

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

1 October 2026

Security

- ◆ **Pakistan Vows Defence of Saudi Arabia** — Defence Minister Khawaja Asif declared that “**any enemy of Saudi Arabia is an enemy of Pakistan**”, underscoring Islamabad’s commitment to Riyadh’s security. Condemning Yemen’s Houthi group, he stressed “**there is absolutely no doubt in our mind that Houthis are committing aggression against Saudi Arabia**” and pledged that Pakistan would make all available resources accessible if the Kingdom’s security came under threat. Asif added “**we’ll be there to defend them**”, highlighting the depth of bilateral understanding. On Iran’s ties to the Houthis, he noted Tehran does not acknowledge them as proxies, warning that state-backed groups can evolve into rogue actors. (*The News*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan Rejects Indian Water Weaponisation** — Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar asserted that Pakistan would not allow India to weaponise water, stressing that the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) guaranteed regional peace and stability. At the launch of a special report, he argued that the treaty could neither be suspended nor terminated unilaterally, adding “**we desire peace yet we cannot allow water to be used as a weapon**”. Tarar recalled the prime minister’s warning at the UN that “**withholding our water would be considered an act of war**”, emphasising water’s link to Pakistan’s lives, agriculture and economy. He also criticised PTI’s governance failures in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (*The News*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **Security Forces Foil Terror Plot in Mir Ali** — Three terrorists belonging to **Fitna al-Khwarij**, a term used for militants of the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), were killed during an intelligence-based operation in Mir Ali, North Waziristan. Security sources confirmed that hideouts in Mir Ali and surrounding areas were destroyed, with a large cache of arms and ammunition recovered. The forces also thwarted an attempt by the militants to intercept a truck carrying rations near Mir Ali Bazaar. The operation underscores the ongoing campaign to dismantle TTP-linked networks and prevent attacks on civilians and supply routes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **Govt Defends Armoured Vehicle Procurement for SCO Summit** — The federal government on Wednesday justified its purchase of **45 bulletproof vehicles** for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation’s Council of Heads of State Summit scheduled in Islamabad during August–September 2027. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif shared a Cabinet Division statement rejecting what it termed “sceptical and unwarranted” criticism in the press and on social media. The statement emphasised that the summit would be “**the most high-profile gathering, second only to the 1973 OIC Summit**”, requiring secure transport for visiting heads of state, government leaders and international representatives. Officials argued the vehicles were essential to meet stringent security requirements and to uphold Pakistan’s stature at the international level. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan Rejects Taliban Allegations Over Nuristan Clashes** — The Ministry of Information dismissed Afghan Taliban claims of Pakistan's involvement in Nuristan fighting as **“self-rhetorical lies”**, saying they were attempts to externalise internal problems and reflected Kabul's **“despair and frustration”**. The ministry labelled the Taliban a **“non-inclusive and non-representative regime”** that imposed itself through force, accusing it of acting as a proxy for **“Hindutva design”** and destabilising the region for money. Taliban Minister Noorullah Noori had warned Pakistan to **“learn from Afghanistan's history”**, but Islamabad countered with evidence of terrorist sanctuaries in Afghanistan. Pakistani officials estimate **70% of Fitna al-Khawarij infiltrators are of Afghan origin**, with UN reports citing 6,000–6,500 TTP fighters in Afghanistan. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistani Special Forces Join Multinational Exercise in Uzbekistan** — Special forces from Pakistan participated in **Eternal Brotherhood-5**, a joint training exercise held in Uzbekistan from 13–25 September 2026. Turkiye, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan also took part, while Kazakhstan joined as an observer. According to state-run PTV, the exercise aimed to **“enhance cooperation, communication and professional capabilities among special forces”**, with participants exchanging experiences on modern operations, combat strategies and responses to security challenges. PTV noted that **“Eternal Brotherhood-5 reflects the growing defence and security cooperation, mutual trust and strengthening of military relations among the participating countries.”** Pakistan regularly engages in joint military exercises, including recent collaborations with Egypt, the US, Kazakhstan and trilateral training with Turkiye and Saudi Arabia. (*Dawn*, [1 October 2026](#))

Economy

- ◆ **Pakistan Returns to Global Capital Markets with Landmark Eurobond Launch** — Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif became the first Pakistani prime minister to open a trading session at the **London Stock Exchange (LSE)**, where he formally launched Pakistan's **US\$3 billion dual-tranche sovereign Eurobond**. Addressing investors and financial leaders, he highlighted strengthening macroeconomic indicators, structural reforms and economic digitisation as evidence of Pakistan's improving economic outlook. **Shehbaz credited Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and his team for securing the country's largest-ever international bond transaction, which attracted nearly US\$6 billion in investor demand.** He also underscored the government's privatisation agenda, including Pakistan International Airlines and First Women Bank, and invited greater UK investment. **The visit was presented as a sign of renewed international investor confidence and Pakistan's re-entry into global capital markets.** (*The News*, [30 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Thar Coal Expansion to Boost Energy Security** — Pakistan is set to begin Phase-III expansion of Thar Block-II on **5 October**, increasing annual coal production from 7.6 million tonnes to **11.2 million tonnes**. The project, led by Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company (SECMC), aims to strengthen energy security by reducing reliance on costly fuel imports, which pushed the petroleum bill to an estimated \$15–16 billion in FY2025–26. Officials emphasise that Thar's vast lignite reserves provide a reliable domestic alternative, helping stabilise electricity costs and conserve foreign exchange. Since operations began in 2019, the mine has been developed in phases to meet rising demand, with Phase-III marking a significant step towards long-term energy independence. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))

- ◆ **Govt Tells IMF Conflict No Longer Impacts Outlook** — Pakistan has informed the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that the Middle East conflict will not affect its economic trajectory, projecting inflation to ease to **7.5%** and the external sector to remain stable. Authorities forecast exports at **\$34 billion** and remittances at **\$45.5 billion**, with the current account deficit expected between \$2.5–3 billion, below the budgeted \$3.6 billion. The government stressed exchange rate stability, noting the rupee averaged Rs278 per dollar in Q1, stronger than the Rs286 assumption. While the IMF urged a market-based exchange rate and tighter monetary policy, Pakistani officials maintained no immediate adjustments were needed, citing strong reserves and resilient inflows. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Pak-China Partnership Strengthened** — Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reaffirmed that “**Pak-China relations are the fundamental pillar of the country’s foreign policy**”, highlighting the leadership’s commitment to fully implementing bilateral understandings. Addressing the 77th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China, he noted that his May conversation with President Xi Jinping was a strong reaffirmation of friendship. Shehbaz announced the launch of **CPEC 2.0**, focusing on industrialisation, Special Economic Zones, IT, AI, agriculture, mining and minerals, while praising progress in agricultural training programmes. Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong lauded Shehbaz’s defence of Pakistan’s national interests at the UN and emphasised the “all-weather strategic cooperative partnership.” Shehbaz also paid tribute to security forces for eliminating three militants in North Waziristan. (*The News*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **SCO Meeting Offers Rare Cordiality Between India and Pakistan** — Despite sharp exchanges at the UN General Assembly, India and Pakistan struck a notably conciliatory tone during the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of National Coordinators meeting in Islamabad. A video released by the Foreign Office showed India’s envoy Alok Dimri warmly greeting Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar with a handshake, a gesture that stood out given strained bilateral ties. Dimri described his first visit to Pakistan positively, expressing interest in travelling to Lahore, Faisalabad and Sialkot, and emphasised SCO’s focus on connectivity, trade and regional prosperity. Pakistan, now chairing SCO for 2026–27, will host the Council of Heads of State summit in 2027. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **Iqbal Urges CAREC to Become Knowledge Hub** — Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal proposed transforming the CAREC Institute into a “**trusted regional knowledge clearing house**” to convert member countries’ experiences into practical solutions. Addressing the Governing Council in Ulaanbaatar, he stressed that after 25 years of building roads, railways and energy links, the next phase must focus on **information sharing and expertise across borders**. He suggested a living knowledge platform, expert directory and peer exchange facility to tackle challenges in trade, digital customs, renewable energy, disaster response and skills development. Iqbal emphasised demand-driven work with measurable impact, adding that Pakistan, as future chair in 2027, would prioritise knowledge exchange and climate resilience. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan Calls for Stronger SCO Cooperation** — At the first meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation’s Council of National Coordinators under Pakistan’s chairmanship, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar urged member states to “**turn vision into action**” by enhancing collaboration in connectivity, trade, innovation and development. He said Pakistan’s

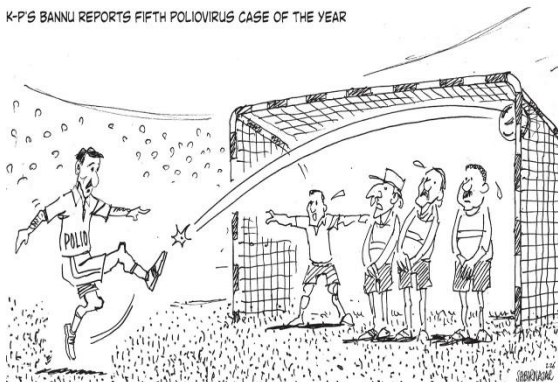
chairmanship would be guided by the “**Shanghai Spirit**” of **mutual trust, equality and common development**, with preparations already underway for the 2027 SCO summit in Islamabad. India’s National Coordinator Alok Dimri welcomed Pakistan’s leadership, identifying trade and connectivity as key areas for cooperation, and expressed interest in visiting Lahore, Sialkot and Faisalabad. The meeting was attended by national coordinators, SCO Secretariat officials and representatives of its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure. (*Business Recorder*, [1 October 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **Govt Holds Back on KP Emergency** — Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, after consultations with senior advisers, decided against immediate imposition of emergency or governor’s rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, despite worsening security and political tensions. High-placed sources revealed that while both options were discussed, the government chose to give PTI another chance to reconsider its 4 October march and adopt a less confrontational course. The federal view is that “**the present situation can still be resolved politically if PTI chooses to de-escalate**”, with possible facilitation for Imran Khan’s medical needs and family access if the march is called off. PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan insisted the protest would remain peaceful. (*The News*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **Punjab Assembly Panel Endorses Christian Marriage Bill** — The Standing Committee on Minority Affairs of the Punjab Assembly has approved the proposed Christian Marriage Bill 2026, marking a major step towards reforming the 153-year-old Christian Marriage Act of 1872. Introduced by Committee Chairman Philebus Christopher, the bill reflects the provincial government’s commitment to the welfare of the Christian community. Key provisions include fixing the minimum marriage age at **18 years for both men and women**, requiring **both bride and groom to be Christian**, and mandating registration of marriages with Union Councils and NADRA. It also expands authority to solemnise marriages to seminary-qualified pastors of registered churches and removes restrictions on timing of ceremonies. (*The News*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **Centre Weighs Emergency in KP** — Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Tariq Fazal Chaudhry revealed that the government is “**seriously considering imposition of emergency in KP**” under Article 232, citing the provincial administration’s failure to curb terrorism. He argued that the KP government had become an obstacle to federal efforts, stressing that the decision would not be driven by political differences with PTI. Adviser Rana Sanaullah echoed that governor’s rule or emergency could be imposed if the provincial government persisted with what he termed an “illegal and unconstitutional campaign”. PTI leaders rejected these claims, insisting their planned 4 October march was peaceful. (*The News*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **ATC Reissues Warrants for KP CM** — An Anti-Terrorism Court in Islamabad on Wednesday reissued arrest warrants for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi and others in connection with the November 26 protest case. Presiding Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra expressed displeasure over police failure to submit the challan, directing that it be filed promptly. The case, registered at Margalla Police Station against PTI leaders and workers, has been adjourned until 9 October. The reissuance of warrants underscores judicial frustration with delays in proceedings and highlights the continuing legal challenges faced by PTI leadership amid mounting political tensions. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))

- ◆ **Sindh Faces Severe Monsoon Rainfall Deficit** — Sindh recorded the country's largest rainfall shortfall during this year's monsoon, receiving **50.8% less rain than normal**, according to Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) data. Karachi was hit hardest, with rainfall between July and September falling **92% below average**, making it the driest city in Pakistan. Nationally, Pakistan received 120.5mm of rain, 19.3% below normal. Balochistan saw a 33.7% deficit, Azad Jammu and Kashmir 18.4%, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 16.3% and Punjab 3.8%. Only Gilgit-Baltistan recorded above-normal rainfall at 4.6%. PMD attributed the deficit to the El Niño climate pattern, which weakened monsoon activity across South Asia. The shortfall raises concerns over water availability and food security, with a 25% shortage expected in the Rabi season. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **AJK Chief Justice Reaffirms Pakistani Identity** — 'Azad' Jammu and Kashmir Supreme Court Chief Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan declared that **"We are Pakistanis first and then Kashmiris"**, echoing Syed Ali Gilani's slogan **"We are Pakistanis, Pakistan is ours."** Speaking at a reception hosted by the Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan, he described the moment as "extremely emotional and honourable" after 18 years. Justice Khan praised Pakistan's judicial fraternity for its role in strengthening Kashmir's judicial system and highlighted longstanding ties between the legal communities of Pakistan and AJK. He stressed that **"cooperation between the judiciary and lawyers is indispensable for the delivery of justice"**, while urging greater professional exchanges to deepen institutional links. (*The Express Tribune*, [1 October 2026](#))
- ◆ **Lahore to Host Extended Basant Festival** — Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has approved a **10-day Basant celebration in Lahore from 29 January to 7 February 2027**, with a one-day suspension on 5 February for Kashmir Day. Earlier this year, Basant returned after an 18-year ban imposed in 2007 due to fatalities and injuries caused by sharp kite strings and celebratory gunfire. Maryam Nawaz described the festival as a **"gift for the people of Lahore"** and a way to promote Punjab's cultural heritage globally. She directed authorities to ensure stricter safety measures and urged citizens to celebrate responsibly. The government has also introduced new kite-flying regulations to safeguard public safety during the festivities. (*Dawn*, [1 October 2026](#))

K-P'S BANNU REPORTS FIFTH POLIOVIRUS CASE OF THE YEAR



[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].