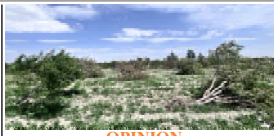




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# QUETTA VOICE



**Federal Cabinet Approves Defence Forces Act 2026, NCA Act Amendments.**

## Federal Cabinet Approves Defence Forces Act 2026, NCA Act Amendments

### NEWS DESK:

The federal cabinet on Thursday approved the Defence Forces Act 2026 and amendments to the National Command Authority Act 2010, with both draft laws set to be presented before Parliament for approval.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired the cabinet meeting in Islamabad, according to the Prime Minister's Office.

The Defence Forces Act 2026 has been prepared as a follow-up to changes introduced through the 27th Constitutional Amendment.

The proposed legislation will establish the administrative framework for the office of the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and the Chief of Defence Forces Headquarters.

Following cabinet approval, the Defence Forces Act 2026 will be tabled before Parliament during its ongoing session.

### Amendments to National Command Authority Act

The cabinet also approved amendments to the National Command Authority Act 2010, another legislative measure linked to the 27th Constitutional Amendment.

The government said the

amendments were necessary to bring the existing law in line with the constitutional changes.

The amended National Command Authority Act 2010 will also be presented before Parliament for consideration and approval.

The proposed Defence Forces Act 2026 is aimed at providing the legal and admin-

istrative framework for the newly defined Chief of Defence Forces position and related headquarters arrangements.

The legislation, along with amendments to the NCA Act, will now move to Parliament, where lawmakers will consider and approve the proposed changes.

## SC Returns Govt Review Petition Against Imran Khan Hospital Transfer Order

### WEBDESK:

The Supreme Court on Thursday returned the federal government's review petition challenging its order to transfer incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan to Shifa International Hospital.

The petition was returned by the Supreme Court registrar's office because the government had submitted incomplete paper books.

The government may now address the objections and file the review petition again, according to an informed source.

The development comes two days after a three-member SC bench ordered authorities to move Imran Khan from Adiala Jail to Shifa International Hospital within two days for medical examination and treatment by a multidisciplinary medical board.

The bench, headed by Justice Shahid Waheed and comprising Justices Naeem Akhtar Afghani and Iftikhar Chaudhry, also allowed Imran Khan's personal physician and sister to remain involved in his medical care.

The court further directed authorities to facilitate regular contact between the incarcerated PTI founder and his family and provide his family access to relevant medical records.

The government also invoked Article 25 of the Constitution, arguing that all citizens are entitled to equal treatment under the law.

PTI demands immediate implementation of the order, which sets out procedures for transferring prisoners



**File Photo of PTI Chairman Imran Ahmed Khan.**

to hospitals.

It maintained that permitting treatment at a private hospital could create an unequal standard for prisoners and potentially affect the uniform application of prison and criminal justice rules.

The government also invoked Article 25 of the Constitution, arguing that all citizens are entitled to equal treatment under the law.

PTI demands immediate implementation of the order, which sets out procedures for transferring prisoners

He said there was no justification for delaying Imran Khan's transfer to Shifa International Hospital and urged authorities to comply with the court directive.

The PTI also criticised government ministers for publicly commenting on Imran Khan's health and treatment, describing the remarks as politically motivated and inappropriate.

Govt defends Imran Khan's treatment

Information Minister Attanullah Tarar said Imran Khan was already receiving medical care under applicable prison regulations and legal provisions.

He maintained that the government had not politicised the

former prime minister's health and said medical treatment would continue in accordance with established rules.

Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry also questioned the demand for treatment at a private hospital, arguing that similar facilities would have implications for the broader prison system.

The latest development keeps the dispute over Imran Khan's hospital transfer, medical treatment and prison facilities before the Supreme Court, with the government potentially seeking to refile its review petition after addressing the registrar's objections.

## Armed Terrorists Attack Saranan Police Station in Pishin, Disarm Officers and Flee with Vehicle



**File Photo: Armed Terrorists Attack Saranan Police Station in PishinQuetta.**

Asmat Hanafi:

**PISHIN:** Unidentified armed terrorists launched a targeted attack on the Saranan police station in Balochistan's Pishin district, police sources said on Thursday.

According to initial reports from local sources, the heavily armed attackers overpowered the duty personnel on site, snatched their weapons, and managed to flee the location using an official police vehicle.

The sudden raid left the local security administration on high alert.

Following the incident, a

heavy contingent of police and Levies forces rushed to the scene to secure the facility and cordon off the surrounding area. Security personnel have launched a search and strike operation along key transit routes across Pishin to trace the fleeing assailants and recover the stolen vehicle and arms.

Police authorities have not yet issued a formal statement regarding the total extent of casualties, structural damage, or the exact sequence of events during the breach.

No group has officially claimed responsibility for the assault so far, and official investigations into the security lapse are currently underway.

# QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

## Balochistan Home Department Completes Landmark Year of Security, Governance and Criminal Justice Reforms

**By Saeed Ahmed:**  
QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan's Home Department has completed a landmark year of reforms, introducing a series of legislative, institutional, and administrative initiatives aimed at strengthening law and order, modernizing governance, and enhancing the province's overall security architecture.

Working under the vision of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, the department shifted its focus beyond routine administration to long-term institution building, technological modernization, and criminal justice reforms designed to reinforce the writ of the State across Balochistan.

### Modern Legal Reforms

During the past year, the Home Department introduced significant legal reforms, including amendments to the Witness Protection framework, reforms to the Balochistan Forensic Science Agency law, legislation enabling Faceless Courts for high-risk terrorism cases, detention centre regulations, the Safe City Authority framework, the Balochistan Prison and Correctional Service Act 2026, and the Probation and Parole Act.

These measures are intended to establish a modern and efficient criminal justice system capable of addressing emerging security threats while improving transparency and accountability.

### Institutions Brought into Operation

The department also focused on translat-



ing legislation into practical implementation.

The Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism was made fully operational to support research, policy formulation, and evidence-based counter-extremism strategies.

Detention centres were activated under the legal framework for the first time, with the Quetta facility already functional and a modern centre under construction in Turbat.

### Strengthening Security Institutions

As part of its institutional reforms, the Home Department operationalized the Provincial Intelligence Fu-

sion and Threat Assessment Centre (PIFAC) to enhance intelligence sharing and inter-agency coordination.

The Balochistan Integrated Security Architecture (BISA) was also established to improve coordination among provincial security institutions.

The Balochistan Charities Registration Authority (BCRA) initiated the province-wide registration and regulation of charities, NGOs, and religious seminars in accordance with applicable laws.

Several specialized units, including the Red Notice Cell, Anti-Illegal Spectrum Cell, Anti-Subversion Cell, Anti-Extortion Coordination Mechanism, and Human

Trafficking Cell, were also established to strengthen intelligence-led policing.

### Safe City Project Delivers Results

Technology remained at the centre of the department's security strategy.

Safe City operations were reorganized under a unified provincial framework with enhanced institutional oversight, advanced surveillance systems, and digital monitoring tools.

Officials said the system has already facilitated the recovery of more than 100 stolen vehicles and assisted in the

arrest of numerous suspects. Plans are also underway to expand the Safe City Project to additional cities across Balochistan.

### Improved Protection of Public Facilities

For the first time, a comprehensive Security of Vulnerable Establishments programme was implemented throughout the province.

Security audits were conducted at government offices, hospitals, educational institutions, and other sensitive installations, while more than 1,500 locations were equipped with

modern CCTV surveillance systems to strengthen public safety.

### Counter-Terrorism Capacity Expanded

The Home Department further enhanced its counter-terrorism capabilities by establishing a dedicated drone surveillance unit to support intelligence gathering, anti-terror operations, and anti-narcotics enforcement.

Bomb disposal units were strengthened, while work continued on introducing video-link proceedings and faceless trials for high-risk terrorism cases to ensure the safety of judges, prosecutors, and witnesses.

law, and eased pressure on public resources.

### Historic Anti-Narcotics Operations

The department also launched one of the province's largest anti-poppo campaigns.

Using drone technology, field verification, and coordinated enforcement, thousands of acres of illegal poppy cultivation were identified and destroyed.

Parallel operations against illegal tobacco cultivation and trade resulted in record seizures, helping curb tax evasion and dismantle illicit markets.

### Administrative Restructuring

Major administrative reforms included the merger of the Levies Force into the Police Department and the integration of Civil Defence into the Special Branch, improving institutional coordination and operational efficiency.

### Towards a Safer Balochistan

Officials describe the past year as the beginning of a broader transformation in Balochistan's security and governance landscape. While acknowledging that significant challenges remain, the Home Department believes the reforms have laid the foundation for stronger institutions, modern policing, improved criminal justice, and sustainable peace.

The transition from legislation to institution building reflects a long-term vision of creating a safer, more stable, and more prosperous Balochistan through effective governance, modern laws, and consistent implementation.

## Balochistan: Qila Saifullah Hailstorm Destroys 7M Fruit Trees, 18,000 Farmers Hit

**Atta Kakar:**

A devastating hailstorm accompanied by powerful winds has caused widespread destruction across Qila Saifullah district in Balochistan, damaging more than 7 million fruit trees and affecting nearly 18,000 farmers and landowners.

The storm struck on April 18, severely impacting one of the province's most important horticultural regions and leaving thousands of rural families facing major economic uncertainty.

The disaster caused extensive damage to orchards, agricultural land, and seasonal crops, particularly apple, apricot, and grape farms that form the backbone of the local economy.

Farmers say years of hard work and investment were wiped out within minutes as hail and strong winds tore through villages and farming areas across the district. Local growers have described the situation as catastrophic, warning that many families may



struggle to survive financially without immediate government assistance.

Farmers say the primary source of income for

a large portion of Qila Saifullah's population, and the destruction of fruit orchards is expected to have long-term economic consequences for the re-

gion. Residents and farming communities have expressed frustration over delays in relief and compensation efforts.

Many affected farmers claim that official assessment and rehabilitation measures have been slow despite the scale of destruction.

Calls are growing for the provincial and federal governments to announce emergency compensation packages, interest-free agricultural loans, and

recovery support for affected communities. Farmers and local representatives are also demanding restoration of damaged irrigation systems and

the introduction of crop insurance mechanisms to help rural communities recover from climate-related disasters.

They argue that without urgent intervention, the crisis could deepen poverty and unemployment across the district.

The Qila Saifullah hailstorm has once again highlighted the vulnerability of Balochistan's agricultural sector to extreme weather events.

Experts warn that climate-related disasters, including hailstorms, droughts, and flash floods, are becoming increasingly frequent in the province.

Placing additional pressure on farmers already struggling with limited infrastructure and rising production costs.

Analysts say stronger disaster management systems, climate-resilient agricultural policies, and faster

emergency response mechanisms are essential to protect rural livelihoods and ensure long-term stability in Balochistan's farming sector.





## NA passes bills related to military, nuclear command structure as Bilawal objects, opposition walks out

**NEWS DESK:** The National Assembly on Thursday passed two bills pertaining to the military and nuclear command structure in a session that saw the opposition staging a walk-out and the PPP — an ally of the ruling PML-N — objecting to the manner in which the legislation was presented.

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif presented the two bills — the Defence Forces of Pakistan Act, 2026 and the amended National Command Authority Act, 2010 — while the opposition walked out.

Meanwhile, PPP Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari raised objections to the way in which the bills were presented; however, the party lawmakers later voted in favour of the bills. Bilawal, speaking on the floor of the NA, lashed out at the government for not taking ruling allies on board while making legislation. Bilawal said he supported the bills but not the way they were presented. "I personally apologise for what is happening to you," he said, referring to the prime minister, and "ruling allies and the opposition". "The legislation is not controversial, but why is such legislation being made controversial?" he asked.

The bills were not on the NA's agenda for today. Earlier in the day, they were approved by the federal cabinet meeting, which was chaired

by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The premier was also in the NA when the bills were presented and left after the NA's approval for the legislation. The session was adjourned till 11 am on Friday.

A statement issued



by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) after the federal cabinet meeting said the bills had been prepared in continuation of the tweaks made to the Constitution under the 27th Amendment.

The Defence Forces Act, it said, "aims to determine the relevant administrative matters regarding the office of the Chief of Defence Forces and the Chief of Defence Forces Headquarters".

Meanwhile, the amendments to the National Command Authority Act were described as "a necessary process" following the 27th Constitutional Amendment.

The 27th Constitutional Amendment, enacted in November last year, fundamentally altered Pakistan's higher defence architecture by abolishing the office of the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and creating the new position of chief of de-

fence forces, concurrently held by the chief of army staff.

Field Marshal Asim Munir became the country's first chief of defence forces following the constitutional changes.

The Amendment also resulted in the creation of the Commander of the National Strategic Command (NSC) post, a four-star officer that oversees the operational integration of Pakistan's strategic forces.

Last month, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had promoted Gen Syed Aamer Raza from the rank of lieutenant general and simultaneously appointed him as the

In the draft of the Defence Forces of Pakistan Act, 2026, a copy of which is available with Dawn, it was stated that the bill was designed to give effect to the chief of the defence forces' role as the commander of the armed forces.

"And to ensure multidomain integration, restructuring and optimum jointness of the Armed Forces," the draft read.

According to the draft, the proposed act will enable the establishment of the Defence Forces Headquarters, which shall serve as the headquarters of the Armed Forces.

## PM Shehbaz once again extends olive branch to opposition for economic, democratic stability

**NEWS DESK:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday once again invited the opposition to sit with the government for constructive dialogue, saying that political matters should be resolved through talks to further strengthen Pakistan's economy and democracy.

"Once again invite the opposition to come and sit together. Matters should be resolved through dialogue so that Pakistan's economy and democracy can be further strengthened," he said, adding that it was now up to the opposition to decide how soon it was ready for constructive engagement.

The government had last extended a similar invitation to the opposition in June, calling for constructive dialogue and a "charter of democracy" to strengthen the country's economy and democratic system.

He also repeatedly offered talks during his government's tenure. The call came two days after the Supreme Court ordered the federal government to shift incarcerated Pakistanis to a private hospital. Government ministers objected to the order and had since filed a review petition in the SC.

Chairing a meeting of the federal cabinet today, the prime minister said the government had always been ready for dialogue, and he had re-

peatedly expressed this position on the floor of the National Assembly as well as before the cabinet.

The prime minister also welcomed the reduction of Rs 32 per litre in the price of diesel, and said the achievement was particularly significant in view of the difficult situation prevailing

different countries had been closed.

"The region is passing through a difficult time, and Pakistan, being a net importer of energy, is specifically affected by the situation," he said.

The prime minister recalled that following the outbreak of the conflict, the federal govern-

ment had arranged Rs128 billion to help control oil prices, while the provinces had subsequently also contributed towards efforts to provide relief.

He expressed hope that the regional situation would improve in the coming weeks and said Pakistan would continue playing its role in efforts aimed at reducing tensions and ensuring stability.

The prime minister also highlighted recent positive developments in the economy, saying the government's mea-

Board of Revenue (FBR) not to unnecessarily inconvenience traders, noting that the business community had reached consensus on the matter.

The prime minister also congratulated the Ministry of IT and Telecommunications and its team on an 18 per cent increase in IT exports in July 2026, saying the growth was a positive development for the country's digital economy. He further welcomed the establishment of a Google office in Pakistan.



in the Gulf region and disruptions to global oil supplies.

He appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of Petroleum and its team in securing the reduction, noting that Pakistan was a net energy importer and was therefore particularly vulnerable to disruptions in international energy supplies.

Referring to the prevailing situation in the Gulf and around the Strait of Hormuz, he said oil supplies had been severely disrupted, while a number of refineries and gas plants in

ment had arranged Rs128 billion to help control oil prices, while the provinces had subsequently also contributed towards efforts to provide relief.

He expressed hope that the regional situation would improve in the coming weeks and said Pakistan would continue playing its role in efforts aimed at reducing tensions and ensuring stability.

The prime minister also highlighted recent positive developments in the economy, saying the government's mea-

## PTA, Google to collaborate on strengthening children's online safety

**NEWS DESK:** The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and Google on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen children's online safety. A press release issued by the authority said the agreement was aimed at strengthening awareness, digital safety and responsible use of online platforms among

and local languages, conducting training programmes in educational institutions and supporting a nationwide awareness campaign to connect millions of families with localised online safety resources and tutorials," it said.

The statement said that on the occasion, PTA Chairman (ret'd) Maj Gen Hafeezur Rehman highlighted the

the country.

"The collaboration reflects the PTA and Google's shared commitment to empowering parents and teachers, enhancing digital awareness, and creating a safer and more secure online environment," the statement concluded.

The development comes after the US-India technology gap on Tuesday inaugurated

**NEWS DESK:** Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Thursday reaffirmed Pakistan's support for Syria's "sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity," the Foreign Office (FO) said.

DPM Dar made the remarks during delegation-level talks with Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad Hassan al-Shabaani, who arrived in Islamabad early on Thursday on an official visit on Dar's invitation.

FO said that during delegation-level talks, DPM Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's support for Syria's sovereignty.

The remarks came after an Israeli attack on an airbase in Syria a day prior.

During the talks, the two sides reaffirmed "longstanding brotherly ties," expanding bilateral cooperation and exchanged views on "regional and international developments, including Palestine, the Golan Heights, Afghanistan, the situation in South Asia, and developments in the Middle East," FO said.

On Wednesday, Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry held a meeting with a delegation from Google and called for enhanced cooperation to promote a safe and peaceful digital environment.



children, parents, teachers and caregivers across Pakistan. It said they would collaborate on a child safety programme focused on "awareness, education and capacity-building equipping parents and teachers with practical tools and resources to help children navigate the digital world safely."

"Key initiatives include developing awareness content in English

"importance of collective efforts and stakeholder collaboration to protect children in an increasingly digital environment". Dr Khawar Siddique, a member of authority's compliance and enforcement team, emphasised the "importance of promoting digital literacy and responsible use of online platforms to promote a safer digital environment for children and families" in

its local office in Pakistan, nearly four years after it first registered in Pakistan, describing the development as a "big milestone" in its engagement with the country.

On Wednesday, Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry held a meeting with a delegation from Google and called for enhanced cooperation to promote a safe and peaceful digital environment.

Al-Shabaani also welcomed the signing of

**NEWS DESK:** Security forces killed five terrorists during an intelligence-based operation in Balochistan's Panjgur district. The operation took place in the Killa Suran area of Panjgur under Operation Raddul Fitna 3, it emerged on Thursday.

Security forces said that intelligence was received regarding the movement of terrorists planning an attack. They said that five terrorists were killed in the incident while several others were wounded.

Security forces also said that a large quantity of weapons, ammunition and equipment was recovered from the terrorists. They added that the killed terrorists were involved in robbery, extortion, kidnapping for ransom, targeted killings and attacks in Panjgur and surrounding areas.

Security forces said the operation was part of the Raddul Fitna 3 would continue as part

the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, lauding Pakistan's role in regional peace and stability, particularly in the US-Israeli war on Iran.

"Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to continued engagement and cooperation for peace, stability and prosperity in the region and beyond."

Earlier in the day, DPM Dar and his Syrian counterpart held a restricted meeting, during which the two leaders reiterated their commitment to "brotherly ties," discussed avenues to expand bilateral cooperation and held "in-

depth" discussions on regional developments.

Earlier, the FO shared pictures of the visiting minister arriving in Islamabad on X.

"Upon arrival, the distinguished guest was received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' additional secretary (Middle East)," it said.

The visit comes as Syria's transitional leadership pursues regional and international engagement following the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad in May 2024.

A day earlier, the FO said the two sides would hold in-depth discussions across the entire

spectrum of bilateral relations, review avenues for further enhancing bilateral cooperation, and exchange views on regional and international developments.

It also said the visit would mark an important step towards further enhancing bilateral relations and cooperation between Pakistan and Syria.

The visit is the first by a Syrian foreign minister since Walid al-Mouallam travelled to Pakistan in May 2007 and the first since the change of government in Damascus.

The visit also

comes after Pakistan on Wednesday strongly condemned an "unprovoked" attack carried out by Israel on an airbase in Syria, saying such acts had the potential to "further undermine regional peace and stability".

Syria's state-run Ekhbariya television, citing a military source, said on Tuesday that Israel carried out eight

attacks on Syria, saying such acts had the potential to "further undermine regional peace and stability," the FO said.

"Such provocative actions constitute a flagrant violation of international law and have the potential to further undermine regional peace and stability," the FO said.

"Pakistan expresses its unwavering solidarity with the brotherly people of Syria, and reiterates its full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as peace and prosperity of the Syrian Arab Republic."

## 5 terrorists killed in intelligence-based operation in Balochistan's Panjgur

of efforts to eliminate militant threats and restore security in the region.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi commended security forces for thwarting the "heinous designs" of the terrorists affiliated with

nation stood united against terrorism and in solidarity with the security forces.

Thursdays' operations are the latest in a string of actions being taken as Balochistan continues to grapple with security challenges.



Fitna-al-Hindustan, according to a statement issued by his ministry.

The state has designated Balochistan-

On Tuesday, more than nine terrorists were killed in an IBO in Zant, Hamari and Surab under Operation Raddul Fitna

3. On Monday, two terrorists were killed and three others were injured in an IBO in the Killa Zik area of Balochistan.

According to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies' (PICSS) monthly security assessment released on July 31, the security situation deteriorated most significantly in Balochistan in the country last month.

The overall death toll increased by 241pc in Balochistan, from 109 in June to 372 in July, the report said.

Security personnel deaths in Balochistan increased by 100pc in June to 62 in July, representing a rise of 933pc. Terrorist deaths rose from 75 to 238, while civilian deaths increased by 93pc, from 28 to 54. Eighteen members of peace committees were also killed in the province.