



At Moscow moot, Pakistan says terrorism remains at...



Pakistan's Climate Vulnerability: A Governance Dilemma

Balochistan Fully Prepared for Local Body Elections; Municipal Services Initiative 2026 Launched

QASEEM SHAH:

QUETTA – The Government of Balochistan is fully prepared to hold the upcoming local body elections upon the completion of the current term in February 2027, with no delays or excuses, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti announced on Monday.

Speaking at the launch of the Municipal Services Initiative 2026 at the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) headquarters, Chief Minister Bugti reaffirmed his government's commitment to empowering local governance and modernizing municipal infrastructure across the province.

Modernizing Municipal Services Across Balochistan

Under the first phase of the initiative, municipal committees across Balochistan are receiving heavy machinery and sanitation equipment to overhaul waste management and drainage systems. The second phase will expand these services to union councils, small towns, and rural areas.

"Balochistan is currently the only province in Pakistan with an active local governance system in place," Bugti noted. "Local government is the closest tier of administration to the public.



Nawabzada Ameer Hamza Zehri handing over a shield to Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti: Photo DGPR

Strengthening it directly elevates the quality of governance."

Addressing the reliance on limited human resources, Bugti stressed that modern technology is essential for long-term urban management. Key Equipment Delivered in Phase 1:

15 Sewage Suction Trucks

87 Sanitation Rickshaws (designed for narrow streets)
350+ Garbage Containers
500 Heavy-Duty Handcarts
700+ Dedicated Waste Bins
Accountability, Citizen App, and Environmental Measures
To ensure performance tracking, the provincial government

has introduced dedicated mobile applications allowing citizens to lodge municipal complaints directly to the Chief Minister's Secretariat. Bugti warned that local administrative officers and municipal staff would face strict accountability for neglect or poor service delivery.

MDCAT 2026 Case Court Gives Directives

News Desk

Quetta: The Balochistan High Court on Monday heard a petition concerning alleged errors in the answer keys uploaded by Balochistan University of Medical and Health Sciences (BUMHS) for the MDCAT 2026 examination.

During the hearing, the counsel representing the peti-

The court asked the counsel whether there was any written evidence available to establish the alleged errors in the answer keys.

In response, the counsel maintained that it was not possible to

properly identify and document all the alleged discrepancies until the official MDCAT question booklet was made available.



tioners submitted that there were alleged mistakes in the BUMHS MDCAT answer keys and that these errors could affect candidate's results.

He argued that the question booklet was necessary to compare the questions with the uploaded answer keys and prepare a written record of the objections.

Zero Tolerance for Cyber Fraud and Character Assassination: NCCIA Quetta Chief

SYED KALEEM SHAH:

QUETTA – The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) in Quetta is enforcing a zero-tolerance policy against social media financial fraud, blackmailing, and character assassination. Additional Director Khalid Baqi announced during an awareness session at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Quetta Balochistan (CCIQ).

Addressing local business leaders, Baqi revealed that most organized cybercrime gangs carrying out financial scams via mobile calls, Facebook, and WhatsApp originate from South Punjab and the Kacha (riverine) areas. He noted that none of the suspects named in the agency's 158 registered cases belong to Balochistan.

Rising Threat to the Business Community

During the session, CCIQ President Ahmad Gul Kakar, Senior Vice President Mirza



Zero Tolerance for Cyber Fraud and Character Assassination NCCIA.

Khan Khilji, and Vice President Jangian Dashti voiced serious concerns over online banking, EasyPaiza, and JazzCash scams that have cost the local business community millions of rupees.

"The business community is facing severe financial losses due to fake social media accounts, blackmailing, and character assassination," said CCIQ

President Ahmad Gul Kakar. "Beyond financial damage, fake news and baseless accusations on social media are tarnishing the reputations of citizens and business owners alike."

To combat this trend, chamber officials proposed forming a joint task force comprising representatives from the CCIQ, the Federal Invest-

igation Agency (FIA), and the NCCIA to streamline complaint handling and speed up investigations.

OTP Scams and Telecom

Branch Crackdown
Baqi agreed to the joint team proposal and urged citizens to exercise strict caution regarding personal data security, particularly sensitive verification codes.

At Moscow moot, Pakistan says terrorism remains at core of Afghanistan's problems

NEWS DESK:

Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan Mohammad Sadiq on Monday said that terrorism remained at the core of Afghanistan's problems, reaffirming that Pakistan would continue to take "all appropriate measures" for ensuring the safety of its citizens, in accordance with international law. Sadiq made these remarks at the eighth meeting of Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan in the Russian capital. The moot brought together Afghanistan and other countries of the region to discuss the situation in



Afghanistan and issues of regional concern, the Foreign Office (FO) said in a statement. Separately, Sadiq posted a transcript of his address

at the meeting, according to which he told the moot that the roots of terrorism emanating from Afghanistan were in a "nexus between the Taliban regime and ter-

rorist groups [...] that operate with impunity on Afghan soil." The situation is worsened by external actors and spoilers who support proxies inside Af-

ghanistan to target Pakistan and other countries in the region," he added. Sadiq highlighted that five years into the Taliban rule in Afghanistan, "Pakistan faces the most serious security threat."

Over the last three years alone, he said, more than 4,700 Pakistanis had been killed due to terrorism emanating from Afghanistan. "No country would tolerate such a situation," he remarked. "Thousands of innocent Pakistani civilians and security personnel have been martyred in the last few years. A result of terrorist attacks planned, financed, supported and carried out from Afghan soil. The Taliban regime is complicit in this. No respon-

sible state can remain passive when its security is repeatedly undermined, and its people are viciously targeted."

The special representative said Pakistan's counterterrorism operations were conducted in response to the terrorist attacks being perpetrated from Afghan soil.

"These operations are precise, intelligence-based and defensive in nature. Pakistan's actions are in exercise of its right to self-defence, to ensure the safety and security of its citizens. These actions are directed solely against the terrorist outfits based in Afghanistan that pose a threat to the region and beyond."

BALUCHISTAN Page No 3



Governor Balochistan Chairs Pakistan-Iran Joint Chamber Meeting, Calls for Expanded...

NATIONAL Page No 4



JI stages rally on third anniversary of Israeli onslaught on Gaza

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 dilemmas rooted in a weak institutional coordination 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 temperatures 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 dziaud19@gmail.com.

Neither Capitalism nor Communism

Aziz ur Rehman Agha
The Cold War may have ended, but the ideological clash between Capitalism and Communism continues to shape global politics, economics, and international relations. Even today, global alliances reflect these old ideological divisions.

However, both Capitalist and Communist systems have failed to manage political and socio-economic affairs effectively. One system suppresses personal freedom; the other deepens inequality. Both carry serious structural flaws that make them unsuitable for modern societies.

This calls for a new, balanced approach — one found in the Islamic socio-economic and political philosophy, which follows a middle path between the two extremes.

The Flaws of Communism

Communism lies at one extreme of the ideological spectrum. It suppresses individual freedoms such as speech, press, and trade.

Historical examples from Maoist China during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) show how intellectual freedom was crushed — books and music not aligned with party ideology were banned, and private libraries were destroyed. Similarly, in the USSR, any deviation from party thought was treated as a crime.



Economically, Communism eliminates private property and discourages entrepreneurship. Without personal incentive, individuals lose motivation to innovate and work for economic growth. As a result, this system hampers development and limits prosperity. The severe restrictions on basic rights and freedoms make Communism unsustainable in modern states.

The Problems with Capitalism
On the other end

lies Capitalism, which has enabled just 1% of the world's population to control more wealth than the remaining 99% combined.

This system inherently promotes economic inequality, empowering elite industrialists while exploiting the working class. Under Capitalism, profit takes precedence over people — workers are overburdened, and ethical values are often sacrificed for industrial gains.

Furthermore, Capitalism's obsession with rapid industrialization and profit maximization has led to environmental destruction, resource depletion, and climate crises.

It prioritizes wealth accumulation over sustainability. These internal contradictions —

growing inequality, moral decay, and ecological harm — make Capitalism an unfit model for an equitable, sustainable society.

The Islamic Socio-Economic Approach
Both Capitalism and

Communism fail because they represent extremes — one suffocates freedom; the other breeds inequality. Islam, however, offers a balanced socio-economic philosophy that harmonizes justice, freedom, and social welfare.

The Islamic economic system allows private ownership and business freedom, but regulates them through moral and legal checks. The obligation of Zakat (charity) redistributes wealth, preventing concentration in the hands of a few.

Meanwhile, the prohibition of Riba (usury) ensures financial fairness and discourages exploitation. Together, these principles foster economic justice, social cohesion, and sustainable development.

Conclusion
Neither Capitalism nor Communism provides a complete solution to humanity's political and economic challenges. Both contain inherent flaws — one curtails human freedom, the other destroys social equality.

The Islamic socio-economic model, however, offers the ideal middle path — balancing individual rights with collective welfare. With its emphasis on justice, equality, and moral responsibility, Islam presents the most sustainable and humane political and economic philosophy for the modern world.

Governor Balochistan Chairs Pakistan-Iran Joint Chamber Meeting, Calls for Expanded Air Links and Trade

QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Jaffer Khan Mandokhail has said the government is committed to expanding air connectivity from Quetta to provide traders and industrialists greater access to the economic markets of Iran and Central Asian countries.

He expressed these views while chairing the 11th meeting of the Pakistan-Iran Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Quetta.

The Governor thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for directing the immediate launch of flights from Quetta to Jeddah, Iran, Turbat and Gwadar in response to the province's demands. He said efforts are also underway to increase the number of flights from Quetta to facilitate business and commercial activities.

Governor Mandokhail said the government is continuously working with the Federal Minister for Commerce and the Consul General of Iran to promote border trade and strengthen commercial relations between Pakistan and Iran.

He said a Jiri Visa Courier Service office is also being established in



Quetta to facilitate traders in obtaining visas and improve access to cross-border business opportunities.

The Governor said the present government and Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kanai Khan are supportive of the business community and assured that serious and practical proposals presented by traders would receive prompt attention.

He emphasized the need to further strengthen working relations at both the federal and provincial levels and said facilities would be provided at every level to promote bilateral trade between

Pakistan and Iran.

Governor Mandokhail urged traders and industrialists to strengthen mutual coordination and come together on a common platform to advance their collective interests. He said Pakistan and Iran have set a target of increasing bilateral trade to \$10 billion, adding that achieving this objective would require improved trade relations, expanded border trade and better business facilities between the two countries.

The Governor also highlighted the importance of strengthening small industries, saying that the expansion of the

sector would increase local consumption, expand trade volumes and create new employment opportunities, helping reduce unemployment.

He described economic development as a process of mutual interdependence, saying that the growth of smaller economic sectors contributes to the strength and expansion of larger sectors.

According to him, development in one sector can support other sectors, creating a foundation for broader economic growth.

Governor Mandokhail said he remains in regular contact with the federal govern-

ment, the Federal Minister for Commerce and the Iranian Consul General to promote trade and economic activity in Balochistan, particularly border trade.

He expressed his commitment to further strengthening government engagement with the business and industrial community to help establish Balochistan as an effective center for regional trade and economic activity.

The meeting was attended by Haji Rafiq Gul Bareach, Naveed Yousaf Rajput, Wali Muhammad Noor, Javed Paracha, Sharmeen Younis, Farzana, Attaulah Mengal and other office-bearers and members of the Chamber of Small Industries.

On the occasion, the Chamber of Small Commerce and Industries presented Governor Jaffer Khan Mandokhail with a gold medal in recognition of his role and engagement with the business community.

The Governor also appreciated the performance of the outgoing chamber cabinet and congratulated the newly elected office-bearers.

Quetta DC Reviews Explosives Licensing, Safety and Regulatory Compliance

QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehruallah Badini chaired a meeting of the District Explosives

and renewal of licenses, security arrangements at relevant locations and other legal and administrative

examine all cases thoroughly in accordance with the law, rules and regulations. He emphasized



Committee to review matters related to explosives, licensing and safety arrangements across the district.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) and officers from the relevant departments.

Participants reviewed various matters concerning explosives, including the issuance

of licenses. Concerned officers briefed the committee on various applications, cases and relevant records.

The meeting also reviewed compliance with prescribed laws and safety regulations governing the use, storage and transportation of explosives.

Deputy Commissioner Mehruallah Badini directed the concerned officers to

that public safety must remain the top priority and directed officials to ensure that all necessary security and safety measures are implemented.

The Deputy Commissioner further instructed officials to ensure timely implementation of the committee's decisions and complete scrutiny and verification of all relevant records.

Science and Technology Key to Progress of Nations, Says Gwadar MPA at World Space Week 2026 Event

GWADAR: Member of the Balochistan Provincial Assembly from Gwadar, Maulana

to pursue their education with dedication and hard work, learn modern sciences and

honour of reciting verses from the Holy Quran. Nagman Baloch,



Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch, has said that science and technology are the fundamental strengths of developed nations, urging young people to acquire expertise in modern sciences and technology and play their role in the development of the country and the region. He made these remarks while addressing participants at the conclusion of a Space Walk organized by Gwadar Grammar School along Gwadar Marine Drive as part of World Space Week.

Hidayat-ur-Rehman said science and technology provide humanity with the means to explore the mysteries of the universe that Allah Almighty has placed beyond human knowledge. He noted that nations making progress today are those that have achieved excellence in education, science and technology. He urged students

utilize their abilities for the development and prosperity of Pakistan and Gwadar.

The World Space Week celebrations in Gwadar began with a Space Walk organized by students and teachers of Gwadar Grammar School. Students showcased their creativity through space-themed posters, placards and a variety of costumes.

A large number of parents, local residents and people from different walks of life participated in the walk and encouraged the students.

The Space Walk concluded at the Love Gwadar Point, where School Head Khudabakhsh Hashim, Principal Nasir Rahim Sohrai and students Asma Allah Bakhsh and Honak Nasir also addressed the gathering.

Faisal Ali performed the duties of stage secretary while Naseebullah had the

honour of reciting verses from the Holy Quran. Nagman Baloch, Council Gwadar's Majid Abdullah, Bahram Baloch, prominent transporter Nawaz Baloch, Principal Majid Khudabakhsh and other notable personalities also attended the event.

World Space Week is observed globally from October 4 to 10 every year. In Pakistan, various educational, research and public-awareness activities are organized by educational and research institutions and civil society organizations under SUPARCO's Space Education and Awareness Drive (SEAD). As part of the celebrations, Gwadar Grammar School is also organizing quizzes, spelling competitions, debates, essay writing, poster and painting contests, and model-making competitions. These activities will continue until October 10.

Balochistan IGP Directs Police to Ensure Public Safety and Prevent Crime

QUETTA: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Balochistan Muhammad Tahir has said that protecting the lives and property of citizens and providing them with a peaceful and crime-free environment is the foremost responsibility of the Balochistan Police.

He directed police officers and personnel to perform their duties with full responsibility and dedication.

The IGP expressed these views while speaking with police officers and personnel during his visit to Qila Saifullah, DIG Sohail Khalid, SSP



Pishin Captain (Retd) Naveed Alam and other senior police officers were also present. During the visit, the DIG Police Zohb briefed IGP Muhammad Tahir in detail on the security

situation and law and order in the region.

The IGP directed police officers to continue taking effective measures to protect citizens, maintain the order and prevent criminal activities.

Upon his arrival in Qila Saifullah, a smartly turned-out police contingent presented a guard of honour to the IGP. He also visited the Martyrs' Memorial,

where he paid tribute to police personnel who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty.

Later, IGP Muhammad Tahir visited Police Station Bostan, where he inspected the facility and met with police personnel. He also reviewed the overall performance and functioning of the police station.

During the visit, appreciation certificates were distributed among police personnel who had demonstrated outstanding performance in the discharge of their duties.

Kech DC Urges Bottled Water Factory Owners to Support Public Welfare Under CSR

TURBAT: Deputy Commissioner Kech Yasar Iqbal Dashti has urged owners of bottled water factories to actively contribute to public welfare initiatives under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and strengthen cooperation with the district administration.

He made these remarks while chairing an important meeting of bottled water factory owners in Turbat. Assistant Commissioner Turbat, Assistant Commissioner Buleda and owners of bottled water factories attended the meeting.

The participants held detailed discussions on improving public facilities in Kech district, undertaking welfare initiatives under CSR, launching projects in the public interest and strengthening cooperation between the private sector and district administration.

Speaking at the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Yasar Iqbal Dashti said the private



sector can play an important and effective role in promoting social development and public welfare. He urged owners of bottled water factories to extend full cooperation to the district administration under their CSR initiatives and play an effective role in projects aimed at benefiting the public.

The Deputy Com-

missioner specifically called for support in the repair and rehabilitation of ambulances, scholarships for deserving and talented youth, and other welfare initiatives. He said such initiatives by the private sector can provide immediate relief to deserving people while also promoting positive and constructive activities

in society.

Yasar Iqbal Dashti said the district administration is utilizing all available resources to address public issues and ensure the provision of basic facilities. He emphasized that effective communication and joint efforts between the administration and private sector

can make public service delivery more efficient and effective.

At the conclusion of the meeting, owners of bottled water factories expressed their commitment to extending full cooperation to the district administration and playing an active role in public welfare and community development initiatives in Kech.

Teachers Shape the Future of Society, Says Qalat Deputy Commissioner on International Teachers' Day

QALAT: Deputy Commissioner Qalat Engineer Ayesha Zahri has said that teachers are the architects of society who lay a strong foundation for the future of a nation.

She expressed these views while addressing a prestigious ceremony held at the District Council Hall Qalat in connection with International Teachers' Day. Engineer Ayesha Zahri said a teacher does not merely impart knowledge from textbooks but also helps develop students' personalities, character, thinking and abilities, preparing them for practical life.



She said all progress achieved in the world, as well as innovations in science and technology, has been made possible through the fundamental contribution of education and the hard work of teachers. "Every one of us is indebted to our teachers

for their guidance and efforts in our journey toward success," she said. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized that respecting teachers is an important part of the country's cultural and social values. Parents give children life while teachers provide

them with knowledge, awareness and the skills needed to live that life meaningfully. Therefore, she said, respecting teachers is essentially respecting knowledge and the future.

Paying tribute to teachers on Interna-

tional Teachers' Day, Engineer Ayesha Zahri said teachers are performing the great responsibility of building generations and their services can never be appreciated enough.

During the ceremony, school students delivered speeches in both Urdu and English highlighting the dignity and importance of teachers and their role in the development and progress of society.

Students also presented a variety of colourful tableaux, which were warmly appreciated by the partici-

Teachers Honoured for Outstanding Services at International Teachers' Day Ceremony in Sherani

SHERANI: The District Education Office Sherani organized a prestigious ceremony at Government Boys High School Khan Alam Sherani to mark International Teachers' Day, with Deputy Commissioner

Kaleemullah Kakar, DEO Saif-ur-Rehman, Abdul Wahab Sherani and a large number of respected teachers playing a fundamental role in strengthening the intellectual, moral and educational foundations of society.

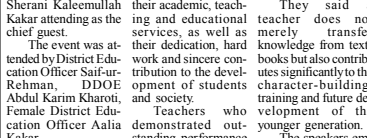
They said a teacher does not merely transfer knowledge from textbooks but also contributes significantly to the character-building, training and future development of the younger generation.

The speakers emphasized that recognizing teachers' services, honouring their contributions and encouraging steps toward further improving the quality of education and strengthening the education system.

During the ceremony, tribute was paid to teachers for their academic, teaching and educational services, as well as their dedication, hard work and sincere contribution to the development of students and society.

Teachers who demonstrated outstanding performance in the field of education were also presented with Best Teacher Awards in recognition of their services and achievements.

Addressing the ceremony, Deputy Commissioner



Female DDOE Fozia, GTA Sherani, President Bhutto Sherani, General Secretary Syed Ali Shah Hanif, GTA Constituent Abdullah Sherani, General Secretary Asghar Sherani, clerk

Jl stages rally on third anniversary of Israeli onslaught on Gaza

NEWS DESK: The Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) on Sunday staged a massive rally in support of the people of Gaza to mark the third anniversary of Hamas's surprise attack on Israel on Oct 7, 2023 and to condemn Tel Aviv's brazen onslaught in Gaza that has resulted in the deaths of thousands of Palestinians, including children.

The JI's 'Gaza March' was held on one of Karachi's key arteries, Shahrah-e-Quaiden, where men and women in large numbers gathered along both tracks of the road, stretching from Allah Wala Chowrangi towards Noorani Kabab.

The highlight of the event was the participation of Dr Muhammad Yousuf Ali-Sukri, the grand mufti of Gaza.

Speaking at the rally, JI Pakistan chief Hafiz Naeem Rehman said Karachi had once again demonstrated solidarity with the people of Gaza despite the city's own economic and social challenges.

Hafiz Naeem called for greater unity among Muslim states and continued support for Palestinians.

He also linked the Palestine campaign with the party's domestic agenda against what he



called the "petroleum levy/bhatta tax" and rising inflation.

He strongly criticised Israel's military campaign in Gaza and accused the United States and other Western powers of backing Israel.

He called on Muslim countries to take a more active role in protecting Palestinians and urged greater unity among Muslim states.

Mr Rehman urged the inclusion of more Muslim countries, including Bangladesh and Qatar, in regional defence arrangements,

saying such cooperation should also address the protection of Palestinians.

The issue of Palestine should not be viewed through sectarian or geographical divisions, he said.

Referring to the Oct 7, 2023 Hamas attack on Israel, he described it as a turning point that, in his view, challenged Israel's military dominance.

He praised the Palestinian resistance and said the people of Gaza had continued to stand by Hamas during the conflict.

The JI leader also

NEWS DESK: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday said it was ready to hold local government (LG) elections in Punjab but faces legal and administrative hurdles in conducting polls in Islamabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Quetta and cantonment boards.

The assessment came at a special meeting chaired by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja to review preparations for LG polls in all provinces, Islamabad and cantonments.

According to a statement by the ECP, the commission was briefed on province-wise progress on the exercise.

On Punjab, the meeting was informed that the ECP was prepared to hold LG polls and take a draft election schedule to the provincial government.

The ECP has sought lists for appointment of district returning officers, returning officers and assistant returning officers to enable appointments, and also asked the Punjab government to respond to the draft schedule at the earliest.

ECP further said



that the preparations with the ordinance and therefore, the ECP decided to take up the matter with the federal government for the "immediate completion of legislation".

If legislation was not done, the ECP said it would proceed to hold elections under the existing Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government Ordinance 2026 had lapsed, the meeting was informed.

According to the statement, a National Assembly Standing Committee had approved legislation in line

with the ordinance and therefore, the ECP decided to take up the matter with the federal government for the "immediate completion of legislation".

If legislation was not done, the ECP said it would proceed to hold elections under the existing Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government Ordinance 2026 had lapsed, the meeting was informed.

According to the statement, a National Assembly Standing Committee had approved legislation in line

However, under Section 19-D of the amended Cantonments Act, the federal government was required to make a formal request to the ECP for holding elections.

"Despite reminders and a letter from the chief election commissioner to the prime minister, no request had been received," the statement said.

It added: "The ECP decided to write a final letter to the Ministry of Defence, failing which it would take an appropriate decision regarding holding of elections."

Imaan and Hadi's arrest: ATC judge irked over IO's absence, failure to present case record

NEWS DESK: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday expressed strong displeasure over the absence of the investigating officer (IO) and the police's failure to produce the case record during the hearing of bail petitions filed by lawyers Imaan Zaib Mazhar and her husband Hadi Ali Chatha in a protest-related case.

ATC Judge Ashraf Muhammad Zulqarnain summoned the deputy superintendent of police (DSP) and the Judicial Complex's security head after being informed that the IO was out of town.

At the outset of the hearing, the judge repeatedly questioned DSP Legal Naeem Yousuf about the whereabouts of the IO and the case record, directing him to provide documentary evidence instead of making verbal assertions.

The DSP initially informed the court that, to the best of his knowledge, the IO was out of town. The judge expressed displeasure, saying he did not appreciate mere verbal statements.

The court subsequently directed the police officer to produce evidence regarding the

IO's whereabouts.

The DSP later told the court that the IO was in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and produced a printout of a WhatsApp message of an investigating officer (IO) and the police's failure to produce the case record during the hearing of bail petitions filed by lawyers Imaan Zaib Mazhar and her husband Hadi Ali Chatha in a protest-related case.

DSP Yousuf then said the IO's mobile



phone was switched off and that it could take 10 to 15 days to establish contact with him.

The judge warned that if the required record was not produced, he could send both the DSP and the superintendent of police (SP) to jail for six months.

The judge also directed the security officer not to allow the DSP to leave the court premises without permission and indicated that he could be arrested if he failed to provide accurate information.

The judge criticised the absence of an effective judicial enforcement

NEWS DESK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said on Monday that three remaining Pakistani crew members of MT Honour 25, an oil tanker that was hijacked off the coast of Somalia in April, are expected to be flown back to Pakistan on Wednesday.

The maritime police force of Somalia's semi-autonomous Puntland said last week that it had recovered the MT Honour 25, a Palau-registered oil tanker with 19 crew members on board, including 10 Pakistanis, which had been hijacked by Somali pirates in April.

The Foreign Office subsequently confirmed that three Pakistanis had died and several others were injured during the operation, later identifying the deceased as Rafiullah Khan, Syed Kashif Umer and Mahmood Ahmed Ansari. Four Pakistanis injured in the operation had arrived in Karachi on Sunday, with the remains of those killed.

In a post on the social media platform X, Dar said three crew members, Imran Ali, Muhammad Yasin and Syed Hasan Yousuf, have been "successfully rescued" and

flown to Addis Ababa — the capital of Ethiopia — accompanied by a team from the Pakistan embassy in Djibouti.

"The three crew members will be received in Addis Ababa and depart for Pakistan on the first available Ethiopian Airlines flight on Wednesday," he added.

He expressed his



gratitude to the government of Somalia and the United Nations (UN) for their assistance and cooperation in securing the crew's release.

"Pakistan remains

firmly committed to strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation to combat maritime piracy and safeguard the security and freedom of international trade routes," he added.

Apart from Pakistanis, the vessel's crew also included seven Indonesians, an Indian and a Sri Lankan. After the hijacking, months passed with no progress

lashed who owned the ship — the man previously thought to be an owner was later revealed to be more likely a middleman who hired them.

Since its hijacking, the crew had made several emotional videos and audio appeals, reporting that they had run out of clean water, food and medicine. Meanwhile, their families launched an interna-

tional appeal, calling on foreign governments, the United Nations (UN) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to take coordinated action to help secure the release of their loved ones.

PTI long march: After Karak address, KP CM's convoy departs for Kohat

NEWS DESK: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi on Monday resumed PTI's march as he addressed supporters in Karak, from where his convoy will depart for Kohat.

The opposition has gone ahead with its march despite warnings from the Centre, which has vowed to prevent any gatherings in Islamabad. The protest aims to demand the release of jailed party founder and former prime minister Imran Khan.

PTI decided to embark on the march after weekend talks with the federal government to bridge their differences failed for multiple reasons, particularly over the counterterrorism policy.

As per an update by PTI after the march on Monday, the Afridi-led march was advancing from Karak towards Kohat.

Addressing party supporters at Karak's



Jail Chowk in the afternoon, the chief minister said he would not be in the Centre's counterterrorism policy and criticised past military operations and drone attacks.

Afridi also referred to Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's remarks from a day earlier, wherein the latter called him "immature".

He went on to recall Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz's remarks on the

terrorism threat to her province, adding: "Supporters of the Centre's counterterrorism policy and criticised past military operations and drone attacks."

Afridi also referred to Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's remarks from a day earlier, wherein the latter called him "immature".

He went on to recall Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz's remarks on the

that "wrong policies drafted behind closed doors were impacting all institutions".

Expressing his patriotism for Pakistan, the PTI leader said: "We also chant Pakistan zindabad, we stand up for the national anthem as well."

But he added that future generations might not do so as there were attempts to "divide Pakistan and spread hatred".

NEWS DESK: United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres is set to visit Pakistan from Oct 6 to 8, the Foreign Office (FO) said, noting that his engagements here would highlight Islamabad's efforts towards strengthening multilateralism.

The visit comes as Guterres' 10-year tenure as the UN chief is set to end on Dec 31.

Guterres is set to meet President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, as well as Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir, FO said on Monday.

The statement added that the UN chief would visit the headquarters of the UN Mission in Pakistan and International Peace and Security, as well as its strides towards disaster preparedness and early warning, will be highlighted.

It stated that the visit will offer an important opportunity to reiterate Pakistan's



longstanding cooperation with the UN, and to exchange views on regional and international developments.

On Friday, DPM Dar had hinted at Guterres' visit, saying that the Pakistani delegation had met him at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) session, held in New York in September. Dar said that he had extended an invitation to Guterres to visit Pakistan, which the UN chief had accepted.

commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

In a post on the social media platform X, Dar said three crew members, Imran Ali, Muhammad Yasin and Syed Hasan Yousuf, have been "successfully rescued" and