

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

15 May 2026

Security

- ◆ **Pak Nuclear Assets For Self-Defence, Not Offence**— Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** reaffirmed that Pakistan’s nuclear programme is **solely for self-defence, not offence**, stressing that the world recognises Pakistan as a responsible nuclear power. Paying tribute to **Zulfikar Ali Bhutto** as founder and **Nawaz Sharif** for conducting nuclear tests, he said 28 May would forever mark Pakistan’s emergence as a nuclear power “Our valiant armed forces taught the enemy a lesson with great courage and bravery.” He also highlighted sacrifices against terrorism, economic resilience, and announced the **National Population Council** to tackle rapid population growth. (*The News*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan’s Fatah-IV Cruise Missile Test**— The Army Rocket Force Command successfully conducted a training fire of the indigenously developed **Fatah-IV Ground Launched Cruise Missile**, equipped with advanced avionics and navigational aids for **long-range precision targeting**. The exercise aimed to enhance operational efficiency and validate technical parameters for improved accuracy and survivability. Senior officers, scientists and engineers witnessed the test. The **President, Prime Minister, COAS, CDF, Naval Chief and Air Chief** commended the achievement, praising the dedication and technical prowess behind the F-series missile programme. (*The Nation*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **K-P CM Afridi Warns of Foreign Militants** — **Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sohail Afridi** said that “**80 per cent of militants and terrorists operating in the province are foreigners**”, contrasting with earlier years when most were locals. He blamed unrest on a lack of seriousness by the establishment but insisted peace could be restored through negotiations if backed by the federal government and security forces. Afridi highlighted **\$10bn trade losses** from border closures, urged respectful repatriation of Afghan refugees, and confirmed CTD progress in the **Mufti Sheikh Idress** investigation. (*The Express Tribune*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Summary of TTP Operations: 14 May 2026**: On 14 May 2026 (27 Dhul-Qa'dah 1447 AH), Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) conducted 10 operations across four provinces, targeting military posts, checkpoints, and scouts. The attacks—including a major suicide bombing in Bajaur, guerrilla ambushes, sniper fire, and mortar shelling—resulted in numerous security force casualties. Notably, a high-casualty suicide attack struck the Damangi Scouts in Bajaur. Additionally, a police constable injured in an April 22 bombing in Charsadda succumbed to his wounds. (*The Telegram*, [15 May 2026](#))

Operations Breakdown

District	Area	Target / Location	Attack Type	Reported Outcome
South Waziristan	Azam Warsak	Sarki Khel Post	Guerrilla attack	Suspected casualties
	Tiarza	Karwan Manza Posts	Guerrilla attack	1 killed, 2 injured
	Sararogha	Khojak Sar Posts	Guerrilla attack	Suspected casualties
Bajaur	Loi Mamond	Damangi Scouts	Suicide attack	Dozens killed; weapons seized
	Riyasat	Inayat Killi Bazaar Scouts	Mortar attack	Casualties reported
	Wara Mamond	Chaptara Post (Dama Dola)	Mortar attack	Casualties reported
Khyber	Tirah Maidan	Akakhel Shadaloo	2 Sniper attacks	2 soldiers killed
Dera Ismail Khan	Kulachi	Rori Camp Military Unit	Ambush/Attack	Casualties reported
	Prova	Kahvi Bahara Military Fort	Mortar attack	Fatalities reported

Economy

- ◆ **SIFC Reform to Streamline Investment**— Secretary **Jamil Ahmad Qureshi** said Chinese and Gulf investors had stressed faster approvals, policy continuity and dispute resolution, adding that a stronger **Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC)** directly addresses these concerns. He criticised campaigns against merging the **Board of Investment (BoI)** into SIFC, noting BoI’s “suboptimal performance” and failure to resolve investor grievances. The merger aims to create a centralised “**single-window**” investment architecture, crucial for **CPEC Phase-II**. Qureshi emphasised that reforms mark a shift from slow procedural governance to execution-based economic management. (*The News*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan’s First Panda Bond Oversubscribed**—Adviser **Khurram Schehzad** announced Pakistan’s debut in China’s onshore capital market with a **US\$250m Panda Bond**, a 3-year fixed-rate instrument denominated in RMB. The issuance of RMB 1.75bn drew overwhelming demand of RMB 8.8bn, oversubscribed more than five times. Schehzad noted demand exceeded Pakistan’s planned programme size, reflecting **growing investor confidence in Pakistan’s reform trajectory**. The bond priced at a competitive 2.5% coupon, signalling recognition of Pakistan’s improving fiscal discipline and external stability. He called it a milestone in Pakistan-China financial cooperation. (*The News*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Government Spending Driven by Immunisation Allocation**— The Finance Division reported that federal **non-employee-related expenditure rose 18%** in the first nine months of FY2025-26, largely due to allocations for the **Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI)**. Civil government expenditure reached Rs629bn, with Rs427bn employee-related (up 10%) and Rs202bn non-employee-related. Of the Rs31bn increase in non-employee spending, Rs29bn was earmarked for

EPI, leaving only Rs2bn as actual operational growth. The Division stressed that presenting figures without highlighting public welfare allocations gives an incomplete picture. (*The Nation*, [15 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Korea Backs Pakistan's Textile Future**— The **Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)** held a groundbreaking ceremony at **National Textile University (NTU), Faisalabad**, for the **Pak-Korea Technical Textile Centre (PKTC)**. The project, funded through Korea's ODA, aims to strengthen Pakistan's textile sector by diversifying into high-value industrial textiles. PKTC will house labs, composite non-woven fabric systems, and academic facilities, integrating research and production. **Prof Dr Rashid Masood** hailed it as a turning point for R&D and skilled workforce development, while **Je Ho Yeon** emphasised its role in fostering innovation and bilateral cooperation. (*The Nation*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan's Forex Position Shows Gradual Improvement**—Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves held by the **State Bank of Pakistan (SBP)** rose by **\$17m to \$15.867bn** during the week ending 8 May. Total liquid reserves increased by \$43m to \$21.337bn, with commercial banks' reserves up \$27m to \$5.469bn. The SBP noted IMF inflows of \$1.3bn will be reflected in next week's data, pushing reserves above \$17bn, enough to cover three months of imports. Despite debt repayments, reserves continue to grow. Pakistan also raised **RMB 1.75bn (\$250m)** through its inaugural **Panda Bond**. (*The News*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Business Forum Urges Federal Control of Key Sectors**—The **Pakistan Business Forum (PBF)** has called for agriculture and industry to be restored to federal policymaking under the proposed **28th Constitutional Amendment**, arguing that the **18th Amendment "did not produce the desired outcomes."** In a letter to political parties, PBF President **Khawaja Mehboobur Rehman** stressed the need for consistency in economic policy to boost investor confidence and long-term growth. The body highlighted declining cotton output and wheat sector challenges, urging constitutional safeguards for fiscal discipline, currency stability and coordinated national economic governance. (*Dawn*, [14 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **IMF Flags Gulf Exposure as Pakistan's Key Risk**—The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, after releasing a \$1.1bn tranche, identified Pakistan's reliance on the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** as its most acute external vulnerability. With **81% of fuel imports** and **55% of remittances (equivalent to 9% of GDP)** tied to GCC economies, the Fund warned that disruptions could severely impact financing and balance of payments. It projected slower GDP growth and higher inflation due to the Iran war. The IMF also stressed Pakistan must provide a clear roadmap for transition to an **interest-free banking system**. (*Dawn*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Investment-to-GDP Ratio Stagnates at 14.4%**—Pakistan's **investment-to-GDP ratio remained stagnant at 14.4%**, missing the 14.7% target, while savings fell to 14%. Despite efforts to attract non-debt foreign inflows, the government relied heavily on loans as exports dropped over 6%. The **Special Investment Facilitation Council** failed to secure foreign investment, and the **Sovereign Wealth Fund** remained dormant due to IMF objections. Private investment rose modestly, with notable growth in **construction (+60%), ITC (+110%), and hotels (+12.8%)**. Public sector investment surged in **manufacturing (+97%) and transport (+51.2%)**. (*The Express Tribune*, [15 May 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Pakistan Welcomes Indian Voices for Dialogue**—At the weekly briefing, Foreign Office Spokesperson **Tahir Andrabi** hailed calls from India for talks as “**a positive development**”, expressing hope that “sanity will prevail” and warmongering will fade. RSS leader **Dattatreya Hosabale** urged keeping dialogue open, while **Shashi Tharoor** wrote, “*For India-Pak peace is not weakness, dialogue is not defeat.*” Pakistan also welcomed Australia’s designation of BLA as a terrorist entity, clarified defence ties with Gulf states, and reaffirmed mediation efforts with China and Iran. Andrabi stressed Pakistan’s vigilance on ‘IIOJK’ and piracy cases. (*The News*, [15 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **NEPRA Approves Extra Power from Iran**—The **National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA)** has approved procurement of an additional **100MW of electricity from Iran**, alongside tariff approval for the existing 104MW supply. Payments will be made in US dollars, linked to **OPEC’s crude oil basket price**, with a take-or-pay clause of 15 million kWh per month. Amendments 07–09 to the agreement outline tariff ranges between **6.1–9.5 US cents/kWh** and **12.40 US cents/kWh** for new supply via the Polan-Jiwani line. The decision awaits federal notification in the Gazette. (*The Nation*, [15 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Positive Signals** —The **Editorial** notes that recent remarks by RSS leader **Dattatreya Hosabale** and former Indian Army chief **Manoj Naravane** urging dialogue with Pakistan are significant, given their institutional influence. **The piece argues that years of hostility, diplomatic downgrading and militarised rhetoric have deepened mistrust between two nuclear neighbours rather than ensuring stability.** While scepticism over India’s intentions remains, the editorial stresses that “**dialogue, however tentative, remains preferable to silence**” and urges both states to move beyond perpetual enmity towards sustainable peace. (*The News International*, [15 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Russia Deepens Ties with Taliban** —**Russia**, which last year became the first country to formally recognise the Taliban government, is now building a “**full-fledged partnership**” with Afghanistan’s rulers, according to **Sergei Shoigu**, Secretary of Russia’s Security Council. He said Moscow was pursuing a “**pragmatic dialogue**” with the Taliban, covering security, trade, culture and humanitarian support, and encouraged regional states to expand cooperation with Kabul. Russia frames this engagement as vital for regional stability and development, though the Taliban’s rule has been widely criticised for human rights abuses. (*The Express Tribune*, [15 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan and Vietnam Explore PTA for Trade Expansion** —During a visit to the **Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI)**, **Vietnamese Ambassador Pham Anh Tuan** highlighted Karachi’s potential as a regional trade hub amid global supply chain disruptions. He noted that Vietnam remains one of Asia’s fastest-growing economies, while bilateral trade with Pakistan stands at **\$850m, far below potential**. Both countries are negotiating a **preferential trade agreement (PTA)** to reduce tariffs on over 100 product lines to zero. The ambassador invited KCCI to send a trade delegation to Vietnam for investment and joint ventures. (*The Express Tribune*, [15 May 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **Azerbaijan Offers Judicial Cooperation to Pakistan**— Azerbaijan’s Minister of Justice **Farid Ahmadov** met **Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan**, Chief Justice of the Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan, and **Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarrar**, to discuss judicial cooperation, legal assistance and court modernisation. Ahmadov praised the FCCP’s progress in six months and offered **technical assistance in AI integration and digitalisation of judicial processes**. Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan welcomed the proposal, stressing international collaboration for efficiency and accessibility. Later, Ahmadov met **Chief Justice Yahya Afridi**, with both sides reaffirming commitment to deepen judicial ties. (*The Nation*, [15 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan to Counter Anti-Peace Disinformation**— Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting **Attaullah Tarar** said Pakistan will expose a **“coordinated negative information campaign”** launched from outside the country to discredit its peace efforts. In a post on X, he stressed the propaganda relied on unnamed sources and reflected the frustration of those “weary of peace.” Tarar noted that credible domestic media and fact-check forums had already debunked the misinformation, adding that detractors of peace oppose Pakistan’s role in eliminating terrorism and promoting regional stability. (*The Nation*, [15 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Aleema Khan Challenges Imran’s Solitary Confinement**— **Aleema Khan**, sister of PTI founder **Imran Khan**, filed a writ petition in the Islamabad High Court against his prolonged solitary confinement at Adiala Jail, terming it **“illegal, devoid of lawful authority, and amounting to inhuman and degrading treatment.”** Filed through Barristers Salman Safdar and Salman Akram Raja, the petition argued no court had sentenced Imran to solitary confinement, citing **Pakistan Penal Code Section 73** and **Pakistan Prisons Rules, 1978**. It alleged his health, particularly eyesight, has deteriorated, and invoked **UN Nelson Mandela Rules** prohibiting indefinite isolation. (*The Nation*, [15 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **Rising Population Sparks Concern in Pakistan** —A special awareness session under the **Chief Minister’s Population Management and Family Planning Programme** was held at Government Associate College for Women, Muzaffargarh, led by **Dr Fayyaz Gopang** and **Ms Farzana Kausar**. Speakers warned that Pakistan’s **population growth rate of 2.55% could double the population in 30 years**, straining education, healthcare, housing and employment. **Muhammad Nasir** stressed female education’s role in tackling the issue and urged collective responsibility for family planning. Students were mobilised to raise awareness and promote socio-economic balance. (*The Nation*, [15 May 2026](#))

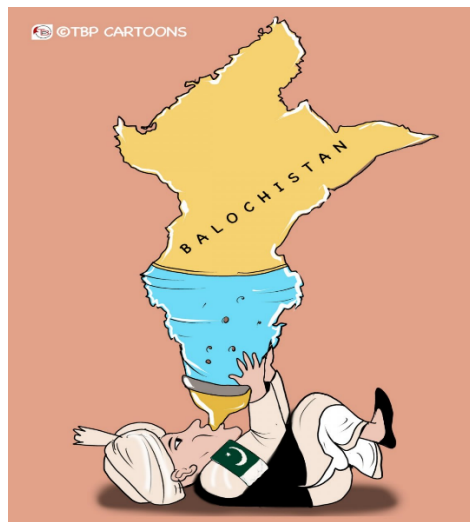
- ◆ **Opposition Raises Alarm Over Deportations from UAE** —In the National Assembly, opposition members claimed **thousands of Pakistanis have been deported from the UAE in recent weeks**. PTI-backed **Shehryar Afridi** urged mediation to resolve tensions, warning that overseas Pakistanis contribute significantly to remittances. **Sher Afzal Marwat** alleged 18,000 deportations, particularly of a certain sect, while **Sahibzada Sibghatullah** said Pakistanis face arrests and inhuman treatment despite legal documents. The matter was referred to the **Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs**. (*The News*, [15 May 2026](#))

- ◆ **PPP Yet to Be Consulted on Constitutional Amendment** —Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari stated that the PPP has not been approached by the PML-N-led government regarding reports of a fresh constitutional amendment, including the **28th Amendment**. He emphasised that **“it is not possible for the federal government to pass legislation, including the budget, without the PPP’s support”** and recalled the party’s role in safeguarding provincial rights through the **26th and 27th Amendments**. Bilawal warned PPP could reconsider its support if promises are not honoured, while also demanding relief for inflation-hit citizens in the upcoming budget. (*Dawn*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **PPP Constitutes Board for ‘AJK’ Polls** —The **Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)** has formed a 10-member parliamentary board to finalise tickets for the upcoming **‘Azad’ Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) elections**. The board includes **Faryal Talpur, Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin, ‘AJK’ Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, and Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar**, among others. PPP Chairman **Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari** emphasised that **“the promises we made to the Kashmiri people are a trust, and we do not betray that trust”**, directing expedited preparations. The move follows similar boards by PML-N and PTI. (*Dawn*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **‘AJK’ Election Commission Flags Errors in Voter Lists** —The **‘Azad’ Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Election Commission** admitted that preliminary electoral rolls for the 2026 legislative assembly elections still contain **“numerous errors”**, despite earlier claims of 90% rectification. Complaints include missing votes and transfers across districts. A high-level committee led by the **Deputy Commissioner of Bagh** was formed to investigate, while the **Chief Election Commissioner retired Justice Ghulam Mustafa Mughal** met NADRA officials, confirming the issues. The Commission pledged corrections under the **Election Act 2020** and reiterated its commitment to **“free and transparent elections.”** (*Dawn*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **Push Grows for Effective Minority Rights Commission in Pakistan** —Lawmakers from religious minorities, civil society and legal experts have demanded swift operationalisation of the **National Commission for Minority Rights (NCMR)** by framing rules that reflect the spirit of the **NCMR Act, 2025**. At a two-day forum organised by TDEA, participants stressed that **timely implementation is essential to safeguard rights of faith-based communities**. **EU Ambassador Raimundas Karoblis** welcomed the law but emphasised effective implementation and autonomy. **Minister Kesoo Mal Kheal Das** pledged the commission’s establishment within two months, while provincial leaders highlighted coordination and scrutiny. (*Dawn*, [15 May 2026](#))
- ◆ **BSO Condemns Biased Education Policies in Balochistan** —The **Baloch Students Organization (BSO) Shaal Zone** has denounced the **Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education** for favouring elite institutions while marginalising students from backward and rural areas. In a statement, BSO said the recent matriculation results prove the system is run under **“class bias, patronage culture and specific institutions instead of merit, equality and justice.”** It accused authorities of systematically pushing Baloch students out of the educational race, warning that such exploitation deepens deprivation and fuels unrest. The group vowed continued resistance for **education, equality and justice**. (*Daily Sangar*, [14 May 2026](#))

POPULATION MAY HIT 390M BY 2050: OFFICIAL REPORT



CENTRE, KP ON 'SAME PAGE' ON TERRORISM: ASIF



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