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Anti-state elements seeking to divide Pakistan "like pieces of cake": CM Bugti

CM Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti condemns violence, anti-state propaganda on social media and terrorist narratives

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that Pakistan and Balochistan are inseparable and that this bond will remain intact forever. He made it clear that no compromise is possible on the integrity, sovereignty, and national security of the state. However, he said the government's doors remain open for all forms of dialogue within the framework of the Constitution of Pakistan.

He expressed these views while addressing participants of the 20th National Workshop Balochistan. The Chief Minister said that violence, anti-state propaganda spread through social media, and what he described as "illegitimized voices" of terrorists are promoting hatred and unrest against the state. He said these tactics are being used in organized attempts to weaken and divide the State of Pakistan, and such efforts will be defeated under all circumstances.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that attributing violence and terrorism solely to uneven development is contrary to facts. He questioned whether the so-called movements had disappeared from areas such as Turbat and other relatively more developed parts of Balochistan, saying this demonstrates that the issue is not development but a particular mindset.

He said anti-state elements are not concerned with public development, prosperity, or ending backwardness, but rather seek to impose their ideology through force of arms. According to him, such elements want to divide Pakistan into pieces "like a cake," but the nation and the state will never allow their objectives to succeed. The Chief Minister said the government is prepared for dialogue within the constitutional framework, but there can be no negotiations with anyone seeking to break Pakistan or undermine its integrity. He stressed that the state takes precedence over everything else and that there can be no compromise on national security. He reaffirmed his commitment to sacrifice his life, if necessary, for the defense, stability, and survival of Pakistan.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said there may be complaints and concerns regarding governance, administration, and public services, and the government is taking serious measures to address them. However, he reiterated that there can be no compromise on the security and unity of the state.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti addressing the participants of 20th National Workshop Balochistan.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting regarding promotion of cashless economy and digital payments

Negotiations continue as Ziarat martyrs' families refuse to end sit-in

QUETTA (ANN): The sit-in by the families of the police personnel martyred in the Ziarat tragedy entered its sixth day today. Leaders of political parties, civil society representatives, lawyers, and a large number of members of the public participated in the protest.

Talks held yesterday between the government's negotiating committee and the sit-in participants ended without any breakthrough. The government delegation, comprising Interior Minister Ziaullah Langau and Health Minister Bakht Kakar, continued negotiations with the bereaved families until late at night. According to the government's negotiating committee, the delegation briefed the families on progress made regarding their demands, including the establishment of a judicial commission to investigate the Ziarat tragedy. The committee said that the Government of Balochistan is prepared to accept all legitimate demands of the bereaved families and the sit-in committee and to extend every possible cooperation.

Meanwhile, the sit-in participants and the All Parties alliance announced province-wide protest demonstrations on 15 July. In addition, women and children will join the sit-in on 16 July, while a province-wide shutter-down strike will be observed across Balochistan on 17 July.

The government's negotiating committee has appealed to the families of the Ziarat martyrs and the All Parties sit-in committee to end the protest and proceed with the burial of the seven martyrs. However, negotiations on the matter are continuing.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakil Qadir Khan addressing the participants of 20th National Workshop Balochistan.

Comprehensive development plan launched to transform Balochistan's socio-economic conditions: CS

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan said that the provincial government gives top priority to good governance, transparency, and public service. He said the provincial administration has launched several strategic initiatives aimed at public welfare, job creation, and ensuring the provision of basic facilities, with the goal of achieving long-term social and economic stability. He expressed these views while addressing participants of the National Workshop.

The Chief Secretary said that the provincial government has launched a comprehensive ten-year development plan to transform the province's socio-economic conditions. The plan aims to promote sustainable economic growth, improve public service delivery, and ensure equal access to infrastructure, education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, making the province more resilient and prosperous. He said the government has initiated strategic projects to improve the province's development and economy, including multiple enterprise development programs to strengthen local industries and small businesses in order to create employment opportunities. Work has also begun on Safe City projects in nine cities, along with initiatives to improve municipal services, ensure a continuous supply of clean drinking water in urban and rural areas, and upgrade basic infrastructure. Work on these projects is progressing rapidly.

He said the government has reactivated 3,900 schools and appointed 14,500 teachers to address teacher shortages and improve educational standards.

The Chief Secretary added that two additional classrooms are being constructed in 3,000 schools. During the current year, more than 279,000 children have been enrolled in schools, while total enrollment over the past two years has exceeded 700,000 students. He further said that the provincial government has implemented an AI-based recruitment policy from this year to fill vacant positions.

PM for increased focus on accelerating implementation of global development agenda

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Tuesday, called for upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, faithful implementation of the UN resolutions and international treaties, as well as for achieving balanced progress across all three pillars of the United Nations – peace and security, development, and human rights. The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with Michelle Bachelet, candidate for the position of the UN Secretary General, who called on him at PM House, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch were also present.

While welcoming Bachelet to Pakistan, the prime minister reiterated Pakistan's strong support for strengthening multilateralism as well as for ensuring the central role of the United Nations in addressing global challenges.

He also called for enhanced international cooperation and increased focus on accelerating the implementation of the global development agenda.

Bachelet commended Pakistan's historic and invaluable contributions to the United Nations.

Govt believes in independent, responsible, strong print media: Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that the government firmly believed in independent, responsible and strong print media in the country.

During a meeting with a delegation of the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE), led by its President Kazim Khan, the minister assured that the consultation process with all relevant stakeholders would continue to resolve the structural and financial issues hindering the newspaper industry.

The minister also agreed on the need to introduce comprehensive reforms to the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) system. He emphasized that it was the need of the hour to align the ABC system with modern requirements, making it both effective and transparent.

The minister pledged that necessary reforms in the ABC, the prompt payment of outstanding dues to media houses, and matters relating to news agencies would be addressed on a priority. He added that all possible cooperation would be extended to resolve the legitimate grievances of journalistic organizations.

The CPNE delegation took the opportunity to congratulate the newly appointed (PIO), Raisa Adil, on officially assuming her responsibilities. The delegation expressed optimism that under her leadership, mutual cooperation between the Ministry of Information and the newspaper industry would be further strengthened.

Security forces win fresh gains in Operation Shaban: Naqvi

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday praised Pakistan's security forces for achieving further successes during the ongoing Operation Shaban in Balochistan, commending the coordinated efforts of the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps (FC) Balochistan, and police. In a statement, Naqvi described the joint operation as a demonstration of effective coordination and professionalism, saying the forces had secured "remarkable achievements" in their campaign against militants. He said the nation highly appreciated the security forces' decisive actions against what he referred to as the "Fitna al-Hindustan" terrorist group, adding that their operations had thwarted the militants' "nefarious designs."

According to the interior minister, security forces killed four more militants during timely and effective operations, calling the development another significant step in the ongoing counterterrorism campaign.

Targeting innocent civilians unacceptable under any circumstances: Badizai

QUETTA (ANN): All Balochistan Transporters Action Committee President and prominent transporter Haji Habibullah Khan Badizai has expressed deep concern and sorrow over the continued incidents of firing on passenger vehicles by unidentified individuals on various national highways in Balochistan. Speaking to a group of journalists, he said such incidents are not only highly condemnable but also pose serious threats to the lives and property of thousands of citizens traveling throughout the province.

He said the national highways are the lifeline of public transportation and the national economy. Targeting innocent civilians is unacceptable under any circumstances.

Digital entrepreneurship platform to showcase Balochistan's talent on national stage: Governor

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Governor of Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail said that the establishment of the province's first digital entrepreneurship platform, Won-it, in the provincial capital Quetta is a commendable initiative.

He said that Won-it is a unique digital entrepreneurship platform designed to align with modern digital business trends, adopt innovative business methods, and promote economic self-reliance.

He said the platform aims to provide talented young people, new business ideas, and startups with a national platform where they can present their business concepts, receive guidance from experts, and obtain business grants to turn their dreams into reality. In this regard, he appreciated the efforts of Won-it Chairman Prince Agha Umar Ahmadzai and his entire team.

He expressed these views while addressing a program organized by Digital Entrepreneurship Won-it at BUITEMS University. During the event, all finalists of the digital entrepreneurship program presented their business concepts in an engaging and competitive pitch show, which the Governor described as highly commendable. Among those present on the occasion were Parliamentary Secretary for Population Welfare Prince Agha Umar Ahmadzai, BUITEMS Vice Chancellor Dr. Khalid Hafeez, Pro Vice Chancellor Dr. Mirwais Kasi, Won-it Chief Executive Officer Umar Ajmal, and faculty members of BUITEMS University.

Governor Mandokhail said the objective of establishing Digital Entrepreneurship Won-it is to promote new business trends and entrepreneurship in Balochistan, highlight innovative business ideas of young people at the national level.



QUETTA: Central leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Hafiz Hamdullah, is talking to the media after expressing condolences with the families of those who were martyred in Hanna Urak.

Some elements currently trying to destabilize situation in Balochistan: Bakht Kakar

QUETTA (ANN): Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar said that after the sit-in at Hanna Urak, the government committee has remained in constant contact with the Ziarat victims. He said their legitimate demands would soon be accepted, after which the committee itself would announce the end of the sit-in. He added that Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has given clear instructions that wherever injustice occurs in Balochistan, the government will take action against the oppressors and stand with the victims like brothers, sharing in their grief and suffering.

Speaking to a media delegation, he said that a handful of elements are currently trying to destabilize the situation in Balochistan and cause hardship for the public. As a result, affected people are compelled to come onto the roads in protest. He said the government will not leave such people alone but will fully cooperate with them and take steps to address their legitimate demands.

He said the government's cooperation with the people of Hanna Urak and the resolution of their demands are on record. Some elements are giving the matter a different color, which may reflect their personal wishes, but there is nothing between the government and the Urak Committee that cannot be made public. He further said that the atrocities committed by terrorists in Ziarat, in which police personnel were martyred, were not only against the people of Ziarat but against the entire people of Balochistan. He said the government has maintained this position from the beginning and will continue to stand with the victims.



A memorial service was held at the Imam Khomeini Musalla Mosque in Tehran for Iran's former leader Ali Khamenei, who was killed in a US-Israeli airstrike.

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Balochistan's development momentum grows

The concluding address of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti during the Balochistan Assembly's budget session for fiscal year 2026–27 reflected a government confident in its achievements and committed to delivering lasting change for the people of the province. His message was clear: Balochistan has embarked on a path of reform, merit, good governance, and stability, and this journey is now irreversible.

Over the past year, the provincial government has translated promises into tangible results. Despite skepticism from critics, the administration has demonstrated that effective governance is built on action rather than rhetoric. The progress reported across key sectors highlights a growing commitment to public service, transparency, and institutional reform. Education has emerged as one of the government's most significant success stories. With nearly all schools across the province now functional, the transparent recruitment of 14,000 teachers, rehabilitation of thousands of educational institutions, and enrollment of more than 720,000 children have transformed opportunities for Balochistan's youth. These initiatives have contributed to a notable reduction in out-of-school children, lower dropout rates, and a substantial increase in literacy levels, laying the foundation for a more prosperous future.

Equally impressive are the reforms in the healthcare sector. The recruitment of medical personnel, activation of basic health units, expansion of maternal and child health services, and introduction of modern healthcare facilities demonstrate the government's determination to improve the quality of life for citizens. The establishment of advanced medical institutions, digitization of pharmacies, and expansion of telemedicine services are bringing quality healthcare closer to communities across the province. The absence of polio cases since late 2024 further reflects the effectiveness of public health initiatives.

Governance reforms have also produced measurable results. Improved attendance in government offices, significantly faster decision-making processes, and full utilization of development funds indicate a more efficient and accountable administration. By prioritizing digitalization and merit-based systems, the government has strengthened public confidence and enhanced transparency in public affairs.

Looking ahead, the provincial government's ambitious development agenda signals a new era of modernization. Projects such as the Quetta People's Train, metro-style transport services, expansion of digital connectivity, construction of new classrooms, solar energy initiatives, and clean water schemes will further improve the lives of citizens while promoting inclusive growth. The scholarship program for Balochistan's daughters reflects a strong commitment to empowering women and investing in human capital. The Chief Minister also reaffirmed the government's unwavering stance against terrorism. While remaining open to constitutional political dialogue, the administration has made it clear that violence and extremism have no place in Balochistan's future. By combining robust security measures with governance reforms and public service delivery, the government is strengthening the bond between the state and its citizens. The announcement of enhanced compensation for martyrs and increased support for security personnel is a fitting recognition of the sacrifices made in the pursuit of peace and stability. These measures underscore the government's commitment to honoring those who have dedicated their lives to protecting the province and the nation. Balochistan today stands at a pivotal moment. The achievements highlighted by Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti reflect a province moving steadily toward stability, development, and opportunity. While challenges remain, the direction is clear: Balochistan is advancing with renewed confidence, and its march toward progress appears stronger than ever.

Violence against women

SAIRA SAMO

Not all men, but the man. This phrase has long circulated on social media whenever violence against women – such as honour killings, acid attacks, and harassment – is broadcast or published. Femicide has been deeply entrenched for centuries, but the twenty-first century has witnessed a new version of cruelty inflicted upon women for a meagre sin or no sin at all.

The case of Dr Mahnoor, who was severely injured in an acid attack by a hospital employee while on duty at Civil Hospital Quetta, again raises questions. Is woman still shackled everywhere, her education deemed unacceptable by a patriarchal society? Has throwing acid on her face shrunk to a simple act of revenge, meant only to disfigure her forever? Is this the justice that prevails for women in our mainstream society? Is this the ultimate status granted to them?

Femicide statistics show that over 7,500 women were killed between 2021 and 2024 in reported gender-based violence (GBV) cases. At least 1,553 were killed in the name of honour (karo-kari) and 3,385 lost their lives to domestic violence. Such numbers reflect the vulnerable status of women in a male-dominated society because the perpetrators are often fathers, brothers and husbands who feel justified in beating and even killing their spouses, sisters and daughters for fear of shame within their communities. Most domestic violence cases are often not reported to the media, yet violence against women continues to spark debate on social media and speaks loudly through its severity.

Domestic violence often harms a woman's self-respect and dignity, making her feel insecure in her own home. She is expected to remain confined within four walls and assume household duties at any cost. In cases of negligence, particularly in rural areas, she is often chastised severely by patriarchal family members for delaying household chores. In fact, such violence leaves deep scars, resulting in vulnerability and poor health.

Karo-kari is most prevalent in the countryside, particularly among feudal communities and illiterate segments of society that associate it with honour. This widespread practice needs to be eradicated in order to build an egalitarian society.

In urban areas where gender-based differences have reduced to some extent, women have progressed educationally, economically, politically and socially – often excelling in various fields of development. Yet we still encounter cases like that of Dr Mahnoor, wherein women are targeted for rejecting a man's proposal. To these men, a rejected proposal is an affront to their honour, prompting them to use acid throwing, physical violence and sexual abuse to strip women of their dignity.

Global organisations and experts have identified different forms of violence, such as physical violence, sexual violence, emotional or psychological violence, cultural violence, verbal abuse, harassment and digital violence. Women in both rural and urban areas continue to suffer these diverse forms of violence.

When a woman is physically out of reach, she is harassed through social media platforms. Studies show that around 58% of women are harassed online globally, whereas around 40% of women in Pakistan have been victims of cyberbullying. Female students rank among the most frequent targets of digital abuse.

Deep-seated traditions in South Asia - including non-consensual and forced marriages, denial of female education and use of women as compensation to resolve conflicts - continue to be legitimised as acceptable cultural practices. The constant assault on women inflicts deep psychological trauma, dampening their spirit. These misogynistic tendencies, injustices and cruelties push countries to the bottom of the Gender Parity Index (GPI).

There is an urgent need to reform such mindsets that undermine the dignity and chastity of women through oppressive customs. We must do away with these misogynistic customs and gender discrimination, ensuring that no more women have their faces scarred by acid.

To acknowledge the status Islam bestowed upon women centuries ago is to recognise an epitome of dignity that the world has seldom matched.

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Peace by piece

MALEEHA LODHI

With the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the US and Iran, an interim deal has been agreed. In what will be a two-step peace process the first phase freezes the war by extending the ceasefire for another 60 days. It commits Iran to open the Strait of Hormuz and the US to end its blockade. That process is already underway. But the hard part lies ahead as the second phase has to address the nuclear file and other thorny issues.

If reaching a preliminary agreement proved so difficult, negotiating a comprehensive settlement will be tougher, especially with Israel's malign presence looming in the background.

After four months of war, both sides wanted an exit ramp from the fighting. President Donald Trump seemed to want it more. Domestic political and economic pressure mounted on him, especially the fear that higher oil prices and inflation would hit American consumers and damage the US economy. This, as mid-term Congressional elections loomed with an unpopular war and the Republican party increasingly divided.

Moreover, continuing the conflict did not seem to bring Trump closer to any of his ever-changing objectives. If regime change was a core objective, the war failed to achieve that. More bombs would not have secured that outcome or his other stated aims. Around 40 times in 90 days Trump claimed "a deal is imminent". This reflected his desperation for one as well as the constant effort to calm markets and drive down oil prices. The economic consequences of the Strait of Hormuz's prolonged closure had begun to weigh heavily on Washington.

Iran was prepared to play the long game, especially as its control of the Strait of Hormuz gave it crucial strategic leverage. Its retaliatory attacks on US bases and energy infrastructure in Gulf countries raised the costs of war for America, its regional allies and the global economy. Tehran used the economic weapon to full effect. But there were limits to this strategy because of the substantial losses Iran also faced. Its ailing economy came under severe stress by reduced access to oil markets, restrictions on shipping and higher inflation. Another round of war heightened the economic risks. Having attained the upper hand in the conflict, a deal made sooner rather than later made more sense when Tehran's negotiating position was relatively strong. Iran had already emerged as a symbol of defiance.

The US was unable to achieve its objectives both on the battlefield and negotiating table.

The deal ending the four-month war shows the failure of military force. The war imposed by the US and Israel did not compel Iran to surrender and accept terms dictated by them.

A militarily weaker country under sanctions was able to hold out because of what the US has historically underestimated — the power of nationalism. While the US waged a war of choice with unclear objectives, for Iran it was an existential challenge. The will to survive powered by nationalist sentiment proved decisive in Tehran's ability to resist aggression. The broader question raised by this is about the limits of military power. The might-is-right paradigm is being challenged in an era where big powers can't get their own way because modern warfare has levelled the ground between them and smaller countries. Military superiority does not guarantee dominance or victory, as exemplified by America's operation Epic Fury, Russia's unwon war against Ukraine and India's aggression against Pakistan last year.

Whether the tentative US-Iran truce is followed by lasting peace depends on how issues deferred to the next stage of negotiations are tackled. This involves a 60-day, extendable period to reach agreement on Iran's nuclear programme and sanctions relief for Tehran. But before that, Lebanon remains an obstacle if Israel, opposed to the US-Iran deal, continues its military rampage there. While the MoU says Lebanon is part of the "immediate and permanent termination of military operations on all fronts", Israel seems intent on playing a spoiler. The nuclear negotiations will of course be the key to a permanent settlement. Iran has already reaffirmed it will not "procure or develop nuclear weapons" in the 14-point MoU. The document also refers to agreement to resolve the stockpiled enriched uranium issue in the talks ahead. It holds out the option to resolve it by down-blending (diluting) the material on site under the IAEA's supervision. This is what Iran offered all along despite Trump's frequent declarations that the "nuclear dust" will be removed from Iran.

Negotiations will also have to find common ground on the duration of a moratorium on enrichment of nuclear fuel. Sanctions relief will be tied to accord on these issues.

The MoU is a testament to US inability to accomplish its objectives both on the battlefield and the negotiating table. It sets out multiple concessions that Iran secured with Washington abandoning many of its red lines. This is reflected in Trump's defensive remarks during his press conference at the G7 meeting. Iran can keep some ballistic missiles, which he had vowed to destroy, because other regional countries have them. He also said Iran could have its own nuclear programme because "other adjoining states have it". Iran will receive waivers for oil exports immediately after signing of the MoU and before nuclear talks begin. As for the release of billions of dollars of Iran's frozen funds, Trump said "We have taken a lot of their money, it's not our money" and has to be returned. But he made it clear that the funds will be released in return for "good behaviour" by Iran and implementation of the MoU. The document also sets out a pathway for substantial financing for Iran's reconstruction. Significantly, Iran's support for its regional allies doesn't figure in the MoU.

The deal got swift international applause. But its future remains uncertain. First comes the test of implementation. Will both sides honour the MoU? Then come the technical talks to hammer out a lasting settlement. As the gap between the two sides remains wide, negotiations may be long-drawn-out. For now, the deal has widened the rift between the US and Israel with America's leaders rebuking the Israelis for their criticism of the agreement and Trump even taking a public swipe at Benjamin Netanyahu. Israel is already defying the latest ceasefire in Lebanon. But it is unlikely that its efforts to sabotage the interim deal will succeed.

The writer is a former ambassador to the US, UK and UN.

Strategic shifts

AIZAZ AHMAD CHAUDHRY

At the dawn of the 21st century, the US was the sole superpower. Its main rival, the Soviet Union, had been dissolved a decade earlier. The era of globalisation had begun. The world looked like a global village. China was rising, but not yet in a position to challenge US supremacy. However, this unipolar world did not last long as America became embroiled in distant, unending wars. With its invasion of Iraq, the unilateral, illegal and pre-emptive use of force against adversaries became a norm. Hatred for minority communities took a violent form. The UN began to lose its relevance. Protectionist walls started impeding free international trade. The world descended into disorder.

In this uncertain clime, China opted to avoid wars, focusing instead on economic growth. The US decided to counter-balance a rising China and, in 2011, announced a pivot of its foreign policy towards Asia. Beijing reacted by flexing its economic outreach and launching the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013 to link China to the outside world through connectivity projects and supply chains. The US embarked on its Indo-Pacific Strategy, co-opting Japan, Australia and India. China perceived it as an attempt to threaten the sea routes it used for exports. So it began to explore alternative land routes to Europe. An opportunity arose when, in 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to elevate bilateral ties to a 'comprehensive strategic partnership'. A few years later, when Putin proposed the idea of a 'Greater Eurasian partnership', China decided to work on three land corridors — the Northern Corridor via the trans-Siberian railway, the multimodal Middle Corridor via the Caspian Sea and a direct overland highway to Russia via Central Asia.

These Eurasian land routes practically neutralised America's policy to contain China's rise through the Indo-Pacific Strategy. Unsurprisingly, the US embarked upon another shift in its Asian policy. It decided to change its hitherto confrontational foreign policy with China to one that would work for both countries. Meeting in May 2026, presidents Xi and Donald Trump agreed to work together for "constructive strategic stability". Pursuant to this shift, the US dropped the word 'Indo' from its Pacific command.

Meanwhile, in the West, Trump decided to retreat from liberal internationalism, and prevailed on US allies in Nato and Europe to spend more on their own security. Accordingly, European countries are now diverting resources towards rearmament and a unified European defence, while maintaining their economic contacts with China. America's recent war with Iran has further undermined its global standing and brought China and Russia even closer in their support for Iran.

Today's shifting geopolitics have baffled India.

These strategic shifts in global geopolitics have baffled India, which had aligned its foreign policy with the US-led Indo-Pacific Strategy, QUAD (Australia, India, Japan and the US) and I2U2 (India, Israel, the UAE and US). Accordingly, it never seriously tried to reconcile with China or let BRICS thrive. India failed to anticipate that the US and China might one day agree to stabilise their relationship for peaceful competition. Nor did it foresee a steep rise in Pakistan's military profile post-May 2025 and diplomatic profile during the Iran-US war. India's decade-long efforts to isolate Pakistan had failed.

Instead of reading these strategic shifts correctly, its leadership under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has relentlessly pursued its partnership with the US and its ally Israel.

Meanwhile, Pak-is-tan has continued to work with China, the US, Russia and key West Asian countr-ies for regional pea-ce and stability. It has also endorsed Chi--na's Global Security Initiative. The latter promotes the concept of indivisible security for all and overwrites the Western idea of hegemony and dominance, laying the foundation of a new world order predicated on collective and cooperative security and respect for each other's sovereignty. Regionally, Pakistan's ties with Bangladesh and other South Asian countries are also improving. Since India has made Saarc dysfunctional, Pakistan and Bangladesh could join hands to form a new grouping in South Asia with China as a full member. It is not clear whether the Modi government will be able to see these regional trends and reverse its hostile policies towards China and Pakistan. It must realise that a hegemonic approach to international relations has failed at the global level and will also fail regionally. The only way forward is to live and let live. Regardless of India's policy approach, Pakistan must keep its doors open for dialogue with all its neighbours while maintaining its deterrent against possible Indian aggression in the years ahead.

The writer is chairman Sanober Institute and former foreign secretary of Pakistan.

Donald Trump says:

Iran agreed to nuclear inspections into 'infinity', Tehran denies US claims

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON / TEHRAN: US President Donald Trump said on Tuesday Iran had agreed to nuclear inspections into "infinity, despite Tehran's denials, and that unfrozen Iranian assets would be used to buy humanitarian supplies from the United States.

Washington agreed waive sanctions on Iran for 60 days from Monday after the first round of talks under a nascent peace deal agreed last week on ending more than three months of war.

US Vice President JD Vance said the talks with Iranian officials in the Swiss mountain resort of Buergenstock laid a good foundation for a final accord and that Tehran had agreed to allow nuclear inspectors back into the country.

But Iran denied it had begun discussions on its nuclear programme at the talks, mediated by Qatar and Pakistan, and said it had not agreed to invite back International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said in an address on Tuesday Iranian officials had not held a meeting with IAEA chief Rafael Grossi in Switzerland and had no plans for the UN nuclear watchdog to inspect Iran's damaged nuclear facilities.

He said Tehran does not intend to allow IAEA inspectors access to nuclear facilities attacked by the US and Israel. "We do not intend to allow inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency to visit the nuclear sites targeted during the conflict," he said.

Baghaei further denied reports of contacts with IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi in Switzerland. "We have not held any meeting with the IAEA director general in Switzerland, nor are there any plans for inspections of our nuclear facilities that were bombed," he said.

Trump hit back on Tuesday at what he said were Iran's "protestations and false statements." "Iran has fully and completely agreed to highest level Nuclear inspections long into the future (Infinity!!!)," Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

He also said any Iranian assets unfrozen under the deal would be placed in an escrow account and used to buy food and medical supplies from the US "including Corn, Wheat.



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (C) speaks during a plenary meeting of the Ninth Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea in Pyongyang. Kim called for the expansion of Pyongyang's nuclear forces, citing military cooperation between Seoul and Washington.

At least 40 drown in France as people seek relief from Europe's heatwave

Monitoring Desk

PARIS: Forty people have drowned in France over recent days as they sought to cool down to escape record heat, the prime minister said on Tuesday, as a heatwave swept across much of Europe.

Britain, Italy, Switzerland and Spain were also sweltering in extreme heat, with record temperatures in some regions disrupting schools and transport networks. Europe is warming at more than twice the global average, according to the World Meteorological Organization, making such prolonged heat episodes increasingly likely.

Much of France is under severe heat alert and set to experience temperatures around 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) on Tuesday, Meteo France said, with temperatures of up to 43 C expected in some parts of western France.

The country has just recorded its hottest afternoon and night since records began in 1947. Fifty-four departments are under red alert in what forecasters said was unprecedented.

Across France, people have been jumping into canals and rivers to cool off. French sports minister Marina Ferrari said she understood the urge to escape the heat but warned against swimming in unauthorised or dangerous areas.

Speaking ahead of an emergency meeting on the heatwave, French Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu said: "A sad scourge when it comes to drownings, as the latest figures just reported to us show 40 deaths since June 18, most of them young people."

On Monday, first responders were unable to resuscitate two children, aged 2 and 4, who were found unconscious by their mother in the family car outside their home, said a prosecutor in Carpentras, southeast France.

In Paris, commuters struggled through sweltering conditions after sleepless nights in apartments ill-equipped for heat. Some trains were cancelled, including between Paris and Brussels.

New Lebanon-Israel talks begin in shadow of US-Iran deal

Monitoring Desk

BEIRUT: Lebanon and Israel began a new round of talks on Tuesday in Washington, with Beirut determined to press ahead with direct negotiations even as they appear to be overshadowed by Iran's decision to make Lebanon part of its talks with the U.S.

Lebanese officials have that face-to-face negotiations with Israel are the only way to secure an end to the war raging since March 2, when armed group Hezbollah fired at Israel in support of Iran and triggered Israeli air and ground attacks that have killed more than 4,000 people in Lebanon.

But four rounds of Lebanese-Israeli talks since April have failed to produce a durable ceasefire. Instead, the longest lull in fighting came this week after Iran and the U.S. agreed a memorandum of understanding that stipulated fighting would halt across all fronts, including Lebanon.

That deal buoyed Iran-backed Hezbollah and dealt a blow to the Lebanese state, whose leaders including President Joseph Aoun had repeatedly warned that Tehran cannot negotiate on Lebanon's behalf.

"Today, and in the coming days, we embark on a new round of talks, which we hope will be decisive in achieving what we desire for the good of our nation and our people," Aoun said in a post on X on Tuesday.

A State Department official said the negotiations would involve military and political delegates from each country and aimed to "advance a comprehensive peace and security agreement between the two countries."

"Our shared goal is to end the cycle of violence for good. We are enabling Israel and Lebanon to negotiate as two sovereign states and to find a way to have peace and security," the official said.

But a Lebanese official and two foreign officials working on Lebanon told Reuters the Iran-U.S. deal had pulled the rug out from under the Lebanese state.



A mother pushes a stroller past a damaged building covered with street artist paintings and a big city marketplace that was destroyed recently by Russian missiles in Kyiv, Ukraine.



The Russia president risks joining a long line of leaders whose strategic ambitions exceeded their logistical realities.

Israel targeted Gaza children resulting in genocide, UN inquiry

Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: Israeli authorities and security forces deliberately targeted Palestinian children, resulting in genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Gaza, and war crimes in the occupied West Bank, an independent United Nations inquiry said on Tuesday.

The report by the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel examined violations against Palestinian children since the start of the war between Israel and Hamas on October 7, 2023.

A previous report by the commission in September found that Israel had committed genocide in Gaza and that top Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, incited these acts — accusations that Israel called scandalous.

The UN commission said that Palestinian children were deliberately targeted and killed during the war, including after a ceasefire came into effect in October 2025. It said this was a key element establishing genocidal intent by Israeli authorities and security forces to destroy the Palestinian group, in whole or in part, in Gaza.

"The evidence shows that Palestinian children have been deliberately targeted and killed by the Israeli security forces," said Srinivasan Muralidhar, the commission's chair, in a statement accompanying the report.

China's newest aircraft carrier sails through the Taiwan Strait

Monitoring Desk

TAIPEI: China's newest and most powerful of its three aircraft carriers sailed through the Taiwan Strait on Tuesday, the Taiwanese defense ministry said, a day after Taiwan began a five-day military exercise on responding to a Chinese attack.

The Fujian carrier first sailed through the narrow body of water separating China and Taiwan in a trial run last September. It later transited the strait for the first time as a fully commissioned military vessel in December.

China claims the self-governed island as part of its territory and has not ruled out the use of force to bring it under Beijing's control. China regularly sends navy vessels and war planes towards Taiwan in military exercises that have become more frequent in recent years to where they now occur almost daily.

Taiwan on Monday kicked off its own five-day exercise to support its response in case of a possible Chinese military invasion.

Iran says technical talks with US concluded in Switzerland

Monitoring Desk

Tehran: Iran announced early on Tuesday the conclusion of technical talks with the US in Burgenstock, Switzerland, as part of Qatari and Pakistani-mediated negotiations aimed at ending the US-Israel-Iran war.

Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi, who led Iran's technical negotiating team, said the four-party talks concluded with an agreement on arrangements for future negotiations, including working groups and implementation mechanisms, Iran's official IRNA news agency reported.

Gharibabadi said the discussions followed a high-level committee meeting held on Sunday to monitor implementation of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding — a framework agreement to end the war signed virtually by the US and Iranian presidents on June 17 — which continued into Monday.

"Technical discussions were held to determine the implementation mechanisms of the memorandum of understanding and the statement issued at the conclusion of the high-level meeting, and the necessary understandings were reached," he said.

US-backed Ebola facility

Kenya's health minister orders suspension of construction

Monitoring Desk

NAIROBI: Kenya's health minister on Tuesday ordered the suspension of the construction of an Ebola quarantine center for Americans, a day after he was held in contempt by a court that had halted the project. Trump administration officials had said that the United States was planning to send Americans who are exposed to Ebola while abroad to a new facility in Kenya instead of flying them home.

In May, the high court had ordered the construction of the center to be halted pending a determination of the case filed by the Law Society of Kenya and the constitutional watchdog, the Katiba Institute, which argued that Kenya's fragile health system was unable to handle a potential Ebola outbreak.

Kim Jong Un reaffirms North Korea nuclear buildup at party meeting

Monitoring Desk

SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called for accelerating the expansion of North Korea's nuclear forces, citing increasingly hostile military cooperation between Seoul and Washington and an unstable global security environment, state media reported Monday.

Kim led a plenary meeting of the Ninth Central Committee of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea from Saturday through Monday to review progress on national goals for the first half of the year and outline priorities for the remainder of 2026, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

The meeting reaffirmed Pyongyang's commitment to strengthening and expanding its nuclear forces, describing them as "the core of the military sovereignty of the country" and the foundation of its war deterrent.

"To thoroughly exercise the position of a nuclear weapons state is the most correct and unique way to actively and confidently cope with the unpredictable international military and political situation," KCNA said.

North Korea passed a law declaring itself a nuclear-armed state in 2022. Kim later amended the country's constitution to enshrine the permanent growth of its nuclear arsenal, calling the status "irreversible." The remarks come weeks after Kim toured a newly inaugurated nuclear fuel production facility and vowed to continue expanding the country's fissile material at an "exponential rate."

China's FM calls on BRICS to strengthen strategic minerals coop.

Monitoring Desk

BEIJING: China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi called on BRICS countries on Tuesday to jointly respond global challenges from Ebola to AI, and to strengthen cooperation on strategic mineral resources, according to a statement from his ministry.

Wang told a meeting in India that BRICS countries should respond to global energy and food security challenges and unite to respond to the Ebola epidemic in Africa.

The should resolutely combat all forms of terrorism and oppose the weaponization of outer space, Wang added, while also calling for close oversight of AI risks.

Speaking at a security meeting in New Delhi, China's top diplomat said the group should "hold high the banner of multilateralism" and firmly oppose unilateralism and protectionism.

"BRICS need to take the lead in speaking up for justice and delivering fair outcomes, and elevate their standing and role in international affairs," Wang said.

He also urged the BRICS to back dialogue and political solutions to resolve disputes d hotspot issues. Touching on the U.S.-Iran conflict, Wang said it underscored the importance of upholding international rules.



Chinese training ship the Qi Jiguang arrives in Vladivostok, as part of an exchange with Russian naval officers.

Oman, Iran to pursue talks on managing Strait of Hormuz navigation

Monitoring Desk

DUBAI: Oman and Iran agreed on Tuesday to press on with discussions about the future administration navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, including maritime services the strategic waterway and the costs associated with them.

In a joint statement issued after talks in Muscat, the two countries said a joint working group involving their foreign ministries would be formed to continue the discussions and that they would consult other littoral states and relevant parties.

The move appears to implement a provision of the memorandum of understanding signed last week that calls for Iran to hold talks with Oman and other Gulf coastal states on the future management of navigation and maritime services in the strait, a vital waterway for global oil supplies. The agreement was announced following a visit by Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Qalibaf and Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, who met Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and held talks with Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Albusaidi. In the statement, Oman and Iran, the two states bordering the strait, reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring safe passage through the in accordance with international law while underlining sovereignty over their territorial waters.

UK government plans new rules to tackle illegal deforestation

Monitoring Desk

LONDON: Britain is planning new rules to ensure that everyday products in the country, including coffee and , do not contribute to illegal deforestation globally, the government said on Tuesday.

Here are the details:

Businesses trading in commodities sourced from rainforests, such as soy and rubber, will need to check that their supply are not contributing to illegal deforestation.

Rubio faces tough task of selling Iran reset to wary Gulf allies

Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio faces a delicate mission this week, pitching Washington's Iran peace deal to Gulf Arab leaders who fear excessive concessions will strengthen Tehran and reshape the region's security balance and oil flows.

Rubio was set to arrive in the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday, before travelling to Kuwait and Bahrain, where he will meet officials from the Gulf Cooperation Council, a grouping of monarchies that also includes Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman.

At issue are elements of a draft agreement that includes no limits on Iran's ballistic missiles, a proposed $300 billion reconstruction fund and provisions that could expand Tehran's regional influence and control over critical oil shipping lanes.

All six GCC nations are strategic US allies that offered some degree of logistical support to Washington during the US-Israeli war with Iran that began four months ago, and all were buffeted by Iranian airstrikes on their US military installations as a result.

Some of those countries are feeling privately disappointed - and surprised.



The UN investigators determined Israel was targeting children in Gaza to attack 'the very capacity of the Palestinian people to exist'.

Officer among 2 killed in a Montreal shooting

Monitoring Desk

CANADA: The tranquility of a residential neighborhood in the Canadian city of Montreal – home to diverse communities, including areas with deep Jewish roots — was shattered Monday morning after a gunman opened fire, prompting a shootout with police that killed at least two people, sent families running for cover and paralyzed the city for hours.

The brazen daylight shooting, which law enforcement sources believe was a targeted attack on police, marks the first time a Montreal officer has been killed in the line of duty in two decades. The rash of gunshots shocked residents of the Côte-des-Neiges neighborhood.

Putin is under pressure as Ukraine menaces Moscow and chokes Crimea

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Life has become increasingly difficult for ordinary Muscovites. Waves of Ukrainian drone attacks are now reaching the Russian capital with growing frequency, exposing the reality that the Kremlin's supposedly impenetrable air-defence shield is anything but. Images of fires burning across Moscow have spread rapidly online, scenes that inevitably evoke memories of the Luftwaffe's Blitz against London in 1940.

Ironically, it is the Second World War that Russia itself is invoking to justify its current actions. This year marks the 85th anniversary of Operation Barbarossa, Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union. Russian state media claims that Europe and the West are preparing a modern-day Barbarossa to threaten Russia once again.

What this narrative conveniently ignores is that Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 and launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The reality is clear: Nato nations are rearming not to invade Russia, but to deter further Russian aggression.

This distortion of history reflects the increasingly precarious position in which President Putin finds himself. Even Russia's formidable propaganda machine is struggling to conceal an uncomfortable truth from citizens in Moscow and St Petersburg: the state can no longer guarantee their security.

Effective legislation, strong parliamentary oversight essential to ensure sustainable economic growth: Gilani

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, on Tuesday underscored the vital role of overseas Pakistanis in promoting investment, strengthening economic diplomacy and enhancing Pakistan's global image, saying the country's diaspora served not only as ambassadors of Pakistan but also as a bridge connecting international markets, innovation, technology and investment opportunities.

He expressed these views while addressing a distinguished delegation of the New York Chamber of Small Business Corp., USA, led by its Founder President Syed Alamdar Hussain Shah, along with prominent businessmen from the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Pakistan, during a formal luncheon hosted in their honour at the Senate of Pakistan.

Welcoming the delegation, the Chairman Senate said their visit reflected a shared commitment to expanding economic cooperation, fostering stronger partnerships and creating new avenues for investment between Pakistan and overseas Pakistani entrepreneurs.

He appreciated the delegation's proactive engagement with lawmakers, government institutions and the local business community, describing it as a positive step towards deepening economic collaboration.

The Chairman Senate expressed gratitude for the citation presented to him on the occasion of Pakistan's Independence Day. He said he accepted the honour with humility, considering it not as personal recognition but as a tribute to Pakistan, its democratic institutions and the millions of overseas Pakistanis whose integrity, professionalism and hard work continue to strengthen the country's reputation around the world.

Highlighting the importance of trust in economic relations, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said investment and trade reinforce confidence between nations.

He remarked that when businesses prosper together, stronger and more enduring international partnerships emerge, adding that the delegation's visit symbolized confidence in Pakistan's economic future.

The Chairman Senate said Pakistan offers immense investment potential owing to its young population, expanding digital economy, strategic geographical location and abundant natural resources. He said the government's ongoing reforms to improve the ease of doing business, coupled with the work of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), have significantly enhanced coordination and facilitation for investors.

Emphasizing the role of Parliament in economic development, he said the Senate remains committed to promoting legislation and policies that encourage entrepreneurship, innovation, investment and job creation.



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Michelle Bachelet, candidate for the position of the UN Secretary General, called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail giving cash prize to two brothers under digital entrepreneurship platform, Won-it at BUITEMS

President felicitates French leadership on National Day

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday extended felicitations to the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, and the people of France on their National Day.

President Zardari, in his message, conveyed that Pakistan highly values its long-standing friendship and multifaceted partnership with France, founded on mutual respect, shared values and a steadfast commitment to peace, sustainable development and international law. He expressed confidence that the close cooperation between the two countries will continue to grow and expand in areas of mutual interest, further strengthening the bonds of friendship and advancing the shared prosperity and well-being of the people of both nations. The president reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further deepening bilateral relations and enhancing cooperation in multilateral forums on issues of mutual interest.

Skilled, talented youth can steer Pakistan toward sustainable development: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said on Tuesday that more than 60 per cent of Pakistan's population consists of youth; therefore, equipping them with technical, vocational, and professional skills in line with the demands of the modern era was indispensable for national development, economic stability, and global competitiveness.

He stated that rapid revolutionary changes were taking place in the field of technology, and those nations were progressing that were investing in equipping their youth with knowledge, skills, and modern technology. He expressed these views in his message on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day, which was observed globally every year on 15 July under the auspices of the United Nations.

The Speaker said that this year's theme for World Youth Skills Day, "Skills for a Shared Future," reflected the reality that a sustainable and prosperous future could only be built through youth equipped with modern skills. He noted that the current era was characterized by artificial intelligence, digital technology, automation, and innovation; therefore, youth must acquire skills in these fields so that they might effectively meet future challenges. He further stated that Pakistani youth possessed immense potential to lead the country toward a technology-driven economy and play a pivotal role in national development.

PKMAP expresses serious concern over deteriorating security situation in Quetta

QUETTA (ANN): Leaders of the Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) said that criminal silence over public issues is nothing but government incompetence. They said the public has been deprived of basic facilities and pushed into hardships. The underground water level has fallen drastically, while the relevant departments and the government continue to neglect the shortage of clean drinking water and its supply to the people. They added that the worsening law and order situation in the province and Quetta city has left people concerned about the safety of their lives and property. They said the increasing public participation in the party is proof of the correctness of its political stance. These views were expressed by PkMAP Provincial President Abdul Qahar Khan Wadan, Provincial Senior Vice President and Quetta District Secretary Syed Sharaf Agha, District Assistant Secretaries Akram Khan Khalji, Naeem Achakzai, Haji Malik Khalji, Haji Khalifa, Haji Gul Muhammad Khalji, and other speakers while addressing a ceremony held in the Ghazi Amanullah Khan regional unit under Sariab Tehsil of Quetta district. At the event, 25 individuals joined the party under the leadership of Haji Gul Muhammad Khalji. Other district and Sariab Tehsil office-bearers and committee members were also present. Meanwhile, in the Sarpul regional unit of the tehsil, Aziz Azhar Khan, along with his family, resigned from another political party and announced his joining of PkMAP. On the occasion, Provincial Deputy Secretaries Sardar Idris Khan Bareech, Soorat Khan Kakar, Tehsil Secretary Naeem Pir Alizai, and Regional Secretary Dr. Ramzan welcomed his decision to join the party. Addressing the gathering, the speakers welcomed the new members and expressed hope that they would play an active political and democratic role in further organizing and strengthening the party in Sariab Tehsil and dedicate their abilities to its organizational bodies.

They said the conditions faced by the people of Quetta are deeply unfortunate. The city's densely populated millions lack basic facilities such as electricity, gas, clean drinking water, education, and healthcare. Even the Safa Project, launched in the name of cleanliness, has failed to improve the city's sanitation system. They said that when corruption, commissions, and nepotism become common in public service institutions, their destruction and paralysis become inevitable. As a result of the deterioration and poor management of these institutions, the people of Quetta are increasingly suffering from mental distress.

The speakers said that to resolve public issues, party workers should discuss people's problems in their primary units and formulate strategies for their resolution. They added that the activation of primary units would ensure the organizational effectiveness of the party. They further stated that under the leadership of its Chairman, Milli Mashar Mahmood Khan Achakzai, the Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party would not hesitate to make any sacrifice in its ongoing struggle to fulfill the national aspirations of Khan Shaheed Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai and other senior leaders and martyrs.



QUETTA: Civil society and women are participating in a consultative meeting on the topic of an empowered local government system in Balochistan, organized by Health and Rural Development (HARD) and in collaboration with Aawaz Centre for Development Services.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti in a group photo with the participants of 20th National Workshop Balochistan.

Govt determined to eradicate scourge of terrorism from Balochistan: Dummar

QUETTA (ANN): Provincial Minister for Food Haji Noor Muhammad Khan Dummar said that the cowardly attack on police personnel in Ziarat district is one of the most heartbreaking tragedies in history. He said that such an incident had never occurred before in the history of Ziarat, and today the entire district is mourning. Every home, every street, and every person is grieving.

Paying tribute to the martyred police personnel, he said that despite limited resources, the brave officers fought the terrorists courageously throughout the day and embraced martyrdom while defending the homeland until their last bullet. He said these great sacrifices would not go in vain.

The provincial minister strongly appealed to the Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal General Syed Asim Munir, and the Prime Minister of Pakistan to launch a comprehensive and effective operation in the mountainous areas of Ziarat and Harnai districts to restore law and order and completely eliminate terrorism. He said indiscriminate action against terrorists and their facilitators is the need of the hour so that the writ of the state can be established and the public can be provided with a secure environment.

Haji Noor Muhammad Dummar said that the people and tribal elders of Ziarat and Harnai stand in complete solidarity with the security forces and are ready to extend every possible cooperation for the establishment of peace.

Defence Minister denounces Maulana Fazl's irresponsible statement

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif strongly denounced the statement made by Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, terming it highly irresponsible and an insult to the immense sacrifices of the martyrs.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman is a seasoned politician and a respected religious leader, and that greater responsibility is expected of him in the choice of his words, he wrote on his social media platform, X. The Defence Minister said linking the sacrifices of soldiers to their salaries is not only unfair but also hurts the sentiments of the martyrs and their families.

He said nobody lays down their life merely for a salary.

The sacrifice of life, he said, is driven by ideology, faith, a sense of duty, and deep devotion to the homeland.

Asif said the war against terrorism is ongoing, and personnel of the Armed Forces, along with members of other institutions and civilians, continue to embrace martyrdom.



The number of cities in Italy under a 'red' alert has increased due to the third heatwave since the start of summer.

All political parties, religious leaders, citizens should stand together against terrorism: Hanif Abbasi

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi on Tuesday urged Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman to clarify remarks concerning the sacrifices of Pakistan's armed forces, saying the comments had deeply hurt the families of martyrs, wounded soldiers and caused anguish across the country.

Addressing a press conference, the minister paid tribute to the officers and Jawans of the armed forces who lost their lives while defending the country and combating terrorism, arguing that their sacrifices could not be equated with salaries or financial benefits.

Abbasi said every martyr left behind grieving parents, widows and young children whose sacrifices should never be diminished.

Referring to photographs of several martyred officers displayed during the press conference, he said many had embraced martyrdom at a young age, leaving behind families and children who would grow up without their fathers. He said the pain endured by the families of martyrs should be understood before making public comments about military service, adding that no amount of financial compensation could replace the loss suffered by those families. The minister said he had grown up respecting Pakistan's armed forces and continued to take pride in their role in defending the country.

He said the armed forces had earned national and international recognition through their professionalism and sacrifices. Referring to Pakistan's recent security achievements, Abbasi said the country's successes were made possible through the sacrifices of martyrs and veterans rather than financial incentives.

He rejected any suggestion that soldiers fought merely because they received salaries, saying many young Pakistanis aspired to join the armed forces despite knowing the risks associated with military service.

Climate change defining threat to Pakistan's economic stability: Dr. Shezra Mansab

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Minister of State for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr Shezra Mansab Ali Khan on Tuesday called for enhanced climate finance, technology transfer, stronger institutions and international partnerships to accelerate climate action, saying Pakistan requires greater global support to strengthen its resilience against the growing impacts of climate change.

Addressing a high-level policy dialogue titled "Climate Finance and International Cooperation for Strengthening Climate Resilience in Pakistan," organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), she said climate change had emerged as a defining threat to Pakistan's economic stability, food and water security, public health and sustainable development, said a press release.

She noted that although Pakistan contributes less than one percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, it remains among the countries most vulnerable to climate change.

Dar reaffirms Pakistan's steadfast commitment to SAARC process

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday underscored the need for a revitalized SAARC, guided by the principles of its Charter, to advance regional connectivity, sustainable development, and the collective well-being of the peoples of South Asia. The deputy prime minister highlighted the region's immense demographic and economic potential and reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast commitment to the SAARC process.

Talking to Secretary General of SAARC, Md. Golam Sarwar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the DPM/FM commended the Secretary General's efforts to promote regional cooperation.



HEBRON, WEST BANK, PALESTINE: Israeli military demolishes the home of Palestinians in town of Deirat, claiming it had been built without a permit

Pakistan's development strategy anchored in "Uraan Pakistan" initiative: Ahsan

UNITED NATIONS, (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal met on Tuesday with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator Alexander De Croo in New York and discussed Pakistan's development priorities and ways to further strengthen the longstanding partnership between Pakistan and the UNDP.



Speaking during the meeting, the minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to its partnership with the UNDP and expressed appreciation for the organization's continued support in advancing the country's national development agenda, a news release said. He said Pakistan's development strategy was anchored in the "Uraan Pakistan" initiative, which focuses on five priority pillars: exports, digitalization, environment, energy and equity. Ahsan Iqbal acknowledged the UNDP's longstanding collaboration with the Ministry of Planning, particularly its support for localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through SDG Support Units and its role in convening the 2025 SDGs Policy Dialogue for Action. The discussion also focused on Pakistan's SDG Plus Programme, aimed at accelerating implementation of the SDGs through stronger provincial ownership and localized action.

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