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Email address: dquettavoice@gmail.com
Website: www.quettavoice.com

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QUETTA VOICE

IHC Bars State Resources for PTI September 27 Protest

Muhammad Faizan Aslam Khan:

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has barred provincial governments from using official vehicles, machinery or other state resources for the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) march and protest planned for September 27.

The court also ruled that no political party or leader has the legal right to block roads in Islamabad, stressing that any march or rally must not disrupt citizens' freedom of movement.

A larger bench headed by Chief Justice Sarfraz Dogar issued the written order on a petition concerning the PTI's planned protest.

The IHC directed provincial governments not to use government resources for any march, rally or procession heading towards Islamabad.

It further ruled that no government employee could be forced to participate in such political activities.

The court said any activity in Islamabad that affects citizens' fundamental rights would constitute a violation of the Constitution.

A public official responsible for infringing fundamental rights would also be in violation of the Constitution and



File Photo: IHC Bars State Resources for PTI September 27 Protest.

the oath of office, it observed. The court directed chief secretaries, the Islamabad chief commissioner and police

chiefs to establish helpines or direct contact mechanisms through which government employees could report pres-

sure from political leaders or officials to join the march.

The IHC emphasised that political protests must remain within the law and should not obstruct public movement or compromise the fundamental rights of citizens.

ATC Orders Passports Blocked of 24 PTI Lawmakers

Muhammad Faizan Aslam Khan:

An Islamabad anti-terrorism court has ordered the blocking of passports of 24 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawmakers, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, in a case registered at Kohsar Police Station.

ATC Judge Abul Hasanat Muhammad Zulqarnain issued the order after police requested that the passports of the accused be blocked, citing concerns that they could leave the country to avoid legal proceedings.

The court said the available record showed that the PTI lawmakers had been nominated as accused in the case and were facing serious allegations related to attacks on state institutions and promotion of terrorism.

The accused named in the order include Sohail Afridi, Asad Qaiser, Sheram Tarkai, Shahid Khatak, Sher Ali Arbab, Muhammad Iqbal Afridi, Dr Amjad Ali, Junaid Akbar, Zubair Wazir, Umar Ayub, Arshad Umarzai, Zar Alam, Mian Umar, Akhtar Khan, Humayun Khan, Riaz Khan, Abdul Kabir Khan, Tufail Anjum, Asif Mehsud, Ajah Gul, Muhammad Usman, Babar Saleem Swati, Irfan Saleem and Advocate Ali Zaman, among others.

The court observed that several accused had failed to appear before it, while those who had obtained interim bail had also not joined the investigation.

Accepting the investigating officer's request, the court directed the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to block the passports of the accused until further orders.

Balochistan Police Says 6 Terrorists Killed, 5 Arrested in Pishin, Qilla Abdullah

WEB DESK:

Six terrorists were killed and five others arrested during intelligence-based joint operations by Balochistan Police, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and other law enforcement agencies in Pishin and Qilla Abdullah districts, police said on Monday.

According to a Balochistan Police statement, the operations were conducted

tigation was underway to gather information about the terrorists' networks, facilitators and planned activities.

The operations were led by the DIG Zhoib Range, Commander CTD and SSP Pishin, with police and other law enforcement personnel working in coordination.

Balochistan Inspector General of Police praised the officers and personnel involved in the operations for their professionalism, courage and co-



File Photo: Balochistan Police Says 6 Terrorists Killed, 5 Arrested in Pishin, Qilla Abdullah.

in Kili Sultan, Azhram, Dinar and Gilo areas of Pishin, along with other identified locations. The police said the six killed terrorists belonged to Fitna al-Hindustan, while five others were apprehended during the operations.

A significant quantity of weapons and other material was also recovered from the arrested suspects, according to the statement.

Police said further investigation

ordinance. The IGP said intelligence-based operations against terrorist networks, facilitators and their support structures would continue across the province.

He reaffirmed the law enforcement agencies' commitment to eliminating terrorists affiliated with Fitna al-Hindustan and Fitna al-Khawarij and protecting the lives, property, peace and security of the people of Balochistan.

For the First Time in Balochistan, Over 14,000 Teachers Recruited on Contract Basis, Lal Jan Jaffar



File Photo: Education Secretary Lal Jan Jaffar.

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: The Balochistan government has decided to extend the contracts of teachers recruited under the first phase of the province's teacher recruitment.

Programme, with the extension to remain subject to their performance, Education Secretary Lal Jan Jaffar told Quetta Voice.

According to the Education Secretary, the first-phase teachers were initially recruited on 18-month contracts, which have now expired.

The provincial government will now extend their contracts

up to December 2027, subject to satisfactory performance.

Lal Jan Jaffar said the decision was taken in view of the province's need for capable teachers and the importance of retaining teaching staff in educational institutions across Balochistan.

Teachers Were Not Paid Salaries

The Education Secretary also acknowledged that some contract teachers have not received their salaries, leaving them facing financial difficulties following the expiry of their contracts.

He said the issue of pending salaries is known to the gov-

ernment and that Chief Minister Balochistan has agreed to extend the teachers' contracts.

Lal Jan Jaffar said that once the necessary official and administrative formalities for the contract extensions are completed,

the government will also process and pay the remaining outstanding salaries of the affected teachers.

Performance-Based Extension Until 2027

The Education Department will assess teachers on the basis of their performance before and during the extended contractual period.

The policy is intended to

ensure that teachers who are performing effectively remain part of the provincial education system.

The decision is expected to provide relief to thousands of contract teachers who have been facing uncertainty over their employment and salaries after the completion of their initial 18-month contracts.

The development also comes amid wider concerns over the quality and availability of public education services in Balochistan,

where teacher shortages and administrative and financial challenges continue to affect educational service delivery.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Pakistan's Climate Vulnerability: A Governance Dilemma

Zia Ud Din:

Pakistan contributes less than one percent to global carbon emissions, yet it consistently ranks among the countries most exposed to climate-induced disasters. This imbalance is not merely an environmental concern; it reflects governance dilemma rooted in a weak institutional co-ordination and limited adaptation planning.

Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges of the modern era, adversely affecting societies at multiple levels.

Rising temperatures, droughts, irregular weather patterns, sea-level rise, melting glaciers, floods, and water insecurity demonstrate its far-reaching global consequences.

Since these impacts transcend national borders, climate change is inherently a global challenge. Along with other developing nations, Pakistan remains highly vulnerable.

In 2024, Pakistan recorded its ninth warmest year in the last 64 years, with an average temperature of 23.52°C and rainfall levels 31 percent above the historical average. This highlights the urgency of collective international action.

For Pakistan, however, climate vulnerability is compounded by governance constraints. Fragmented institutional coordination, weak policy



implementation, and limited emphasis on adaptation have reduced the state's capacity to respond effectively. Consequently, the climate crisis in Pakistan reflects not only environmental stress but also persistent governance failures.

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in global weather patterns and temperatures, primarily driven by human activities. According to United Nations findings, excessive

greenhouse gas emissions have intensified heat retention in the atmosphere. Gases such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide have thickened the atmospheric blanket, largely due to deforestation, fossil fuel consumption, and rapid industrialization.

One of the most visible consequences of climate change is rising global temperatures.

The Copernicus Climate Change Service reported that average global tempera-

tures in 2024 exceeded pre-industrial levels by 1.52°C. This warming has intensified heatwaves, prolonged droughts, and increased wildfire risks. Rising temperatures have also disrupted weather systems, leading to irregular rainfall, intense storms, and stronger hurricanes.

Another major consequence is sea-level rise. Oceans absorb nearly 90 percent of excess heat caused by greenhouse gas emissions, leading to

thermal expansion. Simultaneously, melting glaciers and ice sheets contribute to rising sea levels.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, global sea levels have risen by approximately 21 to 25 centimeters since 1880, threatening coastal livelihoods and infrastructure.

Climate change has also intensified water scarcity, a growing global concern. Pakistan is already a water-stressed country, and climate variability has

further exacerbated this challenge.

A report by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics places Pakistan among the most water-risk-prone nations. Water scarcity places immense pressure on agriculture, industry, and households, undermining economic stability and food security.

Despite contributing minimally to global emissions, Pakistan bears a disproportionate share of climate-related losses. The

Global Climate Risk Index ranks Pakistan among the most vulnerable countries to climate change.

The 2022 floods alone caused an estimated economic loss of \$40 billion and claimed at least 1,700 lives. More recently, monsoon floods in 2025 resulted in over 1,000 deaths.

Given these realities, climate adaptation is no longer an academic debate but a strategic necessity.

Mitigation remains essential to limit

future warming through reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and hydropower is critical.

Equally important is adaptation. Since climate impacts are already unavoidable, societies must strengthen resilience. Investment in climate-resilient infrastructure, improved urban planning, and effective water management is vital.

Global cooperation remains the third pillar of climate response. Climate change transcends borders and requires collective responsibility. Developed nations must honor climate finance commitments and support vulnerable countries in adaptation efforts.

For Pakistan, effective climate governance is central to resilience. Addressing financing constraints, strengthening legislation, improving federal-provincial coordination, and prioritizing adaptation over rhetoric are critical steps.

Climate change presents urgent challenges that demand immediate action. Without decisive reforms in climate governance and a strategic shift toward adaptation, Pakistan will continue to pay an unjust price for a crisis it did little to create.

The author can be reached at: dzinaud19@gmail.com.

MDCAT Registrations Decline, has the MBBS Dream Lost Its Shine in Pakistan?

Syed

Muhammad Yaseen
For decades, becoming a doctor in Pakistan has been viewed as one of the most prestigious and desirable career choices. Thousands of students and families have traditionally spent years preparing for the MDCAT, often treating admission to an MBBS programme as the ultimate measure of academic success.

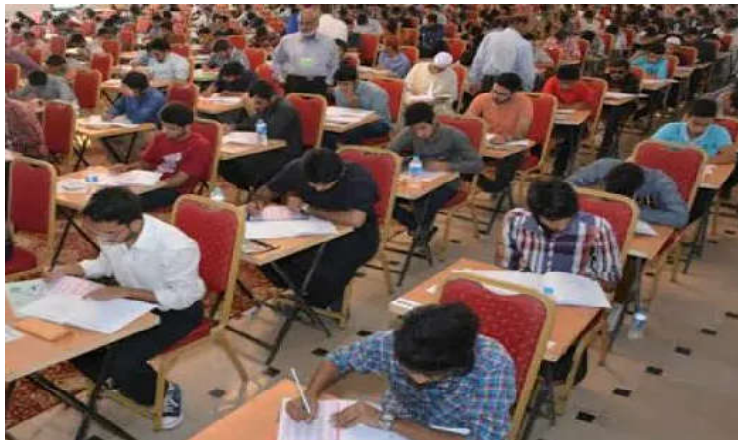
The MDCAT picture appears to be changing.

Official figures indicate a noticeable contraction in the MDCAT candidate and registration pool. In 2022, 204,253 candidates appeared in the MDCAT, followed by 180,534 in 2023. In 2024, PM&DC reported 167,772 registrations, while the number fell to 140,071 in 2025.

These figures require an important qualification. The 2022 and 2023 figures refer to candidates who appeared in the examination, whereas the 2024 and 2025 figures refer to registrations. Therefore, they should not be treated as a perfectly comparable year-by-year series.

The clearest recent comparison is between 2024 and 2025. Registrations declined by 27,701, or approximately 16.5 percent.

The early picture for 2026 also deserves attention, but with caution. According to a National Assembly briefing



on July 10, approximately 135,000 students had registered for MDCAT 2026 at that point.

However, registration was restarted for some days as it got delayed till 20 September. It should therefore not be presented as a confirmed 2026 decline.

The more interesting question is not simply whether MDCAT numbers are falling. It is why?

One obvious factor is the rising cost of medi-

cal education. For students unable to secure public-sector seats, private medical colleges can represent a major financial commitment. Families are increasingly evaluating medicine not only through the lens of prestige, but also through affordability, career progression and financial return.

At the same time, students today have more career options. Technology, artificial intelligence, software development, business, fi-

nance and other professional fields have become increasingly attractive.

It would be premature, however, to claim that these sectors are directly responsible for the MDCAT decline without comprehensive national research.

Another concern is the uncertainty surrounding the medical education pathway itself. Students face a long journey from MDCAT preparation to MBBS, house job, post-

graduate training and eventual specialization. Limited postgraduate opportunities, demanding working conditions and uncertainty about career progression can influence how families assess the profession.

The emergence of vacant seats in some private medical colleges is particularly significant. Reports of unfilled MBBS seats in provinces such as Sindh and Punjab suggest that the traditional situation—where demand over-

whelmingly exceeded available seats—is changing in parts of the private sector.

But vacant seats should not automatically be interpreted as evidence that students no longer want to become doctors. High tuition fees, admission rules, students declining offers and other factors can also contribute. In fact, a court record from Sindh highlighted the role of expensive private-college fees in difficulties filling certain seats.

This distinction is important because the solution should not simply be to lower admission standards when ever seats remain vacant.

Pakistan certainly needs doctors. Large parts of the country continue to face healthcare shortages, particularly outside major urban centres. But increasing the number of medical graduates alone cannot solve these problems.

The country needs a medical education

system that offers quality training, adequate clinical exposure, affordable education, transparent admissions and a credible postgraduate career pathway.

Policymakers should therefore investigate the reasons behind the changing MDCAT trend through a nationwide study of applicants and eligible students. How many reject private medical seats because of fees? How many choose foreign universities? How many switch to other professions? How many are discouraged by postgraduate uncertainty?

Until these questions are properly answered, conclusions about a "collapse" of medical education demand would be premature.

The falling MDCAT numbers should instead be viewed as a warning signal. Pakistan may not be losing interest in medicine; rather, students may be becoming more selective about the price they are willing to pay for a medical career.

The answer is not to force more students into MBBS. It is to make medicine a profession that students choose because it offers quality education, professional dignity, financial sustainability and a clear future.

Pakistan does not simply need more doctors. It needs a medical education system that future doctors can believe in.

“Youth are Pakistan’s Ambassadors”: CM Sarfraz Bugti Interacts with Balochistan Scholarship Students

Ali Hamza, Qasem Shah:
QUETTA: Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, held a detailed interactive session with male and female students from across the province who were selected on pure merit for higher education scholarships at top universities across Pakistan.

The meeting, attended by Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan and Secretary Higher Education Saleh Baloch, provided a platform for students to discuss governance, regional development, and educational opportunities directly with the province’s executive leadership.

Empowering Students from Modest Backgrounds

He described their admission into premier national institutions as a transformative milestone for their families and the region. The merit-based selection of students from remote districts guarantees a bright academic future for Balochistan. Wherever our youth go, they represent our province as ambassadors of a united Pakistan.”

— Mir Sarfraz Bugti, Chief Minister of Balochistan



Speaking to the young scholars, Chief Minister Bugti emphasized that a majority of the selected candidates belong to underprivileged and middle-class families.

He described their admission into premier national institutions as a transformative milestone for their families and the region.

The Chief Minister also expressed deep gratitude to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for supporting Balochistan’s students through fully funded university seats, tuition cover, and hostel fee support in Punjab’s educational institutions.

A Call to Focus on Merit and Resist Anti-State Propaganda

Balochistan Dismisses 100 Government Employees Over Alleged Anti-State Narrative, Babar Yousafzai

QUETTA: The Balochistan Home Department has dismissed 100 government employees from service over their alleged involvement in promoting an anti-state narrative, officials said.

Assistant to the Balochistan Home Department Babar Yousafzai said the dismissed employees had allegedly been promoting a narrative against Pakistan and the state.

He said the employees had violated the oath they took as government servants, leading to departmental action against them.

“Compromise is not possible on narra-



tives against the state,” Yousafzai said, adding that action would be taken against government employees who allegedly continued to

speaking against Pakistan despite receiving government salaries and benefits.

According to the Balochistan Home Department, 95 university teachers were still pending.

Meanwhile, the Home Department said five more government employees, including three employees of the Health Department, had also been dismissed over allegations of promoting an anti-state narrative.

Balochistan to Bring All Ambulances Under MERC 1122 Control

News Desk:
QUETTA: Balochistan Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar has announced that all ambulances operating across the province will soon be brought under the control and command of MERC 1122 to establish an integrated emergency response system.

Speaking at a ceremony at the MERC 1122 headquarters in Quetta, where nine new advanced life support ambulances were inducted and an emergency response software was launched, Kakar said the initiative would improve emergency response and help save precious lives.

He said the government was modernising ambulance services to provide immediate medical assistance to victims of road accidents, particularly on highways, followed by their timely transfer to



trauma centres and other healthcare facilities when required. The minister said the initiative was being implemented in line with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti’s vision of bringing major reforms to the health sector and ensuring that their benefits reached the public.

The newly launched digital response system will enable authorities to monitor ambulances across Balochistan in real time, including their location, availability and movement. It will also facilitate the dispatch of the nearest available ambulance to an emergency site.

Kakar said digitalisation was essential for improving healthcare delivery across Balochistan because of the province’s vast geographical area. The system would enhance transparency, monitoring, management and emergency response.

MERC 1122 Director General Zulfiqar Jatoi said the addition of modern ambulances and digital response software would significantly improve response times and ensure timely medical assistance to injured people.

Balochistan C&W Department Abolishes Nearly 5,000 Obsolete Posts in Major Restructuring Move

QUETTA: In a major administrative and financial restructuring initiative, the Balochistan Communications and Works (C&W) Department has abolished nearly 5,000 posts across 74 different categories, officials said, citing the fact that modern technology and machinery have rendered these positions obsolete.

The move is aimed at bringing the department’s administrative and financial structure in line with modern requirements and eliminating positions whose practical functions have

either been significantly reduced or completely replaced by technological advancements and modern machinery. According to sources, around 5,000 posts belonging to 74 different categories have already been abolished, while work is underway to eliminate another 1,500 posts.

The additional restructuring is expected to further reduce the number of unnecessary positions that have lost their relevance over time. The abolished posts largely belonged to categories where the use of modern technology and machinery has substantially reduced or eliminated the need for traditional manpower and conventional working methods.

In the past, many departmental tasks required large numbers of employees and specialized traditional posts. However, technological advancements and modern machinery have transformed the nature of such work, making several of these positions redundant. The department has maintained that retain-

ing such posts could have resulted in an additional financial burden on the provincial government and the retired staff of Employees Protected

The department has also clarified that employees serving against the abolished posts who have completed 30 years of service will receive their full retirement benefits.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Government of Balochistan has been provided funds to finance the cost of the following Schemes, for the year 2026 based on Composite schedules rates 2026 on Percentage Rates

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Last Date and Time of Bid Submission	Tender Opening
1	CLIMATE RESILIENT WATER CONSERVATION AND ACQUEDUCT REPAIR PROJECT FOR QUETTA (CONSTRUCTION OF THREE CELL BOX CULVERT)	Rs. 403,00,000/-	26 September, 2026 09:00 AM	10:00 AM

Documents shall be made available under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014 Amended up to date. Eligibility of Bidders: Eligibility Criteria for bidders may be seen in the Bidding Documents Bid Security for all the above works is 3% of the estimated cost. Tender fees for all the above works is Rs. 1,000/- each. Bidding Procedure: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure for all bids. Tender Documents: The bidding document can be downloaded from www.bids.gov.pk (free of cost) and the same can also be obtained from the office of the under-signed upon payment of prescribed tender fee. Address: B-PRAEPPS SYSTEM Office Address & Corresponding Office of The Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Quetta. Phone No: 081-82201074

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - Roads
C/W PPR&H Department
District Sharanai

PRD No.1365/14-09-2026

Governor Mandokhail Announces Rs10m Seed Money for Islamia University, Vows to Lay Foundation Stone Soon

QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Jaffer Khan Mandokhail has announced Rs10 million seed money for the establishment of Islamia University and said he would return soon to lay the foundation stone of the proposed institution.

The ceremony was attended by Provincial Minister Mir Asim Kurd Gelo, Sardar Yahya Khan Nasir, Islamia Girls College Principal Professor Shauista Kakar, Muhammad Naem

announced cash prizes of Rs100,000 each for the students of Islamia College who secure first, second and third positions in the FSc examinations conducted by the Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education.

He said the Rs10 million contribution was not merely temporary financial assistance but represented a commitment to transforming society through education and securing a brighter future for the coming generations.

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Rababa Khan Buledi

Inspects Women and Juvenile Facilitation Centre in Quetta

QUETTA: Provincial Adviser for Women Development Dr Rababa Khan Buledi on Monday visited the Women and Juvenile Facilitation Centre and inspected its various sections and facilities.

During the visit, AIG Gender Sector Ahmed Unrani and Centre In-charge Shazia Imran briefed the provincial adviser on the centre’s different departments, facilities and available to women and juvenile victims.

Dr Rababa Khan Buledi visited various sections of the centre and reviewed the facilities being provided to women and juvenile victims. She also sought information from the relevant officials regarding different operational and administrative matters.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Rababa Khan

Buledi said providing women and children with a safe, dignified and supportive environment was an important responsibility of the Government of Balochistan.

She emphasized the need for an effective system to ensure timely legal, social and institutional support to women and juvenile victims.

The provincial adviser said institutions such as the Women and Juvenile Facilitation Centre were playing an important role in addressing issues faced by women and children and facilitating their access to justice.

Students Can Play Key Role in Eliminating Corruption: NAB Balochistan DG

QUETTA: Director General National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Balochistan Niaz Hassan has said that students can play a key role in eliminating corruption by developing strong moral values, professional competence and a sense of accountability.

He expressed these views during a visit by a delegation of students and faculty members of BUTEMS University Quetta to the NAB Balochistan office on September 10, as part of an anti-corruption awareness campaign being conducted in line with the vision of the NAB Chairman.

The delegation was led by Assistant Director Zabooh Ahmed. DG

NAB Balochistan Niaz Hassan welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of such visits in educating students about corruption, its consequences and institutional efforts to combat it.

During the visit, the delegation toured different offices of NAB Balochistan and was briefed on the bureau’s procedures, including the receipt of complaints, inquiry process and prosecution mechanism.

NAB Balochistan Farhan Yousaf Khan delivered an awareness lecture, providing participants with detailed information about NAB’s procedures, vision, mission and performance.

Director Niaz Hassan said that students should play a key role in combating corruption. Referring to Islamic teachings, he stressed the importance of self-accountability and said there was no room for corruption and dishonesty in Islam.

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EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - Roads
C/W PPR&H Department
District Sharanai

PRD No.1365/14-09-2026

CDF Munir reaffirms commitment to bolstering defence ties in meeting with Indonesian naval chief

NEWS DESK: Indonesian naval chief Dr Muhammad Ali on Monday called on Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir, who reaffirmed Islamabad's commitment to strengthening its ties with Jakarta, the military's media wing said.

According to a statement from Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), matters of mutual interest, regional security and bilateral defence cooperation were discussed during the meeting.

"The two sides expressed satisfaction over the existing military-to-military relations and reaffirmed their resolve to further strengthen co-operation, particularly in the domains of professional training, defence collaboration and joint exercises," the statement read. The ISPR added that CDF Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening its "longstanding and brotherly relations" with Indonesia, significantly in the defence and security spheres.

Admiral Ali "appreciated the professionalism of Pakistan Armed

Forces and acknowledged their contributions towards regional peace and stability", the statement concluded. In January this year, Indonesia expressed its desire to further expand defence ties with Pakistan across multiple do-

Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to fostering a strong and enduring defence relationship with Indonesia, based on shared values, mutual respect, and convergence of strategic interests, it said. Lebanese interior minister calls on

ing institutional linkages and fostering greater co-operation between the two countries' security institutions was also emphasised, "the statement added. COAS & CDF reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthen-



mains when the country's Defence Minister Lieutenant General (ret'd) Sjafrudin Sjamsuddin called on CDF Munir in Rawalpindi.

"The meeting focused on matters of mutual interest, evolving regional and global security dynamics, and exploration of avenues for enhancing bilateral defence cooperation," the ISPR said in a statement published then. CDF

CDF Munir Field Marshal Munir also received Lebanon's Minister of Interior and Municipalities Ahmad Al Hajjar during the latter's two-day visit to Pakistan, ISPR said in a separate statement. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest, the evolving regional security environment and the prospects for further enhancing bilateral relations in the security domain. "The importance of strengthen-

ing bilateral relations with Lebanon and expressed the desire to further expand mutually beneficial cooperation in areas of shared interest." Al Hajjar expressed appreciation for Pakistan's contributions to regional peace and stability, according to ISPR. He also acknowledged the professionalism and sacrifices of Pakistan's armed forces in the fight against terrorism.

State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) keeps interest rate unchanged at 11.5pc

NEWS DESK: The State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on Monday kept the key policy rate unchanged at 11.5 per cent.

The decision comes as prolonged tensions in the Middle East drive up global oil prices and fuel inflation.

In a detailed statement, the MPC said it decided to keep the policy rate unchanged with a majority decision of seven out of ten members. MPC noted the recent escalation in the Middle East conflict, which it said led to an increase in global commodity prices and persistent supply chain disruptions.

"However, recent domestic macroeconomic data turned out broadly in line with the MPC's expectations," the statement said, adding that headline inflation increased by 11.1pc year-on-year in August from the previous 9.2pc in July and "core inflation was slightly lower than expectations".

"External account pressures remained contained, supported by robust workers' remittances and higher financial inflows."

MPC noted that economic activity picked up "as reflected by recent high-frequency indicators".

MPC said that the current monetary policy rate was "appropriate to guide inflation towards target range of 5-7pc over the medium term".

"However, uncertainty regarding the outlook has increased, particularly with a stable emerging geopolitical environment." Listing key developments since its last meeting, MPC noted that Pakistan's sovereign credit rating was upgraded to B3 by Moody's with a stable outlook. It also noted that the country had

tapped international capital markets to "raise \$3bn through Eurobonds," leading to an increase in foreign reserves to over \$21bn.

"Third, inflation expectations of both businesses and consumers increased in September, while their confidence weakened," the statement read. It also observed an output decline of 3.5pc in June in large-scale manufacturing, which it said brought the "cumulative FY26 growth to 5pc".

"Fifth, fiscal consolidation

ing July to August in FY27.

"While SBP transferred higher profit of Rs1.9 trillion than the budgeted amount of Rs1.4tr to the government."

Lastly, central banks have become more cautious amidst challenging global economic conditions."

The MPC said it was committed to "achieving price stability with ease merits of incoming data and the ongoing situation in the Middle East".



tion turned out higher than the budgetary target during FY26," it said, further noting that Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) collection had remained "on-target" during

It also observed that adverse geopolitical events as well as weather disruptions had increased in frequency, posing risks to the macroeconomic outlook.

Govt mulling revival of austerity measures, decision to be taken soon: Tarar

NEWS DESK: Information Minister Ataulah Tarar said on Monday that the government was considering reviving austerity measures introduced during a previous fuel conservation drive amid renewed hostilities in the Middle East.

The austerity measures were announced on March 9 to mitigate the impact of the ongoing US-Iran war. These included a 50 per cent cut in fuel allowances for official vehicles, salary cuts for lawmakers, and a partial work-from-home policy in the public sector.

Tarar made the remarks while addressing a press briefing alongside Information Technology Minister Shaza Fatima Khawaja and Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik on the government's fuel relief scheme, which he said was being launched on Sunday amid rising oil prices.

In response to a question, the information minister said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had directed consultations on the austerity measures, some of which, he noted, "are still in force, such as market timings".

Tarar added that "austerity measures pre-



viously taken [...] were being reviewed to assess which of the previous measures need to be revived in the present situation."

He added that a decision will be taken soon. The government ended the measures on June 19, except for market timings. However, in July, it emerged that it was considering reviving back to fuel conservation and austerity measures. The move came amid renewed hostilities in the Middle East, which have disrupted major oil supply routes and led to a rise in fuel prices.

In addition to the crisis in the Strait of Hormuz stemming from the US-Iran war, trade through Bab al-Mandab

— which has become a vital route for Saudi oil exports in recent months — is also facing a growing threat from Houthi rebels, it said.

Relief scheme to cost around Rs25bn monthly Speaking about the relief scheme, Tarar said it was being launched on Sunday amid rising oil prices.

The petroleum minister said the scheme would involve subsidising private oil refineries and discussed with them for one hour how to ensure that in September or October and even if any issues emerge in the Bab al-Mandab, how we can ensure fuel availability and distribute the burden evenly," he said.

Fitna al-Hindustan commander among three killed in Balochistan's Mastung: state media

NEWS DESK: Three terrorists including Fitna al-Hindustan commander Nageeb were killed by security forces during an operation in Balochistan's Mastung district, state media said on Monday.

The federal government last year officially designated all terrorist groups operating in Balochistan as Fitna al-Hindustan, accusing India of sponsoring a proxy war through the outfits.

According to state media, the security forces targeted a vehicle carrying the terrorists using a quadcopter. The strike killed all three terrorists and completely destroyed their vehicle, Radio Pakistan and APP said, citing security sources. The sources added that security forces remained committed to eliminating terrorism and that operations would continue until the last terrorist was eliminated. Separately, Balochistan Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) killed six terrorists of a banned outfit in an operation conducted in Pishin district, Radio Pakistan reported.

According to the CTD spokesperson, four CTD personnel were also injured during the operation that resulted

in the execution of terrorists and the recovery of a large quantity of arms and ammunition.

He further said that the terrorists killed in the operation were involved in attacks on security forces in the area.

On August 21, security forces, in coordination with police, killed 49 terrorists in a series of intelligence-based operations (IBOs) across Khyber-Paktunkhwa

districts, the military's media wing had said. The operations had also resulted in the seizure and destruction of weapons, explosives and remote-detonation equipment, according to the ISPR.

Terrorism is a growing problem for Pakistan, with the number of attacks rising every year since 2022, according to Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED).

A global monitoring



(K-P) and Balochistan over several days, according to a statement by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

In Balochistan, 37 terrorists affiliated with Fitna al-Hindustan were killed in 10 IBOs in Mastung, Mach, Khuzdar and Panigur

organisation. Data from ACLED shows attacks in Pakistan rose nearly fourfold to 2,425 in 2025 from 658 in 2022.

Although K-P has borne the brunt of terrorism, Balochistan has also remained a major target of Indian proxies, which often target civil-

state describes as Indian-sponsored terrorists and their proxies, but despite these efforts, the groups have continued to target civilian and defence installations.

Earlier this month, at least 30 people, including 27 police personnel,

JI chief rejects petroleum relief package, demands abolition of levy

NEWS DESK: Rejecting the petroleum relief package as insufficient, Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Emir Hafiz Naeem Rehman on Monday yet again demanded the complete abolition of the petroleum levy.

On Sunday, PM Shehbaz announced a "relief scheme" for users of motorcycles, autos and vehicles of up to 800cc to "alleviate the burden" of rising global oil prices. The JI chief's remarks come as the party remains engaged in talks with the government over the petroleum levy.

JI has been staging regular sit-ins in Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi and dozens of other locations across the country since August 16 to protest the levy. Last week, the JI chief had warned the government that the ongoing protest would march towards Islamabad on September 20 if the levy was not withdrawn.

As the party's protest entered its 30th day, Rehman, addressing a press conference in Lahore, rejected the fuel relief scheme, terming it insufficient, according to a statement issued by the party.

The JI chief warned the government of creating "obstacles" party's upcoming march in Islamabad.

As per the statement, he warned that

"authorities would be held fully responsible for any consequences if undemocratic tactics were used to block the movement".

"Sit-ins are currently underway at 40 locations across the country," the JI chief was quoted as saying, adding that announcing the protesters would converge in Islamabad on Sept 20.

Rehman claimed that a three per cent increase in the interest rate could save the national treasury around

government could save hundreds of billions of rupees by implementing proposals submitted by the JI's committee," Rehman was quoted as saying.

The chief also rejected "government's excuse regarding the autonomy of the State Bank of Pakistan" and that his party had opposed the autonomy.

As per the statement, Rehman took note of the government's authority to appoint people and urged it to ensure "complete elimination of

capacities, cuts in official privileges and the termination of unfair independent power producer (IPP) contracts," the statement said.

Rehman also confirmed that government-JI talks would resume on Sept 15 (Tuesday).

"The ongoing sit-ins in Lahore, Peshawar and Karachi have been ongoing for 30 days and continue to receive strong support from opposition parties and the general public," he was quoted as saying.

So far, two rounds



Rs1.7 trillion, enough, he argued, to completely eliminate the petroleum levy, which he said currently collects more than Rs1.6tr annually from the public. He also accused the government of protecting the profits of the banking sector under the guise of controlling inflation, the statement said.

He also called for "upgrades to refinery

usury". He also went on to accuse certain oil refineries of "exploiting pricing differences by combining imported and locally refined oil prices".

The JI chief held that the practice had resulted in "unlawful profits at the public's expense" and called for "immediate halt" to it.

He also called for "upgrades to refinery

Bilawal says India 'started a war based on a lie' after Malaysian PM's interview with Indian media

NEWS DESK: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday said India had "started a war based on a lie and lost miserably" after Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim declined to describe Pakistan's alleged involvement in terrorism as state-sponsored during an interview with Indian broadcaster NDTV.

"India now stands exposed internationally," Bilawal said in a post on X, responding to a clip of Anwar's interview with NDTV journalist Vishnu Som.

The truth is India started a war based on a lie and lost miserably, the PPP chairman said, adding that India must honour its commitments made at the time of the ceasefire with Pakistan.

He urged India to discuss "all 11 million points with Pakistan" so the two countries could

work together to bring "peace, prosperity and stability to our region".

Anwar had been in New Delhi over the past weekend to attend the BRICS summit when he gave the interview. Som asked Anwar whether he considered Israel's accusations against Hamas to be terrorism. "Yes, it's state terrorism," Anwar replied, adding that it

consider what Pakistan had allegedly done in Pahalgam, Kashmir and against India to be state terrorism. "I wouldn't go to that extent," Anwar said.

He acknowledged that he was being particularly sensitive because he was speaking in reference to his relationship with Indian Prime Minister

India continued to engage with Pakistan and, "We thought that these issues can be resolved," he said, while also praising India as a country with a "great civilisation, great culture" and "great history".

Som then pressed Anwar on why he was not more direct in condemning Pakistan over alleged terrorism. Anwar said the allegations first had to be established. "I mean, I'm not suggesting that there were no terrorist acts," he said, but added that they had to be ascertained with certainty.

The Malaysians prime minister said that of his intelligence officials involved in engagement with India had told him Sarav Seena had been state-sponsored terrorism.

"Therefore, I, as prime minister of Malaysia, would then refer to these facts," he said.

