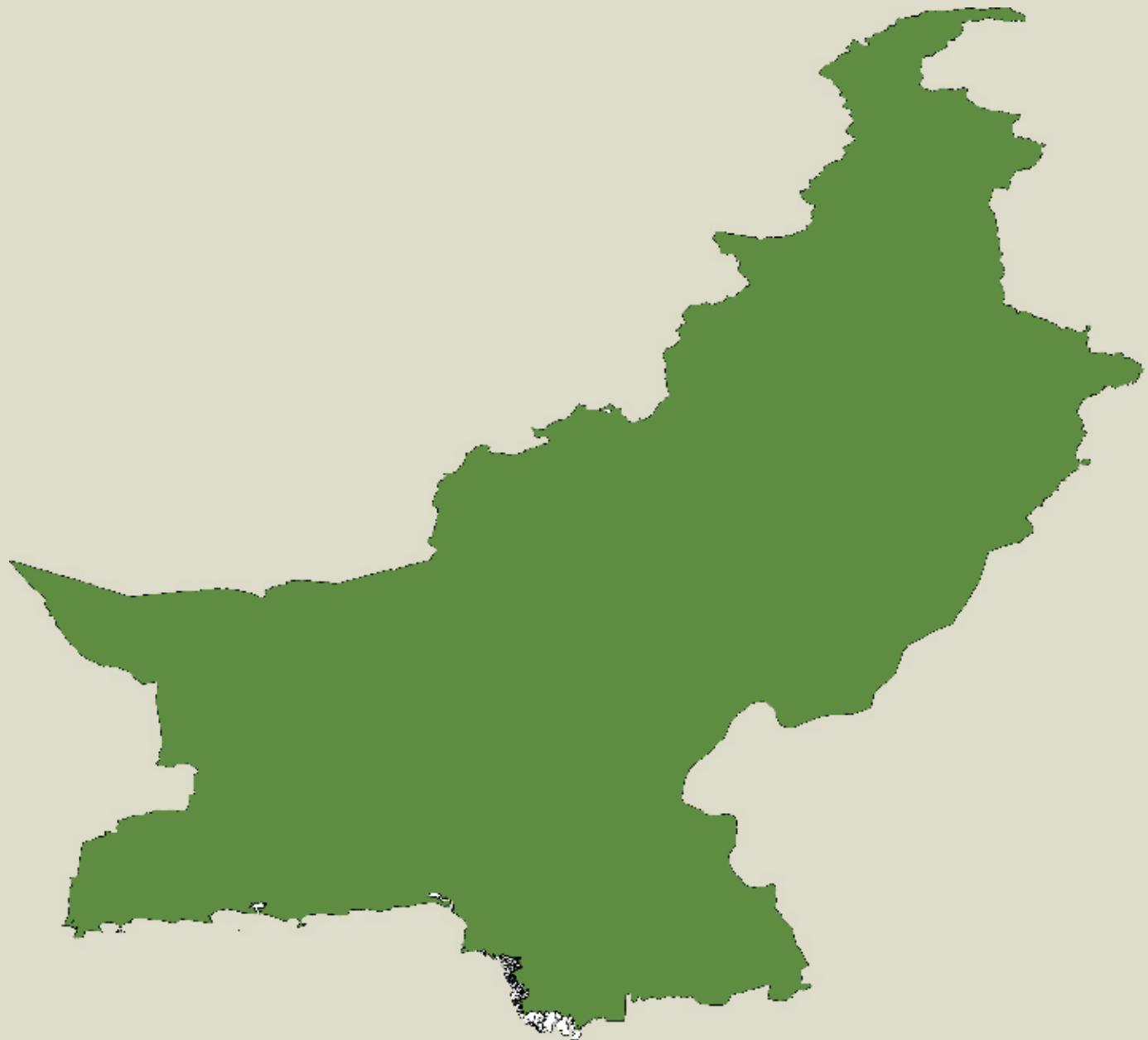


October (16-31) 2016

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



*Prepared by
Dr Ashish Shukla &
Nazir Ahmed
(Research Assistants, Pakistan Project, IDSA)*

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, October (16-31) 2016

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ABBREVIATIONS

- ADB: Asian Development Bank
AIIB: Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ANP: Awami National Party
APC: All Parties Conference
ATC: Anti-Terrorism Court
CPEC: China- Pakistan Economic Corridor
CTD: Counter Terrorism Department
ECP: Election Commission of Pakistan
IED: Improvised Explosive Device
IHC: Islamabad High Court
IMF: International Monetary Fund
ISI: Inter-Services Intelligence
ISPR: Inter Services Public Relations
JI: Jamaat-i-Islami
JuD: Jamat-ul- Dawa
JUI-F Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam (Fazal)
KP: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LHC: Lahore High Court
MQM: Muttahida Qaumi Movement
NAB: National Accountability Bureau
NADRA- National Database and Registration Authority
NAP: National Action Plan
PAT: Pakistan Awami Tehreek
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PPP: Pakistan People's Party
PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
QCG: Quadrilateral Coordination Group
QWP: Qaumi Watan Party
RRG: Rapid Response Group
TTP: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

EDITOR'S NOTE

Although the LoC and international border between India and Pakistan has never been peaceful, ceasefire violations and skirmishes have become very common these days. Hardly any day passes when we do not get the news of two militaries confronting each other. In most of the cases, it is difficult to find out which side provoked and which responded to that provocation. However, the Pakistani newspapers were full of reports of "repeated and unprovoked ceasefire violations" by India. It has become a tendency of blaming Indian armed forces for every minor and major confrontation at the LoC and international border. It appears that the political dispensation in Pakistan is not ready to address India's genuine concerns for peace and stability of the region. Instead of accommodating Indian concerns, the Pakistani leaders solely blame India for everything going wrong in this complex relationship.

The confrontation between the opposition and the government over Panama paper leaks and corruption is continuing with no end in sight. PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto has threatened the ruling PML-N with his announcement of a long march if the government fails to meet his demands by December 27. JI chief Siraj-ul-Haq accused the Pakistani rulers of looting the nation. He even argued that Nawaz Sharif had undermined the nation's ideology and deceived the people of Pakistan. PTI chief Imran Khan went a step further claiming that Nawaz Sharif will be personally responsible if "third power" (understood to be a reference to Pakistan Army) steps in as a result of his upcoming lockdown of Islamabad on November 2, 2016.

Pakistani leadership is heavily relying on the success of CPEC to transform Pakistan's economy. It is believed to be another milestone in the Pakistan-China friendship often described as higher than the highest mountains, deeper than the deepest sea, and sweeter than the sweetest honey of the world. The

Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif argued that Chinese President's vision of One Belt One Road (OBOR) was the vision of peace, development and prosperity of Asia. The ruling dispensation in Islamabad is so obsessed with the project that it refuses to acknowledge the fact that the smaller provinces have some genuine issues at least the way project was being implemented.

Dr Ashish Shukla

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

NATIONAL POLITICS

Non-implementation of NAP challenged in LHC, *The Nation*, October 17¹

Lahore High Court (LHC) has issued notices to federal and provincial governments on a petition filed against non implementation of National Action Plan by the governments. The court took up the case for hearing Monday (October 17). Azhar Siddique counsel for petitioner told the court federal and Punjab governments are not implementing NAP. Implementing NAP is must to rein in terrorism, he added. He alleged that government was indulged in lip service only rather than taking solid steps on implementation of NAP.

Bilawal warns federal govt of long march, *Daily Times*, October 18²

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that if four demands of his party were not met, then a long march will be announced against the federal government on December 27. [...]"A new parliamentary national security committee should be formed," he said, naming his first demand. "Secondly, Pakistan Peoples Party's Panama Bill should be passed in the parliament," he said. Bilawal said that the third demand was that the government should implement Asif Ali Zardari's resolution regarding the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Last but not the least, the Bhutto scion demanded the government appoint a foreign minister immediately. Bilawal was making speeches and addresses at various points in Karachi as part of his 'Salam Shuhuda Rally'.

PM, COAS discuss national, regional security, *The Nation*, October 18³

Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif yesterday called on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and discussed with him matters pertaining to national and regional security with specific reference to the unabated firing by Indian forces at Line of Control (LoC).

'Ruling parties looted nation', *The Dawn*, October 23⁴

Jamaat-i-Islami chief Sirajul Haq on Saturday (October 22) alleged that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had undermined the nation's ideology and also deceived the people. Speaking at his party's two-day congregation held at Azakhel Park, Mr Haq said the ruling parties had looted national wealth and the National Accountability Bureau had failed to hold them accountable for corruption. He demanded that the government merge Fata with Khyber

¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Oct-2016/non-implementation-of-nap-challenged-in-lhc>

² <http://dailymirror.com.pk/pakistan/18-Oct-16/bilawal-warns-federal-govt-of-long-march>

³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Oct-2016/pm-coas-discuss-national-regional-security>

⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1291742/ruling-parties-looted-nation>

Pakhtunkhwa in accordance with the recommendations of a high-level committee. The JI leader also appealed to the Supreme Court to take stern action against corruption.

Nawaz will be responsible if 'third-power' steps in, *The Dawn*, October 24⁵
Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has said that only Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will be responsible if a 'third power' steps in as a result of the PTI's November 2 lockdown of Islamabad. The party has said the upcoming protest is for the premier's 'resignation or accountability' following Panamagate. Speaking to journalists on Sunday (October 23) in Islamabad, the PTI chief said, in a reference to Nawaz Sharif, that only "one person will be responsible if democracy is derailed."

Nawaz must go to Imran to solve crisis, *The Nation*, October 25⁶
Pakistan People's Party leader Senator Rehman Malik yesterday asked Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to surrender and visit Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan's place to unlock the persistent political deadlock. Addressing a news conference here, the former interior minister said Sharif had to do something 'really fast' to dodge a 'national disaster.' "If Sharif visits Imran it won't make a big difference to him but it will make a hell of a difference for the country. The situation can change dramatically and the deadlock can end," he said.

THE PANAMA PAPERS

Govt set to arrest Imran, *The News*, October 20⁷

The federal government has started working on a plan to thwart PTI chief Imran Khan's attempt to 'lockdown' Islamabad on November 2, according to sources. Sources claimed that a list of senior PTI leaders and party workers was being prepared. These key party leaders and workers would be taken into custody and arrested before November 2, when Imran Khan plans to stop the government from functioning. Sources disclosed that it was likely that several key leaders of the PTI as well as party chairman Imran Khan would be placed under house arrest, in order to thwart their efforts to mobilize a huge crowd against the government.

⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1291765/nawaz-will-be-responsible-if-third-power-steps-in-after-protest-imran>

⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Oct-2016/nawaz-must-go-to-imran-to-solve-crisis-malik>

⁷ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/158539-Govt-set-to-arrest-Imran-key-PTI-leaders-before-Islamabad-lockdown>

Notices issued to PM Nawaz, others, *The News*, October 20⁸

The Supreme Court issued notices to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and others in Panama Leaks case. [...]The PTI's plea seeks disqualification of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif but other petitions did not share its prayer. Two of them call for formation of a judicial commission to probe the offshore shells; one opposes this option and the fifth one demands inquiry by investigating agencies against the owners of such companies. The PTI's plea insists on the ouster of the premier, Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and his son-in-law Captain (retd) Safdar.

One million people to join Islamabad protest: Imran, *The Nation*, October 25⁹
Imran Khan believes at least one million people will stand by his party in Islamabad protest on November 2 and no one will be able to stop them. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman addressed to rallies and talked to media to gather maximum public support for his anti-government protest. "*No police can stop one million people," he told participants of a warm-up rally. He said PM Nawaz Sharif had been exposed in the Panama Papers, and he was telling lies to 'hide his corruption' and save his skin.*

PPP to join Islamabad seige: Aitzaz, *The Dawn*, October 25¹⁰

Pakistan Peoples Party leader Aitzaz Ahsan on Monday (October 24) said that although the party was not a part of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's November 2 'lockdown' of Islamabad, it would review its decision if the government resorted to 'torture' of political workers. "We believe that Imran Khan is on the right path," Aitzaz said, adding that the process of accountability should begin with the prime minister and his family. The prime minister has been running away from accountability, he said. The PPP leader claimed Imran Khan's viewpoint is valid and that institutions have not been discharging their duties. "Had the same allegation been levelled against any other party, the government would have taken action much earlier."

Pressure mounts on govt as D-Day draws near, *The Nation*, October 25¹¹

Some interesting developments have begun to take place as the day of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf showdown in capital Islamabad draws near.***The old-ally, Pakistan Awami Tehrik of Dr Tahirul Qadri, has announced joining the November 2 sit-in while the mistrusted ally, Pakistan People's Party, has also begun to send signals it too could join the anti-government protest eventually.***

⁸ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/158606-Panama-Leaks-case-Notices-issued-to-PM-Nawaz-others>

⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Oct-2016/one-million-people-to-join-islamabad-protest-imran>

¹⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1291973>

¹¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Oct-2016/pressure-mounts-on-govt-as-d-day-draws-near>

A rather ominous development however came from within the capital, where the Shuhada Foundation of Lal Masjid cleric Maulana Aziz said it could extend support to PTI for Islamabad lockdown as "the government has crossed its limits in its enmity with Islam and the country".

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

Non bailable arrest warrants for Farooq Sattar, *The Nation*, October 17¹² *Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) has issued non bailable arrest warrants of over 30 accused including MQM founder and Farooq Sattar in the cases of attacks on media houses, violence and treason.* The case pertaining to August 22 media houses attack came up for hearing before ATC Karachi Monday (October 17). [...]The court while declaring over 30 accused including MQM founder, Farooq Sattar and others as absconders issued their non bailable arrest warrants. The court ordered the investigation officer to arrest them and present them before it.

KP govt striving to address main causes of terrorism, *The Nation*, October 18¹³ Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pervez Khattak has said that corruption, economic imbalance and double standard of education were root causes behind terrorism and the provincial government has taken various measures under tripartite plan to address the basic factors leading to the spread of terrorism.

Sattar announces 'Awaami Raabita' campaign, *The Dawn*, October 24¹⁴

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) Pakistan leader Farooq Sattar addressing a press conference in Karachi on Sunday (October 23) announced the party would kick off an 'Awaami Raabita' campaign in the coming week. "*Within the next two days, we will start an 'Awaami Raabita' campaign... Members of parliament, local government representatives will form teams and visit their constituencies and union councils,*" he said. "Small and large meetings will be held... and for 100 days we will run this campaign." "We will also try to solve the problems of Karachi. We will serve the people and solve their problems," he claimed. [...]The MQM leader asked party workers not to be disheartened or lose faith in the party. "MQM Pakistan is registered in the Election Commission of Pakistan under my name," he said. "Workers need not be disheartened. They can depend on MQM Pakistan, it is the only party representing them," he said.

¹² <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Oct-2016/non-bailable-arrest-warrants-for-farooq-sattar-others-issued>

¹³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Oct-2016/kp-govt-striving-to-address-main-causes-of-terrorism-says-khattak>

¹⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1291774/sattar-announces-awaami-raabita-campaign-for-karachi>

EDITORIALS AND OPINION

To The Capital!, Editorial, *The Nation*, October 25¹⁵

[...] *The Shuhada Foundation has also announced its support for PTI's call to shut down the city. While they might not possess real numbers (enough to overthrow a government), they do have the power to gather hundreds of supporters (potentially violent ones at that) from the madaris in and around the twin cities, which is yet another cause for concern for the government and the people of Islamabad.* [...] Imran Khan is stepping up his anti-government rhetoric, which now includes exploiting the civil-military rift. He admits that a potential vacuum can be created, and considering he has no articulated plan to seize power himself, what does he expect to happen? What has always filled in the void that was left by a deposed democratic government? Is the PTI chief really this naïve?

Continuity of the democratic process, Javed Hussain, *The Nation*, October 25¹⁶

[...] There are still some in the country who have not drawn the right lessons from our past experience. [...] Imran Khan's support, voiced in 2014, to the proposal for a government of technocrats to replace a duly elected government, which had completed just one year of its five-year term, was shocking. *It was a thinly veiled attempt to take the country back to military rule. Luckily for the country, that attempt failed thanks mainly to the united front formed by all the other political parties and the admirable conduct of the Chief of the Army Staff, General Raheel Sharif.* The Panama leaks issue has provided Imran Khan and some other disgruntled elements another opportunity to destabilize the current democratically elected government at the Centre irrespective of its consequences for the democratic process or the country which is facing a serious security threat on its eastern border. [...] *Imran Khan needs to learn that democratic continuity is non-negotiable and no issue can justify endangering the democratic process in the country. At the same time, those accused of corruption, irrespective of their position, must be taken to task through due process of law.*

FOREIGN POLICY

China defends Pakistan, *The Express Tribune*, October 17¹⁷

China sprang to long-time ally Pakistan's defense on Monday (October 17) after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi branded Pakistan a "mother-ship of terrorism" at a summit of BRICS nations. Modi's remarks to a meeting of leaders from BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – escalated

¹⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/25-Oct-2016/to-the-capital>

¹⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/columns/25-Oct-2016/continuity-of-the-democratic-process>

¹⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1200928/china-defends-pakistan-modis-mother-ship-terrorism-comment/>

his diplomatic drive to isolate Pakistan, which India accuses of sponsoring cross-border terrorism. [...] *Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying, asked about Modi's comments, said China opposed all forms of terrorism and that the international community should increase counter-terrorism cooperation. "We also oppose the linking of terrorism to any specific country, ethnicity or religion.*

Pakistan, China have a shared future: Nawaz, *The News*, October 19¹⁸

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Wednesday said Pakistan and China have a shared future with their all-weather relationship based upon shared principles and interests. Talking to Chairman Board of Directors Bank of China Tian Guoli at PM House, the prime minister mentioned China's great support to Pakistan in sectors of security trade and infrastructure development.

Pakistan to attend Heart of Asia moot, *The Nation*, October 25¹⁹

Pakistan yesterday confirmed it will attend the Heart of Asia Conference scheduled to be held in India in coming December as the two nations are feeling the heat due to the Line of Control violations almost on a daily basis. The confirmation came weeks after India decided to skip the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation summit in Islamabad – scheduled for November – resulting ultimately in its postponement. India is hosting the upcoming Heart of Asia Conference in Amritsar. One of the 14-member countries of Istanbul Process, India volunteered to host the sixth meeting.

EDITORIALS AND OPINION

BRIC Wall, Editorial, *The Nation*, October 18²⁰

Indian PM Narendra Modi's attempts to isolate Pakistan continue in earnest, even at a summit where Pakistan has no real business being the subject of discussion. *What was supposed to be a conference for the five emerging nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) was used as launchpad for more anti-Pakistan rhetoric in India's latest attempts to win others over in taking a stance against Pakistan. Terming this country the "mothership of terrorism", Modi seems irrationally obsessed.* On the surface it seems like Modi wants war. [...] Russia is playing the same game India is, where the Modi government is cozying up to the US, not caring about the impact on existing alliances, Russia is taking it on a case by case basis too. *There is a reason President Putin neglected to even mention terrorism in his speech to the summit.* [...] The final statement that came out of the summit was also very

¹⁸ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/158365-Pakistan-China-have-a-shared-future-PM-Nawaz>

¹⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Oct-2016/pakistan-to-attend-heart-of-asia-moot-in-india-sartaj>

²⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/18-Oct-2016/bric-wall>

telling; there was no mention of the Uri attack (even though reportedly, Modi wanted it included) and the lack of focus on any specific form of terrorism all but ensured that the Modi narrative was inconsequential.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

Soldiers killed in cross-border firing, The Dawn, October 17²¹

Two security personnel were killed and another one was injured in firing from across the Afghan border in Angor Adda area of South Waziristan tribal region on Sunday (October 16). Sources said that unidentified assailants targeted a checkpost at Angor Adda from the Birmal area in Paktika province of Afghanistan at 9:46am with light and heavy weapons. Two security personnel, Idrees Khan and Arshad, were killed and Naek Saeed was injured.

Rangers powers extended for 90 days, The Nation, October 18²²

Ministry of Interior yesterday extended policing powers of Rangers in Karachi for another 90 days. On the request of Sindh government, the federal ministry issued a notification of powers extension, with effect from October 18, which enables the paramilitary troops to exercise their special powers under Anti Terrorism Act, 1997. The spokesman of the interior ministry said this time matter relating to extension in Rangers' powers in Karachi was settled amicably and through mutual coordination.

Nawaz Sharif master mind behind leakage: Rashid, Daily Times, October 18²³
Chairman Awami Muslim League (AML) Sheikh Rashid has said that the mastermind behind the leakage of controversial news item is Nawaz Sharif. He said this while talking to a private TV channel. Sheikh said that the Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan should resign on his own within 10 days otherwise PM will expel him from the cabinet. He said Nawaz Sharif is "Zinda Pir" of Jati Umrah and he knows well how to mint money. AML leader said that Nawaz himself had given information about Ajmal Kasab and he had already marked journalist Cyril Almeida who has given disputed news item.

General Sir Nicholas calls on General Raheel Sharif, The News, October 19²⁴

General Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter, Chief of General Staff (CGS) UK Army, called on Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif at GHQ on Wednesday (October 19). During the meeting, regional security issues and matters of

²¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1290495/two-soldiers-killed-in-firing-from-across-afghan-border>

²² <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Oct-2016/rangers-powers-extended-for-90-days>

²³ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/18-Oct-16/nawaz-sharif-master-mind-behind-leakage-of-controversial-news-item-sheikh-rashid>

²⁴ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/158350-General-Sir-Nicholas-calls-on-General-Raheel-Sharif>

mutual interest were discussed. The visiting dignitary acknowledged the sacrifices and achievements of Pakistan Army in fight against terrorism and efforts for bringing peace and stability in the region.

Zarb-i-Azb an example of war for peace, The Dawn, October 24²⁵

Terming Zarb-i-Azb an example of war for peace, Chief of Army Staff Gen Raheel Sharif said on Sunday (October 23) that the successful military operation brought stability and prosperity to the country as well as the region. “Today, our brave men can tell the world with pride that by eliminating terrorist networks from the far reaches of Pak-Afghan border, an environment of peace and prosperity is flourishing,” he said, adding: “Having overcome the heartless enemy, we are set to march forward on the road to progress.” The army chief was speaking as the chief guest at the concluding ceremony of the first international Physical Agility and Combat Efficiency System (PACES) Competition.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

A week to remember, Cyril Almeida, The Dawn, October 16²⁶

[...]There was one underestimation on my part. In writing the story, I was aware that a grenade was being dropped in the news cycle. It has since turned out to be a surgical strike followed by a nuclear attack. So do I regret doing it? Not one bit. I have worked for two editors at this paper and from each I have learned a foundational thing about the business of news and analysis in this country of ours. [...]Then came the ECL decision. At that point alarm set it — for personal safety and freedom. Because before the ECL decision it had not even occurred to me that I could be put on the ECL. Once something new, unprecedented and unexpected happens, the old rules can go out the window — and that's where real danger lies. Because then you just don't know if there is a new game and new rules. *It was, I think, a combination of two things that rescued me and rescued me quickly. For all the global coverage, the system here ultimately responds to local concerns. First, and immediately, this paper swung into violent and fierce action. Second, the wider media, battered and fractured by violent convulsions of its own in recent years, mostly united — perhaps as much out of self-preservation than indignation.*

A bone called Almeida, Javaid Iqbal Bhatt, Daily Times, October 18²⁷

[...]First, the flagging of Cyril Almeida as some kind of an intelligence mole who has put national security on risk is amusing, and reflects insecurity that

²⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1291893/zarb-i-azb-an-example-of-war-for-peace-says-army-chief>

²⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1290225/a-week-to-remember>

²⁷ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/18-Oct-16/a-bone-called-almeida>

only nations lacking self-confidence show in times of crisis. [...] The report was as good as over when the PM's office had denied the report and the reporter had stood by the same. By denying the report on one hand and putting the person on ECL, only the faultlines between civil and military institutions have been magnified. [...] *While almost the whole of journalistic community, and even political parties, came to the aid of Dawn staff reporter, there is almost no one in India who can speak for media empowerment at home or in Kashmir. The sermons are meant for others, while silence is routine at home.* Any person daring to speak for freedom of media is immediately subjected to the test of patriotism, and the sword of sedition is hung over his head. Cyril Almeida is another bone on which patriotism of Indians is tested. Say that he proves Pakistan curbs media freedom and you are a good Indian, call him the symbol of media freedom you will wake up to lampoon, and possibly, if stars are ill-aligned, sedition.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

Pakistan economy out of crisis: IMF, *The Nation*, October 25²⁸

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Monday (October 24) painted a mixed picture of Pakistan's economy, saying the country was a better fiscal position now but expressed concern on some serious troubles. Addressing a seminar on "Emerging Markets" in Islamabad, IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde expressed concern that the public debt remains high and perception of corruption deters private investment and impedes efforts to promote sustainable and inclusive growth. Lagarde however said Pakistan was now in a better fiscal position and certainly out of economic crisis.

CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

Western route part of CPEC: Chinese Envoy, *The Dawn*, October 17²⁹

Chinese Ambassador Sun Weidong said on Sunday (October 16) that the passage going through the western part of Pakistan to Gwadar was definitely a part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Speaking at an event held at the Pak-China Friendship Centre to welcome the participants of a car rally arriving from the Chinese region of Ningxia, he said the *CPEC was for Pakistan as a whole with multiple passages and it would bring benefits to all Pakistani people.* "As we see it, all the routes lead to development and prosperity. Under the 'Belt and Road Initiatives', CPEC will make its contribution to reviving the 'Silk Road spirit,'" he added. [...] "Sixteen early harvest projects are under consideration, with total investment of \$13.6 billion and tens of thousands of new jobs have been created for local people." He

²⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Oct-2016/pakistan-economy-out-of-crisis-imf>

²⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1290497/western-route-definitely-part-of-cpec-says-chinese-envoy>

explained that there were three key points of the spirit: openness, inclusiveness and mutual learning, and win-win cooperation. "We will always open our doors to the outside world."

CPEC a great gift of China: Shahbaz, The Nation, October 17³⁰

Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif has said Chinese President's vision of "One Belt, One Road" is the vision of peace, development and prosperity of Asia. He was talking to a Chinese delegation headed by Deputy Governor Wang Heshan of Chinese Province Ningxia, which called on him here on Monday (October 17). Shahbaz said China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project will benefit entire region besides creating thousands of job opportunities. He said, "CPEC is a great gift of China for the people of Pakistan. The mega project will usher in a new era of progress and prosperity." The meeting also agreed to promote cooperation between Punjab government and the Chinese Province Ningxia in agriculture, industry, education, health and tourism sectors.

IMF warns of looming CPEC bill, The Dawn, October 17³¹

GROWING Chinese investments in Pakistan have the potential to lift the economy's potential output, but the repayment obligations that come with this investment will be serious, warns the IMF in its latest and final review of the just concluded programme. "During the investment phase, as the 'early harvest' projects proceed, Pakistan will experience a surge in FDI and other external funding inflows," says the Fund in a short evaluation of the impact of CPEC related investments on Pakistan. However, the import requirements of these projects "will likely offset a significant share of these inflows, such that the current account deficit would widen" within manageable levels during these years.

China to get cloaw with Iran through CPEC: Envoy, The Nation, October 17³²

China's Ambassador to Pakistan Sun Weidong on Monday (October 17) said China is looking forward to enhance its cooperation with Iran through China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project (CPEC). In an exclusive interview with IRNA, Weidong said if Iran joins the CPEC it would be win-win cooperation for both China and Iran. Iran had shown willingness to become part of the CPEC in a meeting between President Hassan Rouhani and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in New York on the sidelines of the latest session of the United Nations General Assembly. [...]Sun Weidong added that China shares very good relations with Iran. "We think that Iran can also be a very important

³⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Oct-2016/cpec-a-great-gift-of-china-for-pakistan-shahbaz>

³¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1290523/imf-warns-of-looming-cpec-bill>

³² <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Oct-2016/china-to-enhance-cooperation-with-iran-through-cpec-envoy>

country along the Belt and the Road initiative, so we really look forward to enhance our cooperation with Iran." "CPEC is a win-win cooperation so we are looking forward to explore the possibilities of cooperation among the all the regional countries," said the ambassador.

India conspiring against CPEC: Birjees, *The Nation*, October 17³³

Federal Kashmir Affairs Minister Barjees Tahir has said India does not want the CPEC to be completed, so it was employing every means through 'RAW' to foil this project which is very vital for the economic development of the country. Addressing the Lahore High Court Bar Association here yesterday, Barjees Tahir said RAW was fully involved in creating unrest and destabilising Pakistan to stop the country from completing the CPEC. However, he said, the government was fully aware of the Indian designs and how it was acting to achieve its nefarious objectives against the country through RAW. The minister said Indian conspiracies were well in the knowledge of the government which was prepared to foil them.

SECURITY SITUATION

TERRORISM

The Fourth Deception, Editorial, *The Nation*, October 25³⁴

The mysterious 'Fourth Schedule' is back in the news again; but unfortunately, the news does nothing to assure the population of the government's 'tough on terror' narrative. *Two days after the Interior Minister – publicly and somewhat embarrassingly – buckled under pressure from the Difa-e-Pakistan Council (DPC) to say that fourth schedule cannot be stripped of citizenship rights, the government has decided to strip other financial rights for the estimated 4000 people on the list.* Not much of a victory for the DPC, and definitely against the spirit of the 'deal' made previously. *Is the government really gambling on the Islamabad lockdown? Initially it seems so; a spokesperson for the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) SBP Sunday said the bank had frozen more than 4,000 bank accounts on the request of the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA). Give them back their CNICs, take away financial services – balance restored, and the government can puff its chest once again.*

BALOCHISTAN

Three civilians allegedly killed in firing, *Times of India*, October 17³⁵

Three civilians have been allegedly killed by indiscriminate firing by Pakistan forces in Balochistan's Nasirabad district, Times Now reported on Monday

³³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Oct-2016/india-conspiring-against-cpec-birjees>

³⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/25-Oct-2016/the-fourth-deception>

³⁵ <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/three-civilians-allegedly-killed-in-firing-by-pakistan-forces-in-balochistan/articleshow/54901621.cms>

(October 17) citing sources. Earlier today, the Baloch Republican Party (BRP) alleged that bombarding by choppers had killed one Baloch civilian - Lalu Bugti. Several others had been abducted, it added. "Pakistani forces launched military operations in Chattar, Sherani, Hoti, and adjacent areas of Nasirabad...Helicopters have indiscriminately bombarded the area, killing an innocent Baloch civilian," the party's spokesperson Sher Mohammed Bugti was quoted as saying by ANI. Pakistan forces had also "conduct(ed) military operations in (the) Goburd area of Mand, Balochistan, and abducted many Baloch people," he said.

[**Note:** Since Pakistani media does not cover Balochistan in details, we are culling out information from other sources as well]

Two suspects killed in Nasirabad operation, *Daily Times*, October 18³⁶

Frontier Corps (FC) shot dead two suspects in combing operation in Chathar area of Nasirabad district on Monday (October 17). According to FC spokesman, acting on a tip, FC personnel launched combing operation in the area when they opened fire at them. Two suspects were killed in retaliation by FC personnel. The FC spokesman said that they were involved in kidnapping for ransom, attacking on security forces, damaging officials building and extortion. Further investigation is underway.

Terrorists target police centre in Quetta, *The Nation*, October 25³⁷

Around six terrorists yesterday night stormed a police training college in Quetta, prompting a military operation to clear the premises which also houses hundreds of police cadets. Reports said five to six terrorists forced their entry into the hostel from the front gate around 9:30pm and held hostage an unknown number of cadets.

SINDH

Woman, children killed in blast outside shrine, *The Nation*, October 17³⁸

An explosion in Liaquatabad area of the metropolis claimed three lives, including a woman and two children, and injured 10 on Monday (October 17). Sources privy to the police reported that it was a grenade blast while injured locals were being shifted to nearby hospital by rescue teams. The blast took place outside a shrine. Rescue teams reached the scene and shifted the injured to a nearby hospital. Security forces cordoned off the area and launched an investigation into the incident.

³⁶ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/balochistan/18-Oct-16/two-suspects-killed-in-nasirabad-operation>

³⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Oct-2016/terrorists-target-police-centre-in-quetta>

³⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Oct-2016/woman-children-killed-in-blast-outside-shrine-in-karachi>

Karachi police arrest TTP Swat commander, *Daily Times*, October 19³⁹

Karachi police have arrested five suspects including outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Swat commander in Karachi on early Tuesday morning (October 18). According to spokesperson of Inspector General (IG) Sindh police, Sohail Jokhio, Karachi police and Rangers carried out a door to door search operation on Tuesday morning (October 18) in Manghopir area followed by grenade attack on Imambargah in Karachi's Liaquatabad area on Monday (October 17). During the operation police arrested TTP Swat commander Gul Nawab and four others and motorcycles and weapons were also recovered from them. "We conducted a search operation in Manghopir area after receiving information about the presence of criminal elements in the area," SHO Manghopir Ghulam Hussain Korai told Daily Times.

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

India has no moral ground to talk, *The Dawn*, October 17⁴⁰

Adviser to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz on Sunday (October 16) said that India had no moral ground to talk about counter-terrorism efforts and pointing fingers at other states as Indian state sponsored terrorism and terror financing on Pakistani soil has been proven irrefutably. The adviser reacted strongly to Indian Prime Minister Modi's statement that Pakistan is the 'mothership of terrorism' and said that "Modi is misleading his BRICS and BIMSTEC colleagues".

India used Saarc to further its agenda: Rabbani, *The Dawn*, October 17⁴¹

Senate Chairman Raza Rabbani has accused India of using the Saarc platform to further its political agenda against Pakistan. Mr Rabbani called upon the other member states of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) to reassess the role of the association and not to allow any country to monopolise the forum. [...]The Senate chairman emphasised that it would be appropriate for Saarc member states to censure such a move in future.

India committed more than 90 violations in 2016: FO, *The Nation*, October 17⁴²

Foreign Office Spokesperson Nafees Zakria has said that India has committed more than 90 ceasefire violations in 2016. "During 2016, India violated ceasefire more than 90 times. This must stop," he tweeted. Nafees Zakaria said that Pakistan has never violated the ceasefire agreement and that ceasefire violations have always been misreported by Indian media. *He said that almost*

³⁹ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/sindh/19-Oct-16/karachi-police-arrest-ttp-swat-commander>

⁴⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1290459/india-has-no-moral-ground-to-talk-about-counter-terrorism-says-sartaj>

⁴¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1290525/india-used-saarc-to-further-its-agenda-rabbani>

⁴² <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Oct-2016/india-commits-more-than-90-ceasefire-violations-in-2016-fo>

90 per cent reports of Indian media, in connection with the Line of Control (LoC), were false. He said that almost 90 percent news being run by Indian media is misleading, baseless and fake. The Spokesman said that Pakistan believes in a peaceful neighbourhood, and Pakistan had always responded to firing initiated by India at the LoC.

Five cable offices showing Indian content sealed, Daily Times, October 18⁴³

The enforcement team of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) has sealed five cable operator offices in the districts of Khushab and Mianwali for telecasting Indian channels illegally. During an operation against the cable operators involved in telecasting of illegal Direct-To-Home (DTH) service and Indian channels, the teams possessed DTHs and issued warnings. PEMRA Deputy General Manager (DGM) Rana Ahmed Mustafa said that Indian content was being telecast through illegal DTH, Indian channels and In-house channels (CD channels) in violation of the government instructions.

US urges to pursue dialogue, The News, October 19⁴⁴

The United States on Tuesday (October 18) urged both India and Pakistan to pursue dialogues in a bid to reduce tensions in the region. Department of State deputy spokesman Mark Toner addressed a press briefing and said that the USA believed dialogue between India and Pakistan would reduce tensions between the two states. Toner said that the United States had been pressurizing Pakistan to go after and initiate a crackdown against terrorists that seek a safe haven on its soil. The Department of State deputy spokesman further said that USA supported a peace process which was owned by the Afghans and also led by them.

Four Pakistani civilians injured in Indian firing, The News, October 19⁴⁵

Four people including two women and as many children were injured on Wednesday (October 19) as Indian forces opened fire along the Line Of Control (LoC) in violation of the ceasefire agreement. Foreign Office Spokesman Nafees Zakaria said on Twitter that the ceasefire violation was committed by Indian forces in Kerela Sector, which he said "was met by befitting response" from Pakistani forces. In a string of Tweets, the spokesman said a 3-year old girl and a teenage boy sustained injuries in the Indian firing and were shifted to a

⁴³ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/18-Oct-16/five-cable-offices-showing-indian-content-sealed-by-pemra>

⁴⁴ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/158334-US-urges-both-India-and-Pakistan-to-pursue-dialogue>

⁴⁵ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/158369-Four-Pakistani-civilians-injured-in-Indian-firing-along-LoC>

hospital for treatment. He said two women identified as Majeed and Shabnam, residents of Palani village were also injured due to Indian mortar firing. The injured women, he said, were being treated at the Tehseel Headquarters Hospital Nakial.

Two killed, several injured in Indian firing, *The Dawn*, October 24⁴⁶

Two people, including a one-year-old baby, were killed and seven others injured in firing by Indian troops across the Working Boundary, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Monday (October 24). "Due to unprovoked Indian firing at the Working Boundary last night, a civilian Muhammad Latif of village Janglora and a minor Haniya embraced shahadat while seven civilians were injured," the statement said. The ISPR said Pakistan Rangers Punjab responded "befittingly" to Indian firing and shelling in Harpal, Pukhlian and Charwah sectors on the Working Boundary.

Four more lives lost in Pak-India fire, *The Nation*, October 25⁴⁷

Two children and another civilian were killed along with a soldier in firing across the border between India and Pakistan, officials from both sides said yesterday, as tension between the nuclear-armed neighbours simmers. The Pak Army said an 18-month-old girl and another civilian were killed on its side of the border in unprovoked firing by the Indian military. "Due to Indian unprovoked firing last night a civilian, Muhammad Latif of village Janglora, and a minor Haniya, age one and a half, embraced shahadat (martyrdom) while seven civilians were injured," a military statement said. The firing took place across the border between Indian-held Kashmir and Pakistan's Punjab province in the villages of Harpal, Pukhlian and Charwah, the statement said. The deceased Pakistanis were Haniya and Muhammad Latif and the injured were named as Yasmeen Bibi (26), Razia Bibi (45), Babar Hussain (32), Muhammad Kaleem (30), Shakeela Bibi (28), Allah Ditta (35) and Muhammad Bashir (80).

⁴⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1291967/two-killed-several-injured-in-indian-firing-across-working-boundary-isprv>

⁴⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Oct-2016/four-more-lives-lost-in-pak-india-fire>

EXCERPTS FROM URDU MEDIA &
SELECT JIHADI LITERATURE

"India, laton ka bhoot...", Editorial, Ummat, October 22⁴⁸

United Jihad Council (UJC) Chief Sayeed Salahuddin has said that the Kashmir issue will not be resolved by talks; it requires armed struggle. He appealed to Pakistan for military help against India and for arms to the Mujahedeen. *We think that if militarily help is provided to the Mujajideen, Kashmir will not only be freed from Indian control but also the whole map of South Asia will change. This needs to be understood that the Brahmins (Brahman samraj) are not going to understand the language of dialogue.* India has occupied Kashmir militarily, which will not end by politics and talking.

Some peace-loving people talk of peaceful resolution and oppose armed struggle. This is fair in normal conditions. But here is an enemy who has deprived the Kashmiris of their basic rights for last seventy years and has committed untold atrocities on them by giving a free hand to its lakhs of armed personnel. [...] *Great powers always talk about human rights and right to self-determination in case of other countries, but when it comes to Kashmir they start building pressure on India and Pakistan and ask them for holding talks to resolve this issue. The real party to the conflict is neither India nor Pakistan but the Kashmiris. If these countries reach to a solution which is not acceptable to Kashmir, peace cannot prevail in the region.* [...]

In the 1980s Pakistan supported Mujahideen in Afghanistan; the peace of the region did not get disturbed by it nor did any war take place. [...] *Kashmir is anyway an unfinished agenda of 'partition' and Pakistan's jugular vein. If we participate in their struggle, it is quite fair. Not only India, but world's great powers only understand the language of force (laton key bhoot). Pakistan conducted its nuclear tests despite great powers opposing it and they could do nothing. If Pakistan decides to participate in the freedom struggle of Kashmiris, then the countries who ask it for holding talks with India, will become active and force latoon ka bhoot India to start productive talks on Kashmir.*

"India is like a scorpion-bitten monkey", editorial, Ummat, October 28⁴⁹

Under Narendra Modi's leadership Indian aggression and terrorism has crossed all the limits. *If the international community does not control*

⁴⁸ <http://ummat.net/2016/10/22/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

⁴⁹ <http://ummat.net/2016/10/28/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

Narendra Modi, his madness will endanger his country, region and the world.

If this is not fraudulence then what is: till yesterday, a man who was known as the butcher of Gujarat (*Gujarat ka kasai*) and was known for his murder of thousands of Muslims and was not given visa by the US because of his terrorism and ferociousness, has become the Prime Minister of a country that claims to be the largest democracy in the world. [...]

If somebody is really human, he grows more humble when he achieves higher status but if some has no substance, he behaves arrogantly. Modi's example is that of a monkey when he gets some ginger and turmeric, it behaves like a grocer. Because India has the second largest population in the world, for the developed world it is a great market and for that they show respect to the leaders of India. Moreover, at the moment, the whole world is against Muslims. They are ignoring Palestine and Kashmir. India has also adopted a pronounced anti-Muslim stance and these countries consider it good for them. [...] However, Burhan Wani's killing has lent a new spark to the Kashmiri freedom struggle and India has been crushing it with utter force and cruelty. The whole world is criticising India for that.

.....All the Muslim countries, like the OIC, are protesting the atrocities of India in Kashmir. [...] There have been some grievances that the OIC and other Muslim platforms do not speak up for Kashmir. Now if the conscience of the Muslims has awakened and they have passed a resolution in favour of the Kashmiris, then it is their sacred duty. According to one Hadith, the whole Muslim *ummah* is like one body, if there is pain in one part it is felt throughout the body. This was just a resolution passed by the OIC and India has been creating hue and cry over it. *If whole Muslim Ummah starts supporting Kashmir like Palestine, the condition of India will be like a scorpion bitten monkey who jumps everywhere crying and dancing.*

India behind attack on Quetta Police centre, Ausaf, October 26⁵⁰

Whole country is mourning the dead in the Quetta attack (attack on police training centre on October 24 leaving 61 cadets dead and more than 165 others injured). Everyone knows who these attackers were and who controlled them. There is no intelligence required for this that our bloodthirsty (*khoonkhwar*) neighbour has been blabbering for over two months, threatening Pakistan, telling us that it would attack inside Pakistan. Indian media reported consistently that now Ajit Doval has been assigned to carry out attacks inside Pakistan. Keeping all this in view, it is clear that India has orchestrated this attack inside Pakistan. [...]

⁵⁰ http://www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2016-10-26/news/detail14_06.php

It appears that the attack was not to revenge the Uri attack but an attack on the CPEC. The news of some Chinese ships coming to Gwadar Port is now few days old and it has caused enormous pain to our enemy. They wanted to destroy this project and now they cannot digest the fact that it is getting completed. What else can they do?...The media knew about it, however, it is surprising that the police seem clueless about it.

*If the government is apprehensive that naming India would lead to further deterioration of relations with India, then the Army leadership should come forward and invite all the institutions of the country and ask them to behave responsibly.....*It is surprising that after fighting for fifteen years the Quetta police is unable to provide security to itself. It shows that the police cannot handle internal security. The security of Balochistan should be linked to security of the CPEC. Otherwise, the enemy will keep striking at our weak points.

"Full-scale war will lead to India's disintegration", Samiullah Malik, *Daily Ausaf*, October 25⁵¹

After witnessing the '*jangi junoon*' (passion for war) of the Indian leadership, *the Federation of American Scientist (FAS) has come up with a research report that says that a full-blown war between India and Pakistan could end in disintegration of India. This disintegration can happen, apart from Kashmir, in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Khalistan.* This is the reason why India will not go for a full war against any of its neighbors.

[...] It is said in the report that though Indian Army is among the largest forces in the world, it continues to remain mired in the past and is not equipped to face modern challenges. [...] The biggest challenge for India is from growing language, tribal and economic inequalities. *India is yet to comprehend this basic fact that for any enemy it is easy to exploit any internal schism in opponent's country.* Being one of most diverse countries of the world, there are many minority groups who are unhappy and willing to work with outside powers. If India goes for a war, these groups will grab the chance for their independence. [...]

There is problem in Assam, Mizoram, Nagaland, Himachal Pradesh, and Punjab apart from Kashmir. Though the Indian Army suppressed the Punjab movement, according to intelligence reports, the Sikh movement is put as number third as a threat. *Because of all these internal threats, India will never*

⁵¹ http://www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2016-10-25/news/detail_31.php

go for a full war and if it happens, that will end up in the independence of these separatist groups who are waiting for such opportunity.

Right to self-determination only solution to the Kashmir issue, Hafiz Saeed, *Ummat*, October 27⁵²

27 October 1947 is a black day in history. This is the day on which India tried to occupy Kashmir against the wishes of its people. 80% of the people of the Jammu and Kashmir state were Muslims and on the premise of the partition, it should have gone to Pakistan. It is also true that the only representative of the Muslims there, the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference had passed a resolution on 19 July 1947 making it clear that the state would like to go to Pakistan and if that was not accepted, the people of the state would rise against it in revolt. It was the responsibility of the British and India to let the Kashmir to go to Pakistan. [...] ***On 27 October, 2.5 Lakh Muslims were martyred and 5 Lakh were made homeless.*** Though 69 years have passed since this horrible incident, even now the Indian atrocities continue in the Indian Occupied Kashmir.

In 1989, the Kashmiri freedom struggle got a new lease of life. Since then till now 1.25 lakh Muslims have been martyred; 23,000 women have become widows; 107,400 children have become orphans; more than one lakh houses have been burnt and there are 700 graveyards of the martyrs. The latest victim of the Indian atrocities was Burhan Muzaffar Wani. [...] Despite all these atrocities and crimes against them, hats off to the Kashmiris who have continued their struggle. They have never accepted the Indian occupation; neither has their hatred for India decreased nor has their affection for Pakistan been affected. *Though the Kashmiris face 8 Lakh Indian Army of killers, and looters, whose agenda is to eliminate Islam and Muslims from Kashmir and consolidate Indian occupation, Kashmiris are saying "our will gets stronger after every killing".* Therefore, the movement they had started in 1947 continues till today and they have invested everything in that. *They hold Pakistani flags and take bullets on their chests. They get martyred and are buried covered in Pakistani flags.* [...]

Now there are voices inside India against Modi and even in capital New Delhi people are sloganeering against him and his effigies are being burnt. *The European media is saying that now it is impossible for India to retain Kashmir by force. The UN Human Rights Commission has decided to file a case against India in the International Court of Justice.* In such circumstance India should understand that the solution of Kashmir issue is not aggression but only the

⁵² <http://ummat.net/2016/10/27/news.php?p=idr4.gif>

right to self-determination: the same right of self-determination which Nehru had promised in the United Nations. [...] *The ceasefire from Pakistan side in 1948 was a big mistake. But Nehru taking the Kashmir issue to the United Nations made it a disputed issue.* After that it was Pakistan's responsibility to work for Kashmir's independence. Because Kashmir is not only geographical issue but its jugular vein of Pakistan and a do or die issue for them. *This is an issue for which the Kashmiris have given lakhs of lives with this hope that Pakistan will also take up their cause. But reality is that our governments have ignored the issue.....[and] none of our leaders has given importance to the Kashmiris' affection for Pakistan and the sensitivity and significance of the Kashmir issue.*

Today in the whole world 27 October is being remembered as a day of protest, especially in occupied Kashmir and Azad Kashmir against Indian aggression. They are raising full-throated slogans everywhere— *Kashmir bane ga Pakistan* (Kashmir will become Pakistan). *We should understand that on 27 October 1947 India's aggression was not against Kashmir but against Pakistan. This was the first attempt by India to isolate and eliminate Pakistan and it was started by Nehru. The RSS pracharak, Narendra Modi has also threatened to isolate Pakistan which means to snatch away our right to live.*

But isolating Pakistan will remain a fond dream of India. *Because of false claims of surgical strikes, Modi has been isolated and criticised not only in India but also in the whole world. Even in Goa where the BRICS Summit was held, India returned red faced.*

On the contrary, Pakistan's relationship with China is much stronger and military exercise with Russia has been a major development. It is surprising that coward Modi is threatening to attack us. Pakistan is not an aggressive country and doesn't believe in aggression unlike India who began aggression in 1947 itself. In these circumstances, we need to develop unity and consensus in our country and foil the conspiracies of our enemy. Remember, a strong Pakistan is the solution to our problems and guarantor of Kashmir's independence.

"Taliban's Amir okays talks with America", report *Ummat*, October 21⁵³

Taliban's Amir Haibatullah Akhunzade has given green signal for talks with America. The son of late Mullah Omar, Yaqoob and his brother Abdul Manaan will lead the talks from the Taliban side. According to the sources, Mullah Omar's family was given such importance for such talks as per the advice by

⁵³ <http://ummatt.net/2016/10/21/news.php?p=story2.gif>

Siraj-ud-Din Haqqani, the chief military commander and deputy emir of Taliban.

The Taliban's Qatar office spokesperson Engineer Naeem Wardak has been removed because of leakage of news about initial contact between Taliban and US. Former Taliban ambassador to Dubai, Suhail Shaheen, the newly appointed spokesperson, refused to confirm any such dialogue. According to Ummat sources, Haibatullah allowed the talks only after Siraj-ud-Din Haqqani apprised him about his talks with Hizb-e-Islami leaders. Following this there were initial talks between Taliban representatives and American officials in Qatar leading to some forward movement in the dialogue process. This was very much in the knowledge of both Pakistan and China, and Pakistan was involved in the process. However, because of the fact that Pakistan is using the channels offered by Qatar and Turkey— which is a NATO country having good links with the US— in stead of using the Saudi channel, it has possibly irked the Saudis, who have now increased their pressures on Qatar.

Siraj has reportedly told Haibatullah that Mullah Yaqoob, as the son of Mullah Omar, had the support of Taliban commanders and if he would take any big decision like this it would not be opposed by Taliban fighters. Sources say that the Taliban will come out with an important statement which may indicate softening of the Taliban demands pertaining to withdrawal of US forces and imposition of Shariah....

While at the moment there is no meeting ground between Taliban and the US on Al Qaeda related issues, there is a convergence of views between the two on the issue of Da'esh. According to the sources, Siraj-ud-Din Haqqani has told Haibatullah that the talks will have full support of the Haqqani network, but any such decision would only be acceptable to all the Taliban fighters, jihadi leaders and field commanders if Mullah Omar's family is asked to officially lead the talks. According to him, Mullah Umar had a special place in the Taliban struggle and was regarded not only as the head of Taliban or leader of global jihad, but also as one of the greatest spiritual leaders (*Roohani Peshwa*) of our time, and Taliban will not consider it proper to oppose his family, if it leads the talks.

Sources say, the talks will start under the leadership of Mullah Yaqoob and Mullah Abdul Manan, after the presidential election in America.....The Taliban team will also include the chief of the Qatar office Shahbuddian Dilawar, Jan Muhammad and others. Sources also speculate that the talks may also take place outside Qatar in Turkey or Saudi Arabia and incase the talks are held in Saudi Arabia, there is every likelihood of Hizb-e-Islami chief Gulbuddin

Hekmatyar joining the talks. Afghan Chief Executive, Abdullah Abdullah went to Riyadh to obtain Saudi consent for hosting the talks.

Hizb-e-Islami sources told *Ummat* that if Saudi Arabia agrees to host the talks then Pakistan will be more than happy because the Saudis can play a big role in Afghan reconstruction. Moreover, the differences between the Saudis and the Taliban on the issue of Al Qaeda are almost over now. The Saudis had only one condition in the past that the Taliban must sever their connection with Al Qaeda and stop helping them.

At the moment, Saudis are more worried about Daesh than Al Qaeda and are in need of Taliban help to contain Da'esh. It is also reported that Turkey is also quite interested in facilitating talks between Taliban and America. It wants an early solution to the Afghan problem because it has found that some of the Turkish Generals working with NATO forces in Afghanistan are linked to the unsuccessful coup attempt in Turkey in July 2016. Two of these Generals were arrested in Dubai when they flew in there from Bagram airbase in Afghanistan, and they are being touted as the mastermind of the coup plot. According to the sources, Turkey and Saudi Arabia have also talked to each other about resolving the Afghan issue.

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
Chathar ⁵⁴	18/10/2016	Two suspects killed	2	0
KP & FATA				
Faqirabad ⁵⁵	14/10/2016	Policeman gunned down	1	0
Punjab				
D G Khan ⁵⁶	13/10/2016	Eight terrorists killed	8	0
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa				
Tirah ⁵⁷	11/10/2016	Seven militants killed	7	0
Sindh				
Karachi ⁵⁸	17/10/2016	Women, children killed	3	10

⁵⁴ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/balochistan/18-Oct-16/two-suspects-killed-in-nasirabad-operation>

⁵⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1289959/police-officer-gunned-down-in-peshawar>

⁵⁶ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/156916-Eight-terrorists-killed-in-DG-Khan-operation>

⁵⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1289267/seven-suspected-militants-killed-in-tirah-valley-air-strikes>

⁵⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Oct-2016/woman-children-killed-in-blast-outside-shrine-in-karachi>