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PM denounces Houthi strikes, reiterates support for KSA



ANI

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has denounced the Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia's civilian and energy infrastructure, calling them a cowardly act that put innocent lives at risk and jeopardised regional peace and security.

In a statement shared on X, the Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support for the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and the brotherly people of Saudi Arabia.

His statement came hours after Yemen's Houthis launched attacks on four cities in southern Saudi Arabia, targeting civilian areas and energy infrastructure.

The strikes reportedly injured more than 70 people and sparked fires at oil facilities, marking what appeared to be a significant escalation in the six-month-old conflict that has heightened tensions across the Middle East.

PM Shehbaz emphasised that such attacks not only put civilian lives at risk but also undermine regional stability and security. He reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support for the Kingdom's sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity.

"Such dastardly attacks threaten innocent lives as well as regional peace and security. We reaffirm our steadfast support for the Kingdom's sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity, and pray for the swift recovery of all those injured," PM

Shehbaz added.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Office condemned in the "strongest possible terms, the reprehensible attacks carried out by the Houthi militia" against civilian and economic targets in Abha, Khamis Mushait, Jazan and Najran in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In a statement, the Foreign Office said that these attacks are a flagrant violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Kingdom, pose a threat to the peace and stability of the entire region, and undermine efforts aimed at securing a peaceful and durable resolution of the conflict in Yemen.

"Consistent with the UN Charter and international law, Pakistan fully supports the Kingdom's legitimate right to take all necessary

measures to defend its territory, protect its citizens and residents and safeguard its national assets against any threat," the statement added.

"Pakistan has been and will continue to make all efforts for achieving lasting peace and stability in the region." The Houthis, who control most of Yemen's populated areas including the capital, said they had launched a broad operation deep into Saudi territory.

They used drones and missiles to strike a Saudi airbase in the southern city of Khamis Mushait, and targets belonging to Saudi Arabia's state oil company in nearby Abha, Najran on the Yemeni border and Jazan, a major Red Sea port city that houses a large refinery and power plant.

Tariq Fazal rejects reports of new Islamabad province



ANI

Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Tariq Fazal Chaudhry has said no new province is being created in Islamabad and the capital's existing status will remain unchanged.

Speaking on Samaa TV's programme Nadeem Malik Live, Chaudhry said Islamabad did not need a chief minister and proposed an empowered legislative assembly for the federal capital. "Say Mayor or Lord Mayor, but below him the Assembly will be empowered. The Assembly will be able to make laws," he said. Chaudhry said a local government system could not replace provincial assemblies, regardless of how extensive the system was. He said around Rs8 billion was collected annually from vehicles in Islamabad, while property and Capital Development Authority (CDA) taxes were collected separately. The minister said no new taxes were being introduced and argued that if taxes collected in Islamabad were spent on the capital itself, the city could be transformed significantly. He stressed the need for an empowered legislative assembly to oversee the affairs of Islamabad. Shafi Jan criticises government. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Minister Shafi Jan criticised the government's approach to local governance and administrative arrangements. He said local government elections had not been held in Islamabad for years and claimed the existing system needed to be reset.

Jan also criticised Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, alleging that

she had made fun of martyrs and calling on her to apologise for her remarks.

He further criticised the Punjab government and claimed the province could face disqualification, while saying former chief minister Usman Buzdar had performed better than Maryam Nawaz.

Jan said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had time until March to support the formation of new provinces, claiming that failure to do so could create difficulties for the party in presenting a new budget.

He also made several allegations against the federal and provincial governments, including claims concerning political motives and governance. The claims were not independently verified.

MQM leader Waseem Akhtar called for the creation of new administrative units, saying they could help improve governance and curb corruption.

He said the proposed 28th Constitutional Amendment should pave the way for the creation of administrative units and argued that each division could have its own chief minister.

Akhtar criticised the Sindh government, claiming that powers retained by the provincial government after the 18th Amendment had contributed to poor governance in cities outside Karachi.

He said administrative units were particularly needed in Sindh and claimed the move would benefit citizens.

Akhtar also accused the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) of opposing new provinces for political reasons. These allegations were not independently verified.

IRGC announces capture of US unmanned submersible: state media



ANI

Iran's state media reported on Tuesday that the Iranian Navy had captured an unmanned US Navy submersible at the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz. "One of the US military's most advanced unmanned underwater vehicles was seized by Iranian armed forces at the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz during a complex intelligence and field operation and brought into Iran," IRIB said.

Tasnim News Agency identified the captured system as a Dive-LD, an autonomous unmanned underwater vehicle developed by US defence technology company Anduril Industries and first delivered to the US Navy's Unmanned Undersea Vehicle Group 1 in 2025. According to Press TV, the "unmanned submersible incorporates some of the world's most advanced underwater technology and was delivered to the US terrorist military in 2025". Press TV further reported that the IRGC announced that "photographic evidence and detailed footage" of the captured US asset would be released in the coming hours. Separately, the Iranian army claimed it had shot down a US MQ-1 drone over the Strait of Hormuz, according to state broadcaster Press TV.

air defence system ... under the control of the country's integrated air defence network".

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday claimed that Iran has been "punished greatly" by the naval blockade, describing the blockade as "so powerful, so effective."

"Iran will not have a nuclear weapon. And they've been punished greatly," Trump said at the Steel Across America event outside the White House, where a 21-foot steel beam recovered from the World Trade Centre's South Tower will be displayed ahead of the 25th anniversary of the September 11 attacks.

Hailing the US military for its attacks on Iran, he said: "The job they do is unbelievable." "The blockade has been so powerful, so effective. Nobody thought it could go so well," he added. The US Treasury Department announced on Tuesday that it had imposed sanctions on 36 targets linked to Iran's aviation sector, including 27 airlines, accusing the sector of facilitating the movement of weapons, personnel and illicit cargo.

The action, carried out under the Treasury's "Operation Economic Outcast," included sanctions against Iran's remaining active airlines, as well as companies and intermediaries accused of helping Tehran acquire US-origin aircraft and aviation technology.

Pakistani cities rank among world's least resilient to climate risk: report



ANI

A new report has ranked Pakistani cities among the world's least resilient to climate risks, underscoring their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Hyderabad, Multan, Lahore, Faisalabad, and Karachi featured among the 10 least resilient cities to cli-

mate risk in a new assessment of 72 major cities worldwide. The report, by geospatial analytics company AlphaGeo, analyses 72 of the world's largest cities. It separates raw physical exposure from resilience-adjusted risk (RAI) to reveal which cities are genuinely protected and which face a dangerous gap between their risk profile and their adaptive capacity.

According to the ranking, Hyderabad ranked second least resilient, Multan third, Lahore fifth, Faisalabad seventh and Karachi eighth. India's Ahmedabad topped the list of cities deemed least resilient. "The 6 highest-risk major cities globally are all in South Asia: Ahmedabad (41), Hyderabad, Pakistan (41), Multan (38), Dhaka (36), Kolkata (35), and Lahore (35).

Fazl challenges political parties over new provinces, stresses timing, circumstances matter

ANI

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has called for political debate before any move to create new provinces, warning against imposing major changes to the administrative structure while arguing that successive policies have weakened the country's political and economic foundations.

Addressing a Khatm-e-Nabuwat conference at the Wahdat Road Cricket Ground in Lahore, Fazl said that September 6, 1965, marked an important episode in protecting Pakistan's geographical boundaries. He said the state could only be strong if its people were secure and respected, arguing that political divisions had weakened the country. "We are not against creating units on principle," Fazl said, adding that decisions on new provinces should take into account the prevailing "time and circumstances". "We are not against provinces, but the time and



circumstances must also be considered," he said, calling for debate rather than unilateral decisions. Fazl said the provinces controlled mineral resources under the 18th Amendment and politi-

cal parties needed to play their role in discussions over the issue.

"Do not impose any decision unilaterally; there should be a debate on it," he said. Criticising major political parties, Fazl said the Pakistan Peoples Party talked about the issue only in the context of Sindh, while the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz remained silent. He accused political and social divisions of preventing Pakistan from developing a unified national identity, saying the country had failed to build one nation based on the Two-Nation Theory and had witnessed violence driven by ethnic divisions. The JUI-F chief also criticised Pakistan's economic dependence on foreign lenders, saying the country had built its economic foundations on external borrowing. "Colonialism has ended, but international institutions decide for our country today," he said, referring to Pakistan's dependence on loans from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

IHC forms larger bench to hear petition challenging PTI Sept 27 protest

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday constituted a larger bench to hear a petition challenging the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)'s planned protest on September 27, with the case scheduled for hearing on September 10.

The development came as PTI stepped up preparations for its September 27 protest and long march towards Islamabad, with party leaders calling on supporters across the country to join the mobilisation. The bench comprises Chief Justice Sardar Saifraz Dogar, Justice Azam Khan and Justice Muhammad Asif. Given the sensitivity of the matter, the court had already issued a notice to the Attorney General for Pakistan. The court also issued notices to the inspectors general of police, advocate generals and chief secretaries of all four provinces, summoning them to appear in person on September 10. The court also summoned Islamabad's chief commissioner and deputy commissioner.

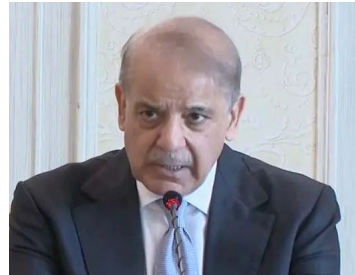
PM Shehbaz seeks business community input to boost exports

ANI

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has sought proposals from the business community to increase the country's exports, stressing that accelerating economic growth is only possible through an export-led strategy.

The prime minister made the remarks during a meeting with a delegation of prominent industrialists and business leaders in Islamabad.

PM Shehbaz said the government had introduced fundamental reforms through consultation with stakeholders despite difficult economic circumstances. The prime minister said Rs800 billion had been



recovered through enforcement measures over the past year. He said the government's efforts had already placed the economy on a path toward improvement, adding that the pace of progress could only be accelerated

by increasing exports. PM Shehbaz said export-oriented economic growth was a priority for the government and expressed confidence that all challenges hindering export growth would be addressed. He stressed the importance of continuing consultations with traders and industrialists while formulating economic policies.

The prime minister said the government wanted to seek the business community's views on measures aimed at increasing exports. He reiterated that close coordination between the government, traders and industrialists was essential for achieving sustainable economic growth.



Federal Minister for Interior Moshin Naqvi presents a model of EV of "Capital Patrol", an initiative of Islamabad Capital Territory Police to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Senate Mobile App Launched to Boost Digital Transformation

Report: Hurish Shah FT:

ISLAMABAD --Acting President and Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Tuesday launched the Senate Mobile Application, describing it as an important step towards digital empowerment, greater efficiency and a more transparent and responsive parliamentary system.

Addressing the ceremony at Parliament House, Gilani said the application marked a new phase in the Senate's digital transformation and introduced "a new way of working, a new way of thinking and a new way of serving the people of Pakistan."

He said the application would modernise parliamentary operations, save time, improve efficiency and strengthen communication between Parliament and citizens. He also highlighted the Senate's e-office system, digital archives, website and social media platforms as part of



wider efforts to improve transparency and public access to parliamentary information. Acting Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar and Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhary welcomed the initiative, terming it an important step towards modernising parliamentary procedures and making Parliament more accessible and responsive. Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Shaza

Fatima Khawaja said digital transformation had become essential across governance and public institutions, adding that the initiative represented a broader process of digitisation.

Senate Secretary Syed Hasnain Haider said the application had been developed by the Senate's IT Department to modernise working procedures and facilitate the dissemination of parliamentary information.

Business Leaders Host Dinner in Honour of Texas-Houston Delegation

BY: ANI Correspondent:

KARACHI -- MD Star Marketing Mahmood Ahmed Khan and FPCCI Central Standing Committee Convener Syed Turab Shah hosted a dinner for a visiting delegation from Houston, Texas.

The delegation arrived from the United States. The gathering brought together business leaders, politicians, diplomats and social figures.

The event focused on strengthening professional and business ties between Pakistan and the United States.

The delegation included Dr. Mubashir Chaudhry, CEO of USP Corporate. Pearl Vuobinen and Alessandra Lin were also part of the delegation. Dr Abdul Bari Khan Attends as Chief Guest

Dr. Abdul Bari Khan, Founder of Indus Hospital Karachi, attended the dinner as the chief guest.

Other prominent guests included MNA Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig and Senator Waqar Mehdi.

Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan also attended the gathering. Khalid Tawab, former Senior Vice President of FPCCI, was among the guests.

Mian Zahid Hussain, Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board, also participated. Rehan Hanif, President of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, attended the event as well.

The event was hosted by Iram Fuad, Executive Secretary of Quaid-e-Azam House Management.

Business Leaders Join the Gathering

Several leading business figures



attended the dinner.

They included Wasiq Ali Khan, Chairman of Star Marketing Group. Hamza Tabani, Chairman of Tabani Group, was also present.

Fazal Karim Dadabhoy, Chairman of Dadabhoy Group, attended the event. Athar Iqbal, CEO of SAL, was among the other distinguished guests. Diplomatic representatives also joined the gathering. They included Dr. Imran Yousaf, Consul General of the Philippines.

The Consul General of Indonesia also attended. Captain Sajid Mahmood was among the distinguished guests.

Former Business Leaders Attend

Former ABAD Chairman Fayyaz Ilyas also attended the dinner.

Other guests included Hanif Gohar, Hanif Memon and Majeed Aziz Balagamwala.

Majeed Aziz Balagamwala is a former President of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Dr. Zahid Ansari, Farhana Owais

and Owais Ahmed also attended.

Abdul Hameed Aslam, Director of Haji Ghani Usman Securities, was among the guests.

Sana Aqeel, Chairperson of MKP, also participated. Other attendees included Zahid Kirani, Javed Iqbal and Zeeshan Altaf Lohiya.

Major Tariq Hashmi, Zia Sahib, Rakhshanda Khan and Nidrat Khan were also present.

Fahad Ahsan, Chairman of Bin Ahsan Builders and Developers, attended the dinner.

Rizwan Siddiqui, Nadeem Zafar, Kashif Khan and Najib Ahmed were also among the guests.

The gathering brought together representatives from business, diplomacy, politics and healthcare. Form An LLC

The dinner highlighted the importance of continued engagement between Pakistani and American stakeholders. It also provided an opportunity to discuss stronger professional and business connections.

Italian Ambassador Meets PM Shehbaz Sharif to Strengthen Bilateral Ties

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- Italian Ambassador to Pakistan Ugo Ciarlatani met Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the Prime Minister House on Tuesday.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Syed Tariq Fatemi and Foreign Secretary Ambassador Amna Baloch were also present. Welcoming the newly appointed ambassador, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan and Italy enjoy excellent bilateral relations and expressed good wishes for Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.

Ambassador Ciarlatani thanked the Prime Minister for the meeting and expressed his commitment to further strengthening Pakistan-Italy



relations through close cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

The Prime Minister assured Pakistan's full support for enhanc-

ing bilateral cooperation, particularly in agriculture, IT and artificial intelligence, industry, textiles and people-to-people contacts.

Rais Nauman Ahmad Successfully Defends PhD Thesis on AI Regulation

Report: ANI Correspondent:

MULTAN -- Rais Nauman Ahmad, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law, Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU), Multan, successfully defended his PhD thesis titled "Regulating Artificial Intelligence to Develop Its Legislative Framework for Pakistan."

The research proposes a comprehensive and constitutionally grounded framework for regulating artificial intelligence in Pakistan, including transparency, accountability, human oversight, legal liability and protection of fundamental rights.



A key contribution is the proposed legal definition of an "AI System" for Pakistan and a draft Artificial Intelligence Act. The thesis also introduces the concept of "Constitutional Anchoring," calling for international AI regulations to be adapted to Pakistan's Constitution and existing legal framework rather than copied directly.

The research was supervised by Dr. Sameera Fatima, Associate Professor of Law and Project Director of the Study Centre at BZU. The successful defence marks a significant contribution to Pakistani scholarship on AI law and emerging regulatory challenges.

Artificial Inflation Will Not Be Tolerated: Assistant Commissioner Sibi

Report: GNM

SIBI -- Assistant Commissioner Sibi and Lehri Malik Bahadur Khan Bangulzai said providing relief and a peaceful environment to citizens is the administration's top priority, and artificial inflation and profiteering will not be tolerated. During a meeting with a delegation of journalists led by Working Journalists Media Group President Mir Allah Dad Rind, the Assistant Commissioner directed traders to sell food items according to the government-issued price list. Violators will face legal action.

He said regular inspections of markets would be conducted to monitor prices and protect citizens from profiteering. He urged the business community to cooperate with the adminis-



tration and provide relief to the public.

Malik Bahadur Khan Bangulzai also appreciated the role of journalists in highlighting public issues and said

the administration would keep its doors open to citizens and ensure that complaints are addressed according to law and merit.

ICCI Hosts ASEAN Day, Envoys Call for Stronger Trade Ties



Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) hosted an ASEAN Day celebration on Tuesday, bringing together ambassadors, diplomats and business leaders to discuss stronger trade and investment cooperation between Pakistan and ASEAN countries.

Philippine Ambassador and ASEAN Committee Chair Dr. Emmanuel R. Fernandez urged businesses and chambers to convert economic opportunities into practical partnerships. ICCI President Sardar

Tahir Mehmood said the next phase of Pakistan-ASEAN relations should focus on trade, investment, technology and business-to-business cooperation.

Former ICCI President Zafar Bakhtawari said Pakistan's trade with ASEAN was around \$10 billion, with significant potential for expansion, and called for Pakistan to be granted full dialogue partner status with ASEAN.

Brunei High Commissioner Colonel (R) Pengiran Haji Kamal Bashah said Brunei was conducting a feasibility study to bring its national airline to Pakistan, which could improve con-

nectivity and boost trade and tourism.

Envoys from Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar and Malaysia also stressed greater market access, trade facilitation and private-sector engagement. Indonesia invited Pakistani businesses to the Trade Expo Indonesia 2026, while Malaysia highlighted agriculture, textiles, IT, tourism, renewable energy and manufacturing as key areas for cooperation.

The event concluded with the cutting of an ASEAN Day cake and presentation of shields to participating ambassadors and heads of mission.

ITC, Mansha Brothers Showcase Advanced AV and Lighting Technology

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- ITC, a global audio-visual and lighting technology provider, and Mansha Brothers, a leading technology solutions company in Pakistan, jointly hosted an exclusive product showcase and networking event in Islamabad.

The event brought together media representatives, industry professionals and corporate decision-makers to explore advanced audiovisual, display and professional lighting solutions and their applications in events, corporate environments and enterprise spaces.

The showcase featured live demonstrations of ITC's latest technologies, giving attendees insights into emerging trends and innovative AV and lighting systems designed to create more immersive and technologically advanced environments.

The event was attended by Chief



Guests Engr. Khadim Hussain Bhatti, Registrar PEC, Muhammad Salman Zafar, Member Social Media Protection and Regulatory Authority, Muhammad Abbas Lone, CEO Mansha Brothers, and Muhammad Zahid Lone, Director Mansha Brothers. Experts also discussed

Pakistan's evolving audiovisual sector and opportunities for collaboration. The event highlighted the shared commitment of ITC and Mansha Brothers to bringing world-class technology solutions to Pakistan and supporting the growth of the country's AV and lighting industry.

Ishaq Dar Reviews Sugar Stocks, Calls for Market Vigilance

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired a meeting of the Steering Committee on Sugar and expressed satisfaction over the availability of sufficient sugar stocks in the country.

He said existing stocks, along with anticipated production, are adequate to meet requirements until well into the next crushing season. He stressed continued vigilance, effective coordination and timely measures to ensure food security, market stability and availability of essential commodities at affordable rates. The meeting was attended by the Minister for Food, Minister for Information, SAPM Tariq Bajwa, Secretary Food, Secretary Commerce and other senior officials.



Report: ANI Correspondent:

QUETTA -- On World Literacy Day, the Balochistan Education Department announced major initiatives aimed at improving education across the province.

Secretary Education Lal Jan Jafar said 3,800 closed government schools have been reopened, while a province-wide enrollment campaign has brought more than 768,000 out-of-school children into education.

The department has also completed the merit-based recruitment of 15,000 teachers and introduced IT and modern technology education to prepare students for the digital era.

Lal Jan Jafar said the government's vision is "Education for All, Bright Balochistan with All," adding that all available resources will be utilized for a brighter educational future.



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Opinion

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Africa pays a high price for dollar dependence

HAFED AL-GHWELL

Governments across Africa are rightfully questioning the wisdom of anchoring their countries’ futures to the US dollar. The instinct grows from patterns that have shaped the continent’s financial stability, trade resilience, and growth prospects for decades.

A currency that once promised predictability now functions as a vehicle for volatility that African policymakers never signed up for. Each Federal Reserve rate hike, for instance, tightens African credit conditions as if Washington were running monetary policy for Nairobi, Accra, and Lusaka.

Dedollarization — reducing reliance on the US dollar for trade, reserves, and financial transactions — speaks to a desire for insulation, bargaining power, and policy autonomy in an era where external shocks arrive with unprecedented regularity.

While talk of dedollarization is not exactly new, it has gained traction in recent years, after several African currencies lost nearly half of their value against the dollar. Such depreciations erode tax bases, inflate debt

burdens, and push countries toward International Monetary Fund programs that come with significant political costs.

Moreover, roughly 70 percent of Africa’s external debt is dollar-denominated. As the dollar strengthens, debt service costs balloon without any new borrowing. In one year alone, African governments paid more than \$60 billion in interest on external debt, and a third of that stemmed from dollar appreciation rather than fundamentals.

A continent seeking structural transformation cannot tolerate a global monetary system that amplifies domestic vulnerabilities. Naturally, leaders see a mismatch: African economies are diversifying, yet currency arrangements still resemble the 1980s. The dollar’s dominance magnifies inflation pass-through because the region’s import dependence makes exchange rate shocks automatically inflationary even where fiscal discipline is relatively decent. Food imports alone cost Africa more than \$35 billion annually, so a stronger dollar can quickly turn a food security issue into a macroeconomic crisis.

Thus, the heightening pursuit of dedollari-

zation is an attempt to negotiate from a position of less fragility rather than an outright rejection of global markets. Consider this: When Kenya pays for imported crude in Kenyan shillings or when Nigeria explores yuan settlements for infrastructure deals, the goal is strategic hedging. Policymakers want to reduce single-currency exposure in the same way investors diversify portfolios. Russia’s removal from dollar-based clearing systems, for example, demonstrated how geopolitical tremors can easily spill into Africa’s trade channels even when the continent is not a party to any conflict. Some African governments are also reading the room. Global south partners, from Brazil to Indonesia, are experimenting with local currency settlement mechanisms. BRICS expansion invited African countries into a club openly discussing non-dollar settlement infrastructure.

Moreover, China accounts for more than a fifth of Africa’s trade, and yuan-denominated transactions are rising from a small baseline. The share is still marginal, yet the direction signals Africa’s turn toward a multipolar currency environment before one emerges fully

without them.

The Africa Continental Free Trade Area adds another layer. A continent-wide free trade area needs frictionless payment channels to make intra-African commerce more attractive than sourcing from Europe or Asia. To date, roughly 15 percent of Africa’s trade is intracontinental. One reason is the cost and complexity of using a third currency for African-to-African trade. A Ghanaian processing firm buying Kenyan tea, for instance, often settles in dollars, even though neither economy uses the currency domestically. That situation makes African trade more expensive by an estimated \$5 billion annually in transaction and hedging costs.

The Pan-African Payment and Settlement System, or PAPSS, launched with AfCFTA support, attempts to rewrite this by enabling instant cross-border settlements in local currencies. Dedollarization gives PAPSS a fighting chance. Without efforts to reduce dependence on the dollar, AfCFTA risks importing the very structural weaknesses it aims to correct. After all, regional supply chains cannot gain traction if currency swings routinely

erase profit margins. Clearing trade in local currencies might not be a silver bullet, but it is a meaningful step toward normalizing African-to-African transactions. However, skeptics point out that African currencies lack depth, stability, and convertibility, making rapid dedollarization risky. The statement is valid, but incomplete. African policymakers are not proposing to replace the dollar with a patchwork of volatile currencies overnight. Instead, they are reducing exposure in incremental steps: expanding swap lines, piloting common payment platforms, and signing bilateral agreements that allow settlement in mutually accepted currencies. Some argue that dedollarization could also alienate the US. However, a more resilient Africa ultimately aligns with US interests. Fragile currencies reduce Africa’s capacity to buy American goods, service American-held debt or collaborate in security partnerships. A region forever one shock away from default cannot be a reliable counterweight to growing external influence or as a steady partner in global governance.

— Arab news

Tripoli deserves better than its current leaders

DR. DANIA KOLEILAT KHATIB

A building collapse in Tripoli, Lebanon, last week killed 14 people. The building was in Bab Al-Tabbaneh, one of the poorest neighborhoods in Tripoli, which is in turn one of the poorest cities in Lebanon and even in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The fall of the building makes us ask the question: Why did this happen to these people? Many do not know the rich history of the precious city. Tripoli was once a capital of trade, culture, and art in the Ottoman Empire. Why this degeneration? And who is responsible?

The building collapse in Tripoli was not an accident, nor was it the first tragedy this year to take innocent lives. It was the predictable outcome of years of neglect by local authorities and successive governments. The dangers posed by these buildings are widely known, yet no preventive action has been taken. Lebanon has a proven record of corruption. Lebanese officials have always acted with impunity. Relying on the blind allegiance of their constituencies, the welfare of the people has never been their primary concern.

According to Raymond Mitri, an activist who heads Lebanon’s anticorruption task force: “The justice system also bears primary responsibility, as those in power have grown accustomed to acting with impunity.” He added: “This culture of no accountability has enabled repeated failures and avoidable deaths.” It is time for the prosecutor general to open a thorough investigation and hold the heads of the relevant authorities accountable for this week’s tragic incident. Without real consequences, this tragic pattern will continue and more lives will be lost.

The collapse of the building in Tripoli is the result of decades of negligence. It is the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the city’s problems. I went to Tripoli a few years ago and I was shocked by the poverty, lack of infrastructure, and lack of employment. The city’s inhabitants face huge health risks because of unregulated trash dumps that also pollute the Mediterranean Sea. Tripoli mirrors the problems of Lebanon. In Tripoli, however, they are more concentrated and more severe. Historically, the city has not been lucky with its leadership. In fact, Lebanon as a whole has not been lucky with its political class, but Tripoli has suffered particularly badly. During the civil war,

various Islamist factions coalesced and created Harakat Al-Tawhid (the Islamic Unity Movement), which controlled the city. The state has been barely present. Each neighborhood has a “kabaday” (strongman) running the show. There is no real law enforcement in the city.

According to a lawyer friend of mine, the city is run by mafia-like organizations. The most important people are those who control the power generators. The generators’ owners divide the areas among themselves. Citizens of each neighborhood are thus compelled to buy electricity from the designated generator owner for that specific area. It is sad to see this historic city languishing. It is sad to see its historic monuments unattended. It is sad to see the kind, generous, and skilled people of Tripoli struggle with poverty and a lack of opportunity.

The irony is that Tripoli is home to some of the wealthiest people in Lebanon and even the entire Arab world. The political class is rich and prosperous and it surrounds itself with fences to protect itself from the ire of the people that it controls. According to Amine Bashir, a lawyer and political activist from Tripoli, members of the city’s traditional political class do not care about the people. On the contrary, it is in their interest to keep the people poor. The poorer they are, the cheaper it will be to buy their vote on election day. They use the people as an “election reservoir.”

At the end of the day, it is not only Tripoli in this situation. Unfortunately, the Lebanese political elite looks at the people as a means to control the country and its resources. The people are a ladder that will allow them to reach the summit of power. Following last week’s building collapse, the state sent the army to Tripoli to protect the politicians from the wrath of the people. This situation made me ask myself: When will the state use its capabilities to protect the people from the corruption of the political class?

Tripoli has suffered from negligence and impunity — this week’s tragedy is a warning that this needs to stop. The people in power need to be held accountable. The people of Tripoli deserve that. They need to rise and the system governing the city needs to fall. If the system does not fall, more buildings like the one in Bab Al-Tabbaneh will do so instead.

— Arab news



From Hormuz to the Pump: Pakistan’s 193 Days of Petrol Shock



Written By :Muhammad
Published By:ANI
News

The Iran war did more than raise a commodity price. It exposed how quickly distant conflict becomes a household tax in an import dependent

economy.

On 28 February, the war in Iran began thousands of kilometres from Pakistan’s filling stations. Within a week, it had arrived at every motorcycle handle, rickshaw meter, farm gate and grocery bill. Petrol, priced at Rs266.17 per litre on 1 March, jumped by Rs55 to Rs321.17 on 7 March. The battlefield was abroad; the first invoice was delivered at home.

That increase was only the opening shock. As supply fears spread around the Strait of Hormuz, through which Pakistan receives much of its oil from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the government replaced its normal fortnightly rhythm with weekly reviews. Petrol remained at Rs321.17 through four March notifications, but the stability was deceptive: the state was postponing a global surge, not cancelling it.

Then came 3 April. Petrol was notified at Rs458.41 per litre and high-speed diesel at Rs520.35 the highest points of the crisis. For petrol, that was a 72 per cent rise from 1 March. A 50-litre tank that had cost Rs13,309 suddenly required Rs22,921. The next day, petrol was cut

to Rs378.41 after public pressure and relief measures, yet diesel stayed at Rs520.35. This distinction mattered: petrol moves people, but diesel moves wheat, vegetables, construction material and almost every item on a shop shelf.

The following weeks showed how an oil shock becomes an inflation chain. Petrol moved through Rs366.58, Rs393.35, Rs399.86 and Rs414.78 before easing during May. Higher fuel costs entered freight charges, bus fares, generator expenses and farm operations. Businesses could not plan around a price that changed every week; households could not easily substitute away from transport. The poorest, who own fewer cars, still paid through dearer food and mobility.

Relief finally became visible in June. After petrol stood at Rs373.78 on 13 June, the government announced a Rs74 cut, bringing the notified rate to Rs299.50 from 20 June. The reduction was substantial, but it did not restore the pre-war price. It also illustrated a central policy problem: when international prices rise, the pass-through is described as unavoidable; when they fall, citizens need confidence that the benefit is transferred completely and transparently.

The respite proved temporary. Petrol climbed from Rs297.53 on 4 July to Rs331.52 by 24 July as regional hostilities and market volatility returned. Pakistan then moved to daily pricing. In principle, daily revisions reduce hoarding and shorten the delay between global prices and domestic pumps. In practice, they transfer exchange-rate, freight and oil-

market uncertainty directly into household and business budgets. A transporter cannot quote confidently today when tomorrow’s input cost is unknown. By 8 September, petrol stood at Rs358.77 after a one-day increase of Rs12.90. That is Rs92.60, or 34.8 per cent, above the 1 March level. It adds Rs4,630 to the cost of a 50-litre fill. The route was not a straight climb: prices surged, retreated below Rs300, and rose again. Yet volatility itself has become an economic cost.

Pakistan cannot end the war, but it can reduce the damage. Every notification should publish a plain-language price build-up: international benchmark, exchange rate, freight, refinery and dealer margins, petroleum levy and taxes. The government should define an automatic stabilization rule, with a transparent ceiling and later recovery mechanism, instead of relying on ad hoc announcements. Relief should target public transport, small farmers and low-income motorcycle users through verifiable digital channels—not broad subsidies that reward heavier consumption.

The longer answer is structural: better mass transit, more efficient freight, strategic fuel stocks, electric two- and three-wheelers, and domestic renewable energy. Pakistan’s petrol story since 28 February is ultimately not only about Iran or America. It is about national exposure. When a missile near Hormuz can rewrite a family’s monthly budget in Lahore, Karachi or Multan, energy resilience is no longer an environmental slogan. It is economic security.

Starmer is learning the lessons of politics the hard way

YOSSI MEKELBERG

Few could have foreseen that merely 17 months after Keir Starmer led the Labour Party to victory in the UK general election, winning a 174-seat majority in Parliament, that he would find himself fighting for his job.

While the British prime minister must take much of the blame for being in this situation — and in his defense, he does admit responsibility — the underlying difficulties of UK politics and society go far beyond one leader’s shortcomings. The country has had six prime ministers in the past decade, which is hardly a sign of a functioning political system. Part of the predicament that Starmer finds himself in is how he sees his role; part of it has to do with the way British politics is conducted; and, more generally, the unforgiving nature of modern politics, which in an age of instant communication, constant scrutiny, and unbearable impatience, means that governments can be judged too harshly and too quickly.

The latest storm that threatens to unseat the current British prime minister is not unjustified, as his decision to appoint Peter Mandelson as ambassador in Washington was a total lapse of judgment. There was never any doubt that Mandelson’s political skills and wealth of experience in government, including on the international stage, would stand him in good stead in dealing with a major and challenging ally. Yet this was also someone who was nicknamed the “Prince of Darkness.” He was also one of the original spin doctors in British politics, and was twice forced to resign from government for failing to live up to the ethical standards of public life.

For a prime minister whose election campaign relied heavily on a promise to rid the country of years of Conservative sleaze, appointing Mandelson was extremely unwise. The resignation of Starmer’s chief of staff, Morgan McSweeney, the mastermind behind Mandelson’s appointment, has given the prime minister breathing space. Yet, in the

fast-paced world of modern politics, he still might be only a misstep or two away from losing his job. With Labour lagging far behind Reform in the polls and only just edging the even less popular Conservatives, and the prime minister’s approval ratings plummeting, he has his work cut out to convince the electorate that they should still trust him as leader. In the short term, he must convince those Labour MPs who can decide his future almost instantly.

It is a truism that nothing genuinely prepares a person for the most powerful job in the country, a position that depends on learning extremely fast, a strong sense of direction and values, and healthy political instincts. Winning an unassailable election victory should have given Starmer the self-belief and confidence to go against his cautious nature.

For many Labour MPs, more than half of whom have been elected for the first time, the impressive showing at the ballot box created the expectation of a radical Labour agenda — not unreasonable in light of voters comprehensively rejecting the legacy of the Conservatives’ 14 years in power. Moreover, for the more left-leaning of the Labour Party, Starmer and his policies were too middle-of-the-road to begin with, and he was not their first choice to lead the party, let alone the country. However, Labour’s decisive victory left them with little ammunition to criticize those who masterminded it, including their ideological arch-nemesis McSweeney. Yet they still held high expectations for a new, radical agenda, only to be disappointed or, possibly, to have their suspicions confirmed.

To be sure, successive Conservative governments left a difficult legacy, with deep divisions over Brexit and immigration, underinvestment in public services, and a rocketing cost of living. For the new government and its leader it has not been enough to blame their predecessors for all the country’s ills; they needed to make an immediate impact while incorporating changes into their long-term strategies.

— Arab news

Jordan’s growing role in Turkish foreign policy

DR. SINEM CENGİZ

Turkiye and Jordan were significantly affected by the Syrian civil war that lasted more than a decade. Now, with the collapse of the Bashar Assad regime in December 2024, a new dynamic has emerged along Türkiye’s southern and Jordan’s northern borders — one that calls for closer coordination between the two states. Jordan, a relatively small state known for its neutral regional policy, has not traditionally occupied a prominent place in Turkish foreign policy. But its geopolitical importance is far too significant to neglect. It has crucial potential when it comes to countering shared regional security challenges. Recent high-level meetings between Ankara and Amman, therefore, merit a closer look to better understand the possibility for Turkish-Jordanian cooperation.

Jordan’s King Abdullah paid an official visit to Türkiye last week at the invitation of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who received him at the Dolmabahçe Palace in Istanbul. King Abdullah’s last visit to Türkiye took place in February 2019. Back then, the regional picture looked very different. Now, the region has been reshaped by a series of major events — from the Oct. 7 attacks to the Iran-Israel war and the fall of the Assad regime — that have fundamentally shifted the political and security dynamics surrounding these two countries. With the fall of the Assad regime, Jordan has emerged as a key partner in Türkiye’s regional policy, particularly regarding Syria and Gaza. For Türkiye, Jordan represents both a stabilizing actor on its southern periphery and a practical partner in managing the post-Assad regional order. Amman and Ankara have found themselves on the same page in regard to regional crises. Jordan therefore became part of a regional cooperation mechanism established between Türkiye, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon, which is aimed at coordinating responses to shared security challenges. Amman has hosted high-level regional security meetings led by Türkiye, bringing together foreign ministers, defense ministers

and intelligence chiefs to discuss counterterrorism efforts and broader regional threats. It was through Jordanian-Turkish cooperation that a joint mission to support Syria’s fight against terrorist organizations, particularly Daesh, was established. At the request of the new leadership in Syria, this joint mission was set up to operate in Damascus, marking a concrete step toward institutionalized regional security cooperation. Jordan and Türkiye are also part of US President Donald Trump’s Board of Peace, further highlighting their shared role in the Gaza peace process. In their joint statement, King Abdullah and Erdogan underscored the importance of preserving the territorial integrity, sovereignty and national unity of all regional states. This emphasis reflects a shared outlook. Jordan has long pursued a status quo-oriented foreign policy, prioritizing stability along its borders. Türkiye’s support for a centralized and territorially unified Syria closely aligns with Jordanian interests in this regard. Both countries view fragmentation and instability in Syria as a direct threat to their security, making their policy convergence not only strategic but also necessary.

Jordan was also chosen to host NATO’s first liaison office in the Middle East. This opened last September, underscoring the country’s geopolitical importance. Jordan has been a member of NATO’s Mediterranean Dialogue since 1995. As a NATO partner, Türkiye views the alliance’s cooperation with Amman as increasingly significant, as its presence in the country will help strengthen the regional security architecture. Amman not only occupies a key position in terms of security cooperation, but also in economic coordination. Jordan and Türkiye, along with Syria, are working on a joint initiative to restore the historic Hejaz railway, focusing on the segment linking the three countries as part of efforts to rebuild regional transport and trade networks disrupted by years of conflict and border closures. Officials from the three countries have agreed on preliminary terms to draft a memorandum of understanding covering the restoration of damaged railway lines.

— Arab news

Senate Panel Orders Action on FGEHA Encroachments, Green Enclave Delay



Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD-- The Senate Standing Committee on Housing and Works, chaired by Senator Nasir Mehmood, reviewed encroachments in FGEHA housing schemes, the delayed Green Enclave-I project and alleged inclusion of Shamilaat and forest land in Sky Gardens.

FGEHA informed the committee

that over 60% of encroachments had been cleared and around 3,000 kanals recovered in various Islamabad sectors. The chairman directed FGEHA to continue the anti-encroachment operation and submit written progress reports.

The committee expressed concern over delays in Green Enclave-I, directing its completion within 18 months. It also ordered quarterly site

visits to monitor progress and protect the rights of affectees.

Regarding Sky Gardens, the committee was informed that development on around 2,600 kanals of disputed land had been halted pending a final determination on whether the land was Shamilaat. NAB was directed to conduct an impartial and transparent inquiry and expedite the investigation.

Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani Announces Prem Nagar Charity Sports Event for Special Children

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD-- Chairman Prem Nagar Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani said preparations for a special charity sports event for children with disabilities have entered the final stage.

The event will be held on September 12 at Pakistan Sports Complex, Islamabad, featuring sports activities for special children from educational institutions in the federal capital.

The closing ceremony will feature live performances by renowned Sufi singers Abida Parveen and Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, while singer and social worker Abrar-ul-Haq will present a special national song dedicated to Prem Nagar.

Dr Vankwani said the event aims to bring happiness to special children and highlight their exceptional abilities. He urged the public and



media to support the children and promote inclusion, equality and respect for persons with disabilities.

He said Prem Nagar is working to

provide education, healthcare, rehabilitation, housing and skills-development opportunities to disadvantaged communities.

Open Public Court Held in Narowal, 27 Applications Heard

Report: ANI Correspondent:

NAROWAL -- An open public court was held in Narowal under the chairmanship of Gujranwala Commissioner Muhammad Ali to address citizens' complaints and provide prompt relief.

A total of 27 applications were heard during the session, with orders issued for the immediate resolution of 15 cases. Relevant departments were directed to complete the remaining cases within a specified timeframe after necessary inquiries and legal and administrative action.

Commissioner Muhammad Ali instructed officials to avoid unnecessary delays, ensure timely relief to applicants and maintain effective follow-up on every complaint. He said public service, transparency and swift action remain key priorities of the administration.



The commissioner also inspected ongoing development works, including the District Attorney's under-construction office, Ideal Village Programme projects in Ghaziwal and facilities at District Headquarters Hospital.

Dr Adnan Jamil Nominated as HEC-Approved Supervisor

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- Dr Adnan Jamil of the Department of Leadership and Management Sciences (LMS), National Defence University (NDU), Islamabad, has been officially nominated as a Higher Education Commission (HEC)-approved supervisor for PhD and MPhil programmes in LMS and Government & Public Policy (GPP).

His nomination is being viewed as a significant recognition of his academic and research contributions in leadership, management and strategic studies.

Students and scholars have welcomed the development, highlighting Dr Adnan Jamil's dedication, academic guidance and mentorship in supporting students' research and professional development.



Rescue 1122 Saves Boy from 50-Foot-Deep Well in Attock

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ATTOCK: Rescue 1122 teams safely rescued a 16-year-old boy after he fell into an approximately 50-foot-deep old well near Railway Park in Attock.

Rescue personnel immediately reached the site and launched an operation inside the narrow and hazardous well using specialized equipment and professional rescue techniques.

The trained rescuers successfully reached the boy and brought him safely out of the well. The timely response of Rescue 1122 helped prevent a serious tragedy.



FIA Gujranwala Arrests 14 Suspected Human Traffickers

Report: ANI Correspondent:

GUJRANWALA -- The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Gujranwala Zone has arrested 14 suspected human traffickers and agents during a crackdown carried out from September 3 to 7 in Gujranwala, Gujrat and Sialkot.

According to FIA officials, the suspects allegedly collected Rs 32.32 million and €3,000 from citizens by promising jobs and overseas travel to countries including Spain, Poland, Portugal, Greece, Libya, the Netherlands and New Zealand.

Among those arrested was Arslan



Shehzad, who had reportedly been

deported from Libya after allegedly becoming involved with several agents. Another suspect allegedly promised to send a citizen to Iraq but left him at the Iran border.

In a separate action, FIA officials arrested Hamid Amin outside the Lahore High Court after his pre-arrest bail was rejected.

The arrests included eight suspects from Gujranwala Circle, three from Gujrat Circle and three from Sialkot Circle. Cases have been registered under the Immigration Ordinance 1979, while further raids are underway to arrest other members of the alleged trafficking network.

International Literacy Day Ceremony Held in Mithi

Report: ANI Correspondent:

MITHI -- The National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), Tharparkar, in collaboration with the District Education Department, organized a ceremony to mark International Literacy Day 2026 at Royal Palace Restaurant Hall.

District Education Officer (Primary) Tharparkar Nasrullah Sahar attended as chief guest, while Deputy Director NCHD Tharparkar Ashok Kumar and other education officials, teachers, students and NCHD representatives participated.

Speakers highlighted the importance of literacy in social and economic development and stressed greater cooperation among government institutions, NCHD, educators, parents and local communities to expand educa-



tional opportunities in underserved areas.

The participants also discussed NCHD literacy initiatives, community-based programmes and the Each One Teach One (EOTO) initiative, with a focus on improving literacy among

children, youth and adults outside the formal education system.

The ceremony concluded with a renewed commitment to strengthen literacy programmes, community participation and educational access across Tharparkar.

150 Million Youth to Be Skilled into National Assets: Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui



Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said collective efforts through formal, non-formal and technical education can transform Pakistan's 150 million youth into skilled national assets.

Addressing an International Literacy Day event, he called

Pakistan's low literacy rate a major challenge and proposed using the country's extensive network of mosques as short-duration educational centres between Ishraq and Dhuhrr prayers.

Siddiqui stressed the need for a unified national strategy involving government institutions, educational organizations and civil society to bring out-of-school children and

youth into the education system.

JICA, UNICEF, UNESCO, NCHD and Allama Iqbal Open University representatives also reaffirmed their commitment to expanding alternative and quality education. Provincial representatives highlighted progress in literacy and enrollment, while stressing continued efforts to reduce the number of out-of-school children across the country.

Federal Ombudsman Team Inspects Islamabad Airport



Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- An inspection team of the Federal Ombudsman visited Islamabad International Airport on the directives of Federal Ombudsman Navid Kamran Baloch to review public complaints and the performance of federal agencies operating at the airport.

The team, headed by Senior Advisor Ahmed Farooq and comprising Adviser Major General (Retd) Haroon Sikandar Pasha, Consultant Vice-

Chancellor Haleem Rajput and Consultant Khalid Sial, directed airport management to improve coordination among agencies and ensure better facilities for passengers.

The team heard complaints, particularly from overseas passengers, regarding immigration delays, alleged harassment by FIA, ASE, ANF and Customs staff, baggage issues and poor wash-room conditions. It also called for dedicated counters and representatives for senior citizens, wheelchair users and

foreigners.

Expressing concern over the pending banking facility, the team directed management to arrange banking services within a week. It also ordered display of market rates for essential items at airport shops and reviewed the implementation of recommendations from previous inspections.

The inspection team has submitted its initial report to the Federal Ombudsman.