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Pakistan Shoots Down 8 Drones Entering Airspace from Afghanistan

NEWS DESK:

Pakistan's air defence system shot down eight drones after they entered the country's airspace from Afghanistan on Wednesday morning, security sources said.

According to the sources, four drones were intercepted near the Torkham border, while four others were brought down in mountainous areas adjoining Kohat. The Pakistan Army and Pakistan Air Force successfully intercepted all eight drones, foiling an alleged attempt to target public places in Pakistan, the sources said.

The development comes amid heightened tensions along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Security sources said Pakistani forces had also targeted several Afghan Taliban positions in the Kurram sector in response to firing from across the border.

The sources further alleged that the drone intrusion reflected continued support for terrorists operating against Pakistan from Afghan territory.



File Photo: Pakistan's air defence system shot down eight drones.

Quetta Police Recruits 349 New Personnel to Strengthen Security

NEWS DESK:

The Quetta District Police has completed the recruitment of 349 new personnel, including 44 women and seven minorities, to strengthen security and law enforcement in the provincial capital.

quota, while 44 women were selected under the women's quota and seven candidates under the minority quota.

The spokesperson said merit and transparency were maintained throughout the recruitment process to ensure the selection of eligible and qualified candidates.

hance Quetta Police's manpower and operational capacity, particularly in maintaining law and order, preventing crime and protecting citizens.

The police department said it would continue to focus on merit-based recruitment and strengthening its



File Photo: Quetta Police Recruits 349 New Personnel Programmes in Quetta.

According to a police spokesperson, 298 men were recruited under the general

dates. The addition of 349 new personnel is expected to en-

workforce to improve public safety and security in Quetta.

Balochistan: CM Bugti Hails Killing of 9 Terrorists in Mastung Operation

NEWS DESK:

Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has praised security forces for killing nine terrorists in a successful operation in Kang Wadi, Mastung district.

CM Bugti said the killing of nine terrorists reflected the security forces' professional capabilities and timely response.

He said weapons, ammunition and three motorcycles were recovered from the terrorists during the operation.

The chief minister also expressed concern for a security personnel injured in the operation and prayed for his speedy recovery.

He said security forces had effectively thwarted the terrorists' attempt and reiterated the provincial government's support for continued counterterrorism operations in Balochistan.

"Balochistan will stand with the security forces until the complete elimination of

terrorism,"

Bugti said, adding that terrorist elements would not be allowed to undermine peace in the province.

He said counterterrorism operations under Radd-ul-Fitna 3 would continue until the

elimination of the terrorist threat.

CM Bugti added that state institutions were taking all necessary measures to protect the lives and property of the people and maintain peace across Balochistan.



File Photo: CM Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

Pakistan Navy, Coast Guards Seize Liquor, Illegal Medicines in Balochistan

WEB DESK:

Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Coast Guards seized a large quantity of liquor and illegal medicines during a joint intelligence-based anti-smuggling operation in Pishukan, Balochistan, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Wednesday.

The operation was conducted in coordination with the Joint Maritime Information Coordination Centre (JMICC) following actionable intelligence about an attempted smuggling operation.

According to ISPR, the seized contraband was handed



over to the Pakistan Coast Guards for further legal proceedings.

The successful operation demonstrated effective coordination among the participating

agencies and their efforts to prevent the use of Pakistan's coastal areas and territory for smuggling and other illicit activities, ISPR said.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Winds of change to where?

ZAHID HUSSAIN: THERE is much talk of the 'winds of change', but where are they blowing from? Well-briefed sections of the media and well-connected cabinet ministers tell us that some form of administrative restructuring to create new provinces is inevitable, and that it may come sooner rather than later.

We are told it is 'the will of the people' and that anyone who opposes it will be swept aside. One cannot help but wonder whether it is really the will of the people or that of the powers that be.

Curiously, while federal ministers belonging to the ruling PML-N deny any public knowledge of such a move, the PPP has vowed to resist the creation of new provinces.

And there has been no debate on the issue in parliament or the provincial assemblies.

Perhaps, as with the previous 26th and 27th Amendments, the draft is being prepared somewhere else, and lawmakers are expected simply to rubber-stamp it.

Speculation about an impending 28th amendment on administrative restructuring had been circulating for some time, but it was the interior minister's public statement last month that confirmed that a change was in the offing.

His remarks amounted to an indictment of the entire political order and a call for structural change.

A statement by the military spokesman soon after gave further shape to the emerging plan.

Those statements triggered intense public debate over a plan whose contours remain obscure.

All manner of suggestions — from the creation of new administrative units to devolution — are being floated.

Yet even the political parties and federal ministers who adamantly support restructuring admit they have no clear framework for how it should be carried out.

The collapse of the system is the result of the denial of democratic rights to the people.

There is no disagreement that the existing political power structure has long since collapsed and can no longer deliver.

But any attempt to salvage the system through patchwork will fail.

The crisis runs far deeper and cannot be resolved merely by redrawing administrative units.

Some media reports, apparently based on the official briefing, suggest the still to be finalised 28th amendment is not limited to new administrative units, but also envisages 'sweeping governance restructuring'.

Structural reform is inseparable from democracy, and any change imposed by extra-constitutional forces will only

worsen the chaos and fuel instability.

Yet given the existing imbalance of power in favour of the establishment, there appears little likelihood of resistance from a civilian leadership of questionable legitimacy.

The 26th and 27th Amendments have already damaged the foundation of the Constitution by virtually destroying judicial independence;

many are of the view that the judiciary has been reduced to an extension of the executive.

A 28th amendment as currently conceived would destroy

even the semblance of democracy that remains.

The creation of new administrative units and devolution of power to local governments has long been viewed as a way to improve governance.

Yet the country's political parties have never reached a consensus on the issue, and the constitutional requirement of a two-thirds

majority in both the national parliament and provincial assemblies has made the creation of new provinces almost impossible.

There is broad agreement on establishing a separate

south Punjab province, but whether it should be divided along linguistic or administrative lines remains a sticking point. Similarly,

while there appears to be a general acceptance in KP of a Hazara province, the exact boundary remains disputed.

The suggestion to divide Sindh, however, remains the most contentious issue. Not surprisingly, the PPP

has campaigned aggressively against a plan that would create a separate Karachi province,

while others have suggested placing the country's financial and

industrial hub under direct federal control.

Both proposals amount to cutting off Sindh's capital city, which makes no sense; any such move could spark an uprising in the country's second-biggest province.

Likewise, dividing Balochistan into several administrative units would only worsen an already volatile situation.

Far from improving governance, such arbitrary plans, conceived arguably by extra-constitutional elements, are impractical.

Rather than pursuing a controversial redrawing of adminis-

trative boundaries, empowering local governments is both more practical and urgently needed to take democracy to the grassroots.

Devolution from the centre to the provinces, and from the provinces to the local level, is a core feature of the 18th Amendment.

Unfortunately, the provinces have failed to implement the second stage of this devolution. That failure has distorted the system and caused widespread governance breakdown.



Local governments have not only had their powers curtailed but have also gone years without elections.

A major problem, however, is the security set-up's growing control of the state.

A civilian government of doubtful legitimacy, beholden to the establishment for its survival, is in no position to resist pressure.

The collapse of the system is the result of the denial of democratic rights to the people, and the rot cannot be stopped through imposed solutions.

A country mired in economic, political and internal security crises cannot afford another contentious issue dividing the people.

These so-called winds of change are certainly not good for the future of democracy and the country.

What we need is the restoration of democracy and the supremacy of the Constitution to stem the rot.

making those powers mandatory.

The grand idea of creating more provinces, and governance reform imposed by the establishment,

will only expedite the very collapse of the state that the interior minister mentioned.

It must be left to parliament and the political parties to build consensus on devolution to local government, which is essential for democracy and good governance.

We have the example of political parties jointly working on the 18th Amendment, which strengthened federalism through the devolution of power to the provinces.

Local governments have not only had their powers curtailed but have also gone years without elections.

Punjab, for instance, has held no local government elections for years despite repeated Supreme Court orders.

Sindh and KP have held elections, but their local governments' powers have been drastically reduced.

and their finances are controlled by provincial governments, rendering them largely ineffective.

Even a megacity like Karachi is governed directly by provincial ministers. Balochistan, the country's most troubled province, has virtually abandoned the local government system, further disenfranchising its population.

What is needed is a constitutional amendment clearly defining the powers of local government and

worse.

Rising heat speeds up plastic breakdown, drought driven dust storms carry particles further through the air, and floods wash plastic waste into farmland and waterways. Protecting mothers and children from microplastics is, in that sense, also a matter of climate justice.

Pakistan's progress on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals is already behind: official data shows

reliable figures exist for less than 10 percent of SDG indicators nationally, and only 7 percent for

Balochistan. Microplastics sit at the intersection of two of those goals, SDG13 (Climate Action) and SDG3 (Good Health and Well-being), yet remain almost entirely unmeasured here.

The Bottom Line

Microplastics are invisible, but the risk they carry is not. In a province already facing drought, poverty,

and stretched healthcare, this is a threat reaching the next generation before it is even born.

Waterfiltration, home gardens, and less plastic use can help right now. But lasting protection will need realmonitoring, enforced policy, and research — starting with the studies Balochistan still doesn't have.

A Policy Gap, and a Climate Connection

Experts say microplastic pollution needs to be treated as both an environmental and a public health issue. That means enforcing waste management laws, banning single-use plastics and plastic

mulching in farming, and monitoring microplastics in soil, air, and food, something Pakistan currently does very little of.

Climate change is making the problem

even more acute. Microplastics are found in food, water, and air, and are linked to a range of health problems, including respiratory issues and cancer.

Microplastics are also found in the environment, where they can be inhaled or ingested. In Pakistan, microplastics are found in the air, water, and soil, and are linked to a range of health problems, including respiratory issues and cancer.

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Plastic in the Womb: Balochistan's Invisible Health Crisis

By Myra Zahid: In the dusty plains of Balochistan, where drought already strains farms and families, a different kind of threat is moving in quietly. It cannot be seen, smelled, or stopped at the door.

It is microplastics, plastic fragments smaller than five millimeters, and they are now turning up in the air we breathe, the soil we farm, and even inside newborn babies.

Microplastics form when plastic breaks down under sun, heat, and friction.

They have been found almost everywhere scientists have looked: household dust, farmland, drinking water, vegetables, and human tissue.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) estimates that the average person eats and breathes in roughly 39,000 to 52,000 microplastic particles every year. In 2019, a global study commissioned by WWF International made headlines when it calculated that people may be ingesting close to a credit card's worth of plastic every week.

The Express Tribune carried the story for Pakistani readers, a reminder that this is not a distant problem, but one already inside our food and water.

Pakistan's Plastic Problem



Pakistan generates an estimated 6.41 million tons of plastic waste a year, according to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), with the vast majority never properly collected or recycled. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) says 86 percent of the country's plastic waste is mismanaged.

left in open dumps, burned, or washed into rivers and the sea. That puts Pakistan among the

world's worst plastic polluters.

When this waste breaks down in open dumps, fields, and gutters, it does not disappear. It fragments

into microplastics that drift into the air or sink into the soil, eventually working their way into the crops we eat.

Mothers and Babies at Risk

The most alarming discoveries are happening before birth. In 2020,

scientists in Italy found microplastics inside the human placenta for the first time, proof that plastic particles can pass from a pregnant mother to her unborn child.

Since then, researchers have also found microplastics in human breast milk.

According to exposure data reported in the Journal of the Pakistan Medical Association (JPMA),

microplastics can carry toxic chemicals

such as BPA and phthalates, both known to disrupt hormones.

These chemicals are linked to low birth weight and long-term developmental risks in children.

In Pakistan, a 2024 study by the University of Karachi's Institute of Marine Science found microplastics in lactating mothers in fishing communities along the Karachi coast, where seafood is

eaten almost daily. No equivalent study has yet been done in Balochistan, but the risk factors are familiar here too: communities along the Gwadar, Pasni, and Ormara coastal line depend

just as heavily on the sea, while facing even thinner access to maternal and child healthcare.

What Can Be Done

There are practical

defenses. Lab tests show that fine water filters (around 0.2 microns, such as certified reverse-osmosis systems) can remove 94 to 100 percent of plastic particles from drinking water.

Balochistan's Agriculture Department is already distributing seeds for home gardening.

Families growing their own vegetables on terraces or small plots, using compost instead of plastic mulch, can cut their exposure while also improving food security.

Small daily habits help too: choosing cloth bags and glass or metal bottles over plastic, never heating food in plastic containers, and never burning plastic waste, which releases microplastics and toxic fumes directly into the air.

Climate change is making the problem

The induction of 349 new personnel will provide Quetta District Police with additional manpower to support its responsibilities for public safety, crime prevention and maintenance of law and order.

Pakistan stands 'shoulder to shoulder' with Saudi Arabia in safeguarding its sovereignty, security: PM Shehbaz

NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterated Pakistan's commitment to "safeguarding the sovereignty and security of the Muslim Ummah".

Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and security in his message to the Gulf state on its National Day.

The National Day, observed every year on September 23, marks the unification of the kingdom at the hands of King Abdulaziz in 1932.

In a post on X, PM Shehbaz congratulated the country on its "remarkable journey of progress and transformation" and reiterated Pakistan's condemnation of the recent Houthis attacks on the country, in particular an attempted drone attack on Makkah.

He held that threats to the security of the Haramain Sharifain "deeply wound the sentiments of Muslims across the world".

"Pakistan stands unwaveringly shoulder to shoulder, with the kingdom in safeguarding its sovereignty, security and the sanctity of Islam's holiest sites," PM Shehbaz stressed.

He noted that under the "dynamic" leadership of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia continues to make impressive strides towards greater prosperity, modernisation and innovation. The premier added that the brotherhood between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia was growing into an even stronger strategic partnership.

leadership and people of Saudi Arabia on the occasion.

In a post on X by the presidency, President Zardari hailed two pacts between the two countries, saying they had "further strengthened the strategic dimension of the longstanding Pakistan-Saudi partnership."

Together, we have proudly signed the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement and the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement," he added.

Under the Strategic

Mutual Defence Agreement signed in Sept 2025, the two countries pledged that any attack on either nation would be treated as an act of aggression against both.

Meanwhile, the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement — signed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey on August 7 — empowers member states to treat an attack against one of them as an attack against all.

In his message, PM Shehbaz said, "I pray that Pakistan-Saudi Arabia brotherhood continues to grow from strength to strength."

President Zardari felicitates Saudi leadership and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia continues to make impressive strides towards greater prosperity, modernisation and innovation. The premier added that the brotherhood between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia was growing into an even stronger strategic partnership.

portant milestones in the longstanding partnership, contributing to peace, stability and security in the region".

He expressed confidence that the fraternal relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia would "continue to deepen and expand across diverse areas of mutual interest for the mutual benefit" of the countries and their people. PM Shehbaz's message comes amid fresh fighting between the Houthis and the Yemeni government, which has dragged in Riyadh, with the Houthis declaring a maritime blockade on the kingdom and targeting its ships in the Red Sea.

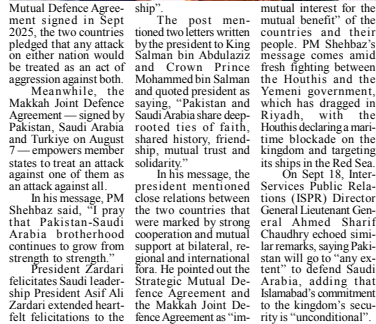
On Sept 18, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry echoed similar remarks, saying Pakistan will go to "any extent" to defend Saudi Arabia, adding that Islamabad's commitment to the kingdom's security is "unconditional".

Expressing his displeasure over the manner in which the complaint had been written, Justice Neelum observed that such FIRs were not even readable.

"The entire Punjab is suffering, this is the situation everywhere," she remarked. The chief justice rejected an inquiry report submitted in a contempt of court matter against the Lahore capital city police officer (CCPO).

Justice Neelum was hearing a petition filed by citizen Momin Khan, who alleged that police officials were harassing him despite court orders.

The petitioner's counsel contended that an earlier petition against police harassment had been referred to the CCPO.



LHC chief justice summons Punjab IG Rao Abdul Kareem in contempt plea against Lahore police

NEWS DESK: Lahore High Court (LHC) Chief Justice Aalia Neelum on Wednesday summoned Punjab Inspector General (IG) Rao Abdul Kareem in a contempt of court petition against personnel of the Chung police.

The chief justice was hearing a petition filed by citizen Mian Muhammad Jamil, with Superintendent of Police (SP) Abdullah appearing before the court on behalf of the Chung police.

The petitioner's counsel, Advocate Shahbaz Bhatti, informed the judge that an LHC single bench had suspended a 2021 order by a sessions court of registering a first information report (FIR) against his client. De-

spite the single bench ruling, the counsel alleged, the police registered a case against the petitioner unlawfully. When Justice Neelum asked SP Abdullah to read the FIR aloud, he was unable to properly read or narrate its contents. "Why is the FIR

not readable? I cannot understand what has been written in it," the chief justice remarked.

justice also sarcastically observed that the writing in the FIR looked like "flies". "Even the size of

the flies is bigger [than this]," she quipped.

Justice Neelum then summoned IG Kareem in person along with the relevant record for Thursday.

The IG was also summoned for Thursday in a separate case, where the chief justice rejected an inquiry report submitted in a contempt of court matter against the Lahore capital city police officer (CCPO).

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Retired Lt Gen Nauman Mahmood appointed first head of Makkah Defence Alliance secretariat

NEWS DESK: The Foreign Office (FO) announced on Wednesday that retired Lieutenant General Nauman Mahmood had been appointed as the first secretary general of the Makkah Defence Alliance between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

"The government of Pakistan is pleased to announce the appointment of Lt Gen Nauman Mahmood, Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military), (retired), as the first secretary general pursuant to the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement," the FO said in a handout, referring to the alliance's initial name.

"The secretary general will lead the general secretariat of the alliance being established at Riyadh," the FO said.

The agreement — signed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey on August 7 — empowers member states to treat an attack against one of them as an attack against all.

Its inaugural meeting was held on Aug 31, where officials from all member states met in Istanbul to establish the institutional structure of the alliance and Pakistan was picked to head its secretariat in Riyadh.

sions taken during the meeting, a secretariat headed by a secretary general will be established in Saudi Arabia to support the alliance's work under the agreement. The secretariat will initially be headed by a secretary general from Pakistan for three years.

The three countries also agreed to take steps to further institutionalise their cooperation in a manner that would enhance their solidarity, ensure the credibility and effectiveness of their collective deterrence and defence, and contribute to regional efforts and cooperative security towards a just, inclusive and lasting peace. Since its signing, there has been conver-

sation about the possibility of its expansion, with Turkey initially suggesting the possibility of Egypt's inclusion. Though there has been no confirmation from Cairo.

From Pakistan, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign

Minister Ishaq Dar clarified soon after the signing that the pact was defensive in nature, with the latter saying that it was also "open to any country in the region" willing to uphold its fundamental principles.

However, when Foreign Office spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan was asked about possibility of the pact's expansion during a

weekly media briefing on Sept 10, he said an expansion was not on the cards at that point.

The three countries first needed to solidify their new organisation before considering opening it to other states with similar threat perceptions and requirements, he explained.

Meanwhile, Inter-Services Public Relations Director General Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said last week that the alliance has no "regional aspirations", adding that it was intended for collective deterrence.

Meanwhile, as the US-Iran conflict continues to expand with Yemen's Houthis rebels attacking Saudi Arabia,

16 terrorists killed in separate security forces, police operations across Balochistan: state media

NEWS DESK: At least 16 terrorists were killed during separate military and police operations in Balochistan's Mastung, Turbat and Quetta districts on Wednesday, state media reported.

According to Radio Pakistan, security forces killed two terrorists affiliated with Fitna al Hindustan during an intelligence-based operation in the Jausak area of Turbat.

The state has designated Balochistan-based terrorist groups as Fitna al Hindustan to highlight India's alleged role in terrorism and destabilisation across Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Pakistan television reported that security forces continued operations against terrorists in Balochistan under Raddul Fitna-3.

In Mastung, nine terrorists were killed after they attempted to attack a checkpoint, according to the state broadcaster. Heavy weapons, ammunition and three motorcycles were also recovered, it added.

"Operations will continue until the threat is eliminated," Pakistan TV said, quoting the security forces.

Member states stressed that "terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security".

According to the statement, UNSC members underscored the need to hold the "perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors" accountable and urged them to cooperate with Pakistan in the matter.

The UNSC held that acts of terrorism are "criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of [its] motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed".

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Punjab govt seeks Rangers deployment in Rawalpindi, three other districts until Oct 5

NEWS DESK: The Punjab government requested the federal government to deploy Rangers in Rawalpindi, Attock, Jhelum and Mianwali districts from Sept 22 to Oct 5 to assist the provincial police in maintaining law and order amid an expected protest on Sept 27.

The request comes as the Kissan Ittehad and PTI have announced long marches and sit-ins in Islamabad in the coming week.

PTI has announced a long march on Sept 27 to press for the release of its founder, Imran Khan.

The letter, a copy of which is available with Dawn, said Rangers have been requested for deployment in Rawalpindi, Attock, Jhelum and Mianwali from Sept 22 to Oct 5.

According to a letter sent by the Punjab government to the Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control, three companies of the Pakistan Rangers have been sought for deployment in Rawalpindi, including one for Rawalpindi and two for Taxila.

Attock, while Jhelum and Mianwali have each been allocated one company.

The deployment is proposed under Article 245 of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, Sections 4 and 5 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, and Sections 7(b) and 10 of the Pakistan Rangers Ordinance, 1959.

The letter said the matter was discussed at the 59th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Cabinet on Law & Order (SCLO) of the Punjab government, held on Sept 20.

The meeting considered the situational review presented by police authorities, the or-

dered the need for all states to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and other obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

The attack was claimed by the Hafiz Gul Bahadur-led Ittehadul Mujahideen.

On Saturday, KP

Lines. The explosion had taken place in Ramadan during Iftar. On Monday, in retaliation for recent terrorist attacks in KP,

police said that a clearance operation launched after the attack had concluded. Police said that the districts mentioned in the letter were the Elite Force commands.

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According to a letter sent by the Punjab government to the Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control, three companies of the Pakistan Rangers have been sought for deployment in Rawalpindi, including one for Rawalpindi and two for Taxila.

Attock, while Jhelum and Mianwali have each been allocated one company.

The deployment is proposed under Article 245 of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, Sections 4 and 5 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, and Sections 7(b) and 10 of the Pakistan Rangers Ordinance, 1959.

The letter said the matter was discussed at the 59th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Cabinet on Law & Order (SCLO) of the Punjab government, held on Sept 20.

The meeting considered the situational review presented by police authorities, the or-

dered the need for all states to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and other obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

The attack was claimed by the Hafiz Gul Bahadur-led Ittehadul Mujahideen.

On Saturday, KP

Lines. The explosion had taken place in Ramadan during Iftar. On Monday, in retaliation for recent terrorist attacks in KP,

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