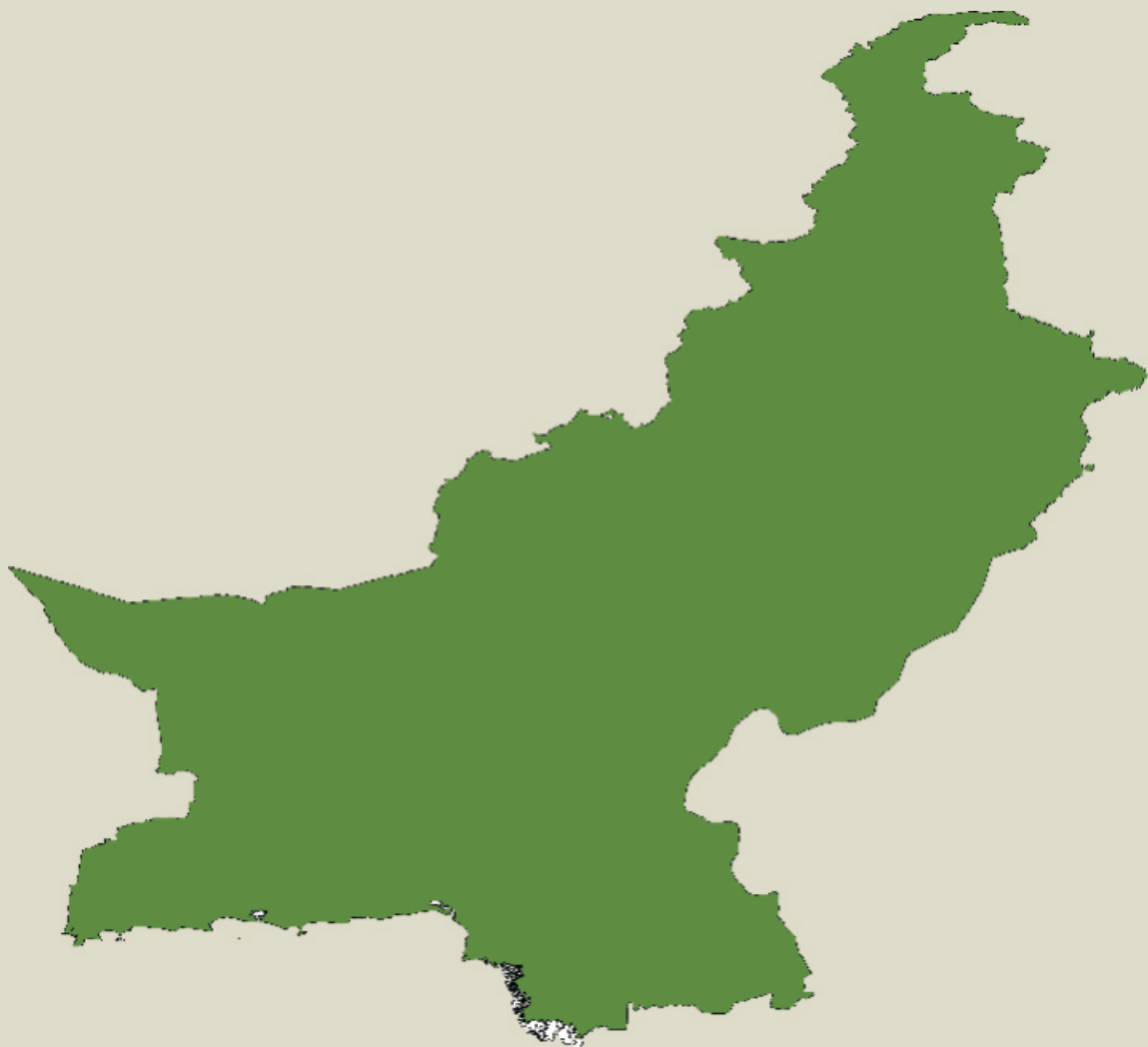


August 2025

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

*A Selected Summary of News, Views and Trends
from Pakistani Media*



Prepared by

Dr. Zainab Akhter

Dr. Nazir Ahmad Mir

Mr. Afroz Khan

Dr. Ashok Behuria



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES

मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Mature diplomacy: Iran-Pakistan Relations, Editorial, *The News*, 08 August¹

The two-day visit of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian along with the agreements and MoUs signed is a signal towards deepening bilateral cooperation between two key neighbours in the region, an intent to move beyond symbolism and focus on substantive collaboration. *Particularly following the recent Israeli aggression against Iran, the visit was both symbolic and strategic. President Pezeshkian's expression of gratitude to Pakistan for its unwavering support during that crisis is also a testament to how, despite occasional disagreements, Iran and Pakistan have never fully turned away from each other. It is also becoming obvious that Iran increasingly views Pakistan as a trusted regional partner, especially when others have either remained silent or aligned with powers bent on isolating Tehran.* The renewed push to link the Chabahar and Gwadar ports is particularly noteworthy. A joint Gwadar-Chabahar maritime route can serve as a crucial artery of connectivity in the region, linking Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East. Similarly, Iran's interest in joining the CPEC under the broader Silk Road initiative would add momentum to regional integration at a time when global blocs are hardening and the world appears more fractured than ever. As for Pakistan's support for Iran's right to pursue nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, that should not come as a surprise either.

PTI on streets! Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, 08 August²

PTI is kick-starting a new political agitation from today, marking the two years of incarceration of former PM Imran Khan. *That the opposition party is on a weak pitch - as it stands divided due to its internal differences and is pushed to the wall by the government - is for all to see. It will thus be a horrendous task for the party to mobilize a sizeable crowd and make its presence felt on the streets. Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa is understood to lead the movement and*

¹ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/1333255-mature-diplomacy>

² <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2559618/pti-on-streets>

there isn't much certainty as to how Punjab and the federal capital's populace will respond, as they have been a victim of lethal crackdown in the past. This dizziness has apparently compelled PTI to chalk out a smart strategy wherein workers and supporters plan to "block roads, share their political heart and disperse peacefully". To what extent it succeeds in building a momentum of change through this 'guerilla campaign' is anybody's guess, but taking into account the vibrancy of the party on social media, it is set to create ripples and give a tough time to the coalition dispensation that is out to exterminate the opposition. The PTI has already launched a mass campaign as far as its overseas strength is concerned, and its media blitz in the Western capitals is making a qualified anti-government impact. The whirlpool tour of Khan's sons to the US, seeking their father's release, has galvanized the necessary sparks and their proposed visit to Pakistan is in need of being watched.

Balochistan's troubles, Editorial, *Dawn*, 08 August³

The HRCP's latest fact-finding report confirms what many in Balochistan have alleged for years: the lack of governance and the violation of people's rights in the province. The report has indicated that enforced disappearances, custodial killings and harassment of families in the province are deliberate. The rot does not stop there. *Elections, as the HRCP points out, have become a farce, with nationalist and progressive parties sidelined through alleged rigging and legal blacklists. The report documents how student leaders and opposition figures are persecuted, jailed, or worse, disappeared. It is no surprise the province suffers from a political vacuum in which unelected actors wield unchecked power and youth live in despair or exile.* This is tantamount to state failure. The HRCP also asserts that the province's mineral wealth is extracted for the benefit of outsiders, while its people are denied education, jobs and representation, and that decisions taken by elected assemblies are routed through controversial investment bodies. All this is seen as a provocation that will only deepen the insurgency. The state must embark on a radical course correction. Repressive laws must be amended or repealed, political freedoms restored, parallel power structures dismantled and security agencies held to account. The people of Balochistan deserve justice, which will, among other things, turn the restive youth away from the militants. The Balochistan issue is one of consequence and must be handled with care.

³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1929455/balochistans-troubles>

Afghan Engagement, Editorial, *The Nation*, 21 August⁴

While the current government has secured several diplomatic successes on the global stage, perhaps the most critical front lies closer to home. Afghanistan continues to be a thorn in regional stability, as the Taliban's new government struggles with the realities of governing a land scarred by decades of war and violence. *Pakistan has taken commendable steps in this regard, and following the 6th Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue in Kabul attended by the foreign ministers of Pakistan, Afghanistan and China there is hope that sustained engagement between these three nations may eventually help resolve the region's persistent challenges. The joint statement issued after the meeting was encouraging. The three sides pledged to strengthen cooperation against terrorism, while also committing to deepen collaboration in trade, transit, regional development, health, education, culture and counter-narcotics.* Equally significant was the agreement to expand the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) into Afghanistan. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was forthright in naming the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) as groups that must be curtailed by the Afghan Taliban, noting that these organizations remain the biggest obstacles to regional peace and prosperity. Ultimately, the dialogue must not only continue but intensify. China, Pakistan and Afghanistan can prosper together only if they collectively defeat terrorism and militarism. It is now up to the Pakistani government to ensure that this momentum is sustained and that cooperation with both neighbours remains a priority at all costs.

Politics of chaos, Editorial, *The News*, 28 August⁵

The latest turn in the PTI's political course reveals a party once again choosing confrontation over participation, while simultaneously exposing the cracks within its own structure. The announcement that the party will boycott the upcoming by-elections in constituencies vacated by the disqualification of its members, coupled with the decision to withdraw from all standing committees of the National Assembly, shows a pattern of retreating from democratic forums to sustain a narrative of victimhood. Regardless of whether these plans actually go

⁴ <https://www.nation.com.pk/21-Aug-2025/afghan-engagement>

⁵ <https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail/?id=428233>

ahead, analysts question whether the rhetoric of defiance is a calculated strategy or evidence of an internal leadership crisis. The PTI's political committee had earlier leaned toward contesting some seats, but reportedly Imran Khan's unequivocal direction has been to abstain entirely. *This reversal has sharpened the sense that the PTI is increasingly governed not by collective decision-making but by solitary commands, relayed through family or close aide. The confusion surrounding the boycott, the tug of war between the political committee and Imran Khan's directives and the near resignation of a senior office-bearer all suggest that the PTI has not cultivated an independent, credible second tier of decision-makers. The party continues to revolve almost entirely around Imran Khan.* While this may ensure loyalty and message discipline in the short term, it also exposes fragility. A movement that depends so completely on one man risks paralysis when he is absent, restricted or incapacitated. Ultimately, the PTI's latest choices illuminate both defiance and dysfunction.

SECURITY SITUATION

Terror realities, Editorial, *The News*, 08 August⁶

Once again, Pakistan's north-western periphery is aflame, both with violence and a profound sense of abandonment. North Waziristan, Bajaur and other districts of the former Fata region are slipping into a familiar nightmare: one of curfews, militant negotiations and a reeling civilian population caught between insurgents and an uncertain state response. *The imposition of a complete curfew in North Waziristan and peace jirgas attempting to persuade local militant leaders to leave Bajaur is a rather frightening and sobering throwback: we have been here before. Unfortunately, the brief hope kindled by the merger of the tribal areas into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018 has not been met with the necessary infrastructure, development, or most crucially, sustainable peace.* Friday's peace march in Shewa tehsil, attended by tribal elders, political representatives and PTM activists, can be seen as an effort at organizing for survival. Speaker after speaker warned of re-emerging militancy and faltering state strategies. The presence of the TTP and the state's reactive posture have left residents feeling defenceless in their own homes. Meanwhile, the

⁶ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/1333024-terror-realities>

government's reliance on jirgas to convince militant leaders to relocate, either back to Afghanistan or into remote mountain ranges, reveals just how thinly stretched and politically compromised the security apparatus is.

Fighting Terror, Editorial, *The Daily Times*, 09 August⁷

Meanwhile, in North Waziristan's Bannu district, a joint army-police operation led to the capture of 14 terror facilitators and the destruction of multiple hideouts. These intelligence-driven, pre-emptive strikes underscore the skill and dedication of Pakistan's defenders, who continue working tirelessly to neutralize threats before they can strike. *The threat itself is evolving. Over the past year, Pakistan has witnessed an uptick in terrorist activity. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), long sheltered in Afghan sanctuaries, appears to be shifting tactics, embedding sleeper cells within civilian populations. Just months ago, the Counter Terrorism Department dismantled a TTP network in Islamabad, poised to strike during a high-profile international summit.* Military leadership has repeatedly raised alarms over the TTP's unchecked movement across the Afghan border, where the Taliban regime has allowed old militant networks to re-emerge. Despite Islamabad's repeated calls for action, Kabul has failed to deliver; leaving Pakistan to confront a hybrid threat—externally enabled, internally embedded. At home, however, some of our defensive measures have created hardship for ordinary citizens. In Balochistan, province-wide mobile data suspensions have become a recurring tactic. These blackouts, though aimed at disrupting militant communications, have left students preparing for exams, remote workers, and families reliant on digital access in a state of ongoing frustration. The irony is clear: the very people these measures are meant to protect often bear the heaviest cost.

Soft target, Editorial, *Dawn*, 14 August⁸

It must, no doubt, be deeply troubling to the state that terrorist outfits have taken to repeatedly targeting the Jaffar Express, as if to signal that they can resort to sabotage

⁷ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/1350616/fighting-terror/>

⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1930769/soft-target>

whenever they wish and get away with it. *Earlier this week, six bogies of the passenger train derailed when a bomb attack tore up the railway track in Balochistan's Dasht tehsil in Mastung district. Thankfully, no loss of life was reported. But one can imagine the terror the ill-fated train's passengers must have experienced. There were 350 on board, travelling from Quetta to Peshawar, when the train derailed.* Their minds must inevitably have wandered to the tragedy that occurred merely five months earlier on the same train, when the BLA had used a very similar method to stop and hijack it. They must have thought of the dozens killed during the rescue operation to liberate the passengers from the terrorists. In short, they would have felt very vulnerable. And this is, perhaps, precisely what the terrorists operating in the region wanted. It bears highlighting that this was the second bomb attack on the same train in just four days. It is the state that should take responsibility and act to pre-empt it. There is an urgent need to reassess the strategies being adopted to manage Balochistan's growing socio-political unrest, especially as observers believe it is feeding the violence breaking out across the province. *Many appeals have been made to the state to exercise more restraint, especially when dealing with the province's social and political leadership, as the dismissal of all dissent as treachery and anti-national sentiment is alienating Balochistan's ordinary people. Such policies are not making the province any safer. The Jaffar Express's travails are merely a reminder of this.*

URDU MEDIA

Iranian President's important visit to Pakistan, Editorial, Roznama Jang, 04 August⁹

The people of Pakistan and Iran are not only geographically connected but also bonded by centuries-old deep historical, religious, cultural, literary, civilizational, and linguistic ties. During the Muslim rule in the Indian subcontinent, Persian was the official language. As a result, while the works of spiritual poets like Hafez, Saadi, and Rumi were widely known in India, renowned poets from the subcontinent also gained immense popularity in Iran due to their Persian poetry. Among them, the Persian poetry of Allama Iqbal

⁹ <https://e.jang.com.pk/karachi/04-08-2025/page4>

remains a highly effective medium for maintaining and strengthening the intellectual, spiritual, and national ties between Pakistan and Iran. For this reason, since the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan, close relations have consistently existed between the two countries. However, the recent Iran-Israel conflict, in which the United States openly supported Israel and effectively joined the war against Iran, has led to a significant wave of national-level affection and solidarity in Iran toward Pakistan, especially because of Pakistan's strong diplomatic and moral support for Iran. In this context, *the recent visit of Iranian President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian to Pakistan, accompanied by a high-level delegation from his government, holds special significance. This is President Pezeshkian's first visit to Pakistan, during which he will meet with the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan for important discussions. During this visit, the Iranian delegation will push forward the progress made in areas discussed during the late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's visit to Pakistan in April, including trade agreements, cross-border markets, and other matters. Before departing for Pakistan, President Pezeshkian outlined the goals of his visit, stating that both countries are committed to increasing their annual trade volume to \$10 billion. He emphasised that Iran and Pakistan are cooperating in economic, scientific, cultural, and border-related matters.* President Pezeshkian highlighted Pakistan's full solidarity with Iran's government and people during the recent Israeli aggression and American attacks, emphasising that Pakistan defended Iran's sovereignty. He further stated that Iran aims to promote border trade with Pakistan via land, air, and sea routes and seeks access to Europe through the Silk Road corridor connecting Iran, Pakistan, and China. He stressed that security and border issues are of critical importance to both nations and that regional stability is only achievable through mutual cooperation. The Iranian President also pointed out that enemies are conspiring to sow division among Muslims, but Iran is determined to foil such plots.

Pakistan-Iran Trade Agreement, Editorial, Roznama Jang, 05 August¹⁰

On the final day of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's two-day visit to Pakistan, ministerial-level talks between the two countries concluded with the signing of a dozen

¹⁰ <https://e.jang.com.pk/karachi/05-08-2025/page8>

agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoUs) of far-reaching importance. The implementation of these agreements will further strengthen the everlasting bonds of mutual cooperation, brotherhood, and friendship. Under these agreements and MoUs, the two sides will cooperate in projects such as the Silk Road initiative and the Gwadar-Chabahar project, enhance land connectivity including the Quetta-Zahedan railway track and trade-related matters, ensure the promotion of free trade, and work toward increasing the current bilateral trade volume from \$3 billion to the target of \$10 billion as soon as possible. Alongside the ministerial negotiations, President Pezeshkian also held separate meetings with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Zardari, where they discussed regional and global developments. On the occasion, President Zardari expressed confidence that Pakistan and Iran would continue to work together for a peaceful and prosperous future for the region. *During President Pezeshkian's meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Army Chief Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and senior federal ministers were also present. The Iranian President emphasised the unity of the Muslim Ummah and thanked Pakistan for its support and solidarity during the recent Israeli attacks, stating that Iran considers Pakistan not just a neighbour, but a brother. He also invited Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to visit Iran.* Both leaders discussed measures to promote mutual trade, including the facilitation of barter trade, increasing quotas for the export of rice, fruits, and meat, activating border markets, and removing trade barriers. After the signing of the agreements, *Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated during a joint press conference that Iran has the full right to acquire nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. This was seen as a reference to the attacks on Iranian nuclear installations aimed at preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons. Iran has maintained a clear stance that it will not abandon its uranium enrichment program, which it claims is for peaceful purposes.* The Prime Minister paid tribute to the Iranian government and people for their strong defence of their sovereignty and integrity in the face of Israeli attacks. *Regarding terrorist activities along the Pakistan-Iran border, the Prime Minister stated that such actions would not be tolerated and that both countries would ensure full cooperation to open up the hundreds of kilometres of shared border for regional peace and development.*

US designates BLA and Majeed Brigade as terrorist organizations, *Daily Sangar*, 12 August¹¹

The US State Department has designated the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and its suicide unit (fidayeen unit) “Majeed Brigade” as foreign terrorist organizations. According to the US State Department statement, “Majeed Brigade is being added to the BLA’s former Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) list.” The statement added that “BLA was added to the SDGT in 2019 after a series of terrorist attacks. Since 2019, BLA and Majeed Brigade have claimed responsibility for further attacks.” According to the US State Department, “In 2024, BLA claimed responsibility for suicide attacks near the airport and the Gwadar Port Authority complex in Karachi. In 2025, BLA claimed responsibility for the hijacking of the Jaffar Express train from Quetta to Peshawar in March.” The attack killed 31 civilians and security personnel and took more than 300 train passengers hostage. The US State Department said that “designating the organization as a terrorist organization plays a critical role in our fight against terrorism and is an effective way to disrupt support for terrorist activities.”

"18th Amendment and Pakistan" Muneer Ahmed Baloch, *Roznama 92*, 17 August¹²

The 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan was passed on the basis of mutual interests of Asif Ali Zardari, Asfandiyar Wali Khan and a few Balochistan chieftains and a little bit of Punjab. The effects of the policy in the form of the provinces’ arbitrariness are suffered by the federation and the provinces. The result is that instability and chaos have engulfed the country from all sides. Sometimes it seems that the six points have been introduced in the form of a new bottle, a new brand, in the form of provincial bias. Ironically, the amendment is pushing the incompetence and loot of the provincial governments to be blamed on the center. This happens despite knowing the fact that the solution to all these

¹¹ <https://dailysangar.online/?p=64210>

¹²<https://roznama92news.com/post/%E2%80%99%E2%80%99-%D8%A7%D9%B9%DA%BE%D8%A7-%D8%B1%DB%81%D9%88%DB%8C%DA%BA-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B1-%D9%BE%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86-%E2%80%98%E2%80%98>

problems is at the provincial level, not at the center. *If the plunder of the resources of the provinces and the plight of the people are compared since the passage of this amendment in 2010 with that before this amendment, the difference is huge. As soon as the amendment started causing troubles in the country, debates about the implications of this amendment started in the country.* When in 2019 the Imran Khan government started seriously thinking about this amendment, a poisonous suggestion was made by Professor Dr. Irfana Mallah of Jamshoro University in Sindh: Every non-Sindhi would have to pay a “Sindh tax” to do any kind of business in Sindh. *Whenever the Pakistan People’s Party loses grip on power in the province, it raises the Sindh issue, bashing those who allegedly snatched the rights of Sindh, sometimes threatening to break the federation and carrying out rallies against alleged discrimination of Sindh. As soon as the talk of some amendments to this amendment started in the initial years of the PTI government, from the first quarter of 2019, Bilawal Bhutto and Asif Zardari started expressing their concerns about the 18th Amendment, saying that if this amendment is tampered with, the federation will be weakened, for which no one else but the national security institutions will be responsible. Indirectly, it was said that Imran Khan has no role, it is the establishment that wants to abolish the 18th Amendment.*

ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Heated scenes in National Assembly: 14 August next date for PTI Protest? Capital Talk with Hamid Mir, Geo News, 08 August¹³

The host pointed out that the PTI and the PML-N leaders locked horns in the national assembly, and now the PTI has given a fresh date after meeting Imran Khan in jail. Aleema Khan after meeting Imran Khan in jail informed the media that Khan has given 14 August as the new date for PTI protest. 14 August is the Independence Day for Pakistan and again the PTI has given this date to confuse the public as the rallies will most probably be for the Independence Day. The host asked why PTI has chosen the 14 August, is it correct to take

¹³ <https://www.geo.tv/shows/capital-talk/617832-heated-scenes-in-assembly-as-protest-erupts>

out political rally on this day? **Guests:** Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhary-Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, & Dr. Nisar Jatt-PTI. **Dr. Nisar Jatt** pointed out that on 5th August the PTI launched campaigns to show solidarity with both Kashmir and Imran Khan but there was crackdown on us on the same day. On immediate bases we decided to take part in the national assembly on the same day and helped to pass the resolution on Kashmir. But after that, the gates of the national assembly were closed and the speaker too could not do anything. He asked that if a worker takes the flag of PTI along with of Pakistan on 14th August then what the problem is. When asked about the option of talking with the government he added that the talks have now become a joke. The real talk if government wants to do can happen only with Imran Khan but he is languishing in the jail. But unfortunately the government is not letting us meet Khan. The need of the hour is a national dialogue and it will start with the release of Imran Khan. The government should allow the political workers of the PTI to meet Imran Khan behind jails. The PTI's first mission is to take relief from the high court and the leaders who are de-seated should be taken back. When asked if the PTI will take part in the by-elections he added that the PTI workers want to take part but Aleema Khan has informed us that Imran Khan does not want the PTI to take part in the by-elections. **Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhary** underlined that 05th August is dedicated to Kashmir to show solidarity with Kashmiri, after the status was removed it is also to condemn the stripping of article 370 from Kashmir. On one hand the whole country was busy is doing so, PTI was doing politics and staging protest. It is true that they are free to do anything, but hijacking important dates like 14th of August is legally not right and they should chose other dates. The gates of the national assembly was not locked and everyone was going in and out, then why is the PTI blaming the government, may be some PTI leaders did not want to take part in the protests on road. Talking about the cases against the PTI workers, it is up to the courts to decide but the arrests can be stopped by the government. In Adiala jail there is law and order situation if we allow political leaders to meet Imran Khan. He added that the PTI should not contribute to the instability of Pakistan at this point of time when the status of the country has increased to a new high after the conflict with India.

Govt extends offer of talks to PTI: Aleema Khan stopped from meeting Imran Khan, Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Sath, Geo News, 14 August¹⁴

PML-N leader **Irfan Siddiqui**, who was a spokesperson for the government committee for talks with the opposition, has asked the PTI to show “seriousness” about the dialogue, saying the government had already offered talks to the opposition party. Both sides had held multiple rounds of talks earlier this year, but the dialogue did not move forward due to a stalemate on PTI’s demands, including the formation of a commission for the May 9 violence. Speaking on a private TV show, the Senator said in democracies, the opposition uses constitutional and democratic ways, not violent protest. He termed the PTI’s plan to organize a protest on August 14 as the continuation of the May 9 mentality. “*The government is not worried about the PTI protest call as the public had already rejected the party and showed no support to the PTI’s protest call on Aug 5,*” he added. He lashed out at incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan for what he called ‘deviating from parliamentary and democratic norms’. He claimed the PTI was following its ‘undemocratic practices’ by boycotting the upcoming by-elections. He said that the PTI was already facing cracks in its ranks due to internal rifts and divisions. He added all state institutions were functioning normally, saying the PTI was trying to paint a bleak picture of the government affairs. **Aleema Khan** has questioned why the meetings are stopped, she sat in protest outside Adiala jail asking the government to let her meet Imran Khan, but she was frisked away to a different location by the police. The PTI leaders also staged walk out from the assembly in protest to this step by the government. Aleema Khan claimed that since three months the government is not letting her meet his brother. **Rana Sana Ullah** who is the Advisor to PM on political affairs pointed out that the meeting of Imran Khan and sisters and protests are two different things. If there is any issue with the meeting then why are they are not going to the court for contempt of court. The jail administrators are of a different view, they say that there is no stopping for meeting but then the PTI is calling media to create heat and headlines. The media is always make an event and news out of these meetings with Imran Khan.

¹⁴ <https://www.geo.tv/shows/aaj-shahzeb-khanzada-kay-saath/618587-govt-extends-offer-of-talks-to-pti>

Trump-Zelensky meetup: Lessons for Pakistan, 11th Hour with Waseem Badami, ARY News, 18 August¹⁵

The host talked about the latest press conference of Trump and Zelensky who are meeting in the white house. We have to see what will come out of this meeting as Trump is very famous for saying one thing and doing another. The last time they met, Zelensky was pressurized by both Trump and his vice president JD Vance. Trump has said that you are not in a good position to dictate US and underlined that you don't have the cards. He added Ukraine is in huge problem and underlined that ceasefire can be achieved in a short time. He added that Donald Trump has already met Putin and now Zelensky, so we have to see what will come out of this meeting. Trump said that he will work with Russia as well as Ukraine. How the Russia-Ukraine can impact Pakistan? **Guest:** Azaz Chaudhary- ex foreign secretary, Musadiq Malik- Federal Minister for Climate Change. **Azaz Chaudhary** pointed out that the Russia-Ukraine war is moving towards its final days and will finish soon. When Trump said that Ukraine does not have the cards, he is right and Zelensky can't play it for long. Europe was pushing him to stretch the war but this will not go on for long. The ceasefire is a reality and this is the chance to stop listening to Europe and finish the war. Europe was trying to use Ukraine and attack Russia but that is not feasible. Talking about Hamaz he added that they do not have more cards now and it should take the deal with Qatar or any other country. Ukraine has a different situation and now they do not have people to send them to war, and on top of it many Ukrainians have left the country. The lesson for Pakistan is that it should keep itself ready, India is unpredictable and the World is selfish. **Musadiq Malik** underlined that there is no place for weak countries in the realpolitik's and the Ukraine that used to be one of a super power is suffering now, has lost one third of its land. The same has happened with Iran and the super powers have bullied both of them. If any country is atomic, it is not treated like that, same has happened with Pakistan it was asked to take the deal and leave the nuclear weapon plan. If Pakistan was weak conventionally or non-conventionally then the story will be something else. The situation of Ukraine is same as Syria, maybe the talks will be

¹⁵ <https://videos.arynews.tv/video/x9p0loe/>

successful, the take away is that there is no place for a weak country like Ukraine in the current times, might is right.

Political talks may resume, who will lead the opposition? Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Saath, Geo News, 21 August¹⁶

Imran Khan has changed some names in the Parliamentary/assemblies after the first round of cases by the government. Mehmood Khan Achakzai has been appointed as the leader of opposition in national assembly and he is also the head of the Tehreek-e-Tahafuz Pakistan movement of the opposition parties. In Senate Azam Swati has been appointed as the opposition leader and in Punjab assembly Imran Khan has asked for five names and he will decide on the same. The host pointed out that the PTI is on the receiving end at the current point, and underlined at the same time he is making allies with other opposition parties. The host asked is the PTI also ready to talk with PML-N and PPP? Guest: Hamid Mir-Senior Anchor-person and Journalist. **Hamid Mir** pointed out that Barrister Gohar, the chairman of PTI has once again said that things should stop now and pointed out that they also condemn the May 9th event and now common sense should prevail. The things he is saying now is not news, some other leaders of the PTI has been saying these things. Whatever he is saying, many senior leaders of the PTI also agree with his stance. He added that there is difference between Ali Amin Gandapur and Barrister Gohar. He added that sometimes the media plays things which Imran Khan has not said, and this creates problem. Any party who is in opposition has to face the same thing which the PTI is facing currently. The grouping within parties are in all the parties, not only in PTI but PML-N and JUI-F too. Right now PTI is on the receiving end and therefore it's highlighted. About the appointment of Achakzai Mehmood as leader of opposition in national assembly, he underlined that this has come from Imran Khan but the problem is that the case of Umar Ayyub who was the opposition leader, there is a stay on his case. PTI has no choice right now, and it is true that this is not a party policy. If Imran Khan is not right then the politics of PML-N and PPP, once they were against each other, then that was also wrong. Imran Khan should not be the only target, others are also not so right. Bilawal Bhutto has also

¹⁶ <https://www.geo.tv/shows/aaj-shahzeb-khanzada-kay-saath/619702-political-talks-may-resume-who-will-lead-the-opposition>

criticized Shehbaz Sharif many times and he has not said sorry to him too but they are together in this present government. Hamid Mir pointed out that there should be talks but the environment should be set for the talks. Imran Khan has to play smart, he can't just agree to talk to the government before any confidence building measures. By making Azam Swati the opposition leader in Senate, who is considered to be neutral can't play bridge between government and opposition. Imran Khan should change his stand and not say that he can only talk to establishment, this is wrong for democracy and PTI should think twice before saying anything.

A reset in Pakistan-Bangladesh relations: FM of Pakistan's visit to Bangladesh, Report Card, Geo News, 24 August¹⁷

The host pointed out that the big news for Pakistan-Bangladesh relations after 13 years as the Foreign Minister of Pakistan Ishaq Dar visits Bangladesh and held talks with top Bangladeshi officials and politicians including the Foreign affairs adviser Touhid Hossain. *The two nations aim to reset relations amid Dhaka's fraying ties with India*. Islamabad is calling it “*historic*” and a “*significant milestone in Pakistan-Bangladesh relations*”. Relations between Dhaka and Islamabad have been easing since a mass uprising in Bangladesh ousted Sheikh Hasina as prime minister last August, prompting her to flee to New Delhi. Hasina was considered more pro-India. Dar's visit comes days after the two nations reportedly eased visa restrictions for travel between them. The host asked what the significance of this visit is and how it will fair for Pakistan-Bangladesh relations. **Guests:** Mamal Sarfraz, Mazar Abbas, Irshad Bhatti & Fakr Durrani. **Mamal Sarfraz** pointed out that this is a big development for both the nations as Bangladesh was part of Pakistan. India was trying to spread its hegemony in South Asia and the smaller neighbours were suffering and complained. Now the balance of power is shifting. Sheikh Hasina was pro-India and now there is a neutral government in Bangladesh and this is good for Pakistan. Now we can challenge the Indian hegemony, SAARC is an important forum because of India who blocked everything. The traditional hospitality between Pakistan and

¹⁷ <https://www.geo.tv/shows/report-card/620149-pakistan-bangladesh-relations-improving-with-fm-dars-visit-after-13-years>

Bangladesh is almost over and we need to use this window. The pro-India sentiment in Bangladesh is over in the country and the youth has the baton now. **Mazar Abbas** pointed out that there still an interim setup and with that we can't plan a long policy with Bangladesh. We have to wait till the elections are done in April 2026 and after that we have to see who comes into power. But the opportunity is open, Bangladesh has come out from the grabs of India, easing of travel and trade and removal of visa restriction is a beginning. It is true that we share a bitter history with Bangladesh and its unfortunate that a new country was formed. **Irshad Bhatti** informed that Muslim League was formed in Bangladesh and Bengal has played a leading role in formation of Pakistan. We have to ask why the relations went soar in the first place between Pakistan and Bangladesh. We have to also ask who broke the country and a new country was formed in 1971. The problem is that Pakistan has learned nothing from its historical blunders till now, there is trust deficient in the country. It is a good news that Hasina and Modi has failed and we have an opportunity but we need to learn the lessons and apologies for the historic mistakes. **Fakr Durrani** underlined that it is a step in the right direction and may open doors for a better relations between the two nations in future. In South Asia, the policy revolves around India, and the Pakistan-Bangladesh relations were also looked from the spectrum of India. This is a big opportunity for Pakistan and we have to wait and see which party forms government in Bangladesh after elections. It has to be note4d that China is a big investor in Bangladesh and China has good relations with Pakistan, in this way China-Bangladesh and Pakistan can work together. We can also work on Climate change as this is impacted both the nations.