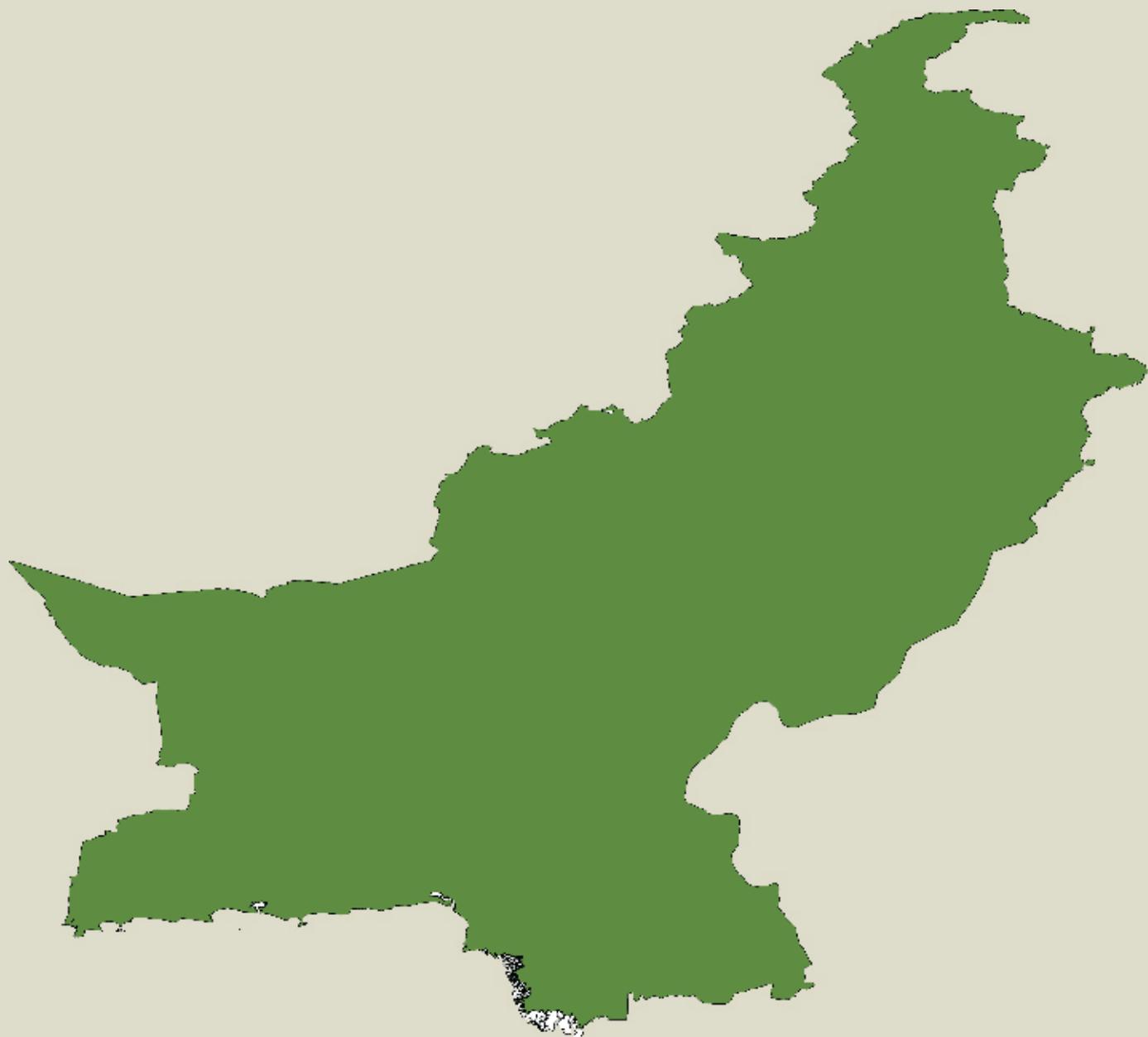


May 2015

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



*Prepared by
Ashish Shukla, Yaqoob ul Hassan
& Manzoor Ahmad Bhat
(Research Assistants, Pakistan Project, IDSA)*

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES
रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, MAY 2015

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ABBREVATIONS

ANP: Awami National Party
APC: All Parties Conference
ATC: Anti-Terrorism Court
BNP: Baluchistan National Party
CPEC: China- Pakistan Economic Corridor
CSF: Coalition Support Fund
ECP: Election Commission of Pakistan
ICBC: Industrial and Commercial Bank of China
IMF: International Monetary Fund
ISI: Inter-Services Intelligence
ISPR: Inter Services Public Relations
JI: Jamaat-i-Islaami
JuD: Jamat-ul- Dawa
KKH: Karakoram Highway
KP: Khyber Pakhthunkhwa
LHC: Lahore High Court's
MQM: Muttahida Qaumi Movement
NAB: National Accountability Bureau
Nacta: National Anti-Terrorism Act
NADRA- National Database and Registration Authority
NAP: National Action Plan
NDS: National Directorate of Security
PkMAP: Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PML-Q: Pakistan Muslim League Quaid
PPP: Pakistan People's Party
PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
RAW: Research and Analysis Wing
SBP: State Bank of Pakistan
TTP: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

Jl resolution for extraditing Altaf, Dawn, May 4¹

A resolution has been submitted by Jamaat-i-islami with the Punjab Assembly secretariat against the recent anti-army speech by MQM chief Altaf Hussain. The resolution submitted by JI MPA Syed Waseem Akhtar demands the federal government take notice of the alleged anti-state and anti-army speeches by Mr Hussain and banning the MQM to curb its "fascism". It also calls for extraditing Mr Hussain from UK and his trial under Article 6 in the country.

Rigging proved in NA-125, ECP orders re-elections, The Nation, May 5²

An election tribunal ordered for re-election in Lahore's NA-125 and PP-155 constituencies after rigging on the seats was proven during the 2013 General Elections. The one-page verdict said that the ballot bags had been opened with a sharp object and the records had been tampered with. It added that in the reports submitted by the tribunal's appointed local commission and Nadra after inspecting the record of the constituency, it was found that on average each person had cast six votes. Khawaja Saad Rafique and Mian Naseer Ahmad, both of whom belonged to the PML-N, had won the 2013 General Elections from Lahore's NA-125 and PP-155 constituencies respectively. ...NA-125 was among the four controversial constituencies – the other three being NA-110 (Sialkot), NA-122 (Lahore) and NA-154 (Lodhran) – where PTI had demanded for voters' thumbprint-verification in the hope of finding a solution that might be acceptable to all concerned.

Rafique Rajwana appointed Punjab governor, Dawn, May 7³

Senator Malik Rafique Rajwana was appointed as the Governor of Punjab on May 6. His appointment was finalised by President Mamnoon Hussain, following which Rajwana said he would do his utmost to serve the people of the province. Rajwana, who hails from Multan, had been serving as a senator on a PML-N ticket. The appointment came following the prime minister's approval with Rajwana meeting the premier shortly before the announcement. The position of Punjab Governor had been lying vacant since the resignation of Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar in January this year. According to his profile available on the senate website, Rajwana is currently a member of the Foreign Affairs, Law Justice and Human Rights, Government

¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1179864/ji-resolution-for-extraditing-altaf>

² <http://nation.com.pk/national/04-May-2015/election-tribunal-orders-re-election-in-na-125-pp-155>

³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1180518/rafique-rajwana-appointed-punjab-governor>

Assurances, Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges, Senate House and Devolution Process committees.

K-P lawmakers for another sit-in, *The Express Tribune*, May 8⁴

Memories of last year's PTI-led demonstrations in the federal capital could have started to fade, however, the party's government in K-P has announced another sit-in. Chief Minister Pervez Khattak announced on May 7 that K-P's lawmakers will set forth to the Parliament on Tuesday to protest changes to the CPEC and power outages. Khattak was at the provincial legislature after chairing a meeting of the Parliamentary Leaders' Committee at the Assembly Secretariat on Thursday to discuss differences between K-P and the federal government. Khattak said K-P was facing prolonged power cuts despite the prime minister ordering no more than six hours of power outages in urban and eight hours in rural areas.

Baloch CM concedes failure in tracing 'missing' persons, *Dawn*, May 10⁵

Balochistan Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch conceded on May 9 that his government's failure in locating the 'missing' persons of his province. Talking to reporters after a book launch here, he said that his government was in talks with the angry Baloch. However, he admitted that success had not been achieved in finding out where the 'missing' Baloch persons were. He said that the people of Balochistan should not be kept in the dark on the issue of Gwadar. The chief minister was the chief guest at the launch of the book on the life and work of distinguished Baloch poet, journalist and politician Mir Gul Khan Naseer titled *Mir Gul Khan Naseer — Zindagi Aur Funn* compiled by Yar Jan Badeeni and Tahir Hakeem Baloch.

MQM asks Ishratul Ibad to resign as Sindh governor, *Dawn*, May 12⁶

Muttahida Qaumi Movement has officially asked Sindh Governor Dr Ishratul Ibad to resign from his post after "*failing to take appropriate measures to safeguard the party's political character.*" Addressing a press conference on May 11 MQM leader Farooq Sattar laid out a list of grievances with the governor, primarily revolving around his inaction at a time when the "*MQM was being politically victimised.*" "*He [Ishratul Ibad] was aware of our workers' disappearances and target killing, and the treatment being meted out to those affiliated with the MQM. We tried to make him pay attention to these incidents but unfortunately he was unsuccessful in putting a stop to them,*" said Sattar. Sattar said the operation in Karachi was initiated at the MQM's request but the operation seemed to have changed its

⁴<http://tribune.com.pk/story/882707/all-eyes-on-the-capital-k-p-lawmakers-plan-trip-to-islamabad-for-another-sit-in/>

⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1181054/balochistan-cm-concedes-failure-in-tracing-missing-persons>

⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1181325/mqm-asks-ishratul-ibad-to-resign-as-sindh-governor>

direction. Referring to the Rangers' raid at Nine Zero in March, Sattar said no other political party's offices were raided. "*The operation now appears to be aimed at damaging MQM's political clout,*" he added.

Zardari rules out governor's rule in Sindh, *The Nation*, May 19⁷

Ruling out any possibility of imposition of governor's rule in Sindh, PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari on May 18 strongly dispelled the impression that Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah was going to be changed. "*Sindh chief minister is not being changed and after 18th Amendment it is not an easy task to implement governor's rule,*" said former president Asif Ali Zardari, while talking to media at an informal meeting. Zardari further said that he was not afraid of governor's rule at all. "*We have faced such situation in the past but I am not seeing such a situation now,*" he said responding to a question about possibility of governor's rule in Sindh. About PPP's weak position in the country, the former president was of the view that the 'magic wand' had pushed the PPP to the third position. "*We will retain our position when the 'magic stick' will become neutral,*" said Zardari, without explaining his remarks.

Despite reshuffle, no change in PTI's top leadership, *Dawn*, May 28⁸

After weeks of controversy, PTI Chairman Imran Khan on May 27 appointed an interim set up for the party leadership. The new setup has been announced, ostensibly, following recommendations made by the party's election tribunal – headed by retired Justice Wajihuddin Ahmad – but despite his protestations, the office bearers who will continue serving the party until the next intra-party elections are actually not new faces. As per the notification, issued by the media wing of the party, all incumbent top-tier leaders have been given new assignments corresponding to their existing responsibilities; meaning effectively that there has been no change at all. Justice Wajih has already rejected the party's decision to appoint temporary organisers at the provincial and central levels, maintaining that most of the PTI's top leaders have been elected through a flawed intra-party election. Following the dissolution of the entire organizational setup of the party, PTI Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi will now act as national organiser for the party. General Secretary Jahangir Tareen – who Justice Wajih pointed out as being responsible for influencing the outcome of the previous intra-party elections – will now serve the party as its central organiser. Saifullah Niazi, who was additional secretary of the party, will now serve as the additional central organiser.

⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/19-May-2015/zardari-rules-out-governor-s-rule-in-sindh>

⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1184725/despite-reshuffle-no-change-in-ptis-top-leadership>

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Promises made to Waziristan affectees fulfilled: PM, Dawn, May 1⁹

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on May 1 said that the government and the army had fulfilled their promise to the affectees of the military operation being carried out in the North Waziristan tribal region. Flanked by Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif, the premier was addressing a press conference in the Mirali town of North Waziristan. "It is a joyous occasion for the displaced persons, I am happy to see the return of the temporarily displaced," the premier said, addressing the press conference. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Mehtab Ahmed Abbasi, Minister for States and Frontier Regions (Safron) retired Lt-Gen Abdul Qadir Baloch and Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme Marvi Memon were also present on the occasion.

Military leadership also part of govt, says Rashid, The News, May 3¹⁰

Information Minister Pervaiz Rashid has said that the military leadership is also a part of the government and national security policies are made with its advice. Talking to the media after attending a literature conference at Arts Council Karachi, Rashid said, "PM Nawaz Sharif has directed Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) over Altaf Hussain's criticism of the army." He said Altaf Hussain has realised his mistake and hoped that no one will criticize national security institutions in the future. Reacting on PTI Chairman Imran Khan's reaction over Altaf Hussain criticism, the minister said the PTI Chief always tries to get others involved in clashes. He added that Khan also tried to create rifts between the government and the Army and also issue statement to divide other countries.

Senate to take up resolution on NAP, Dawn, May 4¹¹

The Senate will take up a resolution on May 4 for calling upon the government "to take effective steps for implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) to counter terrorism in the country". The senators will also discuss a number of other national issues, including the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project, corruption in government departments, gas crisis, aviation policy and non-implementation of the 18th Amendment. It will be a private members' day and the 15-point agenda issued for Monday has no legislative business on it. After a discussion on the resolution on NAP during the previous session, Chairman Raza Rabbani did not put the resolution to vote

⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1179348/govt-army-fulfilled-promises-made-to-waziristan-affectees-pm>

¹⁰<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-183553-Military-leadership-also-part-of-govt,-says-Rashid->

¹¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1179867/senate-to-take-up-resolution-on-nap-today>

because of the absence of Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, saying he did not want to give a one-sided decision on the issue. He had directed the interior minister to come to the house to brief members on the issue.

MQM condemns RAW activities in Pakistan, Dawn, May 4¹²

In what appears to be an attempt to appease the establishment, the MQM has condemned the Indian spy agency RAW and other foreign powers for what it called trying to destabilise Pakistan by creating a law and order situation here. The MQM, which recently came under a barrage of criticism after its chief Altaf Hussain made some controversial remarks, which he later clarified he had passed sarcastically, said that it was struggling for the national security and despite all injustices the loyalty of the party to Pakistan remained unblemished. According to an MQM press release issued on May 3, a meeting of the coordination committee was held simultaneously in Karachi and London to discuss the overall situation in the country.

RAW was created to destroy Pakistan: Khawaja Asif, The News, May 6¹³

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on May 5 said that India's intelligence agency RAW was created to destroy Pakistan and it cannot be taken as a light issue. Asif while speaking in the Geo News programme "*Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Saath*" on May 5 went on to say that the interests of the Taliban and RAW are the same. The Defence Minister further said that if India was actually sympathetic towards Pakistan with regards to the war on terror, it would refrain from creating tension on the border. Asif also said that the statements that were made by MQM Chief Altaf Hussain regarding RAW, were statements that cannot be made by any Pakistani. Speaking about RAW's involvement in Balochistan, he went on to say that the province's so called leaders possess Indian passports.

Constitutional history should be made compulsory, Dawn, May 10¹⁴

Senate Chairman Raza Rabbani has formally asked Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and chief ministers of the four provinces to make constitutional history of Pakistan a compulsory subject "*to inculcate an understanding and commitment to the Constitution*". In separate letters written to the prime minister and the chief ministers, the chairman said: "*Steps may be taken for incorporation of the constitutional history of Pakistan in the curriculum of all federal and provincial educational institutions up to the intermediate level.*" Mr Rabbani said the decision had been taken in the light of a discussion held during the Senate

¹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1179820/mqm-condemns-raw-activities-in-pakistan>

¹³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-183792-RAW-was-created-to-destroy-Pakistan---Khawaja-Asif>

¹⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1181027/pm-cms-urged-to-make-constitutional-history-a-compulsory-subject>

sitting on April 13 in which parliamentary leaders and members had agreed to make “constitutional history” a compulsory subject in educational institutions of the country. The issue came under discussion when senators observed April 10 as the Constitution Day to commemorate the passage of the Constitution in 1973.

Ballots printed under army supervision, *The Express Tribune*, May 10¹⁵

Responding to the testimony of the former election commissioner of Punjab, who revealed that extra ballot papers were printed in several of the province’s constituencies, the ruling PML-N has said that the ballots were printed under army’s supervision. In a written reply submitted to a three-member inquiry commission probing allegations of rigging in the 2013 general elections, PML-N’s counsel Shahid Hamid admitted that the process of printing and delivery of ballot papers for the polls was delayed because of outdated printing machines, shortage of manpower and capacity issues. Claiming that the ECP took all major decisions in consultation with the political parties, the government in its response made it clear that private corporations printed ballots under the supervision of the army. The ruling PML-N incorporated this aspect repeatedly in its reply to satisfy the qualms of opposition parties.

SC suspends election tribunal verdict on NA-125, PP-155, *Dawn*, May 11¹⁶

The Supreme Court on May 11 suspended the decision of an election tribunal which ordered re-election in Lahore’s NA-125 and PP-155 constituencies. Last week, the tribunal had found irregularities in NA-125 and PP-155 after which the ECP had denotified the Railways Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique. The tribunal had annulled results of the NA-125 election and ordered a re-poll on the seat won by Rafique as well as PP-155. However, on May 11 a three-member bench of the apex court headed by Justice Anwar Zaheer Jamali suspended the tribunal’s order when hearing a response to a petition submitted by Khawaja Saad Rafique who was declared victorious during the 2013 general elections from NA-125 constituency. In his plea, the PML-N leader contended that the election tribunal’s decision did not explicitly state that he was involved in rigging. In its short order, the tribunal had said grave irregularities were found in the record of seven polling stations of NA-125 inspected by the Nadra.

¹⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/883903/rigging-probe-ballots-printed-under-army-supervision-says-pml-n/>

¹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1181301/sc-suspends-election-tribunal-verdict-on-na-125-pp-155>

Senators seek briefing on trade route by PM, *The Express Tribune*, May 12¹⁷

In a bid to address ever growing concerns on the CPEC route, the minister in-charge on May 11 said he would quit if there were a change in the project. However, he failed to satisfy senators who insisted on a briefing by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. "I assure you that I will quit and not defend [the decision] if someone could prove that the route, as agreed on July 5, 2013 [during the PM's visit to China], has been changed," Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal said while fielding a barrage of questions, particularly raised by members from Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. Though senators from both sides of the aisle comprehensively spoke about the issue and expressed their concerns during a marathon session that lasted more than six hours, the opposition made an attempt to boycott the proceedings when the minister took the floor, demanding a clarification on the subject from the PM. However, Senate Chairman Raza Rabbani convinced the opposition not to boycott and later on he gave a ruling to constitute a special committee – comprising members from all parties and provinces – to discuss the corridor project.

PM chairs APC to allay China-Pak corridor fears, *Dawn*, May 13¹⁸

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on 13 May chaired a meeting in which representatives of all political parties were briefed on the proposed route of the CPEC project. The government last month had assured political parties that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will soon brief them on key national issues, including the CPEC, electoral reforms and rights of the provinces. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar had said that the prime minister, after his return from abroad, would convene a meeting to take all political forces into confidence on key national issues – CPEC project, election reforms, rights of the provinces and NFC award – to develop a consensus on how to overcome hurdles in these matters. The project is part of Beijing's "Belt and Road" plan to expand its trade and transport footprint across Central and South Asia. It will give China easier access to Middle Eastern oil via the deep water port of Gwadar.

Internal, external forces out to derail CPEC, says PM, *Dawn*, May 15¹⁹

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said on May 14 that the CPEC project was not being welcomed by many internal and external forces who did not want to see progress and development in the country. "These people do not want to see the country get new roads, power houses, infrastructure, health and education," he

¹⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/884837/economic-passageway-senators-seek-briefing-on-trade-route-by-pm/>

¹⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1181714/pm-chairs-apc-to-allay-china-pak-corridor-fears>

¹⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1182077/internal-external-forces-out-to-derail-cpec-says-pm>

said while addressing a ceremony held at the Prime Minister's Office to launch a credit guarantee scheme for small farmers.

Ahsan reveals three routes of corridor, Dawn, May 15²⁰

Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal said on May 14 that Pakistan and China had agreed to "fill in the blanks" in the existing route between Gwadar and Kashgar under the CPEC project, adding that no new alignment had been considered over the past two years. Talking to journalists, he said the leadership of the two countries had signed a memorandum of understanding on the CPEC on July 5, 2013 and constituted a joint working group to make decisions on connectivity of routes from Gwadar to Kashgar. In line with the Chinese wisdom, he said, Section 3 of the MoU required that a long-term plan should be developed under the principle of scientific planning and work on the easiest sections of the project should be given priority. The minister disclosed three routes of the economic corridor. According to him, the western route originating from Gwadar will pass through Turbat, Panjgur, Nag, Basima, Sorab, Qalat, Quetta, Qilla Saifullah and Zhob and reach Dera Ismail Khan before leading to Islamabad. A couple of sections of the road between Gwadar and Quetta are currently at an advanced stage of construction. The second (central) route will originate from Gwadar and reach Dera Ismail Khan via Basima, Khuzdar, Sukkur, Rajanpur, Layyah, Muzaffargarh and Bhakkar. The third route will include Gwadar, Basima, Khuzdar, Sukkur, Rahimyar Khan, Bahawalpur, Multan and Lahore/Faisalabad and then reach Islamabad.

Economic corridor will be a game changer, says Shahbaz Sharif, The Express Tribune, May 25²¹

The Pak-China economic corridor is a game-changer for Pakistan, Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif said on May 24. He was talking to a Chinese delegation, led by Peoples Institute for Foreign Affairs of China Executive President Lu Shumin. "*Pakistan and the whole region will benefit from the Pakistan-China corridor project,*" he said. Economic, cultural and political relations between Pakistan and China were discussed in the meeting. The chief minister and Lu Shumin agreed that joint efforts would be continued for complete elimination of terrorism. "*China is a very sincere and trustworthy friend of Pakistan. The economic package announced by the Chinese president for Pakistan is unprecedented. Ties between Pakistan and China have turned into strategic economic cooperation. The Chinese leadership has achieved development goals through untiring efforts and unprecedented vision,*" he said. Lu Shumin said that cooperation in

²⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1182074/ahsan-reveals-three-routes-of-corridor>

²¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/891695/economic-corridor-will-be-a-game-changer-says-shahbaz-sharif/>

economic, education and health sectors would be further strengthened. "There is great potential in Pakistan and the Pakistani people," he said. He invited the chief minister to visit China.

Handover TTP chief, Afghanistan asked, *The Express Tribune*, May 28²²

The Senate Standing Committee on Interior requested Afghanistan to hand over TTP chief Mullah Fazlullah to Pakistan. "*Please hand over the chief killer of Pakistanis (Mullah Fazlullah) to us,*" chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Interior, Rehman Malik, said on May 28. Further, the committee asked Pakistan to take up issue of hostile agencies' involvement in Pakistan's affairs. Addressing the Senate panel, national coordinator of the Nacta Hamid Ali Khan told a Senate panel, "*49,000 suspects have been arrested in a crackdown against militants under the National Action Plan.*" "*These suspects were arrested in 46,185 joint intelligence operations conducted after Peshawar School massacre across the country,*" Hamid added. "*Around Rs2.1 billion have been confiscated from various accounts believed to be sent for terror fundings and 182 cases have been filed against people involved in terror financing by arresting 230 people,*" the Nacta national coordinator told the Senate panel. Further, the Nacta national coordinator said, "*137 executions have been carried out so far in the country after moratorium was lifted by Premier Sharif.*"

Pakistan taking steps against external threats, *The Express Tribune*, May 28²³

Referring to the Indian defence minister's controversial statement on 'fighting terror with terrorists', Foreign Office spokesperson Qazi Khalilullah said on May 28 that Pakistan is taking all possible measures to safeguard its interests against such external threats. Vowing to take 'proactive' measures to prevent another Mumbai 2008 attack from being hatched on foreign soil, Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar had hinted towards a new proxy war, saying they had to "*neutralise terrorists through terrorists only*". In a weekly news briefing held in Islamabad (May 28), the foreign office spokesperson said that Pakistan is deeply concerned over the statements issued by Indian defence and interior ministers. "*This statement should not only be a matter of concern for Pakistan but the entire world,*" Khalilullah said. "*Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestation,*" he added. "*Such statements prove Pakistan's concerns that Indian intelligence agencies are involved in creating unrest in Pakistan,*" Khalilullah further said.

²² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/893690/49000-suspects-arrested-under-nap-senate-panel-told/>

²³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/893701/pakistan-taking-steps-to-safeguard-its-interests-against-external-threats-fo/>

Baloch activists being monitored in UK, *The News*, May 28²⁴

Pakistan and Britain have been cooperating with each other with exchange of information on dozens of "individuals of interest" to both countries. The News has learnt from foreign office sources in both countries that authorities in Britain have passed detailed information about Baloch activists to Pakistan while Pakistan has handed over files of British nationals residing in Pakistan. It is believed that this exchange of information related to activists who are believed to hold "extremist views". The News has learnt on good authority that the government of Pakistan - as part of its informed decision to tackle law and order situation in Karachi, Baloch militants' activities in Balochistan and counter overall extremism in Pakistan - has decided to approach all the foreign governments to control the elements causing law and order situation in Pakistan from their lands..... This correspondent has learnt that the UK government has passed information about activities of several Baloch activists who have used London as a base to mount their campaigns against the state of Pakistan. The News has learnt that at least two Baloch leaders are being monitored. These activists - believed to be around two dozens - are linked with Hyrbyar Marri, Mehran Baluch and Khan of Kalat and also with several Baloch organisations such as Balochistan Nationalist Party, Balochistan Republican Party and other small groupings. Almost all of them have claimed asylum in the UK on political grounds, citing threats in Pakistan.

Baloch-Pakhtun rivalry rears its head at CPEC meeting, *Dawn*, May 29²⁵

On May 28 all APC was meant to smoothen over differences between the government and the rest of the political parties in parliament over the CPEC. However, unwitting remarks by one of the participants took the discussion in an unexpected direction, as a debate on the decades-old issue of Balochistan's Baloch population versus its Pakhtun population, reared its head again. When National Party chief Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo was given the floor to express his concerns over the corridor, he took well over 20 minutes highlighting importance of the CPEC's western route, which connects Khunjerab to Gwadar through Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. As other participants impatiently awaiting their turn to speak on the matter, Mr Bizenjo took many Pakhtun leaders, present in the meeting, by surprise when he, out of nowhere, asked the government to address the issue of Afghan refugees settled in Balochistan. With more investment coming into Balochistan under the CPEC, "*I fear more Pakhtuns will come to Balochistan in search of jobs, squeezing the Baloch population further,*" Mr Bizenjo went on to say, adding that the issue of Afghan refugees

²⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-320605-Baloch-activists-being-monitored-in-UK-on-Pak-complaint>

²⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1184917/baloch-pakhtun-rivalry-rears-its-head-at-cpec-meeting>

and unregistered Pakhuns must be settled before the census, which the government has announced to hold next March. Unable to contain himself, PKMAP chief Mehmood Khan Achakzai interjected and sarcastically took Mr Bizenjo to task. *"By repatriating Pakhtuns to Afghanistan, you mean to say all of us Pakhtuns sitting in the meeting should also leave the country,"* Mr Achakzai was quoted as asking the NP leader. *"Asfandyar Wali Khan, Aftab Sherpao and Pervez Khattak all have their roots in Afghanistan. Wali Khan's ancestors are buried there and there are many families who continue to live on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border. You want to send all of us to Afghanistan,"* the incensed PkMAP leader asked.

APC reaches consensus on corridor, *The News*, May 29²⁶

The political leadership across the divide attained a landmark achievement on May 28 when the gigantic CPEC was endorsed by the APC, held under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif at the PM House. As the meeting concluded, PM Nawaz Sharif announced that the western route of the economic corridor would get priority and it would be constructed first, for which funds would be released soon. He said under this project, Hassan Abdal, Mianwali, Dera Ismail Khan, Zhob, Quetta, Kalat, Nag, Bisma, Panjgur and Turbat will be connected to Gwadar. He said work would be started immediately on the Mughal Kot-Dera Ismail Khan section. He assured the parliamentary leaders that all matters regarding the CPEC project will be kept transparent. At the outset, the PM announced that political leaders reserved the right to bring their reservations forward if any and the same would be addressed in the true national spirit. He said unity on the project would send a positive message to China, showing that Pakistan as a nation is committed to the project.

FOREIGN POLICY

Kabul's charges of terrorists' influx from Pakistan rejected, *Dawn*, May 1²⁷

The Foreign Office rejected on April 30 fresh allegations levelled by Kabul about the influx of terrorists in Afghanistan from Pakistan and called for closer cooperation to deal with the issue of cross-border terrorism. *"I do not have any information which corroborates that terrorists and militants were going from Pakistan and were involved in these acts,"* FO Spokesperson Tasnim Aslam said at the weekly media briefing. ...Taliban had last week started their annual offensive from Kunduz province in northern Afghanistan and have vowed country-wide attacks. The spokesperson noted that Afghanistan did not share information with Pakistan about the alleged movement of militants.

²⁶ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-37723-APC-reaches-consensus-on-corridor>

²⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1179177/kabuls-charges-of-terrorists-influx-from-pakistan-rejected>

She denounced Taliban's Spring Offensive and emphasised on peace and reconciliation in war-ravaged Afghanistan. *"We support the reconciliation process in Afghanistan. ...If Afghanistan is stable and peaceful, there is peace and stability in our bordering regions. Therefore, we would continue to support the reconciliation effort,"* she added.

Pakistan backs Track-II Afghan-Taliban talks, *The Nation*, May 4²⁸

Foreign Secretary Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry on May 3 said Pakistan supports Afghan-led and Afghan-owned reconciliation process to ensure peace, security and development in the region. Talking to newsmen here at Foreign Office, he said stability in neighboring Afghanistan is critical to peace in South Asia as a stable Afghanistan will ensure peace in the region. *"We believe peace in Afghanistan would mean peace for the whole region,"* he said. The Foreign Secretary said Pakistan has repeatedly offered to facilitate reconciliation process to ensure peace and security in Afghanistan. Replying to a question about recent process of dialogue between representatives of Taliban and Afghan government in Qatar, the Foreign Secretary said it is "Track-II" dialogue and expressed the hope that it will prove successful creating way for formal talks. He said Pakistan fully supports this reconciliation process being held in Qatar. According to details a 20-member delegation from Afghanistan had reached Qatar to hold two-day talks with Taliban representatives aimed at ending Afghanistan's long war. Qatar's Foreign Ministry confirmed that it was hosting "reconciliation" talks to help try to deliver security, peace and stability to the Afghan people.

Maldivian president meets PM Nawaz, *Dawn*, May 7²⁹

A meeting between Prime Minister Nawaz and Maldivian President Abdullah Yamin Abdul Gayoom was underway on May 7 at Prime Minister House in Islamabad. Addressing a press conference after the meeting President Abdullah Yamin said that relations between Pakistan and Maldives have spanned for more than 49 years during which Pakistan had proven itself as a sincere friend. He thanked Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the people of Pakistan for according him with a warm welcome. Premier Shairf said that Pakistan attaches high importance to its relations with the Maldives and added that, *"Our relations are characterised by cordiality, mutual respect and commonality of interest."* He regarded the visit of President Gayoom as an important milestone in the bilateral relations between the two countries. The Prime Minister said Pakistan is aware of Maldives' concerns on climate and environmental issues and is willing to cooperate on these issues bilaterally with Maldives as well as under the ambit of Saarc.

²⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/04-May-2015/pakistan-backs-track-ii-afghan-taliban-talks>

²⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1180523/maldivian-president-meets-pm-nawaz>

Australia to expand anti-terror co-op with Pakistan, *The Nation*, May 7³⁰

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop on May 6 announced 19.9 million Australian dollars to help Pakistan boost its regional trade and investment and rehabilitation of its terror-affected border areas. Addressing a joint news conference along with Adviser on National security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz shortly after their meeting, the Australian foreign minister said Pakistan and Australia enjoy excellent relations which are based on mutual respect and shared interests. She said Australia will provide \$24 million in financial assistance, including \$10 million for the rehabilitation of internally displaced persons in the tribal areas of Pakistan. *"We have long been friends and want to enhance cooperation in different fields,"* she said and added her country has strong and longstanding defence relations with Pakistan. *"We have common interests in countering transnational crimes, including drugs and human smuggling"*. Bishop said she would also encourage Australian tourism to Pakistan which has been battling a homegrown insurgency for over a decade. *"People-to-people links are important and of course we want to see Pakistan as a safe and secure environment so that you can engage international visitors,"* she said. About Australian development assistance to Islamabad, she said during her visit she will announce an assistance package of 24 million Australian dollars for Pakistan. She said 19.9 million dollars, which is part of this package, will be given for facilitating regional trade and investment as well as for the rehabilitation of the country's border areas.

Norway, Philippines ambassadors among 6 killed in Gilgit helicopter crash, *Dawn*, April 8³¹

Ambassador of Philippines Domingo D Lucenario Jr, Ambassador of Norway Leif Larsen and the wives of the Malaysian and Indonesian ambassadors were killed in a helicopter crash in Naltar Valley in Gilgit-Baltistan on May 8. Two pilots and a crew member were also killed when the Pakistan Army helicopter crash-landed on a school in Naltar Valley, DG. ISPR Major-General Asim Bajwa said in a tweet. Media reports identified the two pilots as Major Altamash and Major Faisal. Injuries were also reported from the incident in which Dutch ambassador Marcel de Vink and Polish ambassador Andrzej Ananicz were injured. Bajwa said that six Pakistanis and 11 foreigners were on board the MI-17 helicopter. Speaking after the incident, DG ISPR said the helicopter crashed due to a technical fault and ruled out the possibility of any terrorist or subversive activity. He, however, said that as per procedure, a board of inquiry has been constituted to investigate the cause of the crash.

³⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/editors-picks/07-May-2015/australia-to-expand-anti-terror-co-op-with-pakistan>

³¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1180757/norway-philippines-envoys-killed-in-helicopter-crash-army-claims-no-terror-attack>

Moreover, the outlawed TTP claimed that the incident was the result of an attack it carried out however this could not be independently verified.

US to reshape ties as Chinese influence grows, *The Express Tribune*, May 11³²

In the recent energy talks between Pakistan and the United States, a key thing that became apparent was that Washington was desirous of reshaping its relations with Islamabad in the wake of extensive Chinese influence and investment of billions of dollars to give a push to Pakistan's economy. At a press briefing, US Special Envoy for Energy Amos Hochstein though welcomed the massive flow of Chinese investment, a perception has emerged that Beijing's deepening partnership with Islamabad including the takeover of the strategic Gwadar Port has disturbed the US and India. This has prompted the US to gain a geopolitical foothold in the region which China seems to be dominating. Hochstein, however, said, "*it is not a question of dollar, we are doing it in our own way to build infrastructure in Pakistan,*" adding, the US would provide expertise and technical assistance. This indicates that the US has no money to inject into the investment-starved energy sector. During the talks, US authorities also laid stress on the importance of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in resolving Pakistan's energy crisis. It again, this time indirectly, sent a message that Pakistan should stay away from the IP gas pipeline, rather it should go for LNG imports from Qatar.

Nawaz vows joint action against Afghan, Pak Taliban, *The News*, May 13³³

Expressing an unprecedented solidarity with Afghanistan, Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on May 12 termed the Afghan Taliban's new spring offensive — Operation Azm — an act of terrorism. In his media interaction before returning home from Kabul, Nawaz condemned the increase in violence and attacks by the Afghan Taliban under the new offensive. He maintained that all sanctuaries, whenever found, would be eliminated by direct action and would be monitored by the existing mechanism. Earlier, Nawaz met the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah separately. The prime minister's delegation included COAS General Raheel Sharif, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Adviser to the PM on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Special Assistant to the PM on Foreign Affairs Syed Tariq Fatemi, DG ISI Lieutenant General Rizwan Akhtar Malik, Foreign Secretary Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Pakistan's envoy in Kabul Syed Ibrar Ahmad and senior officials. The prime minister said the continuation of the fresh Afghan offensive and

³²<http://tribune.com.pk/story/884087/competition-intensifies-us-seeks-to-reshape-ties-as-chinese-influence-grows/>

³³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-37438-Nawaz-vows-joint-action-against-Afghan-Pak-Taliban>

attacks would be construed as terrorism. The Afghan Taliban had announced Operation Azm last month to target the foreign occupiers and the Afghan government.

PM rebukes Taliban in show of Afghan support, *The Nation*, May 13³⁴

Islamabad and Kabul on May 12 resolved to work together for regional peace and stability with Pakistan condemning the recent surge in terrorist attacks in Afghanistan and declared the so-called 'Operation Azm' of Afghan Taliban as acts of terrorism. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif pledged support to Afghanistan in its fight against the Taliban during a visit to Kabul, the latest sign of a thaw in their once-frosty relationship. "I can assure you that the enemies of Afghanistan cannot be the friends of Pakistan," Nawaz Sharif said, addressing President Ashraf Ghani. On the occasion, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said, "The criterion for friendship is that a friend stands by a friend in very tough situations." In his reply, Nawaz Sharif reaffirmed Pakistan's full support for an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace and reconciliation process. He also assured the Afghan president of Pakistan's continued engagement with regional and international processes in support of his country. The prime minister said as co-chair of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process during 2015, Pakistan would steer the process in line with the Afghan priorities and aspirations. He said wide-ranging consultations on issues relating to the common challenges and the significant opportunities ahead were discussed.

Pakistan, Turkmenistan to sign trade MoUs, *Dawn*, May 20³⁵

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif during his visit to Turkmenistan said Pakistan's priority is to expand trade and economic relations with central Asian countries. While talking to the president of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the premier said that there is tremendous potential for cooperation between Pakistan and Turkmenistan in various fields such as trade and economy. President Berdimuhamedov said that both countries share similar views on regional peace and stability. He added that the two countries can increase cooperation in telecommunication, agriculture and other sectors. He also highlighted the need for more distinguished people-to-people contact between Turkmenistan and Pakistan. PM Nawaz arrived in Turkeministan's capital Ashgabat on a two-day official visit. He was received by Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov at the airport. PM Nawaz is also scheduled to lead delegation-level talks apart from his one-on-one meeting with with Turkmen president. During the visit, a number of

³⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/13-May-2015/pm-rebukes-taliban-in-show-of-afghan-support>

³⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1183122/pakistan-turkmenistan-to-sign-trade-mous-as-nawaz-begins-ashgabat-visit>

MoUs pertaining to trade, bilateral cooperation and economy will also be signed by the leaders.

Pakistan warns Taliban to shun violence, *The Express Tribune*, May 25³⁶

In what appears to be a major policy shift, Pakistan is said to have delivered a 'stern warning' to the Afghan Taliban to immediately call off their ongoing spring offensive in Afghanistan or else face consequences. The message was recently conveyed to the Taliban leadership through 'intermediaries', said a senior government official, who has the knowledge of this crucial move by Islamabad. "*The Afghan authorities have also been in the loop,*" said the official, who wished not to be named given the sensitivity of the matter. The unprecedented step was taken after the Taliban launched a spring offensive against the Afghan security forces as well as international troops despite attempts by the Afghan negotiators to reach out to the ultraorthodox militia that has been fighting a bloody insurgency since 2001. Recently, representatives of the Taliban and Afghan government officials met in Doha, Qatar, to explore the possibility of peace talks, but the unabated Taliban attacks have threatened the embryonic process. Pakistan is believed to have been pushing for a ceasefire by all sides in Afghanistan in order to pave the way for a meaningful reconciliation process.

Aziz for pooling regional resources for peace, *The Express Tribune*, May 26³⁷

The prime minister's top aide on national security and foreign affairs on May 25 emphasised the need for joint and coordinated efforts to ensure peace and security in Afghanistan, and urged all the neighboring countries to pool their resources for peace and development in Afghanistan. Sartaj Aziz also reiterated that the enemies of Afghanistan are Pakistan's foes. The statement exemplifying the strong bond the two neighbours share was made on Monday during the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process: Senior Officials Meeting at the Foreign Office in Islamabad. Aziz said the recent visit of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to Kabul had added a new dimension to "*our mutual commitment to creating a peaceful and prosperous neighbourhood in the region*". Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai told the meeting that terrorism was still the biggest challenge for the region. "*All of us are concerned over the growing insecurity in the region. Moreover, the security dynamics of our region are changing dramatically, with new threats emerging in the heart of Asia. We shall respond to these challenges collectively.*"

³⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/891809/spring-offensive-in-afghanistan-pakistan-warns-taliban-to-shun-violence-or-else/>

³⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/892411/heart-of-asia-aziz-calls-for-pooling-regional-resources-for-peace/>

Pakistan keen to forge closer ties with Belarus: PM Nawaz, Dawn, May 29³⁸

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Friday held a meeting with President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, who started his two-day visit to Pakistan on May 28. During the meeting at the Prime Minister House, the premier extended condolences to President Lukashenko over the death of his mother two days ago, which was also the reason why the Belarusian president delayed his visit to Pakistan until May 28. This is the first visit by a Belarusian president to Pakistan. On the first day of the President Lukashenko's visit, Pakistan and Belarus vowed to build a broad-based, substantive and long-term relationship in all fields, including trade, economic, education, defence and culture.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

ISPR terms Altaf 's remarks disgusting, The News, May 1³⁹

The Pakistan Army has termed Altaf Hussain's statement against it as disgusting and uncalled for while warning that such remarks won't be tolerated. Reacting to MQM Chief Altaf Hussain's speech to party workers, ISPR DG Major General Asim Bajwa said: "*Such reference to Army or its leadership as reaction to arrest of criminals, who may have links with any political party, won't be tolerated*". The media wing of the army made it clear that the armed forces and law enforcement agencies will continue to execute operations assigned to them. Earlier, speaking to party workers Altaf Hussain said: "*We are called RAW agents every other day. Those who surrendered are called patriots, while the founders of Pakistan are dubbed traitors.*" Hussain's remarks came hours after a senior Karachi Police Officer Rao Anwar called for a ban against the MQM for its alleged links with the Indian secret agency RAW.

Corps commanders take notice of RAW's involvement, The News, May 6⁴⁰

The corps commanders' conference on May 5 took serious notice of Indian intelligence agency RAW's involvement in whipping up terrorism in Pakistan. According to the ISPR, COAS General Raheel Sharif presided over the conference here at the General Headquarters. Speaking to the forum, the army chief said with the overwhelming support of the entire nation, Operation Zarb-e-Azb had inflicted significant damage on terrorists. Emphasising the continued precision targeting of terrorists squeezed in

³⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1184958/pakistan-keen-to-forge-closer-ties-with-belarus-pm-nawaz>

³⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-183285-ISPR-terms-Altaf-s-remarks-against-army-leadership-disgusting>

⁴⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-37336-Corps-commanders-take-notice-of-RAWs-involvement-in-Pakistan>

isolated pockets in Fata, the COAS directed all concerned to intensify intelligence-based operations against the terrorists and their abettors in the urban areas for enduring peace in the country. General Raheel said a terror-free Pakistan was now a national resolve. He said thousands of innocent Pakistanis, including children, had been martyred by extremists. He said the law enforcement agencies and brave armed forces had made a lot of sacrifices in fighting these misguided and hardened criminals to safeguard a peaceful and better future for our next generation.

US hands over used combat aircraft, other weapons, *Dawn*, May 7⁴¹

The United States has handed over 14 combat aircraft, 59 military trainer jets and 374 armoured personnel carriers to Pakistan from the weapons it is leaving behind in the region, reports the Congressional Research Service. ...The United States is withdrawing its forces from Afghanistan and has offered some of the weapons it is leaving behind to its allies in the region, including Afghanistan and Pakistan. Technically, these weapons are classified as "Excessive Defence Articles", i.e. equipment used by the US forces, which can be supplied to allied nations at withdrawal instead of shipping them back to the United States. The weapons include F-16 armaments including 500 AMRAAM air-to-air missiles; 1,450 2,000-pound bombs; 500 JDAM Tail Kits for gravity bombs; and 1,600 Enhanced Pave way laser-guided kits. All this has cost Pakistan \$629 million. Pakistan has also paid \$298 million for 100 harpoon anti-ship missiles, 500 sidewinder air-to-air missiles (\$95 million); and seven Phalanx Close-In Weapons System naval guns (\$80 million).

Pak territory not to be used against others: COAS, *The Nation*, May 13⁴²

Chief of Army Staff, General Raheel Sharif, has directed the Frontier Works Organisation to start construction work of Torkham-Jalalabad Dual Carriage Way, a project suspended for a long time, this week. The Army Chief is currently accompanying Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on a one-day visit to Afghanistan. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Syed Tariq Fatimi and Foreign Secretary, Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry are also a part of the delegation. According to Director General Inter-Services Public Relations Major Asim Salim Bajwa, the COAS said Afghanistan's enemy will be treated as Pakistan's enemy and vice versa. He said Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan will be guided by three principles including strict adherence to policy of non-intervention. Besides, Pakistan would not allow its

⁴¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1180506/us-hands-over-used-combat-aircraft-other-weapons>

⁴² <http://nation.com.pk/national/12-May-2015/torkham-jalalabad-dual-carriage-way-to-restart-coas>

territory to be used against others. The COAS assured full support to Afghan-led reconciliation and assured making all efforts in this regard.

Perpetrators, backers to be punished: COAS, *The Nation*, May 14⁴³

After canceling his three-day scheduled visit to Sri Lanka due to terrorist attack on a bus in Karachi on May 13, the Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif immediately dashed to the port city to take stock of the situation. Upon arrival in Karachi, the COAS went straight to the Karachi Corps Headquarters where he was given briefing on the tragic incident by the corps commander. Director General Sindh Rangers also attended. General Raheel Sharif also telephoned to Prince Karim Agha Khan and offered his heartfelt condolences on the killings of innocent people in Karachi terrorist attack. *"Our heart goes out for the bereaved families. No efforts will be spared to apprehend and punish perpetrators of this terrorist act, their abettors, and backers,"* army chief assured Prince Agha Khan, spiritual leader of Ismaili community.

Apex Committee to increase tempo of Karachi operation, *Dawn*, May 15⁴⁴

The Apex Committee held a meeting at the Corps Headquarters on May 14 deciding to increase the tempo of the ongoing operation in the city and hold weekly meetings to review progress. In a series of tweets DG ISPR Major General Asim Sallem Bajwa outlined the decisions taken during the meeting.

- Intelligence agencies have been directed to work together to exploit existing leads.
- Continuation of across the board operations with increased tempo.
- Regular and meaningful Apex Committee meetings on a weekly basis
- Apprehension of criminals, abettors and members of proscribed outfits regardless of political, religious, ethnic, sectarian or any other affiliations.
- Develop system for strict checking at all entry and exit points.
- Intelligence sub-committee to coordinate and synergise civil-military intelligence efforts for optimally effective intelligence based operations.
- Need to extend governance/law enforcement agencies to Karachi's weakly governed spaces.
- Check all financial channels of funding to criminals, militants and terrorists.
- Effective policing and surveillance in vast suburbs of Karachi to prevent sneaking terrorist attacks.
- Transparent and merit based appointments of various department officials with oversight mechanism to help the system for long-term sustainability.

⁴³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-May-2015/perpetrators-backers-to-be-punished-coas>

⁴⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-184728-Apex-Committee-decides-to-increase-tempo-of-Karachi-operation->

Sectarian rivalry is hurting Karachi: Corps Commander, *The Nation*, May 16⁴⁵

Corps Commander Karachi Lt Gen Naveed Mukhtar on May 18 gave his opinion on the Karachi operation at a seminar organized by the National Defence University in Karachi. Lt Gen Naveed Mukhtar said, "I assure citizens that our struggle against terrorism will continue unabated." Speaking against militants and target killers, Gen Mukhtar said, "We are committed to eliminating all forms of terrorism." He said that all political stakeholders should contribute in maintaining Karachi's security situation. Authorities and police must stay away from political influence, he added. "Karachi generates 65 percent of the Pakistan's total income," he said. "The problems in Karachi are a result of political and sectarian rivalry," Gen Mukhtar concluded.

ISI to train Afghan spooks', *The Nation*, May 18⁴⁶

The Afghan government has signed an agreement with Pakistan's ISI – on mutual cooperation to fight terrorism. The Afghan Tolo News TV channel quoting sources privy to the development reported on May 17 that the agreement will also allow ISI to train the Afghan intelligence –NDS personnel. This came when ISI chief Gen Rizwan Akhtar secretly visited Kabul nearly two weeks ago to meet President Ashraf Ghani. Quoting officials, the TV channel said Gen Akhtar's visit was mainly focused on Pakistan's support to persuade the Taliban militants to join the peace process. The latest agreement between Afghan government and ISI comes as the Afghan officials have long been criticising ISI for supporting the insurgency in Afghanistan.

Achievements made in counter terror ops: Army Chief, *The News*, May 19⁴⁷

Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif on May 18 termed the achievements as phenomenal in the ongoing military operations against terrorists. Addressing the closing ceremony for the 4th Army Physical Agility and Combat Efficiency System Championship, General Sharif declared strategic knowledge and operational preparedness of soldiers as indispensable for making big gains in war against terrorism. ...Gen Raheel Sharif later called on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif at PM's House in Islamabad and exchanged views on national security issues. According to sources, they also deliberated on the reports of national security institutions pertaining to involvement of Indian intelligence agency RAW in recent terrorist acts in the country.

⁴⁵<http://nation.com.pk/karachi/16-May-2015/sectarian-rivalry-is-hurting-karachi-corps-commander-karachi>

⁴⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2015/isi-to-train-afghan-spooks>

⁴⁷ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-185216-Phenomenal-achievements-made-in-counter-terror-ops:-Army-Chief>

COAS, PM discuss foreign meddling, national security, *The Nation*, May 19⁴⁸

Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif called on Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif on May 18 and briefed him on the steps taken to improve law and order situation with specific reference to the port city of Karachi. The meeting, which was held at Prime Minister's House, overall security situation in the country came under discussion, including the various factors influencing the law and order situation such as involvement of foreign elements. Sources aware of the deliberations of the meeting informed that the reports of national security apparatus also came up for review in the meeting wherein evidence of RAW's involvement in the recent terrorist attacks across the country were found. Sources further said that Premier Sharif has directed the army chief that detailed briefing on the subject be given in the upcoming meeting of civil and military leadership to be held during the current or next week to review the matter. These sources further said that after the detailed deliberations on the issue and in the light of health of the proofs against RAW's role in the recent terrorists acts, the future course of action would be adopted.

RAW involved in Karachi unrest: Sindh CM, *The Express Tribune*, May 18⁴⁹

At least 43 people were killed and 13 others wounded on May 14 when armed men opened fire inside a bus carrying members of the Ismaili community near Safoora Chowk in Karachi. Sindh Police Inspector General Ghulam Haider Jamali said 60 people were on board the bus when six gunmen entered and executed 43 passengers. He added that the armed men used 9mm pistols to take out bus passengers from close range. The attackers managed to flee after the attack. Ahmed Marwat, a spokesman for Jundullah, which is a splinter group of the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), had claimed responsibility for the attack.

As police finally registered an FIR over the Safoora Goth killings, Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah revealed that law enforcement agencies have found evidence that India's RAW is involved in the Karachi unrest. Talking to the media after chairing a meeting at the Sukkur Commissioner's Office on Sunday, the chief minister said secret agencies had already found evidence of RAW's hand in terrorist activities being carried out in the country. Expressing deep sorrow over the Safoora massacre, Shah termed the terrorist attack "unfortunate". He claimed that investigations were moving in the right

⁴⁸<http://nation.com.pk/national/19-May-2015/coas-pm-discuss-foreign-meddling-national-security>

⁴⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/888110/evidence-found-raw-involved-in-karachi-unrest-says-sindh-cm/>

direction. "Some clues have also been found in the Safoora attack and the case will be solved shortly," he added.

Safoora Goth massacre masterminds arrested: Qaim, Dawn, May 19⁵⁰

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah on May 19 said security authorities had apprehended four masterminds of the Safoora Goth massacre from Karachi, while talking to mediapersons in Nawabshah. The arrested suspects also pointed out names and details of their accomplices, he added. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif telephoned Sindh chief minister and appreciated his efforts.

Well-educated militants behind high-profile terror attacks, Dawn, May 21⁵¹

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah while addressing a crowded press conference at CM House on May 21 read out the names of the militants, their profiles and the crimes they confessed to have committed. The militants were:

Tahir Hussain Minhas alias Sain Nazir alias Zahid, alias Naveed alias Khalil, alias Shaukat and alias Mota-matriculate, who is the mastermind of the Safoora Goth carnage, has been involved in terror activities since 1998. A trained terrorist who has expertise in making bombs and using arms such as RPG-7 and Kalashnikov. He had personally met Osama Bin Ladin and Aiman-uz-Zawahiri of Al Qaeda on several occasions.

Saad Aziz alias Tin Tin alias John, who is the mastermind of the attack on civil society representative Sabeen Mahmud, has done BBA from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi. Taking part in terrorist activities since 2009, Aziz is a trained militant with expertise in producing different types of literature. He provided funds for terror activities in the city.

Mohammad Azfar Ishrat alias Maajid is an engineer having passed out from the Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology. Involved in terrorist activities since 2011, Ishrat is a trained terrorist who has expertise in making bombs and electronic circuits used as timers in such bombs.

Haafiz Nasir alias Yasir, who completed MA in Islamic Studies from Karachi University, has been involved in terrorist activities since 2013. A trained terrorist, Nasir has expertise in brainwashing and motivating people for 'Jihadi' activities.

⁵⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1182944>

⁵¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1183215>

The confessions made by these terrorists include the carnage of Safoora Goth, murder of Sabeen Mahmud in Defence, firing on American educationist Debra Lobo in the Ferozabad area, bomb attack on a naval officer and suicidal attack on Brig Basit of the Rangers, grenade attack on schools and throwing pamphlets in Nazimabad and North Nazimabad, bomb blast and targeted killings on the Bohri community in the area of Arambagh, North Nazimabad, Bahadurabad Karachi and Hyderabad, bomb attacks on police vans on M.A. Jinnah Road, Arambagh, Gulberg, Gulistan-i-Jauhar, NIPA Chowrangi, North Nazimabad and North Karachi and in the targeted killing of police officials in Gulistan-i-Jauhar, North Nazimabad, North Karachi, Shah Faisal Colony and Landhi.

The chief minister conceded that earlier while speaking at a press conference in Sukkur he had said that Indian intelligence RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) or similar foreign hand had been involved but that statement was mainly on basis of assertion that RAW had remained involved in such activities in the entire region till Balochistan. He said once JIT would be completed into the case then final conclusion could be drawn about affiliation and backing of terrorism as whether they had support of any foreign agency.⁵²

PM gives go-ahead for ground operation in Shawal Valley, *The Express Tribune*, May 26⁵³

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on May 25 gave the go-ahead to extend Operation Zarb-e-Azb into Shawal Valley, sources privy to the development told the scribe. The development to expand the operation into the mountainous north-western region of North Waziristan Agency came during a meeting between the premier and army chief General Raheel Sharif in Islamabad on May 25 "All financial issues related to the new military offence in Shawal Valley will be incorporated in the upcoming budget," the sources added. Further, the source said, "Pakistan Army's operation in Shawal will force Afghanistan to take action against TTP's strongholds in their country and address RAW's sanctuaries there as well." The deeply forested ravines of the valley are a key smuggling route between Pakistan and Afghanistan and are hub of Taliban bases used as launch pads for attacks on Pakistani forces. Pakistan Army has cleared Tirah Valley from terrorists through military operations and the next step is to clear Shawal Valley, the source added.

⁵² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-37562-RAWs-hand-in-Safoora-Goth-incident-being-probed-Qaim>

⁵³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/892049/pm-gives-go-ahead-for-ground-operation-in-shawal-valley/>

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Cohabitation, Cyril Almeida, *Dawn*, May 3⁵⁴

IT'S been a while and stuff's been going on, so time to check in on the state of civ-mil. It's not going very well for the civilians. But well into this new era of cohabitation — the boys won't take over, they won't let the civilians rule either — it's hard to know if what's playing out at any given moment is a redefining of the rules further in favour of the boys or just the bumbling of the civilians. Take this business down in Karachi. Back in September 2013, when the operation was launched, there seemed to be a genuine civilian component. Nawaz owned it, Nisar prattled on about it and the IB showed off. No one really thought Karachi was going to be a civilian-run affair, but the civilians were in the game, playing it and shaping it to some extent. Now, 18 months on, the N-League is wandering around outside the stadium, lost and pitiful. [...] Maybe Nawaz didn't think it would apply to him. Maybe Nawaz thought that Zardari succumbed because he was neither interested in anything more nor had the will to fight it. **But cohabitation has applied to Nawaz and he seems less capable of dealing with it than Zardari. Part of it is ego: Zardari usually looks like he knows he hit the jackpot; Nawaz projects a sense of entitlement, that ruling is what he was born to do.** Part of it is that the pressure on Nawaz has been more intense: **to browbeat a dodgy politician from Sindh you need less than what you need to beat into submission a popular politician from Punjab.** But the combination has been deadly, leaving Nawaz more listless than ever — and the boys more confident than ever. Nawaz not only doesn't have a plan to deal with cohabitation, he looks like he doesn't have a plan. He looks a beaten man. **Zarb-i-Azb, dharna and Musharraf — those are the markers of how cohabitation was enforced and those are markers of what have left Nawaz a man with few ideas and little spirit.**

Challenges posed by the Pak-China corridor, Irfan A Qureshi, *The Express Tribune*, May 8⁵⁵

Recently, the Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif signed a massive MoU of approximately \$46 billion to construct the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Spanning approximately 3,000km, the CPEC is part of the mega Silk Road project initiated by China to firm up its connectivity to Europe, Central Asia and Africa through road and port networks. The MoUs include agreements on other joint ventures, including financing for the energy, infrastructure, trade and technology sectors. These projects provide Pakistan with a promising opportunity to

⁵⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1179604/cohabitation>

⁵⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/882686/challenges-posed-by-the-pak-china-corridor/>

overcome its chronic economic challenges, primarily in the energy, trade and technology sectors. **However, there are fundamental long-term structural consequences of this agreement, which may possibly have negative impacts on the Pakistani economy.** First, due to the needless secrecy and confidentiality displayed by the ruling party, there is a **lack of transparency** surrounding the entire venture, as pointed out by economists Dr Kaiser Bengali and Dr Ashfaq Hasan Khan. [...]A second concern that needs to be addressed by the government is related to **the long-term economic costs and benefits of the Chinese investments**, such as those related to the energy sector. While it may be true that the injection in the energy sector could possibly enable Pakistan to overcome its energy crises in the short- and medium-term, the long-run issues plaguing the energy sector will continue to persist. The main issues aggravating the energy sector are related to its low productive capacity, inefficient distribution network with high line losses and anaemic governance. [...]Third, there are **crucial issues related to our economic capacity, and our ability to absorb the massive investment.** In order to translate any short-term gains into long-term economic success, Pakistan **should aim to increase its absorption capacity — say, in the labour markets — by investing in both vocational training programmes, and by revitalising the education sector.**

Balochistan seminar, Editorial, *Dawn*, May 8⁵⁶

Given the topic — enforced disappearances in Balochistan — the seminar planned at the Karachi University on Wednesday was unlikely to be a tame affair. But as it turned out, tired old tactics of suppressing dissent ensured more sound and fury, a bigger audience and greater publicity than it would have garnered otherwise. Until it actually happened, no one could be certain whether the event, featuring Mama Qadeer, Farzana Majeed and Mohammed Ali Talpur as speakers, would even take place. The university administration had informed the organisers on Tuesday that they would not give permission for it to be held. On the day itself, the door to the arts auditorium — the originally intended venue — remained locked, and many of those not working or studying onsite who wanted to attend had to resort to creative tactics to get around security personnel hampering their access to the campus. In the end, defiance won the day and the seminar, now more in the nature of a protest meeting, went ahead. [...]At the same time, it must be acknowledged that KU being a public institution had some valid concerns, and had it chosen to, the administration could have resorted to harsher measures, courtesy the Rangers personnel hovering in the background, to disperse the gathering. But that would have meant compounding the error

⁵⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1180622/balochistan-seminar>

that began with the cancellation of a similar talk at the Lahore University of Management Sciences. It is fortunate that saner counsel prevailed.

Need for a Pak-Afghan oversight commission, Shahid Javed Burki, *The Express Tribune*, May 11⁵⁷

[...]My conversations in Kabul as well as what I saw covered in the press underscored the following three facts about the Afghan situation. One, with the American and foreign troops gone, the country is extremely anxious about what lies ahead. There is almost total conviction in the country that Pakistan is looking the other way as Afghanistan plunges into darkness. Even a two-day stay in Kabul was enough to show me the high economic and psychological costs of the concerns about security. The second important fact concerns Pakistan's role in helping the country deal with the current unsustainable situation. There is a strong belief in the country that Pakistan is not fully exercising itself to help stem the tide of growing violence in Afghanistan. President Ghani was very clear about expressing this belief in his long conversation with me. If the level of violence worsens in the current fighting season his effort to repair the long-tattered relations with Pakistan will come to naught. The third element in the Afghan thinking is more positive. **Several people in policymaking positions are convinced that a strong link between the two countries could make them the core of a new regional association that will have palpable economic and political impact on the rest of the world.** The American withdrawal, greater Chinese assertiveness, growing tensions between the Sunni and Shia sects of Islam in the Arab world, and the rise of the Islamic State have created the need for a strong multi-state hub. Kabul and Islamabad must work together to provide it. How should these concerns and hopes be addressed? It appears to me that **the approach followed up until now in Islamabad had been episodic rather than strategic.** Kabul and Islamabad have worked together when an event such as the December 2014 attack on the Peshawar Army Public School occurred. **What is needed – and needed urgently – is a multi-dimensional plan of action with a well-defined timeline** to (a) address the poor security situation in both countries; (b) to work out in some detail the intended plan of action; and (c) to keep the plan under watch. A special commission should be set up to be jointly managed and staffed by the people from both sides. The NATO is a model that can be followed. The proposed Commission should have a joint secretariat to keep the developing situation under constant review. Such an approach would create a sense of confidence in the two countries about each other's intentions. This confidence is lacking at this moment.

⁵⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/884206/need-for-a-pak-afghan-oversight-commission/>

Attack on Ismaili community, Editorial, *Dawn*, May 14⁵⁸

It is the vibrancy and plurality of Pakistan that the militants wish to destroy. In targeting Ismailis in Karachi, the militants have grotesquely reiterated their message to the country: **no one — absolutely no one — who exists outside the narrow, distorted version of Islam that the militants propagate is safe in Pakistan**. The Aga Khan has spoken of “a senseless act of violence against a peaceful community”. In their hour of desolation, it is only right that the Shia Ismaili community’s supreme leader has taken a dignified line and sought to comfort what will surely be a deeply anxious community. [...] **Simply breaking up existing cells of militants does little to ensure the next generation of militant cells and groups are not being created. In addition, what of the capacity of an intelligence apparatus that has to keep track of a wide spectrum of threats in Karachi? Surely, that is a task too far for the military-run intelligence agencies alone.** There are occasional noises about the civilian-run intelligence and law-enforcement apparatus being part of the operational and strategic loop, but few believe that to be the case anymore. Finally, for all the problems with a military-dominated security policy in Karachi, why has the Sindh government allowed itself to become near irrelevant? The civilian side of the state needs to be more influential and assertive in the security domain, but in Sindh it appears that the government has nil interest in such an endeavour.

The thaw continues, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, May 14⁵⁹

There can now be little doubt that there really has been a sea-change in the nature of relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. A line has been drawn under the fractious toxicity of the Karzai years, and although there are still areas of tension bilaterally, there is the basis for a productive working relationship. [...] The Taliban are still a powerful fighting force and active across much of Afghanistan, not only in their strongholds of the south and east. “The enemies of Afghanistan cannot be the friends of Pakistan,” said our prime minister, and if he really means that then the support that was sustained for jihadi elements by Pakistan during the time of the doctrine of ‘strategic depth’ has also had a line drawn under it. Peace talks with the Taliban in Doha stumble around in confusion and ultimately it has to be talks and not war. Unfortunately, the war has to be fought before the talks become meaningful.

⁵⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1181758/attack-on-ismaili-community>

⁵⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/885781/the-thaw-continues/>

The extremism within, Editorial, *Dawn*, May 15⁶⁰

The country has an extremism problem. To state that is to suggest the obvious. ***But the state appears to be either in denial of Pakistan's extremism problem or afraid of its true dimensions.*** After each new, grotesque low in the militants' war on Pakistan, the state responds in the same manner. Emergency meetings, long huddles, promises to double down on the existing militarised security strategy — and some vague promises about doing something about the peddlers of hate. Then, unsurprisingly, as the media gaze turns to the next scandal or atrocity and the memory of the previous attack recedes, nothing of substance is done to crack down on extremism.] ***Militancy does not exist in a vacuum — it never has and it never will. It was possible for men to fire bullets into peaceful citizens on Wednesday because there exists a milieu that allows hate to masquerade as religion. Surely, the answers to the extremism problem cannot be the same as the strategy to fight militancy. The first approach is essentially preventive in nature; the latter, curative.*** Prevention is more difficult — ***the extremism-fuelling narrative and infrastructure are far more diffuse than militant groups.***

And it requires greater will — a willingness to reach into the heart of society and re-engineer it. ***If it is not fought, however, the country may find itself winning the battle, but losing the war.***

No country for Hazaras, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, May 28⁶¹

It seems as if there is no place in Quetta safe enough for the Hazara community. They are targeted in mosques, religious processions, markets, their own neighbourhoods. [...] ***At the same time, groups that had been previously spared from this massacre have now been added to the number of persecuted communities.*** The killings of Ismailis in Karachi earlier this month have opened another avenue of sectarian violence. Yet, we are told that a decisive counterterrorism plan is running successfully. The National Action Plan, constituted days after the Peshawar school attack, has failed to combat terrorism the way it should have. Apart from the execution of terrorists and the little headway made with regard to controlling hate speech, no other significant progress seems to be on the horizon. ***Just a day prior to the recent killings, the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat, a banned organisation, held a rally in Quetta. The impunity with which these groups function highlights how serious authorities are in battling the problem.*** There has been an exodus of Hazaras from the country, which comes as little surprise given the dangers they face. They have been risking their lives, leaving their families behind and taking the long boat journey from Pakistan to Australia in hope of survival.

⁶⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1182025/the-extremism-within>

⁶¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/893215/no-country-for-hazaras/>

One wonders when their safety will become a matter of priority for the powers that be.

Pak-Af intel cooperation: A positive accord, Editorial, *The News*, May 21⁶²

In a bold move, the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) has signed an accord with the Afghan intelligence agency, the National Directorate of Security (NDS), to boost anti-terror cooperation and share intelligence. What is positive in this news is the acknowledgement that Pakistan and Afghanistan face the same threats. An NDS spokesperson said that the MoU had clarified who the 'enemy' was and that the NDS looked forward to sincere cooperation. Afghan media has suggested that the agreement was signed during the ISI chief Lieutenant General Rizwan Akhtar's visit to Kabul this month.... ***MoUs between Pakistani and Afghan intelligence services were signed in 2006 and 2009 as well, but the two were unable to find common ground.*** The hope is that this increased cooperation will lead to a change in the approach of intelligence agencies. The fact that Afghanistan has gone ahead with the MoU despite ex-president Karzai calling it against the national interest of Afghanistan shows their commitment. Overall, a difference of approach still remains between Pakistan and Afghanistan. ***While Afghans hope to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table, Pakistan, at least officially, wishes to take them head on.*** The agreement gives out a positive signal. Whether this will lead to any real progress requires serious commitment by both countries.

Pak-Af Front: Positive signs, Editorial, *The News*, May 28⁶³

Things are changing on the Afghan front with the Pakistan government looking committed to improving relations between the two countries. ***Once again, on May 25, Pakistan reasserted its commitment to the stability of the current Afghan government led by President Ghani.*** Speaking at the inauguration of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process conference, Adviser to the Prime Minister of Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz ***promised that Pakistan would treat the enemies of Afghanistan as its own enemies.*** While he did not name the Taliban, Aziz said Pakistan supported an end to a conflict that has been raging for the last three decades. [...] ***However, the meeting continued the recent precedent of blaming India for attempting to destabilise Pakistan-Afghanistan relations through former Afghan president Hamid Karzai.*** What is most significant is Sartaj Aziz's acknowledgment that three decades of conflict are being resolved. The longstanding issues between the two countries will take time and commitment to mend. Both countries, for now, have recognised that mutual trust is important for securing their future against the Taliban insurgencies they both face. This threat became all the

⁶² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-319289-A-positive-accord>

⁶³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-320556-Positive-signs>

more glaring for Afghanistan on Wednesday after a failed Taliban raid on a diplomatic guesthouse. **Cooperation between us and the Afghans is important if regional peace is to be achieved.**

Big plan, little action, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, May 29⁶⁴

The National Action Plan (NAP) formulated in haste in the wake of the massacre at the Army Public School in Peshawar last December was always going to be a stretch to implement. In broad terms, there was little to disagree with in the NAP, but it was always more of a wish list than a full-fledged plan, and putting flesh on the bones was a delegated task for the provinces, and their performance in terms of implementation has been very patchy indeed. The government has now conceded this at a meeting on May 27 held to review progress in implementing the NAP. The Chief of Army Staff, General Raheel Sharif, had already met with the prime minister several days before, a meeting at which **he was reported to have indicated his concerns regarding laggardly progress and seeking “measures for more effective implementation”**. The Corps Commanders’ meeting in April had publicly expressed similar concerns, speaking of “lacklustre” implementation and the need to “re-energise the NAP”.

The liberal’s education myth, S Akbar Zaidi, *The News*, May 29⁶⁵

Of all the myths the Pakistani liberal spews most ardently, the one regarding education reform stands out the most. Liberals argue that they (or we, when they decide to speak for all Pakistanis) need to ‘educate’ everyone in Pakistan, and this will take care of the ‘problem’ of radicalisation/ talibanisation/ militancy in Pakistan. One hears this at every conversation table one passes by, in every column by every morally upright overly-earnest ‘liberal’ contributor one reads in the English press, on TV talk shows – everywhere. There is no escaping the frame that the ‘lack of education’ is our main problem. Donors have pumped millions of dollars and pounds into educating Pakistanis, even in trying to undertake curriculum reform, making the assumption that it is Pakistan’s curriculum, full of biases and hate-speech that creates the radical militant-jihadi ‘mind-set’ And of course, there is the issue of madressah reform as well. **Just make the madressah’s curriculum more ‘scientific’, and all will be well. If only it were so simple. Such proposals reveal the innocent naivety of all such well-meaning liberals, who fail to locate education and its embeddedness into a holistic, social, context.** No matter how much one educates Pakistanis or liberalises their curricula, they will always return and live in a much larger environment which gives rise to jihadism, radicalisation and militancy. **It is not the curriculum or the lack of**

⁶⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/893884/big-plan-little-action/>

⁶⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-320757-The-liberals-education-myth>

education that gives rise to radicalisation but other factors which most people are familiar with, but are afraid to name.Those liberal middle-class Pakistanis who support those political parties that are soft on the Taliban or other militant Islamic groups may parrot the need for curriculum reform, but unless they expose their parties' connivance, they too are guilty of avoiding the central issue related to Talibanisation. **Moreover, even some of these conservative political parties have people within them who would probably be classified broadly as 'liberal', yet these political actors, many of whom are in parliament, are also responsible for such criminal silences.****The easier solutions to radicalisation and jihadism lie in factors outside our schools, colleges and curricula, and probably even outside the madressah.**

ECONOMIC ISSUES

FISCAL ISSUES

Afghan transit trade main smuggling funnel, *The Express Tribune*, May 11⁶⁶

Afghan transit trade is the main source of smuggling into Pakistan. Besides causing annual revenue loss of up to \$3 billion to the national exchequer, it is also promoting terrorism in the country as explosive devices and other material are also being smuggled through it, it has been revealed. The smuggled items help the militants in preparing bombs, suicide jackets, IEDs and explosive-laden vehicles, says a report prepared by Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Quoting a World Bank document it said that smuggling in Afghan transit trade alone caused \$35 billion revenue loss in the period between 2001 and 2009. Smuggling is now a routine in most of the economic activities in Pakistan. Pakistan is facing the enormous challenge of measuring and curbing revenue leakages due to smuggling, the report says. These leakages are estimated to be 50 to 60 percent of the regular economy. Cheaper products are being smuggled in Lahore like cloths, fancy tiles, auto parts, electronics goods, crockery and other items. Due to excessive smuggling, thousands of industrial units have been rendered sick in Pakistan, due to the availability of cheaper smuggled goods in open markets. Shops and markets across the country, especially in the Lahore, are flooded with smuggled goods of all descriptions, said a trader talking to The Nation. He was of the view that smuggling destroys the local industry and makes it uncompetitive.

⁶⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/11-May-2015/afghan-transit-trade-main-smuggling-funnel>

ADB to finance \$6 billion in infrastructure projects, *The News*, May 14⁶⁷

The Asian Development Bank on May 12 approved a \$6 billion loan to help build up Pakistan's dilapidated power network and other key infrastructure, Islamabad said. Among the projects to be financed by the ADB is a 660-megawatt coal-fired power plant in southern Pakistan, while funds will also be allocated for projects related to health, education and highway construction. "(The ADB) agreed to finance US\$6 billion for the next five years in Pakistan," an economic affairs ministry statement said, adding that the funds would help Pakistan tackle a long-running electricity crisis. Along with the 660-megawatt plant, the funds will be used for several hydroelectric dams that will each generate between 100 and 300 megawatts. Pakistan is expected to see accelerating economic growth in the coming years, with the International Monetary Fund forecasting 4.1 per cent expansion this fiscal year, followed by 4.5 per cent growth next year.

Current account deficit shrinks by \$1.5b, *The Express Tribune*, May 19⁶⁸

Pakistan's current account deficit in the first 10 months of 2014-15 remained \$1.3 billion, according to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on May 18. The current account deficit shrank by \$1.5 billion in July-April compared to the same 10-month period of the preceding fiscal year when it was \$2.9 billion. The decrease is partly attributable to the CSF, as Pakistan received \$717 million in the second week of February. A deficit or surplus reflects whether a country is a net borrower or lender of capital with respect to the rest of the world. As a percentage of the GDP, the current account deficit stood at 0.6% in July-April as opposed to 1.4% for the same period of 2013-14.

FDI dips 8%, clocks in at \$824.9 million, *The Express Tribune*, May 19⁶⁹

Pakistan received FDI of \$824.9 million in the first 10 months of 2014-15, which is 8% less than the FDI received in July-April of the preceding fiscal year. According to data released by the SBP on May 19, FDI decreased by \$72.1 million year-on-year in July-April, as it amounted to \$897 million in the first 10 months of 2013-14. FDI in April alone was \$114.9 million as opposed to the net flows of \$94.7 million in the preceding month. With a net FDI of negative \$47.5 million in the 10-month period, the largest net outflow of FDI in July-April was recorded in the category of pharmaceutical and over-the-counter products.

⁶⁷[http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-184527-ADB-to-finance-\\$6-billion-in-Pakistan-infrastructure-projects](http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-184527-ADB-to-finance-$6-billion-in-Pakistan-infrastructure-projects)

⁶⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/888478/recovery-current-account-deficit-shrinks-by-1-5b-in-july-april/>

⁶⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/888500/10mfy15-fdi-dips-8-clocks-in-at-824-9-million/>

Government could fail to meet deficit target, *The Express Tribune*, May 23⁷⁰

Pakistan may have to seek a waiver from the IMF, as it is going to miss the key condition of reducing budget deficit to 4.9% of national output. This will occur due to the lower economic growth rate that squeezed its financing space by Rs78 billion. Under the three-year IMF bail-out programme, Pakistan is supposed to bring down the overall budget deficit – gap between national income and expenses – to 4.9% of GDP by the end of the current fiscal year 2014-15. The gap is filled by borrowings, largely from domestic and partially from external sources. At the time of announcing the budget, the government had set the economic growth target at 5.1%. However, the actual growth rate remained at 4.2%, as per estimates of the National Accounts Committee. Based on 5.1% growth, the government had estimated the size of the economy at slightly over Rs29 trillion, translating into Rs290 billion when equivalent to 1% of GDP. However, due to 4.2% growth, the size of the economy has now been reduced to Rs27.4 trillion and 1% of GDP now amounts to Rs274 billion.

Budget 2015-16: APCC to consider Rs1.46 trillion development budget, *The Express Tribune*, May 26⁷¹

Amid the centre's desire that in the next fiscal year provinces should cumulatively save at least Rs300 billion from their budgets, the federating units are planning to go on a development spending spree and have proposed huge allocations in the new budget. Headed by Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal, the Annual Plan Coordination Committee will on May 26 consider at least Rs1.46 trillion development spending bill for the four provinces and the federal government for the new fiscal year, starting from July. The APCC's recommendations will then be taken up by the National Economic Council, meeting next Monday under the chair of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The national development budget of over Rs1.46 trillion will be the highest in the country's history, although the provinces often spend less than the allocations due to multiple reasons.

TRADE

Mango exports fetch \$1.1m in five days, *Dawn*, May 26⁷²

Pakistan has exported around 2,200 tonnes of mangoes, fetching \$1.1 million, since the start of export season on May 20. All Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchant Association's (PFVA) Research and Development Chairman Waheed Ahmed said mango was being exported to

⁷⁰ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/891279/key-condition-government-could-fail-to-meet-budget-deficit-target/>

⁷¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/892286/budget-2015-16-apcc-to-consider-rs1-46-trillion-development-budget/>

⁷² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1184234/mango-exports-fetch-11m-in-five-days>

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates , Iran, Afghanistan, CIS countries and Oman, among others. He said the fruit was being exported for about \$500 per tonne this season compared to \$250 last year. He attributed improved earnings to the government ban on using wooden boxes for fruit and vegetable exports. Ahmed said a delegation of Iranian Quarantine Department is also coming this month to review the prospects of hot water treatment plants. Some exporters are already making shipments to Iran after getting approval from the quarantine department. "Exporters are hopeful that mango shipments would cross the export target of 100,000 tonnes fetching \$60 million compared to 94,000 tonnes (\$48 million) last year," he said. Pakistan is expected to produce around 1.8 million tonnes mangoes this year

IMF LOAN

Pakistan wants IMF to relax budget deficit cut, *The Express Tribune*, May 10⁷³

Amid the country's growing security expenses, Pakistan has asked the IMF to relax its key condition of restricting the next fiscal year's budget deficit to Rs1.25 trillion. During a policy-level dialogue with an IMF team in Dubai, Pakistan sought additional space to incur expenditures of around Rs160 billion or roughly half percentage points of the GDP, finance ministry officials told the scribe. The space has been sought in view of the ongoing military operations and for initiating a 10,000-strong special security force for the protection of Chinese workers in Pakistan for the CPEC, said the officials. The government has also requested the global lender to treat the spending on Operation Zarb-e-Azb as a one-off expense. Pakistan has requested the IMF to treat the security-related expenditures as a special one-off item," confirmed Rana Assad Amin, the finance ministry spokesperson. Sources said that if the IMF accepted Pakistan's demand, the budget deficit for the 2015-16 fiscal could come to be around 4.4% of the GDP or over Rs1.4 trillion as against IMF's condition to bring it down to 3.9% of the GDP or Rs1.25 trillion.

Pakistan, IMF reach agreement for next year's budget, *The Express Tribune*, May 12⁷⁴

Pakistan and the IMF have reached an agreement on the budget for fiscal year 2016, which will seek to limit Islamabad's fiscal deficit and growth in indebtedness. The broad contours of the agreement were announced at a joint press conference held in Islamabad by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and IMF Mission Chief in Pakistan Harald Finger. Pakistan has agreed to limit its budget deficit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016 to Rs1.34 trillion, or

⁷³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/883942/pakistan-wants-imf-to-relax-budget-deficit-cut/>

⁷⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/884866/bailout-terms-pakistan-imf-reach-agreement-for-next-years-budget/>

4.3% of the total size of the economy. The agreement will continue the fiscal consolidation undertaken by the Nawaz administration. **The IMF projects Pakistan's economic growth rate at 4.5% for the next year, somewhat higher than the downward revised number of 4.1% for fiscal 2015.** Most economists agree that Pakistan needs economic growth of between 5% and 7% to be able to absorb new entrants into its workforce. The fiscal deficit target has been revised upwards to 4.3% for this year's target of 4% of gross domestic product (GDP) due to expenses arising from Operation Zarb-e-Azb, the war against the Taliban. The Rs1,340 billion budget deficit projected for fiscal 2016 includes Rs130 billion due to those expenses, said the finance minister, adding that the government would cut down on other expenses to keep the deficit within the 4.3% limit. The Rs130 billion will not be included as part of the defence budget, even though it is defence spending.

INVESTMENT

Govt rules out change in economic corridor, *The Nation*, May 14⁷⁵

Seeking the help of national political leadership to frustrate the nefarious designs of the forces working against CPEC, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on May 13 said the project is aimed at supporting economic progress of the entire region as it would help boost trade and improve connectivity. To further allay the concerns of political parties, particularly about the route of the economic corridor, it was agreed in the meeting of the parliamentary leaders that **a parliamentary committee comprising MPs from both the houses would be constituted to oversee the implementation of the CPEC and other related projects to the satisfaction of all the political forces in the country**, informed a participant of the meeting. By and large, the participants were satisfied with the briefing of Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal, but as the meeting was truncated due to the PM's emergency visit to Karachi, it was decided that another session of the parliamentary leaders would be arranged soon as the government did not want to see the project in any controversy, sources said.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Evaluating CPEC, Sakib Sherani, *Dawn*, May 1⁷⁶

THE formal launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) during the recent visit of President Xi Jinping has understandably generated a lot of euphoria in Pakistan. With a planned portfolio of projects totalling around \$45 billion, the size of the 'investment' in the CPEC over the next 15 years, if

⁷⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-May-2015/govt-rules-out-change-in-economic-corridor>

⁷⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1179169/evaluating-cpec>

materialised, will equal the cumulative gross foreign direct investment inflows into Pakistan since 1970. **Viewing CPEC solely from the prism of the quantum of envisaged investment it will bring, as the government is doing, is wrong and misleading, however.....** In fact, a proper economic evaluation will need to arrive at the following conclusion: **do the benefits outweigh the costs? [...]A net increase in the import bill will only be a small part of the problem. Most of the envisioned projects will incur liabilities in foreign exchange** (for capital and fuel imports, debt servicing, profit repatriation and wages[Through some smart negotiations, **contracts signed with Chinese companies under the CPEC should emphasise the maximum possible use of local labour and maximum possible local procurement.** Another stratagem could be the negotiation of a follow-on, and larger, **currency swap arrangement whereby Pakistan gets to pay in rupees rather than in US dollars or renminbi. Unfortunately, 'smart negotiations' do not appear to be a forte of the government — nor a primary interest.****The government's capacity to plan, coordinate and execute projects is at a seriously low ebb, and the lack of institutional reform is showing up in our inability to implement initiatives ...**

Is the economy shining? Editorial, *Dawn*, May 8⁷⁷

FOR at least a year now, a pattern has been coming into increasingly sharper relief. As key indicators in the economy — reserves, growth, inflation — show an improvement, the government has been quick to claim credit for having turned the economy around. **But a chorus of voices, with weighty credentials and a presence in the domestic print media, has been regularly voicing grave doubts about the veracity of the turnaround,** pointing out that these are superficial developments and underlying weaknesses remain. Meanwhile, institutional voices such as that of the IMF and the State Bank have equally consistently been providing an upbeat assessment of the direction that the economy has taken during this period, and praised the government's handling of it. [...] **Yes, Pakistan has pulled back from the brink of a balance of payments crisis. Yes, the near total shutdown of the power system in March 2013 has been overcome. But it should also be remembered that the circular debt still remains; that investment is down while consumption is up; that the tax base has probably shrunk instead of increased; that FDI has shrivelled while repatriation of profits has ballooned; that the rupee may be stable but exports have fallen;** and so on. The positive developments that the government, and its chorus of approvers, wants us to believe are indeed real, but the devil is in the caveats.

⁷⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1180624/is-the-economy-shining>

Budget talk, Editorial , The News, May 28⁷⁸

Development and some relief for the people are be the two targets of the next budget – at least that is what Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif would have us believe. According to Sharif, key economic indicators have improved during the last two years, which should allow the government to share some of the benefits with the common man. The prime minister's views on the budget came while he was addressing the federal cabinet meeting called to finalise the budget strategy paper 2015-16. As is the case each year, the PM spoke of the need to streamline the tax system to reduce tax rates while broadening the tax base. The cabinet noted the need for immediate measures to benefit people with the help of the private sector, in addition to a number of long-term mega projects. Nawaz also praised Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on meeting growth targets and stabilising the country's economy. Expatriates were specifically mentioned while the decrease in discount rate was expected to increase investment in the country. The minister of commerce was directed to increase exports. [...]These are all very ambitious figures. Notably, the same day a meeting of the Annual Plan Coordination Committee announced a GDP growth target of 5.5 percent and promised a development outlay of Rs1,418 billion out of which Rs580 billion was earmarked for the federal government and Rs838 billion for the provinces. **Rs150 billion out of this amount has been allocated for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which will be a major component of the government's development strategy.** The major increase was on the side of the provinces – 28.9 percent. **Most of the federal money will go to running ministries and corporations such as Wapda and the National Highway Authority. Only Rs20 billion has been earmarked for social development programmes, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.**

SECURITY SITUATION

TERRORISM

Salmaan Taseer murder: Government challenges dropping terrorism charges against Qadri, The Express Tribune, May 10⁷⁹

The federal government on May 10 submitted an amended appeal against Islamabad High Court's decision to drop terrorism charges against Mumtaz Qadri, a former police guard who murdered Punjab governor Salmaan Taseer in Islamabad in 2011. The interior ministry, through Advocate on Record

⁷⁸ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-320555-Budget-talk>

⁷⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/883923/salmaan-taseer-murder-government-challenges-dropping-terrorism-charges-against-qadri/>

(AoR) Siddique Khan Baloch, filed an eight-page appeal under Article 185(3) of the Constitution, contending that Qadri's acquittal under Section 7 of the ATA 1997 was not in accordance with the law. *"The high court was not right to acquit the convict under Section 7(a) by not appropriately considering the peculiar features of the case, in which the governor of a province, holding constitutional office was murdered mercilessly in a busy commercial area in broad daylight by a person (deputed officially as a security guard) to save and secure the life of the governor,"* reads the interior ministry's appeal, a copy of which is available with The Express Tribune.

Karachi carnage our collective failure: Asif, *The Nation*, May 14⁸⁰

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said, *"If we claim our achievements in the war on terror, then we must admit our failures as well. Karachi terror attack is our collective failure and the responsibility should not be put on others' shoulders."* Talking to a private TV channel after attending a meeting chaired by the PM on 13, the minister said the elements behind this heinous terror attack would be given a befitting reply and brought to justice. *"We won't let these sacrifices go waste,"* he vowed. He said the Karachi situation came to normalcy, but the terrorists once again managed to shed blood in the city. He said the government has taken a stern notice of the hatred being spread in the name of religion. He said the community that played a vital role in the Pakistan Movement became victim of the Safoora incident. The minister said that national unity is the need of the hour and every individual of the society must have to take responsibility in this regard.

PM chairs meeting to review Zarb-i-Azb, NAP, *Dawn*, May 27⁸¹

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif chaired a high-level meeting at Prime Minister House on May 27. Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif, DG ISI Lieutenant General Rizwan Akhtar, DG ISPR Major General Asim Bajwa, Federal Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Federal Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif and other senior civil and military officials were among those attending the meeting. The meeting reviewed progress on operation Zarb-i-Azb and discussed matters relating to the return of Temporarily Dislocated Persons. The meeting also reviewed progress on National Action Plan and discussed measures for its effective implementation.

⁸⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-May-2015/karachi-carnage-our-collective-failure-asif>

⁸¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1184533/pm-chairs-meeting-to-review-zarb-i-azb-nap>

Execution of NAP: Sindh govt's inaction disappoints Centre, *The Express Tribune*, May 28⁸²

A high-level huddle on May 27 expressed satisfaction over the resumption of channels of communication between the interior ministry and the Prime Minister House to coordinate implementation of the new counterterrorism plan but voiced dismay over its poor execution in Sindh. The civil and military leadership believe the Sindh government has not complied with the apex committee's decisions regarding the law and order situation in Karachi and NAP's execution, said a source. "The committee's recommendation of deploying professional and competent police officers was also ignored," he said. "Similarly, the counter-terrorism force (CTF) for Sindh's urban areas, particularly for Karachi, has yet to shape up." Despite their disappointment in the Sindh government, the civil and military leadership vowed to continue the ongoing surgical operation in Karachi.

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA AND FATA

KP witnesses decline in terror acts, *Dawn*, May 6⁸³

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province witnessed a sharp decline in the incidents of terrorism in the first four months of the current year compared to the same period in previous years. According to official data, during the current year, 85 incidents took place compared to 183 in 2014, 173 in 2013 and 134 in 2012, respectively. The analysis showed that 37 IED blasts took place during the current year so far compared to 97 in 2014, 114 in 2013 and 83 in 2012, respectively. Similarly, there was a decline in vehicle borne IED and suicide incidents, as during the current year only two incidents of suicide bombings took place compared to six in 2014 and 10 in 2013. In hand grenade/target killing incidents, there was also a sharp decrease as only 13 incidents of hand grenades throwing and 33 of firing were reported in 2015 so far compared to 26 and 45 in year 2014. Similarly, casualty rate occurred during the current year was the lowest in the last four years, according to the data revealed at a meeting chaired by KP Inspector General of Police Nasir Khan Durrani on May 5.

ASI shot dead in Peshawar, *The Nation*, May 14⁸⁴

Unknown riders shot dead an Assistant Police Inspector in Yakka Toot area on May 14. The police official was going on duty, when he was gunned down

⁸²<http://tribune.com.pk/story/893565/execution-of-nap-sindh-govts-inaction-disappoints-centre/>

⁸³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1180286>

⁸⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-May-2015/asi-shot-dead-in-peshawar>

by unidentified men on motorcycle. On the other hand, at least two militants got killed and two were detained in police, when security forces were on an operation in Hayatabad area of Peshawar. According to details, police and security forces during a joint operation raided a house, where the militants opened fire on them retaliating to which two of the militants got killed, whereas two were arrested. One policeman was also wounded in exchange of fire.

Foreigners arrested in Peshawar search operations, *The News*, May 23⁸⁵

Security forces and law enforcement personnel carried out search operations in different parts of Peshawar on May 23, arresting at least 100 suspects including foreign nationals. Police said that they have also busted a three-member gang of dacoits operating in the city. The joint-operation was carried out in the jurisdictions of Cantonment circle's West and East police stations as well as Pishta Khara and Gulberg areas. Police said 100 suspects were arrested including 25 Afghan nationals residing illegally in Peshawar. Five pistols, one rifle and hundreds of live bullet-rounds were recovered from the suspects. Police further claimed that they have also busted a three-man gang of robbers who were involved in robberies in the Peshawar Cantonment areas.

BALUCHISTAN

Miscreants kidnap two laborers from coal mine, *The Nation*, May 14⁸⁶

At least 25 miscreants on late May 13 night kidnapped two laborers from the local coal mine, in Sharag area and set the equipment on fire. According to the sources, more than 25 armed men entered a coal mine in Sharag Area of Harnai Tehsil and kidnapped Wali Khan and Aqeel Khan, the two laborers there. The miscreants set the equipment on fire before leaving. The kidnapped laborers belong to Swat. The levies personnel have initiated a probe into the matter.

LEAs accused of killing innocent people in Balochistan, *Dawn*, May 19⁸⁷

A member of the treasury benches from Balochistan has accused LEAs of killing innocent people in the name of security in his province. Speaking in the National Assembly on May 18, Sardar Kamal Khan Bangulzai of the National Party said: "If security agencies didn't mend their ways, I am afraid they will face more robust resistance from militants in coming days" because near and dear ones of innocent victims were left with no option but to take up arms. He

⁸⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-185807-100-including-foreigners-arrested-in-Peshawar-search-operations>

⁸⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-May-2015/miscreants-kidnap-two-laborers-from-coal-mine>

⁸⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1182765>

said Baloch people, including public servants, were picked up by agencies and their bodies were found within 24 hours. The MNA alleged three brothers were taken away from his home district of Mastung a few days ago and two of them were killed during investigation. *"Even if they were involved in a crime, didn't they deserve a fair trial?"*

FC killed 29 militants in Balochistan, *The Express Tribune*, May 25⁸⁸

Security forces have killed over two dozen militants belonging to outlawed Baloch insurgents and the TTP and also destroyed a number of their hideouts in various districts of Balochistan in the past one month. *"Frontier Corps [FC] killed 29 militants associated with the Baloch separatist groups and the TTP, including two suicide bombers, during the search operation in the province,"* said Home Minister Sarfaraz Bugti and DIG FC Brig Mohammad Tahir in a news briefing at the FC Help Center in Kholia Phattack on May 22. They also destroyed eight insurgents' hideouts during the month-long operation, he added. The home minister said the TTP militants were sneaking into Balochistan from North Waziristan Agency where Zarb-e-Azb operation is in its decisive phase. But the FC did not let them set up camps in the province, he added. He said the FC carried out the search operation in various districts including Kalat, Mastung, Awaran, Turbat, Zhob, Loralai and Killa Abdullah where the security forces killed notorious militants during the shootout.

Balochistan: Operation launched against targeted killings, *Dawn*, May 29⁸⁹

Balochistan Home Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti announced that security forces have launched an intelligence-based operation in Quetta and its surrounding areas. Speaking at a news conference late May 27 night, he said that the operation was carried out without discrimination. Balochistan Inspector General G Amlish Khan and Home Secretary Akbar Hussain Durrani were also present. Earlier, a high level meeting of the provincial security set-up reviewed the spate of targeted killings of Hazara community people in Quetta. Bugti said that police, Levies and Frontier Corps will jointly conduct action against terrorists. He said that terrorists used weapons with silencers in the attack on the Hazara people. *"The conspiracy to pit people against each other in the name of language, sect and religion will be foiled with the help of the people,"* he said. He did not agree with a remark that there was no writ of the government and said: *"Quetta is under the writ of government and that will be maintained at all cost."*

⁸⁸<http://tribune.com.pk/story/890948/one-month-operation-fc-killed-29-militants-in-balochistan-says-minister/>

⁸⁹<http://tribune.com.pk/story/894083/balochistan-unrest-operation-launched-against-targeted-killings/>

SINDH

TTP claims Karachi attack that killed DSP, two others, Dawn, May 1⁹⁰

At least three policemen, including a DSP, were killed on May 1 when armed men opened fire on their vehicle in Karachi's Gulshan-i-Hadeed area. Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan spokesperson Muhammad Khurasani claimed responsibility for the attack in an email sent to journalists. Police sources say Bin Qasim DSP Fateh Mohammad Sangi was on a routine patrol with his driver, constable Farooq, and a guard, constable Nazeer, when motorcycle-riding gunmen opened fire on the vehicle they were travelling in, severely injuring the three men. The unidentified assailants fled after attacking the vehicle. Police and emergency teams reached the spot, situated near Bacha Khan Chowk in Gulshan-i-Hadeed Phase-I area within the remit of Steel Town police station of Karachi. The injured men were shifted to a nearby hospital where all three succumbed to their wounds during treatment. Investigative teams recovered 22 bullet casings from the scene of the crime.

43 killed in attack on bus carrying Ismailis in Karachi, Dawn, May 13⁹¹

At least 43 people were killed and 13 others wounded on 13 May when armed men opened fire inside a bus carrying members of the Ismaili community near Safoora Chowk in Karachi. Sindh Police Inspector General Ghulam Haider Jamali said that 60 people were on board the bus when six gunmen entered and executed 43 passengers. He added that the armed men used 9mm pistols in the massacre. The attackers managed to flee after the attack. Hospital sources have so far confirmed that the dead include 25 men and 16 women. Police officials said that there were no children among the casualties. All victims were shot from a close-range. Rana M Razzaq, a security coordinator at the Memon Medical Center, told Dawn that, "*One young girl hid and survived. Three or four others who were brought to the hospital have survived...the rest are all dead.*" Jundullah claims attack. Ahmed Marwat, a spokesman for Jundullah which is a splinter group of the TTP, talking to Reuters claimed responsibility for the attack.

Nisar chairs meeting to review security situation in Karachi, Dawn, May 18⁹²

Federal Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan arrived in Karachi May 18 on a one-day visit to get a detailed briefing regarding Wednesday's terrorist attack on a bus carrying members of the Ismaili community near Safoora Goth in which 45 people were killed and eight others were injured. The interior

⁹⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1179338/ttp-claims-karachi-attack-that-killed-dsp-two-others>

⁹¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1181698/43-killed-in-attack-on-bus-carrying-ismailis-in-karachi>

⁹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1182713/nisar-chairs-meeting-to-review-security-situation-in-karachi>

minister's absence at an apex committee meeting last week was conspicuous, as the high-level huddle was chaired by the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Raheel Sharif and attended by high-level civil and military officials including army chief General Raheel Sharif, ISI Director General (DG) Rizwan Akhtar, Corps Commander Karachi Lt Gen Naveed Mukhtar, Rangers DG Major General Bilal Akbar, Federal Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, federal interior secretary, federal chief secretary, Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah, Sindh Governor Ishratul Ibad and MQM leader Farooq Sattar.

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

Pakistan's stand vindicated on Dawood issue: envoy, *Dawn*, May 7⁹³

India's admission that it was not aware of Mumbai fugitive Dawood Ibrahim's whereabouts is a vindication of Pakistan's stand that the wanted underworld don was not hiding in its territory, Pakistan's High Commissioner in India Abdul Basit has said. According to a summary of an interview provided by Headlines Today before it was shown on May 6 night, Mr Basit also spoke at length about issues stalling the peace dialogue with India and his persistent efforts to revive it. India's Minister of State for Home Affairs Haribhai Chaudhary told parliament on May 7 that India does not know where Dawood Ibrahim is located. Mr Basit was quoted as saying that Mr Chaudhary's statement also raised critical and disturbing questions about the veracity of India's dossiers which he described as "self-serving".

India should refrain from interfering in Pakistan, *Dawn*, May 7⁹⁴

Former Foreign Office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam on May 7 introduced her successor Qazi Khalilullah at a media briefing in Islamabad, said a report published on Radio Pakistan. Qazi Khalilullah has fulfilled diplomatic responsibilities in Russia, Tajikistan, Geneva, Myanmar and Cuba. At the briefing in Islamabad today, FO spokesperson Qazi Khalilullah said that Pakistan has always asked India to refrain from interfering in Pakistan's internal matters, and maintained that in the future they would continue to remind India to do so. He said that the government has provided proof of India's involvement in Pakistan's internal affairs, including the recent secretary-level talks. Responding to a question about Dawood Ibrahim, Khalilullah said the government maintained the underworld fugitive is not on Pakistani soil, and that India had accepted Pakistan's ignorance of his whereabouts.

⁹³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1180482/pakistans-stand-vindicated-on-dawood-ibrahim-issue-envoy>

⁹⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1180530/india-should-refrain-from-interfering-in-pakistans-internal-affairs-fo>

Modi condemns Karachi terror attack, *The Nation*, May 14⁹⁵

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed sorrow over the loss of innocent lives in a terrorist attack on a passenger bus in Karachi on May 13. In a tweet, Modi said, "*The attack in Karachi is deeply saddening & utterly condemnable. Our thoughts are with the families of the deceased.*" He said, "*We stand firmly with the people of Pakistan in this hour of grief. I wish all those injured a quick recovery*".

RAW involved in terrorist activities across Pakistan: foreign secretary, *Dawn*, May 14⁹⁶

Foreign Secretary Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry on May 14 said the Indian intelligence agency RAW is involved in various terrorist activities across Pakistan. Chaudhry added that the matter had been taken up "a number of times" at the highest level with India through diplomatic channels. He also touched upon the Karachi bus attack in an informal conversation with media representatives in Islamabad, saying that it is too early to confirm the involvement of Daesh. Chaudhry said that Daesh's involvement in the attack cannot be established on the basis of a pamphlet purportedly left by militant group. However, he said, security agencies are investigating the attack.

BJP minister 'confirmed' India promoting terror in Pakistan: Aziz, *The Nation*, May, 23⁹⁷

Pakistan on May 22 expressed serious concern over the Indian threat to 'use terrorism to counter terrorism' from other countries, ***saying it confirms Islamabad's apprehensions about New Delhi's involvement in terrorism in Pakistan.*** Adviser to the Prime Minister on National Security Sartaj Aziz and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif expressed serious concern over the statement made by Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar that India will use terrorism to counter terrorism from other countries.

Senate committee adopts resolution against Indian Defence Minister statement, *Dawn*, May 27⁹⁸

Taking strong exception to the statement made by Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar about sponsoring terrorism to counter terrorism, the Senate's Standing Committee on Defence on May 26 adopted a condemnation resolution. The committee said the statement is an "open confession" of the

⁹⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-May-2015/modi-condemns-karachi-terror-attack>

⁹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1181908/raw-involved-in-terrorist-activities-across-pakistan-foreign-secretary>

⁹⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/24-May-2015/bjp-minister-confirmed-india-promoting-terror-in-pakistan-aziz>

⁹⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1184544/senate-committee-adopts-resolution-against-indian-defence-minister-statement>

Indian government pursuing the policy of state terrorism. Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Defence Mushahid Hussain Syed presided over the meeting of the committee at Parliament House in the federal capital. The meeting also called upon the government to take up the matter with the UN security council and the international community. The resolution said the statement has serious implications for India's neighbours, and endangers peace and stability in South Asia

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Army's allegations against RAW, editorial, *Dawn*, May 7⁹⁹

Army corps commanders' conference has resulted in a rather extraordinary allegation: *"The Conference also took serious notice of RAW's involvement in whipping up terrorism in Pakistan,"* according to an ISPR press release after Tuesday's conference. Given the forum from which the allegation has emanated, it cannot — nor should it — be easily dismissed. For years, Pakistan and India have traded accusations about RAW and ISI fomenting trouble in each other's vulnerable and unstable regions. ***Inside Pakistan, there has been a consistent set of allegations that Fata, Balochistan and Karachi have been the area of particular focus of the Indian intelligence apparatus.[...] Where intelligence agencies may be creating mischief and stoking trouble, the only long-term answer is to try and restart a process that can lead to normalisation of ties. The seriousness of the army leadership's allegations notwithstanding, shadowy struggles between the intelligence apparatuses in the two countries should not overwhelm the broader need for finding common ground.*** Finally, there is an internal dimension to the problem too: wherever it has been alleged that Indian involvement has been detected, it has come in areas long mismanaged by the Pakistani state itself. Fata, Balochistan and Karachi have all suffered from the abdication by the state of its basic duties towards the people of those areas. ***As the corps commanders' conference stressed, the key is to press ahead with the fight against militancy internally. But a militarised strategy will never work — not in Fata, Balochistan or Karachi. At best, it will cause violence to temporarily subside,*** as seen after previous significant operations, only for it to re-emerge elsewhere or in a different form in the same places. Ultimately, internal security is about the right internal and external policies.

Bus to Islamabad, Fahd Humayun, *The News*, May 28¹⁰⁰

When Indian Defence Minister Manmohan Parrikar spoke of 'neutralising terrorists through terrorists' on a private news channel last week, his

⁹⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1180370/armys-allegations-against-raw>

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-320559-Bus-to-Islamabad>

comments threw into sharp relief the time warp that the India-Pakistan relationship has found itself hostage to. This summer marks a year since the BJP, led by Narendra Modi, ascended to power in India. But despite the initial optimism of fresh engagement and indeed possible rapprochement between South Asia's two largest powers, made feasible by the political capital suddenly available to an emboldened and unencumbered government in New Delhi, real progress between India and Pakistan continues to logjam. Two trends have dominated Indo-Pak ties over the past twelve months: unprecedented violence along the Line of Control and Working Boundary climaxing in early October, and cautious overtures at the official level, beginning with Indian Foreign Secretary Jaishankar's visit to Islamabad in March. But the absence of any follow-up to the foreign secretaries' spring meeting speaks to the chronic malaise that continues to dash hopes for a bilateral breakthrough. In his first year in office, a staggering 15 foreign state visits has turned Modi from persona-non grata to one of India's best-travelled prime ministers. On the border dispute with China, India held its 17th round of talks between special representatives in February. But the same enthusiastic outreach has skipped over Pakistan, despite Islamabad's readiness to engage. [...] So what's next? In the immediate term, the ball is in India's court. India must follow up on Secretary Jaishankar's visit with a reciprocal invitation to Pakistani Foreign Secretary Aizaz Chaudhry, sooner rather than later. Multilateralism cannot, and should not, be the default parameter for Indo-Pak engagement. India will also have to appreciate the limited utility of conditionality dressed as overture in engaging any capital – least of all Islamabad. ***India's apparent indifference to Pakistan's domestic and regional course-corrections, and the judicial and legal difficulties in prosecuting the perpetrators of 26/11, needs to be shelved in lieu of a broader rethink about an interconnected South Asia it wishes to lead into the next decade.*** And while Twitter and hashtag diplomacy makes for good optics, this is no substitute for deeper, institutionalised engagement. ***Pakistan meanwhile, needs to bring trade back onto the bilateral radar even if this means going back to the September 2012 drawing board.*** Islamabad must also accept that, as far as economic compulsions go, ***trade liberalisation helps Pakistan more than it helps India.*** While it may not be possible to pre-empt another summer of dust-ups and discontent on the LoC, the leaderships of both countries enjoy the political wherewithal to offset obstacles with creative engagement that goes beyond crisis management. A previous BJP prime minister demonstrated political courage by taking a bus to Lahore. Towards the end of his tenure, Dr Singh – despite his predisposition towards peace – lamented that his failure to visit Pakistan was a function of being domestically boxed in at home. ***It would be a shame if Prime Minister Modi, given all his majorities and machismo, failed to take that leap of faith.***

EXCERPTS FROM URDU MEDIA

Urgent Need to Review India's Poor Planning and Sickening Policies in Afghanistan, "We could make breakfast in Peshawar, lunch at Kabul and dinner at Zahiden!, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, April 30, 2015¹⁰¹

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani during his first visit to India met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Foreign Minister and he offered his full cooperation to wipe out terrorism from the region. He emphasized upon them that he would wish to see that Afghanistan was a 'grave yard' of terrorists. In this regard, **he sincerely wanted full support and cooperation from Pakistan, Bharat and some other countries.**

In response to his request – **Modi government sent three Cheetal helicopters and wanted to be part of Pak-Afghan trade and transit agreement so as to be accessible to Afghanistan. Prime Minister Modi while talking about lack of interest of Pakistan government, assured Ashraf Ghani to trade with Afghanistan through Iran by upgrading Chabahar port .**

It has been seen that terrorism has been a bane for Pakistan and Afghanistan. Both countries have blamed each other and have claimed that their lands are not being used to carry out attack on the other. Despite Ashraf Ghani's all-out efforts, there appears to be no significant change due to long borders between two countries. **It has also been seen that Afghanistan is not only used by Pakistani fugitives for carrying out attacks inside Pakistan, Bharat also spares no chance to carry out nefarious activities inside Pakistan. Chaotic conditions inside Balochistan and Waziristan (in past) bear ample proof of India's involvement,** while India alleges that struggle for Azadi in occupied Kashmir is the brain-child of Pakistani security agencies. And see how Ashraf Ghani has been soliciting India's cooperation to wipe out terrorism!

On one hand, India wants to be part and parcel of Pak-Afghanistan Transit Trade Pact, while on the other hand, it wants Afghanistan to distance itself from Pakistan. Instead of Gwadar port, India wants to upgrade Chah Bahar port in Iran. If India cultivates economic relations with Iran (Chah Bahar), then it would not be certainly be a gainful venture for Pakistan.

As we know Gwadar port (Balochistan) would be operated by China, which would greatly improve the economic conditions of Pakistan. This is an eye-sore for India and some other countries. **Modi's evil mind (Habas Vadan) has come to the fore when he is progress focusing his attention on Chah Bahar**

¹⁰¹ <http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2015-04-30/page-14/detail-9>

port in Iran. India wants to halt the economic progress of Pakistan by reducing the importance of Gwadar port!

Needless to say, Pak-Afghanistan region has a bearing on trade and commerce in South Asia because of its strategic location. The two countries provide corridor for all commercial transactions between Middle Eastern and South Asian states Modi govt. has made vain attempts to show green pastures to Ashraf Ghani. He even reiterated Manmohan Singh's statement "People are waiting for the day when they would have breakfast in Delhi, Lunch at Peshawar and dinner at Kabul! **However, this dream cannot be fulfilled due to the prevailing war-like situation between India and Pakistan.**

Bravo Pakistan Military: Bravo Pakistan Army, Khaled Kashmiri, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, May 2, 2015¹⁰²

Bravo to our soldiers and to our military who have given splendid examples of their diligence and devotion **to protect our sovereignty and safety of our land and foiled malicious designs of our enemy.** Otherwise they (India) would have seized whole of Jammu and Kashmir in 1948. Thence onwards, Pakistan military has given great sacrifices and **thwarted all attempts of our enemies who were bent upon wiping out Pakistan from the world map.**

Pakistan came into existence because of Hazrat Qaide Azam's Two-Nation theory. There were many (Muslims) who fought tooth and nail not to create Pakistan and they sided with Congress leadership. But, later on they migrated from East Punjab and settled down in Pakistan. **On the chessboard of Pakistani politics, some of them later turned out as extremists, who got a golden opportunity to destabilize and disturb the peaceful atmosphere.** They not only started targeting eminent citizens but threw bombs at the tombs of Auliya Akram and Sufi Azam. Their destruction and killing spree was so high that people were scared and could not name these extremist elements. **And then, it became an open secret that all these extremists were getting outside support and even now foreign countries are patronizing them.**

General Raheel Sharif was cent per cent correct when he said that the support system of these extremist groups is being targeted by the military. This clearly indicates that extremist elements have created safe havens in different places throughout the country. **And these militants are dancing to the tunes of the foreign masters and thus bring death and destruction to our country.** Terrorist attack on super Highway near Sehrab Goth in Karachi, wherein 4 militants were killed is a case in point. **Our intelligence agencies should investigate the connections and bring these facts before the public.**

¹⁰² [http://www.nawaiwaq.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2015-05-02/page 15/detail-10](http://www.nawaiwaq.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2015-05-02/page%2015/detail-10)

India's Role in Afghanistan has come to an end, Syed Nasie Reza Kazmi, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, May 2, 2015¹⁰³

Blaming others for our misdeeds does not help anyone rather it vitiates the atmosphere around us. We should be bold enough to take the responsibility of all bad decisions and then find out their solutions!

In these circumstances when we look at governance in Afghanistan, we see that for eight long years, the government of Hamid Karzai was inundated with corruption and no effort was made to root out corruption from the govt. agencies. Rather, Karzai govt. was instrumental in (i) encouraging all mal-practices and spreading pernicious views in the (against Pakistan) and (ii) encouraging terrorist elements inside and outside the country. ***In addition, Uncle Sam also closed his eyes and allowed all the irregularities to flourish.*** Contrary to this, Ashraf Ghani government has been more people-friendly and has earned confidence of the people.

On taking over the reins of the country, Ashraf Ghani – contrary to the earlier practice followed by Dr. Hamid Karzai visited Pakistan. Thereafter, he went to Iran and China. Only after these visits, he visited India. ***In this way, he showed that India was not his priority like his predecessor, Karzai.*** Now he has won confidence of his neighbouring countries and he has assured them that his land would not be used for carrying out any nefarious activities and malicious attacks upon any neighbour. ***Since Modi has taken over as Prime Minister of India, he has been given the impression (by President Ghani) through diplomatic channels that Afghanistan should not be taken as their (India's) fiefdom [Jaagir] – a subjugated estate, and further, Afghanistan will not dance to Modi's tunes.*** This is despite a grant of US\$ 2 billion by India, which was used for construction of roads and bridges. ***Most of the money (given away by India) was swindled by Ahmed Karzai – Hamid's brother, whose whereabouts are not known.***

Development of Gwadar port (by China) has become an eye-sore for the Modi government. India under the BJP government has been creating bottlenecks in our economic development. Now India has taken up the development of Cha Bahar port of Iran.

On 28 April 2015, during his meeting with Modi, Ghani hoped that Afghanistan would be a graveyard of terrorists. In this connection, he sought India's help and cooperation along with Pakistan and other neighboring countries to wipe out terrorism. He emphasized that we have to arrive at

¹⁰³ <http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2015-05-02/page-15.detail> -12

consensus on **'terrorism'– a grave problem which has eaten up economy of the region like termite.**

Needless to say that geographically, Afghanistan is situated at the meeting point of South Asia, Middle East and West Asia. Once Afghanistan becomes stable, it will be a transit country for oil and gas pipelines. It will earn a lot of revenue in the form of transit fee and its economy would flourish. Countries in South Asia are facing energy crisis. Afghanistan would therefore be a useful transit point for them. Afghanistan also wants more aerial flights to pass through Kabul.***In short, no foreign country should treat Afghanistan as its fiefdom (Jaagir). Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has made it clear to India he is looking for perfect peace in the region. It means Bharat's role in the name of fraternal cooperation in Afghanistan is now over. This is great success for government of Afghanistan and its people!***

Sino-Pakistan economic relations why we squabble over transit fees? Syed Imdad Hussain Shah., *Daily Ausaf*, May 11, 2015¹⁰⁴

It has often been observed in Pakistan that whenever there is any move to start any national development project to redress the sufferings of people, the so-called well-wishers (political parties) of country start criticizing and create bottlenecks in the development projects to earn fake credit.

For example, Miyan brothers (the Sharifs) made so much false propaganda that with the completion of Nandipur Development Plan, there would be no load-shedding in Punjab. Later on, when they came to power, we learnt that this very Project was merely a garbage dump. Economically it was not at all a fruitful venture to implement.

Then came the reports on Chiniot Natural Resources (discovered by a Chinese group— the Metallurgical Cooperation of China). ***It was publicized that when the iron ore in Chiniot would be harnessed by the China and a steel mill would be set up there, it will drive away poverty in the whole country (especially in Punjab).*** Later on, we were told that the leaders made this promises bases on false data. ***Then came the reports on Thar coal mines,*** wherein Dr. Samar Mubarak Mand claimed that the project would meet the energy requirement of the whole country. We were made to believe soon afterwards that the quality of coal in Thar was of a very poor quality and hence coal extraction would not be cost-effective. Who is then behind such false publicity?

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.ausaf.pk/wp.content/uploads/2015-05-11/p.14-08.jpg>

It is imperative for our leaders to explain to us as to who amongst our neighbours are our well-wishers and who are not; Some of them want to destabilize Balochistan by providing help to the Baloch militants. **Some others are threatening Pakistan to either attack an Islamic force (ISIS) or face dire consequences.**

Again there are those who want to extract oil from countries in the region and later supply it to Afghanistan, Pakistan and even India. India has happily agreed to such proposals. **However, India opted out of the Iran pipeline citing security reasons. The fact is that India, during the period when Iran was under severe international sanctions, had bargained for cheap oil [half the international price] worth 800 billion of rupees [from other sources mediated by the West]. This trade continues even now.**

Indian media and security agencies have unleashed vicious propaganda against the construction of the silk route at a height of 32,000 ft. running through Kasghar straddling the borders of China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India. A special security force will be dedicated to provide security to this route. **Some countries like India have strong objections because they would not be able to earn any transit fee from such a route. Further, their plans of initiating "cold start" against Pakistan could not mature. They are worried that through this 'silk route' highway, China will have on-land access to Pakistan throughout the year, while India accesses these regions only through helicopters.** For the aforesaid reasons, one could fathom the anguish and disappointment amongst these countries.

The Western countries have upgraded India as a "mini-super power" and finalized civil nuclear energy agreements with it, while they have set aside Pakistan as an insecure country where conditions are volatile.. How could they see Pakistan emerge as a strong country? Sino-Pak Agreement has dashed all their hopes [of keeping Pakistan poor and weak] to the ground. As a fallout of these developments, Western countries have intensified their activities to bring down Pakistan. **Incidentally, international media has severely criticized the Western governments for having missed their chances in Pakistan, while China has taken full advantage of the situation.**

Now Miyan Nawaz Sharif govt. is bent on bringing this silk route from Kashgar through Punjab and then to other provinces. **But the opposition consisting of Tehrike Insaf, Jamait-e--Islami, ANP, JUI and Baloch parties have called for their second All Party Conference on 16 May, because Ahsan Iqbal's statement has made it clear that Nawaz Shaif government, by giving priority to Punjab, wants to gain credit for his party.** The opposition parties have announced that they will not allow the route to bypass other provinces.

If Nawaz government did not accept their plan, they have threatened to close the Silk route. This has been conveyed to the Chinese Ambassador also. In short, the National Development Plan, like the Kalabagh dam, could be a victim of petty political wrangling. As a result, the people of Pakistan will suffer. ***It is, therefore, the need of the hour that Punjab leadership should exhibit its magnanimity and think of progress of less-developed provinces, which are also part of Pakistan and thus moderate their approach to the issue.*** This is very much required in the long run for the benefit of Pakistan!

Identifying new dangers looming over Gilgit-Baltistan! Editorial, *Bang-e-Sahar*, May 18, 2015¹⁰⁵

These days, the election fever has grappled whole of Gilgit-Baltistan, wherein leaders of various parties are making tantalizing statements whereby innocent people of Gilgit Baltistan are in a fix and fail to fathom the authenticity of these assurances made by several political leaders.

Yesterday, Hafiz-ur-Rehman, (the chief minister designate) while addressing a press conference disclosed that some malicious elements were spreading germs of sectarianism in the region. ***He severely criticised those politico-religious organizations, which claim to be working for unity of Muslims but in reality remain subservient to Indian security agency-RAW.*** The statements made by Hafiz-ur-Rehman and former water and power minister Deedar Ali may be supported by some evidence, but everyone here also knows that here in Gilgit, agencies of other countries (apart from those of Pakistan) are also frantically active.

Hafiz-ur-Rehman has claimed that it was not a new thing that these parties bring funds from outside to spread sectarianism. However, it was strange that despite everyone knowing everything, no one wants to come out openly and oppose it. ***Although election campaigning has been peaceful, still Election Commission should be vigilant about such statements emanating from political leaders which are bellicose in nature.***

As far as presence of RAW in Gilgit-Baltistan is concerned, it is of course not a new issue. For the last few weeks, Islamabad has also been harping on this issue. It has alleged that security agencies of Bharat have been planning to carry out attacks inside Pakistan, using the soil of Afghanistan.

Needless to say that Pakistan is very much concerned that India has established a new Desk in New Delhi for sabotaging Pak-China Economic

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.bangesahar.net/popup.php?r-date=05-18-2015&img=05-18-2015page2->

corridor project. If this be so, its target would also include Gilgit-Baltistan because it is the gateway to prosperity in Pakistan.

Even though Pakistan did not take Gilgit-Baltistan into confidence before signing the Agreement on Economic Corridor with China, its people do not want any confrontation with the government in Islamabad. They only want a peaceful solution to their issues and their struggle would continue. The government and administration should play their roles with magnanimity. Election Commission should be cautious so that no untoward incident – like the Bus incident in Shafoora Goth, Karachi– is not repeated anymore.

India's involvement in Karachi massacre, Mehtab Khan, *Daily Ausaf*, May 15, 2015.¹⁰⁶

Pakistani Senate has unanimously passed Resolution on Karachi massacre and Pakistan Army Chief Gen. Raheel spoke to Prince Karim Agha Khan, the spiritual leader of the Ismailis on telephone and expressed his condolences and deep concern.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has asked all the security agencies to (i) be well-prepared for the coming challenges; (ii) take strong action against all banned organizations, terrorists and also their supporters, (iii) initiate final round of target operation in Karachi. ***On the other hand, they have found pro-RAW elements involved in the Safoora Goth incident. An investigation team has arrested two suspects in the meanwhile who had received training in India. Pakistan Foreign Office has also disclosed that Indian security agency-RAW is spreading rumours to destabilize the present peaceful conditions in the country. Our Prime Minister is correct in saying that our neighbor cannot appreciate or digest our development and progress. Its main agenda is to destabilize Pakistan. So we must gird up our lions to foil all malicious designs hatched by our enemy.***

Sofora Goth incident is utterly condemnable. In this incident, a peaceful community has been targeted and their women and children have fallen victims to the mindless attackers. The culprits would soon be arrested and brought to book. We have vigorously implemented National Action Plan against militants. ***It seems that our economic recovery is not appreciated by our neighbour (India).*** To bring peace to the disturbed city (Karachi), we have to keep constant vigil on our enemies. Our security agencies also need to maintain close coordination to achieve their objective. For last one decade, Pakistan has been in the grip of terrorism, wherein Karachi and Khyber

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2015-05-15/p14-03.jpg>.

Pakhtunkhwa have been greatly affected. ***Our Prime Minister should collect all the data and evidences connected with Karachi incident and present it to Indian authorities and also inform United Nations, USA and other Western countries and show them how India has been inciting terrorist elements to destabilize Pakistan.***

Pak-China Economic Corridor is vital for our economic development and it has unsurprisingly become an eye sore for the enemy (India). What is important now is that most seasoned officers should investigate all high profile cases. It is equally important to bring an end to land mafia in Karachi. Weapons mafia and other mafias need to be eliminated. One similarity was conspicuously visible in all terrorist attacks i.e. Sabeena Mahmood, Haider al Rehman, and the latest Karachi bus incident, i.e., new arms and ammunition were used in these incidents.

Gigantic Work of RAW, Naveed Massod Hashmi, *Daily Ausaf*, May 18, 2015.¹⁰⁷

The tyrants, murderers, terrorists have accomplished a major success by killing 45 members of Ismaili community. In other words the mischief mongers have attempted to divert public attention from Karachi operation. As we know Gen.Raheel Sharif cancelled his Sri Lanka visit and rushed to Karachi, where he was briefed by D.G., Rangers and others. ***Gen.Raheel later on gave orders to arrest all the agents of RAW and those involved in this heinous crime at Safoor Goth.***

Behind the veil of Jind-ul-Allah or ISIS, Indian security agency accomplished this task, but now everything has come out before the public. Pakistan Intelligence agencies have tightened the noose around all RAW agents and their supporters. The experts believe that the technique used in this operation belonged to RAW.

A few weeks ago, S.S.P. Maleer Distt., Rao Anwar, presented some terrorists before media, who confirmed that they had been trained at "training center" in India. On 5 May, 2015, at the Corps Commanders meet, it was agreed that the terrorist campaigns carried out inside Pakistan by notorious organization RAW is the main obstacle in smooth finalization of Pak-China Economic Corridor project. ***It has even opened a new Desk in New Delhi with the sole objective of killing innocent Pakistanis. RAW has publicized that despite Pakistan's claim of having foolproof security system in place in Karachi to eliminate all terrorists how come they could not check those elements that***

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2015-05-18/p14-06>

killed 45 innocent lives. Again, by distributing ISIS pamphlet, RAW has tried to divert the attention of Pakistan security agencies as well as media.

Again Pakistan authorities, during their Kabul visit severely criticized RAW for operating out of Afghanistan and carrying out attacks inside Pakistan. In this context, Pakistan political leadership and Army Chief Raheel Sharif have decided to take immediate steps to curb all the activities on RAW-funded NGOs and other 'secular extremists' (secular dehshat gardon) inside Pakistan.

Needless to say that whether one is an Ismaili or a Bohra, a Shia or a Sunni, all of us have been victims of attacks carried out by notorious RAW.Now it is time that all RAW-funded NGO's, intelligentsia and electronic media channels and communal groups be taken to task and we should make serious efforts to free Karachites from the clutches of RAW once and for all.

Bellicose Statements Emanating From Indian Defense Minister, Editorial, Daily Express, May 25, 2015.¹⁰⁸

For last few decades, Pakistan has been fighting internally against the menace of terrorism. For the last few days, ***Pakistani government has announced to the whole world that Indian security agency 'RAW' was very much involved in triggering violence and sectarian strife within the country.*** Further, the Indian government has been working to sabotage peace and security in our country. Now the recent statement coming from the Indian Defense Minister, Manohar Parrikar, has further confirmed the apprehensions of our government. While speaking in a seminar on last Saturday (May 23, 2015), ***the Indian Defence Minister threatened that "terrorism" would be replied with "terrorism"***. If there was any further Mumbai-like attack, then it would be countered with similar terrorist attacks so that Indian military won't have to do anything. We will counter terrorism with terrorism.

Such bellicose statement emanating from Indian Defense Minister proves that India has openly come into the battle field with a spirit of vengeance and hostility. Out of frustration and hatred, India can go to any extent even if that puts at stake, peace of the entire region.

Reacting to such arrogant statement, Pakistan Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz has reportedly stated that Indian Defence Minister's statement confirms our apprehensions about Indian involvement in militant attacks inside our

¹⁰⁸<http://www.express.com.pk/epaper/PoPupwindow.aspx?newsID=110286656&Issue=NP-ISB&Date=20150525>

country. ...He added that this is first occasion when any Indian Minister openly advocated carrying out terrorist activities in another country. We still stick to our policy of having good neighborly policy with India. **Further, terrorists are our common enemies and it is in our interest to deal with this menace jointly.** Pakistan has been victim of this menace for a very long time.

Pakistan Information and broadcasting Minister Pervez Rasheed has also strongly condemned the threat of proxy war and said that for maintaining peace, the world powers should play their role to maintain peace in the region as the Indian Defence Minister's statement is very dangerous. At this time, world needs peace, progress, prosperity and security. **We are already fighting war against terrorism but Bharat is bent upon spreading terrorism.** India is involved in state sponsored violence in occupied Kashmir also and it has not allowed Human Rights agencies to visit occupied Kashmir. Now the present statement coming from Defence Minister **shows the real intentions of our neighbour. In other words, India wants to perpetuate its hegemony in the region. For this reason, it wants to destabilize Pakistan by all means.**

He further explained that there were several extremist organizations in India, whose main objective was to establish a "Hindu Kingdom" and enslave all Muslims or terminate them once and for all. Needless to say, all these extremist organizations are harmful for Muslims and Christians living in India. **Since the time Mr. Modi has taken over as Prime Minister of India, it has proved to be dangerous not only for the security and stability of Pakistan but also for the safety of the minorities living in India. All the measures taken by Modi Government prove that he is dreaming of establishing "Ram Rajya" in the whole region.** With this aim, Modi govt. is frantically visiting several countries and trying to get arms and ammunition. Surprisingly, United Nations— including United States or any other Western powers— has not yet condemned such aggressive designs hatched by India.

As we all know, our military has achieved unprecedented victory over terrorism in its Zarb-e-Azb operation. It has wiped out the command and control system of the terrorists in Waziristan and restored peace and stability in the region. **But we have a feeling that perhaps Bharat cannot appreciate or digest our success. Now the provocative statement coming from Indian Defence Minister makes it clear that by triggering violent attacks inside Pakistan, it wants to internally weaken Pakistan.** We have been at various times making it quite clear that we are not involved in any violent incident.

As far as incident of Mumbai attack is concerned, Pakistan was prepared to extend all its cooperation in bringing all the facts to light. We are sorry to say that there was no positive response from India to our gestures of

friendship. Rather the Modi govt has been issuing threatening statements against us. On the other hand, it has been seen that the Western powers have always been putting pressures on Pakistan not to get involved in terrorist activities, but when India is openly issuing threats to destabilize Pakistan and destroy peace in the region no one has taken notice of this. **No country has raised any objection to such irresponsible speeches.** It is imperative for the world community to object to such statements emanating from the Indian side. **And they should decide as to who is really responsible for triggering violence and inciting extremist elements which vitiate the atmosphere in the region.**

India has itself given proof of its involvement in acts of terrorism, Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, May 25, 2015.¹⁰⁹

For quite some time in the past, Pakistan has been telling the world leaders about India's deep involvement in carrying out militant attacks in occupied Kashmir and in Pakistan. It is sad that no world leader paid any heed to our complaints. **Now Bharat's Defence Minister Parrikar has himself accepted this fact that India is also fervently supporting terrorist elements!** In the same breath he has given threats to us that whosoever attempts to sneak inside our (India's) territory would not be spared. Further a terrorist would be killed by a terrorist. **He added that if any country has been hatching any plot or having nefarious plans to carry out attacks on India, then his government would take all possible measures ranging from putting diplomatic pressure on that country to setting a thief to catch a thief.**

India's Defense Minister also made an awkward allegation that terrorists are being paid monthly emoluments of INR10,000 to INR15,000 to carry out attacks in India. He added that if any Mumbai-type militant attack happened again then the retaliation from the Indian side would be very severe. He also explained that the terrorists could be eliminated only by terrorists, and it was strange that India did not resort to this practice earlier?

Pakistan's Federal Information Minister and Senator Pervez Rashid strongly condemned India for issuing threats of war and urged the world leaders to play their role effectively for maintaining peace & security in the region. This was important as the statement emanating from Indian Defence Minister was dangerous! **This is proof enough that Bharat is planning to spread terrorism in the region.**

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2015-05-25/p14-05.jpg>.

In our opinion, Indian Defence Minister is out of his wits and is talking utter nonsense. He should understand that nobody would take up guns and fight merely for INR.10,000 per month/attack. ***These boys are fighting for independence (Azadi) of Kashmir and would continue till they free whole of 'occupied Kashmir' from clutches of Indian dictatorship. Pakistan is helping them at the diplomatic level and on moral grounds.***It is imperative for world powers to work for international security and world peace. ***It is strange that a country (i.e. India) is advocating fervent support for terrorists as its official policy. It shows Bharat's evil intentions. The United Nations, USA, Britain and other world powers should pressurize Bharat on this issue and declare Bharat a "terrorist state".***

Economic Corridor, Where Does Gilgit-Baltistan Stand? Editorial, *Bang-e-Sahar*, May 31, 2015.¹¹⁰

An All Parliamentary Parties meeting was held in Islamabad where all parties arrived at a consensus on Pak-China Economic Corridor. The meet was convened at the persistence of Awami National Party (ANP) which believed that ***under the garb of Economic Corridor, Prime Minister Sharif wanted to enrich his own State – Punjab and hence his government nullified the original route of Pak-China economic corridor.*** They also felt that the first route to be established would be the Lahore-Multan road. In this meeting, Nawaz Sharif tried his best to convince and pacify the opposition leaders. In the end it was decided that the western route of Pak-China economic corridor would start from Dera Ismail Khan and pass through Zhob and reach Gwadar and this route would be completed by end of 2016. This plan seemed to have pacified those opposing the corridor plan. ***Unfortunately, there was no representation from Gilgit-Baltistan in these deliberations. No leader seemed to care about the sentiments of the residents of Gilgit-Baltistan when 400 km stretch of this corridor would pass through the region.***

Prime Minister Sharif is very demonstrative about his concern for the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, but when it comes to offering something concrete to them, Nawaz Sharif simply forgets that there are also some Muslim brethren living in this region. ***Heavens would not have fallen if Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan would have been invited to participate in the All Parties Meeting held at Islamabad and present his view-point. It shows that Gilgit-Baltistan does not carry any importance in the eyes of the federal ministers in Islamabad. It is assumed that whatever decision would be taken at the federal level would be acceptable to the people of the region.***

¹¹⁰ http://www.bangesahar.net/popup.php?r_date=05-31-2015&img=05-31-2015page-2-1

Incidentally, a few days back, PML (N) Leader Hafiz-ur-Rehman had made some baseless claims about establishing an economic zone in Gilgit-Baltistan. He said this before the decision regarding economic corridor was made. In the confusing scenario at present, ***the political parties of Gilgit-Baltistan should put forward a specific "Charter of Demands" before the federal authorities. There are also strong apprehensions in the political corridors that after the completion of Pak-China economic corridor, Gilgit-Baltistan would, in all practical purposes be under the control of China.***

We are of the view that with the establishment of this economic corridor, Gilgit-Baltistan should also be accorded the status given to other provinces. ***How could this project be accomplished if the restive local population stands in revolt? The federal authorities should not behave like an arrogant dictator and give people of Gilgit-Baltistan their due share in this project.***

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
Quetta ¹¹¹	26/5/2015	4 killed in sectarian clashes in Quetta.	4	8
FATA				
Bajaur ¹¹²	1/7/2015	Peace committee member killed in Bajaur.	1	0
Bajaur ¹¹³	12/5/2015	Tribal elder among six killed in Bajaur blast.	6	0
Miranshah ¹¹⁴	23/5/2015	Four soldiers killed in NWA IED attack.	4	2
Mohmand ¹¹⁵	27/5/2015	9 security personnel injured in Mohmand	0	9
North Waziristan ¹¹⁶	29/5/2015	blasts. Two FC personnel	2	0

¹¹¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/26-May-2015/4-killed-in-sectarian-clashes-in-quetta>

¹¹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1179344/peace-committee-member-killed-in-bajaur>

¹¹³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/12-May-2015/tribal-elder-among-six-killed-in-bajaur-blast>

¹¹⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-37618-Four-soldiers-killed-in-NWA-IED-attack>

¹¹⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1184540/9-security-personnel-injured-in-mohmand-blasts>

		martyred Waziristan.	North		
				3	37
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa					
Peshawar ¹¹⁷	20/5/2015	DSP gunned down in TTP-claimed attack in Peshawar.		1	0
Sindh					
Karachi ¹¹⁸	4/5/2015	Three 'assailants' killed as police thwart attack in Karachi.		3	2
Safoora Chowk ¹¹⁹	13/5/2015	43 killed in attack on bus carrying Ismailis in Karachi.		43	13
Hub ¹²⁰	25/5/2015	Three dead, 15 hurt in Hub motor cycle blast.		3	15
Orangi Town ¹²¹	26/5/2015	Search operation: Rangers kill four militants in Orangi Town.		4	0
Karachi ¹²²	27/5/ 2015	Gunmen kill three cops in Karachi.		3	1

DRONE STRIKES

Place	Date	Description	Casualties
Bannu North Waziristan ¹²³	18/5/2015	Drone attack in North Waziristan kills six, injures two suspected militants.	6

¹¹⁶<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-186339-Two-FC-personnel-martyred-North-Waziristan->

¹¹⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1183121/dsp-gunned-down-in-ttp-claimed-attack-in-peshawar>

¹¹⁸ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-183580-Three-assailants-killed-as-police-thwart-attack-in-Karachi>

¹¹⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1181698/43-killed-in-attack-on-bus-carrying-ismailis-in-karachi>

¹²⁰<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-185850-Blast-targeting-presidents-son-kills-three,-injures-15>

¹²¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/892487/search-operation-rangers-kill-four-militants-in-orangi-town/>

¹²² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1184522/gunmen-kill-three-cops-in-karachi>

¹²³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/887577/drone-attack-in-north-waziristan-kills-five-people/>

Shawal ¹²⁴	19/5/2015	Drone strike in North Waziristan kills four	4
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¹²⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-185240-Drone-strike-in-North-Waziristan-kills-four>