A student of the International Islamic University Islamabad, Laiba Ijaz, allegedly died by suicide after finding out that the documents provided by an agent for admission to a US university were fake, police said on Saturday.

The victim's body was reportedly found hanging by the roadside in Islamabad's G-10 sector, in the jurisdiction of Ramna police station.

According to police, the victim was distressed after discovering that the documents provided by the agent were fraudulent.

Laiba's family revealed that she had completed her BS degree from the International Islamic University with a gold medal and wanted to pursue further studies abroad.

The family further said that an immigration consultant had demanded Rs7 million to secure her admission to a US university.

Laiba's father, who lived with his family in a rented flat and sold milk on a motorcycle, sold his plot and paid Rs2.1 million in cash to the agent, they added.

The family said Laiba's mother's jewellery was also deposited with a bank to arrange the remaining amount.

They said when Laiba had the admission documents checked, she discovered that all of them were fake.

She sent a final message to her maternal uncle, saying that: "Do not tell my father about the fraud committed against me. He will die."

Police have expanded the scope of their investigation and are examining the case from different angles.

They said they had yet to receive Laiba's post-mortem report, adding that the actual cause of death would be determined after the report was received.

PM Shehbaz takes notice

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has taken notice of the alleged suicide of Laiba, describing the incident as extremely tragic, the PM's Office said. The premier directed the Islamabad inspector general of police and chief commissioner to immediately arrest the suspect accused of defrauding the student.

He said the suspect would be given exemplary punishment in accordance with the law.

Interior ministry orders FIA action

Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry said the interior ministry took notice of the incident and directed the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to take immediate action.

He said the student was defrauded and authorities ordered action against those responsible.

The FIA director general was working on the case, while the FIA director had also met the victim's parents, he added. The minister said those involved in the incident would be brought to justice.

FIA begins probe

The probe agency has launched an initial inquiry into the alleged suicide of Laiba, FIA Director Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari said. Describing the matter as serious, Bukhari said a case would be registered after the inquiry. He said the suspect allegedly defrauded Laiba of Rs7.2 million on the pretext of securing her admission to a university abroad and also took Rs500,000 from her brother on the promise of arranging a job.



SUI: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti listening the problems of the people during visit to his native area.

CPEC road projects in Balochistan receive Rs 54.9 billion in funding

ISLAMABAD (APP): Four ongoing road projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Balochistan's western zone have recorded Rs54.9 billion in releases and expenditure against a combined allocation of Rs83.2 billion.

According to official documents available with Wealth Pakistan, the projects, listed under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for the period from 2020-21 to 2026-27, cover a combined road length of 718 kilometres.

They include the 146-kilometre Hoshab-Awaran section of the M-8, the 168-kilometre Awaran-Naal section of the M-8, the 106-kilometre Basima-Khuzdar section of the N-30 and the 298-kilometre Zhob-Kuchlak section of the N-50. According to the document, the Hoshab-Awaran section has an allocation of Rs18.30 billion, against which Rs9.75 billion has been recorded under releases/expenditure. The Awaran-Naal section has received an allocation of Rs27.28 billion, with Rs20.45 billion shown under releases/expenditure. For the Basima-Khuzdar N-30 project, Rs12.97 billion has been recorded against an allocation of Rs13.75 billion. The Zhob-Kuchlak N-50 project has an allocation of Rs23.85 billion, while releases/expenditure stand at Rs11.707 billion.

An analysis of the official figures shows that the combined Rs54.9 billion in releases/expenditure represents approximately 66% of the total Rs83.2 billion allocation. Among the four projects, the Basima-Khuzdar section has the highest ratio of releases/expenditure to allocation, at approximately 94%, followed by Awaran-Naal at around 75%. The corresponding ratios are approximately 53% for Hoshab-Awaran and 49% for Zhob-Kuchlak. The figures also show a difference of approximately Rs28.3 billion between the combined allocations and the amounts recorded under releases/expenditure.



QUETTA: Focal Person Prime Minister Youth Program Mir Sajjjad Raisani presenting shield to Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail during a ceremony of PML-N Youth Wing Balochistan.

Muqam launches 'Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bachao Tehreek'

Ikhtiar Wali accuses KP govt of poor governance, neglecting public services

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON, Engineer Amir Muqam, on Saturday formally launched the 'Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bachao Tehreek' at a large public rally in Peshawar, saying the province's people wanted peace, an end to terrorism and development.

Addressing the rally, Amir Muqam who is also President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said the province had been paralyzed for two and a half months due to political marches and protests.

He said thousands of people attended the rally at short notice despite the suspension of internet services, describing the turnout as a demonstration of their support for Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, PML-N leader Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir.

Criticizing the provincial leadership, he alleged that political activities and fundraising in the name of marches had disrupted public life, while the province continued to face security challenges.

He said security personnel and civilians were losing their lives in terrorist incidents, but the provincial leadership was not giving due attention to the issue.

Amir Muqam said the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had endured difficulties for 13 years and now wanted peace, the elimination of terrorism and development. He added that Pashtuns loved Pakistan and had made great sacrifices for the country.

He asserted that the time had come for the people to reject the existing political leadership, saying the province's future lay in peace, stability and development.

The minister said the large turnout reflected the public's support for Pakistan and its armed forces, adding that the response to the rally would demonstrate the strength of the movement.



Palestinians living in tents set up in the Bureij area carry water in containers to their makeshift shelters in Deir al Balah, Gaza, Palestine

Aggression against sovereign states deeply disturbing trend

UNITED NATIONS (APP): A senior Pakistani diplomat warned the United Nations that India has formalized its last year's unprovoked military aggression into an official, declared policy, claiming a unilateral right to launch strikes against Pakistan on any manufactured pretext.

"South Asia remains hostage to a doctrine of force," Ambassador Tahir Andrabi, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN offices in Geneva, told the General assembly's First Committee (Disarmament and International Security), referring to India's May 2025 assault and Islamabad's "precise and effective" response.

"India has since elevated that aggression into declared policy — the so-called 'new normal' — claiming the right to strike Pakistan at a time of its choosing, on any pretext it can manufacture," Ambassador Andrabi added.

However, he declared that Pakistan possesses both the capability and the resolve to decisively defend itself sovereignty against any misadventure.

The Pakistani envoy went on to say India was engaged in the largest military build-up in the region — intercontinental-range, sea-based and hypersonic systems — enabled by discriminatory exemptions of export controls, while it evades dialogue: the last formal talks between the two neighbours on nuclear and conventional confidence-building measures were held in 2012.

Pakistan, he said, does not seek an arms race, but has the capacity to defend itself, as evident by its response in May 2025.

"We will, therefore, maintain Full Spectrum Deterrence within the framework of Credible Minimum Deterrence," Ambassador Andrabi said.

"The notion that a limited conventional war can be fought, and contained, under a nuclear overhang is a dangerous delusion."

Resolution of Kashmir dispute essential for peace in South Asia

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): Speakers at a seminar in Muzaffarabad have stressed that a just settlement of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiri people is essential for lasting peace in South Asia, urging the younger generation to play an active role in highlighting the plight of Kashmiris at the international level.

The seminar, titled "Kashmir Freedom Movement and the Responsibilities, Role and Future of the Younger Generation," discussed the grave political and human rights situation in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), the prolonged detention of Hurriyat leaders and political activists, the hardships faced by affected families, challenges to Kashmiri identity and the international community's responsibilities in resolving the Kashmir dispute.

The seminar was chaired by Mushtaq Ahmad Butt, a leader of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter, while Muhammad Amin Butt, Nazim-e-Aala of Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith Azad Kashmir, attended as the chief guest. Hurriyat leaders, political and religious figures, intellectuals, students and people from various walks of life participated in the event.

The speakers said the Kashmir dispute was not merely a political conflict but an important international issue involving the fundamental rights



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal, Sindh Governor Nihal Hashmi, and Sughra Sadaf attend the book launch ceremony at the Quaid-e-Azam Library.

ECNEC endorses 11 development projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Saturday chaired a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) which approved eleven development projects across Pakistan in the energy, roads, water, health, urban development and forensic science sectors. A key project approved in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the construction of the 40.8 MW Koto Hydropower Project in Lower Dir. Projects in Balochistan included rehabilitation and remodelling of Lasbela Canal, the water supply scheme for Gwadar from Mirani Dam, and construction of the Buleda–Proom and Proom–Chedgai roads.

The Committee also approved development of 100 MW distributed solar photovoltaic plants in Gilgit-Baltistan; installation of reactive power compensation devices in the NGC network; the Punjab Urban Land Systems Enhancement Project (PULSE); construction and upgradation of the Dirgi–Shahbozai–Taunsa Sharif road; establishment of the King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud Hospital in Tarlai, Islamabad; and a purpose-built laboratory for the National Forensic Agency.

The DPM/FM stressed the importance of completing development projects on schedule and without cost overruns. He directed the concerned authorities to maintain financial discipline and remove procedural bottlenecks, emphasizing that development projects should serve public welfare.

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