

POSITIVE



Greenwich University

A Publication by Department of Mass Communication & Media Studies and the Diplomatic Academy

Pakistan's standing in the global rankings

Overview

Pakistan observed a slight improvement in the overall international rankings in 2021 covering socio-economic and political outcomes of the country. Several elements complemented the prospects including successful democratic transition, efficient counter-terrorism measures leading to enhanced peace and security, and foreign direct investment inflows under CPEC, among others. Albeit, decoupling economic growth from human development suggests that the country needs to enhance its scores in health, education and standard of living by ensuring political will, equitable financing and efficient governance to ensure parallel growth for marginalized segments as well. Civil and political liberties must grow hand in hand to ensure a conducive environment for democratic dialogue and accountability which ultimately supports its nation building process.

DEMOCRACY INDEX

Pakistan was placed at the 104th spot among 167 states on the global Democracy Index 2021, compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

Index from 0 (authoritarian regime) to 10 (full democracy)

Compiled based on indicators covering: Electoral process and pluralism, Civil liberties, Functioning of government, Political participation, and Political culture.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Pakistan ranked 161 out of 192 countries in the Human Development Index scoring 2022 0.562 out of 1.000 in 2018 compared to 0.560 out of 1.000 in 2017.

Index from 0 (low development) to 1 (very high development)

Compiled based on indicators covering: life expectancy, education, and per capita income

PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

Pakistan's press freedom rank dropped to 145 out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom Index, An annual ranking of countries published by Reporters Without Borders (RWB), an international non-governmental organization dedicated to safeguard the right to freedom of information.

Compiled based on indicators covering: pluralism, media independence, environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, and infrastructure.

TERRORISM INDEX

Terrorism Index in Pakistan decreased to 7.83 in 2021 from 7.92 in 2020.

Index from 0 (lowest impact) to 10 (highest impact)

Compiled based on indicators covering : Total number of terrorist incidents in a given year, total number of fatalities caused by terrorism in a given year, total number of injuries caused by terrorism in a given year and the approximate level of total property damage from terrorist incidents in a given year.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM INDEX

In 2021, index of economic freedom for Pakistan was 51.7 score.

Though Pakistan index of economic freedom fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to decrease through 2002 - 2021 period ending at 51.7 score in 2021.

Compiled based on indicators covering: Market openness, Regulatory efficiency, Government size and the rule of law.

Positive Post is a strategic effort to project achievement and contributions of Pakistan. While showcasing Greenwich University's cultural diplomacy initiatives, it also encapsulates a compilation of different developments complementing Pakistan's socio-cultural, economic & Political outcomes

May 2025

1 May, 1948 : Indo-Pakistani War of 1947, Pakistan enters war on behalf of Kashmir against India.

27 May, 1974: Declaration of Ahmadiyyas as non Muslim.

26 May, 1980: Establishment of Federal Shariat Court is announced.

29 May, 1988: Zia ul Haq dismisses Junjo's government.

16 May, 1991: Islamic Shariah law formally incorporated into legal code.

May 28, 1998: The first nuclear test — Codename Chagai-I was conducted and supervised by the PAEC at Ras Koh Chaghi, Baluchistan.

May 30, 1998: The second nuclear test Chagai-II was conducted and supervised by the PAEC.

3 May, 1999: Start of Kargil war A Pakistani intrusion in the Kargil district.

12 May, 2000: Supreme Court validated the October 1999 coup and granted General Pervez Musharraf executive and legislative authority for three years.

22 May, 2004: Pakistan readmitted to Commonwealth.

14 May, 2006: Charter of democracy (CoD) is signed by two former prime ministers of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto in London.

20 May, 2008: Operation Zalzala ends in a Pakistani victory.

23 May, 2009: Pakistan Army launched Operation Rah-e-Rast.

27 May, 2018: The twenty-fifth amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan was approved by the Parliament of Pakistan.

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Pakistan 'rattles' India with firm response as patience runs out

After demonstrating restraint in the face of blatant Indian aggression Pakistan launched strikes targeting military installations in India and India-held Kashmir.

The strikes were launched under operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos at 5:16am.

“Bunyan-um-Marsoos” translates as a concrete structure or firm foundation.

The missiles, launched by aircraft and ground-based systems, targeted multiple strategic and military sites of India, security sources and state media reported.

According to the military’s media wing and Radio Pakistan, the targeted locations included S-400 missile system in Adampur; military intelligence’s training centre in Rajouri and brigade headquarters in Uri; Adampur, Udhampur, Pathankot, Suratgarh, Sirsa, Bathinda and Halwara airfields; Akhnoor aviation base; artillery gun positions in Dehrangari; Brahmos missile battery site in Nagrota; Brahmos storage site in Beas; and India’s Rabtanwari Post, Jazeera Post Complex, Kafir Mehri, Shahpar 3, and Ghadar Top across the Line of Control (LoC).

ISPR said PAF’s JF-17 Thunder hypersonic missiles destroyed the S-400 missile system in Adampur. The strikes came hours after India fired missiles at three air bases in Rawalpindi, Chakwal and Shorkot, as well as the Rahim Yar Khan airport.

All assets of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) remained safe in the attack, the military spokesman said.

Pakistan has targeted key Indian military installations in a “befitting response” as part of its retaliatory operation, the federal government said in a statement.

“These actions are being carried out in response to India’s initial attack, which was an assault on our homeland, people and sovereignty,” the statement said, referring to Indian missile strikes at



three PAF airbases.

The retaliatory attacks targeted “more than 26” locations and damaged “equipment and personnel” at at least five airbases, according to Colonel Sophia Qureshi of India’s Army Signal Corps.

The damage was sustained at air force bases in Udhampur, Pathankot, Adampur, Bhuj and Bathinda, Col Qureshi said, according to Times of India.

India’s attack India launched missiles and drones in its late-night attack, which were shot down by ground defence systems in Punjab and Sindh.



The strikes targeted Nur Khan air base, Rawalpindi; Murid air base, Chakwal; and Shorkot air base, Inter Service Public Relations (ISPR) DG Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said at a press conference.

Two missiles fired by India at the Shorkot airbase were shot down by the air defence system, officials said.

The debris of destroyed missiles fell near a government primary school in Pirmahal village. No casualties were reported, while

Zahoor Ahmad, 70, received minor injuries after being hit by falling debris.

A drone fired by India fell in open fields in the Ahmad Nigar village on Chiniot-Sargodha Road. A large number of locals gathered at the site to view the wreckage of the fallen drone.

Debris of three downed Indian drones also fell in fields in Islam Nagar village, Chak Noor Muh-ammad 11/SP and Bheela near village 13/SP during the past 36 hours.

It was collected by the police officers who took it away for further analysis.

Drones were also intercepted in Sargodha.

One of the drones fell in the area of Kirana Hills and another in open fields in Chak 48 SB village. No casualties were reported in any of these localities.

At least four drones were also shot down in different areas of Jacobabad, Sindh, on Saturday, according to Deputy Commissioner Sameer Hussain Laghari.

The debris of scattered drones fell near the Jacobabad Institute of Medical Science and the Shah Abdul Latif Numaish (Exhibition) Ground.

Locals reported sounds of explosions as smoke filled the sky, as drones were intercepted by the ground defence systems.

According to DC Leghari, at least eight people were injured after being hit by fragments of destroyed

drones. One man, who was critically injured, had been transferred to Larkana for treatment.

He added the debris had been taken into custody by the authorities.

Shelling at border

At least six people were martyred and five injured as India fired shells in Tanda and Karianwala areas of Gujrat.

The deceased included three members of a family, including a man and his two sons.

They were killed after mortar shells hit their house in Jalalpur Sobia village of Karianwala early on Saturday morning.

The victims were identified as Nisar Ahmed, 45; Habeebur Rehman, 18; and Naeem, 12.

Mr Ahmed’s third son, Muneeb, 17, was injured and undergoing treatment at the Aziz Bhatti Shaheed Teaching Hospital.

Civil defence officials collected the pieces of shells from the house.

The shelling also killed two people in Tanda, while two others were injured in that incident.

The deceased included Zia and Hajira, whereas Umar Mustafa and Sidra Bibi were injured.

Another teenager, Muhammad Nabeel, lost his life in the Barnala village along the border area.

Gujrat Deputy Commissioner Safdar Virk and District Police Officer Dr Mustanser Atta Bajwa reached the attack site in Jalalpur Sobia and inspected the scene. With input from Agencies

Malik Irfan from Rahim Yar Khan, Tariq Saeed from Toba Tek Singh, Aurangzeb from Chiniot, Shafiq Butt from Sahiwal, Waseem Ashraf Butt from Gujrat, Sajjad Niazi from Sargodha and Waseem Shamsi from Sukkur also contributed to this report

Courtesy: Dawn

PSL resumption hinges on foreign players' return

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is aiming to hold the remaining eight matches of the Pakistan Super League postponed due to the conflict with India from May 17 provided foreign players return to the country.

The six franchises have reached out to players, who were flown from the country on a charter flight over the weekend as the cross-border skirmishes with India intensified last week, to return after a ceasefire agreement was reached.

“The franchises are in negotiations with their foreign players regarding the tentative dates of May 17 to 25 with Rawalpindi proposed to be the venue for the remaining matches,” sources told.

The PSL was first moved to the UAE and subsequently postponed after an Indian drone crashed close to the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium last week.

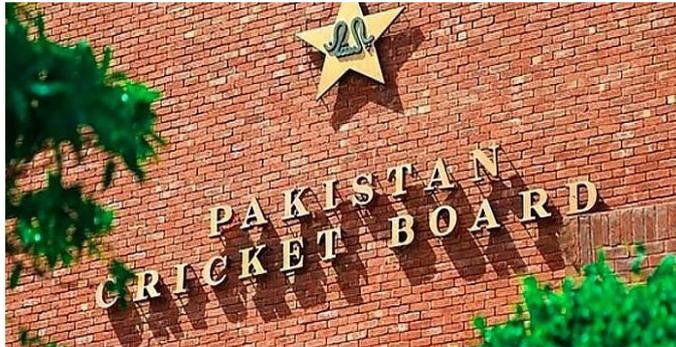
“As soon as the franchises confirm the availability of the foreign players, the PCB will announce the schedule of the remaining matches after getting the approval from chairman Mohsin Naqvi,” sources added.

On Monday morning, the PCB chief had told reporters that “a decision regarding the PSL would be taken by the evening”.

Sources added there will be “more clarity by Wednesday morning as the PCB is awaiting replies from the six franchises to confirm if their foreign players are available or not”. “Only the availability of the players is a hurdle and there is no issue with the broadcasters as they could make arrangements in a few days.”

With no international cricket during the proposed window, the PCB remains hopeful that the foreign players will return.

However, reports suggest Australian players might not be open to the idea of returning to Pakistan or India, which also saw its T20 tournament the Indian Premier League suspended due to the escalating hostilities. While most Australian players



in both countries left for home, former Australia batter Ricky Ponting now coach of IPL side Punjab Kings deboarded his flight home following the ceasefire agreement.

The Board of Control for Cricket (BCCI) in India announced on Monday that the IPL will resume from May 17.

“After extensive consultations with government and security agencies, and with all the key stakeholders, the Board has decided to proceed with the remainder of the season,” the BCCI said in a statement.

The tentative window for the resumption of the PSL sees an overlap with Bangladesh's upcoming tour to Pakistan, with the two teams slated to meet in the first Twenty20 International on May 25.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board said on Sunday that it would make a decision regarding the tour after “careful consideration of the current situation in Pakistan”.

Bangladesh's T20 skipper Litton Das told reporters that the fate of the tour will be decided between the PCB and the BCB.

Bangladesh spinner Rishad Hossain and pacer Nahid Rana were involved in the PSL before they returned to Dhaka.

Rishad issued a public apology after his comments about fellow Lahore Qalandars teammates Daryl Mitchell and Tom Curran sparked confusion and controversy.

Hossain had given a brief interview at Dubai airport where he had claimed that several overseas players, including Mitchell and

Curran, were visibly frightened.

He quoted New Zealand's Mitchell as saying he wouldn't return to Pakistan, and described Englishman Curran as “crying like a child” during tense moments following nearby explosions in Rawalpindi.

The remarks quickly circulated online, prompting criticism and concern.

“I'm aware that a recent comment I made has caused confusion and has unfortunately been misrepresented in the media creating a false perception,” he said on social media.

“The comment was made during a brief interview with Bangladeshi journalists while I was in transit at Dubai airport. It lacked full context and unintentionally overstated the emotions involved.

“I sincerely regret any misunderstanding it may have caused. I've offered an unconditional apology to Daryl Mitchell and Tom Curran. I hold deep respect for my fellow teammates and truly value the Qalandars brotherhood where we always stand by one another, no matter what.

“I look forward to rejoining my team when the Pakistan Super League resumes.”

Mitchell, who has also featured in the IPL, had earlier refuted Hossain's claims.

“Both the PSL and IPL have played major roles in my career, and I've always cherished my time in both tournaments,” he said. “I hope peace prevails and we can get back to playing the game we love and continue giving back to the amazing people who support us.”

Courtesy: Dawn

First heatwave of May 2025 expected to hit Pakistan this week

The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast the first heatwave of May 2025, with extreme weather conditions expected to grip most parts of the country over the next three to four days.

According to the Met Office, a high-pressure system is likely to prevail over the region starting from May 15, leading to a significant rise in daytime temperatures across both southern and northern parts of the country.



The southern regions including Sindh, southern Punjab, and Balochistan are expected to witness temperatures 4 to 6C above normal from May 15 to 20. Meanwhile, the northern areas such as central and upper Punjab, Islamabad, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan will experience 5 to 7C above normal temperatures from May 15 to 19.

Relief from the intense heat may come as a westerly weather system is predicted to enter the upper parts of the country on the evening of May 19, bringing rain-wind/thunderstorms with chances of isolated heavy falls and hailstorms in Kashmir, Islamabad, Potohar region, northeast Punjab, upper KP, and Gilgit-Baltistan on May 19 and 20.

The PMD has advised the public, especially children, women, and senior citizens, to avoid direct sunlight during the day and stay well-hydrated.

Farmers should plan their agricultural activities accordingly and ensure the well-being of livestock.

In the northern areas, rising temperatures could accelerate the snow-melt rate, raising concerns about water management. Citizens are encouraged to practice judicious water usage in all sectors.

The PMD has called on all relevant authorities to remain alert and take proactive steps to prevent any heatwave-related emergencies.

Courtesy: dunyaneews.tv

Pakistan has kept cool despite Indian aggression, says Shehbaz

As the tensions emanating from the Pahalgam attack continue to draw a wedge between the two neighbours, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said Pakistan's response to India's hostile decisions in the aftermath of the attack was "responsible and measured".

On the other hand, India stepped up its measures against Pakistan, saying that it had banned the import of goods coming from or transiting via Pakistan and barred Pakistani ships from entering its ports amid tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbours.

In a meeting with the Turkish envoy who called on him at the Prime Minister's House, the premier said Indian provocative actions would also distract Pakistan from its fight against terrorism. He reiterated that Pakistan had always condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

According to the prime minister, India has yet to respond to Pakistan's offer for a neutral probe into the attack that killed 26 civilians in Pahalgam, a scenic town in the occupied Kashmir.

India failed to share any evidence and was falsely trying to link Pakistan to the Pahalgam incident, said a statement issued by the PM's Office after the meeting. He said Pakistan would fully cooperate with a "credible, transparent and neutral international investigation to ascertain the facts" and would welcome if Turkiye joined it.

The prime minister underscored that Pakistan had rendered great sacrifices in its counterterrorism efforts, including 90,000 casualties and over \$152 billion in economic losses over the years.

He also thanked President Erdogan for his strong statement of support for Pakistan during the prevailing situation in South Asia, as well as his call for peace in the region.

Turkiye Ambassador Dr Irfan Neziroglu informed the prime minister that Ankara appreciated Pakistan's position and expressed its solidarity with Pakistanis, while also calling for de-escalation



and urging restraint to maintain peace and security in South Asia.

On his part, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar spoke to Swiss Federal Councillor and Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis and Greek Foreign Minister George Gerapetritis on the telephone and informed them about regional developments in the wake of the Kashmir attack. He rejected Indian allegations, a disinformation campaign, and unilateral measures that threatened regional peace and security. Mr Dar briefed his Swiss counterpart about India's unilateral decision to hold the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance — an outright violation of international legal obligations, the Foreign Office spokesperson said in a press release. He reiterated Pakistan's call for an independent and transparent international investigation to establish the facts.

The Swiss foreign minister, meanwhile, endorsed Pakistan's proposal for an investigation. He expressed Switzerland's readiness to offer its good offices and explore appropriate mechanisms to facilitate an impartial investigation. The two leaders agreed to remain in close contact on the evolving situation.

In his conversation with the Greek counterpart, he also reiterated the call for an independent and transparent investigation to establish the facts. Mr Gerapetritis emphasised the importance of restraint to prevent escalation and preserve peace and stability and welcomed Pakistan's proposal for a neutral and transparent inquiry. Both leaders agreed to maintain close coordination on regional and global developments, particularly in multilateral forums, including

their engagement as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council, said the statement.

Separately, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said Indian aggression concerning water resources would be met with a resolute response, as Islamabad would not hesitate to take necessary measures to protect its rights and interests.

In an appearance on a private television show, Mr Asif stated that if India continued to violate the Indus Waters Treaty, Pakistan would take the matter to legal forums to protect its rights. He said India had been exposed globally and failed to garner the expected narrative support in light of the attack.

India, with immediate effect, banned the import of goods coming from or transiting via Pakistan and barred Pakistani ships, according to Reuters.

India said Pakistani-flagged ships would not be allowed to visit any Indian port, and Indian flagged-ships would not visit any ports in Pakistan. "This order is issued to ensure the safety of Indian assets, cargo and connected infrastructure, in the public interest and for the interest of Indian shipping," the Directorate General of Shipping said in a statement.

India's Directorate General of Foreign Trade said in a notification that the "restriction is imposed in the interest of national security and public policy". According to Hindustan Times, the ports ministry "banned Pakistani-flagged ships from entering Indian ports and prohibited Indian-flagged vessels from visiting ports in Pakistan".

Courtesy: Dawn

Cyber security: Students urged to protect identities, data online

Vehari Police organised a cybercrime and cyber security awareness seminar at COMSATS University to educate students about emerging digital threats and promote



safe online practices. SP Investigation Farooq Ahmed Kamyana highlighted key issues such as cyber attacks, data theft, phishing, and social media hacking, advising students to regularly update passwords, enable two-factor authentication, and avoid storing credentials in insecure places. He emphasised the importance of not clicking on suspicious links, as they can lead to personal and financial



data breaches. He stressed that cyber security is a shared responsibility of every citizen and institution, not just law enforcement. The session concluded with a question and answer segment and was attended by COMSATS Director Prof Khuda Bakhsh, DSP Legal Muhammad Aslam Hayat, and the Vehari Police IT team.

Courtesy: The Nation

Pakistan tests enhanced version of Abdali missile

“Pakistan today conducted a successful training launch of the Abdali Weapon System as part of Exercise INDUS,” Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the military’s media wing, said.

The missile was tested amid escalating tensions between nuclear-armed neighbours, India and Pakistan, following a deadly attack in India-held Kashmir on April 22.

Without investigation, India accused ‘cross-border linkages’ of the attackers and escalated tensions with Pakistan through military and diplomatic actions. India cancelled visas of Pakistani travellers, held the Indus Water Treaty in abeyance, initiated skirmishes along the Line of Control (LoC) and hinted at potential airstrikes.

Nuclear-capable ballistic missile has 450km range

The standoff, marked by exchange of fire on LoC and tit-for-tat actions, has raised fears of broader conflict, prompting international calls for restraint and renewed dialogue.

The surface-to-surface missile’s test, ISPR said, was carried out to “ensure the operational readiness



of troops” and validate key technical systems, including its advanced navigation and enhanced manoeuvrability.

The newly tested version of Abdali features a range of 450 kilometres (about 280 miles) and enhanced manoeuvrability features.

The missile was originally flight-tested along with other missiles during the height of 2001-02 military stand-off with India and was subsequently inducted into the Army Strategic Force Command. The original version had a range between 180km and 200km.

The missile equipped with inertial guidance system is designed to target military bases, airfields and critical infrastructure. Although the missile carries a rel-

atively small warhead, its mobility and solid-fuel propulsion enable rapid deployment from a Transporter-Erector-Launcher (TEL) vehicle.

President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Gen Sahir Shamshad Mirza and the services chiefs extended their congratulations to the participating troops, scientists and engineers after the test.

The civil and military leadership expressed full confidence in the “Strategic Forces’ preparedness” and technical capability to uphold what Pakistan calls its “credible minimum deterrence”.

Pakistan’s messaging around its nuclear posture has become no-

tably more assertive in recent days. Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir at Exercise Hammer Strike said a “swift, resolute, and notch-up response” would be given to any Indian aggression.

Meanwhile, a statement issued after a corps commanders’ meeting on Friday further escalated the rhetoric, warning of a “sure and decisive” response across the “entire threat spectrum” and mentioning “deterrence posture”—implicitly pointing to nuclear capabilities.

“By reasserting its nuclear deterrence, Pakistan is signalling to both India and major powers that any escalatory move by India can have unintended consequences,” said Muhammad Faisal, South Asia security researcher from the University of Technology, Sydney. “This can bog down Pakistan’s political and military leaders in a commitment trap when in response to an Indian strike, they will either escalate vertically or make their retaliation more substantive, forcing Indian decision-makers to meet with a second round of strikes,” he worried.

Courtesy: Dawn

RCCI urges deeper trade ties with Central Asia at Pak-Uzbek Business Forum

The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has called for greater efforts to harness the vast untapped trade potential in Central Asia, emphasizing the need to enhance bilateral trade volumes and promote deeper collaboration between the business communities of Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

Speaking at a high-level business forum hosted by the Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Islamabad, RCCI President Usman Shaukat highlighted the significance of strengthening economic relations between the two nations. The forum, aimed at boosting trade and investment cooperation, brought together leading figures from Pakistan’s business sector, including prominent entrepreneurs, industry leaders, and representatives from key economic sectors.

Shaukat underscored the importance of creating practical mechanisms to facilitate continuous dialogue and knowledge-sharing between entrepreneurs, fostering sustainable and productive partnerships. “Pakistan and Uzbekistan share tremendous potential for economic collaboration,” he stated. “To realize this, we must build strong, institutionalized channels for engagement between our private sectors.”

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairs review meeting on FBR reforms

The forum opened with remarks from Alisher Tukhtaev, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, who stressed the strategic value of deepening business-to-business ties. “This is not just a gathering of business leaders and officials – it is a gathering of hearts and



hopes,” the ambassador said, alluding to the centuries-old historical, cultural, and spiritual connections between the peoples of both countries.

Ambassador Tukhtaev described Pakistan as a vital strategic partner and a gateway to South Asia. “Uzbekistan sees Pakistan as a true partner,” he noted. “However, our current trade turnover of \$400 million does not reflect the real potential. Together, we can multiply this figure fivefold.” Other notable participants included Atif

Ikram Sheikh, President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), along with prominent entrepreneurs from diverse sectors such as pharmaceuticals, construction materials, leather and wool processing, textiles, and food production. The event concluded with a shared commitment to strengthen bilateral economic cooperation and explore new opportunities in trade, investment, and innovation between Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

Courtesy: The Nation

Political parties vow joint front in case of Indian offensive



All mainstream political parties, except PTI, on Sunday vowed that Pakistan would give a robust response to India if it resorted to any 'misadventure' against the backdrop of the Pahalgam incident, in which 26 civilians were gunned down.

The political leaders made this pledge during an in-camera briefing by the civil and military leadership on Sunday, in which the army spokesperson apprised the mainstream political parties about the latest situation in the region and the preparedness of the country's armed forces to avert any misadventure by the neighbouring country.

The in-camera briefing was given by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Lt-Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry and Information Minister Attaullah Tarar. However, the main opposition party, PTI, did not attend the huddle.

A source privy to the huddle proceedings told Dawn that the political parties were of the view that they stood by the armed forces to foil any attempt by India to spoil regional peace. Before the briefing, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said the main objective of the huddle was to get feedback from the political forces in light of tensions with India.

Participants told India wanted to divert water, intensify Kashmir oppression using Pahalgam

Another source told Dawn that the participants were briefed about how India "prepared and implemented its false flag operation" in Pahalgam. The meeting

was informed that India could not sell its narrative to the world and that Pakistan's stance had emerged stronger in the aftermath of the attack. The participants were also apprised of the preparedness of the armed forces to foil any kind of misadventure by India.

Senator Muhammad Abdul Qadir, who attended the briefing, said that the meeting was informed about how and why India conducted the attack in Pahalgam. Senator Qadir said, as per information shared with the political leaders, the primary objective of the operation was to further divert Indus water, intensify aggression in held Kashmir, and camouflage Indian terrorism with the help of the Afghan Taliban.

With the help of video clips, the participants were given a briefing about Indian involvement in terrorism in Pakistan, especially Balochistan, he added.

PPP leaders Raja Pervez Ashraf, Qamar Zaman Kaira, and Shazia Marri; PML-N's Barrister Aqeel and Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Talal Chaudhry; PM's aide Pervez Khattak; MQM-P's Farooq Sattar; and Kashmiri leader Shah Ghulam Qadir, among others, were in attendance.

Tension between the two nuclear states escalated soon after the Pahalgam attack in which 26 tourists were killed on April 22.

Soon after the attack, India blamed Pakistan for being involved in the attack. On the other hand, Pakistan termed the attack a false flag operation by India and called for a neutral probe.

Courtesy: Dawn

Pakistan seeks peace, but ball in India's court: PM

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to regional peace and offered to resolve all bilateral disputes with India through dialogue, provided New Delhi demonstrates sincerity and cooperation.

Addressing the second Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan Trilateral Summit in the Azeri city of Lachin, the prime minister referred to the recent aggression of India and said that with Allah Almighty's infinite blessings and kindness, the support of the people of Pakistan and friendly countries and a resolute response of the armed forces, Pakistan emerged victorious.



In his speech, telecast live on national TV channels, the prime minister said Pakistan wanted peace in the region and that required talks on the table to discuss the issues that needed urgent attention and amicable solution like the Kashmir issue, which should be resolved according to the UN Security Council resolutions and as per aspiration of the people of Kashmir.

The prime minister said that, unfortunately, India tried to weaponise the Indus Waters Treaty, which was a lifeline for the 240 million population of Pakistan that used the water for agriculture, drinking, and other purposes.

"It is most unfortunate that India tried to threaten to stop the flow of water into Pakistan. This is not possible — nor will it ever be, In-

sha'Allah. We are making proper arrangements to ensure that India never ever does it," he said.

PM Shehbaz said if India wanted to talk on countering terrorism with sincerity, Pakistan would be willing to talk to them on this issue as well.

"We are the biggest victim of terrorism around the globe and have lost 90,000 valuable lives and suffered \$150 billion worth of economic losses over the last few decades. There can be no bigger manifestation of our commitment and intention to beat this menace for all times to come," he added.

If India showed serious and honest cooperation, Pakistan would be willing to bring all the issues, including promotion of trade, to the negotiation table, he said.

The prime minister also appreciated the role of Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, who he said led the armed forces of Pakistan to fight with great bravery and the highest level of professional acumen.

He stressed that during the recent conflict, India failed to present any credible evidence against Pakistan and rejected Islamabad's sincere offer for a neutral and transparent investigation into the Pahalgam incident by any international body. The prime minister said that during the previous trilateral summit, Pakistan,

Courtesy: Dawn

Pakistan calls on world to pave way for peace

Pakistan on Monday urged the global community to swiftly intervene to bring down tensions in the South Asian region and de-escalate the crisis by addressing its underlying reason: the unresolved Kashmir dispute.

Pakistan's leadership also pledged to fiercely defend national sovereignty against any provocation in the wake of the Pahalgam attack that resulted in the death of 26 people in the held-Kashmir region. The government said that provocative rhetoric from New Delhi and baseless accusations against Pakistan were part of a pattern aimed at diverting attention from the Kashmir dispute.

In his meetings with foreign dignitaries, including Iran's foreign minister, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reiterated Pakistan's offer for an "independent, transparent, neutral and credible" international investigation into the Pahalgam incident and invited countries, including the UK, to participate.

PM Shehbaz also raised concerns over what he termed India's attempts to politicise international financial institutions to damage Pakistan's economy and condemned recent actions concerning the Indus Waters Treaty, calling them "unacceptable" and a "red line".

Iran FM visit

During their separate meetings with visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi, PM Shehbaz

and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar highlighted their shared commitment to diplomacy.

Iran had offered to mediate between India and Pakistan, with President Pezeshkian already having spoken to leaders in both capitals and Mr Araghchi expected to travel to New Delhi.

"The prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to work closely with Iran for peace, stability, and development in the region," the PM Office said in a statement after the meeting. Foreign Minister Araghchi reaffirmed Iran's commitment to strengthening its relations with Pakistan and playing its part in bringing peace and stability to South Asia, reported state-run APP.

In his meeting with UK High Commissioner Jane Marriott, the prime minister emphasised that Pakistan would not take any step that endangers regional peace. "Our priority remains economic development," he said, urging London to use its good offices with both countries to promote peace.

'Pakistan will defend itself'

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, at a seminar in Islamabad, said that Pakistan remained committed to regional stability but would not hesitate to defend itself if provoked.

"There appears to be a calculated and premeditated attempt to escalate regional tensions, following a familiar pattern—level accusations without evidence, incite hysteria, and use it as



a pretext for aggression," Mr Dar said. "If aggression is imposed on us, we will exercise our inherent right to self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter."

He also voiced concern over India's move to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty, calling it a dangerous development with far-reaching implications. The foreign minister urged the global community to intervene before the situation spirals further.

"The international community must take serious note of these developments. At a time when the region requires cooperation and restraint, any tolerance for adventurism would only embolden further instability," he emphasised.

"Being a responsible member of the international community, Pakistan remains committed to regional peace and stability. We will support all efforts towards de-escalation," he reassured the international partners about Pakistan's cooperation for de-escalation. The Pakistani military reinforced the civilian leadership's stance, with Gen Asim Munir warning that while the

country sought peace, any violation of its sovereignty would be met with decisive force.

"If Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity are violated, we will respond with full force to preserve national prestige and the well-being of our people," Gen Munir said during remarks at the Balochistan National Security Workshop.

Islamabad has consistently framed the Kashmir dispute as central to the region's volatility and reiterated its call for a resolution based on UN Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

The Iranian top envoy also called on army chief General Asim Munir at GHQ, Rawalpindi. "The meeting featured constructive discussions on the geo-strategic environment, with particular focus on challenges confronted by both countries in the domain of security. The Pak-Iran border security mechanism was also reviewed as part of efforts to enhance bilateral coordination," said a statement issued by the army's media wing after the meeting.

Courtesy: Dawn

Tribute ceremony organised in memory of renowned filmmaker Furqan T Siddiqui

Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi, organised a tribute ceremony in memory of the acclaimed filmmaker, director, and digital media professional Furqan T Siddiqui at the Haseena Moin Hall. President Arts Council, Muhammad Ahmed Shah, different showbiz personalities Chairman of the Music Committee Amjad Hussain Shah, Nadeem Jaffri, Kamran Jilani, Jibran T Siddiqui, Sohail Hashmi, Ahmad Saleem Siddiqui, Mohsin Naqvi, Dr Nudrat, Farhan Qaiser, Ali Zaman, Dr Shehzad Ali Ghazi, Aleem Sheikh, Imran Raza Naqvi, Rehan Siddiqui, Sakina Sarwat, Ali Chishti, Nadeem J, Younus Memon, Azfar

Raza, and all three sons of the late Furqan T Siddiqui expressed their thoughts and memories. President Muhammad Ahmed Shah recalled his deep bond with Furqan, describing him as an affectionate, sincere, and multi-talented individual. "Even today, it feels as if Furqan is still among us. His departure has left a significant void in the industry. He had a remarkable ability to connect people and maintained a close relationship with the Arts Council," he said. Amjad Hussain Shah shared that Furqan was a genuine soul, always smiling and caring for others while concealing his own struggles. "His loss is not just personal



for his family, but a collective loss for all of us," he added. Actor and host Nadeem Jaffri pointed to the bitter truth of the showbiz industry, stating, "We are a thankless society. We wait for artists to fall gravely ill and die before we acknowledge their worth. Furqan, our dear friend, is no longer with us." Jibran T Siddiqui emphasised

Furqan's love for the Arts Council and Karachi, saying, "The city ran through his veins. He entered the media industry at a young age through PTV and quickly proved his talent. The night of March 24 remains unforgettable. He taught us that the real purpose of life is to serve others."

Courtesy: Dawn

Lahore Qalandars Beat Quetta Gladiators in the Final to win PSL, 2025

In a pulsating finale to the Pakistan Super League 2025, Lahore Qalandars edged past Quetta Gladiators by six wickets with just one ball to spare, sealing their third PSL title in dramatic fashion at the Gaddafi Stadium. With the match swinging like a pendulum from start to finish, the packed crowd in Lahore witnessed one of the most thrilling finishes in PSL history.

Quetta Gladiators won the toss and opted to bat first, backing their batting firepower to post a defendable total in the high-stakes final.

Quetta Gladiators XI:

Saud Shakeel (c), Abrar Ahmed, Hassan Nawaz, Dinesh Chandimal (wk), Avishka Fernando, Rilee Rossouw, Mohammad Amir, Khurram Shahzad, Faheem Ashraf, Usman Tariq, Finn Allen
Lahore Qalandars XI:

Fakhar Zaman, Muhammad Naeem, Abdullah Shafique, Kusal Perera (wk), Bhanuka Rajapaksa, Asif Ali, Sikandar Raza, Shaheen Afridi (c), Rishad Hossain, Salman Mirza, Haris Rauf

Quetta's Innings – Power and Collapse

Quetta posted a competitive total of 201/7 in their 20 overs, thanks to a mix of explosive hitting and late-innings drama. Their innings began shakily as captain Saud Shakeel fell early to Shaheen Shah Afridi, while Finn Allen perished to a sharp short ball from Salman Mirza. At 57/2 by the end of the powerplay, Quetta needed a spark. That spark came in the form of Hassan Nawaz, who produced a scintillating 76 off 43 balls, laced with eight boundaries and four sixes. He anchored the innings and found valuable support from Rilee Rossouw (22 off 11) and Av-

ishka Fernando (29 off 22), guiding Quetta to 98/2 by the halfway mark.

However, Lahore's bowlers clawed their way back. Afridi returned to dismiss Nawaz and Dinesh Chandimal in the death overs, initiating a collapse that saw Quetta lose five wickets for just 46 runs. Afridi's spell of 3 for 24 proved to be a game-changer, as he applied pressure exactly when it mattered.

But just when it seemed like Quetta would fall short of a daunting total, Faheem Ashraf stunned Lahore with a cameo of 28 off only 8 balls, including a 26-run final over. His fireworks ensured Quetta finished on a high, posting 201 — a total that looked defendable, but not safe.

Lahore's Chase – A Match for the Ages

Lahore came out firing in pursuit of 202. Fakhar Zaman opened the innings with intent, lofting a majestic boundary over extra cover off the very first over from Mohammad Amir. The crowd came alive as Muhammad Naeem lit up the third over, smashing Faheem Ashraf for three clean sixes, combining brute strength with impeccable timing.

Quetta, however, found a way to strike back. Saud Shakeel introduced Abrar Ahmed, who broke the opening stand by removing Fakhar with a clever leg-break. At the end of six overs, Lahore were 56/1, slightly ahead of the asking rate.

Naeem, who was earlier dropped by Usman Tariq off Amir the 96th dropped catch of the season, and perhaps the most costly. He punished Quetta for the mistake by launching two more sixes, becoming the first batter to hit six sixes in a PSL final. He eventually fell in



search of a seventh, but his 46 run knock off just 27 deliveries had given Lahore a platform.

Abdullah Shafique and Kusal Perera then took control, keeping the scoreboard ticking with calculated aggression. Shafique eventually fell trying to up the ante, and Rajapaksa's brief stay added more pressure as the required rate crept up.

By the 15th over, Lahore were 131/3 and needed 71 off 30 balls. The match appeared to tilt in Quetta's favor.

Just when Lahore seemed to be slipping away, Kusal Perera launched a mini counter-attack. In the 16th over, he reverse-swept Abrar for six and followed up with smart placement to take 12 off the over. But Amir returned to dismiss Rajapaksa, delivering a tight over that left Lahore needing 57 from the last 20 balls.

The tension was unbearable, but Sikandar Raza, ever the calm campaigner, shifted the narrative. He started his innings with a boundary and a six, while Perera exploded in the 18th over smacking Khurram Shahzad for 4, 6, 6 taking 18 runs and reducing the equation to 31 off 12.

Perera continued his rescue mission in the penultimate over, collecting two boundaries and a six, bringing the equation down to 13 needed off the final over. Hasan Nawaz produced a brilliant fielding effort to save a certain

boundary, but with eight needed off three, Raza smashed a six over deep point and then sealed the deal with a crisp four.

A Finish to Remember

Kusal Perera remained unbeaten, while 57-run stand off 20 balls with Raza proved decisive. Their calculated assault under pressure turned the game on its head and clinched the title for Lahore.

The final was a fitting conclusion to a sensational PSL season filled with drama, brilliance, and individual heroics. While Quetta had their moments especially through Nawaz's fifty and Faheem's stunning finish Lahore's depth and nerve under pressure made the ultimate difference.

Lahore Qalandars are now three-time PSL champions, and this victory perhaps their most dramatic yet will go down as one of the most iconic moments in PSL history.

Player of the Match:

Kusal Perera earned the Man of the Match award for his unbeaten 62 off 31 balls.

Player of the Tournament:

Hassan Nawaz was named Player of the Series for scoring 399 runs at a blistering strike rate. The Quetta batter smashed 28 sixes the most in the tournament and consistently anchored his side's innings, playing a crucial role in their journey to the PSL 2025 final.

Courtesy: si.com

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