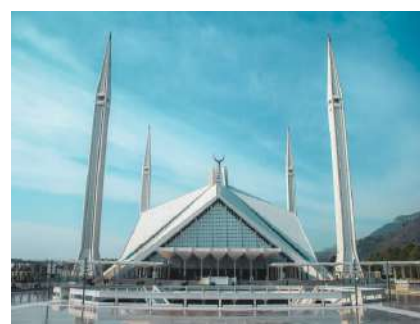




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KP's policies will come from Islamabad now, not Kabul: Kundi



ANI

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said on Monday that gone were the days when there would be no coordination between the Centre and the province, adding that "our policies will now come from Islamabad, not Kabul".

"Gone are the days when there was no coordination between the Centre and the province. Gone are the days when we used to fight needlessly with another province ... We will have policies with the Centre; our policies will come from Islamabad ... not Kabul, Jalalabad or Kahandar. It is clear," Kundi said at a press conference in

Peshawar a day after taking the helm in KP.

Kundi assumed executive control of the province after the Centre imposed governor's rule in KP and emergency in 12 of its districts, citing security situation and alleged non-cooperation of the now non-functional provincial government.

In days preceding the Centre's move, tensions between the federal government and the PTI-led KP government had remained high, initially just over the party's planned march to Islamabad to demand the release of its founder, Imran Khan, and later over the Centre's accusation that its provincial government was

not cooperating on counterterrorism. Federal ministers also accused the PTI's KP government of facilitating terrorists and not taking action against them — allegations seemingly behind Kundi's Kabul reference as Pakistan continues to raise the issue of cross-border terrorism from Afghanistan.

The KP governor's these remarks and those about about ending the lack of coordination between the province and the Centre came as he pledged enhanced support for the province's law enforcers, who are on the frontline in the fight against terrorism.

He said the new setup in the

province would "not compromise on police", pledging enhanced support and a pay raise for its law enforcers.

The governor further stated that he called a meeting on security the previous day and that of the provincial apex committee earlier today. He said the Centre had "shown confidence in us" and to meet its expectations, "our first priority is the fight against terrorism".

Kundi issued a message to the army, police, Frontier Constabulary (FC) and security institutions, saying: "Our committee, this government, is standing side by side with you and will support you fully."

Achakzai draws Balochistan parallel as he flays Centre over governor's rule in KP



ANI

National Assembly Opposition Leader Mehmood Khan Achakzai on Monday drew a comparison between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, criticising the government's move to impose emergency and governor's rule in the former. The federal government on Sunday imposed emergency in 12 districts of KP, and placed the province under governor's rule, taking note of the "provincial government's deliberate disengagement from the fight against terrorism". Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired the federal cabinet meeting that approved the measure, and said regarding terrorism in KP and Balochistan that "the way common citizens are being martyred, the way police officials and security officials, children and mothers [...] there can be nothing more heart-wrenching". Speaking to media outside the Parliament House on Monday, Achakzai claimed that there was no writ of the state in half of Balochistan.

"But you don't impose it there, because the chief minister there is your favourite," he alleged.

Achakzai's claim of a lack of the state writ in half of Balochistan was apparently in connection with the security situation in the province.

Both KP and Balochistan have been facing terrorism, and according to the data compiled by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS), 199 terrorist attacks were recorded in August across Pakistan, out of which KP, excluding the merged districts, recorded 54 terrorist attacks, while Balochistan recorded

89. Speaking alongside Achakzai, Senate Opposition Leader Raja Abbas Nasir also drew the Balochistan parallel. "If terrorism and peace were an issue ... you should have imposed emergency in Balochistan first," he said.

Voicing his criticism of the government's Oct 11 move, he said: "They call themselves the torchbearers of the law and the Constitution. However, they first attacked the Constitution by coming into power through Form-47 and now by signing the orders of imposing emergency against a government that held a two-thirds majority."

In his remarks assailing the Centre's move, Achakzai said, "This will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of everyone who values Pakistan and democracy to unite against this."

He said parties in the opposition would be asked to announce a "democratic struggle" against the move from tomorrow in areas where they had influence.

"We will not abuse anyone; we will not fire bullets — we don't have any — and we will not throw even a stone on anyone." He said the move was an "assault on Pakistan's Constitution and democracy".

"It is the duty of every Pakistani, whether he is a judge, general, in government or not in government, to resist this."

Centre's decision to impose emergency and governor's rule in KP followed weeks of political tensions, with the PTI intending to march to Islamabad to demand the release of its jailed founder, Imran Khan. The march was led by suspended KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi.



Report: Hurish Shah FT: ISLAMABAD, October 12, 2026: President Asif Ali Zardari met newly appointed Foreign Secretary Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Brazilian defence delegation calls on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir

ANI

RAWALPINDI: A high-level delegation from the Federative Republic of Brazil, led by Admiral Renato Rodrigues De Aguiar Freire, Chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces of Brazil, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF), at General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi. Upon arrival at GHQ, the visiting dignitary was presented a Guard of Honour by a smartly turned-out tri-services contingent, said an ISPR news release. During the meeting, both sides discussed matters of mutual interest, the regional security environment and avenues for enhancing bilateral defence and security cooperation. They expressed satisfaction with the long-standing cordial relations between Pakistan and Brazil and agreed to further strengthen



military-to-military collaboration. The COAS & CDF emphasised Pakistan's commitment to strengthening defence ties with Brazil. The visiting dignitary appreciated the profession-

alism and operational preparedness of the Armed Forces of Pakistan and acknowledged their contributions towards regional peace and stability.

Pakistani resident killed, dozen injured in new attack on Saudi airport



ANI

One person was killed and nearly a dozen

hurt in a new attack Riyadh's international airport on Sunday, Saudi authorities reported, a day after a strike claimed by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis that killed 13 people and wounded more than 300.

Saudi-led coalition forces in Yemen said an unidentified projectile had targeted Riyadh's international airport Terminal 4 on Sunday, causing a fire. A Pakistani resident was killed and eleven people were wounded, the Saudi civil aviation authority said. Coalition forces also said Saudi air defences had intercepted a cruise missile in the vicinity of King Khalid International Airport.

'Afridi, some of his cabinet members have been taken into preventive custody,' confirms Talal



ANI

PESHAWAR: Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry confirmed on Monday that former Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) chief minister Sohail Afridi and some of his cabinet members had been "taken into preventive cus-

tody," following the imposition of emergency and governor's rule in the province.

"Yes, I can confirm that the chief minister (Sohail Afridi) and some of his cabinet members have been taken into preventive custody," Chaudhry told Reuters. If any of them have any cases to be tried against them, they will be charged and tried but the others will be released, he said, adding that the detentions happened on Sunday. A day earlier, K-P Information Minister Shafi Jan claimed that Afridi had been arrested and urged people across the province to gather in Peshawar. However, at the time, no government official had confirmed his arrest or detention. Meanwhile, the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police in Peshawar said Afridi remained in police protective custody.

Russian interior minister arrives in Pakistan on four-day visit

ANI

Russian Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokolstev arrived in Pakistan on Monday and would hold "important meetings" with the leadership here, according to a statement by the interior ministry. The statement said Kolokolstev was undertaking the four-day visit at the invitation of Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, marking the first instance of a Russian interior minister visiting Pakistan. Kolokolstev was received by Minister of State for Interior Tallal Chaudhry upon his arrival in Islamabad, it added. During his stay in Pakistan, the Russian interior minister would participate in "important discussions" on strengthening bilateral relations and enhancing mutual cooperation, and would also hold key meetings with the country's leadership, the statement said. Earlier, in January, Russian President Vladimir Putin had said Moscow's relations with Pakistan were "genuinely mutually beneficial" and that it maintained close ties with Islamabad.

'Govt can't keep sleeping when it comes to citizens' security': DPM Dar on K-P emergency, governor's rule

ANI

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Monday defended the federal government's decision to impose emergency measures in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P), saying it had "no choice" but to act to protect citizens from terrorism.

"When it comes to the safety and security of our nationals, our citizens, wherever they live, any part of Pakistan, I think it is the duty of the federal government," DPM Dar said at a conference on Pakistan's evolving counter-terrorism landscape.

The federal government imposed governor's rule in K-P on Sunday, with President Asif Ali Zardari approving Prime Minister Shehbaz



Sharif's advice under Article 234 of the Constitution. The decision came amid tensions between the Centre and the PTI-led provincial government over the security situation and counter-terrorism efforts. The PTI rejected the move as unconstitutional

and vowed to resist it.

He said the government had determined that there was no alternative to the measures it had taken. "It's not a political move. It is surely against the menace of terrorism which the province has been hit with in the last decade and a half," he said. "Can we keep sleeping and looking towards another because it's a political move? No, it's not. I can guarantee you." DPM Dar said the government had paid a heavy political price for difficult decisions in the past, including economic measures taken when Pakistan was on the brink of default, and that "whatever costs" the government has to pay to save the economy, to protect property and lives of the people, "I think it is never too much."



Report: Hurish shah FT: ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari received the credentials of three ambassadors-designate at Aiwan-e-Sadr: Sigvald Hauge of Norway, Irfan Shakiroglu Davudov of Azerbaijan, and Stéphane Laurent Rey of Switzerland.

Ishaq Dar Announces Rs100 Million Seerat Endowment Fund at 3rd International Seerat Festival



Report: FT Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD --Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar addressed the inaugural ceremony of the 3rd International Seerat Festival, highlighting the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a guiding framework for justice, mutual respect and understanding

among nations. He highlighted Pakistan’s efforts to promote regional peace and build bridges between nations, stressing the importance of the UN Charter and relevant UN resolutions in addressing the situation in Palestine and resolving the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. Ishaq Dar also emphasized tolerance, respect for differences and the

role of education in instilling the values of Seerah among younger generations to counter extremism. On the directions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the deputy prime minister announced the establishment of a Seerat Endowment Fund with an initial allocation of Rs100 million to support Seerat studies and promote the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

President Zardari Approves Foreign Visits of Chief Justice of Pakistan and Chief Justice of Federal Constitutional Court

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- President Asif Ali Zardari, on the advice of the Prime Minister, has approved the NOC and ex-Pakistan leave for the Chief Justice of Pakistan to visit the United Kingdom, South Korea and

Japan. The Chief Justice of Pakistan will undertake the visits from October 14 to 21 and October 27 to November 4, 2026. The President has also approved, on the Prime Minister’s advice, the visit of the Chief Justice of the Federal Constitutional Court

of Pakistan to Azerbaijan from October 19 to 22, 2026. The Chief Justice will participate in the conference of constitutional courts and institutions exercising constitutional jurisdiction of the Turkic world (TÜRK-AY) in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

National Assembly Speaker Expresses Grief over Pakistan Army Training Aircraft Crash Near Quetta

Report: Hurish Shah FT;

ISLAMABAD -- National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the crash of a Pakistan Army training aircraft

near Quetta. The Speaker conveyed his heartfelt condolences over the martyrdom of Major Hasnain Shehzad Humayun and Captain Abdul Samad and extended his sympathies to the bereaved families. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said the

loss of precious human lives in the aircraft crash was a great tragedy. He prayed for the elevation of the martyrs’ ranks and for Allah Almighty to grant patience and strength to their families to bear this irreparable loss.

Senate Body Reviews Foreign-Funded Projects Under PSDP 2026-27, Seeks Explanation for M-6 Delays Since 2017



Ahmed Shamsur Rehman/ ANI

ISLAMABAD -- The Senate Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, chaired by Senator Quratulain Marri, reviewed allocations for foreign-funded development projects under PSDP 2026-27 and expressed serious concern over prolonged delays in the M-6 Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway Project.

The Committee was informed that 98 foreign-funded projects, with a total estimated cost of Rs. 8,099.94 billion, were included in PSDP 2026-27, involving foreign assistance of Rs. 4,649.2 billion. Against a demand of Rs. 537 billion for rupee cover, the Economic Affairs Division proposed Rs. 425 billion. However, the National Economic Council allocated Rs. 255 billion, citing fiscal constraints and the Government’s commitment to domestic financing.

Senator Quratulain Marri stressed effective monitoring and timely completion of projects, particularly those with more than 80 per cent physical progress. She also called for a review of dependence on foreign loans, emphasizing the

need to assess borrowing costs and repayment obligations and make better use of domestic resources.

Regarding an M-1-related project, officials informed the Committee that completion was targeted for December 2026 or January 2027. The Committee stressed adherence to the timeline and timely utilization of funds. Reviewing the M-6 Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway Project, the Committee questioned repeated delays despite the project having been under consideration since 2017. Senator Dr. Afanullah Khan also expressed concern over missed deadlines and called for timely implementation.

Officials informed the Committee that Sections I and II were being processed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode, with the concession award targeted for February 2027. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) was providing transaction advisory services for these sections, while financing arrangements had been secured for the remaining sections.

Financing of USD 475 million from the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) for Sections IV and V

and USD 230 million from the OPEC Fund for Section III had been secured. Bids for Sections III and IV were under evaluation, while bids for Section V were expected to open in October 2026. Contract awards for Sections III, IV and V were targeted for November and December 2026.

The Committee also discussed the participation of foreign and local companies in the bidding process and sought clarification on the reasons for delays and the status of proceedings before the Grievance Redressal Committee.

The Chairperson demanded a definite timeline for groundbreaking and directed the concerned authorities to avoid further extensions. Officials stated that the commencement of groundbreaking activities would depend on the completion of necessary approvals and formalities. The Committee emphasized transparent procurement, timely decisions and effective coordination to prevent further delays. The meeting was attended by Senators Shahadat Awan, Saadia Abbasi, Dr. Afanullah Khan and Jam Saifullah Khan, along with the Secretary Planning and other relevant officials.

Workers Are Our Pride, Their Rights Our Responsibility: Jamal Shah Kakar

Report: ANI Correspondent

QUETTA -- Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) General Secretary Jamal Shah Kakar has reaffirmed the party’s commitment to protecting workers’ rights, describing the working class as the backbone of the national economy.

Addressing a Labour Wing Convention organized by the PML-N Labour Wing and various labour unions, Kakar said that workers’ welfare had remained a central priority of Nawaz Sharif’s politics.

He emphasized that timely wages, safe working conditions and dignified employment were



fundamental rights of workers. He pledged to resolve their issues on a priority basis, stating that practical steps would be taken rather than relying on promises.

Kakar announced that workers’

grievances would be compiled in consultation with labour union leaders and that progress on resolving them would be regularly reviewed. He also stressed stronger coordination among the government, elected representatives and labour organizations.

“The prosperity of workers is the prosperity of Pakistan,” he said, assuring workers of continued support for their legitimate rights.

The convention was attended by Provincial Minister Mir Asim Kurd Gailo, MNA Akhtar Bibi, Adviser to the Balochistan Chief Minister Naseem-ur-Rehman Malakhail, several MPAs, Labour Wing office-bearers and representatives of various labour unions.

PTI Kisan Wing Rejects 27.27% to 45.45% Hike in Certified Wheat Seed Prices, Demands Relief for Farmers

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD-- Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Kisan Wing has rejected the 27.27% to 45.45% increase in certified wheat seed prices announced by the Punjab Seed Corporation ahead of the Rabi season, calling it a major financial burden on farmers already struggling with rising agricultural input costs.

In a statement, PTI Kisan Wing Central Information Secretary Khalid Nawaz Sadhraich said the Punjab government had fixed the price of certified wheat seed at Rs. 5,500 per 50kg bag last year following negotiations. However, the Punjab Seed Corporation has now



set the price at Rs. 7,000 for Punjab and Rs. 8,000 for other provinces.

He said open-market prices were also high, with a 50kg bag of Sawera-24 selling for Rs. 8,500, Falak Premium for Rs. 7,930 and

Nishan Bhakkar Super for Rs. 7,533. Sadhraich said farmers were already facing high electricity tariffs, fertilizer costs and diesel prices, while low wheat sale rates and middlemen further reduced their earnings.

Warning that higher seed prices could discourage wheat cultivation this season, he said small and marginal farmers would be particularly affected.

The PTI Kisan Wing demanded the immediate withdrawal of the price increase, restoration of last year’s rates and subsidies on agricultural inputs, warning that continued pressure on farmers could threaten food security and trigger protests.

Foreign Secretary Asim Iftikhar Ahmad Assumes Charge, Calls on Ishaq Dar

Report: ANI

ISLAMABAD -- Foreign Secretary Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar after formally assuming charge at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Senator Ishaq Dar appreciated Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad’s contributions during his tenure as Pakistan’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York and wished him success in his new responsibilities.



KCFR Hosts Cultural Diplomacy Evening in Karachi, Showcases Pakistan’s Rich Heritage

Report : ANI Reporter:

KARACHI -- The Karachi Council on Foreign Relations (KCFR) organised an evening dedicated to cultural diplomacy, highlighting Pakistan’s rich cultural heritage and the role of art, music, dance and poetry in promoting international understanding and goodwill.

The event brought together diplomats, government officials, business leaders, academics, civil society representatives and members of the cultural community.

In her welcome address, KCFR Chairperson Nadira Panjwani HI, SI, emphasised that international harmony is strengthened by appreciating one another’s heritage, arts and traditions.

Keynote speaker Sultana Siddiqui highlighted the role of media and the arts in promoting Pakistan’s cultural identity and projecting a positive image of the country. KCFR Patron-in-Chief Ikram Sehgal underscored the importance of cultural engagement in strengthening international relations and fostering mutual respect. The evening featured a dance



performance by renowned dancer and social activist Sheema Kermani, a poetry recital by Kulsoom Aftab, and a musical performance by Khadim Ali Khan and his group. Paintings by Jimmy Fali and displays of traditional Balochi Zardozi

and jewellery also attracted participants’ attention.

KCFR continues to promote cultural diplomacy as a means of strengthening cross-cultural understanding and building lasting international partnerships.

Warm hospitality ‘a jewel of Pakistan’: Philippine ambassador

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Philippines to Pakistan Dr. Emmanuel R. Fernandez has termed the warmth and hospitality of the Pakistani people as “one of the jewels of Pakistan.”

He was speaking during a video talk show organized by the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) here, sharing his personal impressions of living and working in Pakistan.

“In terms of my wonderful experience in Pakistan, I would say that it is the warmth and hospitality of the Pakistani people that I admire very much. From the first time I set foot in Pakistan, I already felt that warmth,” he said

Recalling an encounter with local residents, the ambassador said he and his wife were walking through a shopping mall when a group of children approached them.

“Out of nowhere, a group of children just came up to us. They weren’t shy at all. They politely asked for our names and wanted to take a picture with us. Later, we went to the



National Monument, and the exact same thing happened. People just welcomed us with open arms,” he said.

“You don’t see that in other countries. You only see it in Pakistan. I truly think that is the one jewel of Pakistan – the warmth of your hospitality,” he added.

Highlighting the country’s natural beauty, Dr. Fernandez said Pakistan’s diverse landscapes were another major attraction.

“And, of course, the other jewel is the beauty of Pakistan itself. As I always say, Pakistan is a very huge and beautiful country. You have everything here. You have snow-

capped mountains, deserts, plains, bustling cities and serene rural areas. It is a beautiful country, and that diversity goes far beyond just geography,” he said. Dr. Fernandez, who also serves as chairman of the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad, emphasized Pakistan’s cultural and linguistic diversity, describing it as an experience the other countries should explore.

“Culturally, linguistically and in so many other areas, Pakistan is incredibly diverse,” he said.

“I think it is an experience that other countries should have. And it is something that ASEAN, in particular, should not simply experience, but use as a driving force to steer towards greater, deeper cooperation with our region,” he added.

The ambassador expressed confidence that relations between Pakistan and ASEAN member states could be further strengthened through mutual respect, cultural understanding and people-to-people exchanges, alongside appreciation for Pakistan’s breathtaking landscapes and renowned hospitality.

National Grid Pakistan signs MoU with TEVTA Punjab to strengthen power sector skills development

ANI

ISLAMABAD: National Grid Pakistan has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) Punjab to strengthen academia-industry collaboration and develop a globally competitive workforce for the power and energy sector.

Managing Director National Grid Pakistan, Engr. Altaf Hussain Malik, and Chairman TEVTA, Brig. (Retd.) Muhammad Sajid Khokhar, SI(M), signed the MoU at the TEVTA Secretariat, Lahore. Senior manage-

ment from both sides were also present, said a press release issued on Monday.

The collaboration will focus on competency-based training, curriculum development, Training of Trainers, on-the-job training, internships, industrial visits and employment linkages. Speaking on the occasion, Engr. Altaf Hussain Malik said training and skills enhancement are his key priorities, with particular emphasis on safety culture and practical skills. He assured TEVTA of National Grid Pakistan’s full cooperation and announced that a joint committee would be constituted to take the collaboration forward.

NATO must be ready for key summit in pivotal year

LUKE COFFEY

The World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, last week highlighted an ongoing rift between the worldview of the US and that of its transatlantic partners in Europe. This time, the dispute centered on Greenland — specifically, America’s desire for greater access to and control over the territory. While tensions were high at times, it was NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte who ultimately helped calm the situation and get transatlantic relations back on track.

Looking ahead, 2026 will be a pivotal year for NATO, with a major summit scheduled to take place less than six months from now in Ankara, Türkiye. To ensure the summit’s success, policymakers must begin shaping the agenda immediately. While the meeting may seem far off, in terms of statecraft and diplomacy, six months is very little time at all. Aligning the US and its European partners more closely will require early preparation, sustained engagement and political will on both sides of the Atlantic. Getting the transatlantic relationship right carries sig-

nificant economic implications — not only for North America and Europe, but for the global economy as well. Together, the two account for nearly half of the world’s gross domestic product. Europe and the US are each other’s largest export markets and each is responsible for trillions of dollars of investment in the other’s economy, supporting millions of jobs. When rifts emerge across the Atlantic, the consequences are felt well beyond security policy, with ripple effects across trade, investment and global growth. As the alliance heads toward the July summit, four major issues are likely to dominate discussions. Policymakers would be wise to begin laying the groundwork now to ensure the meeting delivers tangible results rather than political friction.

The first issue, unsurprisingly given the recent focus on Greenland, is Arctic security. Just as Donald Trump has done more than any other US president to push NATO members to increase their defense spending, he has also done more than any predecessor to force the alliance to take the Arctic seriously. Until recently, NATO avoided even mention-

ing the region in its official documents, largely due to internal disagreements among Arctic allies over what role the alliance should play there.

With growing competition in the High North and with Trump’s renewed emphasis on Greenland’s strategic importance, Arctic security has been pushed near the top of NATO’s agenda for the first time. For this summer’s summit to proceed smoothly, allies should expect concrete deliverables related to NATO’s posture, presence and coordination in the Arctic.

The second issue likely to be raised concerns NATO’s relationship with the broader region — a matter of particular importance to the host country, Türkiye. While Türkiye has been an integral part of transatlantic security since joining NATO in the 1950s, Ankara also places increasing emphasis on security issues in the Black Sea region and the Middle East. Notably, it was a Turkish initiative at the 2004 NATO Summit in Istanbul that led to the creation of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, which formalized NATO’s engagement with several

Gulf states. Since then, the framework has provided a useful platform for high-level dialogue, though it has produced relatively few tangible outcomes in terms of shared security. With the political momentum that comes from hosting the summit, NATO should seize the opportunity to revamp, or at least reenergize, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and strengthen its relationships with key Gulf partners.

The third issue, and one that will no doubt be a top priority for Trump, will be the health of the alliance’s defense spending. Dating back to his first term in the White House, Trump has been among the most vocal US presidents in urging European allies to spend more on defense. At last year’s summit in The Hague, NATO took a historic step by agreeing to aim for defense spending of 5 percent of gross domestic product. This is three percentage points higher than the long-standing 2 percent benchmark. While this goal is not expected to be met until the early 2030s, there is little doubt that Trump will be closely monitoring progress in the meantime.

At present, only a handful of allies, primarily the Baltic states and Poland, come even close to meeting the 5 percent target. If Trump succeeds in working with Congress to pass his proposed \$1.5 trillion defense budget, the US itself would reach that threshold. The faster European allies demonstrate meaningful progress toward this goal, the smoother alliance management is likely to be between the White House and European capitals. The final issue, though unlikely to receive much public attention, will be discussed intensively behind closed doors: the war in Ukraine. Trump has made slow but steady progress in pushing Russia and Ukraine toward negotiations and NATO’s posture at the summit will depend heavily on how far diplomatic efforts have advanced by then. Trump has been clear that Ukrainian membership of NATO is off the table, meaning the alliance will need to find creative ways to remain engaged with Kyiv — strengthening cooperation and support without crossing political red lines set by Washington.

— Arab News

Netanyahu the biggest obstacle to Trump’s Gaza plan

OSAMA AL-SHARIF

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was never on board when US President Donald Trump announced his 20-point Gaza peace plan, which led to the Oct. 10 ceasefire agreement. He has resisted pressure to honor Israel’s commitments under phase one of the plan: allowing the unimpeded flow of humanitarian aid and stopping the killing of Palestinians in Gaza. More than 450 Palestinians, including women and children, have been killed since the ceasefire came into effect. And Israel has prevented the entry of the caravans and shelter needed to protect tens of thousands of displaced Gazans from the bitter cold that has swept the region for weeks. Infants have died of cold and exposure as a result.

Netanyahu was equally unhappy with Trump’s idea of establishing a “Board of Peace” to oversee the implementation of his plan, including the naming of a Palestinian national committee to run the enclave and inviting international troops to serve as a stabilization force in Gaza.

When Trump unveiled the four-tier structure of his Board of Peace this month — with an executive committee, a Palestinian national committee, a US general to head the stabilization force and a high commissioner to liaise between the Palestinian technocratic body and the executive committee — Netanyahu found himself cornered. Trump had stripped him of leverage regarding the fate of the Palestinian enclave. The US president also announced it was time to move to the second phase of the plan, which would entail Israel’s gradual withdrawal from Gaza, in addition to disarming Hamas.

But the real challenge for the Board of Peace will be forcing Netanyahu to yield and embrace the plan and its requirements fully and unconditionally. One litmus test is the opening of the Rafah border crossing. Trump sent his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, and his special envoy, Steve Witkoff, to Israel earlier this week to push this step forward. Netanyahu resisted, reiterating that for the crossing to open, Hamas must hand over the body of the last Israeli captive.

Within 24 hours, the Israeli military found the hostage’s remains in an area under its control in Gaza. Netanyahu bowed — but not before setting new conditions. He would allow the Rafah crossing to open not for aid trucks, but only for pedestrians to travel between Gaza and

Egypt as part of a “limited reopening.”

Meanwhile, Israel continues to refuse entry to the 15-member Palestinian committee tasked with assuming responsibilities in the beleaguered Strip.

Whatever the outcome of Kushner and Witkoff’s trip to Israel, the general impression is that Netanyahu will continue fighting to have a final say on what happens next in Gaza. While the two US envoys met with Netanyahu, Israeli shelling killed at least three Palestinians in various parts of the Strip. The Israeli army has also continued expanding areas under its control beyond the so-called Yellow Line. It is believed to occupy nearly 60 percent of Gaza. The areas under its control have been flattened, while the army is digging deep trenches to prevent Palestinians from returning to what used to be their homes.

Trump’s Board of Peace has sent tremors across the globe because it has been given a mandate that extends beyond Gaza. Most of America’s Western allies have declined the invitation to join. The Arab and Muslim nations that have joined have done so after a careful assessment of the costs and benefits. Being on board regarding Gaza’s future is better than opting out. Working with Trump and his aides from within far outweighs being locked out of the deliberations and discussions. The Palestinian Authority has not been represented at any level of Trump’s plan and is unlikely to have a role in the near future, pending its much-touted reform, which is a red herring. As much as the PA needs genuine reform and accountability, Israel will never approve of a Palestinian body that seeks to fulfill the ambition of a two-state solution. Even so, Netanyahu’s recent political maneuvers do not bode well for the Board of Peace and Trump’s peace plan. He remains the biggest obstacle to ending the carnage, opening border crossings and allowing much-needed aid and supplies to enter freely. Ironically, Netanyahu and his far-right partners still espouse a plan to forcibly remove Gazans from the enclave, retain open-ended military control of the Strip and prevent reconstruction efforts. The opening of the Rafah crossing will put Trump’s plan and his board to the ultimate test. Already, Netanyahu is seeking to derail that effort. He now plans to establish another crossing point, totally controlled by Israel, next to Rafah inside Gaza. Netanyahu is always planning ahead, working to impose new conditions that will keep him in the game.

— Arab News



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s Security Crisis: The Need to Dismantle Terrorist Support Networks



By: Rana Farooq Ashraf
Published By: ANI News Agency

The emergency measures and ongoing debate over the possibility of governor’s rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should not be viewed solely through the lens of political confrontation, the future of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government, or a proposed march towards Islamabad. The broader and more pressing question concerns Pakistan’s national security: how can the state effectively dismantle the terrorist networks that threaten public safety, economic stability and the authority of government institutions?

The situation in the eleven districts reportedly affected by emergency measures requires a comprehensive assessment of militant activity, local facilitation networks and possible cross-border connections. When armed groups challenge state authority, intimidate communities and target law-enforcement personnel, the consequences extend beyond provincial boundaries. Such threats demand a coordinated national response rather than being reduced to a political dispute.

A particularly important area requiring investigation is the possibility of links between militant networks operating in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and violence in Balochistan. Relevant authorities should examine whether elements associated with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), their alleged facilitators or cross-border contacts are providing financial, logistical or operational assistance to the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) or other armed groups. However, such links must be established through credible intelligence and verifiable evidence. Where evidence exists, investigations should extend beyond armed operatives to financial resources, safe houses, supply routes and local support structures.

The presence and status of Afghan nationals in Pakistan also requires a clear distinction between immigration enforcement and counterterrorism. Pakistan has undertaken large-scale returns of Afghan nationals, but effective enforcement requires the identification and lawful processing of individuals whose legal status remains unresolved. More importantly, anyone found through credible evidence to be financing terrorism, facilitating militant movement, supplying weapons or providing opera-



tional support must face legal action, regardless of nationality or political affiliation. Afghan nationality alone cannot constitute evidence of criminal involvement.

Financial investigations in major metropolitan centres, including Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Islamabad, should also form part of a broader counterterrorism strategy. Businesses, warehouses, properties and industrial investments should be examined where credible evidence indicates their possible connection to terrorist financing or other unlawful activities. Investigators should trace beneficial ownership, suspicious financial transactions and links to designated individuals or organisations. The objective should be to dismantle illicit financial networks without stigmatising entire communities or legitimate businesses.

Questions concerning the role of the former provincial administration in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also warrant impartial scrutiny. If credible evidence establishes that any public official, political office-holder or administrative officer facilitated militant activity or deliberately obstructed lawful counterterrorism operations, accountability should follow. Political affiliation must not provide immunity from investigation. At the same time, allegations must never be treated as proof of guilt without due process.

Pakistan needs an integrated security strategy based on effective intelligence-sharing between federal and provincial institutions, financial monitoring, stronger border management, professional law enforcement and greater public confidence. Emergency measures must have a clear constitutional and legal basis, defined limits and appropriate oversight. National security cannot be strengthened sustainably by weakening due process or indiscriminately targeting innocent citizens.

Ultimately, Pakistan must confront not only terrorist fighters but also the financial, logistical and administrative systems that enable militant activity. Success should not be measured by the survival or removal of a political government. It should instead be measured through a sustained reduction in violence, improved public safety, stronger institutions and the restoration of the rule of law.

Sustainable peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan requires a state that is firm against terrorism, impartial in accountability and committed to protecting its citizens. Every genuine facilitator must be held accountable on the basis of evidence, while every innocent person must remain protected by law. Only such an approach can strengthen public trust and provide a durable foundation for peace and stability.

US-Europe rift serves neither, but is it inevitable?

YOSSI MEKELBERG

A rift between the US and Europe is quickly brewing. However, neither side can afford it or will benefit from it. Worse, this long-standing alliance now faces its severest test yet, which is bound to remain for the next three years. It is already leaving deep scars.

The security and prosperity of what is known as the West depend on close transatlantic relationships. When this alliance weakens, it only serves those the US and Europe perceive as their main rivals: China and Russia. One would not be surprised if the leaderships in Beijing and Moscow were rubbing their hands with glee at every spat between the Trump administration and America’s NATO allies. The American administration’s insistence on acquiring Greenland has proven to be, for the EU, the UK and Canada, the final straw. For them, this was a red line they could not afford to let Washington cross without mounting a challenge, as they did.

The strategic importance of Greenland — the world’s largest island — is indisputable and it will only increase because of the unfortunate impact of climate change. Its strategic position between the US and Russia makes it a front-line area of growing importance as the ice sheets melt. Global warming is causing Greenland’s ice sheet and the rest of the Arctic’s sea ice to melt, opening new sea routes that will serve as an alternative to traditional, costly navigation through the Suez and Panama canals. Add to this Greenland’s rich mineral and hydrocarbon deposits and the attraction of this massive island, despite its harsh weather, lack of infrastructure and remoteness, is turning it into the US’ latest frontier.

Alas, the way President Donald Trump is going about it alienates his country’s closest allies and does so needlessly. The idea of the American frontier underpins

the country’s historical westward expansion, with European settlers moving from the original settlements along the Atlantic Coast toward the Pacific Coast. This was a combination of ideology and utilitarianism, eventually resulting, for instance, in the purchase of Alaska in 1867 for the modest sum of \$7.2 million (about \$150 million today).

Acquiring territories reflected the “manifest destiny” notion, coined by John L. O’Sullivan in 1845, that America had a special destiny to stretch across the continent. However, it was another US president, Woodrow Wilson, with his notable 14 points during the First World War, who made his country the champion of the right to self-determination — a position that now seems reversed by the current US administration.

Greenland, in Trump’s thinking, epitomizes this. And it is no longer a fight between the so-called new world and the old world of colonial Europe, but a confrontation that undermines the closest of allies, which share similar security concerns and, at least until recently, similar values and respect for the norms of a rules-based world order.

Before Trump’s arrival at the World Economic Forum in Davos, the fear was that the issue of Greenland was going to cause irreparable damage to the US’ relationship with most of the other members of NATO, which believed that Trump would not climb down from his demand for American sovereignty over the island.

The day before Trump addressed the forum, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney urged his fellow “middle powers” to form new alliances, accusing the great powers of abandoning the post-Second World War system of freer trade and international norms, which required an adequate response. “We understand that this rupture calls for more than adaptation,” he said, as “the old order is not coming back. We should not mourn it.

Sindh Livestock Department Distributes 16 Motorcycles to Field Staff in Tharparkar

****Nareender Kumar/ ANI****

MITHI -- Director General Livestock Sindh Dr. Hizbullah Bhutto has said that livestock is a major source of livelihood for the people of Tharparkar, and the department is taking initiatives to improve animal breeding, productivity and rural prosperity. He expressed these views while addressing a ceremony at the Deputy Director Livestock's office in Mithi, where 16 motorcycles were distributed among field staff to strengthen veterinary services across the district. Dr. Bhutto said Tharparkar is home to more than seven million animals, adding that the department provides free vaccination and



veterinary treatment to protect animal health and enhance productivity.

Director Animal Husbandry Sindh Dr. Arshad Khanzada, Disease Investigation Officer Sindh Dr. Abdul Mannan Khokhar, and Deputy Director Livestock and Animal Husbandry Tharparkar Dr.

Ajay Kumar Rupani highlighted the importance of providing timely veterinary services to farmers in remote areas. They said the motorcycles would improve field staff mobility, strengthen service delivery and help ensure veterinary care reaches farmers' doorsteps.



Muzaffarabad: Information Secretary Muhammad Rashid Hanif is giving a departmental briefing to Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Iftikhar Gilani.



Report: ANI Correspondent: Adviser to the Chief Minister on Information and Broadcasting, Samar Haroon Bilour, addressed a press conference at her office regarding the prevailing situation in the province.

Punjab Chief Minister's Youth Games 2026: Over 134,000 Registrations Completed in Rawalpindi Division

Report: ANI

RAWALPINDI -- A meeting was held at the Commissioner's Office in Rawalpindi on Monday to review and accelerate registrations for the Punjab Chief Minister's Youth Games 2026. The meeting was chaired by Additional Commissioner Coordination Kashif Hussain and attended by focal persons from relevant departments and representatives from various districts. Divisional Sports Officer Rawalpindi Waheed Ahmed briefed participants on the progress, reporting that a total of 134,018 registrations had been completed so far. These included 84,512 from secondary schools, 30,679 from middle schools, 15,732 from colleges, 2,363 from universities and 732 from special persons. District-wise figures showed 38,027 registrations in Attock, 33,757 in Rawalpindi, 33,700 in Chakwal, 27,682



in Jhelum and 852 in Murree.

Additional Commissioner Coordination Kashif Hussain directed all focal persons to accelerate the registration process and ensure significant progress over the next three days. He emphasized that all departments must play an active role

in achieving the targets set for the initiative. He further directed officials to ensure effective monitoring and review registration progress on a daily basis, describing the Youth Games as a special initiative of the Punjab Chief Minister.



ISLAMABAD : Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar witnesses the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the Higher Education Commission (HEC) for the integration of databases.

PM Shehbaz Directs Doubling of SME Financing to Rs 2.2 Trillion by 2028

Report: ANI

ISLAMABAD-- Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed the doubling of total financing for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from Rs 1.1 trillion to Rs 2.2 trillion by 2028, emphasizing their vital role in strengthening Pakistan's economy. Chairing a meeting on the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), the Prime Minister said the business community was the backbone of any country's economy, while Pakistan's SME sector had enormous potential to drive economic growth. He said the ongoing reforms at SMEDA were aimed at empowering small and medium-sized entrepreneurs. He also stressed that creating business opportunities in underdeveloped areas would promote local prosperity, reduce migration to major cities and support overall national development. The Prime Minister directed SMEDA to develop a comprehensive strategy to educate aspiring entrepreneurs about procedures for obtaining business loans. He also called for feasibility studies for businesses across various sectors to be prepared by relevant experts and made available in local languages. The meeting was informed that



SMEDA was being transformed into a central platform to provide training to aspiring entrepreneurs and facilitate their access to bank financing. Offices were being established across the country to improve outreach, while an artificial intelligence-based helpline would provide information and guidance in local languages. Participants were also informed that a memorandum of understanding had been signed between global e-commerce company Alibaba and SMEDA to train 10,000 SMEs over two years. Reforms were also underway to

make the SME digital portal more effective and user-friendly. The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Rana Tanveer Hussain, Jam Kamal Khan, Dr Musadik Masood Malik, Ahad Khan Cheema, Attaullah Tarar and Chaudhry Salik Hussain; Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kiani; Adviser to the Prime Minister Haroon Akhtar; Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan; and senior officials of relevant institutions.

Chinese Investors Can Tap Pakistan's Growing Market Through ICCI: Zikria Akbar Zia

Report: Hurish shah FT

ISLAMABAD -- Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia has reaffirmed the Chamber's commitment to strengthening Pakistan-China economic ties through joint ventures, technology transfer and mutually beneficial investment opportunities. He expressed these views while welcoming a five-member Chinese business delegation led by Cindy Chen of MERA PC, which facilitates visits by Chinese entrepreneurs to Pakistan to explore business opportunities. Zikria Akbar Zia said Pakistan's strategic location, growing consumer market and investment potential offered promising opportunities for Chinese businesses. He stressed the need for stronger business-to-business links and practical joint venture models to translate bilateral friendship into economic gains. He offered Chinese manufacturers the opportunity to showcase their products at the ICCI Display Centre and announced that the Chamber was ready to establish a facilitation desk to



guide members on visa procedures, import-export regulations and Chinese trade policies. Cindy Chen said she had consistently promoted Pakistan as a promising destination for Chinese investors and expressed hope that more entrepreneurs would visit the country and establish lasting business partnerships. ICCI Vice President Mohammad Waqas Khan highlighted the importance of structured B2B meetings in

converting investment interest into business transactions and assured the delegation of the Chamber's cooperation. Executive Member Abrar Ul Haq moderated the session and briefed the visitors on ICCI's initiatives. The meeting concluded with an agreement to pursue a structured framework for trade facilitation, institutional cooperation, product information exchange and business development between Pakistani and Chinese stakeholders.

Khudi Wellness Carnival 2026 Promotes Mental Health, Inclusion and Community Wellbeing

Report: ANI Correspondent:

KARACHI -- The two-day Khudi Wellness Carnival 2026 concluded at Greenwich University Campus, Karachi, bringing together mental health professionals, academics, healthcare practitioners, students and community organisations to mark World Mental Health Day under the theme "Better Minds, Brighter Futures." Organised by Khudi Wellness in collaboration with Thrive School of Psychology and Greenwich University, the event promoted preventive mental health, emotional wellbeing, inclusion and community engagement through panel discussions, interactive activities and wellness initiatives. A key highlight was a panel discussion on "Parenting: Understanding Youth Issues - Bridging the Generation Gap," moderated by Khudi Wellness Founder Sarwat N. Shah. Professor Shaista Effendi, Dr Minhaj Qidwai, Mufti Abu Talha and DG Honnak Baloch discussed youth challenges, family communication, emotional safety and early intervention. A special session featured acid-attack survivor Ahmer Iqbal and burn survivor Marjan Mashaddi, highlighting resilience, dignity and social acceptance. A fireside chat with Dr



Irfan Qamruddin, hosted by researcher Hamza, explored spirituality and personal development. The carnival also featured sessions on employee wellbeing, breast cancer awareness, caregiver mental health, environmental wellness, tree plantation, inclusive care and digital therapy. A community Drum Circle led by Mohsin Kazi encouraged participation and connection. Speaking at the event, Sarwat N. Shah emphasised making mental health support preventive, accessible and inclusive, while encouraging

communities to replace stigma with understanding and collective responsibility. The organisers acknowledged Greenwich University, Thrive School of Psychology, sponsor Almaraya Water and supporting partners Plant a Million, Dr Essa Laboratory & Diagnostic Centre, Honest Foods and Artistic Towels, along with speakers, volunteers and participating organisations. The event reaffirmed the importance of collaboration in building healthier families, stronger communities and a more compassionate society.



Bangkok :Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, meeting with Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, to discuss Pakistan's economic priorities, climate resilience and opportunities for technical cooperation.