

DAILY PAKISTAN WATCH

19-21 September 2026

Security

- ◆ **RAW-Taliban nexus behind proxy attacks** — Pakistani intelligence officials claim that a classified document reveals a coordinated network linking India's RAW, Afghanistan's intelligence apparatus and senior Taliban figures with militant groups operating against Pakistan. **The dossier alleges that the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) received training, financing and logistical support through Afghan territory.** It further describes a series of meetings in 2026 involving Taliban officials, militant commanders and alleged RAW representatives, leading to coordinated operations in Balochistan. **The most striking allegation is that (TTP and AQIS fighters carried out attacks later claimed by the BLA), obscuring the role of internationally designated groups.** (*The News*, [19 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Kohat Mosque Attack Claims 21 Lives** — At least 21 people, including 15 police personnel, were martyred and more than 100 injured in a suicide bombing and armed assault on the Old Police Lines mosque in Kohat during Friday prayers. **The attack began when an explosives-laden vehicle struck the mosque compound, followed by militants opening fire inside the Police Lines.** Security forces killed six attackers after a prolonged operation. Among the victims were senior police officers and civilians, including noted physician Dr Israel Khan Orakzai. **Inspector General of Police Zulfiqar Hamid vowed that “every drop of the martyrs’ blood would be accounted for”, while officials and foreign governments strongly condemned the attack.** (*The News*, [19 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Makkah Defence Pact Faces First Major Test Amid Saudi-Houthi Escalation** — Mohammed al-Bukhaiti, member of the Houthi Political Bureau, warned Pakistan and Türkiye against joining any Saudi-led military action in Yemen, stating that **the Houthis would respond forcefully if either country became militarily involved under the recently signed Makkah Joint Defence Agreement.** The warning followed remarks by Hakan Fidan, Turkish Foreign Minister, who said Türkiye was prepared to meet Saudi Arabia's military requirements under the pact. **The agreement treats an attack on one member as an attack on all three signatories: Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Türkiye.** The developments come amid intensified Houthi missile and drone attacks on Saudi targets, raising concerns over regional security, energy supplies and international shipping. (*The Nation*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Six Security Personnel killed in action as Forces Kill Eight Militants in Hangu Operation** — The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) reported that **two Pakistan Army officers, Captain Abuzar Farooq and Lieutenant Sheraz Babar, along with four soldiers, were killed during an exchange of fire with militants in Hangu district.** The military said **security forces killed eight militants during the engagement and launched a sanitisation operation to clear the area of remaining threats.** President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif paid tribute to

the fallen personnel and reaffirmed the government's commitment to continuing counter-terrorism operations under “Azm-e-Istehkam” until militancy is eradicated. (*The News*, [21 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **Naval Chief Reviews Maritime Readiness During SEASPARK 2026** — Admiral Naveed Ashraf, Chief of the Naval Staff, visited naval units at sea and in the Creeks Area to assess progress in Exercise SEASPARK 2026, the Pakistan Navy's biennial exercise designed to rehearse the full spectrum of maritime operations and test operational preparedness. According to the ISPR, the exercise focuses on rapid transition from peacetime to wartime operations and incorporates modern warfare concepts, including **Operations in the Information Environment, Multi-Domain Operations and the extensive use of unmanned systems**. During interactions with participating personnel, the Naval Chief commended their professionalism, high morale, operational readiness and determination to remain (“**invincible at sea**”). (*The Nation*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Kohat Bombing Investigation Highlights Cross-Border Security Concerns** — Security sources stated that one of the suicide bombers involved in the Kohat police mosque attack has been identified as **Matiullah, an Afghan national, while investigations continue to identify the second attacker**. According to the sources, the development reinforces Pakistan's longstanding concerns regarding the use of Afghan territory for planning and launching attacks inside Pakistan. **The sources also cited recent counterterrorism operations and infiltration attempts along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, arguing that multiple militant organisations remain active across the border**. Referring to international assessments, the sources maintained that **UN and other reports have highlighted the presence of terrorist groups in Afghanistan**, raising concerns over regional security and cross-border terrorism. (*The Nation*, [20 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **KP Chief Minister Advocates New Strategy to Combat Terrorism** — Muhammad Sohail Afridi, Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, called for a fundamental shift in Pakistan's anti-terrorism policy, arguing that **the approach followed for the past 22 years has failed to deliver lasting peace and should be replaced with a more effective strategy**. Speaking during a visit to Kohat after the recent terrorist attack, he paid tribute to martyred police personnel and civilians, while highlighting the province's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. (“**If a policy is not delivering results and is continuously failing, there is a need to shift the policy**”), he said, claiming a revised policy could restore peace within 100 days. He also announced support for victims' families, healthcare upgrades and enhanced policing facilities in Kohat. (*The Nation*, [20 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Need for Sustained Security Operations and Long-Term Stability** — The editorial argues that recent counterterrorism successes in Kohat, Panjgur and Chagai demonstrate the state's growing operational effectiveness and commitment to defeating militancy. **The editorial contends that intelligence-led operations have shifted the security strategy from reactive responses to a proactive effort aimed at dismantling militant networks and preventing future attacks**. It maintains that decisive action is essential to counter insurgency and external attempts to destabilise the country. (“**The capability to protect the state is not merely a claim, but a demonstrated reality**”). The piece concludes that security gains must be reinforced through socio-economic development so that **tactical victories translate into lasting national stability and peace**. (*The Nation*, [20 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Dialogue is essential to Preserve Strategic Stability in South Asia** — The editorial argues that growing regional tensions and the erosion of arms-control frameworks are increasing risks to

strategic stability in South Asia. Referring to remarks by Lt Gen (retd) Mazhar Jamil, adviser to the National Command Authority, the editorial highlights concerns about shrinking diplomatic space and emphasises that (“there was no space for war between two nuclear states”). It criticises what it describes as increasingly inflammatory rhetoric from Indian political and military figures, warning that such language undermines regional peace. **The editorial calls for renewed military-to-military contacts, diplomatic engagement and Track II dialogue to reduce mistrust, manage tensions and prevent escalation between Pakistan and India.** (*Dawn*, [21 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **India’s Emerging Underwater Surveillance Strategy** — Zaeem Mehmood, Faculty Member at DHA Suffa University and PhD Scholar at Greenwich University, Karachi, argues that India’s proposed Underwater Fibre Optic Sensing System (UFOSS) reflects a strategic approach similar to the United States’ Cold War-era SOSUS network. **The writer contends that persistent seabed sensors, combined with anti-submarine warfare assets, could improve India’s ability to detect, track and analyse submarine activity in key areas of the Indian Ocean.** He notes that the system could have implications for Chinese and Pakistani submarines, including Pakistan’s Hangor programme, while also affecting broader regional strategic stability. (“**Persistent sensing progressively reduced uncertainty**”), he argues, adding that UFOSS may intensify the ongoing contest between submarine detection and concealment. (*The Express Tribune*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Judicial Commission Seeks Seminary Records in Mangi Dam Terror Attack Investigation** — Justice Muhammad Amir Nawaz Rana, head of the judicial commission probing the Ziarat Mangi Dam terrorist attack, directed Balochistan authorities to provide a fully verified district-wise record of all registered religious seminaries in the province. **The commission also sought detailed information on seminary registration procedures, verification mechanisms, funding sources and monitoring arrangements, while summoning the Directorate General of Religious Education’s in-charge officer for the next hearing.** Concerns over delayed compensation for victims’ families were also discussed, with officials instructed to expedite pending payments. **Additionally, video footage and an FIR related to the loss of a martyred constable’s belongings were accepted as evidence for further investigation.** (*The Express Tribune*, [20 September 2026](#))

Economy

- ◆ **Pakistan Launches Competitive Electricity Market Reforms** — Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari, Federal Energy Minister, announced Pakistan’s first-ever electricity wheeling auction, offering 400 megawatts of power under the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM), with a further 400 MW planned over the next five years. He said the initiative marked a major shift away from the traditional centralised procurement system, as “**The government is practically moving out of electricity procurement from today.** Under the new framework, power producers and large consumers will be able to trade electricity directly, promoting transparency, competition and efficiency. **The reforms aim to lower energy costs for industry, enhance export competitiveness and eventually provide consumers with greater choice of electricity suppliers.** (*The News*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Government Moves to Boost Wheat Stocks Through Fresh Import Tender** — The Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) has issued an international tender for the purchase of 185,000 metric tonnes of wheat, with bids due by 28 September, as the government seeks to strengthen

domestic wheat stocks despite a near-bumper harvest of 29.6 million tonnes. The move follows concerns over weak procurement and rising flour prices, which have reached as high as Rs150 per kilogram in some parts of the country. **The tender follows an earlier bid process for 750,000 metric tonnes, in which nine bids were deemed technically and financially suitable.** According to the tender conditions, **no bid for less than 60,000 metric tonnes will be accepted.** (*The Nation*, [21 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **Pakistan's Lack of Global Corporate Champions** — Zafar Choudhry, writer and commentator, argues that although Pakistan has produced successful business families across multiple sectors, it has failed to create multinational corporations capable of competing globally. He notes that **“Exports are not entrepreneurship”**, contending that exporting goods differs from building international brands, acquiring foreign companies and investing abroad. Citing Pakistan's limited outward foreign direct investment, he maintains that most local firms remain domestically focused despite their success. **The writer calls on the next generation of business leaders and policymakers to encourage productive overseas investment, global expansion and the creation of internationally competitive Pakistani enterprises.** (*Dawn*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Gilgit-Baltistan's Fiscal Challenges and Growth Prospects** — Syed Haris Ahmed, journalist and commentator, analyses Gilgit-Baltistan's Rs218.845 billion budget for FY2026-27, arguing that the region's key challenge lies not in the budget's size but in its structure. **With development spending of Rs43.97 billion far below non-development expenditure of Rs149.87 billion and tax revenues of only Rs16.98 billion, the region remains heavily dependent on federal support.** The writer notes that tourism, hydropower, agriculture, mining and information technology offer opportunities to expand the economic base, but require sustained investment and institutional capacity. **He argues that recurring federal assistance must be accompanied by productive economic growth to reduce long-term dependence on Islamabad.** (*The Express Tribune*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **GB Police Repel Militant Assault on Remote Checkpost** — Gilgit-Baltistan Police reported that security personnel successfully foiled a terrorist attack on the Sargah Nallah seasonal checkpost, located between Diamer and Ghizer districts. **According to the police spokesperson, around nine militants opened fire on a police party, which responded effectively and prevented the attackers from achieving their objective.** The assailants reportedly escaped by exploiting the difficult mountainous terrain and elevated positions, while all police personnel remained unharmed. **Authorities announced plans to strengthen security arrangements, including relocating the checkpost to a safer location and providing additional personnel, equipment and logistical support.** The police reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining law and order and combating terrorism. (*Dawn*, [20 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Security Personnel's Protest Threatens Polio Campaign in Merged Districts** — Syed Jalal, chairman of the Levies and Khasadar forces' committee, announced that Levies, Khasadar and police personnel in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's merged districts would boycott security duties for the latest polio vaccination campaign until their service-related demands are met. **The protesting personnel cited unresolved issues regarding service structure, seniority, promotions and pension benefits, and have also suspended the registration of FIRs and daily police diary entries as part of their agitation.** The move has raised concerns about arrangements for the immunisation drive.

Protest leaders said demonstrations and boycott measures would continue until the government fulfils its commitments and addresses their longstanding grievances. (*Dawn*, [20 September 2026](#))

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Kenya Eyes Expanded Economic Partnership with Pakistan** — Lt-Gen Peter Mbogo Nijeru (retd), Kenya's High Commissioner to Pakistan, has called for stronger trade relations and increased bilateral commerce between the two countries. Speaking at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he highlighted Kenya's long-standing ties with Pakistan and invited Pakistani investors to explore opportunities in Kenya's industrial and commercial sectors. **He described Kenya as a gateway to East Africa for Pakistani exports, particularly Sialkot's sports goods, surgical instruments, leather products and pharmaceuticals.** The envoy also advocated greater business-to-business engagement and wider cooperation in tourism. **SCCI President Syed Ahtesham Gillani noted that bilateral trade exceeds US\$1 billion, with Kenya serving as Pakistan's largest trading partner in Africa.** (*The News*, [19 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Pakistan, South Korea Move Towards Judicial Partnership** — Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb represented Pakistan's Supreme Court at the 20th Conference of Chief Justices of Asia and the Pacific in Seoul, where judicial leaders discussed challenges related to justice delivery, judicial education and technology. On the sidelines, he held meetings with senior judicial officials from Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea to explore cooperation, institutional exchanges and court modernisation. **A key development was an agreement in principle between the Supreme Courts of Pakistan and South Korea to sign a memorandum of understanding on bilateral judicial cooperation.** The proposed agreement aims to promote judicial exchanges, knowledge-sharing, and capacity building, and is expected to be signed during Pakistan's Chief Justice's forthcoming visit to South Korea. (*The Nation*, [19 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Defence Minister Rebukes Afghan Hostility and Student Solidarity Campaigns** — **Khawaja Asif, Federal Defence Minister**, criticised what he described as persistent anti-Pakistan sentiment among Afghan elements despite decades of refuge and support provided by Pakistan. He alleged that **a significant proportion of terrorists involved in attacks on Pakistan's mosques, schools, markets and security forces were Afghans, and claimed some Afghan elements were aligned with India.** Referring to Pakistani students expressing solidarity with Afghan students, Asif argued that such actions reflected political affiliations rather than humanitarian concerns. **("Do not go so far in your love for a political party that Pakistani blood begins to appear cheap to you"),** he said, urging remembrance of Pakistanis killed in terrorism linked to Afghanistan. (*The Nation*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Turbat Protest Highlights Economic and Security Concerns in Kech** — **Fida Jan Buledi, leader of All Parties Kech**, and other political, business and civil society representatives led a rally in Turbat demanding the restoration of cross-border trade with Iran and an end to restrictions affecting local livelihoods. **Participants also protested against kidnapping for ransom, extortion, enforced disappearances, road blockades and the closure of border crossings.** Speakers argued that cross-border commerce had historically been a vital source of income for local communities and described the continued closure of the border as unacceptable. **The rally's key demands included**

improved law and order, reopening of trade and fuel routes, removal of movement restrictions, and greater space for peaceful political activity. (*Dawn*, [21 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **Iran Signals Conditions for Reopening Strait of Hormuz Amid High-Level Diplomacy** — Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Speaker of the Iranian Parliament and chief negotiator, said Iran had conveyed through mediators its conditions for reopening the Strait of Hormuz, stressing that (“As long as the conditions are not met... and the US commitments are not honoured, it will be impossible... to an open strait”). The remarks came ahead of Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi’s visit to Iran for talks. Iranian officials said their demands include ending the conflict, releasing frozen Iranian funds and lifting the naval blockade. Senior security officials also warned that Iran had strengthened its military capabilities and cautioned that any future confrontation could trigger attacks on US assets and bases in the region. (*Dawn*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Persistent Obstacles in Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations** — Kamran Yousaf, senior foreign affairs correspondent at *The Express Tribune*, argues that renewed mediation efforts by Türkiye and Qatar to ease tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan face a significant challenge following the Kohat mosque attack and Pakistan’s claim that one of the suicide bombers was an Afghan national. The writer notes that despite facilitation attempts by Türkiye, Qatar and China, the core dispute remains unresolved: Pakistan seeks credible and verifiable action against the banned TTP, while the Afghan Taliban deny accusations that Afghan territory is being used for attacks. (“The problem is that unless there is a visible change in Kabul’s approach towards the TTP and other terrorist groups, there is little basis for expecting a major breakthrough”). (*The Express Tribune*, [21 September 2026](#))

Politics, Culture, Etc.

- ◆ **IHC Draws Limits on Political Protests in Capital** — The Islamabad High Court (IHC), in a detailed verdict on a petition concerning Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf’s planned long march, ruled that **no political party, leader, provincial government or public office holder has the lawful right to block roads, highways, interchanges or public spaces leading to Islamabad**. The court emphasised that while peaceful assembly is constitutionally protected, it must not infringe upon citizens’ rights to movement, education, healthcare and business. **The verdict declared that using marches or processions to obstruct the federal capital is “unconstitutional, illegal and unlawful”**. It also directed provincial governments not to use official resources to facilitate such activities. Separately, Interior Minister **Mohsin Naqvi** warned that any violation of the ruling would invite legal consequences. (*The News*, [19 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Political Confrontation Intensifies Ahead of PTI’s Islamabad March** — Junaid Akbar, PTI Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President, warned the government against using force during the party’s planned 27 September protest, stating that **PTI workers would reach Islamabad through multiple routes and would not retreat despite anticipated restrictions and arrests**. He urged nationwide mobilisation and declared **“We will turn Islamabad into Somnath”**, while maintaining that PTI respected state institutions and did not seek to weaken the state. Responding, **Talal Chaudhry, Minister of State for Interior**, described the plan as a “conspiracy”, alleging risks of violence and asserting that **“The right to protest does not give the right to attack”**. He said peaceful protesters

would be protected, but unlawful actions would face strict legal action. (*The Express Tribune*, [21 September 2026](#))

- ◆ **Political Crackdown and Protest Standoff Deepen Before PTI's September 27 March** — Aleema Khan, sister of PTI founder Imran Khan, was detained for 30 days under the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance ahead of PTI's planned Islamabad protest, with authorities citing concerns over public safety and order. PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, TTAP leaders and family members condemned the detention, describing it as political victimisation and demanding her immediate release. Meanwhile, Attaullah Tarar, Information Minister, and Talal Chaudhry, Minister of State for Interior, warned that no violent or unlawful protest activity would be permitted in Islamabad. PTI Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President Junaid Akbar reiterated that party workers would enter the capital through multiple routes and declared that (“This time, it will not happen that we bury our dead and remain silent”). (*The Nation*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Security Agencies Differentiate Between JI and PTI Protest Plans** — A senior security official said authorities do not currently view the planned Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) demonstrations as a coordinated operation, drawing a clear distinction between the two on the basis of their past conduct and potential impact on public order. The official stated that security concerns are significantly higher regarding PTI's planned 27 September march to Islamabad, citing fears of disruption to public life, damage to property and law-and-order complications. While affirming the constitutional right to protest, the official stressed that (“Past practice will not be allowed to be repeated”) and that court orders regarding public roads and government resources would be enforced. (*The News International*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Imran Khan Undergoes Jail Medical Assessment Amid Political Standoff** — Imran Khan, PTI founder and former prime minister, underwent a comprehensive medical examination at Adiala Jail conducted by a special team from the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS). The assessment included checks of his blood pressure, cholesterol levels and eyesight, and was supervised by Dr Arif Khan with assistance from jail medical staff. The examination followed a Supreme Court directive for medical assessment and treatment. Separately, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, PTI Chairman, supported dialogue with the government but observed that (“currently the environment is cold; nothing could be worked out”). He also commented on court directives concerning the use of government resources during PTI's planned protest. (*The Nation*, [21 September 2026](#))
- ◆ **Finance Minister Warns of Heavy Economic Losses from Protests and Sit-ins** — Muhammad Aurangzeb, Finance Minister, warned that long marches, strikes and sit-ins could cost Pakistan's economy approximately Rs120 billion per day, including Rs86 billion in losses to the services sector, Rs25 billion to industry and Rs9 billion to agriculture. He described such disruptions as (“self-inflicted pain”) at a time when the country is transitioning from economic stabilisation to growth. Aurangzeb argued that road blockages and business closures could also reduce government revenues by around Rs17 billion daily and undermine exports, investment and economic confidence. He urged political stakeholders to resolve differences through dialogue to protect Pakistan's hard-earned macroeconomic stability and growth momentum. (*The Express Tribune*, [20 September 2026](#))



[Disclaimer: We do not subscribe to the views expressed by the Pakistani reporters, leaders and commentators, we are making available for perusal by our experts/analysts/policymakers every day. We put it all together in Daily Pakistan Watch (DPW) with a view to acquainting our readers with the prevalent thought process in Pakistan having its bearing on India, with the hope that such effort will help us in devising appropriate policies to deal with Pakistan in a more effective manner. DPW is curated by **Dr. Afroz Khan, Research Fellow, CPS, New Delhi**].