

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

29 September 2026

Security

- ◆ **Pakistan Shares Afghan Conflict Experience With US Review Commission** — A delegation of the **US Afghanistan War Commission**, led by Co-Chairs **Shamila N. Chaudhary** and **Dr Colin F. Jackson**, met **Field Marshal Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces**, at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. The discussions focused on Pakistan's support during the Afghanistan conflict, the regional security environment and developments in Afghanistan. **Field Marshal Asim Munir highlighted the security, strategic and operational challenges faced by Pakistan during the two-decade conflict and stressed the importance of incorporating regional perspectives when evaluating the war.** The delegation, which is reviewing the United States' 20-year engagement in Afghanistan, acknowledged Pakistan's sacrifices and longstanding role during the conflict and appreciated its continued contribution to regional peace and stability. (*The News*, [28 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistani Pilots Prepare for Nation's First Human Space Mission** — Two Pakistani pilots, **Zeeshan Ali** and **Khurram Daud**, are undergoing intensive training in China as one of them is expected to become the **first Pakistani and first foreign astronaut to visit China's Tiangong space station**. According to officials from SUPARCO, the candidates are learning Mandarin, adapting to microgravity, training in centrifuge simulations and mastering spacecraft systems. **A final selection is expected in mid-to-late October, after which the chosen astronaut will proceed directly from training to the mission.** The astronaut will serve as a payload specialist, conducting Pakistani scientific experiments focused on biotechnology, food security and climate resilience. The mission forms part of expanding Pakistan-China space cooperation, which also includes satellite projects and a Pakistani-built lunar rover planned for China's **Chang'e 8** mission around 2028. (*The News*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Security Forces Conduct Intelligence-Based Operation in Dera Ismail Khan** — Security forces killed **four militants** during an intelligence-based operation in **Dera Ismail Khan district** of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to security sources, the operation was launched after close surveillance and intelligence monitoring of militant movements in the area. **A quantity of weapons, ammunition and Afghan currency was recovered from the individuals killed during the operation.** The action formed part of ongoing counterterrorism efforts aimed at disrupting militant networks and preventing attacks. **Security sources reiterated that the forces remain committed to eliminating terrorism and maintaining lasting peace and stability in the country.** (*The Nation*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Three Traffic Police Personnel killed in Tank Ambush** — Three traffic police officials were killed when unidentified gunmen opened fire on their official vehicle in the **Wazirabad area of Tank district**. According to police, the attackers fled after the assault, taking the police vehicle and weapons with them. The deceased were identified as **Pir Khalid, Gul Amin and Saleemullah**, and



a search operation was launched to apprehend those responsible. **In a separate operation in Lakki Marwat, police and Counter-Terrorism Department personnel killed a wanted militant commander, Manzoor, who was allegedly involved in multiple terrorism-related cases.** The operation followed an earlier attack on cricket players in Abdul Khel that left three young men dead and three others injured. **Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi condemned the Tank attack and expressed solidarity with the families of the deceased police personnel.** (*The Express Tribune*, [29 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **Labourers Abducted From Road Construction Camp in Dukki** — Eighteen labourers were abducted after armed men attacked a road construction company's camp in the **Nana Sahib area of Dukki district, Balochistan**. According to reports, the assailants stormed the camp and took the workers hostage before fleeing the area. **Eight of the abducted labourers belong to the Dahar community of Sadiqabad in Rahim Yar Khan district**, while the identities of the remaining workers were not specified in the report. The incident has caused significant concern among the families of the missing labourers, who have appealed to the federal and provincial governments, the armed forces and law-enforcement agencies to secure their safe recovery. **The abduction highlights ongoing security challenges facing workers involved in development and infrastructure projects in parts of Balochistan.** (*The Express Tribune*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **TTP Claims 13 Operations Across Five Districts:** On 28 September 2026 (15 Rabi al-Thani 1448 AH), Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed responsibility for 13 operations across North Waziristan, South Waziristan, Khurram, Tank, and Bannu provinces. North and South Waziristan accounted for the highest number of incidents, with four operations each, while Khurram and Tank recorded two operations each, and Bannu one. The reported attacks included sniper fire, guerrilla assaults, and quadcopter drone strikes targeting military posts and checkpoints. TTP claimed several military casualties, though many incidents were described as having only a "strong possibility" of casualties or material damage. In Khurram, the group reported shooting down a military drone and capturing seven personnel involved in constructing a new post. In Tank, TTP claimed responsibility for a targeted killing of an FIA official and an armed clash with police that allegedly resulted in three personnel deaths and the seizure of weapons and a vehicle. The final reported operation was a drone strike against a newly established military post in Bannu.

District	Area	Incident Description	Claimed Outcome
North Waziristan	Mir Ali (Khaisur)	Sniper attack on Datta Khel military checkpoint	Possible casualties
Total 4	Miranshah (Sarubi)	Quadcopter attack on military post	Casualties and material damage claimed
	Ghariom (Wola Din Narai)	Sniper attack on military post	1 soldier killed
	Spinwam (Mirali)	Guerrilla attack on military post	Possible casualties
South Waziristan	Sararogha (Anzare)	Guerrilla attack on military post	1 soldier killed, 1 wounded
Total 4	Sararogha (Kotkai)	Guerrilla attack on military post	1 soldier wounded; additional casualties possible

	Azam Warsak (Giladun Ghundai)	Quadcopter attack on military post	Possible casualties and material damage
	Shakai (Dand)	Sniper attack on military post/security camera	Camera destroyed; possible casualties
Khurram	Dogar (Ayofi)	Enemy quadcopter drone shot down	1 drone destroyed
Total 2	Dogar (Sarpakh)	Personnel constructing a military post captured	7 military personnel abducted
Tank	Gomal	Targeted killing of FIA official Azmatullah	1 FIA official killed; pistol seized
Total 2	Tank Khas (Wazirabad Bazaar)	Clash following police action	3 personnel killed; 3 rifles, 1 pistol, and 1 vehicle seized
Bannu Total 1	Bakkakhel	Quadcopter attack on newly established military post	Possible casualties and material damage

Economy

- ◆ **Pakistan and IMF Launch Fourth Review of Economic Reform Programme** — Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have begun negotiations in Islamabad for the **fourth review of the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF)** and the **third review of the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF)**. Officials from the Ministry of Finance and the Federal Board of Revenue briefed the visiting IMF delegation on the country's economic situation and programme implementation. **The discussions, expected to continue for around two weeks, will assess Pakistan's economic performance, reform progress and compliance with programme targets through June 2026.** Upon reaching a staff-level agreement and securing approval from the IMF Executive Board, Pakistan would become eligible to receive approximately **\$1 billion under the EFF and an additional \$200 million under the RSF.** Pakistan has already received **\$4.8 billion under the two IMF-supported programmes.** (*The Nation*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan Moves to Import Wheat Amid Supply Concerns and Price Pressures** — Pakistan has received **13 bids for the import of 185,000 metric tonnes of wheat** under an international tender issued by the **Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP)**. According to the evaluation report, **Swiss trader Bunge SA emerged as the lowest evaluated bidder**, offering wheat at \$339.36 per metric tonne CFR Karachi and \$340.36 per metric tonne CFR Gwadar. Twelve of the thirteen bids were found technically and financially responsive, while one bidder was disqualified for not meeting export experience requirements. **The import is being undertaken to address a domestic demand-supply gap despite a near-record wheat harvest of approximately 29.6 million tonnes in FY2025-26.** Officials cited weak procurement and rising flour prices, reportedly reaching Rs150 per kilogram in some areas, as key reasons for boosting wheat stocks through imports. (*The Nation*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **ML-1 Modernisation Positioned as Key to Pakistan's Trade and Connectivity Goals** — **Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal** described the **Main Line-1 (ML-1)** railway modernisation project as the backbone of Pakistan's rail network and a national economic priority. He said the 1,726-kilometre Karachi-Peshawar corridor carries **76 per cent of passenger traffic and**

98 per cent of freight traffic, making its upgrade crucial for boosting trade, logistics and regional connectivity. **The proposed modernisation would increase rail capacity, raise passenger and freight speeds, and significantly reduce travel times on key routes.** Speaking at a CAREC conference in Mongolia, Ahsan Iqbal also urged faster progress on the **Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (UAP) Railway** project, calling for completion of its feasibility study, mobilisation of financing and development of an implementation roadmap. **He said the railway corridor could transform regional trade by linking Central Asian markets with Pakistan's ports.** (*The Nation*, [29 September 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Pakistan Launches SCO Chairmanship With High-Level Coordinators' Meeting** — Pakistan commenced its **2026-27 chairmanship of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** by hosting the first meeting of the **Council of National Coordinators (CNC)** in Islamabad. Chaired by **Dr Mohammed Faisal**, the three-day gathering has brought together representatives from the SCO's ten member states and the organisation's Secretariat to discuss cooperation priorities, upcoming meetings and the programme of activities for the year ahead. **An Indian delegation is also participating, marking its first visit to Pakistan for an SCO-related meeting in nearly two years.** Under the theme **"Turning Vision into Action: Connectivity, Innovation and Shared Prosperity"**, Pakistan aims to promote regional connectivity, economic cooperation, innovation and people-to-people contacts. **The meeting will also help prepare for the SCO Council of Heads of State summit, scheduled to be hosted by Pakistan in August 2027.** (*The Nation*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan Expands Marine Science Cooperation With China and South Asia** — Pakistani officials and academics participated in the **China-South Asian Countries Marine Cooperation Forum** in Qingdao, bringing together representatives from China, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Maldives and other regional states to discuss marine science and sustainable development. The forum adopted the **China-South Asian Countries Marine Cooperation Initiative**, aimed at strengthening collaboration in marine research, the blue economy and environmental sustainability. **Director General of the National Institute of Oceanography Engr Naimatullah Sohoo** outlined Pakistan's approaches to ocean conservation, climate resilience and addressing challenges such as ocean warming. Meanwhile, **Professor Dr Abdul Malik, Vice Chancellor of Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences**, highlighted the university's role in marine ecosystem protection and noted China's support in developing marine science education and training in Pakistan. **The discussions focused on ocean observation, disaster mitigation, ecological restoration and sustainable ocean management.** (*The Nation*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Mountains of Shared Risk** — In her commentary, **Prof Dr Robina Farooq** stresses that Pakistan and Nepal face a common climate crisis as glaciers in the Hindu Kush Himalaya lose ice at unprecedented rates. She warns that **"their futures are tied together by ice, water and risk, and neither can afford to go it alone."** Pakistan's expertise in flood forecasting and glacier-fed irrigation complements Nepal's experience in glacial hazard monitoring, making joint frameworks logical. She argues that cooperation through exchanges and early-warning systems could sidestep regional rivalries and build resilience. **With ICIMOD warning that even at 1.5°C warming the**

region will lose a third of its glacier volume, Farooq insists Pakistan must act now, not as a downstream victim but as a mountain nation with genuine standing. (*Dawn*, [29 September 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **Federal-Provincial Row Deepens Over Counterterrorism Strategy in KP** — A sharp dispute has emerged between the federal government and the **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)** administration over responsibility for tackling terrorism. **Information Minister Attaullah Tarar** and **Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry** accused the KP government of failing to provide adequate resources for counterterrorism and questioned Chief Minister **Sohail Afridi's** stance on security issues linked to Afghanistan. They also criticised the province's governance and counterterrorism preparedness. In response, the **Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)** rejected the allegations, highlighting the sacrifices made by KP's people, police and political workers in the fight against terrorism and accusing the federal government of shifting blame. **Chief Minister Sohail Afridi** called for a **revised counterterrorism policy that incorporates provincial input, greater federal-provincial coordination and improved security resources**, arguing that existing strategies have failed to restore lasting peace. (*The News*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Constitutional Safeguards Limit Centre's Power Over Provincial Governments** — In an analysis of Pakistan's constitutional framework, several legal experts argued that the federal government **cannot simply dismiss an elected provincial government because of political disagreements or dissatisfaction with its performance**. According to constitutional lawyer **Salaar Khan**, a chief minister can be removed through a vote of no-confidence, loss of majority support in the provincial assembly, dissolution of the assembly, or disqualification, but "what it cannot do is fall without the House having a say". **Barrister Ali Tahir** and lawyer **Abdul Moiz Jaferi** similarly stressed that constitutional mechanisms for removing a provincial government are primarily assembly-based. Experts noted that while Articles 232 and 234 allow temporary federal intervention during extraordinary circumstances, these provisions are exceptional, time-bound and subject to constitutional safeguards. **Barrister Rida Hosain** warned that frequent federal intervention would undermine provincial democratic mandates and the federal structure of the state. (*The News*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **AJK Government Dissolves Zakat Council in Administrative Reform Drive** — '**Azad**' **Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Iftikhar Gillani** dissolved the **AJK Zakat Council**, resulting in the removal of approximately **3,000 individuals holding discretionary positions**, including the council chairman and members, district and constituency chairmen, local committee heads, and members of the Ulema and Mashaikh Council. Additional changes included the removal of the Tajweed-ul-Quran coordinator and previously appointed officials in bodies such as the Prime Minister's Inspection Commission, Investment Board and Cultural Academy. **The government also plans major restructuring of the Zakat and Ushr Department, whose annual expenditure reportedly exceeds its income, and is considering a golden handshake package for 256 employees.** Activating the Accountability Bureau and Anti-Corruption Department has been identified as a priority under Gillani's reform agenda. (*The News*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Government Defends Fuel Relief Scheme for Low-Income Commuters** — In an opinion article, **Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik** argued that the **Prime Minister's Special Fuel**



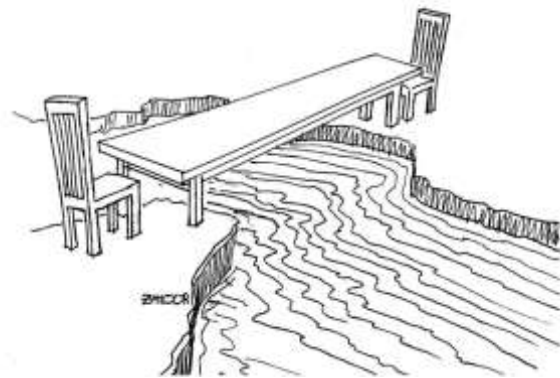
Relief Scheme is designed to cushion low-income households from the impact of rising fuel prices and volatility in global energy markets. He stated that eligible motorcycle, rickshaw and Qingqi users receive **Rs500 in weekly assistance**, while owners of eligible small cars receive subsidised fuel through monthly token allocations. **According to Ali Pervaiz Malik, more than six million successful registrations and over five million fuel-token redemptions have been recorded, with the majority benefiting two- and three-wheeler users whose livelihoods depend on daily transport.** The minister maintained that recent changes, including free registration and expanded eligibility for older vehicles, have improved access to relief. **He contended that the scheme demonstrates the government's commitment to targeted, transparent and citizen-focused economic support.** (*The Nation*, [29 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **AJK Police Arrest Over 120 Suspects Linked to Unrest Cases** — **Inspector General of Police Captain (retd) Liaquat Ali Malik** stated that **122 individuals have been arrested** in connection with incidents of unrest in 'Azad' Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), including attacks on police personnel, injuries to law-enforcement officials and damage to public property. Speaking alongside **Chief Secretary Khushal Khan** in Muzaffarabad, he said that **69 FIRs had been registered** against groups allegedly involved in the disturbances. Malik noted that the cases were specifically related to attacks in which police personnel were killed or injured during the 2025 Chamyati incidents. **The arrests form part of an ongoing law-enforcement response aimed at investigating the unrest and pursuing those accused of involvement in violent activities.** (*The Express Tribune*, [29 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Scrutiny of Digital Evidence in Blasphemy Case** — The **Lahore High Court division bench**, comprising **Justice Sadiq Mahmud Khurram** and **Justice Muhammad Jawad Zafar**, has asked the prosecution to justify the admissibility of electronic evidence used by a Bahawalpur trial court to sentence **Taimoor Raza** to death under section 295-C. The appeal, filed through **Advocate Asad Jamal**, questions contradictions in Facebook-based evidence and highlights that religious scholars' opinions were relied upon though they never testified. The defence alleges Raza was abducted and falsely implicated, while no independent witnesses were engaged. The FIR was registered in 2016 under sections 298A and 7 ATA, but conviction came in 2017 under 295-C. The bench has yet to fix the next hearing date, leaving the prosecution to defend its reliance on digital material. (*Dawn*, [29 September 2026](#))

K-P ABUZZ WITH TALK OF POLITICAL CHANGE



US, IRAN MAY RETURN TO TABLE
WITHIN DAYS OVER HORMUZ



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