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# COUNTRY ANALYSIS REPORT

**Edition 63**

PAKISTAN AND SPACE: WORLD SPACE WEEK EDITION

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# Executive Summary

Pakistan's current outlook reflects a nation balancing progress with persistent uncertainty. During World Space Week, the country celebrated key achievements with the launch of iCube-Qamar, its first lunar orbiter, and new Earth observation satellites designed to monitor agriculture and climate patterns. Collaboration with China on astronaut training and communication satellites marks a new chapter in scientific growth, though gaps in local manufacturing, funding, and data policy continue to hinder full self-reliance.

Politically, instability remains high. The resignation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur on Imran Khan's orders underscored internal rifts within Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, while his successor, Sohail Afridi, represents an effort to restore control amid a surge in militancy. Border clashes with Afghanistan, renewed operations in Balochistan, and recent protests in Azad Jammu and Kashmir reveal how governance and security challenges overlap. Though AJK unrest has eased after talks with the Joint Awami Action Committee, deeper issues of inclusion and accountability persist. Meanwhile, the killing of journalist Tufail Rind and a police raid on the National Press Club in Islamabad have reignited fears over press freedom and civic space.

Economically, Pakistan faces a fragile recovery shaped by inflation, a widening trade deficit, and corporate exits by global firms like Shell, Uber, and Microsoft. The government maintains IMF compliance without new taxes, but fiscal space remains limited as floods devastate farmlands and food prices soar. Despite these strains, the repayment of a \$500 million Eurobond, a rebound in cotton production, and progress on the \$3.5 billion Reko Diq project highlight modest stability. Sustaining this will require structural reforms in exports, taxation, and climate-resilient development.

On the diplomatic front, Pakistan is strengthening ties with Saudi Arabia and Malaysia through trade, investment, and labor programs under initiatives such as the proposed Pakistan-Saudi Economic Corridor. These efforts reflect a pivot toward economic diplomacy and regional integration, even as relations with Kabul remain tense over cross-border militancy. Participation in regional platforms like the Moscow Format signals Pakistan's alignment with Asian partners seeking regional stability free from external influence.

Humanitarian pressures continue following destructive monsoon floods that displaced thousands, exposing deep flaws in disaster preparedness. Civil society and youth networks remain at the forefront of relief and advocacy, while the Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights pushes for stronger laws against abuse and exploitation. Climate change compounds these challenges, with record heat, erratic rainfall, worsening smog, and groundwater depletion threatening lives and livelihoods. Experts warn that without enforcing environmental policies and regulating solar-powered irrigation, Pakistan's ecological balance could face irreversible damage.

# Pakistan and Space: World Space Week Edition

As the world celebrates World Space Week, Pakistan's space ambitions are gaining momentum. Once limited to communication satellites, the country has now ventured into lunar exploration, Earth observation, and astronaut training. These advances may not dominate headlines, but they represent a critical step toward technological self-reliance and scientific growth.

In 2024, Pakistan made history with the launch of iCube-Qamar (iCube-Q), its first lunar orbiter, aboard China's Chang'e-6 mission. The small satellite was developed by the Institute of Space Technology (IST) in collaboration with [SUPARCO and Shanghai Jiao Tong University](#) and successfully entered lunar orbit to capture images of the Moon. This achievement placed Pakistan among the select nations to participate in lunar missions.

That same month, SUPARCO launched [PakSAT-MM1](#), a multi-mission communication satellite built in partnership with Chinese aerospace entities. The satellite supports Pakistan's "Digital Pakistan" initiative by improving internet access in rural areas and strengthening disaster communication systems. In 2025, Pakistan followed with two indigenous Earth Observation Satellites (EOS-01 and EOS-02), enhancing its ability to monitor agriculture, urban expansion, and climate impacts across the country.

Pakistan also became the first foreign country to join [China's space station](#) training program in 2025, selecting two astronaut candidates for participation. This collaboration reflects growing regional cooperation in space technology and a renewed national focus on science education and research capacity. Despite these milestones, Pakistan faces persistent challenges. The country still relies on foreign partners for launches and high-end components.

Developing local launch capabilities, securing consistent funding, and creating a clear policy for data-sharing and commercialization remain key gaps. Experts emphasize that unless private sector engagement and technical innovation are encouraged, progress will remain slow.

Pakistan's [Space Vision 2040](#) provides a long-term framework for developing communication and imaging satellites and expanding applications in resource management and environmental monitoring. However, for this vision to succeed, stronger coordination between academia, industry, and the government is needed.

As this year's World Space Week highlights the theme "Space and Climate Change," Pakistan's growing space program carries real-world significance. Every satellite launched contributes to climate adaptation, early warning systems, and digital inclusion. The true success of Pakistan's journey in space will not be defined by how far it reaches, but by how effectively it improves life on Earth.

# Political Updates

Pakistan's northwest province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) saw a dramatic political shake-up this week as Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur resigned on the orders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and former prime minister Imran Khan. The move comes amid growing criticism of the provincial government's handling of security and a deadly surge in militant violence across the province at its leader's direction. The now former chief minister of KP, Ali Amin Gandapur's departure marks a significant change for PTI, which has governed KP [since 2013](#) and has long considered the province its political stronghold. The party's Secretary General, Salman Akram Raja, announced that Sohail Afridi, a young MPA from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, will take Gandapur's place.

Confirming his resignation, Gandapur said the position had been a "trust" from Imran Khan, which he was now returning. Afridi, 35, who represents PK-70 Barict, will be Khan's new choice for chief minister. He is known within PTI circles as part of the party's new generation of leadership.

Having risen from student politics through the [Insaf Students Federation](#), Afridi is widely seen as a loyalist who has maintained close ties with Khan during the party's turbulent years. His expected appointment signals PTI's attempt to consolidate control and refocus its strategy in KP, where militant attacks have spiked and public pressure has grown over governance and security failures.



Source: Dawn

Party leaders linked Gandapur's removal directly to the worsening security situation. Just hours before the announcement, 11 security personnel, including two officers, were killed in an intelligence-based operation in Orakzai district. Raja said Khan was "deeply saddened" by the loss and believed a leadership change was necessary to restore stability in the province.

In his resignation letter, Gandapur defended his tenure, citing efforts to stabilize KP's finances and counter militancy "with resolute courage." However, his final months in office were overshadowed by internal rifts, including a public spat with Imran Khan's sister Aleema Khan and divisions over the provincial budget. Despite the controversies, party leaders praised Gandapur's loyalty, calling his resignation an act of discipline rather than dissent.

As the province braces for transition, PTI officials insist Afridi's appointment will mark a "new beginning." Raja said the incoming chief minister would be tasked with advancing Khan's vision of peace through dialogue and tribal engagement, distancing the provincial government from what PTI views as the federal government's flawed security policies.

The leadership change reflects both the challenges and resilience of Imran Khan's movement. With Khan still imprisoned and militancy once again threatening KP's fragile stability, the new administration will have to navigate not only the province's security crisis but also the party's evolving identity amid Pakistan's shifting political landscape.

## Security and Governance

The recent clashes between Pakistan and Afghanistan were among the most serious along the border since the Taliban's return to power in 2021. Pakistan's military said it killed over [200 Afghan fighters](#) in retaliatory strikes after what it described as unprovoked aggression by Taliban forces, while 23 of its soldiers were martyred.

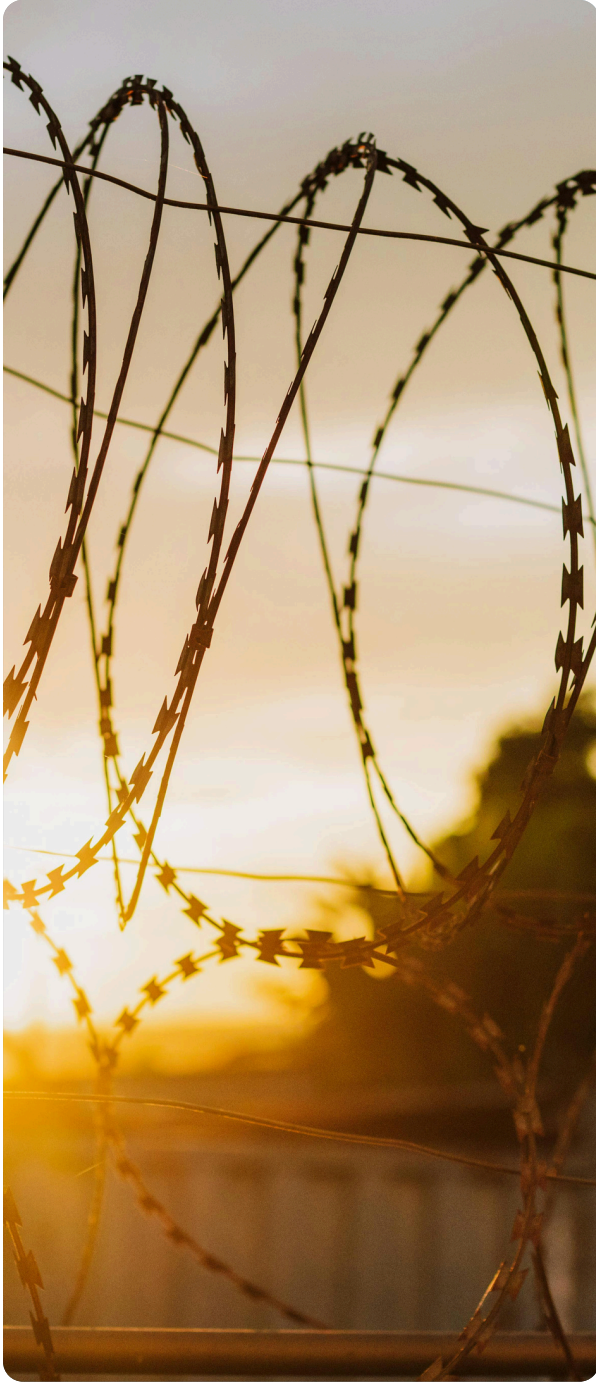
The incident showed the growing tensions between Islamabad and Kabul over the presence of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants allegedly operating from Afghan territory. Pakistan called its actions defensive and targeted at "terrorist infrastructure," while Kabul accused Islamabad of violating its sovereignty.

The situation reflects the fragile state of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations, where mistrust, cross-border militancy, and differing security narratives continue to block dialogue. Despite calls from Gulf nations like Saudi Arabia and Qatar for restraint and diplomacy, the clashes show that without effective border management and cooperation against terrorism, regional stability will remain at risk.



Source: Pixabay

Pakistan is once again facing a convergence of security, governance, and regional challenges. Over the past weeks, the country has seen intensified counterterrorism operations, large-scale civilian protests in Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK), renewed militant attacks along the Afghan border, and a shocking targeted killing of a journalist in Sindh. Together, these events highlight a broader picture of internal fragility, uneven governance, and regional realignments that demand more than a security-centric response.



Source: Pexels

In Balochistan, security forces have launched multiple operations across Quetta, Sherani, Kech, and Khuzdar, reportedly killing [twenty-one militants](#) and arresting four others, including two found disguised as women. Large quantities of arms and explosives were recovered. Authorities described the targets as members of groups tied to the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Baloch separatist factions.

For decades, Balochistan has witnessed cycles of [insurgency](#), state repression, and retaliatory violence. Each wave of crackdowns provides temporary disruption but rarely addresses the deeper roots of alienation, political exclusion, economic neglect, and the absence of trust between local populations and the state. Without a parallel framework of inclusion and development, the province remains locked in a pattern of recurring instability.

Meanwhile, unrest in Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) had drawn attention to long-standing governance and representation issues. The Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) had earlier called for a general strike demanding the abolition of refugee-reserved assembly seats, universal access to education and healthcare, judicial reform, and the establishment of an international airport. The protests initially turned violent, leaving nine people dead, including three policemen, and over two hundred injured, as the government imposed curfews and suspended internet services in an attempt to restore order.

The situation has now settled down following multiple rounds of discussions between the government and the JAAC. Both sides have reached new terms, leading to the suspension of protests. While authorities have agreed to address several key demands, particularly those related to governance reforms and resource allocation, the broader issues of representation and accountability continue to require sustained attention. The recent agreement, however, marks a step toward dialogue and reconciliation, offering a chance to rebuild trust between the administration and the people.

Adding to the sense of unease, [journalist Tufail Rind](#), an office-bearer of the local press club in Mirpur Mathelo, was shot dead while taking his children to school. His niece, a ten-year-old girl, reportedly died of shock after witnessing the attack.

The killing has sparked outrage among media workers and brought to attention the worsening environment for journalists, especially in smaller towns and rural regions. Attacks of this nature have become a grim reminder that local reporters who often work without institutional protection are among the most vulnerable actors in Pakistan's civic space. The incident is part of a pattern of intimidation against the press, which erodes public accountability and deepens public mistrust. The safety of journalists is not merely a human rights issue; it is central to maintaining a functioning democracy capable of self-correction.

Parallel to these internal crises, militant attacks have [re-emerged](#) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Recent incidents include a suicide bombing in Quetta and an ambush in Orakzai. Pakistani officials continue to accuse Afghan soil of harboring TTP elements, while the [Taliban government in Kabul](#) denies any such facilitation. The situation has forced evacuations and displacement in several border districts, complicating local economies and governance structures already under strain. This renewed militancy reveals how the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan has altered the regional balance. The lack of a structured counterterrorism mechanism between Islamabad and Kabul leaves Pakistan's western frontier increasingly vulnerable.



Source: Al Jazeera

The recent [“Moscow Format” talks](#), which were attended by Pakistan, China, Russia, Iran, India, and Central Asian states, have produced a joint declaration opposing any U.S. or Western military presence in Afghanistan or its neighboring countries. The Afghan Taliban were included as full participants. For Pakistan, the development signals both an opportunity and a challenge: while regional consensus on avoiding foreign intervention aligns with its traditional stance, it also places greater responsibility on neighboring countries to collectively manage Afghanistan's security and humanitarian needs.

Regionalism, in this context, can be stabilizing if coupled with shared commitments and mechanisms of accountability. However, without such systems, it risks becoming another layer of rhetoric that masks unilateral interests. The events unfolding across Pakistan point to a state struggling to balance security imperatives with social legitimacy. Military operations continue to serve as the default response to threats, but they do not address the political vacuum and economic marginalization that often fuel unrest.

# Economic Updates

Pakistan's economy enters the last quarter of 2025 walking a fine line between cautious recovery and renewed instability. Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have reached a staff-level agreement that will enable the release of [\\$1.2 billion in funding](#), comprising \$1 billion under the Extended Fund Facility and \$200 million under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility, pending approval by the Fund's Executive Board. The IMF noted that Pakistan's economy is showing signs of stability, with a current account surplus for the first time in 14 years, contained inflation, and improving financial conditions. However, it also warned that recent floods have slowed growth projections and highlighted the country's exposure to climate risks.

While this agreement signals renewed confidence from the IMF, it also reflects Pakistan's continued reliance on external financing to maintain economic balance. The progress praised by the Fund rests on fragile foundations, including limited fiscal space, recurring climate shocks, and delayed structural reforms. Without meaningful progress on taxation, energy sector reform, and climate resilience, Pakistan's economic recovery risks remaining temporary, dependent more on IMF approval than sustainable domestic strength.



Source: Reuters

[Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb](#) recently assured that Pakistan would honor all IMF commitments without introducing additional taxes this fiscal year, emphasizing efficiency in tax collection and better enforcement mechanisms instead of burdening citizens further. The government aims to raise the tax-to-GDP ratio to [around 11%](#), focusing on administrative reforms and digitalization within the newly established Tax Policy Board under the Finance Division. While this stance may provide short-term political breathing space, experts warn it constrains fiscal flexibility in the face of rising public expenditure needs, particularly for flood rehabilitation and social protection.

Economic pressures have compounded these challenges. In 2025, several major [multinational corporations](#), including Procter & Gamble, Shell, Uber, Microsoft, and Yamaha, announced their exit from Pakistan or a shift to third-party distribution models. Analysts attribute these departures to a mix of global restructuring and local obstacles, including high taxation, rupee depreciation, regulatory uncertainty, and weak intellectual property protection.

The loss of foreign investment not only affects employment and innovation but also reduces the fiscal space available for welfare and recovery programs. For ordinary citizens already coping with inflation and livelihood loss, the ripple effects are severe.

At the same time, Pakistan's external sector has shown troubling signs of strain. The trade deficit widened by a staggering **46%** year-on-year in September, reaching USD 3.3 billion as imports surged and exports contracted. Over the first quarter of FY26, the deficit ballooned to USD 9.37 billion, up nearly one-third from last year. The contraction in export earnings, particularly from textiles and other manufacturing segments, highlights ongoing competitiveness issues, rising production costs, and the sector's vulnerability to climate shocks.

The surge in imports, largely driven by energy and industrial inputs, has added pressure to the balance of payments, with the rupee facing renewed downward pressure. These imbalances threaten to erode the country's limited foreign reserves just as the IMF review process intensifies scrutiny over fiscal discipline and external stability. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has raised concerns over an **\$11 billion discrepancy** in Pakistan's trade data for the past two fiscal years, urging authorities to correct and disclose revised figures.

The mismatch, mainly linked to import data in sectors such as textiles and metals, highlights outdated reporting systems and weak oversight in customs and trade documentation. The IMF has called for urgent reforms to improve transparency and data accuracy, warning that such inconsistencies undermine the credibility of Pakistan's economic management and external monitoring.

Inflation, which had shown signs of easing earlier this year, has once again become a major concern. In September, consumer prices jumped 5.6% year-on-year, marking the highest inflation rate in over twelve months. Non-perishable food items and essential commodities led the surge, reflecting both domestic supply disruptions and imported cost pressures. Core inflation in urban centers has also ticked upward, suggesting that price increases are becoming more entrenched. For ordinary households, this has translated into a rising cost of living, while for policymakers, it complicates the already delicate balance between supporting growth and maintaining price stability.

In a rare positive development, Pakistan's cotton production has recorded a strong rebound, offering some relief to the struggling agricultural sector. According to *Dawn*, seed cotton (phutti) arrivals at ginning factories surged by nearly **49%**, reaching over three million bales by the end of September. Punjab and Sindh both posted major increases in output, helping to stabilize supply for the textile industry amid broader economic challenges. The government has also announced the formation of a Pakistan Cotton Board and a "Cotton Plan 2026" to strengthen value chains and improve crop resilience



Source: Arab News

Meanwhile, Pakistan's growth outlook has dimmed in light of widespread flood damage. Torrential rains and flash floods have devastated agricultural regions, submerging over 1.8 million acres of farmland and damaging key crops such as cotton and rice. The economic toll is estimated at over USD 3.5 billion, affecting not only rural livelihoods but also industrial supply chains and export earnings. These shocks have prompted the IMF to reassess Pakistan's growth projections, with forecasts now hovering around 3–3.5%, down from the government's 4.2% target. The agriculture sector's setback threatens to ripple through other sectors, amplifying inflationary pressures and weakening domestic demand.



Source: Arab News

In response to earlier signs of stabilization, the central bank had cautiously begun easing its monetary stance, lowering the policy rate to 11%. However, with inflation rising again and external buffers weakening, the State Bank is expected to hold off further cuts.

On the fiscal side, the government continues to rely heavily on domestic borrowing to meet expenditure requirements. In recent months, nearly **Rs976 billion** has been raised through treasury bills and bonds, reflecting persistent liquidity constraints and limited external inflows. While this helps finance short-term needs, the growing domestic debt burden increases interest obligations, crowding out private credit and constraining development spending.

Despite these pressures, Pakistan achieved a notable milestone in late September by **successfully repaying its \$500 million Eurobond**, which matured on September 30, 2025. The Ministry of Finance confirmed the repayment, stating it was made "as scheduled, in line with all obligations." The bond, originally issued in 2015 with a 10-year tenor, had been closely watched by investors as a key test of Pakistan's external payment capacity.

The government remains optimistic about new investment prospects, most notably through the revival of the Reko Diq mining project, which secured **USD 3.5 billion** in funding commitments. If executed effectively, such projects could offer a lifeline for long-term revenue generation and foreign investment confidence. However, the broader macroeconomic picture remains precarious, with IMF assessments pointing to a potential tax shortfall of **Rs400 billion** and a need for tighter fiscal management.

The deeper challenge lies in the structural weaknesses that continue to shape Pakistan’s economic trajectory, a narrow tax base, low productivity, high import dependency, and growing climate vulnerability. Recent findings by the World Bank also highlight that official surveys tend to underrepresent high-income groups, suggesting that actual inequality in Pakistan may be significantly higher than reported. This skew complicates policymaking, as the burden of adjustment disproportionately falls on low- and middle-income households already squeezed by inflation and job insecurity.

Pakistan is once again facing a looming wheat crisis as prices rise despite official claims of “sufficient stocks.” With feed mills consuming over **1.6 million tonnes** of wheat and private hoarding increasing due to weak regulation, concerns are mounting that the country will need to import at least 1.5 million tonnes before March. The Punjab government’s restrictive policies and Sindh’s release of reserves have done little to stabilise the market. Any delay in imports could trigger shortages and price spikes, while timely imports risk hurting farmers ahead of the sowing season. Once again, poor planning and lack of transparency threaten both food security and farmer livelihoods.

Going forward, Pakistan’s economic management will require not only technical adjustments but also a strategic shift in priorities. Export diversification, greater investment in climate resilience, and social protection for the most vulnerable are essential if the country is to sustain growth without exacerbating inequality. Fiscal reform should focus on expanding the tax base through inclusion and digital transparency, rather than short-term levies. Similarly, the trade policy must shift toward value-added sectors that can buffer external shocks and generate stable foreign exchange earnings.

## Diplomatic Landscape

Over the past few months, Pakistan’s foreign policy has focused heavily on deepening ties with Saudi Arabia and other key allies in Asia and the Middle East. Following the signing of a landmark defence pact between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, both countries have moved swiftly to expand their relationship beyond security cooperation.

The proposed **Pakistan-Saudi Economic Corridor (PSEC)** has emerged as a central idea that could replicate the transformative impact of CPEC by connecting South Asia and the Middle East through trade, investment, and technology exchange.



Source: Dawn

For Pakistan, this corridor represents more than just infrastructure development. It signals a shift toward economic diplomacy, where alliances are measured not only in terms of defence or aid but also in sustainable investment, job creation, and shared growth. The initiative also aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, creating opportunities for Pakistan in sectors like agriculture, renewable energy, and technology.

Pakistan recently secured a [\\$200 million halal meat export](#) deal with Malaysia, highlighting its growing role as a reliable food supplier in the Muslim world. Meanwhile, Islamabad is also planning to [double manpower](#) exports to Saudi Arabia, capitalizing on the Kingdom's Vision 2030 projects that demand skilled labor for infrastructure, energy, and technology sectors. Remittances from Saudi Arabia have remained the backbone of Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves, and the government hopes that new training programs and skill certifications will make Pakistani workers even more competitive abroad.

The diplomatic engagement with Riyadh gained further momentum this month as a [high-level Saudi business delegation](#) arrived in Islamabad to explore new avenues of trade and investment. The visit underscores a growing recognition that Pakistan's strategic importance lies not only in its geography but also in its potential as an investment destination. Talks have centered on energy, mining, and technology partnerships, with particular attention to large-scale projects like the Reko Diq copper mine.



Source: ProPakistani

Beyond the Gulf, Pakistan is also working to diversify its regional partnerships. The Economic Coordination Committee's approval to amend the barter trade mechanism with [Iran, Afghanistan, and Russia](#) reflects a pragmatic approach to sustaining cross-border trade despite global sanctions and dollar shortages.

By promoting barter arrangements, Pakistan hopes to keep regional commerce alive while insulating itself from external financial pressures. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent visit to Kuala Lumpur signaled renewed momentum in Pakistan-Malaysia relations, with new agreements in technology, education, tourism, and halal certification.

Pakistan's warning to carry out [direct strikes](#) inside Afghanistan signals a major shift from reactive border defence to offensive deterrence, but it also raises the risk of a dangerous escalation.

While Islamabad frames these strikes as necessary to eliminate safe havens for groups like the TTP, cross-border operations threaten Afghan sovereignty and could provoke retaliatory actions that further endanger civilians and disrupt trade and movement at key crossings. Sustainable security will require clearer border management, verified counterterrorism cooperation, and regional diplomacy alongside any military measures.



Source: Tribune

However, this new diplomacy also faces challenges. While partnerships with Saudi Arabia and Malaysia bring optimism, Pakistan must ensure that these deals translate into long-term industrial and social development rather than short-term capital inflows. Moreover, as global competition intensifies, Pakistan will need to balance relations between powerful blocs without compromising its sovereignty or development priorities.

Furthermore, Pakistan's federal government has ordered the immediate closure of all Afghan refugee camps in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the [Illegal Foreigner Repatriation Plan \(IFRP\)](#). Camps in Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, Lakki Marwat, Bannu, and Mansehra have already been shut down, along with those in Charsadda and Malakand, with authorities directing refugees to return to Afghanistan. The provincial administration has been instructed to take possession of the vacated land.

While the government frames this move as part of its broader effort to regulate undocumented migration, it marks a significant escalation in Pakistan's repatriation drive, raising humanitarian and diplomatic concerns.

The abrupt closures risk displacing thousands of families who have lived in these camps for decades, many of whom lack secure housing or safety guarantees in Afghanistan. This development could strain Pakistan's relations with Kabul further and deepen the humanitarian crisis at the border, where returnees face instability and limited support.

# Humanitarian Updates

The recent monsoon floods have claimed over [1,000 lives](#) and left thousands injured or displaced. Entire communities in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been submerged, while smaller provinces such as Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan remain cut off due to damaged infrastructure. The National Disaster Management Authority has mobilized rescue and relief operations, yet once again, coordination gaps, delayed response, and limited preparedness have amplified the human cost. Despite repeated climate emergencies over the past decade, Pakistan still relies heavily on reactive measures rather than preventive ones. The absence of effective early warning systems and resilient local infrastructure continues to place the poorest at the greatest risk.

The year also saw growing attacks on press freedom, most notably the violent police raid on the [National Press Club](#) in Islamabad. Journalists were assaulted, equipment was destroyed, and media workers were threatened in what rights groups have called a direct assault on freedom of expression. Although the government has promised inquiries and new safety measures for press clubs, such incidents have deepened fears among reporters and civil society. The silencing of independent voices limits the space for accountability and hampers the free flow of information critical during humanitarian crises.



Source: Pexels

Pakistan's civil society and youth-led initiatives continue to play a vital role in sustaining hope and resilience. From community-based disaster relief to advocacy for press freedom and electoral reform, local actors remain at the heart of humanitarian response. However, without stronger institutional backing, political accountability, and climate adaptation planning, these efforts can only go so far.

The Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights has renewed its call for stronger safeguards to protect children amid a rise in [abuse and exploitation](#) cases across Pakistan. During a session chaired by Dr Nikhat Shakeel Khan, lawmakers reviewed alarming data on child abuse, child labour, early marriages, and trafficking, presented by the Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO). The report highlighted low conviction rates and urged the need to close legal and institutional gaps.

Parliamentarians proposed awareness initiatives in schools, including workshops and curriculum integration on topics such as harassment and “good touch, bad touch.” Members also called for visual campaigns and parental sensitization to strengthen child protection mechanisms. The caucus agreed to develop a set of recommendations aimed at improving policy, enforcement, and public awareness, reaffirming that ensuring every child’s safety is a collective responsibility.

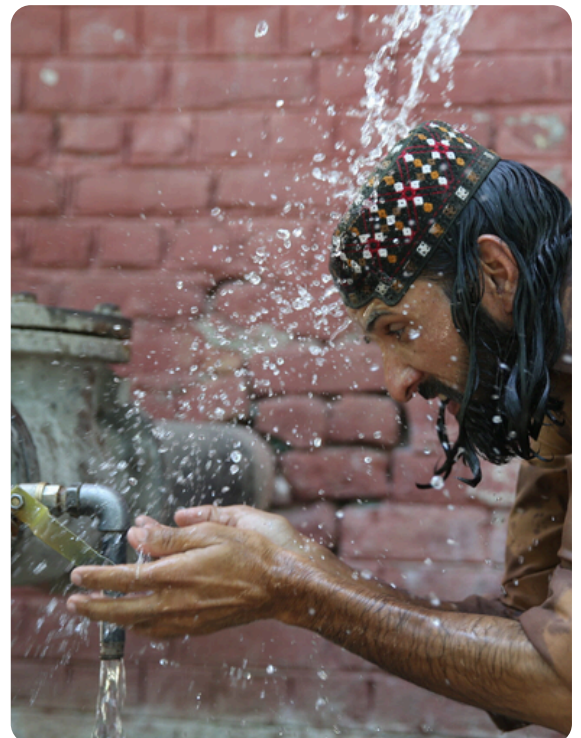
## Climate Change Related Updates

Pakistan, contributing less than 1% to global carbon emissions, remains one of the countries most affected by climate change. In recent years, it has faced repeated disasters such as deadly floods, heat waves, droughts and glacier melt, illustrating what experts call “compound” and “sequential” climate effects, where multiple crises occur together or trigger one another. The 2022 floods alone affected 33 million people and caused [\\$40 billion in losses](#), while regions like Buner and Thar are now witnessing unpredictable shifts from drought to torrential rains.

Despite having a national climate policy since 2012, Pakistan struggles with weak implementation, limited funding and poor coordination. Scientists warn that without urgent adaptation and mitigation measures, the country’s fragile ecosystems and communities will face worsening humanitarian and economic crises in the years ahead.

Pakistan’s climate challenges are intensifying, with new data revealing record-breaking heat, unseasonal rainfall, and growing groundwater depletion linked to the rapid rise of solar-powered farming. The Pakistan Meteorological Department’s latest report shows that September 2025 was among the hottest and wettest months in [six decades](#).

Rainfall rose 52 percent above average, while the national mean temperature climbed by 1.1°C, marking the fifth warmest September in 65 years. Both day and night temperatures were unusually high, with regions like Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Balochistan recording historic heat anomalies. Experts warn that Pakistan is now facing the full force of climate change, with irregular monsoon cycles and prolonged heatwaves becoming the new normal.



Source: The News

Simultaneously, Smog in Pakistan is not an act of fate but the outcome of years of poor governance, weak regulation, and policy neglect. Despite multiple clean air strategies, implementation remains missing, leaving citizens to choke on [preventable pollution](#) every winter.

Lahore, now one of the most polluted cities globally, reflects this failure as unchecked vehicle emissions, crop burning, and unregulated industries continue unabated. Experts stress that Pakistan doesn't need new plans but the political will to enforce existing ones. Without transparent monitoring, cleaner technologies, and cross-border cooperation with India, the haze will only thicken, symbolising not just dirty air but administrative paralysis.

At the same time, a quiet crisis is emerging beneath the surface. A Reuters investigation found that Pakistan's solar-powered tube wells, once celebrated as a clean energy milestone, are contributing to a dangerous drop in groundwater levels.

With roughly [650,000 solar tube wells](#) now operating nationwide, farmers are irrigating more frequently and expanding water-intensive rice cultivation by nearly 30 percent since 2023. The Punjab irrigation department has classified water tables below 60 feet as "critical," with the deepest areas more than doubling between 2020 and 2024.

Officials acknowledge the dilemma: solarisation cuts carbon emissions but accelerates water depletion. Pilot projects to recharge aquifers are underway in Punjab, yet experts argue that without stronger regulation, real-time water monitoring, and crop restrictions, the crisis will deepen. Pakistan's experience highlights the complexity of climate adaptation, where solutions to one environmental problem can worsen another.



# Reading Recommendations

- Sports as a Tool for Preventing Violent Extremism in Pakistan ([Click Here](#))
- Groundwater Recharge: Reviving the Hidden Lifeline ([Click Here](#))
- Selling Misinformation ([Click Here](#))
- Data-Driven Cities: Lessons from World for Pakistan ([Click Here](#))
- The FY 2025–26 Budget and Its Impact on Pakistan’s IT & ITeS Sector ([Click Here](#))
- Planting for Survival: Pakistan’s Path Out of the Heat ([Click Here](#))
- Transparency Through Open Data: Key to Reforming Governance in Pakistan ([Click Here](#))
- From Reports to Reality: Why Pakistan Ranks Last in Global Gender Gap Index ([Click Here](#))
- From Policy to People: Rethinking Governance with Design Thinking ([Click Here](#))
- Floods, Heatwaves, and Hope: Reimagining Agriculture in a Warming Pakistan ([Click Here](#))
- The Fight for Transparent Access to Information in Pakistan ([Click Here](#))
- Life without Autonomy: Understanding Our Culture of Dependency ([Click Here](#))
- Prioritizing Citizens Beyond the Ballot ([Click Here](#))
- Solving the corruption challenge: The key may lie with the citizens. ([Click Here](#))
- Citizens’ Inclusion and Accountability is the Key to Improved Governance and Efficient Public Sector Institutions ([Click Here](#))
- Digital Community Policing ([Click Here](#))
- Privatization of Schools in Punjab ([Click Here](#))
- Water Governance Challenges in Pakistan ([Click Here](#))
- Consumer Protection in Pakistan ([Click Here](#))

