

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

14 May 2026

Security

- ◆ **Pakistan Warns Kabul of Delhi-Like Response**— Defence Minister **Khawaja Asif** told the National Assembly that **Pakistan would respond to Kabul as it did to New Delhi in May 2025** if Afghanistan continued acting as an Indian proxy and facilitating terrorism. He stressed: **“There is only one solution which is war if the Afghan government does not abandon terrorists and their camps.”** Despite three negotiation rounds with Afghan authorities, supported by Turkiye, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, no written commitments were secured. Former Speaker **Asad Qaisar** urged talks, citing trade losses and failures in implementing NAP. The House also passed six bills, including the controversial **Islamabad Capital Territory Condominium Bill**. (*The News*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Army Operation in Balochistan Leaves Officer, Soldiers killed**— Pakistan’s military said a sanitisation operation in Nosham, Barkhan district, killed seven alleged militants linked to “Fitna al-Hindustan”, while Major Major Bhatti and four soldiers were martyred during the exchange. **The Inter-Services Public Relations stated that weapons and explosives were recovered and vowed that counter-terrorism operations under “Azm-e-Istehkam” would continue “at full pace”**. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif praised the security forces, saying the fallen personnel had “set a remarkable example of loyalty” and that “the Pakistani nation will never forget the immense sacrifices of its martyrs”. (*The Express Tribune*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan’s long war against terror**— Security analyst Raashid Wali Janjua argues that Pakistan’s battle against militancy persists because terrorist groups thrive amid Afghanistan’s fractured power structure and weak governance. **He contends that factions within the Afghan Taliban, including the Haqqani network, tolerate or support outfits such as the TTP and IMP, which now cooperate with other militant organisations.** Janjua warns that Pakistan has “lost space in Afghanistan” and must strengthen counterterrorism, cyber capabilities and diplomacy with regional states. **He stresses that sustainable peace also requires governance, development and public confidence in KP’s merged districts.** (*The News*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Catch-22 for India’s Rafale deal**— In his column, **Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd)** explains that India’s need to modernise its ageing fleet has locked the IAF into dependence on **Dassault’s Rafale**, yet France refuses to share the jet’s **source code and Interface Control Documents (ICDs)**. The issue intensified after the **downing of four Rafales by PAF J-10C pilots during Marka-i-Haq in May 2025**, which Paris blamed on Indian pilot error. India insists on ICD access to pursue **Atmanirbhar Bharat** goals, but France fears risks of reverse engineering and third-party transfer. With **Ukraine already lined up for Rafales**, India lacks leverage, leaving its \$43bn deal uncertain. (*The Nation*, [14 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Betraying the front line**— This editorial condemns the lack of political unity amid Pakistan’s ongoing fight against terrorism. The martyrdom of **Major Tauseef Ahmed Bhatti and four soldiers in Balochistan**, alongside the **suicide attack in Bannu**, underscores the ferocity of the threat since the Taliban’s return to Kabul. The editorial criticises **PTI’s focus on Adiala and loyalty to Imran Khan**, calling it “**subversion dressed as politics**” at a time when clarity is vital. It urges political leaders to prioritise solidarity and support for security forces. (*The News*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Summary of TTP Operations: 13 May 2026**: The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) reported nine operations across five provinces on 13 May 2026. Activities ranged from sniper and guerrilla attacks to ambushes and raids on military camps. Significant casualties were claimed in Dera Ismail Khan, where seven personnel were reportedly killed in a hit-and-run on a military camp. Other operations targeted infrastructure, including security cameras in Tank and military housing in Kohat. The group also reported engagements in Gilgit-Baltistan and South Waziristan, highlighting a broad geographical spread of insurgent activity targeting state security forces, intelligence assets, and military convoys. (*The Telegram*, 14 May 2026)

Summary of Operations

District	Area	Target/Nature of Operation	Reported Outcome
Darail	Darail	Attack on Gilgit Scouts post	Personnel casualties reported
Darail	Gilgit-Baltistan	Two attacks on military/FWO camps	Personnel and financial losses
South Waziristan	Shawal Lawarah	Guerrilla operation at Maki Sar fort	One personnel killed
South Waziristan	Shawal Lawarah	Guerrilla operation on post construction	Potential casualties
South Waziristan	Sararogha	Ambush on military convoy in Anzarey	Four injured; vehicles damaged
Dera Ismail Khan	Kalachi	Hit-and-run on Loni military camp	Seven personnel killed; camp damaged
Kohat	Lachi	Raid on army informant's house	Informant killed; rifle/vehicle seized
Tank	Khas Tank	Sniper attack on Malazai police station	Security camera destroyed

Economy

- ◆ **Pakistan launches Panda bond amid IMF talks**— Finance Minister **Senator Aurangzeb** has travelled to China to launch the first \$250m tranche of a planned \$1bn **Panda bond**, following Pakistan’s \$750m Eurobond issuance last month and fresh deposits from Saudi Arabia. Islamabad also repaid \$3.4bn to the UAE and received \$1.3bn from the IMF. Aurangzeb briefed the visiting IMF Mission, led by **Ms Iva Petrova**, on reforms, fiscal discipline and budget preparations, highlighting improved remittances and exports. The IMF acknowledged Pakistan’s progress but stressed sustaining reforms for durable growth. (*The News*, [14 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan's GDP growth slows under IMF programme**— Pakistan's economy grew **3.7% in FY2025-26**, below the **4.2% target**, amid stagflation under the IMF programme. Inflation rebounded into double digits after fuel price hikes linked to the Gulf War. The economy's size rose to **\$452.1bn**, with per capita income at **\$1,901**. The **National Accounts Committee**, chaired by **Secretary Planning Awais Manzur Sumra**, approved provisional growth rates: agriculture **2.89%**, industry **3.51%**, and services **4.09%**. Revised growth for FY2023-24 and FY2024-25 stood at **2.62%** and **3.18%** respectively. (*The News*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Mohmand, Dasu dam costs soar** — The **Ministry of Water Resources** informed the National Assembly that the combined construction cost of the **Mohmand Dam and Dasu Hydropower Project has surged by Rs1.607 trillion**, raising their total estimated cost to nearly Rs2.4 trillion. Mohmand's cost rose from **Rs309.5bn to Rs665.7bn**, while Dasu's jumped from **Rs486bn to Rs1.737tr**, approved by the NEC in December 2025. Allocations for local community development also increased sharply: Mohmand from **Rs160m to Rs4.5bn**, and Dasu from **Rs7bn to Rs57bn**. (*The Express Tribune*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **US eyes deeper economic ties with Pakistan**— The United States has signalled interest in strengthening economic cooperation with Pakistan. **Assistant Secretary S. Paul Kapur**, accompanied by **US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A Baker**, met **Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb** in Islamabad to discuss investment, trade, and reforms. Kapur emphasised the need for a “**competitive and predictable business environment**” to attract foreign investment, noting strong interest from American companies. Aurangzeb highlighted Pakistan's stabilisation efforts, fiscal reforms, and growth in remittances and exports. Both sides reaffirmed commitment to expanding bilateral economic engagement and fostering long-term partnerships. (*The Nation*, [14 May 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **RSS urges dialogue with Pakistan, Congress slams stance**— RSS General Secretary **Dattatreya Hosabale** called for keeping diplomatic, trade, and visa channels open with Pakistan, stressing that “**India should always be ready to engage in dialogue with Pakistan**” while remaining vigilant against terrorism. He cited **Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Lahore bus visit** as precedent and suggested civil society and sporting ties could help. Former Army chief **Gen Manoj Mukund Naravane** backed people-to-people contacts but warned India would not hesitate to use force if required. The **Congress party sharply criticised RSS-BJP**, accusing them of “**pampering Pakistan... Shame on these traitors.**” (*The News*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **India's secular bastion falls in Bengal**— In this commentary **Omay Aimen** argues that the **2026 West Bengal assembly elections mark the collapse of a historic secular stronghold**, with the BJP's victory representing “**the systemic disenfranchisement of the Muslim minority to secure electoral dominance.**” She traces this to the **purging of nearly nine million voters** under the Special Intensive Revision, likening it to the colonial **1905 Partition of Bengal**. Reports of post-election

violence, desecrated mosques, and intimidation of Muslim communities underscore what she calls the “**unravelling**” of **Indian democracy**, warning of long-term instability. (*The News*, [14 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Ritter backs Pakistan for Nobel Prize**— Former UN weapons inspector and ex-US Marine Corps intelligence officer **Scott Ritter** has lauded Pakistan’s diplomatic efforts in easing tensions between Iran and the United States. Speaking on anchorperson **Fahd Hussain’s programme ‘Full Frame’**, Ritter described Pakistan as “**the only game in town**” capable of steering the crisis toward resolution. He commended Islamabad’s leadership, saying: “**If there ever was somebody who deserved the Nobel Peace Prize, the Pakistani leadership... deserves this.**” Ritter urged the global community to support Pakistan economically and politically. (*The Express Tribune*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **China urges Pakistan to expand peace diplomacy**— Chinese Foreign Minister **Wang Yi** asked Deputy PM and FM **Ishaq Dar** to intensify mediation efforts, particularly regarding the **Strait of Hormuz**, during a recent call. Wang praised Pakistan’s constructive role in facilitating **US–Iran contacts**, noting it helped extend a temporary ceasefire. He said: “**Pakistan should continue contributing to restoring regional peace at an early date.**” Dar briefed Wang on Islamabad’s initiatives and expressed hope for deeper coordination with Beijing. Separately, Dar spoke with **Kuwait’s FM Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah**, who commended Pakistan’s peace efforts. (*The Express Tribune*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan’s balancing act as a middle power**— For years Pakistan was seen through the lens of terrorism and instability, but as **Dr Durdana Najam** notes, the narrative is shifting. By mediating between bitter rivals like the US and Iran, Pakistan has shown “**strategic diplomacy to completely reshape how the world sees it.**” Its location, military strength and nuclear capability give it middle power potential, yet “**you can’t survive on good diplomacy alone.**” Without economic reform and political stability, these diplomatic wins risk becoming fleeting. (*The Express Tribune*, [14 May 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

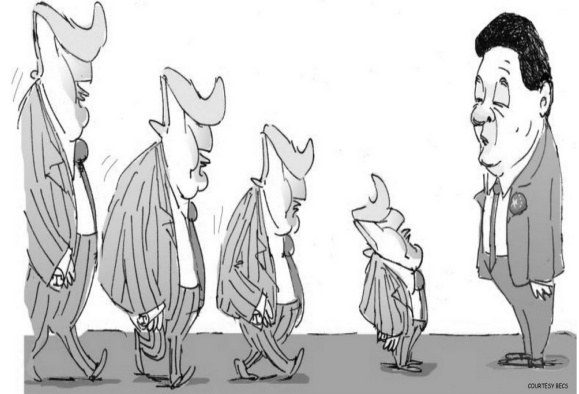
- ◆ **PTI Raises Alarm Over Imran Khan’s torture in Jail**— Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Secretary General **Salman Akram Raja** alleged that imprisoned premier **Imran Khan** has been tortured and “**lost one eye**”, while his wife, **Bushra Bibi**, faces restrictions. **Raja claimed courts were ignoring petitions, meetings with lawyers and relatives were blocked, and “only favourite people are allowed to meet”**. PTI leaders also criticised the judiciary and government, with lawyer **Latif Khosa** describing the 9 May violence as a “**false flag operation**”. **The party warned of protests amid tensions.** (*The News*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Punjab CM office rejects RTI requests on vehicles and foreign tours**— Lawyer **Abdullah Malik** sought details under Pakistan’s Right to Information law about **Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz’s vehicles, foreign visits, and a luxury G500 jet**. His July 2025 and February 2026 applications asked for expenditure on fuel, maintenance, tours, aircraft mileage, and social media staff salaries. The CM office refused, citing “**legitimate exception**” under Section 13(1)(e) of the Punjab

Transparency and RTI Act, 2013, claiming disclosure could harm safety. Similar refusals occurred in 2021 under CM Usman Buzdar, then criticised by PML-N. (*Dawn*, [14 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **JUI-F stalls rapprochement with PTI** — Speculation of a broader opposition alliance arose after meetings between **Maulana Fazlur Rehman** and **Opposition Leader Mehmood Khan Achakzai**, but the **JUI-F has ruled out joining *Tehreek Tahaffuz Ayeen-i-Pakistan's* (TTAP) movement for now**. TTAP spokesperson **Akhundzada Hussain** claimed consensus on launching a campaign against inflation and the proposed 28th Amendment, while **JUI-F spokesman Aslam Ghauri** insisted talks were limited to condolences, stressing: “**We will not join any movement with PTI until past misgivings are resolved... How we can trust them after this.**” JUI-F continues its own “**Awan Nahi Maidan**” campaign. (*The Express Tribune*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Punjab to add Marka-i-Haq to curriculum**— Punjab has decided to incorporate **Marka-i-Haq, the four-day war between Pakistan and India in May 2025**, into school textbooks and produce films under the Film Fund. Chairing the Information Steering Committee, **Minister Azma Bokhari** said: “**To instil a spirit of patriotism among the younger generation, the content related to Marka-i-Haq will be incorporated into the academic curriculum.**” Programmes will also be held in private institutions, while exhibitions and plays honouring sacrifices, including that of **Shaheed Liaquat**, will be staged. A special monitoring cell will curb hate speech during Muharram. (*Dawn*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Sitara-e-Shujaat for Liaquat**— President **Asif Ali Zardari** conferred the **Sitara-i-Shujaat (posthumous)** on **Muhammad Liaquat**, a railway employee who intercepted a suicide attacker near Attock’s Mankoor check post, saving many lives. Liaquat embraced martyrdom during the act, and his mother received the award at Aiwan-i-Sadr. The ceremony, attended by dignitaries including **First Lady Aseefa Bhutto-Zardari**, also recognised contributions in health, education, literature, sports, and diplomacy. Former Pakistan captain **Shahid Afridi** was also awarded the prestigious **Hilal-e-Imtiaz**, Pakistan’s second-highest civilian honour, by **Asif Ali Zardari** during a ceremony. (*The Express Tribune*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **US returns 450 cultural artifacts to Pakistan**— The United States has formally repatriated **over 450 cultural artifacts** to Pakistan in a ceremony at the Islamabad Museum, reaffirming joint efforts to combat illicit antiquities trafficking. The collection includes **Mehrgarh terracotta figurines dating back to 3500–2600 BCE**, a rare **2nd-century Buddhapada sculpture worth \$1.1m**, Gandharan friezes, and a **Gold Strato I coin (105–85 BCE)**. **U.S. Assistant Secretary S. Paul Kapur** said: “**Each belongs to the people of Pakistan. And each now is home.**” The Antiquities Trafficking Unit of Manhattan DA’s Office recovered the items, valued at nearly \$23m. (*The Nation*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **VBMP’s protest camp marks 6164th day**— The Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP) protest camp against enforced disappearances in Balochistan has entered its **6164th day**, with **Sardar Ali Muhammad Qalandrani** visiting to show solidarity. VBMP Chairman **Nasrullah Baloch** recalled that in 2013 the **Supreme Court proved the disappearance of Qalandrani’s sons and other tribal members**, issuing recovery orders that remain unimplemented. He condemned the failure to act as

a “serious violation of the constitution, law and fundamental rights of citizens”, urging the state to fulfil its constitutional duty and ensure justice. (*Daily Sangar*, [13 May 2026](#))

'IRAN VERY MUCH UNDER CONTROL,' TRUMP ASSERTS AHEAD OF CHINA TRIP



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