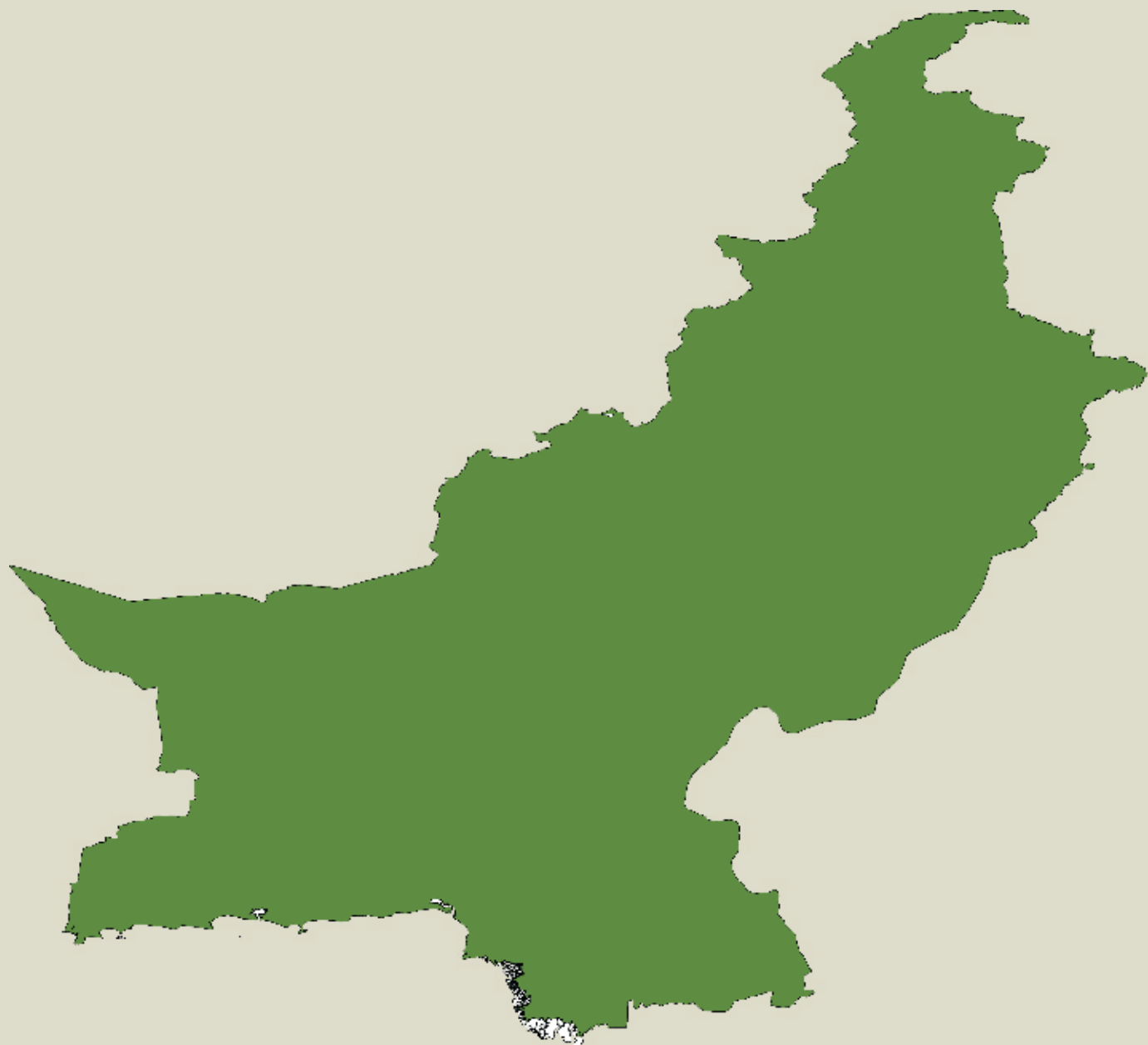


*April 2014*

# PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



*Prepared by  
YaqoobulHassan  
and Shreyas Deshmukh  
(Interns, Pakistan Project, IDSA)*

**idsa**  
INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE  
STUDIES & ANALYSES

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**INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES**

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**PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, APRIL 2014**

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## **ABBREVATIONS**

ADB: Asian Development Bank  
AFD: French Development Agency  
BIT: Bilateral Investment Treaty  
BNP: Baluchistan National Party  
BoI: Board of Investment  
BRP: Baloch Republican Party  
CCPIT: China Council for Promotion of International Trade  
CFAs: Credit Facility Agreement  
CID: Crime Investigation Department  
CII: Council of Islamic Ideology  
CPEC: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor  
CPI: Consumer Price Index  
CSF: Coalition Support Fund  
DGPR: Director General of Public Relation  
E&SE: Elementary and Secondary Education  
EAD: Economic Affairs Division  
ECC: Economic Coordination Committee  
EFF: Extended Fund Facility  
ETPL: Eengy Terminal Pakistan Limited  
FBR: Federal Board of Revenue  
GDP: Gross Domestic Product  
GPA: Gwadar Port Authority  
HED: Higher Education Department  
HUT: Hizb-ut Tahrir  
IMF: International Monetary Fund  
IPPs: Independent Power Procedures  
ISI: Inter Services Intelligence  
ISPR: Inter Services Public Relations  
JI: Jamaat-i-Islami  
JIT: Joint Interrogation Team  
JSMM: Jiye Sindh MuttahidaMahaz  
JuD: Jamat-ul- Dawa  
KP: Khyber Pakhthunkhwa  
MFN: Most Favoured Nation  
MI: Military Intelligence  
MQM: Muttahida Qaumi Movement  
MTBF: Medium Term Budgetary Framework  
NBP: National Bank of Pakistan  
NDMA: Non-Discriminatory Market Access  
NEA: National Energy Transmission

NEPRA: National Electric Power Regulatory Authority  
NP: National Party  
NPMC: National Price Monitoring Committee  
NTDC: National Transmission and Dispatch Company Limited  
OGDCL: Oil and Gas Development Company limited  
OGRA: Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority  
PAF: Pakistan Air Force  
PBS: Pakistan Bureau Statistics  
PDF: Pakistan Development Fund  
Pepco: Pakistan Electric Power Company  
PFMA: Pakistan Flour Mills Association  
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz  
PPL: Pakistan Petroleum Limited  
PPP: Pakistan People's Party  
PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf  
SSG: Special Service Group  
SWA: South Waziristan Agency  
TTP: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan  
UBL: Untied Bank Limited  
UPAP: UAE- Pakistan Assistance Program

## **POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS**

### **PROVINCIAL POLITICS**

#### **Cracks in PTI widen, Dawn, April 3<sup>1</sup>**

MPA Qurban Ali Khan, who leads the PTI dissidents, claimed that three more members of the party, including the deputy speaker had joined the bloc on April 2 taking its strength to 17. "Three more MPAs will join the bloc in the next two days," he told

#### **PTI pressure group refuses to meet CM, Express Tribune, March 4<sup>2</sup>**

The provincial leadership of PTI which is struggling to cope with increasing divides within its ranks in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa suffered another setback on on March 3, when according to insiders, some PTI MPAs tried to set up a meeting between the disgruntled members and CM Pervez Khattak. However, the group members declined, saying they only wanted to talk to party chief Imran Khan. A meeting between PTI Chairman Imran Khan and disgruntled members has been scheduled for April 4

#### **Political interference continues in KP education dept, Dawn, April 6<sup>3</sup>**

Political interference in the affairs of education department has not stopped yet despite claims by the PTI -led provincial government to the contrary, according to official in the Elementary and Secondary Education (E&SE) Department and Higher Education Department and academicians. Such interference by the elected representatives, particularly PTI leaders, could be seen in the secretariat of the both education departments, directorates of E&SE and HED, district education offices, and educational institutions, the sources said.

#### **Khan's dissolution threat adds to unease, confusion, The Nation, April 7<sup>4</sup>**

It surprised many when PTI Chairman Imran Khan so simply threatened to dissolve his party-led coalition government in KP. It is unclear whether it is an attempt to calm down dissidents within his party or he really wants to get rid of his own government. At present, it is crystal clear that no opposition party has made any attempt to destabilise his party's government and those who are raising questions on the government's performance are his own party's lawmakers. Imran has constantly been threatening to dissolve KP

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097448/cracks-in-pti-widen>

<sup>2</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/691063/a-thorn-in-the-side-pti-pressure-group-refuses-to-meet-cm/>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098061/political-interference-continues-in-kp-education-dept>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/07-Apr-2014/khan-s-dissolution-threat-adds-to-unease-confusion>

Assembly for the last five months if his party-led provincial government is destabilised. *At one stage, he went one step ahead and also warned the PML-N-led federal government of retaliation if any attempt was made to topple his government in militancy-hit KP province.*

**K-P Governor Engineer Shaukatullah submits resignation, Express Tribune, April 9<sup>5</sup>**

Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Governor Engineer Shaukatullah Khan submitted his resignation to President Mamnoon Hussain. Commenting on the recent development, TTP intermediary Professor Ibrahim said that the change of governor will not affect peace talks. Shaukatullah Khan was appointed to this post by the then president Asif Ali Zardari on February 9, last year.

**Sardar Mehtab appointed new KP governor, Dawn, April 10<sup>6</sup>**

Sardar Mehtab Ahmed Khan was appointed the new governor of KP province on April 10. President Mamnoon Hussain appointed Sardar Mehtab on the advice of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The cabinet division has also issued a notification for the appointment of Sardar Mehtab. Earlier on April 8 Mehtab had tendered his resignation from the KP assembly seat after his nomination by the federal government as governor of the province.

**Opposition rejects CM's claim on law, order, Dawn, April 1<sup>7</sup>**

The Balochistan government's claim that law and order situation had improved during nine months of its rule *was rejected by the opposition which said that the situation had rather worsened.* Responding to MPAs' queries during the question-answer session in the provincial assembly on 31 March, Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch said the situation was not satisfactory but it could not be denied that it had improved to some extent. He said law-enforcement agencies had set up checkpoints in some areas to maintain law and order, *but a debate could be held on the matter if some members thought that they were creating hurdles for people.*

**Use of force to be last option in Balochistan: Mamnoon, Dawn, April 10<sup>8</sup>**

President of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain on April 8 underlined the need for negotiated settlement of issues relating to Balochistan. He was on a 2-day official visit to the province. Addressing members of Balochistan Cabinet, the president stated that the government was *striving to pave the way for dialogue with disgruntled Baloch leaders.* He said that all out efforts were being made to find an amicable solution of issues relating to Balochistan, a volatile province

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<sup>5</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/692814/k-p-governor-engineer-shaukatullah-resigns/>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098956/sardar-mehtab-appointed-new-kp-governor>

<sup>7</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1096957/opposition-rejects-cms-claim-on-law-order>

<sup>8</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098565/use-of-force-to-be-last-option-in-balochistan-mamnoon>

which is Pakistan's least developed. *"Use of force would be last option in Balochistan,"* the president told cabinet members while giving assurance that restoration of peace through political means was the government's first priority. *The president's visit has come at a time when Balochistan has seen an increase in incidents of violence.*

**Mengal wants end of agencies role in politics, *The Nation*, April 14<sup>9</sup>**

Balochistan National Party-Mengal Chief, Sardar Akhtar Mengal said on April 14 that involvement of agencies in political matters must end. Talking to journalists, he said *"we don't want more mutilated dead bodies from the province, this process must be ended as enough is enough"*. The BNP leader warned that his party members would resign from the assemblies if these issues continued in Balochistan.

**PM Nawaz to monitor Balochistan projects, *The News*, April 18<sup>10</sup>**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will monitor all developmental projects himself in Balochistan. This was announced during a federal cabinet meeting held here on April 18. During the meeting Sharif said, new projects should be started in Balochistan aimed at education, health and the youth. He announced that \$1.5 billion would be spent to expedite construction of the Gwadar airport and development of the port city. MOU's pertaining to the construction of a tunnel in Karachi for the distribution of LNG and purchasing electricity from Iran were also signed during the cabinet meeting.

**Sindh Assembly calls for CII disbandment, *The Nation*, April 11<sup>11</sup>**

Denouncing the recent recommendations in favour of child marriage and against DNA tests in rape indictments by the Council of Islamic Ideology, the Sindh Assembly April 7 passed a resolution unanimously, *demanding the federal government dissolve the council for its failure to play a positive role in the country*. Moved by female lawmaker Mahtab Akbar Rashidi of PML-F from the opposition benches, the resolution was jointly signed by parliamentary leaders of all the parties— ruling PPP, MQM, PTI and PML-N.

**MQM holds protests as two more bodies recovered, *Dawn*, April 18<sup>12</sup>**

Two trussed-up bodies of missing MQM workers were recovered near Korangi Creek in Karachi's Qayyumabad area on April 18. They were shifted to Jinnah Hospital where a large number of MQM leaders and workers had gathered. Leader of the Opposition in the Sindh Assembly and MQM leader

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<sup>9</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/14-Apr-2014/mengal-wants-end-of-agencies-role-in-politics>

<sup>10</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145007-PM-Nawaz-to-monitor-Balochistan-projects->

<sup>11</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/01-Apr-2014/sindh-assembly-calls-for-cii-disbandment>

<sup>12</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1100743/mqm-holds-protests-as-two-more-bodies-recovered>



Faisal Sabzwari identified the deceased persons as the party's workers and said *they had been missing for four months*.

**MQM joins Sindh govt, two ministers take oath, Dawn, April 23<sup>13</sup>**

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement joined the PPP led government in Sindh on April 23. The party received slots of two ministers, two advisors and a special assistant after joining the government. Although the portfolios were not allotted yet, sources said that Rauf Siddiqui will get portfolio of Commerce and Industries, Dr Saghir Ahmed-Health, Faisal Sabzwari- Youth Affairs, Adil Siddiqui-Tourism and Abdul Haseeb- Auqaf.

**(Where is the report on the attack on Hamid Mir??)**

**Sindh govt forms JIT to probe attack on Hamid Mir, The News, April 23<sup>14</sup>**

The Sindh government has constituted a seven-member joint interrogation team (JIT) to investigate an assassination attempt on Hamid Mir, one of Pakistan's best known journalists and Geo News anchor. The team comprising members from the seven agencies will be authorized to interrogate any one relating to the case. Geo News said members from the country's principal spy outfit the ISI, MI, Rangers SS Wing and CID branch of the Sindh police will probe the issue.

**MPAs threaten to stage sit-in against power cut in Sindh, The News, April 29<sup>15</sup>**

PPP and MQM members in Sindh assembly here on April 29 went on a protest against the unannounced and prolonged load shedding in the rural and urban areas of the province piling miseries on the people. PPP members urged upon the Sindh government to lodge a formal protest with the federal government for the injustices being perpetrated on the people of Sindh.

**OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**

**HuT activists resurface in capital city, Dawn, April 1<sup>16</sup>**

The outlawed Hizbut Tahrir has once again started its activities in the capital city with its activists distributing pamphlets among the citizens. In one of its pamphlets written in Urdu, the HuT requested the people of Pakistan to ask

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<sup>13</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101562/mqm-joins-sindh-govt-two-ministers-take-oath>

<sup>14</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145443-Sindh-govt-forms-JIT-to-probe-attack-on-Hamid-Mir>

<sup>15</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-146106-MPAs-threaten-to-stage-sit-in-against-Islamabad-vindictive-power-cut-in-Sindh>

<sup>16</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097006/hut-activists-resurface-in-capital-city>

their relatives serving in the armed forces to help the organisation achieve its mission so that the US *"meets its doom in the region."* In December 2012, HuT activists holding a meeting in a house at E-11 escaped before the police and security forces arrived there to conduct a joint raid. The pamphlet also expressed concern over the operation in Waziristan, saying it was only in favour of America. *"Our army should remove the American diplomats, intelligence agencies and armed forces from Pakistan."*

**PM convenes high-level security meeting after holding party talks, Dawn, April 1<sup>17</sup>**

Nawaz Sharif summoned a key meeting of the ruling PML-N during which discussions on negotiations with the Taliban and former president Pervez Musharraf's request to travel abroad were underway. Sources said that Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan and Information Minister Pervez Rashid were attending the meeting in the federal capital.

**Efforts to sell small arms and jets to S. Arabia underway: Aziz, Dawn, April 2<sup>18</sup>**

Adviser to Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz said in an interview with the BBC that Pakistan *was making efforts to sell small arms and fighter jets to Saudi Arabia while also maintaining a balance between its ties with Iran and Saudi Arabia.* When asked if Pakistan would supply arms to Syria, Aziz said *at this point in time there was no Syria-specific agreement,* adding that *...like any country which with a flourishing arms industry, Pakistan was trying to sell its arms and there was nothing dubious about Saudi Arabia's interest in purchase weapons from Pakistan. He further reiterated the government's claim of Pakistan's neutral stance on the Syria issue.*

**Lawmakers for regulating madrassa education, The Nation, April 2<sup>19</sup>**

The National Assembly on April 1 passed a resolution tabled by PPP MNA Nafisa Shah, urging the government to regulate education in religious seminaries. The resolution, seeking improvements in the curriculum and the disciplinary processes of religious seminaries, was supported by both the treasury and the opposition. Tabled by Nafisa Shah said that science should also be taught as a subject in religious schools. Taking the floor, Religious Affairs Minister Sardar Yousaf said the government would

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<sup>17</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097050/pm-convenes-high-level-security-meeting-after-holding-party-talks>

<sup>18</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097268/efforts-to-sell-small-arms-and-jets-to-s-arabia-underway-aziz>

<sup>19</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/02-Apr-2014/lawmakers-for-regulating-madrassa-education>

soon consult *Ittehad Tanzeemat-e-Madaris* to discuss curricula of seminaries. Sardar Yousuf said 8,000 seminaries were teaching science as a subject, adding consultations were underway over the formation of a regulatory authority for religious schools.

**Missing person case: Spymaster avoids hearing, *The News*, April 20<sup>20</sup>**

Justice Riaz Ahmed Khan of the Islamabad High Court *took an exception to ISI chief's reluctance to appear before the court* in a case relating to a missing person believed to be in the custody of the country's principal spy outfit. Although the judge accepted an application by the ISI director general seeking exemption from appearance after an affidavit was submitted that the 'missing person' was not in the custody of the spy service, he said: "*We don't take pleasure in summoning Director General ISI but nobody appears despite getting 6-week time, don't ridicule the judicial system*".

**Senators call upon ISI to cooperate with probe, *Dawn*, April 22<sup>21</sup>**

Senators called upon the country's top intelligence agency on April 21 to clear its name in cases of attacks on journalists and the matter of enforced disappearances. The role of the ISI was brought up in the house as members discussed attack on senior journalist Hamid Mir in Karachi and allegations levelled by his family against the head of the agency, Lt Gen Zaheerul Islam. Senators, mostly from the opposition benches, deplored the "ISI-bashing" that had ensued in sections of the media following the attack on Mr Mir.

**Pakistan successfully test fires Hatf-III (Ghaznavi), *The News*, April 22<sup>22</sup>**

Pakistan successfully test-fired short range ballistic missile Hatf-III named Ghaznavi on April 22. According to ISPR, the missile can carry nuclear and conventional warheads to a range of 290 kilometers. The successful launch concluded the Field Training Exercise of Strategic Missile Group of Army Strategic Forces Command.

**Nawaz visits Gwadar, *The Nation*, April 24<sup>23</sup>**

Nawaz Sharif, speaking at a briefing in Gwadar on April 24 afternoon, said his visit and meetings in Gwadar are aimed at developing the area on fast track. He said that Gwadar had all the ingredients to become a free port like Dubai, Hong Kong and Singapore. The Prime Minister said the political and

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<sup>20</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-143253-Missing-person-case:-Spymaster-avoids-hearing->

<sup>21</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101448/senators-call-upon-isi-to-cooperate-with-probe>

<sup>22</sup>[http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145385-Pakistan-successfully-test-fires-Hatf-III-\(Ghaznavi\)](http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145385-Pakistan-successfully-test-fires-Hatf-III-(Ghaznavi))

<sup>23</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/24-Apr-2014/government-army-to-build-pakistan-together-pm>

the military leadership are on the same page as far as development of Pakistan is concerned.

**KP asked to check forced conversions, Dawn, April 26<sup>24</sup>**

The federal Ministry for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony has directed the KP Auqaf and religious affairs department *to take legal steps for the prevention of forced conversions of religion under the guise of marriages*. Also, the provincial government has been told to increase quota in jobs in its departments for members of religious minorities. The federal government had approved certain measures for the protection of the minorities' rights and asked all four provinces to ensure its implementation.

**Cooperation with Riyadh: On Iran trip, PM will seek to allay Tehran's fears, Express Tribune, April 28<sup>25</sup>**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will travel to Iran early next month in a bid to allay Tehran's apprehensions regarding his government's increased cooperation with Saudi Arabia, officials said on April 27.

**Suburban mosque named after Salmaan Taseer's assassin, Dawn, April 30<sup>26</sup>**

In the suburbs of the capital, along the road to the airport, lies Ghori Town, a mosque has been named after Mumtaz Hussain Qadri, who was convicted of murdering former Punjab governor Salmaan Taseer and is currently awaiting confirmation of his death sentence in prison. The mosque is constructed on a 10-marla plot of land, next to a girls' seminary, the Jamia Rehmania Akbaria Ziaul Binaat.

## **MILITARY AFFAIRS**

**Govt advised to let Musharraf see his mother, Express Tribune, April 2<sup>27</sup>**

Army chief General Raheel Sharif is said to have suggested to the government to let Gen (retd) Pervez Musharraf go abroad for his medical treatment and to look after his ailing mother. The issue of Musharraf's possible exit was discussed during a meeting between Gen Raheel and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on April 1. ISI chief Lt Gen Zaheerul Islam also attended the 'informal consultations' to decide the fate of Musharraf. Both chiefs were supposed to attend a meeting on national security to discuss the future strategy for talks

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<sup>24</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102433/kp-asked-to-check-forced-conversions>

<sup>25</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/701208/cooperation-with-riyadh-on-iran-trip-pm-will-see-to-allay-tehrans-fears/>

<sup>26</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1103232/suburban-mosque-named-after-salmaan-taseers-assassin>

<sup>27</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/690234/a-day-after-indictment-govt-advised-to-let-musharraf-see-his-mother/>

with the TTP but the meeting was postponed due to developments taking place on Musharraf's front. There was no official release regarding the high-level meeting between the prime minister and army chief.

**Army to preserve its own dignity and institutional pride: COAS, Dawn, April 7<sup>28</sup>**

General Raheel Sharif on April 7 said that Pakistan Army upheld the sanctity of all institutions and would resolutely preserve its own dignity and institutional pride, during his visit to the headquarters of Special Service Group at Ghazi Base, Tarbela.

**Army still upset over 'unfair criticism', Dawn, April 10<sup>29</sup>**

Army generals are still upset for having been "unfairly criticized" by federal ministers. The seething resentment in the military ranks was obvious as generals met for the corps commanders' conference at the General Headquarters on April 9. Army Chief General Raheel Sharif, who presided over the meeting, had earlier in the week publicly stated the concerns when he told peeved Special Services soldiers in Tarbela that army "*will resolutely preserve its own dignity and institutional pride*". Gen Raheel's statement had effectively blown away the façade of civilian and military leadership being on the same page. The issue of drawdown of ISAF from Afghanistan with its implications on the security situation along the bordering region was also discussed. The army chief appreciated own troops for additional security measures along Pak-Afghan border to assist our Afghan brethren in conduct of smooth presidential elections. This was the first meeting of the corps commanders after the statement of COAS General Raheel Sharif in Tarbela on Monday that Pakistan Army upholds the sanctity of all institutions and will resolutely preserve its own dignity and institutional pride.

According to a source, the corps commanders fully supported the views expressed by the COAS for upholding and preserving the dignity of the institution.<sup>30</sup>

**Controversial remarks: Khawaja Asif may lose defence portfolio, Express Tribune, April 14<sup>31</sup>**

Nawaz Sharif is considering taking away the additional charge of the Ministry of Defence from Khawaja Muhammad Asif who holds the portfolios for both

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<sup>28</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098333/army-to-preserve-its-own-dignity-and-institutional-pride-coas>

<sup>29</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098847/army-still-upset-over-unfair-criticism>

<sup>30</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/10-Apr-2014/commanders-take-up-isaf-drawdown-implications>

<sup>31</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/695332/controversial-remarks-khawaja-asif-may-lose-defence-portfolio/>

defence, and water and power. Asif has found himself at the centre of a controversy following his remarks on former president Pervez Musharraf's treason trial. Although the army has not officially demanded Asif's removal as defence minister, insiders say there is a growing feeling within the military that his presence may not augur well for a 'smooth' civil-military relationship. "Naturally, it is not easy for the army to work with a defence minister who is making such unwarranted statements," a security official told *The Express Tribune* while requesting anonymity.

**PM, COAS may meet to 'mend' ties, *The Nation*, April 15<sup>32</sup>**

In order to 'mend' the relationship between the civilian government and the military, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and COAS General Raheel Sharif are likely to meet on April 15 at the PM's House. According to official sources, the high-level meeting will also be attended by Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan and ISI DG Lt.-Gen Zaheerul Islam.....According to the sources, in the wake of the recent tension between the civilian and military leadership, a three-star general, close to the PML-N senior leadership, acted as a bridge between the civilian government and the military leadership, laying down basic modalities for the meeting.

**Army Chief confers military awards to army personnel, *The News*, April 16<sup>33</sup>**

Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif conferred military awards to the Army personnel in an investiture ceremony held at General Headquarters here on April 15. According to ISPR, 10 officers and 20 soldiers were awarded Tamgha-e-Bisalat, 22 officers were awarded Sitara-e-Imtiaz (Military) and three soldiers were awarded UN Medal. Medals of Shuhada were received by their family members.

**Nation proud of Army's sacrifices: Khawaja Asif, *The Nation*, April 19<sup>34</sup>**

Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that a strong and respectable army is an asset of the country and the nation is proud of the army's sacrifices. He said the armed forces are fighting on many fronts for the last many years, rendering sacrifices unparalleled in history of Pakistan. He regretted that a wrong impression is being created by a section of the media about his views about the institution.

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<sup>32</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/15-Apr-2014/pm-coas-may-meet-to-mend-ties>

<sup>33</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-144686-Army-Chief-confers-military-awards-to-army-personnel>

<sup>34</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/19-Apr-2014/nation-proud-of-army-s-sacrifices-khawaja-asif>

**Finance Minister, COAS discuss defence budget, *The News*, April 19<sup>35</sup>**

Federal Finance Minister Ishaq Dar met COAS General Raheel Sharif at GHQ on April 18, ISPR said. According to ISPR press release, the finance minister and army chief discussed defence budget for the next fiscal year.

**COAS Sharif visits ISI headquarters, *The News*, April 22<sup>36</sup>**

General Raheel Sharif, visited DG ISI on April 22, ISPR said in a press release. According to the ISPR press release, DG ISI Lieutenant General Zahir ul Islam received COAS upon his arrival at the headquarters. The army chief was given detailed briefing on internal and external security situation of the country, it said. COAS appreciated the role of ISI towards national security and lauded the contributions and sacrifices of its officers and men towards strengthening the defence of the motherland, the press release added.

**Army to keep on working for peace, stability: COAS, *The News*, April 24<sup>37</sup>**

Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif said on April 23 that the Army would continue to work for peace, stability and socio-economic uplift of the country. He said this while inaugurating the postgraduate college and a paramedical institute in Saidu Sharif. These projects were completed by army engineers as part of the post operation reconstruction phase under the UAE Pakistan Assistance Programme (UPAP), says an ISPR press release. The 52 education and seven health projects have already been completed in Fata/KP during the last few years by the army engineers in Malakand and Swat which has helped in bringing normalcy in the area and relief to the local population, directly benefiting approximately five million people.

**Pakistan Air Force receives F-16 fighter jets from Jordan, *Express Tribune*, April 28<sup>38</sup>**

Air Chief Marshal Tahir Rafique Butt said that the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) is fully prepared for an operation against the TTP. The PAF chief was speaking at the PAF Base Mushaf in Sargodha where the force received its first batch of five F-16 fighter jets from Jordan. The fighter jets are in good condition, the chief said in his address, adding that the air force is fully equipped to combat militants.

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<sup>35</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145067-Finance-Minister,-COAS-discuss-defence-budget>

<sup>36</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145394-Army-chief-Sharif-visits-ISI-headquarters>

<sup>37</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-246113-Army-to-keep-on-working-for-peace-stability-COAS>

<sup>38</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/700963/pakistan-air-force-receives-f-16-fighter-jets-from-jordan/>

**COAS Raheel Sharif reaches Saudi Arabia, *The News*, April 29<sup>39</sup>**

General Raheel Sharif has reached Saudi Arabia on a two-day visit. According to the state run television the army chief is visiting the Kingdom on the invitation of Crown Prince Salman bin Abdul Aziz during which he will also examine military exercises. The army chief along with the ISI director general called on Prime Minister before leaving for Saudi Arabia. During the meeting the army chief and prime minister discussed measures being taken to cope with the menace of terrorism.

**Army observing Yum-e-Shuhada, *The News*, April 30<sup>40</sup>**

Pakistan Army is observing Youm-e-Shuhada (Day of Martyrs) on April 30 in recognition to those valiant soldiers who laid their lives for the defence of the motherland. Ceremonies are being held at Garrisons across the country. An impressive ceremony will be held at Yadgar-e-Shuhada, General Headquarters Rawalpindi.

## **EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS**

**Bhutto's legacy, *The News*, April 6<sup>41</sup>**

Bilawal and his father Asif Ali Zardari addressed a rally at Garhi Khuda Bux to mark the death anniversary of Zulfikhar Ali Bhutto, it was clear people had reached their own conclusions. [...] those gathered at Larkana on April 4th seemed at times rather obviously indifferent to both Bilawal and Zardari's speeches. Perhaps the reaction, visible beneath the waving PPP tri-colour, was rooted in the fact that people had heard it all before. Bilawal's angry tones were familiar, lashing out at the government for its talks with the Taliban, attacking the policy of privatisation and the acceptance of the Saudi grant of US\$1.5 billion. Zardari, calmer in manner, focused on the need to unite the country and end sectarianism.

**Pride and prejudice, *The News*, April 9<sup>42</sup>**

[...] COAS General Raheel Sharif's remarks, made while addressing the Special Services Group at Tarbela, have made headlines and stirred up a lively debate. He spoke essentially of the *determination to protect the 'dignity' of the army, and praised the services of its personnel to their nation*. But into this vagueness, specific meaning is being read in, with the comments being linked

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<sup>39</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-146073-Army-chief-Raheel-Sharif-reaches-Saudi-Arabia>

<sup>40</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-146232-Army-observing-Youm-e-Shuhada-today>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-242582-Bhuttos-legacy>  
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/06-Apr-2014/right-words-wrong-mouths>  
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/06-Apr-2014/ttp-conundrum>

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-243086-Pride-and-prejudice>  
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/09-Apr-2014/alarm-bells-ringing>



in to the trial for treason of ex-COAS General Pervez Musharraf and the remarks directed against him by two cabinet ministers, Khwaja Saad Rafique and Khawaja Asif. Whether this was General Sharif's intention is a matter lost in uncertainty.

**Change of guard at Mansoor**, Zaigham Khan, *The News*, April 10<sup>43</sup>

Forty-three years later, as the Jamaat kicks out Munawar Hsasan from the office of Ameer, he has defaced Maudoodi's party, leaving it in a far worse shape than the founder had in 1972, not only in electoral and political terms but also in terms of public perception and spreading the message of peace for which the Jamaat finds less and less time now. There is hardly any doubt that Pakistan's most influential religio-political party will have to deal with his poisonous legacy for many years to come and the damage may even prove permanent. [...] In the Jamaat, loyalty is not only about the concept of *itaat-e-ameer* – obedience to the ameer only – but also about job security. There is a common joke in the party, '*I am a Jamaati for financial reasons*'. [...] Khorasani, who had recently claimed responsibility for beheading 23 Frontier Corps soldiers, wrote: '*Our destination is the same but the difference is in the modus operandi to achieve it...It is hoped that Sirajul-Haq would carry forward the mission of Syed Munawar Hasan without making any compromise*'.

**Brinkmanship won't pay**, Amir Zia, *The News*, April 14<sup>44</sup>

[...] In a way Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif got an ideal start to his third stint in power as there has been an overwhelming consensus among all the institutions, including the army, about the supremacy of the constitution and continuation of the democratic process. This intra-institutional honeymoon, however, seems to be short-lived. Military insiders blame the recklessness of the civilian leadership in handling important issues for the strained ties, but they admit that the tussle has not crossed the Rubicon.....Instead of managing the civil-military relations with caution, maturity and in the spirit of building institutional consensus, the Sharif government appears to be treading the same old confrontationist path that failed this ruling party in the past when it had two-thirds majority in parliament.

**The law and Musharraf**, Javid Husain, *The Nation*, April 15<sup>45</sup>

The use of intemperate language regarding Pervez Musharraf by a federal minister and a statement by Chief of the Army Staff General Raheel Sharif has generated an unnecessary controversy in the country about the role of the

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<sup>43</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-243329-Change-of-guard-at-Mansoor>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-242737-On-a-slippery-slope>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-244074-Brinkmanship-won%E2%80%99t-pay>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/15-Apr-2014/the-law-and-musharraf>

army and the civil-military relationship. For the strengthening of the democratic process and the rule of law in Pakistan, for safeguarding national security, for the promotion of political stability and the economic development of the country, and for the preservation of the army's "*dignity and institutional pride*," it is essential that all stakeholders react to these events in a calm and dispassionate manner keeping in view national interests instead of parochial considerations.

**The civil-military gap is back**, Arifa Noor, *Dawn*, April 15<sup>46</sup>

[...] Civil-military relations can be tense anywhere, but in Pakistan they are particularly fraught with friction because the reality jars rudely with what the system is theoretically. Technically, the military should report to the civilian government. In reality it is a political stakeholder that until recently was the most dominant player on the stage. For multiple reasons, in 2007, it decided to abandon centre stage. But despite this retreat, the military is not willing to give up entirely on the territory or influence it has carved out over decades. [...] But now neither side is willing to strike out like an Indian villain of yore. This is where the media comes in as it now provides the battleground on which the military and political governments joust, post 2008.

**Out in the open**, *Dawn*, April 19<sup>47</sup>

By renaming the library at Lal Masjid's Jamia Hafsa seminary after Osama bin Laden, Maulana Abdul Aziz has finally nailed his colours to the mast. According to a source at the institute, "*Bin Laden might be a terrorist for others but we do not consider him as a terrorist. For us he was a hero of Islam.*" [...] Consider the resurrection of Maulana Aziz from the ashes of the Lal Masjid episode. The older, somewhat reserved brother of Maulana Abdul Rashid, who died in the Lal Masjid siege in 2007 from which the former tried to escape rather ignominiously disguised in a *burqa* has had his image burnished by the media's excessive pandering to his views. And these views, like those of others pontificating frequently on TV and in print these days, are nothing if not on the far right of the spectrum.

**Madressah reform difficulty**, Muhammad Amir Rana, *Dawn*, April 20<sup>48</sup>

Madressah administration elites are sensitive to the idea of reform in their education system. No government here has intervened in practical terms in the affairs of madressahs predominantly controlled and administered by the clergy. Still these elites eye any madressah-related statement by the government with suspicion. [...] The perception that security threats can be

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<sup>46</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1099885/the-gap-is-back>

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1100853/out-in-the-open>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1101017/madressah-reform-difficulty>

addressed while introducing madressah reforms is flawed. Especially when the government is not even clear as to what kind of educational reforms are needed. Mere introduction of formal education or a few subjects like English and computer science will not help remove security threats emanating from madressahs. To address security issues linked to madressahs, the government and the relevant departments must adopt a non-discriminatory, zero-tolerance policy. If any madressah or school is involved in hate speech, indoctrination of violent ideologies, or providing hideouts to suspected terrorists and providing them with logistics, the law-enforcers should take action.

**Controversial law in Senate, *Daily Times*, April 21<sup>49</sup>**

The Pakistan Protection Ordinance (PPO) is back to square one. The opposition, as was expected, attempted to block the passage of the bill in the Senate. Being in a majority in the lower house, the government had been able to override the opposition in the National Assembly and literally bulldozed the bill through the house on April 7. During their recent meeting, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and PPP co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari had decided on a joint meeting between the legal heads of both the parties to address the anomalies of the bill. That the meeting did not happen, and the treasury decided to push the bill through the Senate, where it did not have a majority, shows the government's eagerness to adopt the bill come what may.

**MQM in government again, *Dawn*, April 24<sup>50</sup>**

The MQM's decision to join the Sindh government is not altogether surprising. The love-hate relationship that it enjoys with the PPP has seen the Muttahida joining and then exiting the provincial government several times in the past. Clearly, the PPP, which enjoys a comfortable majority in the provincial legislature, did not need the MQM seats when the latter party returned to the treasury benches. But former president Asif Zardari for reasons not entirely clear had reportedly worked hard to bring the MQM back into the fold. [...] However, the nature of politics in Sindh is such that while the PPP has a commanding presence in the rural hinterland, the MQM holds sway in urban Sindh, especially in cities located in the lower part of the province. So, keeping the political realities of the province in mind, the formation of the coalition should be welcomed.

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<sup>49</sup> <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/21-Apr-2014/controversial-law-in-senate>

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1101875/mqm-in-government-again>

**Freedom of expression**, Ikram Sehgal, *The News*, April 24<sup>51</sup>

The murderous attack on Raza Rumi in Lahore in which his driver died was claimed by militant extremists, as was the subsequent threat to veteran media personality Imtiaz Alam. While the motive and responsibility for the dastardly assault on Hamid Mir in Karachi is still a matter of speculation, the threat to the freedom of expression in Pakistan is nothing new. However, the drastic escalation of violence thereof against the Fourth Estate by the targeting of well-known media personnel is very disturbing. [...] The gut reaction alleging ISI involvement in the Hamid Mir case is most unfortunate. As vocal critics of the government, the army and the ISI, both Raza Rumi and Imtiaz Alam could have made the same allegations. While it is Hamid Mir's fundamental right to accuse anyone from whom he feels a life threat, perception cannot take precedence over hard evidence.

**History on the march and repeating itself**, Ayaz Amir, *The News*, April 25<sup>52</sup>

[...] Nawaz Sharif's problem is not the army. His problem is himself, and his inability to be at ease with any but loyal yes-men. More than most mortals he is also given to that oldest of human vices: flattery. Since his rise to political prominence in the 1980s – when Governor Lt Gen Jilani chose him as Punjab finance minister – he has surrounded himself with the trained butler-type civil servants. As prime minister for the third time this tendency remains unchanged. The trouble with the army is that no chief, no matter how obliging and self-effacing, can be his master's voice. He cannot, in open durbar, sing praises of Mian Sahib's sterling leadership qualities. Politicians are good at this; bureaucrats, especially the breed we see nowadays, are past masters at this game; but it is unreasonable expecting the same from a chief of the army, commanding its divisions and holding the key to the country's nuclear arsenal.

**Hamid Mir's suspicions**, *The News*, April 26<sup>53</sup>

Now that Hamid Mir has regained consciousness and spoken about the attack against him perhaps we can put behind us the notion that he is anti-army. [...] Note that Mir did not make any accusations; he simply explained the circumstances in which his life was threatened in the weeks leading up to his shooting. As Mir tells it, members of an intelligence agency came to his

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<sup>51</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-246063-Freedom-of-expression>  
<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/23-Apr-2014/the-hamid-mir-case>  
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/23-Apr-2014/the-talk-show-dilemma>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-246244-History-on-the-march-and-repeating-itself>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-245499-Democracy-on-trial>  
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/21-Apr-2014/insults-to-the-armed-forces>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-246463-As-he-comes-to>

residence and told him that he was on a hit list. For some reason they did not tell him who had made this hit list. This is a rerun of the interactions the agency had with Saleem Shahzad prior to his murder and since Shahzad himself was convinced that he would be targeted by them, it is understandable that Mir would be similarly worried. Perhaps, rather than taking punitive action against Mir's employers, the agency in question would now like to clarify if this warning was actually delivered to Mir and who they believed had placed him on the hit list. Others, like the Sindh Assembly which passed a resolution condemning Geo TV for maligning the ISI, should also be focused on answering these questions rather than embroiling themselves in an unnecessary controversy.

**All together to resolve energy crisis, Daily Times, April 26<sup>54</sup>**

PM Nawaz Sharif has inaugurated a 404 MW Uch power project in Dera Murad Jamali, saying that his government is looking toward the complete end of the energy crisis in the country within two years. He was accompanied by the COAS General Raheel Sharif and the CM of Balochistan Dr Abdul Malik. Relations between the Sharif government and General Raheel have been quite tense of late and to see them standing together even if it is for a photo opportunity relays the message PM Nawaz gave the press on Thursday: *that the military and the government are on the same page*. That they have chosen Balochistan as the backdrop behind this reassurance adds another dimension to the whole matter.

**Over sensitive institutions, Dr Niaz Murtaza, The News, April 26<sup>55</sup>**

The so-called sensitive institutions have filed a complaint with Pemra to shut down Geo TV for defaming them and hurting the national interest. This is an interesting tale of two over-reactions. Geo and its staff possibly over-reacted. Now, in turn, the ISI has clearly overreacted in demanding that Geo be shut down. However, there are crucial differences in the two over-reactions. First, Geo over-reacted after one of its most popular anchors was nearly killed and his family and Geo management were understandably in a disturbed state of mind....The main issue still is the physical attack on Mir and not the verbal attack on the ISI or some rogue members within it, as Geo maintains. Clearly, mistakes do get committed in the heat of reporting. The important thing is to ensure that all media groups have mechanisms for learning from such mistakes. Shutting down media groups is not the answer.

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<sup>54</sup> <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/26-Apr-2014/all-together-now>

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-246467-Over-sensitive-institutions>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-246469-Did-they-or-didnt-they>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/26-Apr-2014/hamid-mir-and-the-failing-state>

**Better Khan than never**, *The Nation*, April 27<sup>56</sup>

[...] It was quite interesting to witness the PTI Chairman lambast a news channel [read GEO] for throwing accusations without substantial proof. [...] One of Mr Khan's most notable contributions in recent times has been that of mainstreaming the view that the media is working on an 'anti-Pakistan agenda' in exchange for the "foreign funding" it receives. He can also take pride in making the term "dollar-khor" extremely popular in the public. The only problem is that Mr Khan has not provided a shred of evidence that justifies his many accusations. But, of course, that doesn't deter him from consistently labeling those as traitors who disagree with his views. Everyone was right about the fact that we needed an educated politician who would rise above the traditional politics of slander and intolerance, and take the country forward. Let's keep looking.

**No safe exit for Musharraf**, Rustam Shah Mohmand, *The Express Tribune*, April 27<sup>57</sup>

The Musharraf saga has dominated the political landscape for some time in a country which has been struggling to find its moorings since its inception. The dilemma has arisen because the nation has neither the will nor the capacity to take a military dictator to task for his actions that clearly constitute high treason under either the Pakistani laws or the laws in many other countries that observe and follow a constitution. One reason is that the three former military rulers were not prosecuted and punished for their crimes of having subverted the Constitution. Musharraf is the only military ruler who has lived on to see the return to power of his nemesis.

**Traitors and national interest**, Babar Sattar, *Dawn*, April<sup>58</sup>

[...] The attack on Hamid Mir, Geo's response to the attack, the ISI establishment's response to Geo coverage, and the acute polarisation caused as a consequence of this back and forth is proof of our degeneration into an intolerant lynch mob. We are unable to distinguish between suspicion and conviction, between fair reporting and slander. We have no patience for accountability and due process. Anyone questioning our security state's version of national interest is a traitor who must be banished. At least three aspects of the Hamid Mir story deserve attention. One, what happened to Mir and continuing attacks on journalists that make Pakistan one of the most dangerous places for journalists. Two, how Geo treated Amir Mir's accusation

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<sup>56</sup> <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/27-Apr-2014/better-khan-than-never>

<sup>57</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/700665/no-safe-exit-for-musharraf/>  
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-246466-Censorship-between-conservatives-and-liberals>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/18-Apr-2014/exchange-of-fire>  
<sup>58</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1102671/traitors-and-national-interest>

against the DG ISI as a key suspect in the attack against Mir. Three, the vilification campaign launched against Geo and Hamid Mir to brand them traitors and ban them. Freedom of speech is not freedom to slander or malign. The right to hold and express an opinion needs to be protected. But presenting opinion as fact is a disservice to journalism. Geo crossed a red line in reporting Amir Mir's accusation against the DG ISI not because it aired the accusation, but because the manner in which it did amounted to running a media trial, and not just indicting but condemning the DG ISI in the public eye. And this wasn't the first time.

**Falling one at a time**, Saroop Ijaz, *The News*, April 29<sup>59</sup>

[...] regarding the attack on Hamid Mir the line of reasoning goes somewhat like this, the often frothing in the mouth defence analyst begins with: the ISI did not do it and so stop the lying, treasonous, RAW-centred propaganda. Following it up with, had ISI done it, Mir would not have been alive, since the boys don't miss. Then somewhat defensively implying, even, on the off chance that the ISI did it, do not hurt 'national interest' by saying it publicly. Finally making a comeback by implying Mir had it coming. We have heard this pattern of thought in different permutations before. [...] However, the attack on Hamid Mir brought to light the fundamental confusion that plagues us, and indeed the platitudes that come with it. For example, 'national interest' should be paramount. 'National institutions' should not be attacked or maligned. Banal and stressing the obvious a bit too much.

**The narrative hijacked**, Khadim Hussain, *Dawn*, April<sup>60</sup>

[...] religious militants in Pakistan seem to have hijacked the state narrative on two distinct levels. The first level where the narrative of the state has been hijacked by the banned TTP seems to be in the shape of effectively paralysing the police force and security agencies working under the civilian administration. [...] The second level of hijacking the narrative of the state seems to be the theoretical framework of the social contract. The TTP spokesperson's statement issued to news agencies after the Hamid Mir incident in which four points have been raised by the spokesperson. *First, the nation should be aware of the conspiracy of dividing Pakistan. Second, the objective of Pakistan is 'real Sharia'. Third, the TTP is a force to protect Pakistan's ideological assets. Fourth, the rights of Pakhtuns, Sindhis, and Baloch have been usurped.*

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<sup>59</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-247009-Falling-one-at-a-time>  
<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/29-Apr-2014/our-principal-contradiction>  
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-247010-What-is-patriotism>  
<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/25-Apr-2014/attack-in-karachi>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1102909/the-narrative-hijacked>

**Rebuilding ties with Iran, *Daily Times*, April 30<sup>61</sup>**

[...] With Saudi funding pouring into Syria and with the Saudi regime aggressively marketing its virulent, anachronistic brand of Islam throughout the region, the close relationship between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan is a concern for Iran. The recent 'gift' of \$ 1.5 billion is being seen by many as the latest of numerous Saudi attempts to buy influence in Pakistan. In this climate Nawaz Sharif's upcoming visit to Iran is crucial for re-establishing strong ties. One can choose one's friends but not one's neighbours. Not maintaining friendly relations with neighbours is perhaps the greatest deficiency in Pakistan's foreign policy.

**PM lauds the ISI, *The Nation*, April 30<sup>62</sup>**

During a high profile meeting between the civilian and military leadership, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif lauded the ISI for its role in ensuring peace. The PM's newfound appreciation for the ISI comes after rising pressure on the government to take a clear stance on the Geo-ISI standoff. The government's initial position on the matter could easily be interpreted as favorable towards the media. The Prime Minister's visit to the hospital where Mr Hamid Mir is being treated, Minister of Information and Broadcasting Pervez Rasheed's statement in which he guaranteed support to those who rely on reason instead of violence, and the government's absence during the 8-hours long coverage by Geo which sparked controversy – all contributed towards creating an impression that didn't sit well with the security establishment and a large section of the media.

**A disaster in waiting, Zahid Hussain, *Dawn*, April 30<sup>63</sup>**

It seems like déjà vu. The empire has struck back, orchestrating a media campaign and public rallies in its support. With familiar Islamist faces carrying larger-than-life portraits of the army and ISI chiefs, the spectacle is ominous. Such a public display of support for the head of the spy agency is rare, if not unprecedented. Less than seven years after the return of the democratic order, the military is back in the arena, upping its public political profile. It is a return to the old cloak and dagger game between the civil and military authorities. There may not be a winner in this bitter power struggle, but the collision has heightened political uncertainty in the country.

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<sup>61</sup> <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/30-Apr-2014/rebuilding-ties-with-iran>  
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/701417/making-amends/>

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/30-Apr-2014/pm-lauds-the-isi>

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1103145/a-disaster-in-waiting>



## ECONOMIC ISSUES

### FISCAL ISSUES

#### **Dar fulfills another commitment; Foreign Exchange Reserves cross US \$ 10 billion, *The Nation*, April 1<sup>64</sup>**

The foreign exchange reserves of the country have crossed the threshold of US \$ 10 billion on 31st March 2014. The total liquid reserves stood at US \$ 10.072 Billion. The net reserves with State Bank of Pakistan are US \$5.365 Billion and the net reserves with the Banks stood at US \$4.706 Billion. The Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar said that after repayment of power sector circular debt up to Rs. 500 billion in 45 days and strengthening of the value of Pakistan Rupee, the Government of PML (N) had fulfilled yet another commitment with the nation of shoring up of the FE Reserves to a comfortable level of US \$ 10 billion by the end of March 2014.

#### **ADB expects economy to turn around in 2016, *Dawn*, April 2<sup>65</sup>**

The ADB said on Tuesday Pakistan's economy is showing signs of recovery with moderate growth rate of 3.4 per cent this year. Structural reforms to broaden the revenue base through better tax administration and eliminating exemptions and energy subsidies are critical for fiscal sustainability and the reallocation of resources to promote investment and economic growth. The 'Asian Development Outlook 2014' published on April 1 points out that continued energy sector subsidies, growing losses incurred by state-owned enterprises, and high expenditures for national security are some of the factors testing Pakistan's financial discipline in recent years. The growth rate is marginally slower than in fiscal year 2012-13 (FY13), but economic indicators project the economy to grow by 3.9pc in 2015. "We expect a turnaround of the economy in 2016, as we are engaged in ongoing dialogue for more reforms in subsidy on structural reforms and subsidy on energy. A process is going on the rationalisation of tariff," said Werner Liepach, ADB Country Director while releasing the development outlook at a press briefing on April 1.

#### **Rs308bn injected into banking system, *Dawn*, April 6<sup>66</sup>**

Liquidity crunch was visible in the banking system as State Bank on April 4 injected over Rs300 billion to support banks and to keep them alive for investing in government bonds and treasury bills. The banks invested heavily in the long-term government bonds last week reflecting stability in the

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<sup>64</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/01-Apr-2014/dar-fulfills-another-commitment-foreign-exchange-reserves-cross-us-10-billion>

<sup>65</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097110/adb-expects-economy-to-turn-around-in-2016>

<sup>66</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097805/rs308bn-injected-into-banking-system>

economic system, including a sustainable interest rate with single digit inflation. The State Bank reported that it has injected Rs308bn for seven days into the banking system. Bankers said the banks had been facing liquidity shortage after a huge investment in the government bonds while deposits of the banking system witnessed poor growth during the last three months. In last week's auction of Pakistan Investment Bonds, banks invested record Rs530 billion. This was after a long time that banks invested over Rs110bn for 10 years. The banks invested Rs288bn for three years, Rs128bn for five years and Rs113bn for 10 years. "Banks are also facing poor growth of deposits which created a wide gap of liquidity into the banking system," said a senior banker. Bank deposits grew from Rs7,529bn in December 2013 to Rs7,599bn in February 2014, an increase of just Rs70bn.

**WB projects 4 per cent GDP growth for 2013-14, *The Nation*, April 10<sup>67</sup>**

The World Bank on April 9 projected that Pakistan's GDP growth would approach to four percent during ongoing financial year 2013-14, driven by dynamic manufacturing and service sectors, better energy availability and early revival of investor confidence. The World Bank, in its report 'Pakistan Development Update 2014', has forecasted that country's GDP growth would be in range of 3.6 to 4 percent during current fiscal year 2013-14 against the government's target of 4.4 percent. Growth is picking up, driven mainly by services and manufacturing. Similarly, growth has improved in wholesale and retail trade, finance, and insurance. Acceleration in growth of large-scale manufacturing came from strong performance of agro-based industries, iron and steel. Agriculture appears slightly below target owing to unfavorable weather conditions. On the demand side, growth continues to be driven by private consumption. Credit to the private sector has started to rebound and had posted nominal growth of 4.6 percent, y-o-y, as of mid-March 2014. However, private investment recovery is mild; and much of this is inherited from the crowding out of private-sector credit by government borrowing, which grew at close to nil in FY13.

**Banks under threat: Govt may find it hard to repay debt, says WB, *Express Tribune*, April 10<sup>68</sup>**

While striking a note of optimism about growth prospects, the World Bank warned on Wednesday that Pakistan's private banks may suffer at the hands of the government that could face difficulties in repaying the debt acquired for budget financing. "The maturity of the government's debt is short term that

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<sup>67</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/business/10-Apr-2014/wb-projects-4-per-cent-gdp-growth-for-2013-14>

<sup>68</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/693483/banks-under-threat-govt-may-find-it-hard-to-repay-debt-wb/>

*exposes it to refinancing risks,"* said Markus Kitzmuller, an economist working with the WB. He, along with Martin Rama, the WB's chief economist for the South Asian region, was discussing the highlights of the WB's report on the region through a video link from Washington.

**State Bank's reserves rise \$41 million, *Express Tribune*, April 18<sup>69</sup>**

Foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) recorded a week-on-week increase of 0.82% on April 11, according to data released by the SBP on April 17. The central bank's foreign exchange reserves increased \$41 million to \$4.984 billion during the week. Total liquid foreign reserves held by the country, including net foreign reserves held by banks other than the SBP, stood at \$9.85 billion on April 11, up 1.44% from the figure reported for the week ended April 4. Net foreign reserves held by banks amounted to \$4.86 billion on April 11. The International Monetary Fund's executive board on March 24 approved the third loan tranche of \$540 million for Pakistan, which is going to support the foreign exchange reserves position in coming weeks.

**Current account deficit over \$2.1 billion, *Express Tribune*, April 18<sup>70</sup>**

Pakistan's current account deficit in the first nine months of the ongoing fiscal year increased to more than \$2.1 billion as opposed to \$1.2 billion recorded in July-March of 2012-13, according to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The current account balance for March remained a negative \$156 million. In contrast, the current account in February was in surplus (\$167 million), the SBP data shows. Shown as a percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP), the current account deficit widened to 1.2% in July-March as opposed to 0.7% in the same period of the last fiscal year. The country's balance of payment (BoP) position was particularly vulnerable until recently mainly because foreign exchange reserves held by the central bank had declined to a critical level of \$2.8 billion on February 7. This meant that the reserves provided less than one month of import cover. However, SBP-held foreign exchange reserves have now increased to \$6.9 billion, up 146% in a little over two months. Pakistan exported goods worth \$2.1 billion in March as opposed to exports totaling \$2 billion in the preceding month, reflecting a month-on-month increase of 5%. For the July-March period, exports increased to \$18.9 billion, up 3.2% from \$18.3 billion recorded in the corresponding nine-month period of 2012-13. The country's total imports of goods in March were \$3.3 billion as opposed to \$3.1 billion in January, which means an increase of 7.3% in one month. For the July-March period, imports increased to \$31 billion, up 3.6% from \$29.9 billion in the corresponding nine-month

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<sup>69</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/697012/going-up-state-banks-reserves-rise-41-million/>

<sup>70</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/697008/current-account-deficit-over-2-1-billion-data-reveals/>

period in 2012-13. Workers' remittances remained \$1.3 billion in March, up 10.5% from the preceding month. Workers' remittances in July-March increased to \$11.5 billion, registering an increase of 11.6% over the corresponding nine-month period in the preceding fiscal year when they totaled \$10.3 billion.

**ECC approves Rs18.9 bn PSM restructuring plan, *The News*, April 26<sup>71</sup>**

The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) that met here on April 25 approved Rs18.9 billion restructuring plan for the Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) with an aim to achieve the target to run the entity at 77 percent by June 2015. Besides it, the meeting decided to impose, from May 5 onward to July 31, the 25 percent regulatory duty on potatoes export and zero duty on imports of the said commodity to bring down the prices of potatoes at Rs30 per kg. In the meeting, chaired by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Privatisation Commission Chairman Muhammad Zubair informed that privatisation of the entity is not possible at this stage because the PSM is functioning at 3-6% capacity due to shortage of funds, and it is not possible for the plant to run for a long period at this capacity. The chairman argued that the possibility of finding a strategic partner for PSM also looks remote.

## **ENERGY**

**PM seeks Japan's help in energy sector, *Dawn*, April 2<sup>72</sup>**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on April 1 asked Japan to expand its development assistance portfolio in the country particularly in energy and infrastructure sectors. "We look forward to greater level of cooperation between the two countries in the areas of trade, investment, development, security, energy, institution building and capacity building," the prime minister told Japanese deputy foreign minister Shinsuke Sugiyama, who is visiting Pakistan for the bilateral political consultations.

**France provides Rs8.5b for two 785MW hydropower projects, *The Nation*, April 3<sup>73</sup>**

France has provided Pakistan Rs 8.5 billion for two hydropower projects, the Mohmand Hydropower Project (740MW) located in KPK and Harpo Hydropower Project (35MW) in the Gilgit-Baltistan. To this effect, Nargis Sethi, Secretary of Economic Affairs Division (EAD), Philippe Thiébaud, Ambassador of France, and Denis CASSAT, Country Director of the French

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<sup>71</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-246515-ECC-approves-Rs189-bn-PSM-restructuring-plan>

<sup>72</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097145/pm-seeks-japans-help-in-energy-sector>

<sup>73</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/business/03-Apr-2014/france-provides-rs8-5b-for-two-785mw-hydropower-projects>

Development Agency (AFD), signed the Credit Facility Agreements (CFAs) on Wednesday. This financing aims at completing the 02 hydropower projects with a total capacity to produce 785MW.

**US participation in Dasu, Diamer-Basha projects, *Express Tribune*, April 10<sup>74</sup>**

Pakistan on April 9 underscored the importance of US participation in various energy related projects especially Dasu and Diamer-Basha hydel projects during the working group meeting on economy and finance in Washington. According to a statement on the meeting, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to expanding bilateral trade ties and business links. Pakistan side was represented by a delegation led by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar while the US side was represented by Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, Catherine Ann Novelli. Senior officials from the concerned Ministries and departments from both sides were part of their respective delegations.

**Power shortage leads to 12-18 hours of loadshedding, *Dawn*, April 11<sup>75</sup>**

With mercury inching towards 40 degrees Celsius in most parts of the country and water discharge from two major dams reduced because of low irrigation requirements, electricity shortage shot to 6,000MW on Thursday, forcing authorities to resort to 12 to 18 hours of load shedding. According to officials of the Pakistan Electric Power Company (Pepco), all the determinants turned nasty for the sector's managers in the last two days. Describing the bleak scenario, they said water discharge was reduced, the temperature shot up and power plants of 2,700MW capacity were closed because of fuel shortage.

**Circular debt on the rise again: Asif, *The Nation*, April 16<sup>76</sup>**

Minister for Water and Power, Khawaja Asif, on Tuesday said that circular debt had again swollen as provincial governments and giant corporations did not pay their bills. Asif was talking to media persons after the first meeting of Energy Planning Working Group of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). "Circular debt will not end in just one year. We have to control power theft and line losses to end the circular debt issue," he said. He said that there was a proposal to create a new post of federal adjuster to settle the billing matters, however the proposal was still under process due to non-cooperation of provinces. He said the government paid over Rs 500 billion to end circular debt last year but it piled up again.

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<sup>74</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/693672/us-participation-in-dasu-diamer-basha-projects-important-dar/>

<sup>75</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1099086/power-shortage-leads-to-12-18-hours-of-loadshedding>

<sup>76</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/16-Apr-2014/circular-debt-on-the-rise-again-asif>

**LNG terminal services: Cabinet likely to clear way for award of contract,**  
*Express Tribune, April 18*<sup>77</sup>

The cabinet is likely to award a multi-million-dollar liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal contract to Elengy Terminal Pakistan Limited (ETPL) in its meeting scheduled for Friday, though Fauji Foundation has taken a firm stand against using existing terminals for gas import, sources say. The cabinet will take up the LNG services agreement initialed between Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) and ETPL for approval. Petroleum and Natural Resources Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi told *The Express Tribune* that there would be no more delays. "We were just waiting for the meeting to be held," said Abbasi. "Everything has been done and we will get the final approval [today]." The top management of Fauji Foundation has sent a letter to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, underlining its opposition to LNG import from Qatar through existing terminals and suggested that a new terminal should be constructed for the purpose that would be more secure and economically feasible.

**350 small dams to be built in KP, says Imran,** *Dawn, April 21*<sup>78</sup>

The provincial government would construct 350 small dams to end power loadshedding in KP, said PTI chairman Imran Khan here on April 20. Addressing a public meeting in KhwazaKhela area in connection with campaign for by-election on provincial assembly seat, PK 86, he said that they were moving in the right direction. The PTI-led provincial government was achieving its goals steadily, he claimed. Mr Khan said that they were delivering in KP according to their party's manifesto. "Though we are achieving our targets slowly yet I assure the residents of the province that the PTI government will perform better than other provincial governments at the end," he added.

**Power tariff reduced for one month,** *Dawn, April 23*<sup>79</sup>

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) approved on Tuesday Rs1.02 per unit reduction in electricity tariff of distribution companies of Wapda for next month because of a decline in fuel prices and appreciation of the rupee. The decision was taken on the request of the Central Power Purchasing Agency after a public hearing presided over by acting chairman of Nepra Khwaja Mohammad Naeem. The reduced rates would not apply to K-Electric and lifeline consumers of the distribution companies of Wapda. the monthly fuel adjustment mechanism, the regulator

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<sup>77</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/697010/lng-terminal-services-cabinet-likely-to-clear-way-for-award-of-contract/>

<sup>78</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101298/350-small-dams-to-be-built-in-kp-says-imran>

<sup>79</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101693/power-tariff-reduced-for-one-month>

is required to revise consumer tariff every month on the basis of fuel cost of power generation depending on fuel mix, exchange rate and fuel prices.

**Power shortfall increases again, *The News*, April 25<sup>80</sup>**

The power shortfall in the country again increased to 2,500 MW as the total generation on April 25 was recorded at 10,200 MW while the demand remains 12,700 MW at 0900 hours. According to daily data released by National Transmission and Dispatch Company Limited (NTDC), the hydel generation stood at 3,445 MW, Thermal 985, Independent Power Producers (IPPs) 5,810 MW and Wind 40 MW. The hydel generation has significantly increased owing to more water discharge from Tarbela and Mangla dams and stood at 3,445 MW.

**ADB approves \$400mn loan to boost Pakistan's energy sector, *Dawn*, April 29<sup>81</sup>**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved \$400 million loan to help Pakistan carry out reforms for overcoming power shortages. An agreement in this regard was signed by Secretary Economic Affairs Division Nargis Sethi and ADB's Country Director for Pakistan Werner E. Liepach here on April 28. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and ADB's Governor witnessed the signing ceremony. "*The ADB has approved a soft and concessionary loan for Pakistan, which has the best terms and conditions with interest rate of even less than 2 per cent annually,*" said Ishaq Dar. He said the ADB had also recently approved a loan of \$900 million for Jamshoro coal power project to produce cheaper electricity.

## **IMF LOAN**

**\$109m paid to IMF, *Dawn*, April 2<sup>82</sup>**

Pakistan on March 2 paid 30th instalment amounting SDR71 million equivalent to US\$109 million to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under its standby arrangement (SBA) facility. State Bank spokesperson said a total of SDR4.591 billion (\$7.010bn) has so far been repaid to the IMF since July 2011. Of this amount \$6.066bn was under the SBA facility, the spokesperson added. The country has to pay remaining SDR958 million until Sept 2015 due under the SBA facility.

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<sup>80</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/25-Apr-2014/power-shortfall-increases-again>

<sup>81</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102852/adb-approves-400mn-loan-to-boost-pakistans-energy-sector>

<sup>82</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097104/109m-paid-to-imf>

**IMF not satisfied with bill on 'SBP autonomy', *Dawn*, April 21<sup>83</sup>**

The IMF is said to have reservations over a government bill seeking greater autonomy for the State Bank. Informed sources told *Dawn* that the IMF was of the opinion that "The State Bank of Pakistan (Amendment) Act, 2014" introduced by the government in the National Assembly early this month was not sufficient to provide full autonomy to the central bank in line with international best practices. The IMF is expected to formally take up the issue with Pakistan during the third quarterly review of the \$6.78 billion bailout package under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) scheduled for April 30-May 9 in Dubai. The two sides will finalise exact targets for fiscal adjustment in next year's budget on the basis of economic development during the current fiscal year to reduce fiscal deficit to less than 4.5 per cent.

**Development fund cut to meet IMF terms, *Dawn*, April 22<sup>84</sup>**

The public sector spending on federal development projects meant for improvement of the standard of living of the people lagged significantly behind targets in the first 10 months of the current fiscal year amid the government's priority to keep the fiscal deficit within limits imposed by the IMF. By April 18, the government had released only 40 per cent of the funds allocated for the federal ministries for the year, according to the Planning Commission. Under the disbursement mechanism approved by the government, the ministries should have spent about 75pc of the allocations by now. Of the allocated Rs362 billion, Rs145bn had been released, while about Rs270bn should have been disbursed during the 10 months.

**Nawaz launches Uch-II power project, *Dawn*, April 25<sup>85</sup>**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif inaugurated on April 25 the 404MW Uch Power Project-II in Dera Murad Jamali, Balochistan. Addressing the ceremony, the premier said the government would fulfill the electricity shortage in the country within two and a half years' time. He stressed on the need for carrying forward all institutions together for the country's prosperity. On the occasion, the premier also announced that new power lines would be laid in Balochistan's Nasirabad and Sibi Division areas. This was the second major power project to be inaugurated by the prime minister in a week. Earlier on April 21, the premier had inaugurated commissioning of additional power units at the Guddu Thermal Power Plant.

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<sup>83</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101218/imf-not-satisfied-with-bill-on-sbp-autonomy>

<sup>84</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101491/development-fund-cut-to-meet-imf-terms>

<sup>85</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102238/nawaz-launches-uch-ii-power-project>



## REMITTANCES

### **Pakistan to get \$2.6b next month, *The Nation*, April 17<sup>86</sup>**

Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on April 16 said that Pakistan would receive over \$2.6 billion from different sources like World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank and United States under coalition support fund (CSF) by next month (May). Ishaq Dar said, "The World Bank will also give approval for \$11 billion for the next five years for Pakistan under Country Partnership Strategy- from 2015 to 2019 on May 1 2014". However prior to it, "*The World Bank will approve \$1 billion for Pakistan on May 1 2014 for two projects of energy and revenue development programme*", said Ishaq Dar while addressing a press conference here to inform on economic situation and his tour to Washington and New York. He further said that World Bank would further approve \$700 million for Dasu hydro power project and Sindh irrigation project in its meeting to be held in the end of May 2014.

## INVESTMENT

### **Dar invites Middle Eastern banks to invest in Pakistan's treasury bills, *Express Tribune*, April<sup>87</sup>**

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on April 2 invited Middle Eastern banks to invest in the treasury bills of Pakistan. Representatives of Dubai Islamic Bank, Mashreq Bank, Emirates Islamic Bank, Habib Bank, Habib AGZ Bank, ENBD AM Bank and United Limited Bank attended the meeting. Dar said it was the first time the government had listed treasury bills for trading on the stock exchange. Citing that in the 90s credit facilities were extended by Middle Eastern banks to Pakistan, he mentioned that one such facility had been extended recently and encouraged the bankers to extend similar financing facilities as the Pakistani market has good appetite for such credit.

### **Chinese company to explore iron reserves in Chiniot, *The Nation*, April<sup>88</sup>**

A historic agreement was signed between Punjab government and Chinese company Metallurgical Corporation for exploring iron reserves in Rajua, Chiniot on April 2. According to the agreement, the Chinese company will give final opinion about the quality and quantity of the iron deposits under the land within 10 months. This agreement will pave the way for setting up first Pakistani steel mill in Punjab to be run with local iron. Chief Minister

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<sup>86</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/business/17-Apr-2014/pakistan-to-get-2-6b-next-month>

<sup>87</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/690574/dar-invites-middle-eastern-banks-to-invest-in-pakistans-treasury-bills/>

<sup>88</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/business/03-Apr-2014/chinese-company-to-explore-iron-reserves-in-chiniot>

Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, Provincial Minister for Mineral Chaudhary Sher Ali, Chairman Punjab Mineral Corporation Sumar Mubarrak Mand, Secretary Mineral Development Dr Arshad Mehmood and officials of Chinese company were present.

**Govt to earn Rs143b from OGDCL, PPL and UBL sell-off, *The Nation*, April 19<sup>89</sup>**

Without facing any serious political pressure, the PML-N government is fast moving to complete its privatisation programme, as another prerequisite of appointing financial advisors for disinvesting shares of three entities (OGDCL, PPL, and UBL) would be met by April 22. As the government has planned to generate Rs 143 billion for the disinvestments the shares of three public sector entities by June 30 this year, the Privatization Commission is all set to appoint financial advisors for the prospective capital market transactions (OGDCL, PPL, and UBL) by April 22 2014. The government, in first stage, would offload 10pc, 5pc and 20pc of shares in OGDCL (Oil and Gas Development Company Limited), PPL (Pakistan Petroleum Limited) and UBL (Untied Bank Limited) respectively before June 30 this year, which would generate Rs 143 billion.

## **TRADE**

**Plan to boost trade with US, *Dawn*, April 4<sup>90</sup>**

Pakistan and the US are developing a joint plan to increase trade and investment flows between the two countries over the next five years, US Ambassador Richard Olson said here on April 4. Speaking at the 'Leaders Summit', Ambassador Olson said that the plan will build on existing efforts being made by the two countries to increase trade and investment ties. "*With US as Pakistan's largest export market and a leading source of foreign investment, the two countries will continue to deepen bilateral economic partnership in the years to come,*" Richard Olson said. The US envoy encouraged the public and private sectors of Pakistan to work together on investing in privatisation -- one of Pakistan's most important endeavours.

**Pakistan raises \$2b through Euro bonds, *Express Tribune*, April 10<sup>91</sup>**

In the largest-ever single transaction, Pakistan has been able to raise \$2 billion from international debt markets through the issuance of five- and 10-year dollar-denominated Euro bonds, taking a giant step towards meeting an IMF condition of increasing its gross official reserves to \$9 billion. It was the

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<sup>89</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/business/19-Apr-2014/govt-to-earn-rs143b-from-ogdcl-ppl-and-ubl-sell-off>

<sup>90</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097593/plan-to-boost-trade-with-us>

<sup>91</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/693655/single-attempt-pakistan-raises-2b-through-euro-bonds/>

highest amount that Pakistan has ever raised in a single attempt and shows the increasing confidence of international investors on policies of the PML-N government, according to analysts. "Pakistan's bond was highly over-subscribed and received \$5.2 billion offers but we decided to accept \$2 billion," Rana Assad Amin, the Ministry of Finance spokesman, told The \$1 billion has been raised for five-year at a fixed rate of 7.25%, which is 5.58 % over and above the benchmark five-year US Treasury rate. The rest of the \$1 billion was generated through 10-year bonds at a fixed rate of 8.25%, which is 5.56% above the corresponding 10-year US Treasury benchmark rate.

**Free trade agreement with South Korea, Dawn, April 14<sup>92</sup>**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Monday that Pakistan sought a free trade agreement with South Korea. Sharif met the visiting South Korean premier Chung Hong-won in the federal capital. Following the meeting, diplomatic talks were held between the delegations of the two countries. The delegations were led by the respective premiers of the two countries. The Pakistani delegation comprised Khurram Dastgir and Ahsan Iqbal whereas the Korean delegation included its deputy information minister and deputy commerce minister.

**PFMA decries Afghan export in foreign currency, Dawn, April 29<sup>93</sup>**

The recent restriction by the federal government to export wheat and wheat products to Afghanistan in foreign currency only is hitting centuries-old Afghan market and driving Pakistani products out of the market. This was claimed by the officials of Pakistan Flour Mills Association (PFMA) here on April 28. Addressing a joint press conference, they said wheat products export to the Afghan market had already become negligible and was being fast replaced by the Indian exports. The milling industry has invested billions of rupees in the Afghan market, which is being threatened by this restriction. "The government had already experimented with such a curb and failed. Why is it repeating the mistake," they wondered and demanded: "Wheat and its products' trade with Afghanistan be allowed in local currency."

**OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**

**Inflation rises, Dawn, April 2<sup>94</sup>**

Inflation measured through Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 8.5 per cent in March 2014, rising slightly from the previous month, showed data of the

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<sup>92</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1099842/pakistan-seeks-free-trade-agreement-with-south-korea>

<sup>93</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102988/pfma-decries-afghan-export-in-foreign-currency>

<sup>94</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097114/inflation-rises>

Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Tuesday. The rate crossed the government's annual target of 8pc for 2013-14 compared to 7.38pc in 2012-13, for the first time since December 2013. The slight increase last month is mainly driven by surge in prices of essential food items. Officials project that inflation will decelerate in the next few months owing to cut in petrol prices in March. During the first eight months (July-March) of this fiscal year (FY14), the fiscal deficit was recorded at 2.5pc instead of 2.6pc. This, the officials said, was because of decline in borrowing from the central bank. Inflation stood at 8.64pc during the eight-month period, higher than the annual target projected for FY14.

**China to mark 'Pakistan Theme Day' in Qinghai Food Expo, *The Nation*, April 6<sup>95</sup>**

The China Council for Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) Qinghai has announced to observe 'Pakistan Theme Day' on May 17, 2014 during the upcoming Halal Food Exhibition being held in Xining, China from the 15th to 18th, touching the new heights of the Sino-Pak friendship. Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers & Exporters Association Chairman, Akhtar Nazir Khan Cooki, who has been working to strengthen Pak-China trade ties, observed that he has succeeded to get preferential policy for Pakistani exhibitors in that show by the Qinghai provincial government. *"The May 17, dedicated and specified for Pakistan Theme Day in Qinghai Show, will provide us an opportunity of building our soft image and positive picture through our cultural show, artistic displays, portraying our variety of innovative products and people to people meetings."*

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<sup>95</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/business/06-Apr-2014/china-to-mark-pakistan-theme-day-in-qinghai-food-expo>

**Pak-China Economic Corridor: Chinese team to visit Gwadar by end-April,**  
*The Express Tribune, April 13*<sup>96</sup>

A high-level Chinese technical team will visit Gwadar by the end of this month to examine the deep seaport and infrastructure sites for the proposed Pakistan-China Economic Corridor. This is for the first time top Chinese experts will examine the proposed roads and rail tracks for the economic corridor from Gwadar port, in Balochistan, to Kashgar, in China. "We will arrange meetings and physical visits of the Chinese technical team at the port and infrastructure sites to examine technical feasibilities of infrastructure," said Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) Chairman Dostain Khan Jamaldini. This visit will be followed by another by officials of Chinese financial institutions – including China's Exim Bank, the chief financier of the mega project – to set modalities for provision of funds to execute the project, he added. He said the technical team might give some suggestions for further improvement in infrastructure.

**Agreements signed to boost ties with South Korea,** *Dawn, April 15*<sup>97</sup>

Pakistan and South Korea signed on April 14 several agreements at official and private levels to boost ties in trade, industries and energy sectors. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his South Korean counterpart Chung Hongwon witnessed the signing of memorandums of understanding on expanding bilateral trade, cooperation in industrial and energy sectors. Commerce Secretary Mohammad Shahzad Arbab and Korean Vice Minister for Trade and Energy Han Jinhun signed the documents on behalf of their governments. During official talks with the visiting dignitary, Mr Sharif proposed a comprehensive Pak-Korea free trade agreement to cover trade, investment and services with an objective to enhance trade volume from the current \$1.6 billion.

**Islamabad-Riyadh parleys: Long-term oil credit facility high on Saudi talk's agenda,** *The Express Tribune, April 15*<sup>98</sup>

Pakistan is going to seek a long-term credit facility for oil purchase from Saudi Arabia during two-day talks in Riyadh starting on April 15, a move that will help save and ease pressure on the country's foreign currency reserves. A 20-member strong Pakistani delegation including officials from different ministries and businessmen has left for Saudi Arabia to take part in the parleys, sources say. Minister of Commerce Khurram Dastgir and his Saudi counterpart will be present during the deliberations. A two-day Joint

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<sup>96</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/694951/pak-china-economic-corridor-chinese-team-to-visit-gwadar-by-end-april/>

<sup>97</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1100002/agreements-signed-to-boost-ties-with-south-korea>

<sup>98</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/695607/islamabad-riyadh-parleys-long-term-oil-credit-facility-high-on-saudi-talks-agenda/>

Ministerial Commission meeting will also discuss the possibility of forming joint ventures between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia for oil and gas exploration in an effort to boost energy production in Pakistan.

**World Bank expected to approve \$700 million for Dasu, irrigation projects,** Express Tribune, April 15<sup>99</sup>

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said on Monday that the following discussions with the World Bank, the financial institution is likely to approve \$700 million in May for the Dasu hydel project and irrigation projects in Sindh. Talking to media in Washington, Dar said major financial institutions now agree with Islamabad that Pakistan's GDP growth would surpass their earlier projections. Dar said the country now has access to \$1 billion for the current year under its International Development Association and the World Bank is likely to approve the funds at its meeting next month. With World Bank support, Dar said Dasu Dam, Diamer-Bhasha Dam and 19 other flagship projects have been envisioned for the next four years.

**China seeks guarantees for 21,690MW projects,** *The Nation*, April 16<sup>100</sup>

Chinese National Energy Administration (NEA) has asked the government of Pakistan to give guarantees for 21,690MW power projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Zhang Yuqing, vice-administer NEA, asked for guarantees on Tuesday during the first meeting of Energy Planning Working Group of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) held at a local hotel. Yuqing during his presentation raised six points, including joint planning, planning working group, time schedule for the projects, planning guarantee mechanism in accordance with policy regularity law and mechanism, and intergovernmental agreement to guarantee execution of the projects. The working group was co-chaired by Federal Minister for Water and Power Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal along with Zhang Yuqing.

**16 MoUs signed at business meeting,** *Dawn*, April 17<sup>101</sup>

Sixteen MoUs were signed at the end of a three-day Central Asian Business Opportunities Conference here April 16 with participants making a commitment to revive the historic Silk Route. Over 300 representatives of the private and public sectors from CARs, Afghanistan and Pakistan attended the conference organised by the Ministry of Commerce, USAID and the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The USAID representative

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<sup>99</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/695565/world-bank-expected-to-approve-700-million-for-dasu-irrigation-projects-dar/>

<sup>100</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/16-Apr-2014/china-seeks-guarantees-for-21-690mw-projects>

<sup>101</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1100467/16-mous-signed-at-business-meeting>

reiterated support for the Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (Tapi) gas pipeline project. It was agreed to develop long-term and sustainable partnership in the fields of processed food, agriculture, textile, leather, pharmaceuticals and construction industries. The participants explored areas of investment and trade in respective countries. RCCI president Dr Shimail Daud said that MoUs would help the private sector in sharing information and developing long-term ties among countries attending the conference.

**PM asked to think beyond Punjab, Dawn, April 21<sup>102</sup>**

Former chief minister and Awami National Party MNA Ameer Haider Khan Hoti has criticised Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for focusing on the development of Punjab province only while finalising developmental projects and signing agreements with foreign countries. He alleged that Mr Sharif was treating only Punjab as Pakistan. *"The representation of Punjab only has been considered so far during the prime minister's foreign trips so far,"* he said. Mr Hoti expressed these views here on Sunday during a ceremony wherein former provincial president of Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid's labour wing Inam Saraf joined ANP along with his supporters. MPA Sardar Hussain Babak, former MNA Himayat Ullah Mayar, Shamsheer Khan and local ANP activists were also present on the occasion. Mr Hoti said that Pakhtuns of KP voted PTI to power in the last general elections, but it failed to fulfill even a single promise after remaining in power for 11 months.

**PM in Gwadar to assess development projects, Express Tribune, April 24<sup>103</sup>**

President Nawaz Sharif was welcomed by COAS General Raheel Sharif as he arrived in Gwadar on April 24 to assess development projects. The premier landed in PNS Akram Base via a military helicopter. Also present in Gwadar were Balochistan Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, along with other members of the government. The prime minister expressed concern regarding Gwadar's progress and stated that previous expectations for development had not been met. He said issues in the social, political and economic arenas must also be resolved and that everyone should work together for progress of the country. During his visit, the prime minister will also be giving a briefing on the law and order situation in Balochistan.

**Govt losing Rs15bn annually to tyre smuggling, Dawn, April 28<sup>104</sup>**

The government is losing around Rs15 billion every year due to the smuggling of more than 2.5 million new and used tyres into the country. Industry sources said it is a huge blow to the local tyre industry, the

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<sup>102</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101302/pm-asked-to-think-beyond-punjab>

<sup>103</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/699754/pm-arrives-in-gwadar/>

<sup>104</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102550/govt-losing-rs15bn-annually-to-tyre-smuggling>

government and consumers. Governments world over protect their industries, but in Pakistan the situation is quite reverse, they said. Used winter tyres, which are not suitable for hot climate, have also been smuggled into the country. Except for the cement industry which is allowed to use tyres as an alternative fuel, used tyres are banned in Pakistan. Yet, they are being smuggled in and sold to the public. Brand new tyres produced years ago, hence expired from safety and quality point of view, are routinely being smuggled in and re-stamped with fresh dates locally, cleaned and then wrapped before being sold to unsuspecting consumers.

## EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

### **Slowing economic growth**, *The Express Tribune*, April 3<sup>105</sup>

For the second year in a row, Pakistan's economic growth rate has slowed down and is projected to be a paltry 3.4 per cent during 2014, according to the ADB. The headline numbers would be bad enough on their own were it not for what the ADB identifies as the root cause. Addressing the economic reforms pledged by the government, the ADB country director says: "*Actual actions has either not been taken yet or have to show results. What Pakistan is going to achieve this year and next year is not enough to get this country out of poverty and put it on the path to development.*"

### **Good and bad news**, Dr Farrukh Salee, *The News*, April 13<sup>106</sup>

[...] Pakistan's economic management has taken a U-turn from consecutive disasters of yesteryears. The ADB has revised its GDP projection upwards from 3 percent to 3.4 percent. The World Bank has revised its GDP projection upwards to 4 percent. According to the IMF, GDP growth for 2014-15 will accelerate to about 3.7 percent. The IMF has also confirmed that the "*preliminary data for the 1st quarter 2013-14 recorded 5 percent growth.*" The ADB has promised to provide \$3 billion in the form of project aid and programme loans. The World Bank has promised \$1.7 billion for energy and infrastructure projects. The Islamic Development Bank has promised \$730 million. The Ministry of Finance has sold Eurobonds worth \$2 billion-a magnitude the ministry has never achieved before this was against an initial target of \$500 million. Then there's 3G for an additional \$1.2 billion.

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<sup>105</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/690517/slowing-economic-growth/>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-242169-The-ADB-way>

<sup>106</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-243980-Good-and-bad-news>



**Pakistan returns**, Dr Ashfaq H Khan, *The News*, April 15<sup>107</sup>

Pakistan has made a successful return to the international bond market for the first time in over seven years. Initially targeting to raise \$500 million, Pakistan raised the transaction size to \$2 billion at the back of the strong demand of its paper by high quality and diversified international investors resulting in multiple time over-subscriptions. Pakistan has sold a \$2 billion dual tranche note on April 9, 2014, divided into five and ten year tranches of equal size \$1 billion each. This transaction is Pakistan's largest international sovereign bond offering to date and attracted significant interest from global investors, especially from the US. Pakistan's 5 and 10 year bonds' yields are 7.25 percent and 8.25 percent respectively which are priced at 558 bps and 556 bps above the corresponding benchmark rates of US Treasury 5 and 10 year, respectively.

**Autonomy for State Bank**, *Dawn*, April<sup>108</sup>

The IMF doesn't seem happy with the quantum of independence the government plans to give the State Bank of Pakistan to meet one of several benchmarks of the Fund's \$6.7bn loan. The IMF mission chief in Pakistan has made it quite clear that *the level of autonomy sought for the bank in the draft SBP Act, 2014 isn't enough*. This newspaper quoted him yesterday as saying that the IMF "*may have some reservations and may seek some revisions*" in the bill. The issue will be discussed at the third review of the Extended Fund Facility starting from April 30 in Dubai. The trend of giving central banks maximum legal, policy and operational independence has caught on in recent years. [...] Finance Minister Ishaq Dar is known for his aversion to the 'creation of a state within the state' entailing the surrender of powers that the government has over the SBP. For him, this would mean that, at least theoretically, the government would lose the power to influence the process of determining interest rates, to have an impact on the exchange rate and to favour or punish commercial banks and other financial institutions regulated by the SBP.

**Defence budget**, Dr Farrukh Saleem, *The News*, April 27<sup>109</sup>

Myth 1: The allocation for defence is the single largest component in Pakistan budget. Not true. Myth 2: The defence budget eats up a large percentage of the total outlay. Not true. Myth 3: The defence budget has been increasing at an increasing rate. Not true. In 2001-02, Pakistan spent 4.6 percent of our GDP on defence. In 2013-14, twelve years later, defence spending has gone down to 2.7 percent of GDP. Myth 4: Pakistan end up spending a very high percentage of our GDP on defence. Not true. Myth 5: The Pakistan Army consumes the

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<sup>107</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-244261-Pakistan-returns>

<sup>108</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1101407/autonomy-for-state-bank>

<sup>109</sup> <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-246627-Defence-budget>

bulk of the defence budget. Not true. In the 1970s, the Pakistan Army's share in the defence budget had shot up to 80 percent. In 2012-13, the Pakistan Army's share in the defence budget stood at 48 percent. Now some facts: Fact 1: The Pakistan Army's budget as a percentage of national budget now hovers around eight percent. Fact 2: Losses incurred at public-sector enterprises can pay for 100 percent of our defence budget. Fact 3: Pakistan's armed forces are the sixth largest but our expenses per soldier are the lowest. America spends nearly \$400,000 per soldier, India \$25,000 and Pakistan \$10,000. Fact 4: Of all the armies in the world, Pak Army has received the highest number of UN medals. Of all the armies in the world, Pak Army is the largest contributor of troops to the UN peacekeeping missions.

**Go for foreign direct investments**, Shahid Javed Burki, *The Express tribune*, April 27<sup>110</sup>

The current administration's approach of inundating the economy with funds from bilateral sources has been followed in the past, in particular by the governments that were dominated by the military. Altruism is not the only reason that rich countries give financial assistance to those who are relatively poor. Bilateral aid usually comes with political strings attached that are often not very visible. There are expectations of donors from the recipients that democracies may not be able to fulfill. That may be the case with today's Pakistan. Are there other ways of meeting the resource gap that are less politically encumbered?

**Tyre problems**, *The Express Tribune*, April 30<sup>111</sup>

Pakistan only produces around 20 per cent of its annual tyre consumption and the industry is clearly struggling. [...] Every wheel needs a tyre and Pakistan consumes around 8.25 million of them every year. Smuggled tyres, mostly from Afghanistan, now constitute around 32 per cent of sales and indigenous manufacturers are feeling the pinch. There has reportedly been a rise in smuggled tyres in recent months and tyre industry representatives are rightly angry that so little is being done to stop the flow of illegal goods. The influx is said to be so great that the industry is unable to sustain a level of sales that would turn a profit.

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<sup>110</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/700667/go-for-foreign-direct-investments/>

<sup>111</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/701884/tyre-problems/>

## SECURITY SITUATION

### TERRORISM

#### **PM calls meeting on security, *The Nation*, April 17<sup>112</sup>**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has called a meeting of CCNS on April 17 to discuss overall national security with specific reference to Taliban's decision not to extend the ceasefire and its impact on the ongoing peace parleys. The meeting would be attended by PM's Adviser on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar, Information Minister Pervaiz Rashid, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, all the three services' chiefs, the ISI DG and the IB DG. The meeting has acquired special significance as it would be the first face-to-face encounter between the prime minister and the chief of the army staff following the caution call by the latter on provocative statements by some cabinet members after the indictment of former military dictator Pervez Musharraf in the high treason case. Sources aware of the situation informed *The Nation* that the talks with Taliban would be on top of the agenda.

#### **'Pakistan must break links with Afghan insurgents', *Dawn*, April 18<sup>113</sup>**

Pakistan must break alleged links with any Afghan insurgents if it is to adhere to Article 40 of the Constitution, said an opposition lawmaker in the Senate on April 18. Opposition lawmakers were expressing their views during a debate in the Senate on a motion on foreign policy moved by Senator Raza Rabbani of the PPP. Opposition senators called for ending 'duplicity' in foreign policy formulation and stressed on the need to retrieve the ground lost by civilians to the security establishment over the past decades. Senators called for a serious rethink of policy formulation in the light of realities emerging as a result of political transitions last year taking place in Pakistan's neighbouring countries, including China and Iran, and now Afghanistan and India. Senator Farhatullah Babar said that the basis of foreign policy formulation is laid out in Article 40 of the Constitution of Pakistan.

#### **Punjab claims it's coming down hard on militants, *Dawn*, April 22<sup>114</sup>**

The Punjab government has detained and prosecuted about 700 militants involved in sectarian violence over the last six months. In 2013, law-enforcement agencies in the province registered nearly 3,500 cases on charges of misusing loud speakers, delivering hate speeches, disseminating

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<sup>112</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/17-Apr-2014/pm-calls-meeting-on-security-today>

<sup>113</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1100749/pakistan-must-break-alleged-links-with-afghan-insurgents>

<sup>114</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101490/punjab-claims-its-coming-down-hard-on-militants>

incendiary material and trying to cause divisions among different segments of society. The information was released by the Director General of Public Relations (DGPR) Punjab in response to a story carried in this newspaper, calling attention to the presence of proscribed organisations' sleeper cells in and around Lahore and the provincial government's lukewarm response to these developments.

## KP AND FATA

**'Join up or leave': Threats trigger fresh displacement from Bara, Express Tribune, April 28<sup>115</sup>**

Dozens of tribesmen have started evacuating the Bara sub-division of Khyber Agency due to threats from the Mangal Bagh-led militant outfit Lashkar-e-Islam (LeI). Due to its ongoing conflict with Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, the LeI had given the Shinwari tribesmen and Afghan citizens living in Bara a choice to either join its fight or leave the sub-division within three days, sources said. *"LeI Militants asked residents to provide them one volunteer from each household,"* a Shinwari elder settled in Bara told The Express Tribune on condition of anonymity. *"We chose the second option and decided to leave Bara,"* he said.

## BALUCHISTAN

**Malik not satisfied with anti-insurgency organisation, Dawn, April 21<sup>116</sup>**

An organisation which was set up to counter the insurgency in Balochistan has become the reason for increasing disorder in the province, Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch said. When asked whether the growing violence can be contained, he said: "There are multiple factors at play in Balochistan. One of them is the ongoing insurgency. The main trouble spots, in terms of insurgency, are Kech district and Panjgur. Then there is the issue of tribal and personal conflicts. Lastly, an organisation formed by the government back in the day known as Musallah Difayi Tanzeem in Khuzdar, to counter the insurgency, is also adding to the problems of law and order in the province.

*"But overall, the situation is getting better. There was a time when the High Court observed in its remarks that MPAs and ministers are involved in kidnapping for ransom. But that is not the case today as things are improving. Our main problem still remains the two districts that I mentioned. And the issue of missing persons is not shaping up the way I wanted it to."*

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<sup>115</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/701201/join-up-or-leave-threats-trigger-fresh-displacement-from-bara/>

<sup>116</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101124/malik-not-satisfied-with-anti-insurgency-organisation>

**Gas pipeline blown up in Dera Bugti, Dawn, April 23<sup>117</sup>**

Suspected militants blew up a 16 inch gas pipeline in Balochistan's volatile Dera Bugti district on April 23, an official said. A security official who requested anonymity since he was not authorised to speak to media told Dawn.com that militants had planted an IED close to a gas pipeline in the Pir Koh area of Dera Bugti. He said the IED exploded with a considerably loud bang blowing up 16 inch diameter gas pipeline in the area. "Gas supply to Sui purification plant suspended after the blast," he said.

## **SINDH**

**24 low intensity blasts hit Sindh cities, The News, April 9<sup>118</sup>**

At least 24 low intensity blasts hit different cities of Sindh as Jiye Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM) announced a strike for April 9 against Protection of Pakistan Ordinance and killing of nationalist leader Maqsood Qureshi. According to reports, hand-grenade explosions took place in Karachi, Hyderabad Larkana and other areas around 7:00 pm in the evening on April 8. Unknown attackers targeted railway tracks in Khurshid Colony and Qasimabad areas of Kotri. SSP Hyderabad Pir Farid Jan Sarhindi said police and Rangers had arrested 13 activists of a nationalist party after hand grenade attacks in different parts of the city. Unknown attackers also hurled hand grenades on Rangers Headquarters. Similarly, the attacks were also reported in Nowshero Feroz, Kandyaro and Mehrabpur.

## **TALIBAN TALKS**

**Taliban ceasefire is intact despite lapse of deadline: Yousuf Shah, The News, April 2<sup>119</sup>**

Taliban committee, Professor Ibrahim on April 2 said that no progress was taking place in the talks between the government and the TTP. Though he refused to elaborate on as to why the process has hit a snag, Professor Ibrahim said the committees representing the government and the Taliban had the agenda of bringing peace and for this purpose the process should move forward. Ibrahim said the government had yet to respond over the release of detainees and other confidence building measures. He said that a suitable venue was also yet to be decided to hold talks.

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<sup>117</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101766/gas-pipeline-blown-up-in-dera-bugti>

<sup>118</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-143929-24-low-intensity-blasts-hit-Sindh-cities->

<sup>119</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-143251-Taliban-ceasefire-is-intact-despite-lapse-of-deadline:-Yousuf-Shah>

**No extension in ceasefire, war to start again: TTP, *The News*, April 3<sup>120</sup>**

The proscribed TTP commander in Mohmand Agency, Khalid Omar Khorasani Wednesday said the TTP has not announced an extension in the ceasefire and that the war will start again. In a statement, Khalid Khorasani claimed that the government had breached its promise during the period of ceasefire and held the state, military and political parties responsible for *'the losses suffered'*. He said all the influential sections of the society are in favor of the persistence of war. On Pakistan cricket team's recent defeat against West Indies in World Twenty20, he said *'Allah has always let this nation cry without a break'*.

**Taliban split on ceasefire extension, *The Nation*, April 3<sup>121</sup>**

TTP says it has yet to decide about extending the ceasefire as some of its members were opposing the extension. Alleging continuous violation of ceasefire by the security forces, TTP's Mohmand Agency chapter said it will not accept any extension in the ceasefire and war will resume now. In view of ongoing peace talks with the government, Taliban had announced ceasefire on March 1. The government welcomed it and respond in the same tone. But now as the one-month ceasefire has expired, the governments want the Taliban to extend it. According to private TV channels, TTP spokesman Shahidullah Shahid said that there are differences among the members of the TTP on ceasefire extension. He said final decision in this regard would be taken soon by the TTP central shura. He said there was a voice of dissent within the TTP on the issue.

**19 Taliban freed as 'goodwill gesture', *Dawn*, April 4<sup>122</sup>**

The government announced on Thursday that it had released 19 non-combatants Taliban as a goodwill gesture for bolstering the peace process with the outlawed TTP. But surprisingly, the claim made by the interior ministry was rebutted by the Prime Minister's Secretariat which said that *"release of some prisoners involved in petty crimes by the political administration has been wrongly connoted as release of Taliban prisoners"*. The statement emanating from the Prime Minister's House was in fact a reaction to a report by an international wire service claiming that the prisoners were freed with the approval of the prime minister. *"It is clarified that there has been no authorisation given from the prime minister in this regard,"* the brief statement said.

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<sup>120</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-143290-No-extension-in-ceasefire,-war-to-start-again:-TTP-commander>

<sup>121</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/03-Apr-2014/taliban-split-on-ceasefire-extension>

<sup>122</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097651/19-taliban-freed-as-goodwill-gesture>

**Catch-22?: Conflicting signals on prisoners release, *Express Tribune*, April 4<sup>123</sup>**

The release of Taliban detainees in the peace process is a contentious issue – and the government’s embarrassing mix-up on the matter showcased just how sensitive it is. The government seemed in disarray on April 3 responding to leaked news of the release of 16 ‘non-combatant’ prisoners of TTP in South Waziristan Agency. After the Prime Minister Office denied in a statement that the 16 released prisoners had anything to do with the TTP, the Ministry of Interior later confirmed that the release of 19 ‘non-combatant’ TTP detainees belonging to the Mehsud Tribe had indeed taken place. The release of ‘non-combatant’ detainees, as demanded by the TTP, has been a contentious issue from the outset – with some officials having earlier denied that security forces are even holding any non-combatants.

**TTP ceasefire extended by 10 days, *The News*, April 4<sup>124</sup>**

The TTP announced an extension in the ceasefire which expired on March 31. TTP spokesman, Shahidullah Shahid in a statement announced that the ceasefire had been extended till April 10 and the Taliban Shura would take a further decision in this regard later on. The spokesman added that the Taliban for the sake of peace, acted responsibly and sincerely in holding talks while putting up easy terms and conditions. According to the spokesman, the government failed to deliver good results and better news. Shahidullah Shahid added that the continued silence of the government was confusing the people. The spokesman said directives have been issued to put on hold terror activities against the government and security forces. TTP are still awaiting the government's response despite expiry of the ceasefire deadline, TTP spokesman said.

**Imran says majority of Taliban wants peace, *The News*, April 5<sup>125</sup>**

PTI chairman Imran Khan has said that peace could be established in Karachi if the police is depoliticized. Speaking to media on Saturday, he said that majority of the Taliban militants wanted peace. He said that 6000 operations were carried out over the last 10 years. The PTI chairman claimed that people of KP were happier than the citizens of other three provinces.

**Mengal slams govt over Taliban talks, Baloch alienation, *Dawn*, April 5<sup>126</sup>**

Criticising Islamabad’s dialogue process with Taliban militants, former chief minister and Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) chief, Sardar

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<sup>123</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/691235/catch-22-conflicting-signals-on-prisoners-release/>

<sup>124</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-143469-TTP-ceasefire-extended-by-10-days>

<sup>125</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-143599-Imran-says-majority-of-Taliban-wants-peace->

<sup>126</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097927/mengal-slams-govt-over-taliban-talks-baloch-alienation>

Akhtar Mengal on Saturday lamented that the government considers the Taliban as their own and treats the Balochs as outsiders. Speaking to BBC Urdu, he said ongoing peace talks with the TTP indicate the difference of attitude. *"They (government) consider Taliban as their own.... Hence talks and reservations.... We are just outsiders."* The BNP-M chief warned that his party would resign from the treasury benches of the Parliament in case, what he described as, killing of Baloch youth and their enforced disappearances was not stopped by security forces. He said that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has also been apprised about his party's decision in a meeting on Friday. *"The prime minister has assured that 2014 will be a year of change for Balochistan and political betterment will be visible,"* said Mengal.

**TTP prisoners' release, not true: Yousuf Shah, Dawn, April 5<sup>127</sup>**

Coordinator of the TTP committee Maulana Yousuf Shah on Saturday said the news of the release of 19 non-combatant Taliban from the government side held no truth and not a single name of the released men was on the list given to the government by the Taliban. Moreover, Shah said the government should refrain from issuing rhetorical statements and take the Taliban committee into confidence regarding the issue of prisoners' release. He further said that the meeting between the Taliban and government sides would take place today.

**Pakistan to free 13 more Taliban prisoners: Nisar, Dawn, April 5<sup>128</sup>**

In a bid to bring an end to the ongoing insurgency in Pakistan, the government has decided to free 13 more Taliban prisoners as a confidence building measure to carry forward its peace initiative, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan said on April 4. Speaking to media representatives after chairing a joint meeting of the government and Taliban negotiating committees, he urged the TTP leadership to reciprocate to the government's action for the success of peace talks. Khan said some of those being released by the government were on a Taliban list.

**Tehreek-i-Taliban launches website, Dawn, April 6<sup>129</sup>**

The banned TTP on Saturday launched its website hosting videos, a magazine, and its leaders' interviews and statements. A news release issued by the information and publication wing of the TTP said Umar Media had sponsored the website, which would serve as the central information portal of the outfit. The TTP was declared a banned outfit in August 2008. *"Statements,*

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<sup>127</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097908/govt-claim-of-ttp-prisoners-release-holds-no-truth-yousuf-shah>

<sup>128</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097928/pakistan-to-free-13-more-taliban-prisoners-nisar>

<sup>129</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098058/tehreek-i-taliban-launches-website>



videos, announcements and magazine released by the TTP will be available on the website," the release said. It added that Umar Media was the only authorised body to issue messages and statements of the TTP. The website carries e-mail addresses of central spokesman of TTP Shahidullah Shahid and other sections. The website has been launched during peace talks between the federal government and the TTP.

**TTP govt's angry brothers: Yousaf Shah, Express Tribune, April 6**<sup>130</sup>

The members of TTP are not terrorists, they are the government's angry brothers," coordinator of the TTP committee Maulana Yousaf Shah said, Express News reported on April 6. His statement came after TTP intermediary Professor Muhammad Ibrahim announced that the government committee will meet the TTP shura in two to three days for the second round of their face to face talks. He further added that the TTP committee has been in constant communication with the Taliban and was trying to determine the location of the next meet.

**TTP accuses govt of dilly-dallying on demands, Express Tribune, April 9**<sup>131</sup>

The TTP has said that it is a matter of concern that the government is dilly-dallying on its three key demands while the Taliban are seriously holding a ceasefire. The TTP has called for the establishment of a 'peace zone', release of 'non-combatant prisoners' and an end to crackdown against Taliban members across the country, the group's central spokesperson Shahidullah Shahid said in a two-page letter addressed to the media on Tuesday. "We handed over a list of our non-combatant prisoners to the government [negotiating] committee but still no prisoner has been released while statements of government negotiators and senior officials on 'peace zone' show a lack of confidence among government departments," he said. Unabated action against TTP members – their arrests, torture in custody and mutilated bodies – has raised questions about the ceasefire, Shahid said, adding that the Taliban showed flexibility to provide an environment conducive for negotiation ... but in response, the TTP has only received dead bodies, arrests and torture of its members.

**Cross-border Taliban alliance growing stronger, The Nation, April 10**<sup>132</sup>

Taliban militants in Pakistan have established an increasingly close relationship with insurgents from across the border in Afghanistan, supplying them with explosives and well-trained fighters, a senior Afghan army

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<sup>130</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/691995/govt-committee-to-meet-ttp-in-next-2-3-days-prof-ibrahim/>

<sup>131</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/693200/peace-dialogue-ttp-accuses-govt-of-dilly-dallying-on-demands/>

<sup>132</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/international/10-Apr-2014/cross-border-taliban-alliance-growing-stronger>

commander said on April 9. But in recent weeks the two groups have secretly agreed to work together, with Pakistani militants announcing a ceasefire with their government in order to preserve militant bases used to stage cross-border attacks. Maj Genl M Shareef Yaftali, in charge of several eastern provinces on or near the Afghan border with Pakistan, said this relationship was growing stronger. *"They are working together now. They are going to hold this relationship. It helps them,"* Yaftali, commander of the 203rd Corps, said.

*"The Afghan and Pakistani Taliban have the same ideology. They are the same people. They are of the same school."* Yaftali said many students brainwashed in madrassas, in Pakistan had crossed the border to join forces with the Taliban. He said some 30,000 madrassas were shut in Pakistan last year, prompting an exodus of radically minded fighters. *"If one group is defeated they bring new fighters and it is easy for them to do that,"* said Yaftali, whose command extends over an area of about 83,000 square kilometers with a population of five million people. He said most of the explosive devices also came from Pakistan. *"There are no explosives-making factories in Afghanistan,"* Yaftali said. *"All the explosives enter Afghanistan from Pakistan. We are close to North Waziristan and there are Taliban training ground and funding sources".*

**Peace process in murky waters as TTP ceasefire ends,** *Express Tribune*, April 11<sup>133</sup>

As the extended ceasefire announced by the TTP came to an end on April 10, the future of the fragile peace process once again seems uncertain. With the Taliban plagued by infighting over the past few days and the civil and military authorities differing over how to proceed with negotiations, there is no clarity on either side as to whether the truce will continue. Still, both government and TTP negotiators are working on getting an extension. TTP intermediary Professor Muhammad Ibrahim confirmed the delay in holding the second face-to-face meeting. *"There are difficulties on both sides,"* he replied when asked about the reason for the delay. *"Infighting within the TTP and the recent statements by the army and civilian government were among the factors behind the delay,"* he said. In addition to that, confidence between the Taliban and the government 'has not been fully restored', according to Prof Ibrahim. *"Both sides are making efforts to address the difficulties and we are hopeful for success, but the lack of confidence is one of the delaying factors,"* he said. He did not explain the factors hindering the confidence-building process.

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<sup>133</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/694126/uncertain-future-peace-process-in-murky-waters-as-ttp-ceasefire-ends/>

**Several TTP militants killed in Waziristan infighting, Dawn, April 12<sup>134</sup>**

Several are being reported killed in infighting between two distraught Tehreek-i-Taliban factions between whom fighting intensified on Friday in Waziristan. Both factions are part of the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) umbrella group, which has been waging a bloody seven-year insurgency against the Pakistani state. The clash started a few days ago and the cause of infighting was said to be over interference in matters inside one another's domains. In the latest clash, six Taliban fighters were killed in a remote controlled IED attack on the vehicle of Hakimullah Mehsud group's top commander Sheryar Mehsud in Shawal area of North Waziristan Agency. Official sources said that the vehicle of Sheryar Mehsud was targeted by rival Khan said Sjana group as the two groups continue to target each other. At least 19 militants of the two TTP groups have been killed on April 11 alone in three different attacks in Shawal and Dattakhel areas of the agency.

**Grand jirga ends Taliban infighting, The Nation, April 13<sup>135</sup>**

Taliban Shura member Azam Tariq on April 12 claimed they had reconciled the dispute between the Taliban factions and the internal clashes would not affect the government-TTP dialogue process. Talking to The Nation from an undisclosed location, the Taliban commander said the media had exaggerated the Taliban infighting and the casualties reported in this armed conflict were more than the actual number. He claimed these clashes had no links with the peace dialogue between the government and TTP. He also dispelled the impression that one group of Taliban was against the peace dialogue, claiming the talks were heading in the right direction and all the matters would be resolved amicably soon. He reiterated Taliban had resolved their internal clashes in a grand Jirga which was attended by tribal elders and senior Taliban leaders.

**Release of 12 Taliban prisoners likely, Dawn, April 13<sup>136</sup>**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has approved release of 12 people from detention as part of the so-called confidence-building measures to resume peace talks with the outlawed TTP, credible sources told Dawn. They said the 12 "low profile suspected militants" held by security agencies could be released in next couple of days to meet a key demand of the Taliban. The TTP leadership had handed over a list of combatants to the government negotiating team. "None of those to be released are important," the sources said. They said the talks could resume soon after the prime minister's return from

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<sup>134</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1099185/several-ttp-militants-killed-in-latest-waziristan-infighting>

<sup>135</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/13-Apr-2014/grand-jirga-ends-taliban-infighting>

<sup>136</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1099553/release-of-12-taliban-prisoners-likely>

China. Fawad Hassan, additional secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, who is accompanying the premier during his visit to China, is part of the government's team holding dialogue with the Taliban. The government, however, has not agreed to the TTP's demand of declaring a peace zone in South Waziristan to facilitate their movement.

**Taliban infighting rages on, *The Nation*, April 14<sup>137</sup>**

Mediators have failed to bring peace between two warring Taliban groups in South Waziristan as the fighting has spread to other areas of the agency. Khan Said Sajna Mehsud and Shehryar Mehsud groups of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) are engaged in fierce fighting for more than a week now. Some local tribesmen told *The Nation* on Sunday that some central leaders of the TTP arrived in South Waziristan Agency (SWA) few days back to reconcile the two groups but their efforts have not succeeded so far. The fight comes to a temporary halt in some areas but then it starts in some other areas, they said. On the other hand, sources close to TTP-named peace facilitators told this scribe that there was strong possibility of announcement of permanent ceasefire and release of some prisoners by the TTP in the second round of direct talks between the two sides. TTP spokesman Shahid Ullah Shahid said in a media statement that Taliban shura was making efforts to bring calm between the two groups, which he claimed have no connection with TTP. He also said the local fight will not affect TTP talks with government

**TTP Shura meets in Waziristan, *The News*, April 14<sup>138</sup>**

The TTP Shura met in Waziristan and discussed the dialogue process with the government. The meeting was attended by Azam Tariq, Qari Shakeel and Khalid Haqqani. According to sources, the Shura discussed the conflict between two Taliban groups. It is expected that an important decision will be announced soon. Earlier, Maulana Yusuf Shah denied that there was a deadlock in talks and the Taliban committee would be meeting the government committee on Monday or Tuesday.

**Govt to seek consensus on action against TTP if talks fail, *Dawn*, April 15<sup>139</sup>**

The government will seek a national consensus on what action to take against the Taliban if talks with the outlawed TTP failed, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said here on April 14. Talking about the impact of terrorism on the national economy, he said this was a matter of national importance and that's why the government had stayed in touch with all institutions and political parties on

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<sup>137</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/14-Apr-2014/taliban-infighting-rages-on>

<sup>138</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-144515-TTP-Shura-meets-in-Waziristan->

<sup>139</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1100005/govt-to-seek-national-consensus-on-action-against-taliban-if-talks-fail>

this issue, even those who were not in parliament. "If the talks fail and other actions are to be exercised, then the whole nation will be united in supporting such an action," he said.

**Prisoners release: govt under pressure, *Express Tribune*, April 15<sup>140</sup>**

Some elements are 'pressuring' the government over the issue of the release of 'non-combatants', according former government negotiator Major (retd) Aamir. Speaking with the media on Monday, he said the government 'should only consider the fear of Allah when making any decision in this regard'. "In my opinion, interlinking the issue of release of innocent people from prisons and those in captivity of others with peace dialogue is wrong," he said. He said the question of the release of Professor Ajmal Khan, former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani's son and Shahbaz Taseer had also been raised with the Taliban.

**Militants attacked after soldier hurt in blast, *Dawn*, April 16<sup>141</sup>**

Helicopter gunships attacked militant hideouts in North Waziristan on April 15 after a security man was injured in a roadside explosion. Local people and security officials said an improvised explosive device went off in the morning on Ghulam Khan Road near Saidgee checkpost along the Afghan border, 5km north of Miramshah, the headquarters of North Waziristan. Four to five security personnel were carrying water from a nearby spring when the blast took place. One of them was injured. Security personnel cordoned off the area and started looking for the suspects. The search continued for about 30 minutes during which suspected militant hideouts were attacked. There was no report of any casualty.

**TTP announces not to extend ceasefire, *The News*, April 17<sup>142</sup>**

The TTP has announced that the 40-day long ceasefire will not be extended. In a statement TTP spokesman, Shahidullah Shahid said the government did not give a satisfactory response to the Taliban's 40-day ceasefire and 50 of their detained members were killed during this period. The TTP spokesman said the decision to not extend the ceasefire was taken by the Taliban shura. Shahidullah Shahid added if the government takes any serious step, the TTP will respond. According to Shahidullah Shahid the dialogue process with the government would continue.

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<sup>140</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/695752/prisoners-release-some-elements-pressuring-govt-says-major-aamir/>

<sup>141</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1100228/militants-attacked-after-soldier-hurt-in-blast>

<sup>142</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-144782-TTP-announces-not-to-extend-ceasefire>

**TTP using ceasefire issue 'to blackmail govt', *The Nation*, April 17<sup>143</sup>**

In the jigsaw of Taliban and government peace talks, the former on Wednesday used the 'ceasefire' as a pressure tactic to get some of its unacceptable demands approved from the government, security sources close to the developments on this count informed. Close circles of TTP told that the infighting among the pro-peace and anti-peace Taliban ranks compelled its Afghanistan-based top leadership to announce a decision for not extending the ceasefire but at the same time TTP hasn't suspended or ended the talk's process. Senior member of government peace committee, Rustom Shah Mohmand when contacted, said, "*The TTP statement hints at internal pressures and I think the situation will settle down in two to three days and peace process will continue.*" He said, "*One should not ignore the fact that TTP announcement has not said anything about suspending or ending the talk process, while the announcement concerning the ceasefire also has an ample room for its extension if both sides express some flexibility on certain issues.*"

**Govt to hold fresh talks with TTP negotiators, *Dawn*, April 18<sup>144</sup>**

The Pakistani government is planning a fresh round of talks with Taliban negotiators at the weekend, officials said Friday, despite the militants' refusal to extend a ceasefire called to help peace efforts. Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan said in a statement that he has called a meeting with the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan's (TTP) talks committee on Saturday to decide how to proceed. He said only dialogue could overcome reservations and objections, but warned there was little chance of progress without a ceasefire. "*If Taliban have certain objections, we also have reservations,*" he said, adding the government pushed forward the peace process against serious logjams. "*(But) I don't think the talks process will move forward in the absence of a ceasefire,*" said Khan, who has been an ardent supporter of the talks. He will meet the TTP's three-man talks committee, led by Maulana Samiul Haq.

**Doors of Taliban open for talks: TTP spokesman, *The News*, April 18<sup>145</sup>**

Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has distanced itself from attacks on public places. In a statement here Friday, TTP spokesman Shahidullah Shahid said some elements could launch attack after Taliban refused to extend ceasefire. He said TTP had no link with attacks on public places; however, they could attack government places in their defence. As in the past, doors of Taliban were open for dialogues; he said and added that if the government was serious TTP could carry on talks.

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<sup>143</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/laohore/17-Apr-2014/ttp-using-ceasefire-issue-to-blackmail-govt>

<sup>144</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1100759/govt-to-hold-fresh-talks-with-ttp-negotiators>

<sup>145</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145010-TTP-rules-out-attacks-on-public-places>

**Govt to explore alternatives to talks, *Express Tribune*, April 21<sup>146</sup>**

The government has decided that the fragile peace talks with the TTP will not be 'open ended' and alternatives would be explored to deal with militancy if the process fails to achieve the desired results soon, officials said on Sunday. The decision was taken during the recent meeting of the National Security Committee, which agreed to give peace a chance despite TTP's announcement to call off their 40-day ceasefire. A senior official told *The Express Tribune* that the civil and military leadership would pursue talks with a condition that the process would now have certain timelines. "*Some positive outcome has to be achieved sooner than later because time is running out,*" said the official while requesting anonymity. Another official said the security establishment, which believes that the militants are simply buying time, suggested the civilian authorities do not allow the dialogue process linger on beyond certain point. The army is said to have told the government that prolonged talks would only benefit the TTP and limit the state's options. "*It appears that the militants want to remain engaged with the dialogue process till the drawdown of foreign forces from Afghanistan,*" said a security official. "*They [militants] feel if they can stretch the talks that far it will certainly make it difficult for the government to launch a meaningful operation against them,*" he argued.

**Nisar lends TTP talks a lease of life, *The Nation*, April 23<sup>147</sup>**

Amid serious reservations and concerns coming from both sides, which have virtually pushed the peace process in a dead alley, Federal Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan has called the meeting of both the government- and Taliban-nominated peace committees on April 23. In the light of the chat with some members of peace panels and the information given by the sources, it appears that the trust deficit between the two sides has deepened, while hard talk would be exchanged and tough questions would be raised in today's meeting. Ch Nisar had already said that in the absence of ceasefire, which was withdrawn by Tehreek-i-Taliban a couple of weeks back, meaningful talks between the two sides was not possible.

**Foreign militants seeking 'safe passage', *Dawn*, April 25<sup>148</sup>**

As the government team prepares for another meeting with the TTP, many of the foreign militants based in and around North Waziristan feel they are facing an uncertain future and are not only seeking assurances from their hosts but are also weighing options for moving out to others places, like Afghanistan and Syria, to continue their 'jihad'. This emerged during a series of interviews conducted by this correspondent with scores of foreign militants,

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<sup>146</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/698213/govt-to-explore-alternatives-to-talks/>

<sup>147</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/23-Apr-2014/nisar-lends-ttp-talks-a-lease-of-life>

<sup>148</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102154/foreign-militants-seeking-safe-passage>

mainly around North Waziristan, on getting exclusive access to various groups and to some of the most wanted fugitives in the country.

**Govt-TTP talks likely in two days' time: Yousuf Shah, Dawn, April 26<sup>149</sup>**

Maulana Yousuf Shah, coordinator of the Taliban-nominated committee to mediate peace talks with the government, said that contact had been established with the Taliban and a meeting was expected to take place with its political shura in two days' time. Speaking to DawnNews, Maulana Yousuf said the Taliban Shura had asked for two days' time to determine a location for the meeting to take place. He said extension of ceasefire, exchange of prisoners and other issues would be taken up in the meeting, adding that the deadlock in peace talks would end.

**Militants' hideouts pounded in South Waziristan, Dawn, April 29<sup>150</sup>**

Military helicopters and artillery attacked militants' hideouts in the mountainous Bobar area of South Waziristan tribal region on April 28 where a day earlier three security personnel, including an army officer, had been killed in a bomb blast. According to tribal people and Taliban sources, three helicopters carried out the attack on the hideouts from 3 to 4pm. However, security forces did not confirm the attack till late Monday night.

**Maj Amir distances self from TTP talks, The Nation, April 29<sup>151</sup>**

Former intelligence operative Maj. (ret'd) Amir, who is playing an important role in the ongoing peace parleys with TTP, has dissociated himself from the process and formally conveyed his decision to the government. When contacted Maj. (ret'd) Amir confirmed this development saying that some of the members of the committee were using the platform for securing political mileage. However, he refused to give any further detail and said that he would formally convey his concerns to Federal Interior Minister shortly. Amir was part of the first government committee to initiate peace talks with militants under the head of Special Assistant to the PM Irfan Siddiqui but later the same was disbanded by the government owing to various reasons.

**TTP talks will restore peace: PM, Express Tribune, April 30<sup>152</sup>**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has expressed confidence that his government's peace initiative would help restore the much-needed peace in Pakistan. "Peace will return to Pakistan soon as the dialogue with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan is making headway," he told journalists in London where he arrived on April 29 on a three-day official visit. He said the government started the negotiation

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<sup>149</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102441/govt-ttp-talks-likely-in-two-days-time-yousuf-shah>

<sup>150</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102952/militants-hideouts-pounded-in-south-waziristan>

<sup>151</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/islamabad/29-Apr-2014/maj-amir-distances-self-from-ttp-talks>

<sup>152</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/702152/ttp-talks-will-restore-peace-pm/>



process with good intentions. "The whole world adopted such approaches [to quell unrests]," he said and referred to how the United Kingdom resolved the Ireland issue. About the Karachi situation, he said peace in the port city was imperative. "We did not waste time [after coming to power]. We took all the parties on board. And through [the ongoing targeted] operation, the [law and order] situation in Karachi is being controlled. Peace in Karachi is dear to us as it is the economic hub and commercial centre of Pakistan."

**Taliban Shura contacts TTP intermediaries, Express Tribune, April 29<sup>153</sup>**

The Political Shura of the TTP contacted members of the TTP peace talks committee last night, on April 30. According to TTP intermediary Professor Mohammad Ibrahim, TTP spokesperson Azam Tariq contacted and expressed Taliban's concerns regarding the situation in South Waziristan. He added that the government has been informed about these concerns. On April 23, government negotiators and Taliban intermediaries had agreed to form a subcommittee to look into reservations from both sides in an effort to keep the nascent peace dialogue process. This was done at a joint meeting of the government negotiating team and the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's intermediary committee.

## NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

**Rabbani dubs Protection of Pakistan Bill a black law, The Nation, April 10<sup>154</sup>**

Leader of the House in the Senate Raza Rabbani said his party would oppose the Protection of Pakistan Bill in the Senate. While talking to BBC, he said Pakistan needs stringent laws to deal with extremism but that they should be within the constitutional limits. He vowed to bring such a bill in the Senate which would be acceptable to all.

**PPO may be used against Nawaz some day: Bilawal, The News, April 10<sup>155</sup>**

PPP Patron-in-Chief, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari says if the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance (PPO) 'passes in its current form, one day Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will be arrested using it.' Bilawal in his message on a social networking website hoped the Senate would do the right thing by not passing the PPO. The legislation was also condemned by the MQM in a statement issued by party chief Altaf Hussain. The MQM chief referred to the PPO as a 'black law' against which protests will continue as long as workers are alive.

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<sup>153</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/702221/taliban-shura-contacts-ttp-intermediaries/>

<sup>154</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/10-Apr-2014/rabbani-dubs-protection-of-pakistan-bill-a-black-law>

<sup>155</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-144121-If-PPO-passes,-one-day-PM-Nawaz-will-be-arrested:-Bilawal->

**PPO to be softened, PM assures Zardari, Dawn, April 17<sup>156</sup>**

With an important Senate session under way, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met former president Asif Ali Zardari here on Wednesday and agreed to review the controversial PPO along with other anti-terrorism laws after taking the parties in parliament on board. The law, which has generated much debate and attracted considerable criticism, has been passed by the National Assembly and presented in the upper house, where it does not stand much chance because the PML-N does not have a majority in the Senate. The opposition parties in the Senate, including the PPP, ANP and PML-Q, have made it clear they will not let the bill pass in its current form.

**Opposition meet to devise joint plan to block PPO bill, Dawn, April 21<sup>157</sup>**

Opposition parties in the Senate will be meeting on Monday to devise a joint strategy to block the government's move to get the Protection of Pakistan bill passed from the upper house. The meeting, according to opposition senators, has been convened to prepare a consensus document containing amendments to the controversial bill which is expected to be taken up by the Senate's Standing Committee on Interior in the next few days. The bill was referred to the standing committee by the chair amid strong protest by opposition members when it was tabled by the government in the house on April 19. In a significant development, the MQM, which had been playing the role of an independent opposition for the past one year, has announced that it will attend Monday's meeting so that the opposition parties could come out with a united stance on the bill.

**Next round will be final, says TTP interlocutor, Express Tribune, April 28<sup>158</sup>**

The government has not demanded the release of three high-profile figures believed to be in captivity of the TTP, Maulana Yousaf Shah, the coordinator of the Taliban intermediary committee, said on April 27. It is the media that has been calling for the release of the sons of slain Punjab governor Salmaan Taseer and former premier Yousaf Raza Gilani and Islamia College Vice Chancellor Prof Ajmal Khan. Similarly, the TTP has also not named their 'non-combatant' prisoners to seek their release from government custody. *"All those 19 prisoners released by the government are not associated with the Taliban,"* Shah told a news conference at the Malakand Press Club. *"The third round of peace dialogue will begin soon – and the government has promised to hand*

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<sup>156</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1100418/ppo-to-be-softened-pm-assures-zardari>

<sup>157</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101214/opposition-parties-meet-today-to-devise-joint-plan-to-block-protection-of-pakistan-bill>

<sup>158</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/701182/peace-dialogue-next-round-of-talks-will-be-final-says-ttp-interlocutor/>

over 13 TTP prisoners to the Taliban intermediary committee," he added. "Most probably, this will be the final round of talks,"

## EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

**Another bellicose neighbour**, Muhammad Ali Ehsan, *The News*, April 6<sup>159</sup>

[...] As if the two neighbours, India and Afghanistan, were not belligerent enough, the Iranians also seems to have joined the not too unfamiliar Pakistan-bashing chorus which claims that Pakistan is not doing enough and should do more to prevent the spillover of terrorism across its borders and into the neighbouring countries. The reason is the proliferation of transnational criminal and terrorist activities along the Pakistani borders. No nation is able to secure itself and remain sovereign unless it secures its borders. We know that since long, the level of border enforcement in Pakistan is inadequate. [...] Iran is a valued neighbour and a brotherly Islamic country. More than assurances, we need to formulate a 'joint border security and enforcement policy'. Frontier Corps mans our border posts but if terrorism has to be controlled, our regular forces, sooner than later will have to become a stakeholder in ensuring security along are western border with Afghanistan as well as Iran.

**Security Pact**, *The Nation*, April 8<sup>160</sup>

Pakistan and Iran's security pact, intends to address terrorism, abduction and other issues that occur along the porous border. [...] The significance of the pact is even more crucial given how Pakistan finds itself ensnared in a tricky spot of maintaining cordial ties with both Iran and Saudi Arabia. The rivalry exercised between the two countries can be felt in Pakistan, which has become a quasi-playground where proxy clashes premeditated on sectarian lines continue to ruin the lives of ordinary citizens. Furthermore, with Syria on the international community's agenda, Pakistan's positioning with Iran a staunch ally of the Assad regime cannot be practiced without extreme caution. With them or without them, it is clearly not an optimal situation to be found

**Tactical advantages**, *Daily Times*, April 9<sup>161</sup>

Recent infighting between factions of the TTP is increasingly spilling out into the open. On 7th, reports say five TTP fighters from a Mehsud group were killed near Shaktoi, South Waziristan, in a brutal ambush by the Khan Said Sajna faction. The dead included Rasheed Mehsud, a commander who was close to former TTP leader Hakeemullah Mehsud. Five more Mehsud

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<sup>159</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/691827/another-bellicose-neighbour/>

<sup>160</sup> <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/08-Apr-2014/security-pact>

<sup>161</sup> <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/09-Apr-2014/tactical-advantages>

affiliates were killed while responding to the attack, including Kashid Khan Mehsud, alleged leader of the 'Shehryar' Mehsud faction. Other reports put the number as high as twenty killed. Reports of TTP infighting have grown since Hakeemullah's assassination by a US drone in December last year. [...] Violence between TTP factions is not new and to be expected, given that it is an umbrella organisation, as well as the culture of blood feuds and revenge common in the tribal areas. The negotiations and Hakeemullah's death have fractured the organisation more deeply than before. The government now has time to consider its next move, including a careful vetting of the prisoners list the TTP has given. The TTP want to hurry the process to show their rank and file they are achieving progress.

**Revisiting Pak-Bangladesh relations**, Saman Zulfqar, *Daily Times*, April 12<sup>162</sup>

[...] For a long time, Pakistan has been named by Indian politicians in their election campaigns but the recent blow came from Bangladesh when the leader of the ruling Awami League, Sheikh Hasina Wajid, in her election campaign adopted an anti-Pakistan posture. Though Pakistan-Bangladesh relations have not recovered the bitter memories of 1971 and have remained mired in controversies, the Awami League, as the founding party of Bangladesh, has ever since tried to justify its existence by promoting a nationalist agenda and by harnessing anti-Pakistan propaganda. [...] The Awami League's rhetoric against Pakistan keeps it an important player in politics. The new wave of accusations started on the eve of the 2014 general elections when, 42 years after Bangladesh's independence, Prime Minister Hasina Wajid has been trying to revive the fading memories of the 1971 civil war.

**A costly peace**, *Daily Times*, April 13<sup>163</sup>

An Afghan military commander Major General Muhammad Sharif Yaftali has blamed Pakistan for exporting terrorism to Afghanistan. According to the official, the ongoing peace talks and the resulting ceasefire in Pakistan is earned at the expense of renewed bloodshed in Afghanistan where the Haqqani network has unleashed a new offensive. He has said that *Pakistan is supplying explosives to the militants in Afghanistan. The pre-poll armed campaign targeting election rallies during Afghanistan's presidential elections had also been inferred as the Taliban's effort to further stoke insurgency in the country.* According to reports, the Haqqani network has convinced the TTP to accept the ceasefire option lest it is attacked by the Pakistan military with a direct effect on both the parties' stakes in Afghanistan. If there is any truth in the allegation made

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<sup>162</sup><http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/12-Apr-2014/revisiting-pakistan-bangladesh-relations>

<sup>163</sup> <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/13-Apr-2014/a-costly-peace>

by the commander about Pakistan's involvement in the fresh wave of violence in Afghanistan, Pakistan should expect more trouble.

**Fake Ceasefire Over, *The Nation*, April 18<sup>164</sup>**

Only three days after Interior Minister Nisar Ali Khan informed the nation that the 'peace talks' with the TTP were about to enter a "comprehensive" phase, the TTP has announced that it will not be extending the ceasefire. Considering how much time and effort the good minister spends defending terrorists before the people they routinely kill, they really ought to be more considerate towards him. He says that Islamabad is a safe city, and they bomb the capital within a week. He claims that the peace talks are about to enter the next level, and they decide against extending the ceasefire. The terrorists really need to learn to spot a caring friend when they see one. They have only themselves to blame for destroying the credibility of a sympathizer in such a key position. Perhaps Mr Nisar should get his statements approved by the TTP so that he doesn't embarrass himself every time he makes a claim.

**The dissension within, Khadim Hussain, *Dawn*, April 20<sup>165</sup>**

Khan Said *alias Sajna and Shehryar Mehsud, both from the Mehsud Taliban fighters, continue to engage in a bloodbath for turf and kitty.* According to first-hand reports, dozens of fighters, mainly from the Shehryar group, died in the recent infighting which started in South Waziristan and expanded to North Waziristan. Though there's a lull now, the acrimony continues. An application has been submitted by the Taliban Shura to TTP emir Mullah Fazlullah to decide who will hold the reins of Waziristan's Mehsud fighters. Previously, infighting among various Taliban factions would be settled by the Haqqanis, who, this time appear to have distanced themselves. [...] if Fazlullah is to gain absolute control within the TTP rank and file then at the end of the ceasefire and Fazlullah's control of the TTP might specifically see in Upper Waziristan, Lower Kurram, Orakzai, Upper Khyber, Mohmand, Bajaur and Malakand Division a resurgence of militant activities if sleeper cells in these areas are activated. It is likely that militant activities might increase in Kandahar, Helmand, Nimroz and Farah in southern Afghanistan and Kunar and Nuristan in eastern Afghanistan where the hard-core sleeper cells of the international jihadist network are regularly reported. Keeping in view this scenario, both Pakistan and Afghanistan need to look into the details of their strategic moves. It is advisable for the governments and security establishments of both countries to find a way out of strategic conflicts between them.

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<sup>164</sup> <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/18-Apr-2014/fake-ceasefire-over>  
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1100362/too-much-for-too-little>

<sup>165</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1101006/the-dissension-within>

**The secret behind the ceasefire**, Harris Bin Munawar, *The Nation*, April 22<sup>166</sup>

A ceasefire between the government and the Pakistani Taliban will continue as part of a deal in which the two sides will give each other more time to crumble on their own, tribal elders privy to the deal have said. Analysts say the withdrawal of Taliban threats to journalists is part of the agreement, which will allow Pakistan to kill its own journalists. "The government has been able to persuade the military in a recent meeting that Taliban hideouts in dangerous strategic locations can be located and destroyed, and their key leaders can be identified and targeted by other Taliban factions while the government continues to respect the recent truce," a security official said. "Meanwhile, the team of negotiators that the government had sent to Waziristan has assured the Taliban that Pakistan's civil and military institutions are fully capable of violating the fundamental rights of their own citizens in the name of religion and security, and the Pakistani society is already on the path to anarchy and civil war." Speaking on condition of anonymity, the official said the US had not carried out any new drone strikes in the lawless tribal areas of Pakistan for the same reasons.

**Forced Eviction**, *The Nation*, April 29<sup>167</sup>

The tribal areas of Pakistan are most frequently described as lawless. The latest news to come out of Khyber Agency, reaffirms that impression. Reportedly, no less than 100 families belonging to Afghan tribes have been forced to flee from their homes in Bara following death threats from an outlawed terrorist group, LeI. The roots of the issue can be traced to Afghanistan's Nangarhar province, where LeI faces an armed opposition from members of the same tribes, which remain settled in Afghanistan. The conflict poured into Pakistan when the MangalBagh-led LeI asked tribes living in Bara to provide fighters and other assistance to the group or face consequences. As the set deadline approached closer, the vulnerable tribes abandoned their homes and possessions to find shelter in Peshawar and other adjoining areas. This unfortunate development points towards two major problems.

**Dialogue with the TTP**, *Dawn*, April<sup>168</sup>

The details leaked from the government-army huddle to discuss the ongoing talks with the TTP were surely meant to underline the government's clarity, resolve and determination when it comes to achieving meaningful results in a clear timeframe on the dialogue front. Yet, the vague details passed on to the media about what was discussed and decided at the meeting only underscored just how shoddily the dialogue process has been managed so far.

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<sup>166</sup> <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/22-Apr-2014/the-secret-behind-the-ceasefire>

<sup>167</sup> <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/29-Apr-2014/forced-eviction>

<sup>168</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1103148/dialogue-with-the-ttp>  
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-247184-The-talk-scene>

[...] What can be extrapolated from the government's contortions over the dialogue issue is two things: one, the government wants dialogue to succeed at nearly any cost; two, the government is so keen to convince the TTP of its bona fides that it is willing to let the TTP dictate the pace and the content

## RELATIONS WITH INDIA

### **Dastgir for proactive approach in trade with India, *Express Tribune*, April 3<sup>169</sup>**

Commerce Minister Khurram Dastgir Khan has said that the business community of the country needs to adopt a proactive approach to take on the new challenges in trade with India. *"You cannot grow economically if you continue to live with doubts. If you want economic growth, you will then need to accept new challenges despite the reservations,"* said Khan while talking to members of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI). *"There must be some reservations of the business community regarding trade with India but I wish any problems would be reported to me, and I hope the business community will rise above expectations. We have to take tough economic decisions. Right now our government has to focus on two biggest challenges: extremism and electricity crisis,"* said Khan while speaking on the priorities of the government.

### **No benefit from MFN to India sans level playing field, *The Nation*, April 6<sup>170</sup>**

Unless level-playing field is provided Pakistan cannot benefit from granting most favoured nation (MFN) status to India, observed rice exporters. *"If you import Indian rice into Pakistan the duties and taxes are just around 14 per cent but if Indians import Pak rice the duties are more than 70 per cent".* Secondly Indian farmer is heavily subsidized and costs of fertilizers are much less than in Pakistan. The difference of US\$ exchange rate is also in favor of India. Market sources told *The Nation* that bilateral trade with India in rice would knock our farmers out of the competition. *"For that, we recommend that import of rice from India for local consumption with in Pakistan is countervailed by imposing countervailing duty in proportionate to the difference of subsidized inputs available by Indian farmers."*

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<sup>169</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/690592/spreading-confidence-dastgir-stresses-proactive-approach-in-trade-with-india/>

<sup>170</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/business/06-Apr-2014/no-benefit-from-mfn-to-india-sans-level-playing-field>

**Peace linked to resolution of Pak-India disputes, *The Nation*, April 10<sup>171</sup>**

Pakistan has once again reiterated that durable peace in the region is linked to resolution of all issues and disputes between Pakistan and India. Responding to questions at the weekly news briefing in Islamabad on April 10, foreign office spokesperson Tasnim Aslam pointed out that the two countries had a framework to discuss an eight point agenda, but the process stands disrupted for the last three years. She said, Pakistan looks forward to resumption of that process for the sake of regional peace and in order to allow the two countries to focus on economic development. To another question the spokesperson said Pakistan is a recognized and legitimate party to Jammu and Kashmir dispute. Asked what kind of relations Pakistan will have with India if Narendra Modi wins elections, she said we deal with countries and it is for people of India to elect whoever they seem fit.

**Zehri: India helps the separatists in Balochistan, *The Nation*, April 15<sup>172</sup>**

Senior Minister and President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in Balochistan, Sardar Sanaullah Khan Zehri has said that separatist movement in the province has been led by India to create further instability and chaos to damage Pakistan. Zehri said that the neighbouring countries of Pakistan and US want to destabilize the country. He also added that a few countries did not want to see Gwadar port in operational mode and if Pakistan will succeed in achieving the target, a 'superpower' and some neighboring countries could support separatist to destabilize the province. Gwadar port will boost our national economy and create job opportunities for thousands of youths in Balochistan, he added.

**Modi's remarks encouraging: Pakistan envoy, *Dawn*, April 24<sup>173</sup>**

Pakistan said on Wednesday it was "encouraged" by comments from India's election frontrunner Narendra Modi who stressed cooperation with foreign governments if he was elected prime minister. Critics fear that if elected Mr Modi will adopt a tough foreign policy that could see relations deteriorate with Pakistan and China. But Pakistan High

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<sup>171</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/10-Apr-2014/peace-in-region-linked-to-resolution-of-pak-india-disputes>

<sup>172</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/14-Apr-2014/zehri-says-india-helps-the-separatist-movement-in-balochistan>

<sup>173</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101843/modis-remarks-encouraging-pakistan-envoy>



Commissioner Abdul Basit said he welcomed Mr Modi's comments in a television interview that he would pursue the policies followed by former BJP premier Atal Bihari Vajpayee. *"I was very much encouraged. They were very positive. It gives us hope that if he is elected as prime minister we should expect more positive things,"* Mr Basit told journalists in New Delhi.

**Indian media confirms Modi aide's visit to Pakistan, *The News*, April 26<sup>174</sup>**

The 'close associate' of BJP prime ministerial hopeful Narendra Modi, who visited Pakistan this month, is a Washington-based sympathiser of the BJP, Jitendra Kumar. However, contrary to claims by officials here that the BJP associate met with junior officials, the Indian media claims that Jitendra Kumar met with Sartaj Aziz, advisor to prime minister on foreign affairs and the foreign secretary Aziz Choudhry during a luncheon meeting on April 4. When the spokesperson at the Foreign Office was asked about the visit on Thursday, she replied, *"I am not aware of any such visit."* Kumar is a Washington-based energy and power consultant and according to sources he is said to have briefed the BJP leadership, especially its prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi about his interaction in Islamabad. He is also likely to make a presentation to the BJP leadership. Significantly this is the first back channel contact between the two sides and indicates the BJP's willingness to do business with Pakistan", added the report.

**LoC ceasefire violated near Kotli, *Dawn*, April 28<sup>175</sup>**

Indian troops on April 28 reportedly fired from across the LoC near Kotli. According to military sources, this was the second time during a week in which shots had been fired from across the LoC in violation of the ceasefire. Indian troops opened fire in the Kothra sub-sector near Kotli, upon which the Pakistani military retaliated and returned fire. No casualties were reported in the incident.

**Indian BJP leader asks Nawaz to save Geo TV, *Nation*, April 29<sup>176</sup>**

India's former external affairs minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Yashwant Sinha has called upon Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to

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<sup>174</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-246516-Indian-media-confirms-Modi-aides-visit-to-Pakistan>

<sup>175</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102820/loc-ceasefire-violated-near-kotli>

<sup>176</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/28-Apr-2014/indian-bjp-leader-asks-nawaz-to-save-geo-tv>

save GEO TV from a complete closure. According to reports, he made this demand in a letter to PM Nawaz Sharif while voicing support for Pakistan's attacked journalist Hamid Mir. Sinha also described the move to cancel Geo TV's license as a "backward and retrograde step" decision by the ISI and Pakistan's Defence Ministry.

**Stern rebuttal: Nisar warns Modi against threats, *Express Tribune*, April 30<sup>177</sup>**

Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan on April 29 criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party leader for his statement on bringing Dawood Ibrahim to India if he comes to power. In a rare swipe at a politician from India, Nisar said, "The statement by the BJP leader is irresponsible and shameful. Modi should first determine the whereabouts of Ibrahim and then dream of attacking Pakistan." During a recent interview, the BJP prime ministerial candidate had said that he would bring notorious don Dawood Ibrahim back to India from Pakistan if he comes to power. Reacting to the statement, the interior minister said that, "*The such a statement by a likely prime minister of India is provocative, condemnable and touches the heights of animosity towards Pakistan.*" He added that Modi had gone too far in his hostility against Pakistan and Muslims in particular.

## **EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS**

**NDMARB, Dr Kamal Monnoo, *The Nation*, April 9<sup>178</sup>**

[...] The recent saga on Pakistan-India trade liberalization has played out no differently. In the last quarter of 2013, the Pakistani public in general and the stakeholders in particular were advised that granting the MFN status to India was in the interest of Pakistan and therefore would be announced shortly. As the reaction from different business quarters picked momentum, a political spin replaced economic fundamentals and soon the MFN was instead named as NDMA and later again re-named as NDMARB. The cabinet meeting scheduled on the 28<sup>th</sup> march officially adopt the NDMARB never took place and the various announcements of the Commerce Minister, after his whirlwind Delhi Yatra, vis-à-vis fast-tracking functioning at the Wagah-Attari land route facility, cross border investments, reciprocal banking arrangements, etc are also yet to materialize. So why is the government having cold feet? The easy answer is to blame the army and this is exactly the impression being conveyed now. Nothing could be further from the truth, as the army has kept its distance and maintained neutrality over the initiative.

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<sup>177</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/702112/stern-rebuttal-nisar-warns-modi-against-threats/>

<sup>178</sup> <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/09-Apr-2014/ndmarb>  
<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/01-Apr-2014/a-welcome-decision>

## STATISTICS

### BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
<b>Balochistan</b>				
Quetta <sup>179</sup>	3/4/2014	Three people killed, two women injured in Quetta firing.	3	2
Jaffarabad <sup>180</sup>	5/4/2014	Blast injures four in Jaffarabad	0	4
Sibi <sup>181</sup>	9/4/2014	Terror in Sibi: Passenger train bombed; 17 dead.	17	48
Quetta <sup>182</sup>	12/4/2014	Two Shia Hazaras gunned down in Quetta.	2	0
Quetta <sup>183</sup>	19/4/2014	Policeman among two killed in Quetta firing incidents.	2	1
Quetta <sup>184</sup>	21/4/2014	Blast injures three in Chaman.	0	3
Quetta <sup>185</sup>	21/4/2014	Three people gunned down in Quetta.	3	0
Baluchistan <sup>186</sup>	23/4/2014	DSP injured in Balochistan blast.	0	1
<b>FATA</b>				
South Waziristan <sup>187</sup>	7/4/2014	Four TTP militants killed in S. Waziristan attack, claim sources.	4	1
Miramshah <sup>188</sup>	11/4/2014	13 killed in Miranshah bombing, rocket attacks.	13	0

<sup>179</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097266/three-people-killed-two-women-injured-in-quetta-firing>

<sup>180</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1097915/blast-injures-four-in-jaffarabad>

<sup>181</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/693195/terror-in-sibi-passenger-train-bombed-17-dead/>

<sup>182</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1099414/two-shia-hazaras-gunned-down-in-quetta>

<sup>183</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145114-Policeman-among-two-killed-in-Quetta-firing-incidents>

<sup>184</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101337/blast-injures-three-in-chaman>

<sup>185</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101334/three-people-gunned-down-in-quetta>

<sup>186</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/23-Apr-2014/dsp-injured-in-balochistan-blast>

<sup>187</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098330/four-ttp-militants-killed-in-s-waziristan-attack-claim-sources>

<sup>188</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-144190-Miranshah-bombing,-rocket-attacks-kill-13>

North Waziristan <sup>189</sup>	15/4/2014	Blast near security forces' convoy in N Waziristan; one injured.	0	1
Kyber Agency <sup>190</sup>	24/4/2014	Aerial bombing in Khyber Agency kills 23 militants, injures 15.	23	15
South Waziristan <sup>191</sup>	30/4/2014	Blast in South Waziristan kills 5, injures 3.	5	3
<b>Punjab</b>				
Rawalpindi <sup>192</sup>	9/4/2014	Rawalpindi big blast kills 23, injures 42.	23	42
Lahore <sup>193</sup>	11/4/2014	Blast leaves 12 injured in Lahore.	0	12
<b>KP</b>				
Tank <sup>194</sup>	9/4/2014	Firing incident in Tank district kills five, say police.	5	1
Peshawar <sup>195</sup>	18/4/2014	1 soldier killed, 2 injured in gun attack near Peshawar.	1	2
Peshawar <sup>196</sup>	19/4/2014	Army officer dies as militants ambush convoy.	1	2
Peshawar <sup>197</sup>	21/4/2014	Peshawar: Five policemen among six killed in firing.	6	30
Charsadda <sup>198</sup>	22/4/2014	Three killed, 30 injured in Charsadda blast.	3	6
Swabi <sup>199</sup>	25/4/2014	Gun attack kills seven of a family in Swabi.	7	6
Peshawar <sup>200</sup>	28/4/2014	Attack on Nato container injures six in Khyber.	0	6

<sup>189</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1100044/blast-near-security-forces-convoy-in-n-waziristan-one-injured>

<sup>190</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/699667/jet-planes-bomb-militant-hideouts-in-khyber-agency/>

<sup>191</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/702214/blast-in-south-waziristan-kills-5-injures-3/>

<sup>192</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098742/at-least-23-killed-dozens-injured-in-islamabad-blast>

<sup>193</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-144162-Blast-leaves-12-injured-in-Lahore>

<sup>194</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098770/firing-incident-in-tank-district-kills-five-say-police>

<sup>195</sup><http://tribune.com.pk/story/697277/security-forces-vehicle-targeted-near-peshawar/>

<sup>196</sup><http://www.nation.com.pk/national/19-Apr-2014/army-officer-dies-as-militants-ambush-convoy>

<sup>197</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145345-Five-policemen-among-six-killed-in-Peshawar-firing>

<sup>198</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101538/three-killed-30-injured-in-charsadda-blast>

<sup>199</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102231/gun-attack-kills-seven-of-a-family-in-swabi>

<sup>200</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102819/attack-on-nato-container-injures-six-in-khyber>

<b>Sindh</b>				
Karachi <sup>201</sup>	10/4/2014	PML-N lawyer shot dead in Karachi.	1	0
Karachi <sup>202</sup>	10/4/2014	Shia doctor, madressa students among 12 killed in Karachi.	12	0
Karachi <sup>203</sup>	12/4/2014	Another lawyer, trader killed in 'sectarian' attacks.	2	0
Karachi <sup>204</sup>	14/4/2014	Three people dead in Karachi violence.	3	0
Karachi <sup>205</sup>	18/4/2014	Three seminary students shot dead in Karachi.	3	0
Karachi <sup>206</sup>	21/4/2014	Five killed, one injured in Karachi violence.	5	1
Karachi <sup>207</sup>	24/4/2014	Karachi: 4 including Inspector Shafiq Tanoli killed in suicide blast.	4	3
Karachi <sup>208</sup>	25/4/2014	4 killed, 30 injured in Karachi blast.	4	30
Karachi <sup>209</sup>	28/4/2014	Blast in Karachi's SITE area; three children killed	3	-

<sup>201</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098952/pml-n-lawyer-shot-dead-in-karachi>

<sup>202</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1098781/shia-doctor-madressa-students-among-12-killed-in-karachi>

<sup>203</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1099238/another-lawyer-trader-killed-in-sectarian-attacks>

<sup>204</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1099675/three-people-dead-in-karachi-violence>

<sup>205</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145008-Karachi:-three-seminary-students-killed-in-firing->

<sup>206</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1101333/five-killed-one-injured-in-karachi-violence>

<sup>207</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145583-Two-including-Inspector-Shafiq-Tanoli-killed-in-Karachi-blast>

<sup>208</sup><http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-145717-Four-killed,-30-injured-in-Karachi-blast->

<sup>209</sup><http://www.dawn.com/news/1102823/blast-in-karachis-site-area-three-children-killed>