

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

11 August 2026

Security

- ◆ **Iran reassured on Makkah Accord's defensive nature** — Pakistan has emphasised that the **Makkah Joint Defence Agreement** with Saudi Arabia and Türkiye is “**not an instrument of confrontation**” but a defensive pact aimed at regional stability. Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** hailed it as “a profound honour” to safeguard Makkah and Madinah, while Deputy PM/Foreign Minister **Ishaq Dar** stressed it strengthens collective deterrence under **Article 51 of the UN Charter**. Dar reassured Iranian FM **Abbas Araghchi** that the accord is defensive, with Araghchi responding positively. In Tehran, spokesperson **Esmail Baghaei** said Iran sees “no reason to be concerned,” noting the pact reflects regional states’ shift away from reliance on US security guarantees. The federal cabinet unanimously endorsed the accord, calling it a milestone for Muslim unity. (*The News*, [11 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Five Militants Killed in Panjgur Operation** — Security forces killed five terrorists, including a key commander named **Wazir, son of Jamal**, during an intelligence-based operation in **Sarkeni and Chidgi areas of Panjgur, Balochistan**. The action was part of **Operation Radd-ul-Fitna-3**, launched after reports of **Fitna al-Hindustan** militants in the region. The federal government last year officially designated all terrorist groups operating in Balochistan under this label, accusing India of sponsoring a proxy war through these outfits. (*The Express Tribune*, [11 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Tripartite Defence Pact and Shifting Security Architecture** — Writing in his column, **Ambassador M. Alam Brohi** explains that Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey have signed a **Mutual Defence Pact in Makkah**, a move reflecting Gulf States’ growing insecurity amid the ongoing war against Iran. He notes that **Iran has threatened attacks on energy and civilian infrastructure** while US military presence has failed to reassure allies. The pact, he argues, signals both **erosion of confidence in Washington’s security umbrella** and fear of Iran’s rise. Brohi cautions that inclusion of Turkey gives the pact “an aura of a budding security alliance,” while future membership of other states will depend on US and Iranian reactions. He adds that **China and Russia may welcome erosion of US influence**, but will expect Iran not to be excluded from any new architecture. Pakistan, he concludes, must balance its commitments to Saudi Arabia with its ties to Iran and China. (*The Nation*, [11 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Peripheral Peace as National Strategy** — In his commentary, **Dr Talat Shabbir (PhD in International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University)** argues that Pakistan’s geography, at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East, makes **peace in the periphery a precondition for economic progress and internal stability**. He stresses that Pakistan cannot afford an insecure western frontier while seeking connectivity, and calls for **credible deterrence, purposeful diplomacy, secure borders, and development of neglected regions**. He concludes:

“Pakistan cannot secure its future by looking inward only... Peace in the periphery should be treated as a national strategy.” (Daily Times, [11 August 2026](#))

Economy

- ◆ **US Reaffirms Support for Pakistan’s Economic Reforms** — Finance Minister **Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb** met US Chargé d’Affaires **Natalie Baker** to discuss strengthening **Pakistan–US economic cooperation**. Aurangzeb briefed her on his recent Washington visit, including talks with the **US Treasury, IMF, DFC and EXIM Bank**, highlighting opportunities for investment and financing. He emphasised Pakistan’s focus on **structural reforms, fiscal discipline, export-led growth and diversifying financing sources**. Baker appreciated Pakistan’s efforts to stabilise the economy amid regional challenges and **reaffirmed US support for Pakistan’s economic reform agenda**, expressing interest in expanding bilateral trade and investment. (*The Nation*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Foreign Investors’ Confidence in Pakistan** — The **Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI)** reported that its member companies have invested **over \$23 billion in Pakistan during the past decade**, surpassing the country’s cumulative net FDI inflows of \$21 billion. According to the *Members’ Contribution to the Economy 2025* report, OICCI members generated **Rs13.1 trillion in gross revenue**, maintained **Rs42 trillion in assets**, invested **Rs615 billion in CAPEX**, and contributed **Rs3.2 trillion in government levies**. Secretary General **M Abdul Aleem** stated: *“Their cumulative investment of over USD 23 billion during the past decade is a strong vote of confidence in Pakistan’s future.”* (*The Nation*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **World Bank Warns Against Fund Diversion in Balochistan** — The **World Bank** has expressed strong displeasure over the redirection of funds from a **resilient housing programme for flood-affected families** in Balochistan to infrastructure projects, warning this could **“deepen poverty, raise disaster risk and erode trust in institutions.”** Country Director **Boloromaa Amgaabazar** cautioned that 119,049 verified households risk exclusion, with 84pc of beneficiaries classed as ultra-poor. She stressed that grievances must be addressed transparently, noting that families may otherwise remain in unsafe housing, forced to divert income from food, healthcare and education. (*Dawn*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Long-term Growth Imperative for Pakistan’s Future** — Business leaders warn that Pakistan’s current **3.7% GDP growth** is inadequate to sustain a population projected to reach **400 million by 2040**. PIAF founder **Mian Shafqat Ali** stressed that the country must achieve **6–7% annual growth** to provide jobs, housing, healthcare and education, cautioning that “a growth rate of around 3% to 4% may provide temporary stability, but it is not enough.” Syed Mahmood Ghaznavi urged a **clear 2040 economic roadmap**, arguing that without investment in skills and productivity, the demographic dividend could become a burden. (*The Express Tribune*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Remittances Strengthen Pakistan’s External Accounts** — Pakistan’s workers’ remittances opened FY27 strongly at **\$3.63 billion in July 2026**, up **13% year-on-year** and **4.5% higher than June**. The **UK (up 23.4%) and US (up 17.6%)** led gains, while Saudi Arabia and the UAE remained dominant sources, contributing over \$1.65 billion combined. However, **Sindh and Balochistan saw**

negligible benefit, reflecting regional disparities. The State Bank noted FY26 remittances rose 8.6% to \$41.58 billion, underscoring their role as the economy's backbone. Analysts project FY27 inflows at \$40.1 billion, vital for stability. (*The Express Tribune*, [11 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Devolution and Fiscal Balance in Pakistan** — In his commentary, **Dr Hafiz A. Pasha** (Professor Emeritus at BNU and former Federal Minister) highlights the **World Bank's report on strengthening fiscal federalism**. He stresses that while the **7th NFC Award (2010)** and **18th Amendment** were milestones, their implementation has faltered. **"Local governments remain ad hoc, fiscally dependent, institutionally unstable and fully subservient to provincial discretion."** He notes that ad hoc federal measures have reduced provincial shares to **34.3% in FY27**, far below the mandated 57.5%. Dr Pasha concludes that Pakistan must empower **effective, elected local governments under Article 140A** rather than create more provinces. (*Dawn*, [11 August 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Dar Shares Defence Pact with Iran, Engages Gulf Allies** — Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister **Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar** briefed Iranian Foreign Minister **Abbas Araghchi** on the recently signed **Makkah Joint Defence Agreement** between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye, stressing its aim of **"strengthening strategic cooperation and contributing to regional peace and security."** Araghchi thanked Dar, with both agreeing to remain in close contact. Dar also spoke with **Saudi FM Prince Faisal bin Farhan** and **Kuwaiti FM Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah**, discussing multilateral cooperation, regional developments and investment ties. (*The Nation*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan-Kazakhstan Partnership Strengthened** — Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening ties with **Kazakhstan**, focusing on **regional connectivity, trade, energy, education and people-to-people exchanges**. He conveyed appreciation to Ambassador **Yerzhan Kistafin** for his role in elevating relations to a **Strategic Partnership** during President **Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's visit** earlier this year. The PM expressed warm regards to Tokayev and wished the outgoing envoy success. Ambassador Kistafin thanked Pakistan for its cooperation, expressing confidence that bilateral ties will continue to grow under the partnership framework. (*The Nation*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan and Russia Eye Agricultural Cooperation** — Federal Minister for National Food Security **Rana Tanveer Hussain** met **Nikita Buzanov** of Russia's Ministry of Economic Development to explore new avenues in agriculture and livestock. Hussain emphasised Pakistan's interest in **modern machinery, fertilisers, pesticides and vaccines**, noting their importance for productivity and food security. He also highlighted the need for stronger cooperation in **animal health and disease prevention**. Buzanov said Russian firms were ready to supply inputs and technologies, underscoring potential for expanded bilateral trade. Both sides agreed to continue consultations for **practical, result-oriented engagement**. (*The Nation*, [11 August 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **PPP gains edge in AJK's third phase** — Early, unofficial results from the **third phase of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly elections** show the **PPP leading in two constituencies**, the **PML-N ahead in one**, and an **independent candidate victorious in another**. A major upset occurred in **LA-14 Western Bagh**, where independent **Sardar Sajid Iqbal Abbasi** defeated former PM and Muslim Conference chief **Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan** in his home seat. In **LA-15 Central Bagh**, PPP's **Sardar Zia-ul-Qamar** led against rivals including ex-PM **Sardar Tanveer Ilyas**. **LA-16 Eastern Bagh** saw PML-N's **Sardar Mir Akbar Khan** ahead, while in **LA-17 Haveli-Kahuta**, incumbent PM **Faisal Mumtaz Rathore** was leading. The Election Commission clarified that results published by a private "Pakistan's Election Portal" were unofficial and not affiliated with the Commission. (*The News*, [11 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **PTI Rift Over Long March Date Deepens** — Internal divisions within **Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)** have sharpened after overseas leaders alleged that **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi** delayed the long march to **27 September** due to a "secret deal." Afridi rejected the claims as "**completely baseless**", insisting the date was jointly agreed with PTI's provincial and central leadership and the **Tehreek-e-Tahaffuz-e-Ayeen-e-Pakistan (TTAP)** alliance. He described **Aleema Khan** as "non-political" and vowed to convince her of the decision. Meanwhile, a protest outside the Islamabad High Court saw poor turnout, prompting PTI Secretary General **Salman Akram Raja** to criticise members. Afridi warned that if **Imran Khan's health** is neglected, youth anger could spiral uncontrollably. (*The News*, [11 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Senate Panel Reviews Balochistan Security and Customs Issues** — The Senate Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat, chaired by **Senator Rana Mahmood-ul-Hassan**, was briefed on the **security crisis in Balochistan**, particularly attacks on LPG tankers along the **Taftan–Quetta route**, with officials confirming losses of nearly **Rs2 billion**. Customs reported convoys now operate under security escorts, though attacks persist. Senators raised concerns about **warehouse thefts**, **rewards for customs officers**, and **smuggling cases**, while **Senator Abdul Qadir** warned that harassment of industrialists discourages investment. The committee also discussed electricity transmission, tariffs, and Fesco-related investigations, and summoned the NAB and FIA chiefs for clarification. (*The News*, [11 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Coalition Strains as PPP–PML-N Rift Widens** — The **Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)** has threatened to withdraw support from the **Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led government**, signalling a serious rupture in the ruling alliance. A senior PPP leader told *The Nation* that "**there is a lot of pressure on the chairman (Bilawal Bhutto Zardari) to leave the coalition government**", adding that trust in the PML-N is eroding daily. PPP has halted parliamentary cooperation, vowing to scrutinise and amend government bills, while leaders **Shehla Raza** and **Sharmila Faruqi** accused the PML-N of electoral misconduct and weak governance. The rift, triggered by alleged manipulation in the **AJK elections**, raises doubts about the coalition's future. (*The Nation*, [11 August 2026](#))

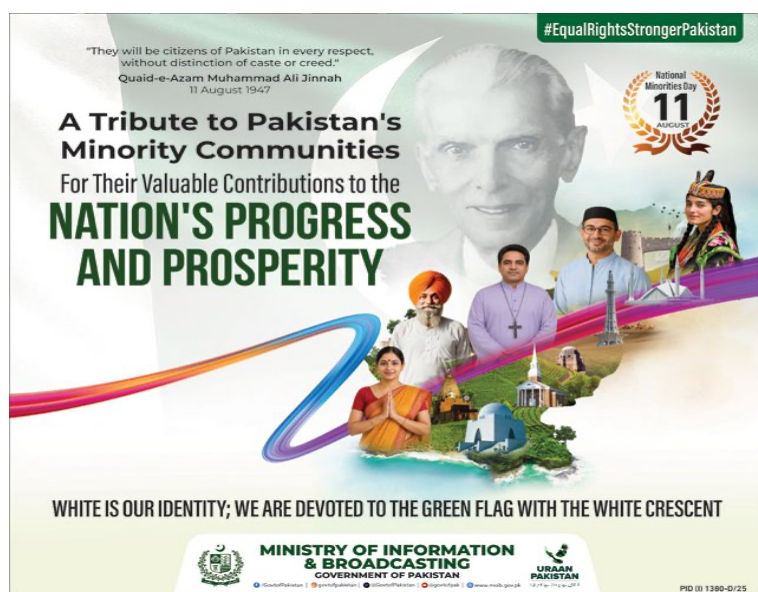
- ◆ **System Under Strain: Shehbaz's Challenge** — Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** faces no immediate threat, but criticism of his government has shifted from performance to whether the **political order itself can still deliver**. Interior Minister **Mohsin Naqvi** declared the system had "collapsed," while veteran commentator **Sohail Warraich** argued Shehbaz has failed to build a narrative, trading

politics for proximity to power. This strikes at his core claim of managerial delivery. Calls for **new provinces and stronger local governments** intensify pressure, threatening patronage networks in Punjab and Sindh. As **Salman Masood** notes, “the people now declaring that the system has broken down are the people running it.” (*The Nation*, [11 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Equal Citizenship and Minority Rights** — On 11 August 1947, **Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah** declared that Pakistan’s citizens should enjoy **equal rights, privileges and obligations**, regardless of religion, caste or creed. Today, minority rights activists mark this vision at the **Minorities Rights March** in Karachi, demanding safeguards against forced conversions, misuse of blasphemy laws, and expanded political representation. The editorial stresses that “**citizenship should not be graded according to faith**” and warns that mob violence, social exclusion and discriminatory laws betray Jinnah’s founding principle. **National Minority Rights Day must be more than ceremonial; equal dignity requires action.** (*Dawn*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Farmers Threaten ‘Million March’ Over Agrarian Crisis** — The **Pakistan Kissan Ittehad (PKI)** has demanded the resignation of Punjab Chief Minister **Maryam Nawaz**, warning of a nationwide protest march to Rawalpindi on **25 September** if their demand is ignored. PKI leaders **Mian Umair Masood** and **Khalid Hussain Batth** accused the government of devastating agriculture, citing a **Rs2,200 billion wheat loss**, potato deficits of **Rs250,000 per acre**, and cotton yields collapsing from 60 to 12 maunds per acre. Fertiliser and electricity costs have soared, leaving farmers “economically crippled.” Batth rejected official wheat yield claims and condemned raids on poor farmers while major mills escape scrutiny. PKI leaders warned that rural voters will not forget these policies and announced they will take their appeal directly to the **military leadership in Rawalpindi.** (*Dawn*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Islamabad Prepares for SCO Summit with Hotel Expansion** — The **Capital Development Authority (CDA)** is working to secure **4,000 top-class hotel rooms** in Islamabad ahead of the **2027 Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit.** CDA Chairman **Sohail Ashraf** acknowledged the challenge but pledged to meet the target, announcing a **conference of hotel owners and investors** next week to accelerate construction and upgrades. Major hotels like **Serena, Marriott and Mövenpick** will be supplemented by new projects, including the **New Islamabad Convention, Exhibition and Expo Centre (NICEEC)**, a Rs37 billion facility set to host the summit. The CDA says additional venues such as the **Jinnah Convention Centre** and **Pak-China Friendship Centre** will also be available. (*Dawn*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Leadership Reaffirms Equality for Minorities** — On National Minorities Day, **President Asif Ali Zardari** and **Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif** pledged Pakistan’s commitment to **justice, equality, tolerance and protection of minority rights.** Zardari praised minorities’ contributions in wars, health, education and national development, declaring: “*I firmly believe in the equality of every citizen, regardless of religion or faith, before the state.*” Sharif highlighted new safeguards, including the **National Commission for Minorities Act 2025**, the **Interfaith Harmony Policy 2025** and the **National Action Plan for Human Rights 2026**, recalling **Jinnah’s 1947 vision** of equal citizenship. (*The Express Tribune*, [11 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Youth and the Shifting Currents of Politics** — In his commentary, **Jawed Naqvi** (**Dawn's correspondent in Delhi**) reflects on how young protesters challenging the Modi government often emerge from families loyal to the right-wing. He notes that ideological migrations are common: “**liberal or communist or fascist ideologues are not hatched in hatcheries**” but evolve from lived realities. Examples range from **Umar Khalid's secular left turn** to **Neha Bora's break from BJP traditions**. Naqvi cautions that many youths may not yet have crossed the “tipping point” from social reality, but their defiance signals potential transformation. (*Dawn*, [11 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Transit Bail Granted to Noreen Niazi in Peca Case** — The **Peshawar High Court (PHC)** has granted transit bail to **Noreen Niazi**, sister of PTI founder **Imran Khan**, in a case registered under the **Peca Act 2016**. Justice **Arshad Ali** accepted her plea, directing her to furnish bail bonds of Rs80,000 with two sureties and appear before the relevant Islamabad court by **20 August**. Niazi's lawyers argued she was falsely implicated, calling the allegations politically motivated. Niazi herself claimed, “*Too many cases are being registered across Pakistan, and no one knows why.*” (*Dawn*, [11 August 2026](#))





The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of Pakistan, published posters in several national newspapers to pay tribute to **Pakistan's minority communities** for their valuable contributions to the country's progress and prosperity. It also highlights **Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's** vision of **equal citizenship** and commemorates **National Minorities Day on 11 August**.

*[Disclaimer: We do not subscribe to the views expressed by the Pakistani reporters, leaders and commentators, we are making available for perusal by our experts/analysts/policymakers every day. We put it all together in Daily Pakistan Watch (DPW) with a view to acquainting our readers with the prevalent thought process in Pakistan having its bearing on India, with the hope that such effort will help us in devising appropriate policies to deal with Pakistan in a more effective manner. DPW is curated by **Dr. Afroz Khan**].*