

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

09 July 2026

Security

- ◆ **Pakistan's Military Leadership Vows to Crush Cross-Border Terrorism, Accuses India of Acting as Spoiler:** On 8 July 2026, Pakistan's Chief of Defence Forces, Field Marshal Asim Munir, addressed faculty and participants at the **National Defence University in Islamabad** during a convocation ceremony, where he delivered a pointed message on the country's counterterrorism resolve. He declared that *"terrorism emanating from across the borders will be crushed with full might of the state"*, stressing that sanctuaries and facilitators of proxy groups would be dismantled. Munir warned hostile intelligence agencies—implicitly India—against destabilising Pakistan, adding that *"wars are not won through media rhetoric or political sloganeering but through faith, unity and discipline"*. His remarks were framed as both reassurance to domestic audiences and a signal to external actors that Pakistan's military remains resolute in countering hybrid and sub-conventional threats.

Complementing this, DG ISPR Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry held a press briefing in Rawalpindi, where he directly accused India of orchestrating recent violence with Afghan facilitation. He alleged that *"India and its aligned enemy forces, operating with the facilitation of illegitimate Afghan regime, are behind three major terrorist attacks in Balochistan over the past four days"*. He reported that 54 militants were killed in operations, while 42 Pakistanis, including soldiers, policemen and civilians, were martyred.

The **major attacks between 1–8 July 2026** that prompted these statements were:

1. The N-25 Highway Convoy Ambush

In the deadliest direct strike on the military during this window, militants belonging to the banned Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) set up a blockade on the strategic **N-25 highway**. When a Pakistan Army convoy moved in to respond, it was heavily ambushed.

- **Casualties:** 11 soldiers were killed in the initial engagement.
- **Military Counter-response:** 14 militants were killed on-site, and subsequent intelligence-based operations in Kharan and Dalbandin killed an additional 14 insurgents.

2. The Mangi Dam Assault and Mass Execution (Ziarat District)

Militants launched a coordinated, multi-directional assault on a police check-post guarding the under-construction Mangi Dam project in the mountainous Ziarat district.

- **The Attack:** Overwhelming the position, the attackers initially killed **9 police officers** (including two high-ranking officers) and overran the post.

- **The Abduction & Executions:** The insurgents took the surviving **18 police officers hostage** and retreated into the mountains. Army and Frontier Corps (FC) reinforcements surrounded the area to launch a rescue operation, but during the intense subsequent clashes, the militants executed all 18 abducted policemen.

3. Hanna Urak Civilian Attack

During the night between July 4 and 5, BLA militants targeted local residents in the Hanna Urak area. While villagers resisted the assault and forced a retreat, **4 civilians were killed** and 6 others were left injured.

Together, Munir's strategic framing and Chaudhry's operational detail reveal a deliberate narrative: Pakistan is positioning India as the principal external destabiliser while projecting military resolve and national unity. The dual emphasis reflects an effort to consolidate domestic support and internationalise Pakistan's security concerns, signalling a hardening of Islamabad's stance with implications for regional stability. (*Dawn*, [09 July 2026](#), *The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Security lapses under scrutiny after Mangi Dam attack** — Following a deadly ambush in Ziarat's Kach Mangi Phase III that killed nine police officers, including two SHOs, the Balochistan government suspended the district SP and ordered a high-level inquiry. **Terrorists abducted civilians and police personnel, though some escaped and one constable was rescued.** The committee, empowered to summon officials and inspect records, will review security arrangements and recommend reforms. CM Bugti warned that *"negligence or incompetence in protecting lives and property will not be tolerated."* (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Counterterror operations intensify in Balochistan** — Security forces killed 54 terrorists in sweeping operations after three major attacks left 42 civilians and personnel dead. **DG ISPR Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said most slain terrorists were Afghan nationals linked to "Indian proxy Fitna al Khawarij".** He praised police for *"defending with courage"* during the Ziarat assault. Field Marshal Asim Munir vowed that cross-border terrorism would be crushed, stressing that sanctuaries and facilitators would be dismantled. **"There is no one in this world who can deter the State of Pakistan,"** Chaudhry declared. (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Investor confidence shaken by worsening security** — The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (OICCI) Security Survey 2026 revealed that **71% of foreign firms rank law and order among their top three business concerns.** Security perceptions deteriorated sharply in Karachi and Balochistan, with street crime rising and confidence in local police declining. OICCI Secretary General M Abdul Aleem stressed that *"security should be viewed as a critical economic enabler"* and urged targeted interventions. **Despite challenges, 87% of members remain confident of holding board meetings in Pakistan.** (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Shifting power dynamics beyond the Middle East war** — In her analysis, public policy analyst *Durdana Najam* argues that the recent conflict involving Israel, Iran and the United States revealed limits of military dominance and underscored diplomacy's renewed importance. **"Even overwhelming military superiority has limits,"** she notes, highlighting Iran's resilience and Arab states' refusal to be drawn into wider war. Najam situates this within a broader transition from American primacy to a "multiplex world" where middle powers like Pakistan, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia gain relevance by mediating and building consensus. (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan's quiet shift to MENAAP** — In his column, *Irfan Mustafa* highlights the World Bank's reclassification of Pakistan into the **Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan (MENAAP)** grouping from FY26. He argues this reflects Pakistan's growing economic and strategic ties to the Gulf, noting its labour flows, remittances and investment future are now Gulf-linked. Mustafa stresses that Pakistan should seize this as a **strategic opening**, repositioning itself as a connector economy and skills partner. He cautions, however, that confidence must be tempered with vigilance against bloc politics. (*The News*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan and Russia forge joint counterterrorism plan** — At the UN Chiefs of Police Summit, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met Russian counterpart Vladimir Kolokoltsev and agreed to develop a **joint strategy against Afghan-based terrorist networks**, with plans for an MoU, joint police exercises and enhanced cooperation in counter-narcotics, cybercrime and training. Naqvi warned that “*more than 25 terrorist organisations are active in Afghanistan*” and stressed collective responsibility. He also met China's Ling Zhifeng, reaffirming security cooperation. Addressing UNCOPS-2026, Naqvi urged **global law-enforcement partnerships**, stressing “*No country can deal with them alone.*” (*Dawn*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **India's overseas shadow network exposed** — This editorial argues that US indictments from **Operation Hardball** have punctured India's diplomatic façade, revealing a **sophisticated organised crime-terror nexus** allegedly operating from within its prisons. The indictment details how jailed gangster Bishnoi directed violence abroad using smuggled phones, raising questions about state complicity. The piece stresses that Pakistan's long-standing warnings about India's covert methods now appear vindicated, as Western law enforcement investigates India-based actors for assassination, extortion and diaspora intimidation. It concludes that “**this matter cannot be buried under diplomatic convenience**” and demands accountability. (*Dawn*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Water must not be weaponised** — This editorial warns that India's unilateral suspension of the **Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)** is a grave violation of international law. For over six decades, the treaty has endured wars and crises, serving as a rare model of cooperation. The piece stresses that “**water security is inseparable from national security**”, with agriculture central to Pakistan's economy. Linking the Pahalgam incident to treaty suspension is condemned as unjustified. Pakistan's military leadership vowed “all necessary measures” to safeguard water rights, while urging dialogue and adherence to international law. The editorial concludes that the **World Bank and global stakeholders must act to protect treaty mechanisms**, as unilateral abrogation undermines confidence in international agreements. (*Business Recorder*, [09 July 2026](#))

Economy

- ◆ **Ahsan Iqbal urges diaspora to back Uraan Pakistan** — Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal addressed Pakistani-American business leaders in Chicago, inviting them to invest capital, networks and expertise in Pakistan's economic transformation. **He highlighted recent gains in security, diplomacy and macroeconomic stability, calling Pakistan “one of the world's leading economic turnaround stories”**. Iqbal outlined the *Uraan Pakistan* agenda, targeting a \$1 trillion economy by 2035 and \$3 trillion by 2047, anchored in the 5Es framework. “**What we need is your capital, your networks and your expertise,**” he stressed. (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **IMF warns of volatility amid low growth forecast** — The International Monetary Fund has kept Pakistan's growth forecast unchanged at 3.5% for FY2026-27, below the government's 4% target and far short of the 6% needed to create 4.5 million jobs annually. **The IMF cautioned that renewed Middle East conflict could “extend commodity price volatility, further threaten supply chains, raise prices, and weigh on financial conditions.”** Crude oil prices have already risen by \$8 per barrel, raising diesel import costs. Global inflation is projected to climb to 4.7% in 2026. (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **World Bank reviews Tarbela extension safeguards** — A World Bank mission visited the Tarbela Fifth Extension Hydropower Project in Haripur to assess progress on environmental, social and occupational health and safety measures. **The delegation, led by Dr Chudi Okafor and Pablo Cardinale, inspected project sites and reviewed compliance with regulatory standards.** Senior specialists Imranul Haq and Sana Ahmed joined the mission, which Project Director Umair Mannan and officials from the Environmental and Social Management Unit briefed. **Focus remained on environmental management, social safeguards and OHS compliance.** (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Sindh launches Rs2b fund for HIV-affected children** — The Sindh Employees' Social Security Institution (SESSI) approved a Rs2 billion endowment fund to provide treatment and welfare for children affected by HIV. **Minister for Labour Saeed Ghani, chairing the meeting, vowed “no one involved will be given any leniency”** as 37 doctors and paramedical staff were suspended following an inquiry into the outbreak at Valika Hospital, with 78 cases confirmed so far. Ghani termed the incident a *serious tragedy* and assured families of continued support. (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Mounting debt crisis threatens Pakistan's stability** — Pakistan's federal debt has surged to Rs82 trillion, rising by **Rs16 billion daily** and outpacing inflation and growth. Short-term external debt has skyrocketed thirteenfold in a year, largely due to current government policies. **Interest payments now exceed Rs8 trillion, consuming nearly half the federal budget.** The Auditor General flagged anomalies adding Rs1.83 trillion in costs, while the debt office remains headless. The editorial warns that without sustained growth and reforms, poverty will deepen as debt continues to spiral. (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan's economic prospects amid regional peace** — In his column, Ishrat Husain, former World Bank country director for Central Asian Republics, argues that Pakistan is well placed to benefit from emerging opportunities if US-Iran talks yield stability. He stresses that after restoring macroeconomic stability, the challenge is to pursue **investment-led, export-oriented and inclusive growth**, warning that reforms must be implemented with accountability. Husain highlights immediate opportunities with *Iran, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia*, noting that the real dividend lies not in aid but in **expanding trade, attracting investment and acquiring technology.** (*Dawn*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Islamabad seeks tariff relief in US talks** — Pakistan and the United States began two-day trade negotiations in Washington, with **tariffs dominating the agenda** as Islamabad seeks relief from new US import duties and pursues a broader trade agreement. Led by Commerce Secretary *Jawad Paul*, the delegation aims to finalise a framework for expanded bilateral commerce. The talks follow President Trump's tariff measures, including a temporary 10pc global duty expiring July 24, and

ongoing Section 301 investigations. The US remains Pakistan's largest export market, underscoring the stakes of these negotiations. (*Dawn*, [09 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Iran-Pakistan pipeline needs a reset** — In his column, **Shahid Sattar** warns that without a functioning gas market and lower prices, the Iran-Pakistan pipeline risks becoming a **taxpayer liability rather than an energy-security asset**. He notes the current formula could make Iranian gas more expensive than RLNG, while lacking flexibility and reliable supply. Industry and households cannot absorb such costs, leaving the project commercially weak. Sattar argues Pakistan must prioritise **gas market reform, competitive pricing and enforceable contracts**, stressing that physical connectivity alone does not equal energy security. (*Business Recorder*, [09 July 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Diplomacy over confrontation** — Pakistan's Foreign Office voiced **deep concern** over escalating Middle East tensions, warning that collapse of the fragile US–Iran ceasefire could destabilise regional peace and global energy markets. Stressing that **“a renewed conflict is in no one's interest”**, Islamabad urged restraint and preservation of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding, which it described as **“an enduring foundation for understanding, mutual respect and shared prosperity.”** Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar recently appealed to both sides to sustain dialogue despite violations. (*The Express Tribune*, [9 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan deepens global security cooperation** — Pakistan and China reaffirmed their strategic security partnership at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, pledging to expand counterterrorism cooperation, strengthen border management, and intensify efforts against illegal immigration and drug trafficking. **Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and China's Vice Minister of Public Security Ling Zhifeng vowed to confront terrorism and emerging challenges together.** Naqvi also met Russian Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev and Sri Lankan Interior Minister Anand Wijepala, with all sides agreeing to bolster collaboration across security and law enforcement sectors. (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Special Iranian flight awaits clearance for Lahore** — An Iranian airline's extra flight scheduled to arrive in Lahore on Wednesday was unable to depart Tehran as **Pakistani authorities had not yet granted landing permission.** Airport sources confirmed the service was not a regular commercial flight but a special operation requiring prior approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Officials stated the Iranian government had already submitted the request, and the aircraft will be allowed to depart once clearance is issued. **Formal approval is mandatory for such flights.** (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **US consulates in Lahore and Karachi to reopen** — The United States embassy announced that regular consular services will resume in Lahore and Karachi from 20 July, months after suspension due to violent anti-US protests. **Operations were halted in March after demonstrators breached the Karachi consulate perimeter, prompting US Marine Security Guards to open fire, leaving at least 10 protesters dead.** The embassy confirmed that services will include US citizen assistance and visa processing. Officials cautioned against using external sources for appointments, urging applications via the official website. (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))

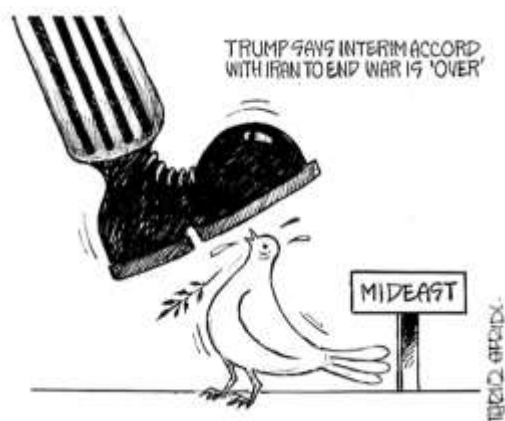
- ◆ **Pakistan and Bulgaria reaffirm partnership** — Pakistan and Bulgaria pledged to strengthen ties through **parliamentary diplomacy, trade expansion and educational exchanges** during a meeting between MNA **Zeb Jaffar**, Convener of the Pakistan-Bulgaria Parliamentary Friendship Group, and Bulgarian Foreign Ministry official **Petko Doykov**. Ambassador **Irena Gancheva** also joined the delegation. Jaffar emphasised six decades of cordial relations and called for enhanced collaboration in climate change, agriculture, youth exchange and culture. Highlighting Bulgaria's strategic location, she urged greater investment and cooperation via the Pakistan-EU Business Forum. (*The News*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **China's people-centred modernisation under CPC** — At a seminar marking the CPC's 105th anniversary, **Prof Gao Jian**, Secretary-General of Shanghai International Studies University, said China's governance model rooted in its own realities has **"proved Fukuyama's claim wrong that modernisation would ultimately take the form of Westernisation."** He stressed that Chinese modernisation is not a template but a people-oriented approach. Former ambassador **Masood Khalid** traced CPC's journey from Mao to Xi, while **Moin ul Haque** highlighted its Global South engagement. **Shi Yuangqiang** of China's Embassy cited Xi Jinping's emphasis on truth, global vision and self-governance. (*The News*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Croatian FM's landmark visit to Pakistan** — Croatia's Foreign Minister Gordan Grlić Radman arrives in Islamabad today for the **first-ever visit by a Croatian foreign minister**, signalling intent to broaden cooperation. Invited by Deputy PM and FM Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Radman will hold talks covering trade, investment, education, defence, IT and maritime affairs, alongside regional and global issues. He will also meet PM Shehbaz Sharif and Senate Chairman Yousaf Raza Gilani to reinforce political and parliamentary contacts. The Foreign Office said the visit would provide **fresh momentum to bilateral ties**. (*The Nation*, [09 July 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **Burhan Wani remembered as symbol of 'resistance'** — On the 10th anniversary of Burhan Muzaffar Wani's death, a rally in Muzaffarabad drew leaders of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, officials, refugees, and youth. **Participants carried Pakistani and AJK flags and chanted slogans against India and in support of Wani.** Speakers described him as *"a symbol of the Kashmir freedom movement"* whose legacy continues to inspire. Shaukat Javed Mir, spokesperson for the AJK Prime Minister, emphasised that Kashmiris remain committed to self-determination, condemning India's human rights violations. (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Bilawal and Dar emphasise transparent polls in AJK** — PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari met Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar in Islamabad to review the situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Dar congratulated Bilawal on forming the government in G-B, while Bilawal thanked the DPM for PML-N's support in establishing an elected administration. **Both leaders agreed on the importance of holding free, fair, and transparent forthcoming general elections in AJK.** (*The Express Tribune*, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **PM Shehbaz to assess Balochistan's security crisis** — Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is set to chair a high-level meeting in Quetta today to review law and order after three major terrorist attacks killed 42 people. **Authorities will brief him on the prevailing security situation, while the provincial Apex Committee will convene.** Earlier, CM Sarfraz Bugti warned that *"anyone*

*challenging the writ of the state will face only defeat and destruction” and vowed operations would continue until the last militant was eliminated. **Peace and stability in Balochistan remain non-negotiable.** (The Express Tribune, [09 July 2026](#))*

- ◆ **PM insists on transparency in GB solar project** — Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed the Power Division to ensure **full transparency and third-party validation** in the procurement of Gilgit-Baltistan’s 100MW solar project, describing it as a federal gift to the region. The plan includes 18MW rooftop systems with storage on 499 government buildings by December 2026. He also paid tribute to *Madr-e-Millat Fatima Jinnah* and humanitarian *Abdul Sattar Edhi*, while expressing condolences over a cargo plane crash and China’s storm devastation. **Solar energy remains central to Pakistan’s clean power strategy.** (The News, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **APC calls for reconciliation in Balochistan** — The *Save Balochistan All Parties Conference*, chaired by former CM Akhtar Jan Mengal, declared the province’s crisis a **political, constitutional and human rights issue**, urging a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The declaration condemned “exploitative policies” and demanded repeal of the Mines and Minerals Act, revival of border trade, and release of political prisoners including **Bushra Bibi, Dr Mahrang Baloch and Ali Wazir**. Ex-PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi lamented, “*Politics has turned into hatred and enmity... the youth of Balochistan are disappointed.*” (The News, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Indus Valley facts and prejudice** — In his column, journalist *Omar Quraishi* critiques Indian media claims that Pakistanis have only just “discovered” Mohenjo Daro and Harappa. He stresses these sites have long been part of Pakistan’s **curriculum, cultural identity and even currency**, noting “*These are hardly the actions of a nation only now becoming aware of its own past.*” Quraishi warns that prejudice distorts facts, with misinformation spreading faster than evidence. He concludes the Indus Valley Civilisation belongs to all humanity, and its greatest centres lie in present-day Pakistan. (The News, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Two Christian cricketers killed in Mastung** — Unknown gunmen on motorcycles opened fire at a cricket ground in Mastung, killing **two local players from the Christian community**. The victims died instantly from multiple bullet wounds. Police shifted the bodies to the district hospital, while grieving families and community members blocked the highway in protest, placing the victims’ bodies there. The attack highlights ongoing insecurity in Balochistan, where targeted violence continues to claim lives and fuel unrest. (Dawn, [09 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **NA panel alarmed over K-IV funding gap** — The National Assembly Standing Committee on Economic Affairs voiced **deep concern over the slow progress of Karachi’s K-IV Water Supply Project**, noting only Rs10bn allocated against Rs78bn required. Chaired by Dr Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, the committee warned delays could hinder adequate water supply and demanded a full briefing on finances and timelines. It also flagged cost disparities in the Lyari Elevated Freight Corridor financing with Korea’s Exim Bank, urging more prudent options. Members stressed strict adherence to timelines for CAREC Tranche-III and cautioned that regional energy shocks continue to pose risks to Pakistan’s economy. (The Nation, [09 July 2026](#))



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