'Substantial' forces deployed in Saudi Arabia: Pakistan

AFP, *Islamabad*

Pakistan has a "substantial" number of forces deployed in Saudi Arabia acting in a defensive capacity, Pakistan's foreign ministry spokesman said yesterday.

"From Pakistan already we have a substantial number of forces as well as resources in town, in Riyadh," foreign ministry spokesman Sajjad Haider Khan told journalists, without specifying whether the deployment had grown under a major defence pact inked this year with Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

He added Pakistani military personnel in the kingdom "would not be crossing the borders of the other side for an attack on the Houthis, but of course (is acting) in the defence of the territory".

Yemen's Houthis have launched barrages of aerial salvos against Saudi Arabia including attacks on Riyadh's international airport on Thursday, killing three.

Pakistan signed a defence agreement with Saudi Arabia and Turkey in August committing the three countries to come to each other's aid in the event one was attacked.

The conflict between the Houthis and Yemen's Saudi-backed government has widened, with the Iran-backed fighters staging repeated attacks on Saudi targets since they began a lightning offensive just across the border.

Khan declined to say whether fresh Pakistani deployments had been made since Saudi Arabia's conflict intensified and said "how much and when and where" forces would be deployed would be up to the trilateral alliance, which is headquartered in Riyadh with a retired Pakistani general as its secretary general.

Khan noted that Pakistan's forces had been deployed in Saudi Arabia regularly since the 1980s, including following the signing of a bilateral agreement between Islamabad and Riyadh in 2025.



A man stands next to salvaged items as people search the rubble of a collapsed building following overnight Israeli airstrikes in Gaza City yesterday, before which the Israeli military had warned residents to evacuate the area. Since a ceasefire was declared last year, Israeli forces have killed at least 1,450 people in Gaza. PHOTO: STAR

Who is Navi Pillay?

AFP, *Johannesburg*

Former UN rights chief Navi Pillay -- awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday -- is a fearless global rights defender who has also served on the International Criminal Court and was South Africa's first non-white woman High Court judge.

The 85-year-old has built a formidable reputation during a decades-long career that took her from South African courts to the ICC and International Tribunal for Rwanda.

She gained global prominence for her outspoken condemnation of government repression of popular protests in the Arab world, including Libya and Syria.

Between 2021 and 2025, she chaired a commission of enquiry created by the UN Human Rights Council to probe the root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The panel, which does not speak for the UN and has faced harsh Israeli criticism, found that "genocide is occurring in Gaza and is continuing to occur", Pillay told AFP in 2025.

"The responsibility lies with the State of Israel," she said.

Pillay is currently an ad hoc judge at the International Court of Justice, working on a case deciding whether Myanmar's crackdown on the Rohingya breached the 1948 UN Genocide Convention, with a ruling expected in the coming months.

Born the daughter of a bus driver in South Africa's east coast city of Durban in 1941 to a family of Tamil descent, Pillay has had a groundbreaking career.

She grew up in a poor neighbourhood in the southeastern coastal city during white minority rule, and studied law at the University of Natal before attaining a Master's and Doctorate from Harvard.

She became the first non-white woman to open a law firm in Durban, where she carved out a reputation as a doughty defender of apartheid opponents.

In 1973 she won the right for political prisoners in the notorious Robben Island penal colony -- where jailed anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela was held at the time -- to have access to lawyers.

A year after Mandela became president in South Africa's first democratic vote in 1994, she made legal history by becoming the first woman of colour to be appointed to the country's high court.

Soon after, the late liberation hero recommended her to serve on a United Nations tribunal trying Rwandan genocide suspects.

- She held the position of UN rights chief
- Pillay oversaw UN report that found Israel committed genocide in Gaza
- She is now an ad hoc judge at the ICJ overseeing Rohingya genocide case

In 1998, she was among judges on the Rwanda tribunal that was the first to try rape as an act of genocide.

Ten years later, Pillay was appointed UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, a role she held until 2014.

Her upbringing in an unjust apartheid society spurred her to fight discrimination everywhere and earned her the reputation of being the voice of victims around the world.

"We put up with the worst insults and racial discrimination and abused and treated like dirt," Pillay told AFP in an interview in 2023.

That could have made you "weak and cry" or "fight every step of the way", she said.

IN BRIEF



Thieves steal wine worth $5.6m in Italy's Tuscany

AFP, *Rome*

Thieves in Tuscany have stolen 30,000 bottles of wine worth an estimated five million euros ($5.6 million) from the renowned Marchesi Antinori winery, the company said yesterday.

"As far as we know, there has never been such a big heist in Italy," a company representative, who asked not to be named, told AFP.

The stolen wines were three of the company's reds -- Tignanello, Solaia and Guado al Tasso -- which sell for 120 to 300 euros or more depending on the vintages.

"They are our among our most iconic labels and are certainly also prized by collectors," it said.

The theft happened last weekend at a warehouse in central Italy where the prized wines had been prepared for export.

The thieves deactivated the alarm and the theft was only discovered on Monday.

Houthi strikes on Riyadh airport kills three Saudis

REUTERS, *Riyadh/Dubai*

Thursday's attacks on Riyadh airport killed three people, Saudi authorities said yesterday, as Yemen's Houthi group stepped up missile strikes on the kingdom and tried to shut down its airspace in an escalating war triggered by the US-Iran conflict.

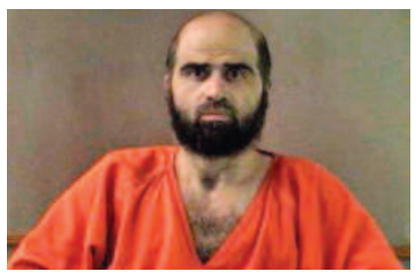
The strikes, which also injured several people, damaged a Saudia Airlines plane and sent smoke billowing over the airport, led many airlines to cancel flights to the Saudi capital days before it is due to host a major meeting of global oil chiefs.

Saudi airstrikes hit Houthi targets in the Yemeni capital Sanaa overnight, Houthi officials and affiliated media said, as part of an intensifying air war against the Iran-allied group aimed at reversing its recent territorial gains, threats to international shipping, and attacks on the kingdom.

A Saudi-led coalition backing government forces in Yemen said it had destroyed three missile launch platforms used by the Houthis and warned it would respond firmly to attacks on civilians.

The Houthis, who have encircled Yemeni government forces in Yemen's third-largest city of Taiz and are trying to defend positions on the Red Sea coast against a Saudi-backed offensive, had already killed three people with strikes on airports in the kingdom earlier this week.

US to livestream execution of Fort Hood shooter



AFP, *Washington*

The execution by firing squad of convicted military base shooter Nidal Hasan will be livestreamed, a Pentagon official said, drawing sharp condemnation yesterday of the plan to broadcast the killing.

Hasan's execution, set for December 3, is poised to be the first that the US military has carried out by firing squad since World War II.

"It will be livestreamed. Details will follow," the Pentagon official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told AFP of the death sentence imposed on the US Army psychiatrist who shot dead 13 people at Fort Hood in 2009.

The UN condemned the plan to livestream the execution, saying it would amount to torture.

The last US military execution was carried out in 1961, when John Bennett was hanged for rape and attempted murder.

Russia to 'do everything' to end war

Putin tells Pezeshkian; Iran says talks will only succeed without 'threats'

AFP, *Ashgabat*

Russia's President Vladimir Putin has vowed to "do everything" to help end the Middle East war when he met Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian for talks ahead of a regional summit, Russian media reported.

The leaders of two of the world's most sanctioned nations met after arriving in Turkmenistan for a summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) that started yesterday in the Caspian Sea resort of Avaza.

"We are ready to do everything that is in our power to contribute to the settlement of this situation," said Putin.

He added that Iran had made "real efforts to end the war" since US-Israeli attacks started on February 28, according to Russian news agencies.

Putin also noted the "positive evolution" in Iran-Russia relations.

The two countries have reinforced diplomatic and military links since Russia launched its offensive in Ukraine in February 2022, becoming increasingly reliant on each other.

The contacts came with Iran-US talks at an apparent impasse. Pezeshkian said this week that negotiations with Washington were "meaningless".

Diplomatic efforts to resolve Russia's offensive in Ukraine also appear deadlocked, even as both sides intensify attacks.

"We are engaged in dialogue, but every time we negotiate with the United States, they attack again," Iranian state media quoted Pezeshkian as saying at the talks with Putin.

Trump ruled out attacking Iran again before the US midterm elections on November 3, saying on Thursday that Washington was holding "productive discussions" with the Islamic republic.



In this pool photograph distributed by the Russian state agency Sputnik, Russia's President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian hold a meeting in Turkmenbashi on Thursday. PHOTO: AFP

Pezeshkian said Tehran wanted to see a "final framework" to end the war.

"Negotiation conducted in the shadow of force is not negotiation, it is imposition and coercion," he said, warning that sanctions on Iran would affect "regional trade, connectivity, energy, and order."

Putin and Pezeshkian will attend the summit of the CIS -- originally a grouping of former Soviet nations -- with leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Turkmenistan and other Central Asia states.

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e-Tender Notice

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Faridpur for the procurement of:

Sl. No	Tender ID No/ Package No	Name of works	Last date and time for Tender Security submission	Tender Closing/ Opening Date & Time.
1	2	3	4	5
1	1342562, 30/e-GP/FRD/ 2026-2027	Providing Skilled & Semi Skilled Labour for Executing Road repairing Branch Triming, Clearing & Grabbing of Roadway Embankment at November-2026 Under Road-Sub Division-II, Section-III Under Road division, Faridpur During the Financial year 2026-2027.	19/10/2026 12:00 hour	19/10/2026 12:30 hour
2	1342563, 31/e-GP/FRD/ 2026-2027	Levelling of Hard Shoulder by Dense Bituminous Surfacing Wearing Course with surface of main Pavement from Ch. 0+500m to Ch. 3+670m of Bhanga-Faridpur (Goalchamot) (N-804) Road Under Road Division Faridpur during the FY 2026-2027.	19/10/2026 12:00 hour	19/10/2026 12:30 hour

e-Tender details can be downloaded from 08/10/2026 time: 23:00 to 18/10/2026, time: 17:00 of e-GP system portal http://www.eprocure.gov.bd for pursue.
e-Tenders will be accepted only as stated in above list, accepted tenders will be opened online immediately as stated in above list.

(Khalid Saifullah Sardar)
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