

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

25 September 2026

Security

- ◆ **Pakistan Strikes Afghan Targets Amid Border Clashes** — Pakistan conducted precision aerial and drone strikes at 10 locations in Afghanistan following an incursion of eight drones launched from across the border. Information Minister Attaullah Tarar stated that **the retaliatory strikes were a sovereign act of self-defence**, describing the drone intrusion as a *"blatant violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity"*. Pakistan criticised the Afghan Taliban for failing to dismantle terrorist sanctuaries and escalating hostilities. **Kabul was sternly warned that future provocations would face an immediate and decisive response**. Subsequent border clashes, shelling, and attempted incursions in Kurram and the Gulistan sector led Pakistani forces to retaliate, destroying several Afghan Army border posts and repelling enemy advances. (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Iran Yet to Formally Join Makkah Defence Accord**—Defence Minister **Khawaja Asif** said **Pakistan had discussed the Makkah Defence Accord with Iran, but Tehran had not yet formally joined the agreement**. He noted that Iran could become a member in the future, alongside several other countries that have expressed interest. Asif said the participating states were still establishing the accord's secretariat, after which they would discuss its operational details. Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** separately confirmed that he had briefed Iranian President **Masoud Pezeshkian** on the accord. The developments indicate that Iran has been consulted but remains outside the agreement's formal membership for now. (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Balochistan Imposes Province-Wide Restrictions Under Section 144** — The Balochistan government has imposed **Section 144 across the province for 30 days**, citing concerns over activities and gatherings that could affect public safety, security and law and order. **The order prohibits the display, carrying or use of weapons in public places, bans gatherings of five or more persons, including rallies, demonstrations, sit-ins and processions, and restricts the covering of faces in public spaces where identification may be obstructed**. Authorities stated that the restrictions will remain in force for a month unless modified, withdrawn or extended by the competent authority. **Law enforcement agencies and district administrations have been directed to ensure strict implementation, with legal action promised against violators**. (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Balochistan Refers First Batch of Terror Suspects to Newly Established Faceless Courts** — In a significant development under the **Anti-Terrorism (Balochistan) Amendment Act 2025**, authorities have referred **40 terrorism suspects for trial through faceless courts**, a mechanism



introduced to replace controversial enforced disappearances with a formal legal process. **According to officials, around 90 suspects have been detained under the new law, five have been released after investigations, and 40 cases have proceeded towards trial.** The system provides for preventive detention, judicial oversight and confidential court proceedings conducted via video links, with the identities of judges, prosecutors and protected witnesses kept secret for security reasons. **Officials argued that extraordinary measures were necessary given persistent threats to judges, prosecutors and law-enforcement personnel handling terrorism-related cases in Balochistan.** (*The News International*, [25 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **US-Iran Talks Explore Phased Deal as Regional Tensions Escalate** — According to **Reuters**, US and Iranian negotiators in New York are exploring a phased arrangement that could involve the reopening of the **Strait of Hormuz** and the easing of US economic restrictions on Iran. **Iranian officials reportedly favour a step-by-step approach, with navigation through Hormuz restored in exchange for the lifting of the US blockade and potential access to frozen Iranian assets.** At the same time, regional tensions continued to intensify. **Yahya Rahim Safavi, adviser to Iran's supreme leader, warned that any further US military action could expand the conflict towards the Indian Ocean.** The developments coincided with continued Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia, rising oil prices, diplomatic efforts at the United Nations, and growing international concern over maritime security and stability in the Middle East. (*The News International*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **C-1 Nuclear Power Plant Operates Safely for 427 Days Without Interruption** — **Chashma Nuclear Power Plant Unit-1 (C-1) operated safely and without interruption for 427 days during Cycle 18, setting a new record for the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC).** The report highlights that **C-1 achieved a perfect World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) Performance Indicator Index score of 100** for the first two quarters of 2026. Officials noted that **nuclear power remains one of the most cost-effective energy sources in Pakistan**, with generation costs at Rs 6.876 per unit, reinforcing the nation's energy security through PAEC's six operational plants. (*The Nation*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Eight Militants Killed in North Waziristan Operation** — Security forces killed **eight militants affiliated with Fitna al-Khwarij** during an intelligence-based operation in North Waziristan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, according to security sources. A large quantity of **weapons, ammunition and other equipment** was recovered, while the militants' hideouts were destroyed. The sources said the militants had attempted to use a mosque as a shield to evade the security forces. However, taking into account the **sanctity of the mosque**, the forces conducted the operation with precision. The reported operation comes amid continuing security operations against militant groups in the region. (*The Express Tribune*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Experts Debate India's Strategy and Wider Challenges to South Asian Stability** — At a workshop on **"Evolving World Order and Strategic Stability in South Asia"**, Strategic Plans Division official **Retired Maj Gen Syed Shahab Shahid** said India's strategic behaviour was undermining regional security and attributed this to what he described as an **"ultra-nationalist**

Hindutva philosophy". Other experts called for a broader understanding of strategic stability that goes beyond traditional military power. **Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi**, CISS executive director, highlighted growing challenges to global arms control and nuclear governance. Participants also examined India's military modernisation, emerging technologies, nuclear deterrence, crisis management and lessons from **India-Pakistan crises from Pulwama to Pahalgam**. (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))

Economy

- ◆ **Government Prepares 174 IMF-Linked Reforms Ahead of Programme Review** — Finance Secretary **Imdadullah Bosal** informed the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue that the government is working on **174 amendments sought by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)** under its ongoing financing programmes worth \$8.4 billion. **The proposed changes, covering financial-sector governance, state-owned enterprises, foreign remittances, climate-related measures and currency integration, will be presented to parliament for approval.** The briefing came ahead of the IMF mission's fourth review of the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility and third review of the Resilience and Sustainability Facility. Discussions also include reforms relating to the **Sovereign Wealth Fund, remittance policies, sugar-sector liberalisation, energy-sector restructuring and state-owned enterprise governance.** Lawmakers stressed that reforms should translate into tangible economic and social benefits while supporting investment, exports and sustainable growth. (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan Launches \$6 Billion Refinery Modernisation Drive to Boost Energy Security** — Pakistan's major oil refineries, including **Attock Refinery Limited (ARL), National Refinery Limited (NRL), Cnergyico Pakistan Limited (CPL) and Pakistan Refinery Limited (PRL)**, have signed long-delayed upgradation agreements under a nearly **\$6 billion investment programme** aimed at modernising the refining sector, producing cleaner Euro-V fuels and strengthening energy security. **The projects are expected to reduce furnace oil production, increase local refining capacity and save around \$1.5 billion annually in foreign exchange by cutting petroleum product imports.** According to **Adil Khattak, CEO of ARL and Chairman of the Energy Committee of the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry**, the initiative concludes a policy process that began in 2019 and reflects the strategic importance of domestic refining capacity amid evolving geopolitical conditions. (*The News International*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **US Financing Explored for PIA, Refineries and Reko Diq** — Finance Minister **Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb** explored US financing opportunities for **PIA aircraft and engines, refinery upgrades and the Reko Diq mining project** during engagements in New York. Discussions with US Export-Import Bank Chairman **John Jovanovich** included possible financing for Boeing 787 Dreamliners, spare parts to restore grounded Boeing 777s and aircraft pre-delivery payments. The sides agreed to continue developing a broader cooperation framework while prioritising specific transactions. Aurangzeb also highlighted Reko Diq's importance to Pakistan's future exports and the costs associated with delays. Separately, he promoted digital transformation,

cashless payments, digital skills and regulatory frameworks for virtual assets and their potential applications in remittances and investment. (*The Nation*, [25 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **White Oil Pipeline Tariff Draws Consumer-Cost Concerns** — Stakeholders at an **OGRA public hearing** supported the Faisalabad-Thallian-Tarujabba White Oil Pipeline but raised serious objections to its proposed tariff structure. They warned that **ship-or-pay provisions, minimum volume requirements and dollar-indexed tariffs could shift unused-capacity costs to consumers**, potentially creating another burden similar to capacity payments in the power and gas sectors. The proposed 30-year tariff starts at **\$64 per tonne in 2029** and falls to \$14.5 by 2058. The \$431 million project, involving SOCAR, PSO and FWO, is expected to strengthen Pakistan's white-oil pipeline network, reduce road transportation and improve fuel supply to northern areas. (*The Nation*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **37 Multan Division Projects Move Forward with Rs5.049bn Investment** — **Thirty-seven development projects worth Rs5.049 billion** are under progress in Multan division, with 33 already approved and four awaiting clearance. The Divisional Development Working Party, chaired by Commissioner Multan Division **Amir Karim Khan**, approved six projects costing Rs1.395 billion across Multan, Khanewal and Vehari. District Development Committees approved a further 27 projects worth Rs1.272 billion. Multan received eight projects worth Rs495 million, Khanewal eight worth Rs359.379 million, Vehari five worth Rs208.793 million and Lodhran six worth Rs209.070 million. The remaining four projects are at divisional or departmental approval stages, with authorities directed to follow prescribed timelines for approval and completion. (*The Nation*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **IMF Praises Pakistan's Reform Progress as Reviews Begin** — IMF Managing Director **Kristalina Georgieva** expressed satisfaction with Pakistan's economic reform programme, saying the government's measures had helped strengthen **macroeconomic stability, fiscal discipline, external reserves and investor confidence**. She cited progress on tariff policy, domestic revenue collection and privatisation, saying "**strong reforms have helped Pakistan maintain economic stability and restore confidence.**" Georgieva noted that Pakistan had regained access to international financial markets and said continued reforms could support faster economic growth and improved living standards. Her remarks came as the IMF began the **fourth review of Pakistan's \$7 billion programme** and the third review of its \$1.4 billion climate resilience facility, potentially unlocking about **\$1.2 billion** in financing. (*The Express Tribune*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan, Belarus Seek Wider Cooperation Across Multiple Sectors** — Senate Chairman **Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani** reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening ties with Belarus during a meeting with President **Aleksandr Grigorievich Lukashenko** in Minsk. Gilani called for expanded cooperation in **political, parliamentary, economic, educational, technological, cultural and people-to-people sectors**. He urged greater interaction between the two countries' business communities through investment forums and the Belarus-Pakistan Business Council. He also identified opportunities for **industrial cooperation, joint ventures, technology transfer, research and development and manufacturing partnerships**. Gilani further highlighted agriculture and food

security, particularly the potential for increased Pakistani exports of **rice, fruits and vegetables** to Belarus. (*The Express Tribune*, [25 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **GB Reforms Panel to Widen Consultations** — The prime minister's committee on political reforms for Gilgit-Baltistan has decided to form a larger committee to widen consultations on bringing a constitutional amendment that would grant the region provisional provincial status and parliamentary representation. Written by Jamil Nagri, the report notes that **Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar chaired the subcommittee meeting**, which included GB Chief Minister Amjad Hussain and Opposition Leader Hafiz Hafeezur Rehman. Officials reviewed various options to ensure effective political and economic rights for the region, with **Chief Minister Amjad Hussain calling for a comprehensive and sustainable framework** reflecting the aspirations of local stakeholders. (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **PM Shehbaz and Iranian President Reaffirm Islamabad MoU** — Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced that Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian reaffirmed that the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) remained “totally acceptable” to Iran during their meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York. PM Shehbaz stressed that restoring regional peace and reducing tensions in the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandab is an urgent priority. Addressing security concerns, the prime minister stated that terrorist attacks targeting Pakistan originate from Afghanistan, vowing a “befitting response” until the threat is eliminated. (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan and Maldives Reaffirm Commitment to Expanding Bilateral Relations** — Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), met Abdul Raheem Abdullah, Speaker of the People's Majlis of the Maldives, at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi to discuss regional security and bilateral cooperation. Field Marshal Munir emphasised the importance Pakistan attaches to its brotherly relations with the Maldives and reaffirmed the country's commitment to further strengthening ties for the mutual benefit of both nations. Abdullah praised Pakistan's constructive contributions to regional peace and stability and expressed his desire to deepen engagement and expand cooperation in areas of shared interest. The meeting underscored the shared resolve of Pakistan and the Maldives to enhance bilateral collaboration and maintain close relations. (*The Nation*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan and Bangladesh Pledge to Deepen Bilateral Ties and Economic Cooperation** — Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, meeting on the sidelines of the 81st United Nations General Assembly in New York, reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation in trade, investment, connectivity, education, tourism and people-to-people contacts. The two leaders expressed satisfaction with the positive momentum in bilateral relations and emphasised continued coordination at multilateral forums, particularly the United Nations. Shehbaz Sharif reiterated Pakistan's resolve to deepen mutually beneficial ties, while

Tarique Rahman welcomed the improving relationship and expressed Bangladesh's desire to expand engagement. Separately, the prime minister invited overseas Pakistani business leaders in the United States to invest in Pakistan, highlighting economic reforms and efforts to create a more conducive environment for business and investment. (*The Nation*, [25 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **Japan Donates Books to Bahria University to Deepen Bilateral Ties** — Japan has donated around 100 English-language books on its history, politics, economy, security, international relations, philosophy, literature, language and culture to Bahria University Islamabad under the **READ JAPAN PROJECT**. Japanese Ambassador **Akamatsu Shuichi** described the books as “**bridges of knowledge**” and expressed hope that students would become the next generation of bridges between Japan and Pakistan. He highlighted growing interest in Japan among Pakistani youth and the importance of education and people-to-people exchanges. Bahria University welcomed the donation, saying it would enhance students' understanding of Japan and contribute to stronger bilateral relations. The initiative comes ahead of the **75th anniversary of diplomatic relations** between the two countries next year. (*The Nation*, [25 September 2026](#))

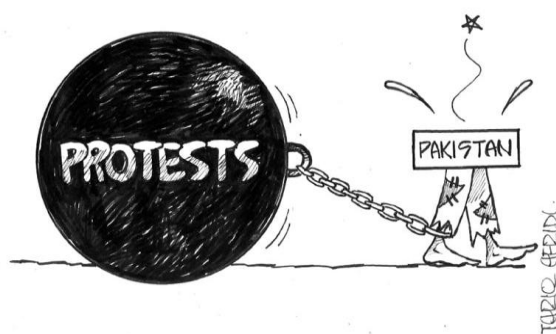
Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **PTI Faces Internal Uncertainty as Islamabad March Nears** — The **Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)** appeared divided over its planned 27 September march on Islamabad, with **Advocate Naeem Haider Panjutha** suggesting the protest could be postponed if the government agreed to hold elections within six to eight months, release **Imran Khan** and other political prisoners, and order judicial inquiries into the events of 9 May and 26 November. However, **PTI spokesman Sheikh Waqas Akram** rejected reports of any such proposal, insisting that only Imran Khan could decide on postponing the march and maintaining that the protest would proceed. **Meanwhile, the government deployed Rangers in Islamabad and several districts of Punjab and authorised additional security measures ahead of the planned demonstration.** (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **PTI's Planned Islamabad March Revives Memories of November 2024 Confrontation** — In this analysis piece, **journalist Ismail Khan** argues that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad are heading towards a situation reminiscent of the PTI's November 2024 D-Chowk march, with uncertainty surrounding the party's planned 27 September mobilisation. **According to Khan, the PTI leadership appears divided, faces logistical and financial constraints, and lacks a clear consensus on how the protest will proceed or conclude.** He notes that both the PTI and federal authorities are operating under intense pressure, with Islamabad heavily fortified and memories of previous clashes still fresh. **The writer emphasises that “no one knows, neither in Peshawar, nor in Islamabad, how events will unfold”, warning that the absence of meaningful dialogue increases the risk of confrontation and political instability.** (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Veteran Politician Dr Najeem Naqi Assumes Office as AJK President** — **Dr Najeem Naqi** of the **Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)** was sworn in as the new President of ‘Azad’ Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) after securing a clear majority in the presidential election. **He won 32 votes**

against 13 secured by PPP candidate Chaudhry Latif Akbar and took the oath of office from AJK Chief Justice Raja Saeed Akram. Dr Naqi, the 11th president since the adoption of the parliamentary system in 1975, pledged to work for development and fulfil the expectations of the people. Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq Gillani described him as a “noble person”, while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulated him and reaffirmed Islamabad’s full support for the welfare and progress of AJK. (*Dawn*, [25 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **Transparency International Report Highlights Gaps in Access to Information Compliance** — Transparency International Pakistan (TIP) has found weak implementation of right-to-information laws across federal and provincial government departments, with proactive disclosure compliance ranging from **59 per cent in Punjab to just 28 per cent in Balochistan**. The assessment reviewed 98 ministries and departments and identified **budget and expenditure information as one of the weakest areas of disclosure**. It also found poor publication of contact details for Public Information Officers (PIOs), which are essential for citizens seeking information. **The report recommends standardised disclosure formats, improved training of PIOs, mandatory publication of their contact details, greater transparency in decision-making processes and the creation of dedicated RTI sections on government websites.** (*The News International*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Gohar Calls for Dialogue to Avoid Confrontation Ahead of PTI March** — Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), urged the government to engage in dialogue before the party’s planned long march, stressing that **“we do not want people and law-enforcers to come face to face”**. He argued that a major political mobilisation required communication and warned against the use of force against peaceful political workers. Gohar maintained that PTI supporters were exercising their democratic right to seek justice and have their concerns heard. **He claimed there was an “undeclared governor’s rule” in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and cautioned that attempts to marginalise a mainstream political party could have serious consequences.** Meanwhile, PTI leaders held consultations with opposition figures on preparations and strategy for the planned 27 September march. (*The News International*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **KP Police Bill Faces Federal Challenge** — Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry has criticised the proposed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Bill, saying it is inconsistent with the Constitution and federal rules governing the Police Service of Pakistan. He warned that proposed provincial powers over senior police officers’ appointments and postings could weaken the **chain of command, discipline and morale** of the force. Chaudhry said the bill marked a departure from the 2017 police law and could face judicial scrutiny. He also highlighted the KP Police’s longstanding shortages of equipment and resources, particularly within the Counter Terrorism Department, and questioned the composition of proposed police liaison committees for excluding opposition and civil society representatives. (*The Nation*, [25 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Minority Representatives Seek Stronger Rights Protections in Sindh** — Representatives of minority communities and the **Parliamentary Council for Human Rights** have called for stronger safeguards for minorities in Sindh, including greater political representation, equal employment

opportunities, curriculum reforms and protection against forced religious conversions. **MNA and former federal minister Kamran Michael** and other speakers urged authorities to treat minority rights as fundamental citizenship rights. Citing **National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR)** data, they said 136 alleged forced-conversion cases were recorded in 2023, mostly involving Hindu women and girls in Sindh. They called for stronger legislation, enforcement of the **18-year minimum marriage age**, district-level protection mechanisms and transparent implementation of the **5% employment quota**. (*The Express Tribune*, [25 September 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. DPW is curated by **Dr. Afroz Khan, Research Fellow, CPS, New Delhi**].*