



Strong economy, advanced technology, unity vital to national defence: Ahsan



Naqvi doubles down on demand for new provinces



Minister inaugurates monsoon tree plantation drive at Pak Secretariat

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PM, president highlight Pakistan's growing role in regional security as nation observes Defence Day

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Zardari highlighted Pakistan's growing role in regional security on Sunday as the nation observed its 61st Defence and Martyrs' Day.

The day began with a 31-gun salute in Islamabad and a 21-gun salute in the provincial capitals, state broadcaster Radio Pakistan reported. A change of guards was also held at the Quaid's mausoleum in Karachi. A contingent of 64 male and eight female cadets from the Pakistan Air Force Academy participated in the guard-changing ceremony with Asghar Khan assuming guard duties.

Defence Day is observed every year on September 6 to commemorate the legacy of

the 1965 war, which began after India launched an attack across the international border. The war ended with a ceasefire on September 22, and peace between the two countries was negotiated under Soviet auspices in Tashkent on January 10, 1966.

During this war, 1617 square miles of territory was occupied by Pakistan as compared to 446 square miles of Pakistan's open and undefended territory occupied by India. The Pakistan Army had captured 20 Indian officers, 19 junior Indian commissioned officers and 569 other ranks.

PM Shehbaz paid tribute to the martyrs and veterans of the armed forces and their families on behalf of the entire nation in a Defence Day message issued by his office.



KARACHI: Pakistan Air Force (PAF) cadets from the PAF Academy Asghar Khan assumed ceremonial guard duties at Mazar-e-Quaid on Defence Day.

Security forces kill over 20 terrorists during multiple engagements in KP: ISPR

PEAK POINT



RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed over 20 terrorists during multiple engagements in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa between September 3 and 5, the military's media affairs wing said on Sunday.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the slain terrorists were sponsored by India and belonged to Fitna-al-Khawarij — a term the state uses for the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The ISPR statement mentioned an engagement in KP's North Waziristan on the night between August 31 and September 1. Security forces had initially killed 15 terrorists who were trying to infiltrate into Pakistan through its border with Afghanistan at the time. Following that, 10 more terrorists holed up in the area were killed, the statement said, adding that a total of 25 terrorists trying to enter Pakistan had been killed in that event. In another encounter in North Waziristan, movement of another group of terrorists along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border was picked up by the security forces. "Own troops effectively engaged this group of khawarij. As a result of precise and skillful engagement, seven khawarij were neutralised," the ISPR statement said.

Ghalibaf warns any aggression against Iran will draw a 'faster, heavier, more painful' response

PEAK POINT



TEHRAN: Iranian parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf on Sunday said the United States had realised that the era of "proportionate responses" had come to an end, the ISNA news agency posted on X.

"From now on, any aggression against Iran's interests and security will receive a 'faster, heavier, and more painful' response," Ghalibaf said. He said powerful strikes by Iranian military forces against US bases had left American leaders "in a state of utter helplessness". IRNA news agency wrote on X. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said on early Sunday that it targeted a US aircraft carrier and a navy destroyer with ballistic missiles, claiming both were damaged and withdrew from the area. The IRGC said in a statement published by IRNA news agency that its Aerospace Force launched the missiles at the two warships. It claimed the vessels had harassed Iranian ships and were taking part in a maritime blockade, adding that both warships left the "engagement area" after sustaining damage. The IRGC said the US military's Central Command (CENTCOM) acknowledged that two navy warships were targeted, describing its statement as confirmation of the operation.

It also warned that continued US military action would draw "heavier" responses from Iran's armed forces.

PTI leader Hammad Azhar arrested from Multan in May 9 cases

PEAK POINT



LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former National Assembly member Hammad Azhar has been arrested in Multan and handed

over to Lahore police for further proceedings, police sources told The Express Tribune on Sunday.

According to police sources, Azhar was involved in several cases related to the May 9 events and had been declared a proclaimed offender since May 9, 2023.

The police sources claimed Azhar was detained near the RA Bazaar area and was taken into custody from the home of a close friend. The PTI leader was wanted in the May 9 case involving an attack on the Government Officers' Residence (GOR) Gate, they said.

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) had declared Azhar a proclaimed offender over his non-appearance, while the court had also issued his permanent arrest warrants, according to police sources.

The sources said Azhar had been handed over to the investigation wing. He was also a nominated accused in more than 50 cases related to the May 9 events.

Impressive ceremony held at GHQ to mark Defence and Martyrs Day

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: An impressive ceremony was held at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi today to mark Defence and Martyrs Day. A smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Army presented a salute at the Martyrs' Monument at the GHQ. The Adjutant General of the Pakistan Army visited the Martyrs' Monument and laid a floral wreath to pay tribute to the martyrs. During the ceremony, the Adjutant General held a special meeting with the families of the martyrs and expressed solidarity with them. He listened to the issues faced.

Dar, Saudi and Turkish FM's follow up on understandings reached in first Makkah Defence Alliance meeting: FO

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar held phone calls with Saudi Arabian and Turkish foreign ministers on Sunday and followed up on the understandings reached at the inaugural meeting of the Makkah Defence Alliance last month, the Foreign Office (FO) said. The joint defence pact was signed on August 7 and empowers the member states to treat an attack against one of them as an attack against all of them. Its inaugural meeting was held on August 31 in Istanbul, where it was decided that the alliance's secretariat would be initially headed by Pakistan for three years. The three countries also agreed to work towards strengthening their defence capabilities and the cohesion of their armed

forces through joint activities, robust defence indus-

Prince Faisal Bin Farhan and Turkish Foreign



try cooperation, and joint technology development and production. Moreover, through the institutionalised and resolute implementation of the Makkah agreement, the three countries also agreed to provide essential contributions to regional peace and stability. In a series of posts on social media platform X, FO said that DPM Dar held separate phone calls with Saudi Foreign Minister

Minister Hakan Fidan on Sunday. In the call with the Saudi FM, the two leaders discussed regional and international developments, including matters of mutual interest at multilateral fora. "They also discussed follow-up on the understandings reached at the inaugural meeting of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee of the Makkah Defence Alliance,

held in Istanbul, and agreed to remain in close contact," FO said.

In a separate post, FO said that Dar also spoke to Fidan and thanked him for hosting the inaugural meeting of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee under the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement in Istanbul.

FO said the two leaders followed up on understandings reached and discussed ways to further advance cooperation under the framework.

"The two foreign ministers also exchanged views on regional and international developments. They also discussed matters of mutual interest and opportunities to further strengthen cooperation at multilateral fora," FO added. The tripartite agreement was signed by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Pakistan condemns demolition of century-old mosque in India



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly condemned the demolition of the century-old mosque in Saharanpur, India. Responding to media queries regarding reports of the demolition of a century-old mosque in Saharanpur, Foreign Office Spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan on Sunday said this reprehensible action against a historic Islamic place of worship is yet another manifestation of the broader Islamophobic and Hindutva-driven campaign to erase Islamic heritage. He said the demolition of the historic Babri Masjid in 1992 remains an enduring symbol of this ideology of religious intolerance, prejudice and hatred.

The spokesperson called upon the international community to take immediate cognizance of the systematic persecution of Muslims by Indian authorities and the continued desecration.



SPORTS



PCB, franchises weigh January window for next PSL edition: Report



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and eight Pakistan Super League (PSL) franchise owners have discussed moving next year's tournament to January.

The proposal was discussed at the PSL Governing Council meeting held in London on September 1, with media rights holder Walee Technologies reportedly pushing for an earlier window.

The report said Walee proposed moving the PSL to January over concerns about limited advertising revenue during the April-May window.

The period comes after Ramadan, when companies are understood to have already spent a significant portion of their marketing and television advertising budgets.

Franchise owners, however, have raised concerns over whether they would receive their full share of broadcast revenue regardless of when the tournament is held, particularly amid questions over Walee's advertising returns.

Under the existing agreement, the eight franchises receive 95% of broadcast revenue from the central revenue pool.

The first nine editions of the

PSL, held between 2016 and 2024, were staged in the February-March window.

The tournament was moved to April-May for the past two seasons because of the ICC Champions Trophy in 2025 and the T20 World Cup this year, resulting in the PSL being played concurrently with the Indian Premier League (IPL).

One advantage of holding the PSL alongside the IPL has been the uninterrupted availability of players, an issue that had affected previous editions because of clashes with other T20 leagues around the world.

A January-February window could again create player-availability issues, with the PSL competing for overseas players with South Africa's SA20 and Australia's Big Bash League.

The shift could also create logistical challenges in Punjab, where January and February bring colder temperatures and dense fog. Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi, three of the four traditional PSL venues, are located in the province.

One proposal is to start the tournament in Karachi before moving to Punjab and Peshawar as weather conditions improve.

Hesson faces selection challenge



PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Pakistan head into the third and final Test against England at Edgbaston on Wednesday with their preparations clouded by a string of omissions that have left the touring side short of experience and facing the prospect of a first Test-series clean sweep in England.

England lead the series and have a chance to complete a 3-0 victory, something they have failed to achieve against Pakistan on home soil despite coming close twice.

England won four of five Tests in 1962 but Pakistan drew one match to avoid a sweep. In 2006, England won three of four, with another draw again denying them a clean sweep.

The opportunity is now firmly in England's hands, with Pakistan entering the Birmingham Test after a difficult period in which seven players and two key coaches were left out of the touring party following the defeat at Lord's.

The changes have left head coach Mike Hesson working with a squad that must be rebuilt quickly before the series finale.

Pakistan have spent the last few days training in Birmingham, where Hesson will be looking to settle on a combination capable of competing with an England attack that has consistently tested their batting.

India thrash Pakistan by seven wickets in Women's T20 Asia Cup



PEAK POINT

DUBAI: Three wickets each by Prema Rawat and Shree Charani and a positive batting display helped India beat Pakistan by seven wickets in the ninth match of the ACC Women's T20 Asia Cup 2026 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

Chasing a modest 56-run target, India crossed the line in 8.4 overs with seven wickets to spare, courtesy of an unbeaten

partnership between Deepti Sharma and captain Harmanpreet Kaur.

The former champions, however, got off to a shaky start to the pursuit as Pakistan captain Fatima Sana dismissed Shafali Verma (12) and Pratika Rawal (four) in the second over with 18 runs on the board.

Following the back-to-back set-backs, captain Kaur joined Smriti Mandhana (nine) in

the middle, and the experienced duo could slip to bat first in the for the third wicket before Fatima struck backfired as the Green Shirts' batting unit faltered and could muster 55 before getting bowled out in 18.1 overs.

Kaur then joined forces with all-rounder Deepti, and the duo steered India to glory in the ninth over with an unbeaten 28-run partnership.

Captain Kaur top-scored for India with an unbeaten run-a-ball 18, comprising one four and a six, while Deepti made 12 not out from 14 deliveries.

Skipper Fatima remained the solitary wicket-taker for Pakistan as she made three scalps for just 17 runs in her three overs.

Pakistan captain Fatima Sana's decision to bat first in the high-octane fixture before Fatima struck backfired as the Green Shirts' batting unit faltered and could muster 55 before getting bowled out in 18.1 overs.

The Green Shirts, however, got off to a contrasting start to their innings as their opening pair of Muneeba Ali and Shawaal Zulfiqar put together a 27-run partnership.

Right-arm spinner Shafali Verma gave India the much-needed breakthrough in the fifth over when she remained the solitary wicket-taker for Pakistan after being hit for four. The left-handed opener walked back after scoring 13 off 15 deliveries.

6,000 athletes to participate in Pakistan-hosted South Asian Games next year



Pakistan hockey team reaches in South Korea for Asian Games preparations

MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's national senior hockey team has arrived in the Republic of Korea to participate in a pre-Asian Games training camp and a series of practice matches against the Korean national side.

According to the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) on Sunday, the national team will stay in South Korea till September 14 as part of its preparations for the upcoming Asian Games. The Pakistan side will undergo joint training sessions with the Korean team and play three practice matches during the tour. The schedule includes a joint training session on Monday, followed by the first practice match on Tuesday. The two sides will hold joint training sessions on September 9 and 10, while the second practice match is scheduled for September 11. Another joint

training session will take place on September 12 before the third and final practice match on September 13. The Pakistan team will return home from South Korea on the night of September 14.

The PHF has also clarified that the same squad that represented Pakistan in the FIH World Cup 2026 will feature in the South Korea series, with the selection



The PHF spokesperson said the training camp and practice series would provide the national players with an important opportunity to fine-tune their preparations ahead of the Asian Games and address weaknesses identified during their previ-

ous international engagements.

The same squad will subsequently represent Pakistan at the Asian Games, providing the team with continuity and valuable international match practice ahead of the continental event.

Eight Siblings make Taekwondo history, Bag Six Golds, Two Silvers at Swat Azadi Cup





Hamza Shehbaz's 52nd birthday celebrated by team Hamza Shehbaz Sharif

Nawabzada Mohsin Ali Khan, MNA Mahjabeen Abbasi, Sajid Abbasi, Yasir Abbasi and Col. (Retd.) Anwar Abbasi Attend Ceremony

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A cake-cutting ceremony was organised by Team Hamza Shehbaz Sharif to celebrate the 52nd birthday of former Punjab Chief Minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Hamza Shehbaz Sharif. The ceremony was held at the National Press Club, Islamabad. The event was attended by Team Hamza Shehbaz Sharif Coordinator Yasir Abbasi, former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial minister Nawabzada Mohsin Ali

Khan, Member of the National Assembly Mahjabeen Abbasi, PML-N Islamabad General Secretary Sajid Abbasi and Colonel (Retd.) Anwar Abbasi. Speaking on the occasion, Yasir Abbasi extended heartfelt birthday greetings to Hamza Shehbaz Sharif and said that his political struggle, commitment to public service and passion for the development of Punjab were highly commendable. He said that Team Hamza Shehbaz Sharif was proud of its young leader,



adding that PML-N workers, particularly the youth, held Hamza Shehbaz's leadership and spirit of public service in high esteem. Yasir Abbasi expressed hope that Hamza Shehbaz Sharif would continue to maintain the same

bond, affection and patronage with party workers and members of his team that he had demonstrated in the past. He said he was proud to be a part of Team Hamza Shehbaz Sharif and extended his best wishes to the team's

patron-in-chief on his birthday. He prayed that the coming year would bring Hamza Shehbaz Sharif greater success, honour, happiness and further opportunities to serve the people. Yasir Abbasi also thanked Nawabzada Mohsin Ali Khan, MNA Mahjabeen Abbasi, PML-N Islamabad General Secretary Sajid Abbasi and Colonel (Retd.) Anwar Abbasi for attending the ceremony and extending their support to Team Hamza Shehbaz Sharif. The participants expressed their resolve to continue standing firmly

with the PML-N and its mission of public service under the leadership of Hamza Shehbaz Sharif. Concluding the ceremony, Yasir Abbasi once again extended his heartfelt birthday wishes to Hamza Shehbaz Sharif and prayed for his long life, good health, success and prosperity. "Happy birthday to Hamza Shehbaz Sharif. May Allah Almighty always bless him with success and prosperity. We all pray for his long life, health and well-being."

Defence Day: Top City-1 holds Grand Motor Rally to Pay Tribute to Pakistan Armed Forces September 6 is a glorious chapter in Pakistan's national history, says Brig (Retd) Amjad Ali Jan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of Defence Day of Pakistan, Top City-1 organised a grand and enthusiastic motor rally from Top City-1 to Fatima Jinnah Park (F-7), Islamabad. The rally was held on the directives of Top City-1 CEO Kanwar Moeiz Khan, with a large number of citizens participating in cars and motorcycles. The motor rally departed from Top City-1 and proceeded via Srinagar Highway before culminating at Fatima Jinnah Park, F-7.

Participants carried national flags, banners and pictures of the country's military leadership, while the rally reverberated with enthusiastic slogans of "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Pakistan Armed Forces Pindabad." The participants paid glowing tribute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the defence, security and sovereignty of the motherland, while also expressing deep appreciation for the sacrifices and services of the Pakistan Armed Forces. The participants expressed their full confidence in the leader-



ship of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir Shah, Chief of Army Staff, and said that the nation stood firmly alongside its armed forces and would make every sacrifice necessary for the defence and secu-

urity of the country. Addressing the participants on behalf of Top City-1 CEO Kanwar Moeiz Khan, Brigadier (Retd.) Amjad Ali Jan said that September 6 is a glorious chapter in Pakistan's

national history, marked by timeless stories of courage, sacrifice and selflessness. He said the brave sons of the Pakistan Army had always thwarted the enemy's nefarious designs by putting their lives on the line. He said the Defence Day rally was a symbol of national unity and solidarity with the Pakistan Armed Forces, adding that the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder with the country's brave forces and would never allow the sovereignty, security and integrity of Pakistan to be compro-

missed. Brigadier (Retd.) Amjad Ali Jan further said that Defence Day provided an opportunity to remember the sacrifices of the martyrs, carry forward their mission and renew the national commitment to unity and solidarity for the defence of Pakistan. The rally concluded at Fatima Jinnah Park, where special prayers were offered for the security, stability and prosperity of Pakistan, elevation of the ranks of the martyrs, and continued success and glory of the Pakistan Armed Forces.

Opinion & Editorial

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Kalash Valley: A Living Masterpiece of Nature's Beauty

By: Zaheer Haider Jafri

Pakistan is blessed with an extraordinary diversity of landscapes, cultures and traditions. From the Arabian Sea to the snow-covered peaks of the north, the country offers countless examples of nature's magnificence. Among these remarkable destinations, the Kalash Valley holds a special place. Surrounded by majestic mountains, green slopes, flowing streams and peaceful natural surroundings, Kalash is not merely a tourist destination; it is a living masterpiece where nature, culture and human life exist in remarkable harmony. Located in the Chitral region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Kalash valleys include Bumburet, Rumbur and Birir. These valleys are surrounded by towering mountains and blessed with forests, springs, streams and fertile slopes. The landscape changes dramatically with the seasons, giving the region a different character throughout the year. In spring, the valley becomes green and colourful; in summer, its pleasant climate attracts visitors; while in winter, snow-covered mountains transform the entire landscape into a breathtaking natural scene. The beauty of Kalash, however, cannot be understood through its mountains alone. Its real uniqueness lies in the combination of natural beauty and cultural diversity. The Kalash community has a distinctive language, traditional dress, music, festivals and social customs. Their centuries-old cultural traditions have made the valley an important cultural destination not only for Pakistani tourists but also for researchers, photographers and international visitors interested in indigenous cultures. The traditional festivals of Kalash are among the



most fascinating features of the region. Music, traditional dances, colourful dresses and community gatherings provide a glimpse into a cultural heritage that has survived through generations. These traditions are not simply performances for tourists; they are an important part of the community's social identity. Therefore, visitors must approach Kalash culture with respect and sensitivity rather than treating it merely as an attraction. One of the most striking experiences in Kalash is its peaceful natural environment. Far from the noise and congestion of major cities, the sound of flowing water, birds and mountain winds creates an atmosphere of tranquillity. The early morning light falling on the mountains and the evening shadows spreading across the valley offer scenes that are difficult to capture completely in words. For many visitors, Kalash becomes more than a journey; it becomes a memorable encounter with nature. Kalash also represents an important opportunity for Pakistan's tourism industry. At a time when international tourists increasingly seek authentic cultural experiences and natural destinations, Pakistan has enormous potential. Kalash possesses both of these qualities. With improved infrastructure, responsible tourism policies, better communication facilities, clean accommodation and effective promotion, the region could become one of Pakistan's leading eco-cultural tourism destinations. Yet tourism development must not come at the cost of the very beauty that attracts visitors. Unplanned construction, deforesta-

tion, plastic waste and excessive pressure on natural resources can seriously damage fragile mountain ecosystems. Climate change presents another major challenge. Changing rainfall patterns, floods, landslides and other environmental pressures can affect mountain communities and their natural surroundings. For this reason, sustainable tourism should be at the heart of future planning for Kalash. Development should focus not only on increasing the number of tourists but also on protecting forests, water resources and biodiversity. Waste management, environmentally friendly construction and responsible tourist behaviour should become essential components of tourism policy. Local communities must also be placed at the centre of tourism development. Local young people can be trained as professional guides, hospitality workers and cultural interpreters. Traditional handicrafts and locally produced goods can be promoted in national and international markets. Such initiatives would create employment opportunities while encouraging local communities to preserve their cultural and environmental heritage. The role of tourists is equally important. Anyone visiting Kalash should remember that a beautiful valley is not simply a place for photographs; it is also the home of local people and a delicate ecosystem. Visitors should avoid littering, respect local traditions, protect natural resources and behave responsibly. Responsible tourism can ensure that the benefits of tourism reach local communities without destroying their environment or way of life. Kalash also offers Pakistan an opportunity to present a softer and more positive image to the world. Its natural beauty and cultural diversity

demonstrate that Pakistan is much more than the political and security stories often highlighted internationally. The peaceful valleys, welcoming communities and unique traditions of regions such as Kalash can become powerful instruments of cultural diplomacy and international tourism. The challenge before Pakistan is therefore not simply to promote Kalash but to protect it. Development must be carefully planned so that roads, hotels and other facilities improve the lives of residents without destroying the natural landscape. The cultural identity of the Kalash community must also remain an essential part of every development strategy. Kalash Valley is truly a living masterpiece of nature's beauty. Its mountains represent strength, its rivers symbolize continuity, its forests reflect the generosity of nature, and its people embody the cultural diversity of Pakistan. It reminds us that true development is not about conquering nature but about living in harmony with it. If properly protected and responsibly promoted, Kalash can become a symbol of Pakistan's natural beauty, cultural richness and tourism potential. The valley does not need to become another crowded urban destination. Its greatest attraction is its authenticity. Kalash deserves to be discovered, but even more importantly, it deserves to be preserved. The responsibility belongs to the government, local communities, tourists and every Pakistani who considers the country's natural and cultural heritage a national treasure. If we protect Kalash today, future generations will also be able to witness the extraordinary place where nature has created one of Pakistan's most beautiful living masterpieces.

Strong economy, advanced technology, unity vital to national defence: Ahsan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday said that Pakistan's defence in the 21st century could no longer be viewed merely in terms of protecting geographical borders.

A strong economy, advanced technology, skilled human capital, energy and water security, effective institutions and national unity have become equally important pillars of national security, he said while addressing a Defence Day ceremony as chief guest.

Ahsan Iqbal paid rich tribute to the martyrs and Ghazis, saying the sacrifices of those who laid down their lives for Pakistan and their families would remain an enduring debt of the nation. "A martyr does not sacrifice his life alone; his entire family makes a sacrifice in the name of the homeland," he said.

Ahsan Iqbal said that the nation had foiled the enemy's designs in 1965 through unity, resolve and sacrifice, but the nature of warfare had since changed. "Alongside land, air and sea frontiers, cyber space, artificial intelligence,

unmanned systems, space technology, electronic warfare and the information domain had emerged as new fronts of national defence".

He said Pakistan must become a creator rather than merely a consumer of technology by developing indigenous capabilities in artificial intelligence, cyber security, space sciences, robotics, quantum technology and other emerging fields. Universities, research centres, defence institutions, scientists, engineers and the private sector, he added, should be brought together in an integrated national ecosystem of research and innovation.

The minister termed economic sovereignty an essential component of national security, saying a strong and sustainable national defence could not be built on a weak economy. "Pakistan's next major national struggle is the struggle for economic sovereignty, and its sustainable path is export-led economic growth," he said.

He said the country needed to move away from an economic model dependent on debt and consumption towards one based on production, productivity,

investment, innovation and exports.

Ahsan Iqbal said increasing exports should be treated as a national mission rather than the responsibility of the Ministry of Commerce or exporters alone. Clear, measurable export targets for major sectors should be set and monitored at the highest level with the same seriousness given to fiscal and revenue targets, he said and added, "A nation that sells higher-value products and services to the world gains greater economic and strategic influence in the global system".

The minister presented a seven-point national strength and stability framework, linking Pakistan's defence requirements with its economic, technological and social priorities.

The first priority, he said, was defence and technological superiority, requiring Pakistan to maintain its conventional and strategic capabilities while building indigenous strength in AI, cyber security, space technology, unmanned systems, robotics and other emerging technologies. The second was an export emergency programme, under which exports should become a national economic priority.

Mohsin Naqvi doubles down on demand for new provinces

PEAK POINT

LAHORE/KARACHI: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Saturday renewed his call for a "reset" of Pakistan's governance system, insisting that the country needed to restructure its administrative framework to address decades-old failures in public service delivery and declared that new administrative units had to be made at any cost. "New administrative units will eventually have to be created as Pakistan's growing population and changing needs can no longer be effectively managed through the existing administrative structure," said the minister, who is considered close to the powers that be. Addressing a National Policy Dialogue on 'Devolution of Powers and Good Governance in Pakistan' at the University of Management and Technology, Mr



Naqvi said the proposed "reset" did not mean a change of government or political party but a comprehensive review and restructuring of the administrative system to make it responsive to the needs of citizens.

His earlier remarks about "resetting the system" had been widely interpreted as a reference to the incumbent government. He clarified that his call was not aimed at replacing any particular government or political party.

Mr Naqvi said Pakistan, after nearly eight decades, was still struggling to provide.

Acting President Gilani stresses collective responsibility for protecting Pakistan's biodiversity

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, Sunday, said that Pakistan was blessed with extraordinary biodiversity and some of the world's most remarkable wildlife and stressed that protecting this natural heritage is a shared responsibility.

Addressing Safari Club International, Pakistan Chapter's international conservation fundraiser gala dinner, he said their experience had shown that conservation succeeded when the parliament, government, local communities, hunters, hunting outfitters and conservation organisations worked together.

Acting President Gilani stresses collective responsibility for protecting Pakistan's biodiversity.

"Ethical and responsible hunting, when conducted lawfully and sustainably, can contribute to wildlife conservation by generating meaningful benefits for communities living alongside wildlife," he added.

In order to make a real difference on the

ground, Gilani emphasized that a legislative and policy framework must take into consideration the views and experience of communities, wildlife professionals, hunters, hunting outfitters and other legitimate stakeholders.

"We all must work in close coordination and understanding to ensure responsible hunting in sync with biodiversity and conservation imperatives," he added.

At the same time, the acting president opined that it was imperative to recognise the legitimate role of responsible hunters who respect the law, uphold ethical hunting standards and contribute towards conservation and community development.

Their rights must go hand in hand with their responsibilities to wildlife and future generations, he said, adding that they should also recognise licensed hunting outfitters as important stakeholders because, they provided a vital link between hunters, wildlife authorities and local communities and their field experience could contribute positively.

Forecast for flooding of low-lying areas in seven Punjab cities

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) of the Pakistan Meteorological Department on Saturday warned of inundation of the low-lying areas of seven Punjab cities due to possible rainfall on Sunday (today).

The forecast for Lahore, Sheikhupura, Kasur, Faisalabad, Sargodha, Jhang and Okara says that heavy downpours may disrupt routine life and movement in these cities.

According to the FFD, the flow at Guddu Barrage is expected to reach the low-flood level while moderate increases in flows are also expected in the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab and Ravi rivers and their associated tributaries. The division has also warned of possible urban flooding in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Gujrat and Gujranwala and flash flooding in streams in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and tributaries of the Kabul River. The FFD also warns of increased flows in the major rivers and associated.

Hospitals & drinking water crisis, millions of children out of school: Aleem Khan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Abdul Aleem Khan on Sunday said that people were still being deprived of basic necessities of life and no one who genuinely loved the country could be satisfied with the system.

In a message posted on X, he said that the country continued to face a serious shortage of clean drinking water, while the condition of hospitals had deteriorated significantly and millions of children remained out of school. He said that people were still deprived of basic facilities while their hardships were increasing day by day.

The IPP President questioned "If the provinces were deliver-



ing effectively under the existing system why would the people be in such a condition?" He said there was a need to remove the lens of prejudice and look at the actual situation of the people as the reality is that the public is frustrated and deprived of basic amenities.

Aleem Khan questioned how long the common people would continue to be placated with slogans and be forced to travel hundreds of miles to have their problems addressed.

Minister inaugurates monsoon tree plantation drive at Pak Secretariat

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry on Sunday inaugurated a monsoon tree plantation campaign at R Block of the Pak Secretariat, organized by Faizal Global Relief Foundation. Speaking at the event, the minister highlighted the importance of tree plantation for environmental protection and said collective efforts were essential to increase green spaces and secure a healthier future for coming generations. The plantation drive was launched as part of ongoing efforts to expand Islamabad's green cover during the monsoon season. Talal Chaudhry appreciated the role of Faizal Global Relief Foundation,



saying the organization was contributing not only through educational and welfare activities but also through practical initiatives aimed at environmental improvement. Addressing the participants, the minister said tree plantation was playing an important role in strengthening Islamabad's green corridor. He noted that increasing the number of trees across the federal capital remained a key.



ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani in a group photograph with the office bearers of Safari Club International, Pakistan chapter's International Conservation Fundraiser Gala Dinner 2026.

Pakistan needs stronger institutions, actionable policies to address challenges: IPS forum

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's ability to address its complex national and international challenges depends on stronger institutions, improved governance, evidence-based policies, and effective implementation. At the same time, the country needs to anticipate opportunities in technology, agriculture, maritime affairs, regional connectivity, and its evolving strategic environment while addressing persistent social and economic concerns.

These issues were dis-



cussed at the annual meeting of the National Advisory Council (NAC) of the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), where scholars, policymakers, diplomats, technocrats, and practitioners stressed the need for forward-looking, practical, sustainable, and actionable approaches to Pakistan's future.

Chaired by Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, and moderated by Amb (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice chairman, IPS, the session also provided intellectual input to IPS's research agenda.

The forum was addressed by Justice Dr. Syed Muhammad Anwer, judge, Federal Shariat Court, Dr Anis Ahmad, VC, Riphah

International University; Amb (r) Sardar Masood Khan, former president, AJK; Lt Gen (r) Hidayat ur Rehman, chairman, AJK Public Service Commission; Owais Ahmed Ghani, former governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Prof Dr Qibla Ayaz, former chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology; Vice Admiral (r) Iftikhar

Ahmed Rao; Syed Abu Ahmad Akif, former federal secretary; Dr Syed Kaleem Imam, former federal secretary and IG police; Amb (r) Masood Khalid; Prof Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, former chairman, HEC; Dr Syed Tahir Hijazi, former member (governance), Planning Commission of Pakistan; Prof Dr Anwar ul Hassan

Gilani, former chairman, Pakistan Council for Science and Technology; Dr Syed Muhammad Junaid Zaidi, former rector, COMSATS University; Dr Masood Mehmood Khan, Curtin University, Australia; Prof Dr Saima Hamid, former VC, Fatima Jinnah Women University; Prof Dr Asad Zaman, former VC, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics; Amb (r) Maj Gen (r) Dr Noel Khokhar; Naufil Shahrukh, policy analyst and CEO MuComm; and Dr Naveed Butt, former department head.