

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

8-10 August 2026

Security

- ◆ **Shield of Collective Security** — Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye signed the **Makkah Joint Defence Agreement** in Makkah, pledging that an attack on one will be treated as an attack on all. **Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif** hailed the pact as a “**shield of peace**,” while **President Recep Tayyip Erdogan** stressed it is open to other friendly nations. **Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan** described the accord as a milestone in defence cooperation, clarifying it is not a military axis but a framework for sustainable security. The agreement reflects shared commitment to peace, deterrence and regional stability. (*Dawn*, [8 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Clarifying the Makkah Defence Pact** — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister **Ishaq Dar** emphasised that the **Makkah Joint Defence Agreement** signed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye is “**purely defensive in nature**” and “**not targeted against any country**.” He explained that the accord, consistent with Article 51 of the UN Charter, treats an attack on one member as an attack on all, while reinforcing peace, stability and prosperity. Dar stressed it does not replace existing bilateral or multilateral agreements and remains open to other nations. Turkish Foreign Minister **Hakan Fidan** added that Egypt may join once technical matters are resolved. (*The Express Tribune*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **From Doha to Drone Strikes** — The roots of the current Pakistan–Afghanistan confrontation lie in the **Doha Agreement of 2020**, which excluded Kabul’s government and left the Taliban unchecked. By August 2021, the Taliban had seized power without delivering on promises of inclusivity or renouncing ties to Al-Qaeda. Instead, Afghanistan became a hub for over 20 militant outfits, fuelling a shadow economy of opium and smuggling. Pakistan, ranked by the **Global Terrorism Index 2026** as the most impacted country, endured escalating **TTP attacks**. Diplomatic efforts failed, leading to **Operation Ghazab Lil Haq** in February 2026. Taliban retaliation, including drone incursions, has underscored their fragile military capacity. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Rejecting Taliban’s Weapon Allegations** — Pakistan’s Ministry of Information and Broadcasting dismissed the Afghan Taliban’s claim that weapons were being smuggled from Pakistan into Afghanistan, calling it “**frivolous, baseless and contrary to established facts**.” The ministry noted Afghanistan was already “**awash with enormous quantities of sophisticated weapons**” worth \$7.2 billion left behind after the U.S. withdrawal, alongside Soviet-era stockpiles. It said the allegation was an attempt to divert attention from the “**far more serious and documented concern**” of terrorist sanctuaries operating on Afghan soil. Pakistan reiterated that the Taliban must honour commitments to prevent Afghan territory being used for terrorism. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Counterterrorism Drive in Balochistan** — Security forces killed **15 terrorists** in intelligence-based operations across Mastung, Bolan, Washuk, Awaran, Sibi, Khuzdar, Harnai and Noshki under **Operation Rad-ul-Fitna-3**, aimed at eliminating what the state terms “**Indian proxies**.” Large caches of weapons and ammunition were recovered, severely damaging militant networks. Interior Minister **Mohsin Naqvi** praised the forces, calling them “**the pride of the nation**” and vowing terrorism would be eliminated with public support. The campaign follows rising attacks, with ACLED data showing incidents in Pakistan surged nearly fourfold between 2022 and 2025, underscoring Balochistan’s vulnerability. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Sacrifice in Hangu Operation** — Security forces killed **seven terrorists** belonging to the Indian-proxy group *Fitna al-Khawarij* during an intelligence-based operation in Hangu, but **Captain Hamza Akram (27, Narowal)** embraced martyrdom while leading his troops. According to **Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR)**, the terrorists took refuge inside a mosque, “**blatantly disregarding the sanctity of the place of worship**,” before being neutralised. Weapons and ammunition were recovered, and sanitisation continues under **Operation Azm-e-Istehkam**, approved by the Federal Apex Committee on the National Action Plan. ISPR stressed that such sacrifices reinforce Pakistan’s unwavering commitment to eliminate foreign-sponsored terrorism. (*The Nation*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Makkah pact signals shifting Muslim world security order** — Senior foreign affairs correspondent **Kamran Yousaf** writes that the **Makkah Joint Defence Agreement** between **Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Türkiye** marks a new phase in regional security. Signed last week, the pact commits the three nations to treat an attack on one as an attack on all, offering “**a message of collective deterrence**.” Yousaf notes that in 2019 Pakistan struggled to balance ties between Riyadh and Ankara, but by 2026 the three powers now stand together. While not officially anti-Iran, the pact reflects a **multipolar security system** and could evolve into a broader defence framework. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan emerges as key beneficiary of US-Iran war** — Journalist and TV anchor **Fahd Husain** argues that Pakistan has “**won without firing a bullet**” by leveraging diplomacy and hard power during the US-Iran conflict. He highlights ten reasons for Pakistan’s strategic rise: expanding its role from South Asia to West Asia, demonstrating the value of military strength in the “**Guns vs Butter**” debate, and institutionalising stability through the **trilateral defence pact with Saudi Arabia and Türkiye**. Husain stresses that while India is the “**net loser**,” Pakistan’s domestic governance failures remain a stark contrast to its rising global stature. (*Dawn*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan’s counterterrorism dilemma** — Security analyst **Muhammad Amir Rana** highlights that despite intensified operations, terrorist violence is escalating, especially in **KP and Balochistan**. July saw the year’s highest number of attacks, including a devastating suicide bombing in Swat. While **205 militants were killed in 26 operations**, only five arrests were made, revealing reliance on lethal force and weak investigative capacity. “[The country lacks a coordinated strategy that converts operational success into durable peace],” he warns. Without governance reform, political inclusion, capable policing and community trust, militants will keep returning to cleared areas. (*Dawn*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Summary of TTP Operations 8-9 August 2026:**

8 August 2026 (24 Safar 1448 AH)

On 8 August 2026, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed 19 operations across five provinces: South Waziristan (7), Peshawar (6), North Waziristan (3), Zhob (2), and Orakzai (1). Operations involved ambushes, grenade launcher (GL) and hand-grenade attacks, mine explosions, snipers, and detention of military supply contractors. Key highlights include a mine explosion in Mir Ali that caused ten casualties (5 killed, 5 wounded), dual attacks in Zhob killing ten personnel and destroying three vehicles, multiple strikes on security forces in Peshawar, and a counterattack in Orakzai resulting in the deaths of five soldiers—including Captain Hamza—and four TTP fighters.

9 August 2026 (25 Safar 1448 AH)

On August 9, 2026, TTP claimed 20 operations spanning South Waziristan (8), North Waziristan (8), Peshawar (2), Khurram (1), and Khyber (1). The attacks largely utilized sniper fire, heavy machine guns (DSHK), mortar rounds, GL shells, and targeted ambushes against military convoys, checkpoints, and forts. Notable actions included an ambush on a six-vehicle military convoy and secondary forces in Angoor Adda causing significant casualties, a mortar bombardment on a military fort in Parachinar resulting in ten casualties, and widespread sabotage of military infrastructure, including solar energy setups, security cameras, and water extraction machinery.

Consolidated Summary Table

Date	Total Ops	Regional Breakdown	Primary Attack Tactics	Key Outcomes & Impact
8 August 2026 <i>(24 Safar 1448 AH)</i>	19	• South Waziristan: 7 • Peshawar: 6 • North Waziristan: 3 • Zhob: 2 • Orakzai: 1	Ambushes, GL shells, mine explosions, hand grenades, sniper attacks, and detentions.	• 10 casualties in Mir Ali mine blast (5 killed, 5 wounded). • 10 personnel killed & 3 vehicles destroyed in Zhob. • 5 personnel killed (incl. Capt. Hamza) & 4 TTP fighters killed in Orakzai. • Multiple casualties across Peshawar; post infrastructure sabotaged.
9 August 2026 <i>(25 Safar 1448 AH)</i>	20	• South Waziristan: 8 • North Waziristan: 8 • Peshawar: 2	Convoy ambushes, DSHK heavy fire, sniper attacks, mortar shelling, and sabotage.	• 12+ casualties & 1 vehicle destroyed in Angoor Adda convoy ambushes. • 10 casualties in Parachinar fort mortar attack.

Date	Total Ops	Regional Breakdown	Primary Attack Tactics	Key Outcomes & Impact
		• Khurram: 1 • Khyber: 1		• Sabotage of solar systems, security cameras, and water extraction equipment.

Economy

- ◆ **Exports to US show modest rise** — Pakistan's exports to the United States increased by **1.55%** in FY2025-26, reaching **\$6.12 billion**, according to **State Bank of Pakistan (SBP)** data. Year-on-year, exports rose **12.93% in June 2026**, while month-on-month they grew **16.69%** compared to May. However, overall exports to the rest of the world fell **4.63%** to \$30.84 billion. Imports from the US surged **38.93%** to \$3.26 billion during the fiscal year, though June saw a sharp month-on-month decline. Pakistan's total imports rose nearly **9%**, underscoring widening trade imbalances despite stronger US demand. (*The Nation*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Govt sanctions Rs10b for export sectors** — Federal Minister for Commerce **Jam Kamal Khan** announced that the Ministry of Commerce has sanctioned **Rs10 billion** for the textile and apparel industry and other export sectors under the **Duty Drawback and Technology Upgradation Schemes**. He said the initiative would **"improve the liquidity of industry and enable them to enhance exports."** The funds are expected to support technological upgrades, strengthen competitiveness and expand Pakistan's presence in global markets. The move reflects the government's continued focus on facilitating industry and creating an enabling environment for sustainable export growth. (*The Nation*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan launches major airport modernisation drive** — The **Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA)** has unveiled a multibillion-rupee expansion programme, marking two years since its establishment. Key projects include the **completion of the New Gwadar International Airport at Rs55 billion** and the **reconstruction of Karachi's main runway at Rs10 billion**. Expansion schemes are under way at **Lahore (Rs43b)** and **Skardu (Rs70b)**, while Islamabad has become the country's **first fully cashless airport**. The PAA also plans new facilities such as a cargo village in Karachi, an MRO centre in Islamabad, and potential greenfield airports in Sukkur, Faisalabad and Dera Ismail Khan. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **From sovereignty to fiscal strength** — Writer **Muzammil Hemani** argues that Pakistan's unfinished task is to translate political sovereignty into **fiscal independence**, defined as the ability to raise sustainable domestic resources and pursue development priorities with autonomy. He warns that **"fiscal dependence emerges when borrowing becomes a substitute for reform."** While tax revenues have improved, Hemani stresses that broadening the tax base must target untapped economic capacity rather than overburdening documented taxpayers. He calls for eliminating wasteful expenditure, encouraging growth, and making formality economically viable, noting that fiscal reform must balance revenue mobilisation with efficient spending. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pak-Iran trade ambitions face hurdles** — Writer **Dr Ali Salman**, CEO of PRIME think tank, examines the recent pledge by Iran and Pakistan to raise bilateral trade to **\$10 billion**, noting that sanctions, payment channels and transit connectivity remain major obstacles. Formal trade collapsed to zero by 2020, but barter trade since 2023 is estimated at **\$3 billion**, covering 26 approved commodities. He cautions that “**such export targets may generate newspaper headlines, but they will have limited practical meaning unless supported by credible payment, compliance and logistics mechanisms.**” Practical steps include seeking a **US waiver for petroleum imports** and exploring a **currency swap**. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Vision 2047 controversy highlights governance gaps** — The federal government is set to launch **Vision Pakistan 2047** on **International Youth Day (12 August 2026)** without involving the **Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives**, which is already working on its own Vision 2047 framework. Chairman PMYP **Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan** has asked ministries to submit goals and reforms, but officials criticised the short timeline, saying “[only cut-paste is possible, no original work expected].” Planning Minister **Ahsan Iqbal** stressed that “**developing long-term plans is the mandate of the Ministry of Planning**” and requires at least 6–12 months of preparation. (*The Nation*, [8 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan’s fiscal paradox and power-sector burden** — Pakistan’s fiscal deficit narrowed to **1.6pc of GDP in FY26**, but this apparent stability masks fragility. Public debt reached **Rs83.29tr (\$298.5bn)**, with **Rs6.16tr consumed by interest payments** in 11 months. The IMF projects a 3.2pc deficit for FY27. Structural stress stems from the **power sector**, where capacity payments and dollar-indexed IPP contracts drive circular debt, now at **Rs1.84tr**. Although renegotiations with 14 IPPs may save Rs1.4tr, **CPEC-related liabilities of Rs1.4tr remain unresolved**. As Mohiuddin Aazim warns, “[the economy has reached a stage where structural reforms can no longer be postponed].” (*Dawn*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Economic dividends of the Makkah pact** — The trilateral defence agreement between **Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye** is being hailed not only as a landmark security arrangement but also as a potential economic game-changer. Collectively, the three nations represent an economic bloc worth **over \$3 trillion** and a market of nearly **380 million people**. Analysts argue that if strategic trust translates into trade liberalisation, investment and industrial partnerships, Pakistan could attract billions in foreign investment, expand exports and modernise its manufacturing base. Early signs include Pakistan’s request for a **\$6.7bn concessional oil financing facility from Saudi Arabia** and growing Turkish interest in energy, infrastructure and defence manufacturing. As **Khalid Mustafa** notes, the pact’s success will be measured not just by military cooperation but by whether it delivers “**factories, infrastructure, technology, jobs and sustainable economic growth.**” (*The News*, [8 August 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Pakistan’s Mediation and US–Iran Peace Challenges** — A recent analysis by **Ibrahim Al-Marashi** in *South Asian Voices* argues that Pakistan should not be blamed for setbacks in the **US–Iran peace process**, as mediation failures often reflect “**deep-seated psychological mistrust and structural disputes**” rather than shortcomings of the mediator. The article highlights Pakistan’s unique “geo-

positional capital” and credibility in Tehran and Washington, likening its role to the 1971 Kissinger–China breakthrough. It notes that Pakistan’s intervention succeeded at a “**mutually hurting stalemate**,” averting escalation in April 2026. The piece stresses that mediation cannot manufacture ripeness but must remain reliable when parties return to talks. (*The Nation*, [9 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Indian Media Acknowledges Strategic Value of Makkah Defence Pact** — Indian media outlets, including *India Today*, have described the **Pakistan–Saudi Arabia–Türkiye defence agreement** as an important development for Pakistan. Reports noted that **joint military exercises, defence integration and technology transfers** could enhance Pakistan’s combat preparedness, while access to **Türkiye’s advanced drone technology and electronic warfare capabilities** would strengthen its defence. Analysts highlighted that **Türkiye’s technology, Saudi Arabia’s resources and Pakistan’s operational capabilities** form a potent combination. Indian media’s recognition of these benefits is seen as an implicit admission of the pact’s strategic importance and its challenge to India. (*The Nation*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Defence Minister’s Fierce Warning on Israel** — Pakistan’s Defence Minister **Khawaja Asif** declared that “**Israel is a threat to the entire Muslim world**” and urged for “**a united military front**” against it, following the signing of the trilateral defence pact with Saudi Arabia and Türkiye. He described Israel as “**a product of the Balfour Declaration... an illegitimate state**” and insisted its leadership, regardless of who governs, maintains “**an anti-Islamic mindset**.” Asif reiterated that until the Palestinian issue is resolved, Muslim countries must stand united. Israel has yet to respond to his latest remarks. (*The Nation*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan backs ASEAN’s peace vision** — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister **Senator Ishaq Dar** reaffirmed Pakistan’s support for ASEAN’s efforts to promote peace, stability and prosperity on the organisation’s **59th Anniversary**. He stressed that “**inclusive dialogue, mutual trust and international cooperation remain the most effective means of addressing shared challenges**.” Dar congratulated ASEAN Secretary-General **Dr Kao Kim Hourn** for his leadership and reiterated Pakistan’s commitment to work closely with ASEAN in advancing “**a peaceful, prosperous and integrated region**.” The Foreign Office said Pakistan values ASEAN’s role in regional cooperation and sustainable development. (*The Nation*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Balancing Oversight and Press Freedom** — The editorial warns that new guidelines for foreign media, though intended to streamline reporting, risk creating “**an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy**.” It argues that restrictive frameworks transform organic storytelling into managed narratives, undermining transparency. The piece stresses that **misinformation must be tackled through fact-checking and evidence, not access restrictions**, as curating an image through bans signals insecurity. A confident government, it notes, trusts the press to operate autonomously. The editorial concludes that a sustainable media environment requires shifting from control to facilitation, ensuring authentic experiences shape global perception. (*The Nation*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Iran sets tough terms for Strait reopening** — Iranian Foreign Minister **Abbas Araqchi** said the **Strait of Hormuz** would only reopen once the United States met strict conditions, including **compensation for widespread attacks**. He confirmed that a deal with Oman on new shipping lanes

was in its “final stages” but insisted Washington must first end threats, lift sanctions, unblock Iranian assets and halt aggression against Iran’s allies. Supreme Leader **Mojtaba Khamenei** holds ultimate authority, though his absence from public view since February has fuelled speculation. Meanwhile, **Houthis attacked Saudi Aramco’s Jazan refinery** with a drone, underscoring regional volatility. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pak envoy urges deeper bilateral ties with US** — At a joint celebration of **US Independence’s 250th anniversary** and **Pakistan’s 79th Independence Day**, Ambassador **Rizwan Saeed Sheikh** highlighted the “**time-tested bond of friendship**” between the two nations. Speaking at an event organised by the **Pakistani American Press Association (PAPA)**, he called for strengthening relations through **greater trade, investment and economic cooperation**. The envoy also underscored the importance of **fairness, objectivity and impartiality** as core values of journalism, noting their role in fostering mutual understanding between Pakistan and the United States. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **China and Pakistan to advance CPEC 2.0** — Chinese Ambassador **Jiang Zaidong** reaffirmed Beijing’s readiness to work with Islamabad to build **CPEC 2.0 with high quality**, citing geographical proximity, mutual trust and longstanding friendship. He said the two nations would expand cooperation to “**cope with the uncertainty of the external environment with the certainty of China-Pakistan relations**,” accelerating efforts to create a closer community with a shared future. Jiang praised Pakistan’s support for the **one-China principle** and highlighted China’s new **Ethnic Unity and Progress Promotion Law**, stressing that no ethnic group should be left behind in modernisation. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan’s quiet embrace of global standards** — Pakistan’s long-standing engagement with **international treaties and conventions** has quietly laid the foundations for sustainable development. The country is party to **over 150 major agreements** spanning governance, trade, labour, human rights and the environment. It has ratified **38 ILO conventions**, including eight of the ten Fundamental Conventions, demonstrating commitment to labour rights such as the **abolition of forced labour** and the **elimination of child labour**. As **APTMA Chairman** notes, “[Pakistan’s engagement with international standards is not a recent phenomenon. It has been quietly laying the foundations for sustainable development].” (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Asia’s shifting balance in a multipolar world** — Former finance minister and World Bank vice-president **Shahid Javed Burki** reflects on Asia’s evolving role in the global order. He recalls coining the term “multipolar” after the USSR’s collapse, now widely used to describe today’s fragmented power structures. In East Asia, **China’s assertiveness** and uncertainty over US commitments have spurred Japan, Australia, South Korea and others to strengthen defence ties and expand military capabilities. In West Asia, the **US-Israel attack on Iran (Feb 2026)** has destabilised the Middle East, with ripple effects near Pakistan’s borders. Burki notes Pakistan’s troubled relations with **India, Iran and Afghanistan**, contrasting with its deepening partnership with **China through CPEC and plans for CPEC-2** into Afghanistan. He concludes that Asia’s future will be shaped by regional powers filling the space left by an overstretched United States. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Lessons for Pakistan from Iran's resilience in war** — Dr **Muhammad Ali Ehsan**, non-resident research fellow at IPRI and Assistant Professor at DHA Suffa University, argues that Iran's survival despite devastating attacks offers six key lessons for Pakistan. First, "**strategic autonomy begins with technological autonomy**," as Iran's sanctions-driven self-reliance contrasts with Pakistan's dependence on imports. Second, institutional resilience is vital, since Iran's state continued functioning under assault. Third, national identity can transcend ideology, mobilising society for resilience. Fourth, Pakistan must reassess its **conventional force structure** in light of drones, cyber and precision weapons. Fifth, economic resilience requires energy security, reserves and alternative trade routes. Sixth, true military resilience rests on a **social contract** that ensures justice, accountability and equal citizenship. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Shehbaz's meeting with Bangladeshi PM in Jakarta** — Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** will meet his Bangladeshi counterpart **Tarique Rehman** in Jakarta next week during the **12th D-8 summit**, marking their first interaction since Rehman took office six months ago. The three-day summit begins on **17 August 2026**, after being postponed earlier due to the Middle East conflict. Diplomatic sources indicate Shehbaz will also meet **Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian** and **Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan** on the sidelines. It is likely that **Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir**, Chief of Defence Forces, will join Pakistan's delegation for key engagements. (*The News*, [9 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Bangladesh eyes Pakistan for medical tourism** — With **800,000 Bangladeshi patients spending over \$6bn annually on overseas treatment**, Dhaka is now exploring Pakistan as an alternative to India amid strained ties with New Delhi. During a meeting in Islamabad, **High Commissioner Md Iqbal Hussain Khan** sought **visa facilitation, better air connectivity and hospital access** for Bangladeshi patients. Federal Health Secretary **Muhammad Aslam Ghauri** assured cooperation, while **Muhammad Arshad Qaim Khani** of the Sehat Card Programme estimated Pakistan could attract **200,000 patients worth \$1.5bn**. Medical tourism expert **Dr Zakiuddin Ahmed** stressed that Pakistan must back its medical expertise with visas, accreditation and marketing. (*The News*, [9 August 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **Sindh leaders defy NCCIA summons** — The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has summoned **Jeay Sindh Mahaz (JSM) Chairman Riaz Ali Chandio** and **Qaumi Awami Tehreek (QAT) President Barrister Ayaz Latif Palijo** over alleged anti-state social media posts. Chandio refused to appear, saying he was "**ready to face arrest**" and denounced the notice as political victimisation. Palijo, however, confirmed he would attend the inquiry in Karachi. Both leaders linked the summons to their opposition to Interior Minister **Mohsin Naqvi's** proposal to create new administrative units, warning against any move to divide Sindh or exploit its resources. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **Appointments amid elections raise concerns in AJK** — The 'Azad' Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) government has appointed **seven new members to the Public Service Commission (PSC)** for a three-year term while general elections are still under way. Opposition parties, including the **PML-N** and **PTI**, criticised the timing, calling the move politically motivated. PTI leader **Khawaja**

Farooq said such decisions during elections were “**not morally good**” and should have been left to the incoming government. The PSC plays a crucial role in recruitment, making its composition politically significant during transition. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **PTI split over September march plan** — The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) faces internal divisions after **Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi** announced a long march towards Islamabad on **27 September**, catching many central leaders off guard. PTI Central Information Secretary **Sheikh Waqas Akram** confirmed the party was “**not taken into confidence**,” contradicting K-P Information Minister **Shafi Jan**, who insisted the decision was made in consultation with allies. Local PTI chapters in K-P have opposed the plan, pushing the hashtag “**27 September Long March Na Manzoor**.” Senior leaders criticised Afridi’s unilateral style, saying such announcements were often made “in the heat of the movement.” (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **PPP vows legal challenge over AJK poll rigging** — **Chaudhry Yasin**, President of the **Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Azad Jammu and Kashmir**, accused the **Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)** of “**widespread electoral rigging**” during the ongoing elections. Speaking at the National Press Club, he raised serious concerns about the roles of the **Election Commission and administration**, alleging manipulation of the process to benefit the PML-N. Yasin announced that the PPP would **approach the courts** to seek investigations into the alleged irregularities, vowing to challenge what he described as a compromised electoral process. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan to boost energy security through exploration** — Minister for Petroleum **Ali Pervaiz Malik** announced plans to accelerate **domestic oil and gas exploration** to reduce reliance on imports, noting Pakistan currently produces only **70,000 barrels per day against demand of 500,000**. He said **Turkish Petroleum** will soon begin offshore drilling, while a leading international firm has been tasked with preparing a comprehensive energy roadmap. Malik highlighted the government’s **transparent petroleum pricing mechanism** and efforts to stabilise the economy despite global price shocks from the **Iran–US conflict**. He added, “**Pakistan’s next major destination... is sustainable economic progress**.” (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan’s governance challenges demand devolution and reform** — Writer **Dr Manzoor Ahmad**, former ambassador and WTO representative, argues that Pakistan’s recent diplomatic gains are overshadowed by internal governance failures rooted in **highly centralised decision-making**. He stresses that “**meaningful devolution is no longer optional; it is essential**,” noting that weak local governments undermine schools, hospitals and municipal services. Ahmad highlights fragile security in **Balochistan and K-P**, where the **National Action Plan** has remained overly security-focused, neglecting economic development and community participation. He calls for operationalising **Joint Border Markets**, restoring cross-border trade, and strengthening institutions to ensure sustainable prosperity. (*The Express Tribune*, [10 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Balochi song celebrates unity ahead of Independence Day** — Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** lauded the release of the Balochi-language patriotic song “**Pak Ae Watan**”, calling it a “**beautifully captured spirit of love for our beloved homeland**.” Produced by **ISPR** and performed by **Akhtar**

Chanal Zahri with music by **Sami Khan**, the song blends **Baloch folk traditions** with a message of national solidarity. It highlights unity among Pakistan's provinces, AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan, portraying the country as central to people's identity and their willingness to sacrifice for it. The song promotes **brotherhood, pride and cohesion** across diverse communities. (*The Express Tribune*, [9 August 2026](#))

- ◆ **PPP alleges Punjab police deployed in AJK elections** — **Chaudhry Yasin**, President of the **Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) AJK**, demanded transparent investigations into disputed constituencies, alleging that **Punjab police had been called to AJK deliberately for “specific purposes.”** At a press conference with **Javed Budhanvi** and **Arshad Sohaib**, he claimed “**not organised rigging but outright rigging**” was taking place in LA-9, accusing the **PML-N** of forcing victory. He also criticised PML-N leader **Rana Sanaullah** for announcing the party's win months earlier. Meanwhile, **CEC Justice (r) Mustafa Mughal** assured voters of peaceful polling in Bagh and Haveli despite postponements elsewhere. (*The Express Tribune*, [9 August 2026](#))
- ◆ **Child protection failures demand urgent reform** — The shocking figure of **1,914 child abuse cases in Pakistan in the first six months of 2026** — more than 10 a day — underscores systemic failure. According to **Sahil**, 1,015 involved sexual abuse, 558 abduction, 101 missing children, 35 child marriages and 98 pornography-linked cases. Disturbingly, **43pc of abusers were acquaintances and 45pc of incidents occurred in the victim's own home.** The **Qayyumabad case** illustrates the danger embedded in familiar relationships. As the *Dawn* editorial warns, “the economy has reached a stage where structural reforms can no longer be postponed” — prevention, not just registration, must be the state's priority. (*Dawn*, [10 August 2026](#))





The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of Pakistan, together with the Government of Punjab, published posters in several national newspapers celebrating what they described as the “Historic Makkah Joint Defence Agreement,” signed by the three ‘brotherly’ Islamic countries of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye. The posters portrayed the agreement as a “Joint Defence Agreement – Stronger Peace, Secure Future” and emphasised the

bonds of friendship, mutual security, and cooperation among the three countries.

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The Nation

PEACE SECURITY STABILITY

MAKKAH JOINT DEFENCE AGREEMENT

مکہ پابندی دفاعی معاہدہ

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Government of Pakistan

ASIF ALI ZARDARI
President Islamic Republic of Pakistan
I warmly welcome the signing of the historic Makkah Joint Defence Agreement in the holy city of Makkah. This landmark agreement is an important contribution to peace, security and stability in the region and beyond. It is a significant step towards strengthening collective security, defence cooperation and strategic partnership among our three brotherly nations.

SHEHBAZ SHARIF
Prime Minister Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Honoured to sign the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement alongside my dear brothers, I feel immense pride and joy. This historic agreement is a testament to the deep bonds of friendship and solidarity among our three brotherly nations. United by faith, committed to peace, and dedicated to the welfare of our people, we are determined to stand together in the face of any challenge and ensure a secure and prosperous future for all.

FIELD MARSHAL SYED ASIM MUNIR
Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces
The international community has acknowledged that Pakistan is an integral part of the global security architecture. Our nation's commitment to peace, security and stability is a source of pride and inspiration for our people. This historic agreement is a significant step towards strengthening collective security, defence cooperation and strategic partnership among our three brotherly nations.

KHAWAJA ASIF
Minister for Information
I welcome the signing of Makkah Joint Defence Agreement between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye. It is a significant step towards strengthening collective security, defence cooperation and strategic partnership among our three brotherly nations.

ISHAQ DAR
Minister for External Relations
I extend warm congratulations to the nations and the people of the region for signing this historic agreement. This landmark agreement is a testament to the deep bonds of friendship and solidarity among our three brotherly nations. United by faith, committed to peace, and dedicated to the welfare of our people, we are determined to stand together in the face of any challenge and ensure a secure and prosperous future for all.

THREE BROTHERLY NATIONS ONE COLLECTIVE SHIELD

UNITED BY FAITH BOUND BY FRIENDSHIP COMMITTED TO PEACE

OUR COMMITMENT TO PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY IS UNWAVERING

TOGETHER FOR OUR PEOPLE TOGETHER FOR OUR REGION TOGETHER FOR OUR FUTURE

AN ATTACK ON ONE IS AN ATTACK ON ALL

In the light of ongoing discussion and interest surrounding the “Makkah Joint Defence Agreement” (The Makkah Accord) over the past two days, the following context and clarity on this Agreement may be useful for everyone to note:

The Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, jointly signed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye on Friday 7th August 2020, reflects the depth of the brotherly relations between the leadership and peoples of the three countries. The Makkah Accord is the culmination of years of discussions and consultations, with a common vision to strengthen strategic cooperation in addressing multifaceted peace and security challenges and advancing regional peace, stability and prosperity. The Makkah Accord does not abrogate or replace any existing bilateral or multilateral agreements between these countries, or with other countries or organisations. Any external armed attack on any one of the three countries will be considered as an attack on all, consistent with the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter. The Makkah Accord is purely defensive in nature. It is not targeted against any country and its sole purpose is to further strengthen our ongoing efforts towards peace, stability and prosperity in the wider region. The Makkah Accord remains open to any country in the region willing to uphold its fundamental principles and resolve differences through mutual respect, cooperation and peaceful means. The Makkah Accord is consistent with the fundamental pillars of our foreign policy. Pakistan looks forward to continuing to work closely with all brotherly countries in the region towards lasting peace and stability. We remain committed to advancing the cause of peaceful resolution of all conflicts and building a more secure, stable and prosperous future for our peoples.

“Our nations stand united for peace, security and stability in the region and beyond. This historic accord strengthens our resolve to protect sovereignty, defend our people and promote prosperity for the entire Ummah and the wider world.”



*[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**].*