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Any attempt to divert Pakistan's water to be treated as act of war, India 'must make no mistake about it': PM at UNGA

MAHPARA ZAMAN

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reiterated before the United Nation's General Assembly on Friday that any attempt by India to divert Pakistan's share of water would be treated as an "act of war".

"Water must never be weaponised. Rivers should nourish nations, not divide them. Therefore, any attempt to stop, impede or divert Pakistan's share of the waters will be treated as an act of war. India must make no mistake about it," he said.

The premier was addressing the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

"The pursuit of peace is among the noblest of human endeavours," the premier

began his speech by saying, adding that Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's declaration of support for the UN Charter had shaped Pakistan's national ethos and "guided our conduct at home and abroad".

He addressed the conflict in the Gulf region and wider Middle East, highlighting the loss of lives, economic suffering and pressure faced by critical maritime routes, particularly the Strait of Hormuz.

"At this critical moment, Pakistan chose to act swiftly. Through concerted efforts, Pakistan brought Washington and Tehran under one roof in Islamabad," PM Shehbaz said, referring to the Islamabad Talks that resulted in the signing of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding.



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif speaks during the 81st United Nations General Assembly at UN headquarters in New York.

PTI postpones Islamabad long march to Oct 4

PEAK POINT



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi said on Friday that the PTI's long march towards Islamabad, which was originally scheduled for Sept 27,

would now commence from Peshawar on Oct 4. The announcement by the KP CM came during a press conference in Peshawar, where he said the PTI's political committee had held a meeting and "unanimously agreed" to now commence the march on Oct 4 from Peshawar. "This struggle of ours is just for the supremacy of the Constitution, restoration of the independent judiciary, media freedom and Haqqi Azadi, as envisioned by Imran Khan," he added.

The PTI has been gearing up for a nationwide protest and march towards Islamabad to press for the release of its founder, Imran Khan, who is currently incarcerated in Rawalpindi's Adiala jail. Afridi claimed that Imran would be out of jail within half an hour if justice was served.

But, he rued, court directives were not being abided by, referring to court orders for Imran's medical treatment and meetings with his family.

Trump to wrap up Xi summit with a tour of US archives

PEAK POINT



NEW YORK: US President Donald Trump will follow up his summit with Xi Jinping by taking the Chinese leader on Friday to the US National Archives, where they are expected to stress views about the history and direction of ties between their countries. Thursday's lavish state summit at

the White House appeared heavy on symbolism but light on substance, with no sign of major breakthroughs between the world's biggest economies. Still, Trump highlighted progress under a bilateral trade mechanism, citing what he described as increased market access for US farmers and ranchers, while both leaders identified artificial intelligence as an area for cooperation. Trump said in remarks welcoming Xi that they would see some of the greatest treasures of US history at the National Archives, including the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They would also see "artifacts testifying to the long and cherished relationship" between China and the United States and their "cultural exchanges", he said. "Just as our ancestors reached across the ocean centuries ago to trade, to learn, and to build a better world, our two countries do really the same thing, and we're very proud of it and the relationship," Trump said. China has not commented on the visit to the archives, but analysts say Xi may be keen to see records relating to the US switch of recognition to communist China from Taiwan in 1979. Xi has long sought to persuade Trump.

Iran proposes reopening Hormuz, ending war within seven days

PEAK POINT



NEW YORK: Iran has submitted a proposal to the United States to end their war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz within seven days, its foreign minister

told media outlets in New York.

"If certain conditions are met, the strait will be open within seven days and talks will start," Abbas Araghchi, who is in the US for the UN General Assembly, told media outlets including the New York Times and The Guardian. Japanese news agency Kyodo was the first to report the proposal, citing a senior Iranian official on Tuesday. Iranian media, however, denied the Kyodo report, while authorities in Tehran have not clarified their position. Araghchi also met for talks on Tuesday with US President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff.

Iran has previously set out seven conditions for ending the war and reopening the strait. According to Araghchi, as quoted by the New York Times, the latest plan calls for a cessation of all hostilities in the Middle East for seven days, including in Lebanon.

Civil Secretariat, Police Lines shut in Peshawar over security

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: The Civil Secretariat in Peshawar has been evacuated with immediate effect due to security concerns. Secretariat sources said the mosque located inside the Civil Secretariat has also been closed as a precautionary measure amid the security concerns. The Directorate of Excise and Taxation has also been evacuated, while the former FATA Secretariat building has been cleared. Meanwhile, entry into Police Lines Peshawar has also been restricted due to security concerns. The Islamabad Motorway has been closed to all traffic at the Anbar Interchange.

Report identifies 260 Afghan terrorists killed on Pakistani soil in military operations

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A report has identified 260 Afghan terrorists killed in various military operations in Pakistan, exposing a deeply entrenched terrorist nexus operating directly from Afghan soil.

The security report featuring full names, home addresses, and detailed family records has debunked the continuous denials by the Afghan Taliban regime regarding its provision of sanctuary, support, and patronage to terrorist organizations.

As the toll strictly accounts for identified fatalities and excludes unidentified or active militants, the deaths represent only a fraction of the broader Afghan terrorist involvement inside Pakistan.

According to the report,

public funerals for these killed while attacking Pakistan. This state-backed



been held in their hometowns across Afghanistan, openly attended and participated in by Afghan Taliban regime officials, which demonstrates the regime's direct patronage. The regime, which claims to have no connection with cross-border terror, faces stark questions over why its official representatives stand side-by-side with families mourning terrorists

Hindustan.

High-powered military equipment, including M4 assault rifles, Remington sniper rifles, and advanced night-vision gear, is currently being deployed by these terrorists against Pakistani targets.

The human toll of this Afghan-based terror infrastructure has reached alarming levels. In 2026 alone, terrorism emanating from Afghan soil has resulted in 1,327 Pakistanis martyred and 2,484 injured.

The United Nations estimates confirm that Fitna al-Khawarij maintains a force strength of approximately 6,000 to 6,500 terrorists inside Afghanistan. Furthermore, UN reporting documented over 600 terrorist attacks launched against Pakistan in 2025, with multiple assaults originating.

33 India-sponsored terrorists killed by security forces in Balochistan since Sept 21: ISPR



PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces have killed 33 terrorists in counter-terrorism operations in Balochistan since Sept 21, the military's media affairs wing said in a statement on Friday.

Terrorists from Fitna-al-Khawarij and Fitna-al-Hindustan were targeted in the operations, according to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

The state uses the term Fitna al-Khawarij for the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and refers to designated Balochistan-based groups as Fitna al-Hindustan to highlight India's role in terrorism and destabilisation across Pakistan. Detailing the operations, the ISPR said that on Sept 24, as part of the ongoing Operation Shaban, security forces.



SPORTS



Pakistan secure 3-0 victory against China at Asian Games



MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Hockey team secured a 3-0 victory against China in the Pool B match of the 2026 Asian Games men's hockey competition, with Captain Abubakar Mehmood, Hannan Shahid, and Sufyan each contributing a goal to seal the win.

The recently concluded fixture got off to a quiet start as neither team could open the scoring in the first quarter.

Pakistan eventually pulled ahead at the 19th-minute mark when skipper Mahmood successfully converted a penalty corner. Sufyan doubled the Green Shirts' advantage five minutes later, scoring in a similar fashion.

Shahid further bolstered Pakistan's dominance in the win in the men's field hockey (24), who also have nine pulsating second quarter by scoring a sensational field goal in the 28th minute.

The triple strike helped Pakistan go into halftime with a three-goal lead in their

quint league-stage fixture. Furthermore, the hat-trick in the penultimate quarter, of victories consolidated their advantage until the final whistle as China could not score a single goal.

The 3-0 victory marked Pakistan's third consecutive win in the men's field hockey at the Asian Games. The national team first three games. Pakistan started their campaign with a next face Malaysia in their 9-0 routing of Thailand penultimate league-stage fixture, which would be crucial in determining.

Pakistan secure another Asian Games medal as Noor, Ashab reach squash semis



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan secured another medal at the Asian Games on Friday after Noor Zaman and Mohammad Ashab Irfan won their respective singles matches to reach the semi-finals of the squash competition. Third-seeded Noor defeated Hong Kong's Chi Hin Henry Leung, while fifth-seeded Ashab overcame India's Veer Chotrani at the Nagoya Kinjo Futo Arena to put Pakistan into the medal rounds of the event. Noor, Pakistan's top-ranked player in the draw, was pushed by Leung but held his nerve to secure a place in the last four. Ashab also produced a strong performance against the fourth-seeded Indian, recovering from losing the opening game to win 3-1. Ashab prevailed 6-11, 11-8, 11-6, 11-6 to avenge Pakistan's defeat to India in the men's team final at the previous Asian Games. The victories mean Pakistan are assured of at least a bronze medal in the men's singles competition, with the losing semi-finalists awarded bronze. It is the first time since 2002 that two players for Pakistan have made it to the Asian Games semi-finals. The two Pakistanis had reached the quarter-finals without dropping a game, with Noor defeating Kuwait's Ammar Altamimi 11-4, 11-9, 11-4 and Ashab overcoming Saudi Arabia's Mohammad Al Alnafsan 11-9, 11-3, 11-5 in the last 16 on Thursday.

Pakistan gears up for FIFA ASEAN Cup challenge



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: (2:00pm PST) on Saturday, will be the first game for the Pakistan men's football team in an official FIFA tournament with the event offering and opportunity for Solano's men to compete against teams much higher than them in the FIFA rankings, said a press release. "We want to use this opportunity to test ourselves against

dalone football tournament title in 74 years. The FIFA ASEAN Cup, though, will offer a sterner test.

"All our opponents will be very tough and they have fantastic players," said Solano. "Asian football has been getting better and better so it is a big test for us. We are slowly growing, we try to go step by step. We will try to prove ourselves as a national team and see how far we can go in this competition. For skipper Abdullah, the tournament is an opportunity for the players to step up. "It is a great opportunity for us to compete against teams at another level," said Abdullah. "We will try to give our best."

Taekwondo Belt Promotion Test to be held on September 28



PTV batter breaks Misbah's record with 49-ball century



Beyond the silence: Pakistan's Sana finds expression in squash

PEAK POINT

Inside the glass walls of a squash court, Sana Bahadar lets her racquet do the talking. Outside, the 20-year-old Pakistani communicates through a combination of sign language and lip reading.

Deaf and non-verbal since birth, as are her two younger brothers, Sana struggled to communicate until squash gave her a powerful medium of self-expression.

A round-of-32 defeat at the hands of Iran's Najmeh Boushehri-zadeh cut short her Asian Games debut, but simply competing at the Aichi-Nagoya Games marks a monumental achievement.

"She's a role model not just for kids who can't hear or speak," her father Sher Bahadar, who runs a printing business in Peshawar, told Reuters as Sana scrolled on her phone beside him at the Kinjo Futo Arena.

"In our family circles, she's seen as an example of where talent and commitment can take you."

That journey has demanded heavy sacrifices.

Bahadar sold two of his printing machines this year to

Sana was just 10 years old when she took up the sport and was introduced to Pakistani squash great Qamar Zaman, who took her under his wing.

"You know how it is in those special schools. They



fund Sana's overseas trips. With the demands of accompanying her abroad, his business has dropped by 60% — a reality he acknowledged with a wry smile.

"I have no regrets, though. Because of her, I get to travel and meet so many great athletes. We are absolutely proud of her," he said.

herd students into stitching, weaving and carpentry classes. I said, why not IT or sports?" Bahadar said.

The vision proved fruitful, but financial hurdles mounted quickly once Sana rose to become the national champion. A Karachi-based foundation provides four million Pakistanis.



5th edition of Sharjah Book Sellers Conference brings together 912 book industry professionals from 99 countries

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The fifth edition of the Sharjah Book Sellers Conference, organized by the Sharjah Book Authority, was inaugurated by Chairperson of the Sharjah Book Authority Sheikhha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi at Expo Centre Sharjah.

The two-day conference brought together 912 booksellers, publishers, distributors and representatives of e-commerce platforms from 99 countries to discuss bookselling, distribution, digital promotion, artificial intelligence and innovative ways of reaching readers. Pakistan's book and publishing industry was also represented at the conference.

The Pakistani delegation

included National Book Foundation (NBF) Director Headquarters Murad Ali Mohmand, Director Book Corner Pakistan Amar Shahid, Urdu World Books Chief Executive Officer Sarmad Khan, Ferrozsons' Daniyal Muhammad and Liberty Books Pakistan Director Sameer, said a message received here on Friday.

Pakistani representatives established professional contacts with international booksellers, publishers and distributors and discussed opportunities for cooperation in publishing, sales, distribution, translation, digital platforms and access to international book markets.

The participation of Pakistani delegates provided



an opportunity to highlight Pakistan's literary, book and publishing activities within the broader global publishing industry. In particular, the representation of the National Book Foundation helped connect Pakistan's public-sector initiatives for the promotion and publication of books, access to readers and international literary and publishing relations

with the global book industry. The inaugural ceremony was attended by Sharjah Book Authority Chief Executive Ahmed bin Rakkad Al Ameri, board members, and representatives of cultural organizations, publishing houses and libraries from the United Arab Emirates and various other countries.

The conference aimed to

examine practical challenges facing the bookselling sector, explore effective ways of bringing books to readers, benefit from experiences across different markets and promote international business relations.

Its programme featured workshops, panel discussions, innovative presentations and direct business meetings.

In her keynote address, Sheikhha Bodour Al Qasimi said that technology was rapidly transforming the ways in which content is created, discovered and trusted. However, she noted that the fundamental role of booksellers remained to connect the right book with the right reader. She said Sharjah continues to attach

importance to this essential relationship between books and readers, while recognising that making use of technological opportunities and investing in the capabilities of industry professionals are essential to preparing for the future.

The conference also featured a keynote address by Jaime Daez, founder and managing director of the Philippines-based renowned bookstore Fully Booked. He shared the organization's journey from a specialized architectural bookstore to a multi-subject bookselling business, highlighting changes in the market, the needs of local readers, bookstore management and the growing importance of e-commerce.

PEC launches 2nd Young Engineers Personality Development Programme at NDU

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), in collaboration with the National Defence University (NDU), held the inaugural session of its second Young Engineers Personality Development Programme (YEPDP) at NDU.

The one-week programme is being conducted for Phase 2, Batch-I of PEC's Graduate Engineers Training (GET)

Placement Programme. The batch comprises 700 engineering graduates who have completed five months of field placement across more than 60 leading public and private organisations. At NDU, they will take part in training organised through the Institute for Professional Leadership Development Centre (IPLDC), covering communication, leadership, teamwork, emotional intelligence, con-



flict management and professional ethics.

Chairman PEC Engr. Waseem Nazir said the training would help young engineers build on their field experience and prepare for professional responsibilities. He congratulated the participants on the opportunity to become NDU alumni at an early stage of their careers and encouraged them to make full use of the programme. PEC selected

a total of 2,300 engineers for the first and second GET cohorts through digital balloting, with each trainee receiving Rs. 50,000 throughout their placement. The first cohort of 600 graduates completed its training at NDU in July 2026. The current batch will complete its one-week programme through expert-led sessions, discussions, case studies and practical learning activities.

Opinion & Editorial

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A fragile recovery

Though economic indicators are moving in the right direction, Pakistan's economy is still in a very fragile shape, according to the latest Asian Development Bank report. The Asian Development Outlook warns that even though the economy has stabilised, it is still perilously vulnerable to shocks beyond its control. According to the report, GDP growth accelerated to 3.7% in FY26, up from 3.2% the previous year. Gains were largely due to a rebound in manufacturing, which grew 6.6%. Resilient services grew 4.1%, and agricultural recovery grew steadily at 2.9%. Private investment rose 8.6% in real terms, and sovereign credit rating upgrades from S&P and Moody's signaled renewed investor confidence. But these indicators are not enough to offset the fact that inflation is still concerning - it was 7.1% in FY26 and is projected to climb to 8.3% in FY27, well above the SBP's 5% to 7% target range. While external shocks - such as the conflict involving Iran and its impact on global trade and energy prices - have played an outsized role in raising prices, our economy could have absorbed these shocks more easily if it were not already on shaky ground. The government has also not done itself any favours by choosing to increase spending in several non-revenue areas - meaning that these spending increases will not increase government revenue at all.

Education for society

Faisal Bari

NOTWITHSTANDING what might be going on in other countries, Pakistan has a real problem regarding violence against women. In the past few months alone, we have seen some horrendous incidents: 'honour' killings, marriage-of-choice killings, rapes, domestic violence, spousal violence and killings, abduction, rape and killing of minors, and violence against employees and staff. There is no dearth of reports from national and international bodies documenting the extent and severity of these issues.

A couple of points stand out in these reports. One, we do not have good data on violence against women. Incidents are underreported, and there are no national registries or data sets of any sort. Most reported data comes from newspaper reporting, police case registrations, hotline reports, and so on. Two, though many reasons - poor laws and weak implementation, few protections, pathetic institutional arrangements, low reporting and conviction rates, delays, social and societal taboos, etc - are cited in these reports, a primary one is the impact of patriarchy: the control of men over society. Patriarchy shapes not only laws, norms, and expectations in this society; it also shapes responses: what she was wearing, why she was out at that time, why she was driving, and so on.

Patriarchy is hard to spot, fight, and neutralise because it is embedded in almost every norm, rule, and law. Most societies have, historically and even today, used education to address society's main issues. What it means to be educated has varied across societies and times, and one element (other than the ability to carry out tasks) has been the larger socialisation of the individual within society and the shaping of their values and norms. I want to pose the question: should we not be shaping our education to take on the issue of patriarchy and its impacts directly?

Recently, my daughter started school as a fifth-grader in a public school in London. On the very first day, after introductions and other formalities, her teacher spent a couple of hours talking about the autism spectrum and notions of inclusion, expected behaviour, and what was not expected or what would not be tolerated. This came before any conversation about the English or math curriculum. This term, the heroes the class will be introduced to include Frida Kahlo, Mahatma Gandhi, Simone Biles, and a couple of human rights defenders from across the globe. We must address the most urgent social and cultural issues of our society through education. Every day when I walk her back from school and ask her about her day, she tells me about the book they have

been reading in class, the documentary they saw, the discussions they had, etc. I have to ask specifically about her math, English and history lessons. They are there, and she is learning the subjects she is supposed to, but the school and her education are much more than that. This has been true every school day. It is about what she needs as a human being and a citizen; it is about values and the kind of society that needs to be there. Specific skills are just a small part of the 'education' she is getting.

I went to some of the best schools in Lahore in the day. But when I landed in England for undergraduate studies, one of the first things I noticed, comparing my own educational experiences with those of my undergraduate peers from England, was that almost each one of my peers had been exposed to things I had not. All of them had good exposure to and knowledge of a major European language other than English. All of them had studied music for many years in their schools, and many could play one instrument fairly well or had a good understanding of it. Many of them had had singing lessons: some were good choir singers. So, language, music and singing. Their exposure to art was also more advanced than mine. The schools I attended focused much more on doing well in academic subjects and preparing for school-leaving examinations.

Courtesy Dawn

Time to divest the hybrid

Shahzad Chaudhry

We have been in it for a long time now. It all began on April 10, 2022, when an order was put in place to keep functioning normally. It will soon be five years to that day - the normal tenure of any government. Beyond claims of avoiding an impending default, we can count little else as progress in the domains the governing concoction oversees. Perhaps, legally and constitutionally, we may barely be in the green, but that would not have been possible without large-scale legislative manipulation and court-packing. That in its wake is a certain stink goes without saying. At the hands of some legal luminaries, this surely must count as the lowest point in our national journey of the last five years.

Through it all, we coined, and then popularised, and then normalised the term hybrid, which was as repugnant as the derogatory and symbolic pointing of the fingers at the shoulders when referring to the Establishment whenever a politician was put on the spot. In the meantime, the military forces distinguished themselves in 2025, and then added value to it by employing their global standing for significant diplomatic gains. The function, though, primarily lay in the government's corner. The government has used the opportunity to reinforce the notion of hybridity that this government relishes. It touts PTI as the common threat, but the impunity it employs in this commonness is all too apparent. The government thus continues to enjoy a free ride. And it has flown plenty to all corners of the world without alleviating an iota of difficulty for the common man in whose name they don the ruler's robes. The war in the Middle East has been a huge impediment, undoubtedly, as most global economies point South, but without it too there was no sign of easing of the frills and the extravagance that has accompanied the style of governance when a default has always loomed.

Courtesy Tribune

Dar, Saudi and Turkish counterparts review progress on institutionalising tripartite defence pact



PEAK POINT

NEW YORK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar met his Saudi Arabian and Turkish counterparts on Friday to review progress on institutionalising the tripartite Makkah Defence Alliance. The agreement — signed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye on August 7 — empowers member states to treat an attack against one of them as an attack against all. Its inaugural meeting was held on Aug 31, where officials from all member states met in Istanbul to establish the institu-

tional structure of the alliance, and Pakistan was picked to head its secretariat in Riyadh. Retired Lieutenant General Nauman Mahmood was appointed as the first secretary general on September 23. Dar met Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and Türkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan at the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, he said in a post on social media platform X. "Under the framework of the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement (MJDA), we

reviewed progress towards establishing the institutional structures under the agreement and exchanged views on regional and international security issues," he wrote.

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Ministry, in a post on X, said the meeting was held within the framework of the agreement, where the three member states condemned the recent Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia and discussed arrangements to convene an "urgent meeting of the chiefs of staff of the three countries" to support the Gulf state within the pact.

"They commended the vigilance of the Saudi armed forces and their ability to defend the kingdom's security," the statement said, adding that Saudi Arabia held the right to take measures "it deems appropriate" in self-defence.

It added that the three sides reviewed progress on the establishment of the general secretariat, committees, and working groups, as well as "preparations for the commencement of their activities".

KP government 'deliberately evading' constitutional duty to maintain law & order: Tarar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Friday said the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was "deliberately evading" its constitutional responsibility to maintain law and order in the province.

Talking to media here, Tarar said KP government was "playing the role of a facilitator for terrorists" rather than confronting them.

Terming law and order a provincial subject, he said it was incumbent upon the KP government to address the deteriorating security situation.

The minister questioned why a provincial government, which had an absolute control over its territory, would choose not to act against militancy. In fact, there is a "political-terror and crime



nexus" built around illegal mining and the timber trade, he said.

Tarar pointed out that militancy prevailed in the province because in connivance between the politicians and terrorists, adding that the provincial politicians were "on the front" funding terrorist networks through illegal contracts and trade.

He said PTI not only abstained from condemning terrorists operating in the province but avoided taking any action against them. The minister said when security forces came under attack from across the border.

M-6, M-10 to strengthen Pakistan's connectivity with China, Central Asia: Aleem Khan

PEAK POINT

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Friday said that stronger regional connectivity and mutual cooperation were essential to address emerging global economic challenges. Addressing a special panel discussion on the impact of international connectivity at the 2nd International Investment Forum in Baku, he said that almost every country had been affected by the prevailing global economic pressures and under such circumstances, mutual cooperation were essential, said a press release. The forum was attended by ministers and delegates from more than 60 countries, including Central Asian states, Türkiye, China, United States, United Kingdom, UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that Pakistan had taken stringent measures to reduce Government expenditure while at the same time, infrastructure was being upgraded on modern lines to promote trade, investment and regional connectivity.

He noted that recent tensions along maritime routes had resulted in a significant

increase in global freight and trade costs. However, Pakistan continues to provide safe and efficient land and maritime corridors for regional trade even in challenging circumstances, he said.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that the ports of Karachi, Port Qasim and Gwadar remained fully operational while Karachi Port handled more than 54 million metric tonnes of cargo annually. Improved regional connectivity is transforming Pakistan into an important trade hub while the country is emerging as a key maritime gateway for Central Asian states, as well, he said and added that Pakistan's exports to Central Asian countries had witnessed significant growth whereas Pakistan's exports to Kazakhstan had exceeded US\$240 million and exports to Uzbekistan had surpassed US\$118 million.

The minister said that the quadrilateral trade agreement among Pakistan, China, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan was operational while efforts were underway to include Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in the regional trade network. He said that Pakistan was also playing a positive role in promoting

Amir Muqam calls for focus on development, rejects protest politics

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and President of PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engineer Amir Muqam, on Friday said all constitutional stages in Azad Kashmir including the election of the president have been completed smoothly while urging political groups to resolve differences through dialogue instead of protests and sit-ins.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Amir Muqam welcomed the election of Dr. Muhammad Najeeb Naqi Khan as President of Azad Kashmir and said the election process had sent a positive message in the region. He said the people of Azad Kashmir had expressed confidence in the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and thanked the people and all those who contributed to the electoral process. He also said the election of Prime Minister Barrister Ifthikhar Gilani had been completed smoothly. The minister said the federal government would continue.

UN must be strengthened, not abandoned: Sardar Masood Khan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Former ambassador to the United States, China and the UN, Sardar Masood Khan said here Friday that the United Nations must be strengthened through the rule of law and revitalised multilateralism to address contemporary global crises. Responding to the rapidly evolving conflict in the Middle East, Sardar Masood Khan said in a statement that the widening US-Iran confrontation had created serious regional and global consequences, while the situation involving the Houthis, Saudi Arabia and the wider Gulf had further complicated the security environment. He said the present moment required sustained diplomacy alongside security measures.



Khan said the central question facing the US-Iran confrontation was whether the conflict would continue to escalate or whether a negotiated framework could emerge. He noted that both sides had publicly articulated positions while leaving some space for diplomacy. He stressed that direct engagement between the two sides, if it materialised, would be an important indication that their negotiators had found sufficient common ground for dialogue. He said the continuing conflict had imposed.

Women University Mardan conducts first-ever M.Phil viva voce in Mathematics

PEAK POINT

MARDAN: Women University Mardan achieved a significant academic milestone with the successful conduct of the first-ever M.Phil Viva Voce in the Department of Mathematics. Five M.Phil scholars formally presented and defended their research theses before the duly constituted examination committee. Dr. Hina Zahir, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar (SBBWU), and Dr. Mahreen Fiza, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM), served as External Examiners. The research scholars were supervised by Dr. Mehnaz and Dr. Sumaira Saleem. The University extends



its sincere congratulations to the scholars, their supervisors, and the Department of Mathematics on this landmark academic achievement, which reflects the institution's continued commitment to promoting quality post-graduate research and academic excellence. The University also acknowledges and appreciates the valuable support and cooperation extended by the Director.



BAKU: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan attended 2nd International Investment Forum in Azerbaijan.

Stronger strategic ties among Muslim countries urged to address growing threats

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Greater strategic interaction and sustained institutional cooperation among Muslim countries are needed to enable the Muslim world to respond more effectively to rapidly changing geopolitical developments and emerging global challenges. In this context, the Asia-Pacific region, home to some of the world's largest Muslim populations, is immensely important.

This was observed by a delegation from the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies

(IAIS), Malaysia, during a visit to the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The two institutions also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the occasion.

The IAIS delegation comprised the CEO, Dr Syed Azman bin Syed Ahmad Nawawi; Deputy CEO, Dr Ahmad Badri bin Abdullah; Dr Abdul Latif bin Mohd Ibrahim, head of Research and Publication Division; and Mohd Faiz bin Md Nawi, special officer (international affairs), Strategic Unit, IPS was represented by Chairman



Khalid Rahman; Vice Chairman Syed Abrar Hussain; Abdul Rashid Turabi, Kashmir affairs expert; Shafaq Sarfraz, head of operations; and Nadeem Farhat, research fellow. The delegation noted that

the Muslim world was facing a range of complex challenges amid significant changes in the international system. It emphasized the importance of closer interaction among Muslim countries, particularly in Asia,

given their substantial populations, economic potential, and strategic significance. Greater coordination, information-sharing, and institutional linkages were viewed as important for developing a more informed and proactive response to global and regional developments.

The discussion also covered Palestine, Occupied Kashmir, Afghanistan, Sudan and other conflict-affected regions, with participants stressing the importance of developing a deeper understanding of the political, social and geopolitical fac-

tors shaping these crises. The participants observed that longstanding conflicts require sustained attention rather than being treated only as short-term crises.

Geostategic experts from both institutions exchanged insights and perspectives on current geopolitical conditions that are severely impacting Muslim populations worldwide. While the genocide in Palestine and pervasive human rights violations in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir received specific attention, the constructive.