

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

30 July 2026

Security

- ◆ **32 terrorists killed in joint operations** — Security forces eliminated **32 Indian-sponsored terrorists** in coordinated operations across **Khyber district (KP)** and **Nushki (Balochistan)** within 24 hours, according to **ISPR**. In Khyber, **24 militants of Fitna al-Khwarij** were killed during intelligence-based sanitisation operations, while in Nushki, **eight terrorists of Fitna al-Hindustan** were neutralised after intense engagements. Weapons, ammunition and IEDs were recovered and destroyed. President **Asif Ali Zardari** and Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** paid tribute to the forces, commending their professionalism and sacrifices in combating terrorism. (*The News International*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan welcomes Kuwait's defence accord ratification** — Pakistan hailed Kuwait's ratification of the **Defence Cooperation Agreement signed in June 2023**, calling it a milestone in their longstanding partnership. Foreign Office Spokesperson **Tahir Andrabi** said the accord provides a framework for **military training, joint exercises, education and expertise exchanges**, strengthening institutional linkages between the two armed forces. Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif**, meeting Kuwaiti FM **Sheikh Jarrah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah**, reaffirmed Pakistan's role as a mediator in regional peace efforts. Both sides also agreed to deepen cooperation in **trade, investment, energy, labour, IT and health**, while the Kuwaiti dignitary praised Pakistan's contributions to regional stability. (*The News International*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Escalation across the Middle East** — The US and Saudi Arabia struck Iran-backed militias in Iraq, killing six advisers, while the **IRGC launched missiles at US forces in Jordan** under *Operation Nasr 2*, all intercepted. A **drone hit US-owned gas tankers in Egypt's Damietta port**, sparking fires. President **Donald Trump** vowed Iran would “get a beating.” Saudi Arabia cited self-defence after drones targeted oil facilities. Meanwhile, Iran seeks **Chinese-made Manpads**, rejected Oman's Strait of Hormuz plan, and US analysts warned of **depleted Patriot and THAAD stockpiles**. (*The News International*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **National Strategic Command chief meets service heads** — Newly appointed Commander **General Syed Aamer Raza** called on **Admiral Naveed Ashraf**, Chief of the Naval Staff, at Naval Headquarters, and later met **Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu**, Chief of the Air Staff, at Air Headquarters in Islamabad. Both service chiefs congratulated him on assuming command as the first head of the **National Strategic Command**. According to **ISPR**, matters of professional interest were discussed during the meetings. (*The News*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **DSP among six policemen martyred in Hangu attack** — A major terrorist assault in **Khazeena area, Hangu district** late Wednesday night left **six policemen martyred**, including **DSP Diyar Khan** and two ASIs. At least **22 policemen were wounded**, among them **DSP Mujahid**. Police

officials said reinforcements also came under fire, but security forces killed **eight terrorists** and injured several others during the exchange. The attackers even targeted the district police officer's car, though he escaped unharmed. The incident underscores the continuing threat faced by law enforcement in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (*The News*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Nuclear Energy and Climate Imperatives** — In his column, **Yasir Hussain**, Associate Director of Research at the **Centre for International Strategic Studies (CISS)**, Islamabad, argues that Europe's record-breaking heatwave, with **over 1,300 deaths** according to WHO, underscores the urgency of climate action. He notes that **"Pakistan consistently ranks among the countries most vulnerable to climate change"**, yet contributes only 1% of global emissions. Hussain stresses that nuclear energy, already avoiding **122 million tonnes of CO2-equivalent emissions** in Pakistan, must be part of a revised global nuclear order to fight climate change. (*The News*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Electoral Mismanagement in AJK Raises Security Concerns** — The **Editorial** warns that violence during the first phase of the **Azad Jammu and Kashmir elections** reflects more than a law-and-order lapse, arguing that **"administrative mismanagement can quickly become a national security problem."** The piece questions why polls were held in phases despite intelligence on possible disruption, criticises the **information vacuum** restricting independent media, and cautions that such instability offers hostile actors, especially India, opportunities to exploit unrest. It urges transparency, anticipation and public confidence to restore credibility. (*The News*, [30 July 2026](#))

Economy

- ◆ **Pakistan repays \$1.4bn Chinese loan** — The **State Bank of Pakistan (SBP)** confirmed repayment of a **\$1.4 billion commercial loan to China**, which is expected to be refinanced in the coming weeks. SBP Governor **Jameel Ahmed** said Pakistan serviced **\$2.2bn foreign debt in July 2026**, including the Chinese loan and \$800m in other repayments. He noted Saudi Arabia rolled over **\$5bn deposits for three years**, easing external pressure. Pakistan's foreign reserves stood at **\$22.6bn on July 17**, with \$17.2bn held by SBP. Debt servicing obligations for FY27 are projected at **\$21.5bn**, lower than the previous year. (*The News International*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Saudi Arabia rolls over \$5bn debt** — Pakistan's external sector pressure has eased after **Saudi Arabia extended \$5bn deposits for three years**, SBP Governor **Jameel Ahmad** confirmed. He said this rollover, along with **\$9bn in foreign currency purchases** from the local market last fiscal year, reduced gross external financing needs to **\$21.5bn** for FY27. Pakistan has taken a total of **\$8bn in deposits from Saudi Arabia**, with \$5bn now extended till December 2028. Ahmad noted interest costs on foreign debt fell by nearly \$0.5bn, while reserves stood at **\$17.3bn on July 17** after repaying a \$1.3bn Chinese loan. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **China donates \$2m reproductive health supplies** — In partnership with the **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**, **China** handed over reproductive health and family planning equipment worth **\$2 million** to Pakistan. The supplies, aimed at improving **maternal and newborn healthcare** and expanding family planning access, will be distributed across **10 underserved districts**. The handover ceremony took place at the **Rural Health Center (RHC) Tarlai**,

Islamabad, with the equipment formally delivered to the **Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination**. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Emergency Wheat Import Linked to Provincial Payments** — The **Economic Coordination Committee (ECC)**, chaired by Finance Minister **Muhammad Aurangzeb**, approved importing up to **one million tonnes of wheat** but tied consignments to provincial letters of credit worth **\$340 million**. A steering committee led by **Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar** will oversee the process to ensure provinces bear costs. Officials stressed this avoids past sugar import lapses. With flour prices up **74% year-on-year to Rs129/kg**, the move addresses shortages, though only 45% of provincial demand may be met. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Circular Debt and Structural Flaws in Power Sector** — The **Editorial Board** notes that Pakistan's **circular debt rose by Rs61bn in FY2026, reaching Rs1.67tr**, breaching IMF's cap. The Power Division blames subsidy cuts, but the editorial stresses that **“a power sector that needs fiscal transfers just to avoid piling up fresh arrears was never built to stand on its own.”** Despite renegotiated contracts, tariff hikes and bank loans, debt persists. Falling distribution losses are welcome, yet rooftop solar growth and systemic leaks mean debt will keep returning unless reforms address structural flaws. (*Dawn*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Artificial Exchange Rate Policy Weakens Exports** — Exporters in Karachi have criticised Pakistan's managed currency policy, noting that the rupee has appreciated by Rs4 against the dollar over 18 months while **“cheaper dollar fuels unnecessary imports, widening trade gap.”** With imports surging to \$39bn in FY26 and exports stagnating, they warn of lost competitiveness as production costs are **12pc higher than China's**. Analysts highlight the REER at 106.4, showing the rupee's artificial strength, deterring foreign investment. Exporters urge gradual depreciation to revive manufacturing and exports. (*Dawn*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **ADB to Support Pakistan's Border Trade Modernisation** — The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** is set to approve a **border connectivity and logistics upgrade facility** to modernise Pakistan's border infrastructure and boost regional trade. The announcement came during a meeting between **Commerce Minister Jam Kamal** and the **CAREC Secretariat**, which highlighted Pakistan's active role in the **Regional Trade and Investment Facilitation Partnership framework**. Preparations are underway for the upcoming **CAREC Ministerial Conference and Business Forum in Mongolia (Sept 29–30)**, focusing on logistics, energy security, digital connectivity and investment. (*Dawn*, [30 July 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Beggary-related deportations fall sharply** — Pakistan has seen a **75% decline in deportations linked to overseas begging**, according to the **FIA**. Senior official **Dr Athar Waheed** said deportations involving forged travel documents dropped 31%, while overall deportations from EU countries fell 16% in 2025 compared with 2024. **FRONTEX** reported a **47% decline in illegal border crossings** by Pakistanis into Europe in early 2026, attributed to AI-based passenger screening and the upgraded **IBMS 2.0** system. Deportations from Gulf states also fell, with Saudi

Arabia and GCC countries sending back 802 Pakistanis in 2026, down from 4,800 in 2024. (*The News*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan Extends Port Access to Kazakhstan** — Pakistan has offered **Kazakhstan access to Karachi, Port Qasim and Gwadar**, aiming to strengthen maritime connectivity and regional trade. During talks with Ambassador **Yerzhan Kistafin**, Maritime Affairs Minister **Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry** emphasised that “**Pakistani seaports can act as transit hubs for Kazakhstan and the wider Central Asian region, offering access to markets in the Persian Gulf, Africa and Southeast Asia.**” The initiative includes potential joint ventures in coastal free zones, positioning Pakistan as a key transit partner for Central Asia. (*Dawn*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan Secures Return of Smuggled Antiquities** — Pakistan has recovered **904 stolen artefacts** from the United States, France and Italy, in one of the largest restitutions of cultural property in its history. Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture **Aurangzeb Khan Khichi** led the effort, which included pottery, terracotta figurines and sculptures from the **Mehrgarh (3500–2200 BC)** and **Gandhara (2nd–5th Century CE)** civilisations. Officials credited diplomatic coordination and adherence to the **1970 Unesco Convention**. The antiquities will be preserved and displayed for public education and research. (*Dawn*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Gwadar Gas Terminal and Balochistan’s Development Agenda** — The Balochistan cabinet, chaired by **Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti**, has approved construction of a **\$14bn tri-state gas terminal in Gwadar** with Turkmenistan’s investment, directing officials to safeguard provincial rights. Ministers **Mir Zahoor Buledi** and **Mir Ziaullah Langove** said the project will supply gas to Gwadar, Panjgur, Chagai and Washuk. Alongside, the cabinet cleared major welfare and security measures, including **Rs858m for South Balochistan Package projects**, scholarships for 300 children, and the **Sibi-Harnai Road project worth Rs19bn**. It also upgraded colleges, child protection rules, and expanded Safe City initiatives. (*Dawn*, [30 July 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **Shehbaz directs monthly FBR outreach** — Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** ordered the **FBR chairman and senior officials** to visit Karachi every month to hear business concerns and act on them. He instructed strict measures against tax evasion, a **digital monitoring system** for industries by December, and merit-based appointments. Chairing the **Daanish Authority Board**, he directed timely completion of schools, full boarding facilities, and mandatory IT and AI training. He also pushed for the **National Digital Vision** rollout in health, agriculture, housing and SMEs, and urged a comprehensive employment strategy under the **Prime Minister’s Youth Programme**. (*The News*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Bilawal, Maryam clash over AJK polls** — PPP Chairman **Bilawal Bhutto Zardari** accused the **PMLN** of rigging the Azad Jammu and Kashmir elections, citing “Form 47” manipulation and occupied polling stations. He demanded re-polling and investigations, alleging PPP workers were killed in election violence. Punjab CM **Maryam Nawaz** dismissed the charges, mocking PPP as “a master of rigging” and urging Bilawal to accept defeat. She credited PMLN’s governance projects for voter support. Meanwhile, AJK officials warned of armed militants infiltrating protests, and the

Election Commission notified winners from both parties. The **PTI** rejected the elections, calling them a “mockery of democratic values.” (*The News*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **SC rejects plea against bail of alleged BLA supporter** — The **Supreme Court** dismissed a petition seeking cancellation of bail for **Bilal**, accused of having links to the **Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)**. A two-member bench led by **Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan** heard the case registered by the **CTD Karachi**. The prosecution sought adjournment to submit more documents, but the judge questioned how a bank employee transferring funds for a vehicle could be linked to terrorism, noting the lack of evidence tying him to the BLA. The same bench also rejected a plea to cancel bail for **Nadeem alias Cheeno**, accused in a narcotics case. (*The News*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **AJK police accuse JAAC of armed agenda** — ‘Azad’ Jammu and Kashmir Police spokesperson **SSP Khawar Ali Shaukat** said the proscribed **Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC)** was operating under a “specific agenda” to destabilise the region. He accused protesters of firing automatic weapons at security personnel from fortified positions in **Rawalakot**, noting the clashes disproved social media claims of a peaceful movement. Shaukat stated that state institutions had exercised restraint but were constitutionally bound to act when attacked. The violence left **one Rangers official martyred** and around **15 law enforcement personnel injured**, with police recovering modern weapons from militants. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Internet restored in Muzaffarabad after 53-day shutdown** — Broadband services resumed Wednesday night at **10pm**, bringing relief to residents, businesses, journalists and others after connectivity was suspended on **June 6**. While broadband is back, **mobile data remains patchy**. The disruption had hampered communication, banking, and coverage of political developments during the crucial election period in **AJK**. Restoration comes ahead of the **second phase of AJK Legislative Assembly elections** on **August 2**, where **1.248 million voters** will cast ballots across **21 constituencies**, including nine in Muzaffarabad Division and 12 reserved for refugees. Campaigns have intensified, with contests involving major leaders like **Sardar Tanveer Ilyas, Shah Ghulam Qadir, Chaudhry Latif Akbar, Raja Farooq Ahmed Khan, and Raja Farooq Haider**. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Islamic banks told to drop abaya dress code** — A **Senate Standing Committee on Finance**, chaired by **Senator Saleem Mandviwalla**, directed Islamic banks to stop compelling female staff to wear abayas, insisting instead on a **modest national dress code** for all employees. Senators **Dr Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur** and **Sherry Rehman** argued that no attire should be imposed, noting shalwar kameez suffices as national dress. **SBP Governor Jameel Ahmed** confirmed guidelines had already been issued. The panel also raised concerns over **taxes in electricity bills, ATM/VISA card charges, and SMS alert fees**, urging transparency and customer choice. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Policy continuity vital for demographic dividend** — Planning Minister **Ahsan Iqbal** warned Pakistan’s population could reach **372–390 million by 2050** if reforms are not implemented. Speaking at the launch of *Development Advocate Pakistan’s* 50th issue, he said nearly **67% of Pakistanis are under 30**, making youth the country’s greatest asset if equipped with **quality education, modern skills, and dignified employment**. He stressed that without **policy continuity**,

the demographic advantage could turn into economic strain. Highlighting initiatives like **URAAN Pakistan** and the **5Es National Development Framework**, he announced training for one million youth as “Ambassadors of Social Change” and pledged Hepatitis-free zones in Islamabad, GB, and AJK. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))

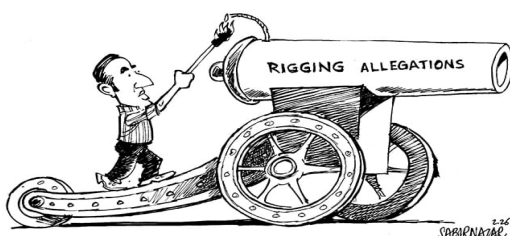
- ◆ **PTI rally dismissed by KP Governor** — Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Governor **Faisal Karim Kundi** termed PTI’s planned **August 5 rally** “meaningless,” urging the party to seek legal remedies for **Imran Khan’s release** instead of street protests. Speaking at a **Ulema and Mashaikh Conference** in Peshawar, Kundi questioned PTI’s lack of clear strategy and the absence of its “Tiger Force.” He said rallies cannot secure Khan’s freedom, stressing that negotiations would only be held with those willing to engage. On Kashmir elections, he challenged critics to provide evidence of rigging. Kundi also called for **inter-sectarian harmony**, praised the armed forces, and highlighted Pakistan’s diplomatic role during the Iran-US conflict. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Balochistan declared regular police area** — The provincial cabinet, chaired by **Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti**, approved the merger of the **Levies Force into the police**, declaring the entire province a regular police area. Meeting at the CM Secretariat, the cabinet also cleared **Phase III of the Chief Minister Scholarship Programme**, under which 300 children of registered workers will study at a boarding school in Islamabad. Other decisions included upgrading **Union Councils Mesi Zai and Mai Zai** to municipal committees, establishing a new committee in **Gulistan**, appointing **SP Nabeel Ahmed** as COO of the **Safe City Authority**, and setting up a new police station at **Marble City, Hub**. The cabinet also approved the **Balochistan Planning Manual** and **Child Protection Rules 2026**. (*The Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **PTI demands probe into AJK killings** — The **Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)** rejected the **July 27 ‘Azad’ Jammu and Kashmir elections**, calling the process “a fraud” and condemning violence that it said harmed the Kashmir cause internationally. At a press conference, PTI Chairman **Barrister Gohar Ali Khan** and former AJK PM **Sardar Qayyum Niazi** alleged unprecedented oppression of Kashmiris, questioning the decision to hold elections in three phases despite AJK’s small population. Gohar said low voter turnout reflected public rejection of both **PML-N** and **PPP**, accusing them of politicising the crisis. PTI demanded a transparent investigation into killings and urged stakeholders to act wisely to protect the Kashmir cause. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))
- ◆ **Punjab CM orders 800 mini-dams in Potohar** — Chief Minister **Maryam Nawaz Sharif** approved construction of **800 mini-dams** over the next three years to store rainwater, creating capacity for **32,000 acre-feet**. Reviewing water conservation progress, she was informed that **110 mini-dams** already exist across Punjab. Departments of agriculture, irrigation, housing, and local government will coordinate, with dedicated staff for monitoring. Officials reported lining of **2,600 watercourses** (7,000 km) saved 20% water, while high-efficiency irrigation boosted yields by 50%. Plans include rehabilitating **4,500 more watercourses**, expanding drip/sprinkler irrigation to **30,000 acres**, and completing **300 recharge wells**. She also directed strict legal action against rape, child abuse, and corruption, and reviewed the **Safe City Project** rollout across all 43 districts. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Sharif's Push for Digital Integration and Reform** — Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** inaugurated the **Sky47 national data centre**, directing that its facilities be made available to all federal institutions and stressing that **“a single, integrated national data centre... will save national resources.”** He also ordered timely completion of **Daanish Schools**, reaffirming equal education for underprivileged children. In parallel, Sharif pressed for **strict action against tax evasion**, with FBR reforms including production tracking, faceless customs clearance, and ADRCs that have already recovered **Rs54 billion**. (*The Express Tribune*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Gender-Based Violence and the Silence Around It** — The **Editorial** highlights Pakistan's alarming rise in **gender-based violence (GBV)**, noting UN data that **“28 per cent of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence”** and Sahil's report of **3,172 GBV cases in the first half of 2026**. Crimes include murders, rapes, honour killings and torture, with most victims suffering in silence due to socio-cultural barriers. The editorial condemns the **lack of state support**, stressing that nations cannot progress when half their population is under attack and urging behavioural change. (*The News*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **Indus as a Corridor of Unity** — In his column, **Hassan Abbas**, PhD in hydrology and water resources from Michigan State University, recalls that the **Indus once “stitched communities together instead of dividing them.”** He critiques colonial and post-1947 irrigation policies for creating conflict and ecological decline, urging a shift towards **inland navigation** to reconnect regions. Abbas envisions barges linking Karachi to Peshawar, offering Afghanistan and Central Asia direct sea access, while reducing costs and emissions. He concludes: **“Indus unites, not divides. When a river flows for everyone, everyone prospers.”** (*Dawn*, [30 July 2026](#))

- ◆ **CII Chief Urges Parties to Counter Hate Speech** — At a policy dialogue organised by **Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS)**, **Allama Dr Raghieb Hussain Naeemi**, Chairman of the **Council of Islamic Ideology (CII)**, called on political and religious parties to **“openly promote tolerance among their supporters”** and discourage hate speech. He stressed teacher training to foster inclusivity. **Dr Salma Malik** of Quaid-i-Azam University urged educators to be free of biases, while **Dr Ishtiaq Ahmad** advocated revival of student unions. Lawyer **Dileep Doshi** and **Dr Nadeem Abbas** also highlighted persistent fault lines and social media concerns. (*Dawn*, [30 July 2026](#))



[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.]