

Terror-sponsor Pak has no locus-standi to comment on India's internal matters: MEA

NEW DELHI, July 17 (IANS)

INDIA on Friday yet again slammed Pakistan for its support and sponsorship of cross-border terrorism while using it as an instrument of state policy.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that that investigation continues in last year's heinous Pahalgam terror attack carried out by Pakistan-backed terror groups.

"The Pahalgam terror attack took several innocent lives. You all saw its barbarity. Our authorities have begun investigations in the matter and it continues. As far as cross-border terrorism is concerned, you are well aware of Pakistan's decades-long sponsorship and support for it as also its continued use as instrument of state policy," he said in response to a question.

The terror attack in Pahalgam took place on April 22, 2025. The Pakistan-backed attackers singled out victims after asking about their religion, forcing them to recite the Islamic 'Kalma' to identify non-Muslims. Among those killed were 25 tourists and one local pony ride operator who tried to save the tourists. The Resistance Front (TRF), an offshoot of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), claimed responsibility for the attack.

During the briefing, Jaiswal also said that Pakistan has no locus-standi to comment on matters internal to India.

When asked about Pakistani leaders expressing support for Hurriyat leaders after National Investigation Agency (NIA) filed chargesheets against them, Jaiswal responded, "Pakistan has no locus-standi to comment on

matters which are internal to India."

'Chabahar Terminal did not face any damage during strikes'

NEW DELHI, July 17 (IANS)

THE Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Friday confirmed that the India-developed Chabahar Port terminal in Iran has not suffered any damage during the recent airstrikes conducted by the United States. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that Indian Government had seen reports (about the airstrikes) but confirmed that the Chabahar terminal did not suffer any damage.

Pakistan: Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly seeks provincial status, constitutional rights

■ By Sajjad Hussain

ISLAMABAD, July 17 (PTI)

THE Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution urging Pakistan's federal government to grant the mountainous region provisional provincial status along with constitutional and political rights, according to a media report on Friday.

The resolution, supported by both Treasury and Opposition members, was moved by lawmaker Jalal Ali Shah during the Assembly session on Thursday, 'Dawn' newspaper reported.

It noted that the Gilgit-Baltistan (Empowerment and Self-Governance) Order 2009 established an elected Legislative Assembly and enhanced self-governance, while reaffirming that constitutional advancement of the region

remained an objective of the State.

It also noted that the Gilgit-Baltistan Order, 2018, granted legislative powers to the Assembly following recommendations made by a committee headed by the late politician Sartaj Aziz.

The House urged the Federal Government to implement the committee's recommendations by granting Gilgit-Baltistan provisional provincial status, enabling its residents to elect representatives to Pakistan's National Assembly and secure representation at the federal level.

Gilgit-Baltistan is administered separately by Pakistan. India has consistently maintained that the entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including Gilgit-Baltistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, are integral and inalienable parts of India.

ISRO revises voluntary retirement, resignation norms for scientists linked to Gaganyaan, key missions

NEW DELHI, July 17 (ANI)

THE Department of Space has revised the authority and procedure for accepting voluntary retirement and resignation requests from ISRO's Group 'A' Scientific and Technical personnel, directing that such requests from scientists associated with the Gaganyaan mission and other important national projects should not be accepted as a matter of routine.

In an Office Memorandum (OM) issued on July 14, the Department said the decision was taken after noticing a spate of voluntary retirement and resignation requests from scientific personnel, which was affecting the implementation of projects of national importance.

Burnham elected new Labour Party leader, UK PM-designate



LONDON, July 17 (PTI)

ANDY Burnham was on Friday confirmed as the newly-elected leader of the UK's governing Labour Party, becoming the Prime Minister-designate to take charge at 10 Downing Street next week.

The 56-year-old member of Parliament for Makerfield in northern England, on track to become Britain's seventh Prime Minister in a decade, admitted that it was the "last chance" for Labour to deliver the change promised at the last general election in July 2024.

"We are going to give people hope back," said Burnham in his first speech as party leader. "I am ready to lead, building on the foundations laid by Keir Starmer," he said, thanking the outgoing leader for his "service to the country".

Burnham, the sole candidate in the leadership race since Starmer announced his resignation last month, vowed to "set Britain on a new path" with a less toxic political climate and a greater shift away from centralised power at Westminster in London.

"I will be a leader for every region and nation in this great country, and this party will be unashamedly Labour in our priorities and in the decisions we take," he said. "We want to give your area more power to build the council and social homes that you desperately need, more power to improve your high street, backing local businesses such as the pubs and the shops that bring them to life... More power to re-industrialise," said in the PM-in-waiting.

W Asia crisis, uncertain monsoon major risks for growth: Malhotra



NEW DELHI, July 17 (PTI)

RESERVE Bank Governor Sanjay Malhotra has said the West Asia crisis and the expectation of a weak monsoon present significant risks to economic growth.

“Despite global uncertainties, India has witnessed an over 7 per cent growth rate in the past few years. Last financial year, India clocked a growth rate of 7.7 per cent supported by strong and robust macro-economic fundamentals,” he said in an interview to DD News.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has projected a GDP growth of 6.6 per cent for the current financial year despite various challenges, he said.

“Monetary and fiscal policies are robust, and because of that, we are witnessing high GDP growth,” the Governor added. On inflation, he said the

central bank has raised its inflation forecast to 5.1 per cent for FY27, higher from its earlier estimate of 4.6 per cent.

Inflation going past the Reserve Bank’s median target of 4 per cent in June was largely driven by supply-side factors, Malhotra noted.

Retail inflation climbed to 4.38 per cent in June from 3.93 per cent in May, mainly due to costlier food items. The food inflation increased to 5.32 per cent in June from 4.78 per cent in the preceding month.

Talking about another risk factor, Malhotra said that how the monsoon behaves is crucial, as a large population depends on the agriculture sector. Agriculture contributes about 17 per cent to the GDP, he said, adding that “we have to be vigilant about that (monsoon)”.

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Trump unveils \$10 billion US defence push

WASHINGTON, July 16 (IANS)

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump has announced nearly \$10 billion in new investments in the country's defence industrial base in Pennsylvania, saying the projects would create more than 4,000 jobs and strengthen

Trump admin vows to open Pentagon to defence startups

WASHINGTON, July 16 (IANS)

THE Trump administration

Claims it will create over 4,000 jobs

America's military manufacturing amid growing global security challenges.

Speaking at the Pennsylvania Defence and Innovation Summit hosted by Senator Dave McCormick on Wednesday (local time), Trump said the investments would support the construction of ships, submarines, military vehicles, weapons and advanced defence technologies while reinforcing America's manufacturing base. "This afternoon, we're announcing nearly \$10 bil-

lion of new investments in our defence industrial base, right here in the great commonwealth of Pennsylvania," Trump said. "These investments will create more than 4,000 jobs. Pennsylvania workers will build the ships, submarines, trucks, weapons and industries that will ensure America remains the strongest and most powerful nation in the history of the world."

The announcement brought together senior administration officials, defence executives,

technology firms, private investors and labour leaders in what Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth described as an unprecedented effort to modernise America's military industrial base.

"There has never been a moment like this," Hegseth said. "Our bureaucracy was built to keep most of you out, and we've been waging a war of attrition against the Pentagon bureaucracy to open up the aperture and make sure competition and speed and innovation and commercial options have a seat at the table."