

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

12 May 2026

Security

- ◆ **Weaponisation of Water**— Yousuf Nazar argues that, a year after Operation Sindoor, India has effectively weaponised water by suspending the Indus Waters Treaty. He claims the **closure of Baglihar Dam’s gates has reduced flows vital to Pakistan’s farming and electricity generation**. Citing Narendra Modi’s declaration, (“**Blood and water cannot flow together**”), Nazar says erratic releases have disrupted planting cycles, increased food prices, and weakened industry. **He describes India’s approach as “slow-motion strangulation” rather than an outright blockade**. He maintains that legal appeals and diplomatic outreach have failed to restrain India’s growing upstream leverage over Pakistan’s survival. (*The News*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Foiled Suicide Plot in Islamabad**— Sarfraz Bugti announced that Pakistani intelligence agencies had prevented a planned suicide attack in Islamabad by **arresting a young woman from Turbat**. According to Bugti, the woman had allegedly been trained by a banned militant organisation after being blackmailed by her cousin, who threatened to kill her father if she refused cooperation. **He claimed militants were exploiting Baloch girls through social media and coercion for anti-state activities**. The government stated that the woman would be safely returned to her father, while authorities continued efforts to arrest those behind the plot (*The News*, , [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Human Trafficking and Foreign War Recruitment Allegations**— Pakistan’s Federal Investigation Agency has begun investigating claims that smugglers recruited citizens to fight in the Russia-Ukraine War. A complainant from Rawalpindi alleged he paid millions to an agent for a job in Russia but was instead coerced into military service after arrival. **Victims say they were detained after refusing to fight and had visas expire while abroad**. They later returned with embassy assistance in Moscow, while the alleged trafficker reportedly absconded (*The Nation*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Summary of TTP Operations – 11 May 2026**: On 11 May 2026, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed **eight operations** across six provinces. In **Peshawar**, ambushes targeted FC and police patrols, with likely casualties. In **Diamer (Tangir)**, guerrilla strikes hit a military camp, residence camp, and checkpoint, reportedly causing losses. **Tank** saw clashes with peace committee members, injuring two. In **North Waziristan (Guryum)**, a sniper attack killed one FC personnel. **South Waziristan (Toi)** witnessed a guerrilla assault on an FC camp, killing one and injuring another. In **Swat (Matta)**, gunfire on a police vehicle injured one officer.

Operations Table

District	Area	Target/Incident	Reported Outcome
Peshawar	FR Peshawar	Ambush near Jenkor police station on FC	Casualties reported

District	Area	Target/Incident	Reported Outcome
Peshawar	Peshawar City	Attack on police patrol near Bhar Baba Kili	Strong possibility of casualties
Diamer	Tangir	Attacks on military camp, residence camp, checkpoint	Casualties among army reported
Tank	Central Tank	Clash with peace committee in market	Two injured, further casualties possible
North Waziristan	Guryum	Sniper attack on FC bunker in Bobali	One personnel killed
South Waziristan	Toi	Guerrilla attack on central FC camp	One killed, one injured
Swat	Matta	Gunfire on police mobile in Sambat	One personnel injured

Economy

- ◆ **Resilient remittances bolster Pakistan's economy**— Overseas Pakistanis sent **\$3.5 billion in April**, marking an **11.4% YoY rise**, though inflows fell 7.6% MoM. Total remittances in the first ten months of FY26 reached **\$33.9 billion, up 8.5% Year on Year (YoY)**. Despite Middle East tensions and a widened trade deficit, these inflows stabilise reserves and support families. Waqas Ghani, Head of Research at JS Global, noted: “The 11 per cent YoY [increase] signals robust underlying demand for formal remittance channels and continued emigration-driven inflows.” (*The News*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan–China Economic Ties Strengthened**— Pakistan's Ambassador to China, **Khalil Hashmi**, announced that over **300 MoUs and 36 joint ventures worth \$13bn** have been signed between Pakistan and China in the past two years. He highlighted a nearly 30pc conversion rate of MoUs into formal contracts, reflecting effective follow-up. Discussions with **CATL**, a leading battery manufacturer, aim to leverage Pakistan's raw materials for sodium-based battery technologies. At Karachi Chamber of Commerce, Chinese delegates praised the city's potential as a hub for digital trade. **Zubair Motiwala** said the KCCI–IBI Group MoU would boost investment and industrial collaboration. (*Dawn*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Refining Policy Revived Amid Oil Crisis**— Pakistan has revived its long-delayed **oil refining policy** as disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, triggered by the US–Iran war, strain supplies. Petroleum Minister **Ali Pervaiz Malik** termed local refineries “**critical national assets**” and stressed removing bottlenecks to unlock \$6bn in stalled investments. Finance Minister **Muhammad Aurangzeb** assured corrective measures in the upcoming budget, aligning upgrades with IMF's **Resilience and Sustainability Facility** goals. Refineries demanded stability clauses, tax relief, and force majeure protections. Officials warned obsolete technology worsens health and climate risks, urging swift action to reduce reliance on imports. (*Dawn*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Gwadar Port Slashes Tariffs to Boost Trade**— Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs **Junaid Anwar Chaudhry** announced major tariff cuts at Gwadar Port to strengthen international transit trade. **Berthing fees for container ships were reduced by 25pc, port charges on transshipment containers by 40pc, and transit cargo charges by up to 31pc**, alongside one month of free storage

for general cargo. Chaudhry said these incentives aim to make Gwadar a competitive deep-sea hub for Central Asia, the Middle East and East Africa. **Noorul Haq Baloch**, GPA chairman, added the revised structure would attract investors and create jobs. (*Dawn*, [12 May 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **A more hateful India is also a Danger to its Neighbours**— The USCIRF 2026 Annual Report has again urged the US to designate India a “country of particular concern,” citing **systematic persecution of Muslims and Christians** under Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s BJP. The report highlights **mob violence, anti-conversion laws, expulsions, and state control of worship**. The message for minorities is clear: “You may live in India, but you are not truly ‘Indian’.” Despite global criticism, BJP’s **anti-Muslim rhetoric has fuelled electoral gains**, notably in West Bengal. A more intolerant India threatens both domestic peace and regional stability. (*The News*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan Issues Strong Demarche to Afghan Diplomat**— Pakistan’s Foreign Office summoned the Afghan Chargé d’Affaires, issuing a “**strong demarche**” over the **9 May TTP vehicle-borne IED attack in Bannu that martyred 15 police constables**, stressing that the **mastermind resides in Afghanistan**. Kabul was warned that harbouring terrorists would not be tolerated. Pakistan’s Ambassador Ubaid-ur-Rehman urged “practical steps” against threats. Deputy PM Ishaq Dar discussed US-Iran tensions with US Chargé d’Affaires Natalie A Baker, including seized Pakistani and Iranian seafarers. UN envoy Jean Arnault and Saudi FM Faisal bin Farhan praised Pakistan’s **constructive regional role**. (*The News*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Commemorating Marka-e-Haq in Moscow** —The Pakistan Embassy in Moscow **observed Marka-e-Haq as a symbol of Pakistan’s unity, resilience, and commitment to regional stability**. Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi stated that Pakistan’s response during Operation *Bunyan-um-Marsoos* was lawful, measured, and supported by effective coordination between political and military leadership alongside public resolve. Members of the Pakistani diaspora expressed solidarity, praising the country’s civil leadership, armed forces, and diplomatic efforts in preserving peace. **A documentary screened during the event highlighted the operation and reinforced confidence in Pakistan’s continued progress and stability**. (*The News*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Bangladesh minister lauds Pakistan’s education expo** — The Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka, with HEC, inaugurated the Pakistan Education Expo 2026 to strengthen academic ties. Bangladesh Education Minister Dr ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon praised Pakistan’s evolving education system, saying, “**I was truly impressed by the remarkable improvements in their education. Their system has advanced significantly.**” He welcomed full scholarships for Bangladeshi students, noting cultural similarities would ease adjustment. Dr Milon urged scholars to uphold Bangladesh’s dignity abroad and return to contribute nationally (*The News*, [12 May 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Iranian Delegation Explores Gwadar Opportunities**— A high-level delegation from Iran’s **Chabahar Free Zone Organization**, led by Chairman **Muhammad Saeed Arbabi**, arrived in Gwadar via the Gabd-Rimzan border to assess investment prospects. Welcomed by **Jehand Hut**, President of the Gwadar Chamber of Commerce, the team includes investors and logistics experts

who will tour the Gwadar Free Zone, port facilities, and development projects. The visit is expected to advance plans for a **joint logistics network, transit trade, and cooperation between Gwadar and Chabahar**, marking a milestone in Pakistan–Iran economic ties. (*The Express Tribune*, [12 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **\$80m Russian-Backed Insulin Plant Approved** — Russian firm **Zavod Medsintez LLC**, in partnership with Pakistan’s **Genetics Pharmaceuticals Pvt Ltd**, will invest **\$80m** to establish an insulin manufacturing facility in Islamabad. The **Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP)** has conditionally approved the project, linking it to strict phase-wise deadlines. Phase one, worth \$20m, will build an aseptic insulin filling plant by **December 2028**; phase two, worth \$60m, will establish a full-scale plant by **December 2031**, including local API production. The initiative aims to reduce Pakistan’s reliance on imported insulin and improve diabetes treatment access. (*The Nation*, [12 May 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **Fazlur Rehman’s fierce critique of government** — JUIF chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman declared that the regime has made the **Constitution unsafe and democracy a dead body**. Speaking in the National Assembly, he condemned the assassination of Maulana Muhammad Idrees and recalled the martyrdom of party leaders and “80 martyrs in Bajaur in a single day.” He accused Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif of pursuing illegitimate constitutional amendments, criticised PPP for aiding rollback of the 18th Amendment, and denounced rising petroleum prices, inflation, and lawlessness in KP and Balochistan (*The News*, [12 May 2026](#)).
- ◆ **KP Assembly condemns cleric’s assassination** — The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly unanimously passed a resolution against the **brutal killing of Maulana Mohammad Idrees**, demanding immediate arrest of the perpetrators. Moved by JUIF lawmaker Adnan Wazir, the resolution suspended routine agenda to debate insecurity. Adnan Khan lamented that “**the government’s writ is nowhere to be seen**,” while Muhammad Sajjad warned the crisis was now a matter of survival for Pakhtuns. Lawmakers criticised ineffective peace jirgas, rising violence in Bannu, and failure of security institutions, urging joint federal-provincial action (*The News*, [12 May 2026](#)).
- ◆ **PTI Workers Cleared in 9 May Case** — A court in Peshawar acquitted **74 activists of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf in a case linked to the May 2023 unrest following the arrest of Imran Khan**. Additional Sessions Judge Faraz Ahmad ruled that the prosecution had failed to provide direct, circumstantial, or admissible evidence connecting the accused to the killings of two people during protests. The court observed that continuing the trial would amount to “**unnecessary harassment**” since **there was “no probability” of conviction**. (*Dawn*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Rally in Bagh Highlights Kashmir–Pakistan Bond** — ‘Azad’ Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister **Faisal Mumtaz Rathore** declared at a Pakistan Zindabad rally in Bagh that Kashmir’s destiny is inseparable from a “**prosperous and stable Pakistan**”. He praised the Pakistan Armed Forces, recalling that “**last May, the forces of falsehood were defeated by the forces of truth**”, and asserted that Pakistan’s prestige now stands higher globally. Rathore laid the foundation stone of the Chhatar Dhara Bridge, fulfilling his late father’s 1990 vision, and emphasised his government’s mission to **restore public faith in a broken system**. (*Dawn*, [12 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Senate Panel Flags Minority Quota Gaps**— The Senate Minority Caucus, chaired by **Senator Danesh Kumar**, expressed concern over provincial departments’ disregard for minority quota policies. The committee directed the Ministry of Human Rights to ensure compliance nationwide. The **AIG Balochistan police** confirmed a 5pc quota exists but admitted that of 1,142 minority constable posts, only 440 are filled, leaving 702 vacant. **Dr Nelson Azeem** urged equal application of quotas in Class-IV positions and challenged police claims in a Christian girl’s alleged kidnapping case, stressing she was a minor. Authorities were asked to reinvestigate. (*Dawn*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Reviving Pakistan’s Buddhist Legacy**— This editorial argues that the **revival of Buddhist chants at the ancient Dharmarajika Stupa after nearly 1,500 years symbolises coexistence and the enduring legacy of the Gandhara civilisation**. The participation of monks and diplomats from several Asian countries highlighted Pakistan’s untapped potential for religious and cultural tourism. **The piece criticises successive governments for neglecting infrastructure, promotion, and visitor facilities at Buddhist heritage sites** despite global scholarly and spiritual interest. It stresses that preservation alone is insufficient and calls for easier visas, better connectivity, and international partnerships to **transform places like Taxila into centres of intercultural exchange and economic opportunity** (*Dawn*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **KP Assembly Passes Overseas Property Protection Law**— The Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Assembly enacted the **Overseas Pakistanis Property Act 2026**, introduced by **Law Minister Aftab Alam**, establishing special courts to resolve expatriate property disputes within **120 days**. Overseas Pakistanis can file online, testify via video link, and benefit from measures blocking illegal transfers and aiding rent recovery. The session also saw the **Ehsaas Handcart Protection Bill 2026** tabled, regulating 140,000 vendors. Lawmakers unanimously condemned the killing of **Maulana Muhammad Idrees**, while uproar followed **PML-N MPA Sobia Shahid’s “RAW agenda” remark**, later expunged. (*The Express Tribune*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Balochistan’s Youth Voice Calls for Reform**— A new study, *Voice of Balochistan’s Youth: Identity, Development and Geopolitical Perspectives*, led by **Dr Siraj Bashir Baloch**, **Nomeen Kassi**, and **Dr Farah Naseer**, reveals a digitally connected generation seeking **education, jobs and peace** but constrained by governance failures. **“The youth of Balochistan are not a problem to be managed, they are a resource being wasted,”** said Dr Baloch. The report highlights dissatisfaction with employment, education and healthcare, mixed views on CPEC, suspicion of foreign actors, and gendered experiences of exclusion. Researchers urged **digital literacy, quotas in CPEC projects, and governance reform** to unlock youth potential. (*The Express Tribune*, [12 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Punjab Moves to Simplify Madrasa Registration**—The Punjab government has proposed amendments to the **Madrasa Registration Act** to ease procedures and reduce duplication. Under the plan, madrasas already registered with the **Federation of Madrasas or other religious boards** will not require separate registration under the Societies Registration Act in Punjab. A proposal to give federal registration legal status at the provincial level and link federal and provincial madrasa data is also under review. Officials said the amendments, prepared after consultation with scholars and administrators, await cabinet approval. (*The Nation*, [12 May 2026](#))



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