

# DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

07 July 2026

## Security

- ◆ **GHQ's Firm Resolve Against Cross-Border Terror** — At the 276th Corps Commanders' Conference chaired by **Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir**, Pakistan's military leadership declared it would continue counterterrorism operations against groups using Afghan Taliban-controlled territory. The forum warned that *"lasting peace and stability in the region is contingent upon preventing use of Afghan Taliban-controlled territory by Indian terrorist proxies"*. Under **Operation Ghazab-Lil-Haq**, intelligence-based operations will target sanctuaries across the frontier. The military also emphasised dismantling the **terror-crime nexus**, countering hybrid warfare, and reaffirmed support for Kashmir's right to self-determination. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **AJK Government Links JAAC to India-Backed Agenda** — The 'Azad' Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) government has accused the proscribed **Joint Awami Action Committee (Jaac)** of inflicting **financial losses of Rs15 billion** through violent activities and alleged ties with anti-state elements backed by India. Information Secretary **Muhammad Rashid Hanif** claimed the group, which began as a public movement during the COVID-19 inflation crisis, was later hijacked by foreign-backed actors. He alleged Jaac escalated from peaceful protests to organised violence, including attacks on officials, and accused it of using women and children as human shields. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **TLP Workers Booked Under Terror Charges** — Police in Hyderabad registered two cases under the **Anti-Terrorism Act** against 41 members of the banned **Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP)**, including district and tehsil emirs. FIRs alleged they gathered outside Hyderabad Press Club and near the Sui Gas office to recruit people into the proscribed organisation, fleeing when police attempted arrests. **Seven leaders and workers were remanded for seven days by the Anti-Terrorism Court**. Officials said the accused continued political and religious activities despite the federal ban. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Terrorists Strike Quetta's Hina Urak Resort** — Four residents were killed and nine injured when terrorists attacked locals at the tourist spot of **Hina Urak** near Quetta. **Tribesmen resisted the assault, forcing militants to flee**, while security forces killed three attackers and continue searching for seven abductees. Interior Minister **Mir Ziaullah Langau** praised locals' courage, condemned external backing of terrorism, and confirmed a joint checkpoint has been established. Deputy Chief Minister **Shahid Rind** vowed the operation would continue until the area is fully cleared, stressing, *"The state stands firmly with its people."* (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Nine Policemen Martyred in Ziarat Attack** — At least **nine policemen, including two senior officers, were martyred** in a terrorist assault on a police post in Balochistan's **Ziarat district**, confirmed Deputy Commissioner **Abdul Qudoos Achakzai**. The incident occurred in the **Mangi Dam area**, with five policemen still missing as reinforcements were dispatched. The attack follows recent assaults on police installations in Qila Abdullah, Pishin and Duki. Despite this, data from

the **Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS)** noted a “significant decline” in terrorism in Balochistan during June. (*Dawn*, [7 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Indus Waters Treaty at a Strategic Crossroads** — Retired Lt Gen **Muhammad Saeed**, now Chairman of WAPDA, warns that India’s unilateral suspension of the **Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)** in May 2025 has created an existential challenge for Pakistan’s water, food and energy security. He stresses that the **Chenab River’s predictable flows are indispensable** for the Indus Basin Irrigation System, irrigating nearly 10 million acres. Saeed argues Pakistan must respond through **diplomacy, legal action and accelerated water development**, including completion of major dams and modernisation of basin management. He concludes: “Preserving the treaty’s faithful implementation is indispensable for safeguarding Pakistan’s water, food and energy security.” (*Dawn*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Army Vows to Safeguard Pakistan’s Water Rights** — At the **276th Corps Commanders’ Conference** chaired by **Field Marshal Asim Munir** at GHQ, Rawalpindi, the military leadership reaffirmed its commitment to take “all measures necessary” to ensure Pakistan’s rightful share of water under the **Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)**. The forum condemned India’s unilateral suspension of the treaty and hybrid warfare tactics, pledging continued **intelligence-based operations under Operation Ghazab-lil-Haq** against terrorist proxies using Afghan soil. It also reiterated support for **Kashmir’s right to self-determination**, stressing that “true regional stability hinges entirely on granting the Kashmiri people their inalienable right”. (*Dawn*, [7 July 2026](#))

## Economy

- ◆ **SBP Launches InvestPak for Small Investors** — The **State Bank of Pakistan (SBP)** has unveiled *InvestPak*, a digital platform opening the **Rs82 trillion sovereign debt market** to ordinary citizens for the first time. Individuals can now buy government securities directly via the web or mobile devices, bypassing intermediaries. Finance Minister **Muhammad Aurangzeb** hailed it as advancing a digitally inclusive economy, saying, “This is about making participation simpler, more inclusive, and more accessible.” SBP Governor **Jameel Ahmad** called it “a defining milestone” under Strategic Vision 2028. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Budget Secures Stability but Misses Reforms** — Economists **Dr Sajid Amin Javed (SDPI)** and **Dr Afia Malik (ex-PIDE)** warn Pakistan’s FY2026-27 budget has achieved short-term stability but failed to tackle **structural issues in taxation, energy and investment**. Javed said the budget offered “breathing room” yet missed broadening the tax base, estimating reforms could yield Rs400–500 billion annually. Malik described it as another “stabilisation budget,” stressing reforms in **SOEs, exports, energy and governance** are vital. Both emphasised that durable recovery must be **investment-led, not reliant on public spending**. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **OGRA–Oil Industry Talks to Break Stalemate** — The **Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra)** has called a meeting on **8 July** with chief executives of over 30 oil marketing companies (OMCs), including **PSO, Attock Petroleum, Hascol, Parco, Gunvor, Cnergyico and Puma Energy**, to address longstanding regulatory and financial disputes. Key issues include **Rs66 billion in unpaid price differential claims (PDCs)**, stagnant marketing margins since September 2023, and frequent revisions to the petroleum pricing formula. Industry officials say resolving these matters is vital for the **long-term sustainability of Pakistan’s downstream petroleum sector**. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **PBC Proposes \$1.9 Billion Export Boost** — The **Pakistan Business Council (PBC)** has presented an export acceleration plan to Finance Minister **Muhammad Aurangzeb**, targeting **\$1.1–1.9 billion in incremental exports within 12 months**, including \$450–700 million in July–December 2026. PBC Chairperson **Dr Zeelaf Munir** unveiled “*Building Brand Pakistan: Unlocking Processed Food Export Potential*”, urging a shift from commodity-led to brand-led exports and stressing “*policy stability and public-private partnership*”. PBC CEO **Javed Kureishi** pledged private-sector support to scale Pakistan’s global market presence. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan’s Debt Burden Hits Rs82 Trillion** — The federal government’s debt stock surged to **Rs82 trillion by May 2026**, rising by Rs5.9 trillion in one year at an average of Rs16 billion per day, according to the **State Bank of Pakistan (SBP)**. The increase of 7.8% outpaced inflation, highlighting weak debt management. The **Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP)** flagged a **budget anomaly of Rs1.83 trillion**, citing irrational loan repayment allocations. Concerns deepen as the **Debt Management Office remains headless for six months**, undermining accountability. Interest payments have crossed Rs8 trillion this fiscal year. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Public Investment Needs Human-Centred Compass** — Former Federal Secretary **Zafar Hasan** argues Pakistan’s public investment conflates growth with development, prioritising roads and dams over health and education. The **2025 Human Development Report ranked Pakistan 168/193**, with inequality reducing its HDI by a third. The **Federal PSDP 2026–27 allocates Rs1,000 billion**, yet health gets less than 2% and higher education under 5%. Hasan urges binding ceilings on mega-projects, minimum social-sector floors, and NFC transfers tied to verified outcomes. He stresses “*infrastructure and human capital are complements, not substitutes.*” (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Gas Tariff Notification Missed Amid Debt Crisis** — Pakistan has failed to meet its **1 July IMF structural benchmark** for notifying biannual gas tariffs under the \$7bn Extended Fund Facility, with circular debt in the gas sector exceeding **Rs3.44 trillion**. Officials cited legal challenges to the appointment of acting OGRA chief **Nabeel Ahmad Awan** and disputes over **unaccounted-for-gas (UFG) reduction targets**. While OGRA has completed procedural requirements, companies sought more time to commit to CTS-specific UFG strategies. Finance Minister **Muhammad Aurangzeb** reaffirmed IMF commitments to cost-recovery tariffs, pledging reforms to curb debt and improve energy viability. (*Dawn*, [7 July 2026](#))

## Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Historic Pakistan–Kyrgyzstan Engagement** — President **Asif Ali Zardari** began his official visit to Kyrgyzstan, warmly received by President **Sadyr Japarov** at Issyk-Kul International Airport with a guard of honour. This marks the **first visit by a Pakistani head of state since Benazir Bhutto’s 1995 trip**, underscoring its symbolic importance. The two leaders toured the Rukh Ordo Cultural Center, where Zardari lauded Kyrgyz hospitality and heritage. Comprehensive talks are expected on trade, energy, agriculture, education, healthcare, tourism, and regional connectivity, aimed at strengthening **brotherly relations** between Islamabad and Bishkek. (*Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan–Saudi Arabia Stadium Partnership** — Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) signed an MoU in Jeddah on Monday for a new stadium project. The agreement was inked by **Prince Saud bin Mishaal bin Muhammad Al Saud**, Chairman of the Saudi Cricket Federation,

and **Mohsin Naqvi**, PCB Chairman and Pakistan's Interior Minister. The partnership marks a significant step in expanding cricket in the Middle East and Saudi Arabia's sports growth, with Pakistan contributing expertise in stadium design, construction, and cricket facility management. (*Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan Reviews SCO Summit Preparations** — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister **Ishaq Dar** chaired the fourth meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Follow-up Committee to assess preparations for Pakistan's upcoming **SCO Council of Heads of State (CHS) chairmanship (2026–27)** and the CHS Summit to be hosted in Islamabad in 2027. Sub-committees briefed on venue, accommodation, security, finance, media, transport and logistics. Dar directed officials to **expedite work** to ensure readiness for the high-profile summit. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **PM Orders Embassies to Expand Overseas Job Opportunities** — Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** directed Pakistani embassies abroad to intensify efforts in identifying and securing employment opportunities for the country's workforce. Chairing a review meeting on youth employment, he emphasised that Pakistan's workforce has "*immense potential*" and instructed missions to share job market information with relevant ministries. He also tasked NAVTTC and the **Prime Minister's Youth Programme** to provide vocational training, foreign language courses, and internationally recognised certifications. Shehbaz stressed education and skills aligned with global standards to boost employability. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Visa-Free Proposal for Chinese Tourists in G-B** — A plan to allow **Chinese nationals visa-free entry into Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B)**, mirroring the arrangement permitting G-B residents to visit China's Xinjiang region, was presented to **PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari** and newly elected Chief Minister **Amjad Hussain**. Officials argued the move could significantly boost tourism and economic activity. They also urged the construction of an international airport in Gilgit, steps to end electricity load-shedding, and measures to address wheat shortages. Bilawal pledged **full support for G-B's development**. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Searching for an Alexander in South Asia** — Columnist **Jawed Naqvi** reflects on renewed calls by intellectuals and activists for **India–Pakistan peace talks, restoration of diplomatic ties, and easier visas**, arguing that tension hurts millions of young people. Yet he notes both governments have undermined democratic institutions, raising doubts about peaceniks' ability to alter domestic realities. He recalls solidarity across borders during Ayub Khan's rule and debates among poets **Fahmida Riaz** and **Ahmed Faraz** on supporting democracy abroad. With Modi's **Operation Sindoor** and Pakistan's **Operation Bunyan um Marsoos**, Naqvi warns **peace may resemble a Korean-style armistice**. He concludes by asking if anyone can cut the Gordian Knot of hostility, invoking the legend of **Alexander the Great**. (*Dawn*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan Steps into Libya Mediation Role** — Islamabad has quietly begun mediating between Libya's rival eastern and western administrations, marking a significant expansion of its diplomatic profile. **Reuters sources claim the US is "fully aware and involved"**, while Saudi Arabia is also supportive. The initiative follows Pakistan's earlier mediation between the US and Iran. Chief of Defence Forces **Field Marshal Asim Munir** recently met eastern commander **Saddam Haftar** in Rawalpindi, ahead of Haftar's Washington visit. Pakistan is engaging both sides, with the GNU backed by **Qatar and Turkiye** also seeking talks. Defence ties, including potential **JF-17 jet sales**, are being explored despite a UN arms embargo. (*Dawn*, [7 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Armenia Names First Envoy to Pakistan** — Armenia has appointed **Karen Grigoryan** as its first-ever Ambassador to Pakistan, according to a presidential decree. Grigoryan, already serving as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the UAE, will hold concurrent accreditation to Pakistan with residence in Abu Dhabi. Diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Armenia were formally established in **August 2025**, after decades of non-recognition due to Pakistan's support for Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The peace agreement and Azerbaijan's restoration of control paved the way for Islamabad and Yerevan to normalise ties. (*The News*, [7 July 2026](#))

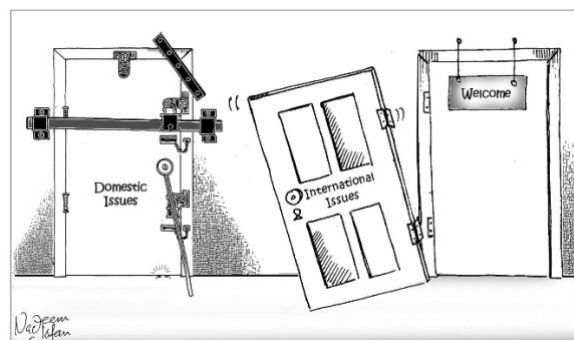
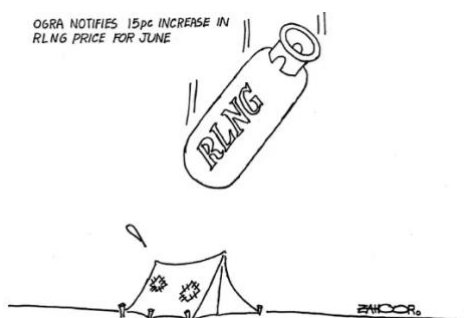
## Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **PTI's Conditional Re-entry into AJK Polls** — Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman **Gohar Ali Khan** signalled the party may reconsider its boycott of the 'Azad' Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Legislative Assembly elections if given a level playing field. He stressed the boycott was a "difficult decision" but insisted, "*in politics nothing is final*". The move followed unrest after the ban on the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), deadly clashes, and **arrests of political workers, restrictions on media coverage, and supply disruptions**. PTI's legal status remains unresolved pending Supreme Court review. (*Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **PPP's Expanding Footprint in Judicial Appointments** — As Chief Justice **Yahya Afridi** convenes Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) meetings to fill high court vacancies, **PPP Senator Farooq H Naek** has pitched 33 names across four high courts. This move revives debate over PPP's growing influence after the **26th and 27th Constitutional Amendments**, with critics recalling the party's earlier judicial appointments under **CJP Abdul Hameed Dogar** that were later invalidated. Naek's list includes 16 for the SHC, 10 for the LHC, five for the BHC and two for the IHC, signalling PPP's bid for a larger role. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Re-polling Announced in Diamer Constituencies** — The Election Commission of Gilgit-Baltistan (ECGB) has scheduled **re-polling on 12 July 2026** at selected polling stations in Diamer district, following directives of the G-B Supreme Appellate Court. Voting will take place at the Female Polling Station Lushi Thak in **GBA-15 (Diamer-I)** and at eight polling stations in **GBA-17 (Diamer-III)**. Chief Election Commissioner **Raja Shehbaz Khan** emphasised that the process must be conducted in a "*transparent, free, fair, impartial and peaceful manner*", urging eligible voters to responsibly exercise their right to vote. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **SC Seeks Replies on Imaan Mazari Sentence Plea** — The Supreme Court on Monday issued notices to the federation and other respondents on a petition seeking suspension of sentences awarded to **lawyer Imaan Mazari** and **Barrister Hadi Ali Chattha**, while noting that the Islamabad High Court (IHC) should hear and decide their pending application. Counsel **Faisal Siddiqi** argued, "*Our only request is that the high court fix the case and decide it, even if the decision goes against us*". Justice **Muhammad Ali Mazhar** observed the SC generally does not interfere in interim high court orders. The matter is adjourned until 21 July. (*The Express Tribune*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Khetran Removed from Balochistan Cabinet** — The **Governor of Balochistan**, acting on the advice of Chief Minister **Sarfraz Bugti**, has removed **Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran (PML-N)** from his post as Minister for Public Health Engineering under **Article 132(3) of the Constitution**. A notification was issued by the Services and General Administration Department on Monday evening. Sources cited growing differences between Bugti and Khetran, which deepened over time

and led to his dismissal. Khetran, currently abroad, was unavailable for comment. He is the second minister removed, following PPP's **Mir Ali Hassan Zehri** earlier. (*Dawn*, [7 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Court Acquits Blasphemy Accused Over Weak Evidence** — A Lahore sessions court acquitted a man accused of desecrating the Holy Quran, ruling the prosecution failed to establish any direct link between him and the alleged act. **Witnesses could not identify the accused**, while a key eyewitness was dropped, depriving the case of corroboration. **Digital evidence was deemed inadmissible** as CCTV footage was never verified or played in court. The judge stressed that “*even a single circumstance creating reasonable doubt entitles an accused to acquittal as a matter of right*”. (*Dawn*, [7 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Water Quality Crisis in Gilgit-Baltistan and Upper Indus** — Researchers **Nelam Pari** (SDPI) and **Ehtisham Ullah** (Planning & Development Department, GB) warn that despite abundant glacier-fed water, **67.1% of source samples and 74.8% of household samples tested positive for E. coli**, leaving only 15.8% of the population with safely managed drinking water. District disparities are stark, with contamination highest in Gilgit and Astore, though Hunza fares better. The authors stress that “*water abundance does not necessarily translate into water safety*”, urging integrated monitoring, sanitation reforms, and climate-resilient infrastructure. (*Business Recorder*, [7 July 2026](#))

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