

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

5 August 2026

Security

- ◆ **Punjab officials praise security at major Shia religious events** — Auqaf Secretary Dr Ehsan Bhutta lauded the **successful and peaceful conclusion** of the Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and the 983rd Urs of Hazrat Ali Hajveri (RA), attributing it to effective coordination among departments. He emphasised the saint's enduring message of harmony and compassion. Commissioner **Nauman Yousaf** and DC **Ali Ejaz** reviewed arrangements, including control rooms and monitoring centres, ensuring comprehensive security and facilities for millions of devotees. (*The News International*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Journalist killed in Jaffarabad attack** — Local journalist **Nazar Muhammad Kanrani**, former vice president of the Awami Press Club Sohbatpur, was shot dead in **Dera Allahyar** on Tuesday, while his brother was injured. The attack occurred in the **Ladies Bazaar area**, police said. The suspect, identified as **Hafiz**, was arrested soon after, and an investigation has been launched, though the motive remains unclear. (*Pakistan Today*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Service Chiefs reaffirm solidarity with Kashmiris** — On Youm-e-Istehsal, Pakistan's military leadership — **Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir (COAS & Chief of Defence Forces)**, **Admiral Naveed Ashraf (Chief of Naval Staff)**, and **Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu (Chief of Air Staff)** — along with the **Armed Forces of Pakistan**, reiterated their “**unwavering solidarity with the resilient and courageous people of IIOJK.**” The **ISPR statement** emphasised support for the Kashmiri people's **right to self-determination under international law and UN Security Council resolutions**, condemning India's continued occupation, demographic changes, and human rights violations. It stressed that **lasting peace in South Asia is intrinsically linked to a just settlement of the Kashmir dispute**. The Armed Forces paid tribute to Kashmiri martyrs and pledged to stand shoulder to shoulder with them in their struggle for freedom. (*Nation*, [05 August 2026](#))

Economy

- ◆ **IMF constraints hinder Pakistan's energy reforms** — Power Minister **Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari** said IMF commitments are blocking Pakistan from introducing **flexible, market-based tariffs** that could cut electricity costs and boost battery storage. He unveiled a roadmap to raise clean energy's share to **90 per cent by 2035**, stressing “**battery storage is not an optional add-on; it is a strategic asset for Pakistan's energy sovereignty.**” Meanwhile, the SIFC unlocked a \$200 million mining investment in Khuzdar, Balochistan, resolving long-standing disputes. (*The News International*, [05 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan's first lithium breakthrough in Sindh** — The Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) has signed an agreement with **Pinstech** to develop technology for **commercial-scale lithium extraction** after discovering **275 mg/L lithium** in geothermal brines at Khairpur, Sindh — over three times the international benchmark. OGDCL has identified more wells for exploration, while **Heavy Mechanical Complex (HMC)** eyes domestic lithium for EV batteries and defence. Officials hailed it as Pakistan's **first confirmed lithium occurrence**, potentially positioning the country in global critical mineral supply chains. (*The News International*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Recurring collapse predictions around Shehbaz Sharif's government** — **Ansar Abbasi** writes: Since the **PMLN-led coalition** took office after the February 2024 elections, commentators have repeatedly forecast its imminent fall, with “countdown clocks” shifting from 90 days to six months. Each deadline tied to IMF reviews, budgets, opposition protests or coalition tensions has quietly lapsed, only to be reset. Constitutional experts dismiss claims of a six-month deadline for creating new provinces as **politically impossible**, given the two-thirds majority requirement in Parliament and provincial assemblies. Despite speculation about “wonder boys” or ministerial sackings, the government has consistently outlived forecasts, raising the question of why collapse predictions keep resurfacing without materialising. (*The News International*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Balakot Hydropower project touted as cheaper than CPEC alternative** — The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has claimed that the **Balakot Hydropower Project (BHPP)** will generate electricity at tariffs **28% lower than CPEC's Suki Kinari HPP and 25% less than Patrind HPP**. Officials from **Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organization (PEDO)** told a **NEPRA public hearing** that better financing terms and management cut costs by nearly half, saving **\$603 million**. The 300MW project in **Mansehra** is expected to produce **1,008 GWh annually** at a levelised tariff of **6.3576 US cents/kWh** over 30 years. Financing is structured at **89.8% debt and 10.2% equity**, with foreign loans pegged to **SOFR + 0.75%** and local loans to **KIBOR + 3%**. Equity investors seek a **17% dollar-indexed return**. Critics, including industrialist **Arif Bilwani** and intervenor **Rehan Javed**, questioned the project's necessity given surplus capacity, inconsistencies in PEDO's data, and its absence from the **IGCEP 2025–35**. They urged NEPRA to ensure transparency in procurement, debt-equity assumptions, and compliance with the **Power Policy 2015**. (*The Nation*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **TDAP trains farmers for China maize exports** — The **Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP)** organised five-day seminars across Punjab districts to strengthen farmers' readiness for exports under the **new China maize import protocol**. Experts emphasised **stricter phytosanitary and quality standards**, including aflatoxin control and Khapra beetle surveillance, while also promoting **good agricultural practices (GAP)** for sesame production. Farmers were guided on **value addition, processing, packaging and branding** to boost competitiveness. Extension staff received training to ensure wider adoption of export-oriented practices, enhancing Pakistan's access to China's agricultural market. (*The Nation*, [05 August 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Pakistan–China reaffirm counterterrorism cooperation** — Pakistan and China renewed their joint push against Afghan-based militants during Chinese envoy **Yue Xiaoyong's** visit to Islamabad. He met **Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq**, who noted “productive discussions” on threats from **TTP and ETIM** and pledged deeper coordination. Both nations demanded “**visible and verifiable**” steps to prevent Afghan soil being used for terrorism, stressing regional peace and security. (*The News International*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan and Iran push for deeper trade ties** — Pakistan and Iran have reaffirmed their resolve to expand bilateral trade to **\$10 billion**, with Commerce Minister **Jam Kamal Khan** urging removal of barriers in border logistics and cargo movement. His Iranian counterpart **Mohammad Atabak** co-chaired the Pak-Iran trade committee in Islamabad, where Tehran sought greater trade through **Karachi and Gwadar**. Current trade stands at \$3.129bn, far below target, prompting calls for an early **free trade agreement**. (*Dawn*, [05 August 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **Foreign media movement restricted beyond three cities** — Pakistan’s new **Foreign Media Facilitation Guidelines 2026** require all foreign journalists and media personnel to obtain a **No Objection Certificate (NOC)** from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting before covering news outside **Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi**. Even accredited media must comply. For leisure trips to Abbottabad or Murree, NOCs may be issued within three working days. The rules apply to all international print, electronic, digital and social media platforms. (*Dawn*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **88 protesters remanded after pro-Kashmir rally arrests** — An anti-terrorism court in Islamabad sent 88 protesters arrested during a pro-Kashmir demonstration on judicial remand for identification. Judge Abdul Ghafoor Kakar accepted the prosecution’s request after police presented the suspects, booked under various provisions at Shalimar police station. Jail authorities were directed to conduct the identification parade within 14 days, after which the accused will be presented again. (*Dawn*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **PPP alleges irregularities in AJK polls** — The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has accused the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) of “**unprecedented rigging**” during re-polling in Muzaffarabad’s LA-27 and LA-28 constituencies. **Sherry Rehman (PPP Vice President)** condemned alleged ballot manipulation, while **Chaudhry Latif Akbar (PPP AJK President)** claimed 56,000 votes were cast in hours and demanded re-polling. **Javed Ayub (PPP candidate)** alleged bogus voting and women being barred from polling stations. PPP submitted video evidence to the Election Commission, warning of Supreme Court action. **Rana Sanaullah (PM’s Adviser)** dismissed the claims as a “disinformation campaign.” (*The News International*, [05 August 2026](#)) . (*Nation*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Armed forces pledge disaster relief support** — During a visit to NDMA’s National Emergencies Operation Centre, **Field Marshal Asim Munir (Chief of Defence Forces and Army**

Chief) reaffirmed that Pakistan's armed forces are **"fully prepared to extend assistance"** in relief, rescue and rehabilitation operations. He praised NDMA's disaster management capacity and stressed readiness, coordination and swift response. Officials warned monsoon rains continue to trigger flooding, with fatalities largely from unsafe structures, underscoring stricter building safety enforcement. (*The News International*, [05 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Glacial floods devastate Chitral** — A glacial lake outburst flood (Glof) and cloudburst have ravaged Chitral, destroying bridges, roads and fibre-optic links, cutting off internet and isolating communities. The Chitral–Peshawar Highway and Chitral–Shandur Road remain closed, leaving Upper Chitral disconnected. At least two deaths were reported, while landslides trapped hundreds of vehicles. Rescue 1122 and local authorities launched relief operations, though residents criticised the slow response. The devastation has left schools shut, markets deserted and communication paralysed. (*Dawn*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan reaffirms solidarity on Kashmir dispute** — On *Youm-e-Istehsal*, (Day of Exploitation)¹ **President Asif Ali Zardari** vowed Pakistan's **"unwavering moral, political and diplomatic support"** for Kashmiris, stressing peace in South Asia hinges on resolving the dispute under **UN Security Council resolutions**. He declared India's August 2019 actions "cannot change the legal status" of Jammu and Kashmir. **Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif** echoed that Pakistan's foreign policy cornerstone is Kashmir's peaceful settlement, urging India to end rights violations and reverse unilateral measures. The **armed forces**, led by **Field Marshal Asim Munir**, reaffirmed solidarity, while **Bilawal Bhutto Zardari (PPP Chairman)** said, *"No unilateral action can erase history, silence a people's voice, or extinguish their yearning for justice."* (*The News International*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Police staff suspended over negligence in rape case** — **DIG Operations Lahore Faisal Kamran** paid a surprise visit at 1:30 am and suspended the **entire staff of Ghaziabad Police Station** for delaying action in a rape case and failing to inform senior officers. SHO Shehryar was replaced by Ali Zaib Dastgir. Authorities confirmed investigations are under way with **"no leniency for negligence."** Separately, police arrested an ex-employee for theft and two proclaimed offenders for fraud. (*The News International*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Shah Allah Ditta Caves to be developed as Buddhist heritage site** — Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi announced plans to transform the historic Shah Allah Ditta Caves in Islamabad into a world-class Buddhist heritage site. Conservation efforts will include illumination, installation of a modern telescope, and visitor facilities such as a cafeteria and gift shop. The initiative coincides with the upcoming Gandhara Conference later this year, aimed at showcasing Pakistan's rich archaeological and cultural legacy. (*Dawn*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan, Qatar draft Hormuz reopening plan amid Kashmir solidarity** — The front page of *Pakistan Today* (Lahore Edition, 5 August 2026) highlights Pakistan and Qatar preparing a document to reopen the **Strait of Hormuz** under a Memorandum of Understanding, amid indirect **US–Iran contacts**. Alongside, the paper devotes major coverage to **Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir**,

¹ Youm-e-Istehsal literally means "Day of Exploitation" in Urdu. It is observed in Pakistan every year on 5 August to mark India's revocation of Article 370 in 2019, which stripped Jammu and Kashmir of its special constitutional status. The day symbolises Pakistan's solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

marking seven years since India's **revocation of Articles 370 & 35A**. The campaign stresses that the move was **"rejected by the people of Jammu & Kashmir, Pakistan, and not recognised by the UN."** Portraits of Kashmiri figures and slogans such as *"We are Pakistanis. Pakistan is our homeland"* underscore Pakistan's official stance and solidarity. (*Pakistan Today*, [05 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Debate reignites over new provinces in Pakistan** — Interior Minister **Mohsin Naqvi** has reopened the contentious issue of creating more provinces, arguing that **"governance has collapsed"** and that smaller administrative units could solve people's problems faster. His remarks drew responses from **PPP Secretary General Nayyar Bukhari** and **ISPR DG Lt Gen Sharif Chauhry**, both stressing that any change must follow **constitutional procedures and public mandate**. The editorial in *Pakistan Today* notes that while ideas such as carving provinces along **civil divisions or linguistic lines** (e.g., Hindko, Pashtun, Seraiki, Potohari, Karachi) have circulated, Pakistan has largely retained its inherited boundaries apart from the One Unit experiment. Unlike India's frequent boundary changes, Pakistan has been cautious. The piece highlights that Naqvi's comments also carried implicit criticism of the Prime Minister, dismissing his efforts as "firefighting" and laptop distribution as inadequate for youth. This raises the broader question: are new provinces a genuine solution to governance challenges, or simply another recurring political debate? You might want to explore the constitutional hurdles, the PPP's past attempts, or the comparisons with India's provincial changes to see how this debate has evolved. (*Pakistan Today*, [5 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Jam Kamal demands equitable funding in Balochistan** — Federal Minister **Jam Kamal Khan** has urged a **fairer distribution of development funds**, stressing that **PSDP allocations must reflect need, population, economic contribution and deprivation rather than political preferences**. He criticised billions being concentrated in a few districts while others were excluded, and noted elected representatives' proposals were ignored. He emphasised that **balanced progress requires transparent planning**. (*Pakistan Today*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Ayesha Jalal compares Kashmir and Gaza suffering** — At a talk in Karachi's **Quaid-i-Azam House Museum**, historian **Ayesha Jalal** (Mary Richardson Professor of History, Tufts University) said **"Kashmiris have suffered no less heartbreaking violence than Gaza."** She linked Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's stance on Kashmir and Palestine to his opposition to ethno-nationalism and advocacy for Muslim-majority provinces. Jalal emphasised that both regions have endured severe violence and political turmoil, underscoring the need to understand their struggles in historical and global context. (*Dawn*, [05 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Lahore Declaration urges inclusive dialogue on governance reforms** — A national conference at the **University of Lahore**, organised by the **Centre for Policy and Nation Building (CPNB)**, adopted the **"Lahore Declaration"** calling for a broad national dialogue involving all political parties, including **PTI and Imran Khan**, to review governance reforms. Participants — including politicians, constitutional experts, former judges, lawyers and civil society — stressed that Pakistan's prosperity and cohesion depend on a governance structure that strengthens institutions, devolves powers, and ensures effective service delivery. The declaration highlighted proposals such as **new provinces, constitutionally empowered local governments**, and stronger administrative structures, but stopped short of endorsing any single model, recommending expert working groups to examine each option's constitutional, financial and political merits. It also called for restructuring the **Election Commission of Pakistan** to ensure full independence, and demanded

constitutional guarantees for **regular local government elections** and protection against arbitrary dissolution. Transparency measures such as **independent accountability mechanisms, citizen feedback systems, and open budgeting** were also emphasised. The conference resolved to continue dialogue and present reform proposals to Parliament, provincial governments and constitutional institutions, with **Chairman Awais Raoo** reaffirming the University's commitment to evidence-based policy discussions and greater youth participation. (*Nation*, [05 August 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.]

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5th AUGUST YOUM-E-ISTEHSAL-E-KASHMIR

ILLEGAL REVOCATION OF ARTICLES 370 & 35A

Rejected by the people of Jammu & Kashmir	Rejected by Pakistan	Not endorsed by the international community	Not recognized by the United Nations
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Pakistan is our homeland."**

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5
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ARTICLE 370 & 35-A

کشمیریوں کے بنیادی حقوق پر ڈاکہ

یوم استحصال کشمیر

5th AUGUST

وزیر اعلیٰ پنجاب مریم نواز شریف

افواج پاکستان اور غیر ملکی آزادی کی لڑائی، ایک نئی کشمیری نیشنل جوائنٹ کے شانہ بشانہ کھڑے ہیں

بھارت کے 5 اگست 2019 کے غیر قانونی اور یکطرفہ اقدامات

کشمیریوں کو حق خود ارادیت سے محروم نہیں کر سکتے!

حکومت پنجاب

کشمیری جھکیں گے

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