

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

6 August 2026

Security

- ◆ **Pakistan-US Counterterrorism Talks Reaffirm Resolve** — Pakistan and the United States held the fourth round of their counterterrorism dialogue in Washington, led by US Coordinator Ambassador Gregory LoGerfo and Pakistan's Special Secretary Ambassador Nabeel Munir. Both sides exchanged detailed views on evolving threats and pledged to deepen cooperation through sustained engagement. They reaffirmed joint resolve to confront **ISIS-Khorasan, al-Qa'eda, TTP, and BLA**, stressing collaboration at multilateral forums to advance global counterterrorism efforts. The talks underscored a shared vision of regional peace, prosperity, and stability. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan Reaffirms Solidarity on Istehsal Day** — On Youm-e-Istehsal, Pakistan's civil and military leadership reiterated support for Kashmiris, rejecting India's 5 August 2019 revocation of autonomy. **President Asif Ali Zardari said India's actions "cannot change the legal status of the dispute, nor weaken the resolve of the Kashmiri people."** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif warned of "grave consequences" from measures that deepened repression and sought demographic change. The ISPR, led by **Field Marshal Asim Munir**, reaffirmed solidarity, stressing that lasting peace in South Asia is "intrinsically linked" to a just settlement. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **US Eyes Pakistan's Mineral Potential** — The United States has expressed readiness to finance **another Reko Diq-sized mining project**, with investors willing to take on Pakistan's security risks. A US embassy official stressed that *"the critical minerals issue is very important for us because it is about economic security, prosperity and national defence."* The \$7.7 billion Reko Diq project remains delayed due to security and cost concerns, though it could generate **\$2 billion annually** once operational. Pakistan, now part of the **US Critical Minerals Initiative**, is seen as a source of copper, antimony, tungsten and rare earths. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Questioning India's Narrative of Peace in Kashmir** — Public policy analyst **Durdana Najam** highlights the contradiction between New Delhi's claim that terrorism has ended in Kashmir and the continued killings of civilians, such as the 31 July shooting of two migrant workers in Kulgam. Former chief minister **Farooq Abdullah asked: "If terrorism has ended, who is doing the killing?"** The article traces Kashmir's unresolved accession, the unfulfilled UN plebiscite, and the erosion of autonomy culminating in the 2019 abrogation of Article 370. Reports by the UN, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International document repression, internet shutdowns and curbs on civil society, underscoring that "normalcy" is performed rather than lived. Najam argues that genuine dialogue, with Kashmiris as principal parties, is the only path forward. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Afghanistan's Resistance and Pakistan's Policy Choices** — Retired Major General **Inam Ul Haque** analyses the emerging anti-Taliban resistance led by Lt Gen Sami Sadat's Afghanistan United Front (AUF), alongside groups like the National Resistance Front (NRF) and Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF). He notes that while these movements do not yet pose a mortal threat to Taliban rule, they signal a deteriorating security environment, especially in **Badakhshan, Panjshir and Hazara Highlands**. Haque stresses that Pakistan's Afghan policy must be guided by realism: *"The TTP remains a thorn, Afghan public hostility is enduring, and the IEA remains cunningly pro-India and anti-Pakistan."* He recommends leveraging intelligence, targeting the TTP, engaging resistance groups, and adopting a regional approach to terrorism. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **India's Transnational Repression Under Scrutiny** — In an editorial, *The Express Tribune* highlights UN rights experts' alarm over India's alleged campaign to assassinate dissidents abroad. Five UN rapporteurs urged Canada to protect Sikh activist Moninder Singh, who has received multiple warnings of imminent threats, noting that the danger even extended to his wife and children — a **"dramatic escalation"** from earlier cases. The killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar in 2023 and a failed New York plot, both linked to Indian intelligence, underscore a pattern of repression. Despite denials, India's strategic value to the West has muted responses, but the editorial insists **"the world must act now to send India a message that no state is above international law."** (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **US-Pakistan Pledge Joint Counterterrorism Action** — At the fourth **US-Pakistan Counterterrorism Dialogue in Washington**, both countries reaffirmed their commitment to an **"enduring vision" of regional peace, prosperity and stability**. Led by **Special Secretary Nabeel Munir** and **US Coordinator Gregory LoGerfo**, the delegations vowed to confront groups threatening citizens and regional stability, including **ISIS-Khorasan, Al-Qaeda, the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)**. Discussions focused on strengthening border security, disrupting facilitation networks, and enhancing collaboration. The joint statement underscored shared interests in counterterrorism and determination to confront violence, as the outlawed TTP and BLA continue targeting civilians and security forces in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (*The Nation*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Bleeding Wounds, Broken Promises** — In his column, senior public policy expert **Aamir Zulfiqar Khan** reflects on the transformation of Pakistan from a once secure land into one plagued by insurgencies in **Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**. He recalls travelling safely in the 1990s with minimal security, contrasting it with today's violence and instability. He argues that successive governments prioritised short-term survival over long-term reform, citing the failure to implement the National Action Plan (NAP) as a prime example. Khan outlines counter-insurgency lessons from global cases: **clear political objectives, inclusivity, unified command, accurate intelligence, empowered local governments, economic development, disruption of insurgent finances, precision in force, a strong judiciary, and effective governance**. He warns that ignoring insurgencies in their infancy leads to exponential danger, urging immediate action: *"The drumbeats of insurgency are getting louder with each passing day... The time to wake up is now."* (*The Nation*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Bad Press and Media Restrictions** — In its editorial, *Dawn* criticises the government's new **'Foreign Media Facilitation Guidelines'**, which require international journalists to obtain a no-

objection certificate (NOC) to report outside Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi. The rules mandate accreditation for all foreign media workers and even Pakistani fixers, translators and drivers, with accreditation subject to suspension if deemed against “ideology, sovereignty, security or public order.” The editorial argues that such measures will **alienate the foreign press and damage Pakistan’s image abroad**, noting that misinformation should be countered with facts, not restrictions. It warns that reporting will shift abroad, producing a less flattering picture of Pakistan. (*Dawn*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Summary of TTP Operations – 5 August 2026:** On 5 August 2026 (21 Safar al-Muzaffar 1448 AH), Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed responsibility for ten attacks across South Waziristan, Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, North Waziristan, and Mohmand. Operations included ambushes, raids, sniper fire, and missile strikes, reportedly causing multiple casualties and material damage to security forces. South Waziristan witnessed the highest activity, with five incidents targeting military convoys, posts, and forts. Peshawar saw two attacks against police units, while isolated assaults occurred in Dera Ismail Khan, North Waziristan, and Mohmand. These incidents highlight continued militant activity across north-western Pakistan. (*Telegram*, 6 August 2026)

Table of Operations

District	Area	Type of Attack	Reported Impact
South Waziristan	Shaktoi	Sniper attack	Security camera damaged
	Shaktoi	Ambush	Likely casualties
	Tiarza	Missile strike	Possible casualties, material losses
	Azam Warsak	Raid	Nine personnel killed/wounded; one militant killed
	Badr	Ambush on convoy	Five killed, three wounded; vehicles damaged
Peshawar	City District	Targeted attack	Constable killed
	City District	Attack on police squad	Two wounded
Dera Ismail Khan	Daraban	Ambush	Likely casualties
North Waziristan	Miranshah	Grenade launcher attack	Likely casualties
Mohmand	Anbar	Raid on checkpoint	Casualties and material damage

Economy

- ◆ **Sindh Cabinet Approves Key Economic Measures** — Chaired by Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, the Sindh cabinet approved import of **500,000 metric tonnes of wheat** to address a projected shortfall of 1.69 million tonnes, alongside raising the minimum wage from Rs40,000 to **Rs43,000 per month** for unskilled workers. Structural reforms included converting the PPP Unit into a government-owned company with Rs8 billion authorised capital, and imposing toll tax on the

Nawabshah–Ranipur (Mehran Highway) to generate Rs2 billion annually. Expansion of the flood housing programme to Gilgit-Baltistan was also cleared. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **K-IV Project Needs Rs70 Billion More** — The National Assembly Standing Committee on Water Resources reviewed progress on Karachi’s long-delayed K-IV water supply project, with Minister Moeen Wattoo confirming **Rs86 billion has been spent and another Rs70 billion is required for completion**, while only 40% of work is done. Lawmakers raised concerns over water shortages and the tanker mafia charging up to Rs8,000 per tanker. The committee also discussed the proposed **WAPDA Security Force Bill**, aimed at creating a dedicated force with arrest powers to protect strategic projects. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Resource-Sharing Plan for Gilgit-Baltistan Reviewed** — Planning Minister **Ahsan Iqbal directed time-bound proposals on fiscal reforms, hydropower development and expedited execution of projects** during a meeting of the Prime Minister’s Review Committee. The session focused on ensuring sustainable growth in Gilgit-Baltistan and decided to finalise recommendations for submission to the prime minister. A key priority was the creation of a **transparent resource-sharing mechanism based on National Finance Commission principles**, aimed at establishing a fair and predictable system of fiscal transfers for the region. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan–Netherlands Eye \$5 Billion Trade Goal** — The Netherlands has identified the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) as a key partner to expand bilateral trade and investment. **Dutch Chargé d’Affaires Hajo Provo Kluit praised LCCI’s 48,000-member base as vital for strengthening ties**, while Acting LCCI President Tanveer Ahmed Sheikh noted current trade stands at \$1.9 billion, with potential to reach \$5 billion. Pakistan’s exports include textiles, rice and hosiery, while imports comprise petroleum, dairy and medical equipment. Sheikh highlighted opportunities in **value-added garments, IT services and halal meat**. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **CPEC 2.0 Push for Fast-Track Implementation** — Federal Minister for Planning **Ahsan Iqbal** has directed ministries to expedite work on the five corridors under **CPEC 2.0 — Growth, Livelihood, Innovation, Green Development and Regional Connectivity**. Chairing the 91st CPEC Projects Review and National Steering Committee meeting, he stressed that memorandums of understanding must translate into **timely implementation rather than remain confined to paperwork**. Concerns were raised over delays in the Karachi Coastal Comprehensive Development Zone, Gwadar power supply, and KKH Phase-II financing. The minister also emphasised utilising the expertise of 1,000 agriculture graduates trained in China, aligning future programmes with biotechnology, AI-driven agriculture and high-yield crops. (*The Nation*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **The Growth–Jobs Paradox in South Asia** — Economist **Ishrat Husain** highlights how rapid GDP growth in India and Bangladesh (6–7pc annually) and Pakistan’s modest 3–4pc have failed to generate sufficient formal employment. Despite rising education levels, **youth joblessness remains alarmingly high** — nearly 40pc of Indian graduates under 25 are unemployed, while four in five workers remain in insecure informal jobs. Husain stresses that *“rapid GDP growth by itself cannot ensure enough jobs or social stability.”* Structural issues include agriculture’s inability to absorb surplus labour, premature decline of manufacturing, low female participation, and a mismatch between education and employer needs. He argues that growth must be **labour-absorbing, manufacturing**

revitalised, agriculture reformed, and education aligned with market skills to avoid frustration and instability. (*Dawn*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan to Self-Finance KKH Phase-II if Needed** — At the 91st meeting of the **CPEC Projects Review and National Steering Committee**, chaired by Federal Minister **Ahsan Iqbal**, Pakistan decided in principle to proceed with the **Karakoram Highway (KKH) Phase-II project** under CPEC. While the government aims to secure Chinese financing, it will fund the project from its own resources if external support fails. Iqbal emphasised that **CPEC 2.0's five corridors — Growth, Livelihood, Innovation, Green Development and Regional Connectivity — must be expedited**. Concerns were raised over delays in projects like the Karachi Coastal Comprehensive Development Zone and Gwadar's power supply. The minister also directed authorities to align agricultural training in China with national priorities, focusing on biotechnology, AI-driven farming and high-yield crops. (*The News*, [6 August 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Iran–Oman Hormuz Deal Signals Shift in Gulf Dynamics** — Iran and Oman have reached “fundamental understandings” on a shipping route through the Strait of Hormuz, with Deputy FM Kazem Gharibabadi confirming commercial ships would pass through Iranian waters both inbound and outbound. The proposed deal, aimed at easing five months of US–Iran conflict, would give Tehran control of Gulf-bound traffic — a major concession. **“The devil is in the details. A single tweet from Trump could cause the whole thing to collapse,”** cautioned a regional source. Crude prices dipped as talks progressed. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Dar Denounces Al-Aqsa Provocations** — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, speaking in Amman, **condemned incursions into Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif by extremist Israeli settlers under the protection of occupying forces**, warning they undermine Jerusalem's religious and historical status and threaten regional peace. He stressed: *“Israel has no sovereignty over Occupied East Jerusalem or its Islamic and Christian holy sites. All measures seeking to alter their character or status are null and void.”* Dar urged Arab and Islamic unity, rejection of illegal settlements, and collective support for the Gaza Peace Plan. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pak–Iran Push for 24/7 Border Trade** — Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met Iranian Minister Seyyed Muhammad Atabak and agreed to enhance cross-border trade by ensuring **round-the-clock border operations, improved logistics, and harmonised customs procedures**. Both sides pledged cooperation in mining and value addition of precious stones, aiming to reach the **\$10 billion bilateral trade target**. Sharif reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to regional peace and conveyed best wishes to Iran's leadership. Atabak praised Pakistan's hospitality and confirmed technical talks on the Pakistan–Iran FTA were underway. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan and Japan Strengthen Development Cooperation** — Pakistan and Japan reaffirmed their commitment to deepen bilateral cooperation, agreeing on a mechanism for new projects with emphasis on **infrastructure, human resource development, digital transformation, tourism and sustainable economic growth**. The resolve was reiterated during a meeting between **JICA President Dr Tanaka Akihiko** and Federal Minister for Planning **Ahsan Iqbal**, aligning with

Pakistan's URAAN 5Es framework. Both sides expressed determination to expand collaboration in line with shared priorities for long-term progress. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **R-4 Ministers Reaffirm Support for Palestine** — Meeting in Amman, the foreign ministers of Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye reiterated that **a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Palestinian issue is indispensable for Middle East peace**. They expressed “*unwavering support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian State on the basis of the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.*” The ministers also emphasised dialogue and diplomacy to prevent further escalation. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Shehbaz Sharif's Strategic Visit to Saudi Arabia** — Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** embarks on a one-day official visit to Jeddah today at the invitation of Crown Prince **Mohammed bin Salman**, with talks expected to centre on **Gulf security, the Yemen conflict, and US–Iran negotiations**. He is accompanied by **Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir**, underscoring the strategic weight of the consultations. Delegation-level talks at the Royal Palace will review bilateral cooperation and regional stability, including maritime security and threats from Yemen's Houthis. Both sides are expected to reaffirm their **close strategic partnership in defence, security, economy and investment**. (*The Nation*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan and US Reaffirm Strategic Engagement** — Defence Minister **Khawaja Muhammad Asif** met US Charge d'Affaires **Natalie Baker** in Islamabad, where both sides reiterated their commitment to **closer bilateral cooperation and sustained engagement**. Discussions focused on the evolving regional and global security situation, with emphasis on advancing shared objectives of peace and stability. According to the Ministry of Defence, the meeting was held in a “**cordial and constructive atmosphere**”, reflecting the resolve of both countries to maintain regular high-level dialogue and collaboration on issues of mutual concern. (*The Nation*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **India's Twin Track of Influence and Confrontation** — Columnist **Maskwaith Ahsan**, editor-in-chief of *E-SouthAsia*, argues that India has pursued a dual strategy of **soft power through education and culture** and **hard power via proxy warfare and regional manoeuvres**. He notes that Indian teachers in Afghanistan cultivated goodwill that “**has now begun to yield political dividends for Delhi**,” while militant groups like the TTP were allegedly used to destabilise Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan where CPEC projects are vulnerable. Ahsan warns that enduring hostility benefits elites on both sides, as “**politicians, military establishments and business interests... benefit from this perpetual game of brinkmanship.**” (*The News*, [6 August 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **Naqvi Affirms Government's Full Term** — Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi dismissed speculation of an early exit, asserting that **Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will remain in office for five years**. Speaking in Lahore, he said: “*The government will complete its five-year constitutional term. Shehbaz Sahib will remain prime minister for five years.*” Naqvi defended his performance, noting 70% cabinet meeting attendance, and urged a public audit of ministries. He reiterated his view that Pakistan's

80-year-old system is “broken,” but praised Shehbaz’s 14–16-hour work ethic and reforms, insisting progress continues despite challenges. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Police–PTI Clashes in Karachi** — Police and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers clashed near the Karachi Press Club during a protest marking the third anniversary of Imran Khan’s arrest. Authorities blocked roads with containers, causing severe traffic disruption, before using **tear gas to disperse demonstrators and arresting several workers, including PTI Sindh General Secretary Dr Masroor Siyal**. PTI observed a nationwide “Black Day,” staging rallies across Sindh, demanding Khan’s release, restoration of democracy, and relief from inflation. The party alleged police baton charges injured workers. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Exhibit in Rawalpindi Highlights Kashmir Struggle** — A photo exhibition at the Punjab Arts Council Rawalpindi marked *Kashmir Exploitation Day*, showcasing alleged atrocities in Indian-administered Kashmir. Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Culture **Shazia Rizwan called 5 August 2019 “one of the darkest days in Kashmir’s history”**, condemning India’s revocation of the region’s special status. She stressed Pakistan’s continued political, diplomatic and moral support for Kashmiris. Council Director Mohammad Shakoor said the annual event aims to spotlight human rights violations and preserve national, cultural and historical memory. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **FIR Lodged After MQM-P HQ Clash** — Police registered a case against 20–25 unidentified individuals following **aerial firing and violent clashes between rival factions at MQM-Pakistan’s Bahadurabad headquarters**. The FIR, filed at New Town police station, includes charges of attempted murder, terrorism, rioting and vandalism, but no faction was named, reflecting “extreme caution.” Three men — Amir, Asad and Kashir Ali — were injured but left hospital against medical advice, preventing statements. The report also listed Azhar and Zeeshan Habib among those present. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Attack on AJK Politician’s Relatives in Rawat** — Unidentified gunmen opened fire on a vehicle carrying the nephew of Muslim Conference candidate Abdul Khateeb and his UK-based family near Mankiala Bridge in Rawat. The vehicle, displaying a campaign poster, was struck by bullets on its rear windscreen and bumper, but **all occupants escaped unharmed**. Complainant Mohammad Zulqarnain alleged the attackers intended to kill them. Police registered a case and launched an investigation into the incident, which caused panic in the area. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Adiala Jail Rejects Solitary Confinement Claim** — Jail authorities informed the Islamabad High Court that **PTI founder Imran Khan is not being held in solitary confinement**, stressing the practice has largely been abolished in prisons. The report was submitted in response to a petition filed by Aleema Khan challenging Khan’s alleged confinement. The superintendent stated that “*no inmate at Adiala Jail was being kept in solitary confinement*.” The case is scheduled to be heard by Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro on Thursday. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **LHC Dismisses PTI Rally Plea** — The Lahore High Court rejected PTI’s petition seeking permission to hold a rally at Minar-e-Pakistan on August 5, ruling the plea infructuous since the deputy commissioner had already decided the matter. **Justice Mirza Viqas Rauf questioned under**

which provision of Article 199 the court could grant permission for a public gathering, stressing decisions must follow the law. The petition was filed by PTI Lahore President Mian Usman Akram, with the deputy commissioner and officials named as respondents. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **PML-N's Challenge in AJK Governance** — The editorial notes that the PML-N is set to form government in 'Azad' Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) after securing 24 seats in the 53-member legislature, while the PPP trails with 10. The victory, driven by a pro-development campaign, was marred by allegations of misuse of state machinery and the **weakest voter turnout in AJK's history**, attributed to protests by the Joint Awami Action Committee and boycotts by PTI. The editorial stresses that the credibility test lies in ensuring turnout in the final phase and urges the PML-N to prioritise **addressing public grievances and engaging civil society** to build trust. (*The Express Tribune*, [6 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Government Considers National Assembly Session Post-AJK Polls** — Parliamentary sources reveal the government is weighing the option of summoning the **National Assembly on 17 August**, after the conclusion of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir elections. The NA Secretariat will issue the summons only after the consent of **President Asif Ali Zardari**. The summary has been delayed due to the ongoing AJK polls and Interior Minister **Mohsin Naqvi's recent statement on new provinces**. Experts note that the parliamentary calendar is tentative and often adjusted. Opposition members retain the right to requisition a session, which the Speaker must convene within 14 days. (*The Nation*, [6 August 2026](#))



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