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'Winning peace more important than winning war': Naqvi on US-Iran mediation efforts at Doha security forum

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said on Monday that "winning peace was more important than winning a war" as he discussed Pakistan's mediation efforts between Iran and the United States. Speaking at the 8th Global Security Forum being held in Doha, Naqvi stressed that Pakistan chose the "path of peace" during a critical time and made efforts to bring both sides to the negotiating table, further highlighting the personal efforts of the Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir to achieve peace.

"The aim of both countries, Pakistan and Qatar, was never to take credit, the only aim was to stop further conflict and to save innocent lives. Pakistan has always believed that dialogue is better than war. We believe that winning peace is far more important than winning a war."



Nawaz Sharif pays tribute to soldiers fighting terrorism

WEB DESK

LONDON

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif has said there is no doubt about the sacrifices made by the Pakistan Army. Nawaz Sharif spoke to journalists as he left Avenfield House in London.

Asked about the Pakistan Army's sacrifices, the former prime minister said there was no question about its sacrifices and that Pakistani soldiers were fighting with great courage. He prayed that Allah Almighty grant the martyrs a high place in His mercy. He said those involved in terrorism



Punjab cabinet approves Rs7.6b Thal agriculture project subsidy

SPECIAL REPORTER

LAHORE

The Punjab cabinet, chaired by CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif, has approved a series of development initiatives, including the establishment of horticulture authorities in 20 districts and subsidies for agricultural projects. The 37th cabinet meeting approved Rs7.6 billion in subsidies for the Thal Agriculture Transformation Project, covering 10,000 acres in Mankera and Layyah. The project includes drip irrigation, solar power and water storage facilities.

The cabinet also approved subsidies for 10,000 tractors under the Chief Minister's Green Tractor Program, with Rs9.5 billion allocated for 10,000 high-power tractors. Subsidies were also approved for 10,000 low-power tractors under Phase IV.

CM Maryam Nawaz directed the immediate payment of outstanding dues required to make medical equipment functional in hospitals. The cabinet also approved funds for essential liabilities of the Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Department.



Saudi Arabia's newly appointed ambassador to Pakistan, Dr Rajeh Tamimi Al-Baghmi, met Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff, at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi

DG ISPR says Makkah alliance has no aggressive intent, urges dialogue to resolve ME conflict

DG ISPR Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry says the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement reflects three nations' unity, reaffirming Pakistan's unwavering commitment to Saudi Arabia's security.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has called for a negotiated settlement to the ongoing Middle East conflict, stressing that diplomacy is essential to prevent further military



escalation. In an interview with an Arab television channel, the military spokesperson said that if diplomatic efforts fail and military confrontation occurs, the collective deterrence mechanism of the Makkah Alliance would come into action. Chaudhry described the Makkah joint defence agreement as a significant development achieved in a short period, saying it reflects the shared vision of three

countries. He reaffirmed that safeguarding Saudi Arabia's sovereignty, territorial integrity and the holy sites of Makkah and Madinah remains a top priority for Pakistan. He said Pakistan's position on protecting the holy sites was clear and unequivocal, adding that the country's political leadership and field marshal had already conveyed its stance. (Continued on Page-4)

Major martyred, four terrorists eliminated in Kalat, Gwadar operations

The major identified as Wajahat Waheed embraced martyrdom in an improvised explosive device (IED) explosion during a clearance operation in Tehsil Pasni of Gwadar district.

Bureau Chief

RAWALPINDI

A major of Pakistan Army was martyred and four terrorists of Fitna al-Hindustan were eliminated during intelligence-based operations by security forces in the districts of Kalat and Gwadar of Balochistan.

The major identified as Wajahat Waheed embraced

martyrdom in an improvised explosive device (IED) explosion during a clearance operation in Tehsil Pasni of Gwadar district.

According to ISPR, intelligence agencies had reported the presence of several hideouts of Indian-sponsored Fitna al-Hindustan terrorists in Jattakabad area of Kalat district and the Shadi Kaur area of Pasni tehsil of



Gwadar district, which posed a threat to the local population.

According to the ISPR, on October 18, security forces conducted an intelligence-

based operation in the Jattakabad area of Kalat. During the operation, the terrorist hideout was effectively targeted and after an intense exchange of fire, four terrorists were killed. A large cache of arms and ammunitions were also recovered from the area.

According to a spokesman for the Pakistan Army, a clearance operation was underway to eliminate terrorists and secure

the area in the Shadi Kaur area of Pasni Tehsil of Gwadar District, when a contingent of security forces was targeted with an improvised explosive device (IED).

As a result of the explosion, Major Wajahat Waheed, who led the squad, was martyred. Major Wajahat Waheed, 34, was from Lahore. He sacrificed his life in the defence of the motherland while performing his duty.

PTI Chairman Gohar challenges KP emergency in Peshawar High Court

PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar challenges the KP emergency, parliamentary resolutions and presidential notification, seeking suspension and annulment of the measures.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has challenged the imposition of emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the resolutions passed by both houses of Parliament and a joint sitting endorsing the move in the Peshawar High Court.

He has filed an application seeking amendments to his pending writ petition.

The application, filed by advocate Shah Faisal Ilyas, describes the imposition of emergency as unconstitutional and seeks suspension of the relevant government notification, or SRO, and annulment of the parliamentary resolutions.

The petitioner contended that President



Asif Ali Zardari's announcement on October 11, 2026, imposing emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under Article 234 of the Constitution was illegal and unconstitutional.

According to the petition, resolutions passed by the National Assembly and Senate on October 14, followed by a resolution adopted at a joint sitting of Parliament on October 15, have also been challenged. The petitioner argued that these resolutions attempted to provide legal cover to an unconstitutional measure.

PM welcomes Gauth AI initiative to support students, teachers

Shehbaz Sharif pledged full support for Daanish schools as Pakistan signed an MoU with Gauth AI, providing free subscriptions to teachers and students.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said the government would provide all possible resources and facilities to Daanish schools, reaffirming its commitment to ensuring quality education and creating new opportunities for students, teachers and the younger generation across the country through artificial intelligence (AI). Addressing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signing ceremony between the Ministry of Education and Gauth AI, the prime minister termed the agreement a significant step towards expanding educational opportunities and welcomed the provision of free subscriptions by the technology company. He said the first 4,000 subscriptions being gifted by Gauth to Pakistan would help students and



teachers benefit from modern educational tools. Of these, 1,000 subscriptions would be allocated to teachers associated with the government's Daanish schools initiative. The prime minister said the government had provided all possible facilities to students, adding that Daanish schools was a magnificent educational institution offering free education. "There is no dearth of resources, and the government will provide all possible resources to the Daanish schools."



Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chairs a meeting in Islamabad on October 19, 2026, to review the proposed restructuring and deregulation roadmap for Pakistan's gas sector, focusing on financial sustainability, operational efficiency and private-sector participation.

Punjab approves industrial development and export promotion scheme

- Punjab's cabinet has approved the features of an industrial development and export promotion scheme

SPECIAL REPORTER

LAHORE

The Punjab cabinet has approved the features of an industrial development and export promotion scheme aimed at boosting manufacturing, promoting locally produced goods and expanding the province's export potential, Provincial Information Minister Azma Bokhari said on Monday.

Speaking to the media at the Directorate General Public Relations (DGPR), alongside Provincial Transport Minister Bilal Akbar Khan, Bokhari said the provincial government was focusing on increasing exports of products manufactured in Punjab. She emphasised the need to establish a distinct Pakistani identity for locally manufactured goods, saying products made in the province should carry the "Made in Pakistan" label and be introduced to international markets under that identity.

The minister described the cabinet's approval as part of the government's broader efforts to strengthen industrial activity and promote exports.



However, she did not disclose the scheme's financial allocation, implementation timeline or specific incentives for manufacturers and exporters. The initiative is expected to support the government's efforts to improve the visibility of Pakistani products and encourage businesses to explore international markets. Its eventual impact will depend on the scheme's implementation, the support provided to industries and the ability of local manufacturers to compete

internationally. Warning against unsubstantiated allegations during the media briefing, Bokhari also addressed the issue of allegations circulated on social media, saying individuals could not make accusations without accountability. She said journalists making baseless allegations would be sent notices, underscoring the government's stated position on addressing what it considers misinformation. Her remarks highlighted the

continuing debate over social media content, journalistic responsibility and the need to distinguish substantiated reporting from unverified claims.

Punjab approves 1,500 additional electric buses Separately, Transport Minister Bilal Akbar Khan said the Punjab government was continuing efforts to improve public transport services across the province.

He said 1,100 electric buses were currently operating in Punjab and Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had approved an additional 1,500 buses on Monday.

According to the minister, the latest approval would help expand public transport capacity and improve access to transport services for commuters across the province.

He added that the total number of buses in Punjab was expected to reach 3,000 by the end of the year.

The expansion is part of the provincial government's efforts to strengthen public transport infrastructure and increase the availability of electric buses. A larger electric bus fleet could also support the transition towards cleaner public transport, although the overall benefits will depend on deployment.

CDA Chairman Reviews Progress on Islamabad Jail Project, Directs Timely Completion

- Sohail Ashraf inspects ongoing construction and essential infrastructure, emphasizing adherence to the approved timeline, high construction standards and provision of all necessary facilities.

NEWS REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Sohail Ashraf visited the site of the Islamabad Jail project, where he reviewed the progress of ongoing construction work, the current status of the project, and the deadline for its completion. During the visit, the CDA Chairman was accompanied by the Director General (Services) CDA, the relevant Assistant Commissioner, and senior officers of Islamabad Jail. The CDA Chairman inspected various sections of the Islamabad Jail project and evaluated the progress made on construction as well as the development of essential infrastructure. On this occasion, the CDA Chairman was briefed on the progress of the project. He also discussed the quality of construction work and compliance with set standards with the relevant officials. The CDA Chairman directed that the project be completed on time according to the approved timeline while ensuring high construction standards at all costs. The visit of CDA Chairman Sohail Ashraf to the Islamabad Jail



project reflects CDA's commitment to the timely completion of major projects through continuous monitoring, effective coordination, and administrative oversight. During his visit, CDA Chairman Sohail Ashraf emphasized that the project must be completed within the stipulated timeframe, construction quality must be maintained, and the provision of all necessary facilities in the project must be ensured.

Islamabad Police Continues Phase-I Recruitment Interviews, Reviews Administrative Arrangements

- Senior officers assess candidates' eligibility and qualifications to ensure merit and transparency, while SP Headquarters Pari Gul Tareen inspects Police Lines Headquarters and directs officials to improve facilities and operational efficiency.

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Islamabad Police Continues Phase-I Recruitment Interviews; Senior Officers Assess Candidates' Eligibility According to the details, interviews of candidates for Phase-I recruitment in Islamabad Police are underway. A panel comprising senior police officers is conducting interviews to assess candidates' eligibility, qualifications and other relevant aspects. Special attention is being given to merit, transparency and adherence to the prescribed rules and regulations to ensure equal opportunities for all eligible and qualified candidates. Measures have also been taken to complete all stages of the recruitment process in an organized manner and ensure appropriate arrangements for candidates. The objective of Islamabad Police is to induct professionally capable individuals into the force to strengthen public safety and further improve the policing system. Meanwhile, SP Headquarters Pari Gul Tareen visited various sections of Police Lines Headquarters, Islamabad, where she reviewed the



available administrative facilities, day-to-day operations and overall management arrangements. The purpose of the visit was to assess the condition of the facilities at Police Lines and ensure the smooth, efficient and organized conduct of routine affairs. During the visit, SP Headquarters reviewed

the relevant matters and directed the concerned officials to utilize available resources effectively and take necessary measures to improve administrative arrangements. She emphasized the importance of providing better facilities to police officers and officials while further improving the efficiency of



SSP Operations Islamabad Holds Open Court to Address Public Grievances

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

SSP Operations Islamabad holds open court to resolve public grievances Following the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry, the SSP Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza held an open court at his office under the open door policy to ensure the immediate redressal of citizens' problems. Citizens presented complaints regarding land encroachments and other issues. SSP Operations attentively listened to the concerns and issued directives to the relevant officers to take legal action on the marked applications within the given time frame and submit a report. On the occasion, the SSP Operations Islamabad said, the Islamabad Police follows a zero-tolerance policy regarding violence against women and children. Providing maximum relief to the public is a top priority. The supremacy of the law will be ensured at all costs. He further emphasized that every citizen has equal rights, and all applications will be decided on merit. The protection of citizens' lives, property, and dignity is of utmost importance, he added.



Wanted Member of House-Burglary Gang Arrested; Stolen Cash and Weapon Recovered

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Wanted Member of House-Burglary Gang Arrested; Stolen Cash and Weapon Used in Crime Recovered According to the details, the Shalimar Police Station team of Islamabad Police arrested a wanted member of a house-burglary gang for his alleged involvement in a house burglary. The police team recovered stolen cash and a weapon allegedly used in the crime from his possession. A case has been registered, and further investigation is underway. Following the special directions of SSP Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza, Islamabad Police is continuing its crackdown against accused persons involved in theft, robbery, street crime and other serious offences across the federal capital. Effective measures are being taken to apprehend criminal elements and prevent crime. SSP Operations Islamabad has directed all officers to intensify action against criminal elements involved in depriving citizens of their valuables and ensure their arrest in accordance with the law. Islamabad Police urges citizens to cooperate with the police in combating crime and immediately report any suspicious activity or person to the relevant police station or the emergency helpline Pukar-15.

Punjab Bans Spy Gadgets to Protect Citizens' Privacy

STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE

The Government of Punjab has decided to impose a ban on devices used for spying, including glasses, pens, watches and other gadgets equipped with hidden cameras and recording equipment. According to a spokesperson for the Punjab Home Department, strict legal action will be taken against the use and sale of spy equipment and covert electronic devices. The spokesperson said that the decision had been taken to protect citizens' privacy and personal information. The ban particularly aims to ensure the safety and protection of women and children. The spokesperson noted that complaints had emerged regarding illegal surveillance, harassment and blackmail through the use of spy devices. He said that the Punjab government remained committed to protecting citizens' fundamental rights, personal information and privacy. The general public has been advised to remain aware that the illegal use of everyday items equipped with hidden cameras will attract strict

Rubio says Ukraine and Russia should be focused On ending the war



Web DESK
SAMARKAND, Uzbekistan

Ukraine and Russia should be focused on ending the war between them, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told reporters on his visit to Uzbekistan on Monday. Asked about a possible meeting of US President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping to negotiate an end to the four-year-old Ukraine conflict, Rubio said: "There's been talks of a 'meeting. I don't know whether it's been finalized, but

the 'president has been clear. He'd like the war in Ukraine and Russia to end." Rubio landed in Samarkand on Sunday night to meet top 'officials of the C5+1 grouping that brings together the United States and the Muslim-majority post-Soviet states of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.Trump hosted C5 leaders at the White House last November. "We see nothing good coming from this 'war," Rubio said. "We see a lot of downside to it, including the very real 'risk of escalation and spread of this thing... into another country because of a failed sabotage attack, because of drones that are hit with electronic warfare and they wander into a neighbouring country."The US has been trying to mediate a peace deal to bring the Ukraine war to an end and Trump has since clinched a diesel import deal with Russia and waived some sanctions on Moscow, which he said should keep the Kremlin at the negotiating table.



Efforts to End War with US Intensify as Russian Foreign Minister Arrives in Iran

Around 40 killed, injured in Houthi missile attack in Yemen’s Shabwa: official

■ US Embassy in Riyadh issues security alert for citizens in Middle East amid Houthi attacks

Web Desk
Yemen



A spokesperson for Yemen’s armed forces said the Houthis targeted Shabwa with three ballistic missiles. The spokesperson said the missiles struck a training centre for security and police personnel, accusing the group of deliberately killing Yemenis across the country’s provinces.

There was no immediate comment from the Houthis on the reported attack. US embassy issues security alert for citizens in Middle East Earlier, the United States in Riyadh issued a security alert for Americans in the Middle East "due to the complex security environment," amid attacks by

the Houthis on civilian airports and other critical infrastructure. According to the US Embassy in Riyadh, American citizens should "be aware of potential flight cancellations, airspace closures, and travel disruptions." It added that the attacks by the Houthis resulted in civilian casualties and severe travel disruptions, noting that "the hostilities have the potential to escalate rapidly beyond that immediate area." "Americans traveling to or from the Middle East should monitor information about airport and airline operations and develop contingency plans in advance," the embassy advised, adding that "Iran and groups supportive of Iran may target other US interests overseas or at locations associated with the United States and Americans throughout the world, including US businesses and other institutions."

US 'exhausted and worn out', lacks capability to launch new conflict: IRGC

● Foreign Minister Araghchi meets Russian counterpart, discusses bilateral, regional developments

Web Desk
TEHRAN



The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) spokesperson Brigadier General Hossein Mohebbi said that the United States forces were "exhausted and worn out," and that they lacked the capability to launch a new conflict, Tehran Times reported on Monday. The spokesperson stated that the US "entered the war with all its might in the past and is certainly not in a position now to launch a new conflict that would yield any additional gains for it." He added that most US bases in the region "have been rendered

inactive," and American forces had "withdrawn hundreds of kilometres away from Iran." "From a technical and military standpoint, the United States lacks the capability to launch a new conflict," Mohebbi said, according to Tehran Times. The spokesperson noted however, that as US midterm elections approach, "it may seek to manufacture some

achievements." "We do not rule out any possibilities and are prepared to respond. This time, our response will be much more forceful," he said. On the IRGC's military capabilities, Mohebbi stated, "Our capabilities have undoubtedly increased significantly, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and are now at least 1.5 times greater than in the past." According to Tehran Times, the spokesperson added that the production of missiles, drones, and other equipment Tehran needed was never halted. "We have even expanded production, improving range, accuracy, and destructive power, while also

developing new weapons," Mohebbi said, adding that if the war escalated, "the IRGC's surprises will reveal themselves." Separately, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi, with both sides reviewing bilateral, regional and international developments, IRNA news agency said in a post on X. Lavrov arrived in Tehran for his first visit since the outbreak of the Middle East war, Iran's state broadcaster IRIB reported earlier in the day. The foreign minister is expected to meet Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian during the visit, IRIB said, citing Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei.

French PM calls for 'partial curfews' in cities hit by riots and looting

■ Students block access to Louvre Museum in support of high school protests

Web Desk
FRANCE



French Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu has asked regional authorities to impose "partial curfews" in some cities on Monday evening as France reels from two days of unrest that saw town halls burned down and hundreds of businesses looted. Interior Minister Laurent Nunez earlier admitted that police had "lost control" of the protests in several cities, while the Yellow Vest movement called for a new round of protests. Meanwhile, French President Emmanuel Macron rejected the resignation of Interior Minister Nunez following widespread violence and looting across the country during last weekend's protests, according to broadcaster BFMTV. Nunez submitted his resignation to Macron a day earlier amid mounting criticism over the authorities' handling of the unrest. "I am the minister of the interior, I am responsible for everything that happens on the ground," he told France Inter radio, explaining his decision to resign. Nunez acknowledged a "loss of control" by police in some cities and admitted there had been a "lack of anticipation" in deploying available security forces. Read More: Student protests spread across France, Belgium However, the president decided to keep him in office, citing the need for continuity in the command of security forces during the current crisis, according to a statement from the Elysee Palace. Macron also called for greater transparency over what he described as "failures in anticipation and intelligence" that contributed to the scale of the

violence. The unrest, which erupted during demonstrations on Saturday, left nearly 1,000 law enforcement officers injured and resulted in approximately 2,400 arrests, according to official figures. The government's response has faced criticism from several local leaders, including the mayors of Paris, Marseille and Limoges. Nunez is expected to visit Marseille, one of the cities hardest hit by the violence, where authorities reported that up to 30,000 people were involved in looting on Saturday. Students block access to Louvre Museum in support of high school protests Students blocked access to the Louvre Museum in Paris on Monday in support of ongoing high school protests and to denounce what they described as police repression, the French media reported. The blockade prevented the museum from opening at its usual time of 9am, according to management and unions cited by the daily Le Parisien. Students from the École du Louvre led the action, while the CFDT trade union said students from the National School of Fine Arts also participated. Museum management said the protest had no direct connection to the Louvre itself, describing the museum as being used "as an echo chamber."

UN agency slashes Gaza food aid over funding, warns needs persist

■ Groups target public buildings, loot supermarkets as police arrest around 1,200 people

Web Desk
GAZA

The World Food Programme said Monday it would end monthly assistance to 500,000 people in Gaza due to a funding shortfall, despite acute needs in the war-battered Palestinian territory. With the cutbacks, 1.1 million Palestinians in Gaza -- still about half the population -- will be receiving either food or cash assistance each month from the UN agency, in reduced amounts. The World Food Programme said its efforts had mitigated the effects during a famine last year in Gaza -- a description of the situation disputed by Israel -- and warned that conditions had not improved to the point that it can take away aid. "People are not safe. Airstrikes continue on a daily basis. People continue to be displaced," Shaun Hughes, the WFP country director, told AFP at the agency's office in east

Jerusalem."Almost everybody remains without a permanent home to live in. And the humanitarian conditions are brutal," he said. According to the latest assessments, 1.4 million people -- or two-thirds of Gaza's population -- are still "acutely food insecure" and need humanitarian assistance to survive, he said. In August last year, the UN's Integrated Food Security Phase Classification said that Gaza was suffering famine conditions. Israel, which has blockaded the territory and attacked it relentlessly since the unprecedented October 7, 2023 attack on it by Hamas, described the finding as a lie. The famine classification was lifted in December, two months after a US-brokered ceasefire was announced in Gaza. Israel has kept striking Gaza since then, vowing to kill anyone involved in the October 7 attack. Since the ceasefire, the WFP has been



able to step up assistance and had been reaching between 1.5 million and 1.8 million people every month. "This has been a lifeline. But now, rather

than being able to sustain and scale up that assistance, we're actually having to reduce it," Hughes said. "And that's not because we don't have

humanitarian access to deliver food; that's because we don't have funding." In addition to reducing the number of people who receive rations, the WFP has been forced to shrink the content. Families receiving food assistance will now get only one food parcel instead of two and a smaller bag of wheat flour, the WFP said in an operational note. The 75,000 families who receive assistance in cash will see the amount reduced from 1,250 to 750 shekels (\$400 to \$240) per month. The WFP is funded by governments as well as private donors. It has seen a sharp drop in resources, including after President Donald Trump returned to power in the United States and drastically slashed contributions to UN agencies as well as bilateral aid. The agency says it needs about \$450 million over the next six months for its operations in Gaza and the West Bank, but in 2026 it has only received about half the usual financing for the Palestinian territories.



Dera Ghazi Khan | October 19, 2026: Qasim Butt, Head of the Sardar Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari Airport Expansion Project, presenting a shield to Federal Minister for Energy Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari.

Pakistan to shift load-shedding from power feeders to transformers from June

- Energy Minister Awais Leghari says Pakistan plans to shift load-shedding from high-loss electricity feeders to individual transformers from June next year



Web Desk

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan will shift its load-shedding strategy from electricity feeders with high power theft to individual transformers from June next year, Federal Minister for Energy Awais Leghari has said.

Speaking to the media after reviewing the expansion project at Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari International Airport in Dera Ghazi Khan, Leghari said the proposed change was aimed at protecting consumers from the financial burden caused by electricity theft. The minister said two hours of load-shedding at night had helped save consumers from an additional burden of Rs6 per unit. He did not provide further details about the proposed transformer-based system or explain how its implementation would affect consumers in areas with high electricity losses.

Under the proposed approach, authorities would shift from feeder-wide load management to transformer-level load-shedding, potentially allowing power distribution companies to target areas more precisely. However, the practical impact on households and businesses will depend on the implementation mechanism and the identification of electricity theft hotspots.

The announcement comes amid persistent challenges facing Pakistan's power sector, including electricity theft, distribution losses and the financial pressures

associated with supplying power to areas where recovery remains low. Airport expansion project reviewed During his visit, Leghari also reviewed the expansion of Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari International Airport, which has remained non-operational for the past five years. The minister said the prime minister had approved the expansion project at a cost of Rs5.5 billion, with the airport expected to become operational for international flights by the end of next year. Pakistan Airports Authority officials briefed the minister on the ongoing development work, including plans to extend and widen the runway and introduce night-time landing facilities.

According to the briefing, the runway is being extended from 6,000 feet to 10,000 feet, while its width will increase from 30 metres to 45 metres.

Officials said the project was expected to be completed within 18 months. The improvements are intended to enhance the airport's operational capacity and enable it to accommodate a wider range of aircraft operations.

Leghari said the restored airport would benefit passengers from Dera Ghazi Khan Division and neighbouring districts in other provinces, improving regional connectivity and access to air travel. Focus on regional development

The minister also discussed administrative and political matters, saying consultations were underway at the party level regarding the establishment of additional administrative units.

He said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz had already passed a resolution in the assembly supporting the creation of South Punjab and Bahawalpur provinces.

Gold prices remain stable in Pakistan as silver rates rise

- Gold prices remained unchanged at Rs440,636 per tola in Pakistan on Monday, while silver rose by Rs59 to Rs6,234 per tola following an increase in international prices.

NEWS DESK

KARACHI

Gold prices remained unchanged in international and local markets on Monday, while silver rates recorded an increase, according to market data.

In the international bullion market, the price of gold remained stable at \$4,181 per ounce, with no change recorded during the day. The stability in global prices was reflected in Pakistan's local bullion markets, where the price of gold stood unchanged at Rs440,636 per tola. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of gold remained stable at Rs377,774.

In contrast, silver prices increased



in both international and domestic markets.

The international price of silver rose by 59 cents per ounce to reach \$57.56. Following the increase, the price of silver in Pakistan's local bullion markets climbed by Rs59 per tola to

Rs6,234.

The price of 10 grams of silver also increased by Rs50 to reach Rs5,344.

The latest rates indicate contrasting movements in the precious metals market, with

gold holding its value while silver registered modest gains.

Gold and silver prices in Pakistan are influenced by international bullion rates, currency movements and domestic market conditions. Changes in global prices can affect local jewellery costs and the purchasing decisions of consumers and investors.

For jewellery buyers, stable gold prices may provide some relief after periods of volatility, although the prevailing rate remains a significant expense for households. Silver, meanwhile, recorded an increase in its local price per tola.

Market participants will continue to monitor international bullion prices and currency movements for indications of the direction of domestic precious metal rates.

Pakistan Stock Exchange closes lower after volatile trading

- The KSE-100 Index fell 453 points to close at 165,966 on Monday after volatile trading at the Pakistan Stock Exchange. Shares worth Rs8.26 billion changed hands.

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) closed in negative territory on Monday as selling pressure persisted throughout a volatile trading session, pulling the benchmark KSE-100 Index down by 453 points and bringing it to 165,966 points. The stock market began the new business week on a bearish note, with the benchmark index coming under pressure shortly after the opening bell. The KSE-100 Index dropped by around 500 points during the early trading hours, moving towards the 165,900-

point level as investors navigated changing market sentiment. The negative opening set the tone for a cautious trading session, with market participants closely monitoring price movements across listed shares. Despite fluctuations during the day, selling pressure remained evident, preventing the benchmark index from closing in positive territory. At the end of the session, the KSE-100 Index settled at 165,966 points, compared with the previous close of 166,419 points. The decline of 453 points reflected the overall negative performance of the benchmark index during the day's trading. Market activity remained notable, with shares



worth approximately Rs8.26 billion changing hands during the session. Total trading volume stood at 108.61 million shares, indicating continued participation by investors despite the market's downward movement. The trading session was marked by fluctuations as investors responded to changing market sentiment. The benchmark index's movement towards the 165,900-point level

during early trading highlighted the pressure faced by the market at the start of the week. However, the index subsequently finished the session at 165,966 points, remaining below its previous closing level. The KSE-100 Index had ended the previous trading week at 166,419 points, providing the reference point against which Monday's performance was measured. The latest decline brought the benchmark down by 453 points from that level, reflecting a negative start to the new trading week. The combination of a lower closing level and continued intraday volatility underscored the unsettled direction of trading during the session.

Finance Minister reviews proposed roadmap for gas sector restructuring, deregulation

- Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday chaired a high-level meeting to review the proposed restructuring and deregulation roadmap for Pakistan's gas sector, focusing on financial sustainability,

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday chaired a high-level meeting to review the proposed restructuring and deregulation roadmap for Pakistan's gas sector, focusing on financial sustainability, operational efficiency, consumer welfare and greater private-sector participation. The proposed reforms aim to establish a financially sustainable, efficient and competitive gas market that supports businesses, encourages private investment and protects consumer welfare, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance.

The meeting discussed a phased transition towards greater competition, supported by effective regulation, improved operational performance and a more sustainable approach to gas pricing and supply.

Participants reviewed key sectoral challenges, including circular debt, cross-subsidies, unaccounted-for-gas (UFG) losses and supply-demand imbalances. Discussions focused on addressing legacy liabilities, improving the financial viability of gas utilities and ensuring that existing financial pressures do not undermine the proposed market structure or place an undue burden on consumers.

A sustainable resolution of legacy circular debt and a clear approach to address cross-subsidies were identified as important to the viability of restructured entities and the



transition to a competitive market.

The meeting also discussed the expected outcomes of the reform framework, including enhanced energy security, increased private-sector investment, reduced fiscal and sovereign risks, greater

business-to-business transactions, more stable and sustainable gas pricing, improved access to competitively priced gas for exporters, and lower system losses through stronger efficiency benchmarks and performance-based incentives.

The Finance Minister emphasized the importance of aligning all stakeholders around a practical and implementable reform architecture. The proposed framework draws on international experience, including gas-sector reforms in Türkiye and the United Kingdom, while taking into account Pakistan's institutional structure, market conditions and consumer interests.

Participants also stressed the need for careful sequencing to safeguard security

of supply, protect regulated consumers and create a predictable environment for private-sector participation.

The proposed framework will be presented to the Prime Minister, following which further technical work and stakeholder consultations will help refine the reform approach and support an orderly transition.

The meeting reaffirmed the Government's commitment to advancing gas-sector reforms in a phased and consultative manner to strengthen financial sustainability, improve operational efficiency, attract investment and develop a more competitive gas market while safeguarding consumer interests.

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By: Khurram Shahzad

For years, Pakistan’s public finances seemed trapped in a punishing cycle. Borrow to survive. Pay ruinous interest. Borrow again. Now, by several significant measures, that cycle appears to be breaking.

Pakistan’s central government debt grew at just 5 percent in the current fiscal year. That is the slowest pace recorded in at least 15 years. It is also a sharp retreat from the 23 percent growth posted as recently as fiscal year 2023, according to data from the State Bank of Pakistan.

Officials say the deceleration reflects a deliberate and sustained effort to restructure how the country borrows — and at what cost.

The numbers have been scrutinized by economists and international creditors alike.

They suggest a country that has spent the

better part of three years rewiring its fiscal architecture from the ground up. At the center of the debate is a figure that has circulated widely on Pakistani social media.

That figure claims the country’s debt has ballooned to between 97 and 100 trillion rupees.

Officials push back sharply on that characterization. That figure, they say, conflates central government debt — currently sitting at approximately 81.9 trillion rupees — with a broader accounting category that includes private sector liabilities.

The distinction matters enormously. Sovereign debt sustainability is not assessed by headlines or aggregate totals. It is assessed by how much a country owes relative to the size of its economy. On that measure, Pakistan is moving in the right direction. The debt-to-GDP ratio has declined from roughly 76 percent in fiscal year 2019–20 to approximately 68 percent in fiscal year 2026.

More notably, external debt — the portion denominated in foreign currencies and most susceptible to exchange rate shocks — has fallen from around 28 percent of GDP to roughly 21 percent over the same period.

The government has also restructured the terms on which it borrows.

Pakistan’s Debt Burden Eases To 15 Year Low, As Fiscal Overhaul Takes Hold

Average domestic debt maturity has extended from 2.8 years to 3.8 years. That change buys breathing room by spreading repayment obligations further into the future.

It also reduces what economists call refinancing risk unable to roll over short-

the central bank. It also includes 2.3 trillion rupees of market debt bought back before maturity. Officials say early debt retirement at this scale is without precedent in Pakistan’s history. Perhaps the most consequential shift for ordinary Pakistanis is the change in how much of the federal budget is consumed by

current fiscal year. That is a reduction of nearly two trillion rupees — or about 22 percent — in a single year.

Beyond the debt numbers, Pakistan’s external position has undergone a notable reversal.

Foreign exchange reserves once covered less than two weeks of imports. That level left the country acutely vulnerable to external shocks and import disruptions. Reserve cover has since risen to nearly three months.

Officials also emphasize that a growing share of the accumulation has come from non-debt sources — improving what economists call the quality of reserves. The current account has also swung from chronic deficit to surplus.

In fiscal year 2022, Pakistan recorded a current account deficit of 17.4 billion dollars — the second largest in its history.

The country has now posted two consecutive years of current account surpluses. That turnaround substantially reduces its dependence on external financing.

Three consecutive years of primary fiscal surpluses have further slowed the pace at which new debt is being added.

A primary surplus means the government is now collecting more revenue than it spends — before accounting for interest payments.

What has changed, supporters of the current trajectory argue, is the direction of travel — and the momentum behind it.

“Every government borrows. Every government repays,” one official framing of the data put it. The real question is whether debt is becoming more sustainable, more affordable, and less risky.

By the metrics Pakistan is now posting, the answer — at least for this fiscal year — appears to be yes.



term debt in a hostile market.

— the danger of being caught unable to roll over short-term debt in a hostile market.

Pakistan also recently issued a foreign bond at what officials described as the lowest rate in the country’s history — at 2.5 percent. That development signals renewed, if cautious, confidence among international investors.

Separately, the government has retired 4.7 trillion rupees in expensive existing debt. This includes 2.47 trillion rupees owed to

interest payments alone.

At their peak in fiscal year 2023, those payments absorbed roughly 64 cents of every rupee of gross federal revenue.

That left almost nothing for roads, schools, hospitals, or public services.

That ratio has since fallen to approximately 40 percent. This has freed up fiscal space that analysts say the government is beginning to deploy toward development spending.

In absolute terms, interest expense has declined from approximately 8.89 trillion rupees to an estimated 6.94 trillion rupees in the



By: Amina Sardar

Energy Insecurity and Crisis Diplomacy

Energy Insecurity and Crisis Diplomacy: Pakistan’s Foreign Policy Behavior in the Iran–Gulf Strategic Conflict (2020–2026) Analysts, while considering foreign policy of Pakistan, take into account security coalitions, religious empathies or great-power politics but energy insecurity, which is the foremost component of Islamabad’s political conduct sparks very little of their interest. Pakistan foreign policy is largely determined by preservation of its struggling economy and its fuel supplies as evidenced by role it played during current Iran–Gulf crisis. Energy crisis, in modern political landscape of low as well as high income countries, is challenge not only for economy but also for internal peace and security alongside its immense contribution to foreign policy. Energy security is the sustained provision of energy at a budget-friendly cost as explained by International Energy Agency (IEA). Shifts in global power trade and prices guide and curtail policy options and political decisions of power-reliant states like Pakistan. There could be no bigger and compelling proof to this than the way regional conflict of Iran–Gulf turmoil directed International policy planning of Pakistan and persuaded it to harmonize conflicting regional goals with maintenance of its power demands. Irrespective of the fact, that Pakistan enjoys homegrown energy supplies, it hugely

depends on foreign energy imports of Gulf states and is a major contributor to their fuel exports. During fiscal year 2025, Pakistan imported 12.53 million metric tons of petroleum products worth of \$8.4 billion. Overall Pakistan depends on imports for 70–80% of its oil, 100% of its LNG from Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar through the Strait of Hormuz, the main route for Pakistan’s oil and LNG imports, which carries approximately 20 million barrels of oil per day and 20% of global LNG trade, making it a critical chokepoint for Pakistan’s energy security. Consequently, this heavy dependence leave Pakistan to external shocks originating from the gulf region with direct implications for Pakistan’s economic stability which is already fragile, widening fiscal deficits, increasing

inflationary pressures, national security and independent foreign policy decisions. The gravity of this vulnerability is evident in the current regional conflict, which Bloomberg and International Energy Agency assessments termed the current oil supply disruption as the largest in the history of the oil market as the war has hit 7.5% of global output and an even bigger swath of exports. Pakistan acquired highly diplomatic stance during intensified Iran and Gulf conflict. Pakistan keeps close religious ties with Gulf royal states which are home for millions of Pakistani international employees alongside offering appreciable monetary aid. The mutual collaboration and capital allocation suggests stronger affiliations with Saudi Arabia and Gulf states, if viewed from power-politics

approach. But nonetheless, to boost cross-border integration, territorial security and energy alliance, it strives for keeping harmonious ties with its neighboring brother Islamic state Iran. Even so, these are not the only factors which influence its decision of favoring one over the other during state of political catastrophe. From idealist perspective, this seems more plausible when energy crisis is viewed as strong factor influencing international ties. Pakistan Vision 2025, National Security Policy 2022–2026 and National Electricity Plan 2023–2027 clearly demonstrate that sustainable energy security is no longer a theoretical belief rather legally validated principal policy goals. When considering energy imports via Strait of Hormuz, which is currently narrowing policy alternatives, governing leadership needs to focus on international benefits in conjunction with appraisal of vulnerabilities related to supply breakdowns and growing energy expenses. Pakistan strategic stance during Iran–Gulf tension is less suggestive of political uncertainty, rather it seems to be part of threat handling tactics. Pakistan’s calls for mediation and de-escalation are not simple conventional pledges to peace, instead it reflects a pragmatic diplomatic effort to protect national economic and energy security by reducing the risk of regional conflict that may jeopardize essential energy sources.



By Syed Faiz Naqshbandi

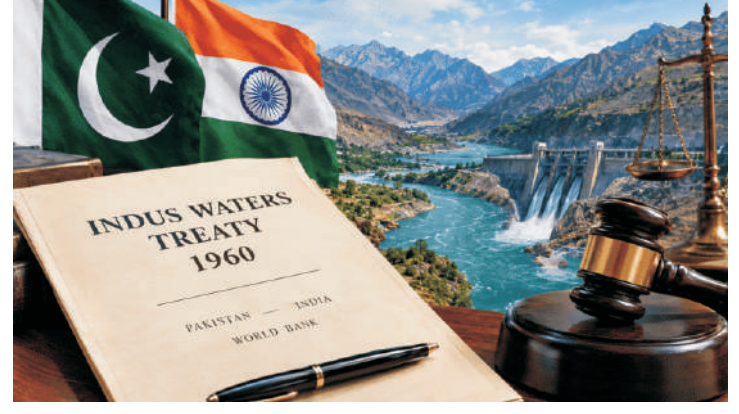
India’s Violations of the Indus Waters Treaty Under International Law and the Hague Arbitration

The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) of 1960 is one of the most significant bilateral water sharing agreements in the history of international law. Negotiated with the assistance of the World Bank, the Treaty establishes a comprehensive

legal framework governing the use of the Indus river system, comprising the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej. Its central arrangement allocates the

Non-compliant hydroelectric project designs. The design of Indian run-of-river hydroelectric projects is against the Paragraph 8 of Annexure D, including requirements governing storage, pondage and other technical features.

Indian Excessive pondage. India had maintained more water storage capacity than permitted under the treaty, particularly in relation to its use of the western rivers. The Court of Arbitration has specifically



Eastern Rivers; Ravi, Beas and Sutlej principally for India’s use, while the Western Rivers; Indus, Jhelum and Chenab are allocated principally for Pakistan’s use, subject to the rights and conditions expressly provided by the Treaty.

For more than six decades, the Treaty has provided a legal framework for the management of one of the world’s most important trans-boundary river systems. Its significance extends beyond water allocation: it is a binding international agreement incorporating detailed provisions concerning cooperation, information exchange, water use and peaceful dispute settlement.

The Indus Waters Treaty (1960) imposes binding obligations on both India and Pakistan, including India’s obligation to let the waters of the Western Rivers; Indus, Jhelum and Chenab flow to Pakistan in accordance with the Treaty. But Indian certain projects including Kishenganga and Ratle, maximum pondage and other actions violate the Treaty.

Exceeding Treaty limits on the Western Rivers. India had exceeded the use of the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab and must remain within the rights and conditions established by Article III of the Treaty.

addressed the legal and technical basis for determining maximum pondage under Paragraph 8(c) of Annexure D. Its May 2026 Award addressed the calculation of maximum pondage in relation to a project’s anticipated load.

Indian Interference with Pakistan’s downstream interests. The Indian projects must operate consistently with Pakistan’s rights under the Treaty, including its existing agricultural and hydroelectric uses. The arbitration has also considered circumstances in which minimum-flow obligations may arise under the Treaty and applicable customary international law.

Unilateral “abeyance” of the Treaty. India’s April 2025 announcement that the Treaty would be held in “abeyance”. This is a big question mark under international law. The Court subsequently addressed the issue in its Supplemental Award on Competence of 27 June 2025 and, on 31 August 2026, issued an Award concerning the status of the Treaty in respect of India’s decision on abeyance. Any party to a bilateral treaty cannot unilaterally suspend or alter the operation of that treaty.

Dispute-settlement obligations. India had failed to comply the dispute settlement mechanism established by Article IX and

Annexure G. The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) records that India has not participated in the current arbitration proceedings, although the Court has continued to consider the issues before it.

Pakistan had played legally with the framework of international law and treaties. In legal terms, Pakistan’s central contention has been that India has exceeded its limited rights under the IWT that exceed the Treaty’s express conditions and undermine rights protected for Pakistan.

Pakistan does not dispute that India possesses treaty based rights to use the Western Rivers for specified purposes. The Treaty permits India to construct certain run-of-river hydroelectric plants subject to detailed conditions. The fundamental question is whether those projects have been designed and operated in accordance with the precise requirements of Annexure D and whether India’s conduct preserves the rights secured to Pakistan. This question has been examined by the Court of Arbitration constituted under the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) pursuant to Article IX and Annexure G of the Treaty. On 8 August 2025, the Court issued its Award on Issues of General Interpretation of the Indus Waters Treaty, addressing questions concerning Article III and Paragraph 8 of Annexure D. The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) has stated that awards of the Court are final and binding on the Parties.

legal foundation of Pakistan’s position also rests upon the fundamental principle of pacta sunt servanda, the principle that

international agreements must be performed in good faith. Article 26 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties expresses this principle, while Articles 27 and 31 address the relationship between treaty obligations, domestic law and treaty interpretation. Although the Indus Waters Treaty predates the Vienna Convention, these provisions reflect important principles of international treaty law. The basic proposition is clear: a State cannot simply disregard an international obligation because circumstances have become politically difficult or because it prefers a different interpretation of its commitments.

DG ISPR says Makkah alliance has no aggressive intent, urges dialogue to resolve ME conflict

The DG ISPR said attacks on holy sites had triggered strong anger among the public and political and military leadership. He warned that further escalation of tensions at any level would not benefit any country. Emphasising the risks of a wider confrontation, Chaudhry said expanding the military conflict in the Middle East was not in anyone’s interest. He reiterated that reaching a negotiated outcome was imperative to prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

He also stressed that the Makkah Alliance’s leadership and approach were clearly defined, maintaining that the

alliance had no aggressive intentions. He said Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye share a commitment to peace, stability and prosperity in the region. He said the alliance was not directed against any particular country but was intended to promote regional peace, security and stability.

The DG ISPR called for greater unity among Muslims, saying countries in the region should work together rather than engage in conflict with one another.

IGP Islamabad Recognizes Outstanding Police Performance, Awards Certificates of Appreciation

- Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry directs officers to prioritize public complaints, ensure prompt resolution of citizens' issues, maintain courteous behavior and uphold merit, transparency and professionalism in service delivery.



NEWS REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

IGP Islamabad Appreciates Police Officers for Outstanding Public Service, Awards Certificates of Appreciation According to the details, Inspector General of Police

(IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry invited police officers who demonstrated outstanding professional performance and dedication to public service to the Central Police Office (CPO). He appreciated their efforts, encouraged them for their commitment and awarded them

certificates of appreciation in recognition of their services. On the occasion, the IGP Islamabad stated that serving citizens, resolving their issues promptly and treating them with dignity and respect are fundamental responsibilities of Islamabad Police. He said that

officers who perform their duties with honesty, sincerity and professional dedication, considering public service their foremost responsibility, are a source of pride for the department. IGP Islamabad directed the officers to continue performing their duties with the same enthusiasm, commitment and dedication. He instructed them to give priority to citizens' complaints and take all possible measures to resolve their issues promptly. He emphasized that courteous behavior, merit-based action and timely service to the public must be ensured at all times. IGP Islamabad Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry further stated that recognizing and encouraging officers who demonstrate good performance promotes hard work.

SECP Launches Probe into SE Fruits and Vegetable Limited IPO Disclosures

SPECIAL REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has initiated an investigation into the accuracy and completeness of disclosures in the IPO of the SEFruits and Vegetable Limited IPO. The investigation will examine whether any gaps, omissions or negligence occurred by the responsible parties in reporting the information and determine where responsibility lies. The inquiry will review the Pakistan Stock Exchange's role as a front-line regulator; the Consultant to the Issue's due diligence, role in preparing the prospectus and certification of its accuracy; and the auditor's audit of the Company's financial statements. It will also examine the SECP's internal procedures for review

and approval of IPO applications. The findings of SECP's inquiry into the SE Fruits and Vegetable Limited IPO will guide improvements to the IPO review and approval framework. These will cover measures for adequate and accurate disclosures, proper discharge of duties by auditor and consultants, timely identification and proper reporting of all any material issues and coordination between PSX and SECP. The SECP Chairman Dr Kabir Sidhu said, "Every IPO must meet clear standards of disclosure, transparency, scrutiny and accountability. We will act firmly where failures are established and use the inquiry's findings to close gaps in the IPO regime. Our objective is a rigorous and transparent approval process with adequate disclosures that protects investors and supports credible businesses seeking capital."

Punjab Police Arrest 11,397 Kite-Flying Law Violators Across Province

Police register 10,849 cases and recover over 599,000 kites and 19,361 string reels; IG Punjab warns of strict legal action against violators and online sellers of metallic strings.

crime reporter

LAHORE

On the directions of Inspector General of Police Punjab Abdul Kareem, Punjab Police are continuing vigorous operations across the province against those violating the Anti-Kite Flying Act. Providing details, the Punjab Police spokesperson said that during the current year, 11,397 accused were arrested and 10,849 cases were registered across Punjab, including Lahore, for violations of the Anti-Kite Flying Act. During these operations, 599,340 kites and 19,361 string reels were also recovered. Punjab Police spokesperson further said that in the provincial capital, Lahore, 5,740 accused were arrested and 5,466 cases were



registered. In Lahore, 217,176 kites and 7,875 string reels were also recovered. IG Punjab Abdul Kareem has issued clear directions that kite flying will not be tolerated anywhere across the province and that strict legal action must be taken against those involved in this dangerous activity. He further directed that those involved in the



online sale and trade of metallic string and kites should also be brought to justice. IG Punjab Abdul Kareem appealed to parents to keep their children away from this deadly activity, while urging citizens to immediately report any incident of kite flying by calling 15 and fulfil their responsibility as law-abiding citizens

Five die after out-of-control car hits road divider in Multan

SPECIAL REPORTER

MULTAN

Five people lost their lives when a speeding car went out of control and collided with a road divider in Multan, while 33 people were injured in a separate road accident in Ghotki on Monday morning.

The first incident took place at Sabzazar Metro Station on Bosh Road in Multan. Soon after receiving the report, a Rescue 1122 team rushed to the site and retrieved the dead bodies.

The Rescue 1122 team also doused the fire which had erupted in the bonnet of the vehicle.

Later, the Rescue 1122 shifted all five dead bodies to Nishtar Hospital, Multan. Two fire vehicles of Rescue 1122, four



ambulances, and one motorbike ambulance took part in rescue operation.

33 injured in Ghotki road accident 33 passengers became critically injured when their bus collided with a Mazda that was parked at the Toll Plaza.

Rescue teams rushed to the spot and shifted the 33 injured passengers to the Civil Hospital. Sources said that all 33 passengers are under treatment in the Hospital.

Punjab govt to appoint 61 intelligence operators in special branch

- According to details, a summary has already been forwarded to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for approval.



NEWS DESK

LAHORE

The Punjab government has decided to appoint 113 new intelligence operators in BS-7 in the special branch, but the Revenue Department recommended appointing only 61 intelligence operators due to lack of funds. According to details, a summary has already been forwarded to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for approval.

Due to lack of funds, the Department

of Revenue recommended appointing only 61 intelligence operators. The decision was taken keeping in view of their expenditure and payment of pension.

Chief Secretary Punjab also endorsed the

recommendations of the Revenue Department.

On the directive of the Chief Minister of Punjab, the matter regarding the recruitment of intelligence operators in the Special Branch was presented before the provincial cabinet.

The Punjab Cabinet approved the proposal for recruitment into the intelligence cadre via circulation on September 16, 2026. Re

Pakistan Sunni Tehreek Backs Army Operations, Calls for New Provinces

- Tahir Dogar stresses national unity, zero tolerance for terrorism, balanced development and transparency in government institutions, particularly the Punjab Auqaf Department.

STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE

Sardar Muhammad Tahir Dogar, President of Pakistan Sunni Tehreek Central Punjab, has expressed full support for Pakistan Army and security forces' operations against terrorist elements, called for the establishment of new provinces and effective administrative units, and stressed the need for national unity and transparency in government institutions, particularly the Punjab Auqaf Department. Addressing a press conference alongside religious scholars and leaders, including Allama Naeem Javed Noori, Allama Pir Azam Ali Naeemi, Pir Asghar Noorani, Allama Mujahid Abdul Rasool Khan, Professor Qaiser Shehzad Naeemi, Allama Zulfiqar Mustafa Hashmi, Pir Muaz-ul-Mustafa, Mufti Saleem Naqshbandi, Pir Shahid Rasool Qadri and others, Dogar said that Pakistan's security, national sovereignty, the elimination of terrorism, protection of public rights and



transparency in national institutions were among the country's foremost priorities. He said the Ulema Board of Pakistan Sunni Tehreek fully supported the operations being conducted by the Pakistan Army and security agencies against terrorist elements described as Fitna al-Hindustan in Balochistan and Fitna al-Khawarij in the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Dogar said no individual or group involved in spreading terrorism, targeting innocent civilians and security personnel, or undermining peace and stability in the country should be allowed to operate with impunity. He called for indiscriminate legal action, based on available evidence, against those involved in

terrorism, including their facilitators, financial supporters and planners. He said the government, Pakistan Army, police and other law enforcement agencies should continue coordinated efforts under an effective strategy to eliminate terrorism. Paying tribute to security personnel and innocent civilians who had lost their lives in the fight against terrorism, he said their sacrifices deserved the highest respect from the entire nation. He added that those harbouring hostile intentions towards Pakistan must recognise the importance of national unity and a strong defence. He said attempts to promote sectarianism, ethnic divisions, factionalism and unrest would not be allowed to undermine the country's stability. All political and religious parties, along with national institutions, must rise above personal interests and remain united on matters of national security. Establishment of New Provinces and Administrative Units a Pressing Need Sardar Muhammad Tahir Dogar said Pakistan Sunni Tehreek supported, in principle, the establishment of new provinces and effective administrative units across the country.

StarCharge, McDonald's Pakistan Join Hands to Expand EV Charging Facilities

- Cooperation agreement aims to provide convenient electric vehicle charging at suitable McDonald's locations across Pakistan, supporting clean transport and investment in EV infrastructure.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

StarCharge and McDonald's Pakistan signed a Cooperation Agreement to bring convenient EV charging to suitable McDonald's locations, enabling customers to charge their vehicles while dining. Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain, graced the signing ceremony, joined by Mr. Jamil Mughal, Chief Operating Officer of McDonald's Pakistan, Mr. Omar Malik, CEO of StarCharge Pakistan, and representatives from both organisations. The Minister welcomed the collaboration and

appreciated Omar Malik's efforts to advance EV charging infrastructure in Pakistan. He highlighted the importance of such partnerships in supporting Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's vision for electric mobility, attracting investment and promoting cleaner transport. Recalling his visit to StarCharge's manufacturing facilities in China, he expressed confidence in the company's technological capabilities. Combining StarCharge's global charging expertise with McDonald's familiar dining destinations, the partnership aims to make electric mobility more accessible and convenient across Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain with CEO of StarCharge Li Hongqing and Chief Operating Officer of McDonald's Pakistan, Jamil Mughal after signed a MoU.



Pakistan's Yasin Khan wins gold at IFBB World Fitness Cup 2026

SPORTS REPORTER

PESHAWAR

Pakistani athlete Muhammad Yasin Khan has won a gold medal for the country at the IFBB World Fitness Cup 2026, held in Slovakia, after securing first position in the bodybuilding competition. Yasin Khan, who is associated with the Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO), represented Pakistan at the international event, where athletes from 27 countries participated, according to PESCO. His achievement has brought recognition to Pakistan in international bodybuilding and highlighted the participation of Pakistani athletes in global fitness competitions. Securing first position at an event featuring competitors from numerous countries marks a significant milestone in his sporting career. According to the details shared by PESCO, Khan delivered an outstanding performance in the competition to claim the top position and win the gold medal. His success reflects his participation at the international level and adds to Pakistan's presence in bodybuilding and fitness sports.

Pakistan face stern England test

- Hosts aim to build on opening victory against Sri Lanka in the ODI tri-series

SPORTS DESK

KARACHI

Pakistan will look to build on their solid performance in the opening match when they take on England in the second show of the ODI tri-series at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. Led by Shaheen Shah Afridi, Pakistan made a bright start to the series on Sunday, making a strong comeback to beat Sri Lanka by 37 runs. Chasing a target of 306, Sri Lanka were well-placed at 253-5 at one stage. However, Haris Rauf dismissed Janith Liyanage 96), triggering a collapse as the visitors lost their last five wickets for just 15 runs. Shaheen led from the front with figures of 3-55, while Haris, Faheem Ashraf and Naseem Shah supported him well, taking two wickets each. Earlier, Salman Ali Agha struck a superb 107, his fourth ODI century, to help Pakistan post 305 all out. Pakistan were struggling at 118-4 when Agha and Hasan Nawaz, who scored 37, put together a 97-run partnership for the fifth wicket to boost the total. After losing their openers cheaply, Babar Azam, who scored 45, and debutant wicket-keeper batsman Saad



Baig, who made 39, added 74 runs for the third wicket to steady the innings. However, the subsequent loss of wickets put the hosts under pressure before Agha produced a special knock to strengthen Pakistan's position. England will pose a tough challenge for Pakistan. The two sides will meet in an ODI for the first time in almost three years. Their last ODI encounter took place on November 11, 2023, at Eden Gardens

in Kolkata during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup, when England secured a 93-run victory. The two teams have played 92 ODIs against each other, with England winning 57 matches and Pakistan claiming 32 victories. Three matches ended without a result. England have enjoyed a strong run in recent times, performing well in the subcontinent. They beat Sri Lanka 2-1 in an away series and also recorded 2-1

series victories over India and Sri Lanka at home. A major boost for England is the return of premier leg-spinner Adil Rashid, who has rejoined the squad after a hand injury ruled him out of their recent 2-1 ODI series victory over Sri Lanka. Sam Curran has also returned after recovering from a groin injury. However, premier fast bowler Jofra Archer has been rested for the tour, while Jos Buttler has been ruled out because of a hamstring injury sustained against Sri Lanka. Glamorgan leg-spinner Mason Crane, who is yet to make his ODI debut, has been called up to the squad. He returns to the England setup eight years after his previous international appearance, in the fifth men's Ashes Test in Sydney in 2018. Crane also played two T20 internationals in 2017. Uncapped Sussex players James Coles and Henry Crocombe, who were both part of England's white-ball squads this summer, have also been included. "This will be a massive challenge to play against two really good teams in different conditions," England captain Harry Brook said at a pre-series news conference. "We want to be a team that adapts to conditions and can find different ways to win, and this series provides a perfect opportunity to try and do that."

Salman Agha explains century celebration in ODI tri-series opener

- Agha calls for greater recognition of domestic cricket, says scoring runs at that level requires considerable skill

SPECIAL REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



against England before missing the second match and being sent home as part of a major squad reshuffle that saw seven players released ahead of the third Test. Following his return from the

England tour, Agha featured for Kingsmen Academy in the President's Trophy Grade-I, playing five matches and making headlines with an unbeaten 300 in his first outing against Markhor IT

(MIT) Solutions. He was subsequently removed as Pakistan's T20I captain, with Sahibzada Farhan appointed as his replacement. Agha was also left out of Pakistan's squad for the T20I series against Sri Lanka, which the hosts won 2-1. During the post-match media conference, Agha addressed his celebration after registering his fourth ODI century, explaining that the gesture was not intended to send a message to anyone or prove a point. Instead, the middle-order batter revealed that the celebration was dedicated to his young son, who watches cricket on television and celebrates in a similar manner.

Azan Ahmed stars as Pakistan U-17 beat Sri Lanka by five wickets

- Former Pakistan captain will lead struggling SNGPL in the President's Trophy game against KRL

SPORTS REPORTER

MULTAN



Pakistan Under-17 cricket team defeated Sri Lanka Under-17 by five wickets in the third one-day international at Multan Cricket Stadium, taking a 2-1 lead in the five-match series. Pakistan captain Azan Ahmed delivered a composed batting performance, scoring an unbeaten 63 off 94 balls to guide his team to victory while chasing a target of 160 runs. The hosts reached the target in 41.5 overs, losing five wickets in the process. The victory gave Pakistan the advantage in the series after three matches and strengthened their position ahead of the fourth ODI, scheduled to be played at Multan Cricket Stadium on Wednesday, October 21. After winning the toss or being asked to bat first, Sri Lanka were bowled out for 159 in 44 overs. Despite a couple of notable contributions from their batters, the visitors were unable to build a substantial total against Pakistan's disciplined bowling attack. Sandaru Malshan was Sri Lanka's leading scorer, making 52 runs, while Mathuka Gunaratne contributed 49. The pair provided valuable runs for the visitors, but the remaining batters struggled to convert their starts into significant contributions. Pakistan's bowlers maintained pressure throughout the Sri Lankan innings, regularly taking

wickets and preventing the visitors from establishing a strong position. Fahad Iqbal led the attack with three wickets, playing a crucial role in restricting Sri Lanka to a modest total. Ammar Khan and Dawood Rana also made important contributions, claiming two wickets apiece. Their efforts helped Pakistan dismiss the visitors for 159 before the completion of their allotted 50 overs. With a target of 160 runs, Pakistan entered the chase needing a steady batting performance rather than an aggressive approach. The hosts made progress towards the target, although the loss of five wickets meant the batting side still had work to do before securing the result. Captain Azan Ahmed stood out during the innings, showing patience and composure as he anchored the chase. His unbeaten 63 came off 94 deliveries, providing stability to the Pakistan batting lineup and ensuring the team remained on course for victory.

Pakistan beat India by eight wickets in over-40 cricket World Cup

- Green-shirts dominate their opponents to secure their second successive win in the event

SPORTS DESK

GUYANA



Pakistan defeated arch-rivals India by eight wickets in their second match of the IMC Over-40 World Cup in Guyana, registering a convincing victory after restricting their opponents to 143 runs and completing the chase with 22 balls to spare. According to tournament reports, India won the toss and elected to bat first in the ninth match of the competition. However, Pakistan's bowlers delivered a disciplined performance, dismissing the Indian side for 143 runs in 34.3 overs. Murtaza Ali was India's leading scorer, contributing 48 runs, while Amit Mishra added 38. Despite their efforts, India were unable to build a sufficiently strong total as Pakistan's bowling attack continued to take

wickets at regular intervals. Mohammad Khalil led Pakistan's bowling effort, claiming three wickets to put pressure on the Indian batting lineup. Mohammad Irfan and Fahad Jabbar also played important roles, taking two wickets apiece. Wasim Ali and Syed Fareeduddin contributed one wicket each as Pakistan restricted India to a modest total. Chasing a target of 144 runs, Pakistan produced a commanding batting performance

and reached 144 for two in just 26.2 overs. The successful chase highlighted the team's control of the match, as the Pakistani batters kept the required run rate manageable and ensured that the opposition had little opportunity to make a comeback. Adnan Akmal and Sheharyar Ghani were the standout performers with the bat, scoring unbeaten 63 runs each. Their impressive partnership guided Pakistan towards victory and helped the team complete the chase without further setbacks after the loss of two wickets. For India, Amit Mishra claimed both Pakistani wickets to fall. However, his efforts were not enough to prevent Pakistan from securing a comprehensive eight-wicket win. Pakistan's batting approach proved effective throughout the chase, with Akmal and Ghani maintaining their composure and taking the team across the finish line comfortably.

International squash championship to begin in Karachi on Wednesday



SPORTS REPORTER

KARACHI

Pakistan will once again host an international squash tournament as the \$82,000 Venus ABC Open Squash Championship begins on

Wednesday at Creek Club, Defence Authority Karachi. The championship, included in the international calendar, features separate men's and women's events, each carrying prize money of \$41,000. Foreign players have started arriving in Pakistan to participate in the championship. The five-day tournament will continue until October 25. In the opening round, the top eight players will receive byes and advance directly to the pre-quarterfinals. England's world No. 25, Chris Malik, has been named the top seed in the men's event, while Egypt's world No. 48, Mostafa El Serty, is seeded second. In the women's event, England's world No. 27, Lucy Turmel, is the top seed, while Egypt's world No. 46, Amina El Rihany, has been placed second.



China's Guangdong men's hockey team arrived in Pakistan on Monday for a 13-day tour that includes matches against leading departmental sides and a Pakistan under-18 team, offering domestic players valuable exposure to international competition.

President Zardari, PM Shehbaz urge women to seek timely medical advice on breast cancer



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

President Asif Ali Zardari, First Lady Aseefa Bhutto Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have urged women to seek timely medical advice if they have any concerns about their health on Breast Cancer Awareness Day.

In his message, President Asif Ali Zardari said breast cancer affected thousands of Pakistani families, with its consequences extending beyond patients to affect the social and emotional lives of entire families. He encouraged women to pay attention to changes in their health and seek appropriate medical advice.

The president said families and society should create an environment in which women could openly discuss health concerns and access medical facilities without fear or hesitation. He also stressed the need to provide emotional, social and family support to women living with breast cancer and those who had completed treatment.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said breast cancer awareness, early detection, quality treatment and continued care were important concerns. He said the government was committed to ensuring that no Pakistani woman was deprived of timely and quality treatment because of her location or financial circumstances.

The prime minister said the government was working with relevant federal, provincial and local

institutions to improve access to primary healthcare services and specialised cancer treatment. He emphasised the need to pay particular attention to women in rural and underserved areas, where access to healthcare facilities remained limited. He said lady health workers were playing an important role in raising awareness among women about breast cancer symptoms, self-examination, timely medical advice and the need to visit healthcare facilities. Special training was also being provided to strengthen the capacity of primary healthcare staff in early detection.

According to the prime minister, the Federal Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnostic Centre at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) was providing screening and diagnostic services, free medicines and referrals for suspected cases requiring further treatment. The government was also working with public health programmes and private organisations to expand access to screening.

Shehbaz Sharif urged families, the media, religious leaders, educational institutions, civil society and medical professionals to help break the silence and hesitation surrounding breast cancer and encourage women to seek timely examinations and treatment.

In her message, First Lady Aseefa Bhutto Zardari urged women to prioritise their health and consult qualified medical professionals without hesitation whenever they had concerns. She said women affected by breast cancer needed support from their families and society during this difficult period. The first lady appreciated the contributions of doctors, nurses, healthcare workers, volunteers, patient support organisations and the media.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi taking oath as Acting Chief Justice of the Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan at the Court premises in Islamabad on 19 October 2026.

Azma Bokhari's daughter ties the knot, CM Maryam attends ceremony



Staff Reporter

LAHORE

The daughter of Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has tied the knot at a private ceremony in Lahore.

According to details, the nikah ceremony of Wadiat Fatima and Barrister Syed Musa Raza was held on Sunday. The nikah ceremony was attended by several prominent political and government figures. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz also attended the ceremony to congratulate the couple.

Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique, Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Zaheer Iqbal Channar, Special Assistant Salma Butt and Parliamentary Secretary Shazia Rizwan were also among those in attendance.

Pakistan's first astronaut to embark on space mission on Nov 25

- Muhammad Zeeshan Ali and Khurram Daud had successfully completed advanced medical, psychological and aptitude assessments in China for a human spaceflight mission

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

The first Pakistani astronaut to embark on a space mission will do so from China's space center on Nov 25, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said while the country aims to achieve a lunar landing by 2035.

China's state-run Xinhua News, in April, announced the selection of two Pakistani nationals as the first foreign astronauts for an upcoming space mission training by China.

Pakistani military's media wing said in February that Muhammad Zeeshan Ali and Khurram Daud had successfully completed advanced medical, psychological and aptitude assessments in China for a human spaceflight mission. Xinhua said one of the two



Pakistani astronauts would participate as a payload specialist, becoming the first foreign astronaut onboard the Tiangong space station.

"Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has said that Pakistan's first astronaut will embark on a space mission from China's space center on November 25, while the country aims to achieve a lunar landing by 2035," the planning

ministry said in a statement.

"He said cooperation with China would help Pakistan reach new heights in space exploration," it added.

The minister made these comments as he attended a concluding ceremony of the World Space Week held in his hometown, Narowal. The event was held in collaboration with the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco).

KP governor vows federal coordination, announces anti-encroachment drive

- KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi announces anti-encroachment operations, a wheat inquiry and traffic reforms, while pledging closer coordination with the federal government.



Staff Reporter

PESHAWAR

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has pledged closer coordination with the federal government and other provinces, saying differences would be set aside to work as a united unit.

Speaking to the media in Peshawar, Kundi said the administration had resolved to clean up the entire province, adding that operations against encroachments and to improve sanitation had begun in Peshawar. He said no recommendations or personal influence would be entertained during the operation.

The governor said an inquiry had also been launched into the wheat issue to determine how the wheat allocated to

the province had gone missing. He said the facts would be brought to light and the inquiry report would be released soon.

Kundi said development projects would be selected on merit and only useful schemes would be pursued. He alleged that, in the past, as many as four departments had prepared bills for development work. He vowed that public funds would not be misappropriated.

He said a meeting had been convened to discuss traffic laws and improve traffic management. New traffic regulations were being prepared, and cameras would be used to improve enforcement and address complaints about challans.

On electricity shortages, the governor said he would meet WAPDA officials to discuss the increasing load-shedding. He said the practice of electricity theft would no longer be tolerated and consumers would have to pay their bills.

Kundi added that the time had passed when the province would repeatedly accuse the federal government of discrimination over electricity and gas supplies.

Sindh CM Shah says no majority supports creation of new provinces

- Sindh CM Murad Ali Shah inaugurates Karachi landfill project, discusses governor's rule, terrorism, new provinces and the Mir Raza case.

NEWS DESK

KARACHI

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah has said there is currently no majority in favour of creating new provinces in the country.

Speaking to the media at the inauguration of a modern landfill site in Jam Chakro, Shah said the project aimed to keep Karachi clean. He said five modern cells were being constructed at the Jam Chakro landfill site, with work scheduled for completion by December. Karachi's waste would be disposed of scientifically and systematically at the facility. The modern waste



management system would help address environmental problems and eliminate foul smells. Similar internationally standard waste disposal points would also be established in other districts

of the city.

Responding to a question, Shah said imposing governor's rule was constitutional but not democratic. He added that nobody wanted to remove an

elected provincial government. He said terrorism was currently the country's biggest challenge, asking what could be said when terrorism persisted while provinces opposed action against it.

The Sindh chief minister reiterated that there was no majority in favour of creating new provinces.

Regarding the Mir Raza case, Shah said the provincial cabinet had decided to establish a judicial commission to investigate the matter. He added that the cabinet would open the sealed envelope containing the commission's report and make a decision accordingly.

More than 21,600 Pakistanis imprisoned in 71 countries, National Assembly told

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs told the National Assembly that 21,647 Pakistanis are imprisoned in 71 countries. Saudi Arabia accounts for 10,745 prisoners and the UAE for 5,297.

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

A total of 21,647 Pakistani citizens are imprisoned in 71 countries worldwide, including 8,569 who have been sentenced and more than 13,000 whose cases remain under trial, according to figures presented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the National Assembly.

The data show that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates account for the largest numbers of Pakistani prisoners abroad, highlighting the scale of the issue facing Pakistani citizens detained in foreign jurisdictions.



Saudi Arabia holds 10,745 Pakistani prisoners, while 5,297 are in prisons across the UAE, according to the figures. Other Gulf countries also hold

Pakistani nationals in significant numbers. The figures list 599 prisoners in Qatar, 578 in Oman, 218 in Bahrain and 81 in Iraq. Beyond the Gulf region, India

has 738 Pakistani prisoners, followed by China with 625, Greece with 516, Malaysia with 444, Italy with 353 and Türkiye with 190.

The figures also include 169 Pakistani prisoners in Iran, 141 in the United States, 91 each in Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan, 35 in Thailand, 27 in Australia and 23 in the United Kingdom.

According to the information presented to parliament, the prisoners' cases are at different stages of legal proceedings in their respective countries. While thousands have received sentences, a substantial number are still awaiting the outcome of their cases.

Hajj 2027: One day left for pilgrims to deposit second installment

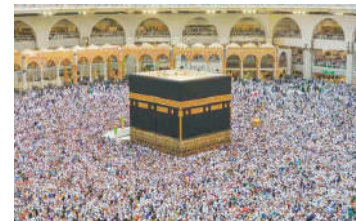
Muzaffar Ahmed Bhatti

ISLAMABAD

Only one day remains for pilgrims registered under Pakistan's government Hajj scheme to pay the second instalment of their Hajj dues, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has announced.

According to the ministry's spokesperson, government-scheme pilgrims must complete their payments by October 20 to avoid cancellation of their Hajj applications.

Pilgrims can pay the outstanding amount through the National Information Technology Board's Hajj portal or the Pak Hajj mobile application. The online portal offers payment options through bank



cards, One Link and manual bank challans.

The ministry has urged all applicants to meet the deadline and complete the required formalities within the stipulated period.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs has also reminded pilgrims that obtaining and submitting a verified medical fitness certificate is mandatory.