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Messi still out but Barcelona could welcome back Suarez



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More than ever, Mike Pompeo at helm of Trump foreign policy



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Drone attack at two Aramco sites sparks fire

Saudi interior ministry claims ablaze under control

RIYADH: Drone attacks on two Saudi Aramco factories in Abqaiq and Khurais provinces on Saturday sparked fires that the state oil company brought under control, the Saudi interior ministry spokesman said without identifying the source of the drones.

The precise targets and the extent of possible damage were unclear. Aramco did not immediately respond to a re-

quest for comment. Abqaiq, 60km southwest of Dhahran in Saudi Arabia's eastern province, contains the world's largest oil processing plant. Khurais, 190km further southwest, contains the country's second-largest oilfield.

Smoke is seen following a fire at an Aramco factory in Abqaiq, Saudi Arabia, September 14, 2019 in this picture obtained from social media.

Tensions are running high in the region after attacks in June and July on oil tankers in Gulf waters that Riyadh and Washington blamed on Iran. Tehran denies the accusations.

Iran-aligned Houthi fighters in Yemen have also launched attacks over the border, hitting Shaybah oilfield with drones last month and two oil pumping stations in May. Both at-

tacks caused fires but did not disrupt production. Security forces foiled an Al-Qaeda attack on Abqaiq in 2006. Aramco is preparing to float shares as early as this year as part of efforts to diversify the economy of the world's top oil exporter away from crude. It has hired nine banks as joint global co-ordinators to lead the IPO and has been meeting bankers this week in Dubai as it speeds up the listing plans.

Pakistan condemns drone attack
Pakistan has strongly condemned

the drone attack on Saudi oil processing facility Buqayq and the Khurais oil field causing fire, material damage and disruption of its operation.

Such acts to sabotage and disrupt commercial activities causing fear and terror cannot be condoned. Pakistan hoped that such attacks will not be repeated given the potential damage they can cause to the existing peaceful environment in the region. Pakistan also reiterated its full support and solidarity with the brotherly Kingdom of Saudi

Arabia against any threat to its security and territorial integrity.

Earlier, drone attacks sparked fires at two Saudi Aramco oil facilities as it prepares for a much-anticipated stock listing. The statement added that an investigation had been launched after the attack in the kingdom's Eastern Province but did not specify the source of the drones. In a retaliatory move, Saudi Arabia later launched a counter attack on the Yemen side. However, details of the attack was not known. —DNA

Pakistan summons Indian envoy over LoC violations

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Saturday summoned Indian envoy and condemned the unprovoked ceasefire violations by the Indian occupation forces along the Line of Control (LoC). The Director General (SA & SAARC), Dr. Mohammad Faisal, summoned the Indian Charge de Affaires, Mr. Gaurav Ahluwalia, and condemned the unprovoked ceasefire violations by the Indian occupation forces along the Line of Control (LoC).

In the most recent ceasefire violations by the Indian forces on 14 September 2019 in Nikial and Jandrot Sectors of the LoC, targeting innocent civilians, an innocent woman Fatima Bibi, 40 years old, resident of Village Balakot, embraced shahadat while seven others, including women sustained serious injuries.

The Director General (SA & SAARC) urged the Indian side to respect the 2003 Ceasefire arrangement; investigate these and other incidents of ceasefire violations; instruct the Indian forces to respect the ceasefire, in letter and spirit and maintain peace on the LoC and the Working Boundary. He urged that the Indian side should permit UNMOGIP to play its mandated role as per the UN Security Council resolutions. —DNA

ML-1 agreement signing likely in October: Rashid

LAHORE: Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmed Saturday said the signing of an agreement about construction of the Main Line-1 (ML-1) was expected in October, which would be a great achievement for the nation and the railways ministry.

Addressing a press conference about Pakistan Railways matters at the PR headquarters here, he said the prime minister had assured him that the Planning Division would complete its work on the ML-1 soon and the agreement with China for upgradation of the main line would be signed in the next month. He said the department was ready to give its track to private sector for running freight trains if private parties promise Rs 36-40 billion revenue to the department.

He said that train schedule was getting improved and within seven to eight days, the schedule would be regularised across the country if there would be no heavy rains during this period. The minister said that no new passenger train was under consideration until the arrival of new coaches; however, study of new routes was being conducted presently. He said those trains could be stopped where occupancy of the



train is less than 40 percent of the capacity. He said that freight and land of railways would remain in focus in the upcoming year. To a question, he said that a summary for appointment of new CEO of the railways had been forwarded to the authority after the retirement of CEO Aftab Akbar, who would retire on Sept 15. —APP



RIYADH: A view of the smoke coming out of the two Saudi Arabian oil sites of Aramco after attacked by a drone.

PM for out of box solution, proposals to improve economy

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has emphasized that stability of economy and facilitating the business community is top priority of the government. He was chairing a meeting of government's economic team in Islamabad on Saturday.

The Prime Minister directed various ministries to devise a clear mechanism based on timeline to achieve quarterly targets and accomplishments.

He also called for presenting out of the box solutions and proposals to improve the economy and to make consultations with all stakeholders in order to start implementing the workable suggestions. Imran Khan said the baseless propaganda against the economy should be rebutted with complete facts so that people have the clear picture of past situation and current improvement.

Referring to importance of agriculture in the national economy and the steps taken by the government to revolutionize the sector, the PM said government has constituted a detailed policy for the promotion of all areas of agriculture. He said need of the hour is to apprise the people of this policy and all the related steps for their benefit. Imran Khan said promotion of small and medium enterprises is among the priorities of the govt.

He said special attention should be paid on revival of plants and sick units that were closed due to mismanagement and financial problems of the past. He called for a vibrant role of CIRC and improving the coordination between all stakeholders including National Bank, State Bank and other institutions to devise a course of action for the revival of sick units. Referring to steps taken by the government for promotion of

construction sector, the Prime Minister said the proposal to declare construction sector an industry and the imposition of fixed tax on construction activities in the large cities is being finalized in order to remove obstacles in this regard.

Imran Khan directed the Chairman Naya Pakistan Housing Authority to also consider a proposal for a financial incentives package to promote the construction of apartments and encouraging investment in this area. The government team gave a comprehensive briefing to the Prime Minister on steps taken for improvement and stability of economy and their impacts.

The meeting was informed that positive results have been witnessed as a result of meas-

■ SMEs is among top priorities of the govt: Imran

ures taken by the government. These include increase in exports, 38 percent decrease in trade deficit in first two months of current fiscal year, improved tax collection, increased tax net and acceleration in private business activities.

Chairman FBR apprised the Prime Minister that tax collection has significantly been improved in recent months. The Prime Minister appreciated the performance of Chairman FBR. Minister for Planning and Development briefed the meeting on progress relating to implementation of China Pakistan Economic Corridor project.

The Prime Minister while expressing satisfaction on implementation of CPCEC said this project is not only a reflection of Pak-China friendship

but it will have positive impacts on national and regional economy. Governor State Bank of Pakistan while giving a briefing to the meeting said during meetings with exporters, they have not only expressed full confidence on government policies but also presented various proposals for export related industry which are being considered. Finance Secretary apprised the meeting that Special Secretary Finance Omar Hamid Khan has been assigned the responsibility of spokesperson for important ministries relating to economy and a media cell has been set up at Ministry of Finance for this purpose.

PM rejects nukes war over Indo-Pak tension
Prime Minister Imran Khan has warned about the renewed tensions over Indian held Kashmir spiralling out of control and said no rational human being can talk of nuclear war.

Comparing the Pakistan-India nuclear stand-off to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, in an interview with RT, PM Imran said, India and Pakistan being pitted against each other over the disputed region in a dangerous standoff. "No rational human being can talk of a nuclear war," PM Imran said.

Urging the world community to intervene in Jammu and Kashmir, the prime minister said the situation on the ground remains "explosive" and may escalate way beyond the Indian subcontinent.

He added any further escalation between the two countries may lead to unimaginable fallout. Vowing to "knock on every door" to get the issue of Jammu and Kashmir on the forefront of the global agenda, the prime minister said, so far he feels underwhelmed by the world community, after having "expected the world to

4 troops martyred, 2 militants killed at Pak-Afghan border

RAWALPINDI: Four soldiers embraced martyrdom while another soldier sustained injuries in two separate incidents of firing by militants on the western border, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) stated on Saturday. According to a statement issued by ISPR Director General (DG) Major General Asif Ghafoor further revealed that two militants were shot dead in response by the military.

The first incident happened in Spinwam tehsil of North Waziristan tribal district, where miscreants opened fired on a routine patrolling party of security forces.

Consequently, 23-year-old Sepoy Akhtar Hussain, hailing from District Baltistan, embraced martyrdom. In a separate incident in Dir, terrorists from across the Pak-Afghan border opened fire at army troops who were busy in border fencing. "3 soldiers embraced shahadat while one got injured," the military's media wing said. —DNA

Soldier, woman martyred in LoC firing

By Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: One soldier and an elderly woman embraced martyrdom in two instances of unprovoked Indian firing from across the Line of Control (LoC) in Haujipir, Nakyal, and Jandrot sectors of Azad Jammu Kashmir on Saturday.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the slain official was identified as 33-year-old Havaldar Nasir Hussain, a resident of Narowal, who had been in service for 16 years. Separately, the India troops, while targeting the civilian population, martyred a 40-year-old Fatima Bibi, a resident of Balakot. Six others, including four women, sustained injuries, who were then evacuated to a nearby medical facility for medical treatment, the ISPR added.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Office has summoned India deputy High Commissioner over violation of ceasefire agreement in Nakyal and Jandrot sectors. According to the statement issued by the FO, the Indian forces have been deliberately targeting the civilian population living along the LoC.

IOK continues to remain under military siege

ISLAMABAD: The humanitarian crisis is aggravating further as the Indian authorities continue to impose curfew and other restrictions in the Kashmir valley on the 41st consecutive day on Saturday.

The Kashmir valley remains under strict military siege as hundreds of thousands of Indian troops deployed in every nook and corner continue to keep millions of people confined to their homes, Kashmir Media Service reported. Normal life is crippled with educational institutions, shops, markets and business establishments remaining closed and public transport off the roads. Communication services like mobile, internet and TV channels are snapped in the entire Kashmir valley and in some parts of Jammu region.

The telecom sector of the territory had suffered a loss of more than 900 million rupees in last one month. An official of a telecom company told media that it would become difficult for the operators to continue their services if the Indian government did not lift the restrictions on mobile services and data in occupied Kashmir. —APP

Qadri retires from politics

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT) Chairman Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri on Saturday announced his retirement from politics and the chairmanship of the party.

"I am taking retirement from PAT chairmanship and politics," Qadri said in a video message on social media. "It was due to our struggle that the accountability process began and the corrupt mafia has now been held accountable. We tried to stop unethical means from coming into the assembly and put all our energies to stop these ways. Unfortunately, in our politics, there is no room for the poor and the middle-class people." —DNA

EU Parliament members for sanctions on India over alarming HR violations in IOK

ISLAMABAD: The Members of the European Union Parliament on Saturday called for trade and travel sanctions on India over the alarming human rights situation in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IoK). The Co-Chair of the Friends of Kashmir Group in the EU Parliament, Richard Corbett, called for utilizing all possible means to mount pressure on India to ease the military curfew in Occupied Kashmir. He proposed the imposition of trade sanctions on New Delhi and restrictions on the travel of those involved in committing human rights violations and acts of terrorism in Indian occupied Kashmir.

Corbett was speaking to a conference jointly organised by Friends of Kashmir Group in the European Parliament and the Jammu-Kashmir Self-Determination Movement at the European Parliament in Brussels. The Friends of Kashmir Group also proposed that a resolution be pre-

sented in the EU regarding the situation in the Occupied Valley. Last month, members of this group had visited Azad Jammu and Kashmir. During the visit, the EU members had a chance to meet the victims of unprovoked attacks from India on the Line of Control and the relatives of those who had lost their lives in these attacks. The group also met a wide range of civil society members including journalists, physicians, teachers, students and lawyers to collect firsthand information about the area.

They called upon the Indian government to provide a similar kind of access in Indian Occupied Kashmir so as to independently verify claims about lack of food, medicines and other items in the Occupied Valley. Those who spoke at the conference included Anthea McIntyre, Shaffaq Mohammed, John Howarth, Irena Von Weise, Theresa Griffin and Raja Najabat Hus-

sain. Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Sardar Masood Khan was also present on the occasion and welcomed the decision of the European Parliament to hold a debate on the situation in Occupied Kashmir. Khan said that the decisions reflected growing concern in Europe over the deteriorating human rights situation in Indian occupied Kashmir and warned about prolonged siege turning into genocide. He said all the developments in the Indian Occupied Territory fit into the definition and criteria of genocide and called for swift action by the international community to intervene and prevent a catastrophe.

Kashmiris not to succumb to India's repression: AJK President
Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Sardar Masood Khan has called upon the Kashmiri and Pakistani expatriates to make incessant

efforts to highlight Kashmir issue in Europe in its true perspective. "Kashmir was and would never become part of India and the solution to this dispute lies in the relevant UN resolutions", he declared while addressing the Kashmiri and Pakistani Diaspora in Belgium's city of Brussels on Saturday, AJK Presidential secretariat said in a press statement issued Saturday evening.

Masood said that India through the use of brute force would never succeed in suppressing the just struggle of Kashmiri people for the realisation of their inalienable right to self-determination. He said that the Kashmiri people had never succumbed or surrendered to India's repressive means nor will they do so in the future. The president called upon the diaspora community to play their active role in apprising the international community of the agonies of people of occupied Kashmir. "The constant curfew imposed by the Indian