

CLAWS Newsletter



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by Shreeya Shubhi Mohanty

Domestic Developments

8 July ([Reuters](#); [Al Jazeera](#)): **Forty-Two Security Personnel Killed in Coordinated Balochistan Attacks.**

Pakistan's military announced that coordinated militant attacks across Balochistan claimed the lives of **42 police and army personnel** within a span of three days. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the attacks targeted security checkpoints and patrol units in different parts of the province. The military stated that **54 militants** were killed during subsequent clearance operations, describing the violence as one of the most serious security challenges faced by the province this year. The attacks highlighted the growing operational capability of Baloch insurgent groups despite years of military campaigns. The surge in violence is likely to increase pressure on Islamabad to allocate additional security resources to Balochistan while raising concerns over the safety of CPEC-related infrastructure and other strategic projects.

20 July ([Dawn](#); [OCHA](#)): **Monsoon Floods Cause Widespread Damage Across Pakistan**

Heavy monsoon rainfall caused severe flooding across several provinces of Pakistan, resulting in dozens of deaths and widespread damage to homes, roads and agricultural land. Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were among the worst-affected regions, with rescue teams deployed to evacuate stranded residents and provide emergency relief. Authorities warned that additional rainfall could increase the risk of flash floods and landslides in vulnerable districts. The floods once again highlighted Pakistan's vulnerability to climate-induced disasters and the significant economic burden associated with recurring extreme weather events. Damage to crops, transport infrastructure and public utilities is expected to place further pressure on government finances and humanitarian response mechanisms.

23 July ([Dawn](#)): **District Judge Killed in Balochistan Ambush**

Pakistan's security situation deteriorated further after suspected militants ambushed and killed District and Sessions Judge Abdul Hakim Kakar and his security guard in Mastung district, Balochistan, on **23 July**. The judge was travelling from Quetta to Mastung when armed assailants opened fire on his vehicle before fleeing the scene. Although no organisation claimed responsibility, authorities suspect the involvement of Baloch separatist groups, particularly the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), which has intensified attacks against government officials and security personnel in recent months. The attack was strongly condemned by President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir, who reiterated Pakistan's resolve to continue counterterrorism

operations. The incident underscores the persistent security challenges in Balochistan despite ongoing military operations and highlights the province's continued vulnerability to insurgent violence.

24 July ([BBC](#); [Al Jazeera](#)): Protests Disrupt Elections in Pakistan-Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Pakistan-administered Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) witnessed widespread protests ahead of the legislative elections after constitutional amendments reserved 12 assembly seats for refugees residing in Pakistan. The Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JKJAAC) organised demonstrations and a region-wide strike, arguing that the changes undermined the political representation of residents and expanded Islamabad's control over the territory. Clashes between protesters and security forces resulted in casualties and arrests, while authorities increased security deployments across Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot and other districts. Human rights organisations also raised concerns over allegations of excessive use of force and arbitrary detentions. The unrest has intensified political uncertainty in PoJK and raised concerns over the credibility of the electoral process. The protests reflect deeper public dissatisfaction over governance, economic conditions and the perceived erosion of regional autonomy. The developments also challenge Pakistan's efforts to portray political stability in the territory, while increasing international scrutiny of its administration in the disputed region.

24 July ([The News Pakistan](#)): Government Unveils New Population Control Strategy

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced that the federal government will introduce a comprehensive national population strategy aimed at reducing Pakistan's population growth rate by 2035. The initiative seeks to improve access to family planning services, strengthen maternal healthcare, and expand public awareness campaigns. Officials described rapid population growth as one of Pakistan's most significant long-term development challenges. The proposed strategy reflects growing concern over the impact of population growth on education, healthcare, employment and public resources. Successful implementation will require close coordination between federal and provincial governments as well as sustained investment in public health infrastructure.

20 July-22 July ([Awami Awaz Pakistan](#)) Transporters Oppose Fuel Price Hike; Government Averts Nationwide Strike

The Karachi Goods Carrier Association (KGCA) strongly opposed the government's latest increase in diesel and petrol prices, warning that it would launch a nationwide transport strike

if the decision was not reversed within 24 hours. The association argued that higher fuel prices would significantly increase freight costs and place an additional burden on the transport sector already grappling with rising operational expenses. It cautioned that a nationwide shutdown of goods transport would disrupt the movement of import and export cargo through **Karachi, Port Qasim and Gwadar ports**, severely affecting the supply of petroleum products, food, medicines and other essential commodities across the country. The announcement raised concerns over potential disruptions to Pakistan's logistics network, trade flows and domestic supply chains.

The proposed strike was ultimately called off after successful negotiations between the government and representatives of the **Petrol Pumps Owners Association (PPOA)** and the **Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA)**. Following assurances from **Petroleum Minister Ali Pervez Malik** that dealer margins and commission-related concerns would be addressed within two weeks, both associations withdrew their protest. The government also announced the introduction of a **pilot daily petrol pricing mechanism**, replacing the existing fortnightly revision system on a trial basis. Officials stated that the new pricing mechanism would improve transparency, allow domestic fuel prices to better reflect international market fluctuations and ensure that any reduction in global oil prices is passed directly to consumers. The agreement helped avert a nationwide fuel supply crisis while highlighting the government's efforts to balance fiscal reforms with maintaining economic stability.

External Affairs

10 July ([Dawn](#); [Pakistan Today](#)): **Pakistan Raises Kashmir and Water Issues at ASEAN Regional Forum**

Pakistan used the **32nd ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)** in Kuala Lumpur to highlight its concerns over regional security, particularly the Jammu and Kashmir issue and India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty. Addressing the ministerial meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister **Ishaq Dar** called for greater adherence to international law, preventive diplomacy and peaceful conflict resolution. He argued that unresolved disputes in South Asia continued to threaten regional stability and urged the international community to support dialogue on Kashmir and the restoration of the Indus Waters Treaty. Dar also emphasised emerging non-traditional security challenges, including cyber threats, maritime security, climate change and transnational crime, while reaffirming Pakistan's support for ASEAN's vision of regional cooperation. India strongly rejected Pakistan's remarks, describing them as "baseless" and reiterating that **Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India**. New Delhi also maintained that the Indus Waters Treaty issue remains a bilateral matter and criticised Pakistan for attempting to internationalise issues at multilateral forums. The exchange reflected the continuing diplomatic rivalry between the two countries despite the broader agenda of the ASEAN Regional Forum. Pakistan's intervention at the ARF formed part of its wider diplomatic strategy to draw international attention to Kashmir and water security while projecting itself as an advocate of regional dialogue and multilateral engagement.

15 July ([Dawn](#)): **Pakistan Reaffirms Commitment to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation**

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar met the Secretary-General of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** to reaffirm Pakistan's commitment to strengthening regional cooperation on security, connectivity and economic integration. Discussions focused on counterterrorism cooperation, regional stability, trade and transport connectivity, with Pakistan reiterating its support for the SCO's efforts to promote peace and development across Eurasia. Islamabad also underlined the importance of enhancing cooperation with Central Asian states through regional connectivity initiatives. The meeting reflects Pakistan's continued emphasis on multilateral diplomacy as a means of expanding its strategic engagement with China, Russia and Central Asia. Islamabad views the SCO as an

important platform for addressing shared security concerns, particularly terrorism and regional instability, while simultaneously promoting economic cooperation and infrastructure development.

24 July ([Arab News Pakistan](#)): Pakistan Condemns Israeli Actions at Al-Aqsa Mosque

Pakistan joined Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Qatar, Indonesia and the United Arab Emirates in issuing a joint condemnation following the visit of Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Israeli settlers to the **Al-Aqsa Mosque compound** in Jerusalem. In a statement issued by the Foreign Office, Pakistan described the incident as a violation of the historical and legal status of the holy site and urged the international community to prevent further actions that could escalate tensions in the region.

The statement reaffirmed Pakistan's longstanding support for the Palestinian cause and its backing for a two-state solution based on pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state. The coordinated statement also demonstrated Pakistan's continued alignment with key Arab and Islamic partners on issues concerning Palestine and regional stability.

23-25 July ([ARF](#)): Pakistan Expands Regional Diplomacy Through Multilateral Engagement at the ASEAN Ministerial Forum

Pakistan intensified its diplomatic outreach by actively participating in regional and international forums aimed at strengthening political and economic partnerships. Alongside its engagement at the ASEAN Regional Forum and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Islamabad continued consultations with Gulf countries, China and Central Asian partners on regional security, trade and connectivity. Pakistani officials consistently highlighted counterterrorism cooperation, economic resilience and regional dialogue as the cornerstones of the country's foreign policy.

Pakistan's recent diplomatic engagements indicate an effort to balance its strategic relationships across Asia while maintaining close ties with traditional partners in the Gulf and China. At the same time, Islamabad has continued to raise issues relating to Kashmir, water security and regional stability in multilateral forums, reflecting its broader strategy of using international platforms to advance its foreign policy objectives while reinforcing its role in regional diplomacy.

Economy and Development

22 July ([Reuters](#)): S&P Upgrades Pakistan's Sovereign Credit Rating

Pakistan received a positive boost to its economic outlook after S&P Global Ratings upgraded the country's long-term sovereign credit rating from 'B-' to 'B'. The agency cited improved institutional stability, successful implementation of IMF-backed reforms, and stronger fiscal management as the primary reasons for the upgrade. According to S&P, tax reforms, higher revenue collection, and continued support from international financial institutions have strengthened Pakistan's macroeconomic position and improved investor confidence.

Despite the upgrade, Pakistan's economy remains dependent on external financing and sustained implementation of structural reforms. Inflationary pressures, high public debt and external vulnerabilities continue to pose significant challenges. While the improved credit rating is expected to facilitate access to international financing and boost market confidence, the government's ability to maintain fiscal discipline and expand its tax base will remain critical for long-term economic stability.

24 July ([Dawn Business](#)): Federal Budget Prioritises Defence and Fiscal Consolidation

Pakistan continued to implement the FY2026–27 federal budget, which places a strong emphasis on fiscal discipline while significantly increasing defence expenditure. The budget allocates nearly Rs3 trillion for defence, reflecting Islamabad's assessment of an increasingly challenging regional security environment. At the same time, the government remains committed to IMF-backed reforms aimed at reducing the fiscal deficit, improving tax collection and restoring macroeconomic stability. Economists note that while the budget demonstrates the government's commitment to fiscal consolidation, debt servicing and defence continue to account for a substantial share of public expenditure, limiting resources for development and welfare programmes. The success of the government's economic strategy will largely depend on the sustained implementation of reforms and continued external financial support.

About the Author

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