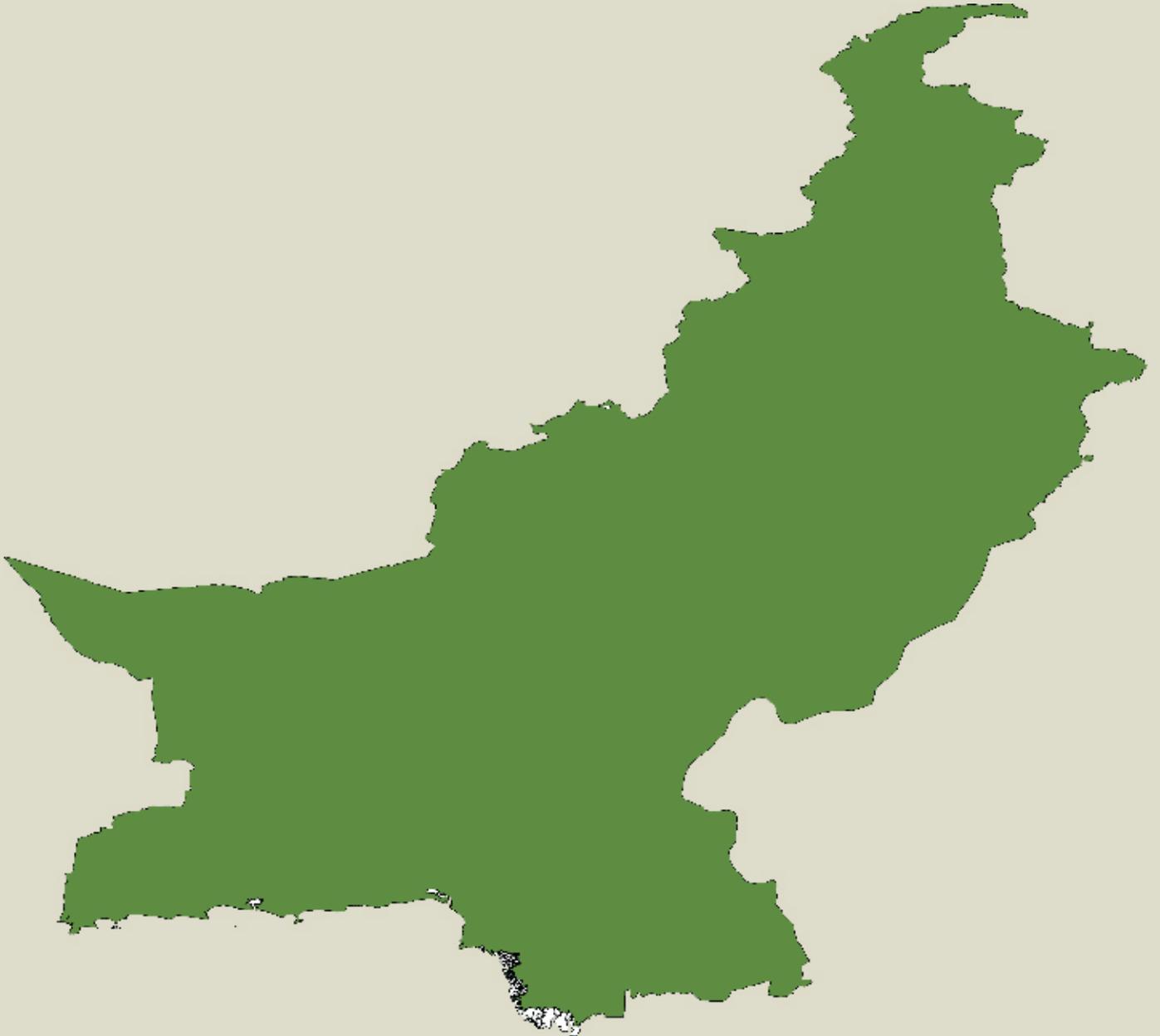


July 2018

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



Prepared by
Dr. Zainab Akhter
Nazir Ahmad Mir
Dr. Mohammad Eisa
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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, July 2018

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Editorial

Pakistan had its national and provincial elections this month. Both the English and vernacular media was mainly dwelling into possibilities, prospects, the allegations of rigging, army's role, fight between the parties, fight within the political parties, challenges for the next government along with other issues. In all this however, anti-India rhetoric did continue. It was argued that India is conspiring with other countries, with the US in particular to defame Pakistan and push it to the wall. The decision of the FATF's move to put Pakistan in the grey list was seen as result of such policies. Thus one columnist argued that 'India is committing terrorism in the region and providing financial support to terrorist organizations. India's ambition against Pakistan is now open particularly in Balochistan and Kashmir.' Western press has also started reporting this.' The role of India was seen out and out as meant to disturb Pakistan.

Apart from implying that there were some foreign forces wanting to influence and disturb the election process in Pakistan, the vernacular media was critical of the political leaders of the country who according it were not showing much concern about Kashmir issue. The political parties had no policy and nor they wanted to raise the issue. The vernacular media maintained that by labeling 'freedom struggle' or 'Jihad' in Kashmir as terrorism the world was being unfair to the Kashmiris and their cause. On their policy on Kashmir, the head of the newly formed Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) said in an interview that Kashmir would get freedom only through Jihad. All other means, according to Khadim Hussain Rizvi, had failed. The vernacular media was of the view that the change in Pakistan, in the form of Imran Khan likely to be the next Prime Minister, was welcomed by the people of Kashmir. They were hopeful that Imran would pursue the Kashmir policy with consistence and much more enthusiasm.

The statement by the Justice Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui of Islamabad High Court (IHC) that the secret agencies were meddling in the judicial affairs did ruffle few feathers. Justice Siddiqui said that the establishment wanted to fix Nawaz Sharif and did not want him and his daughter to come out of jail before July 25. It was argued in the Urdu media that the matter needed to be investigated and, if found true, the guilty should be brought to light and punished for the same.

On the nature and process of the July 25 national and provincial elections, the vernacular media was overall critical of the political parties and politicians for their negative role in making the elections controversial. Some commentators believed that the PML N and Nawaz Sharif was met an unfair treatment. Why it was otherwise that only the PML N were targeted by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB)? It was argued that the establishment did not want a popular leader to be the Prime Minister of the country that could undermine its influence. Others however were of the view that the establishment might have been unhappy with Nawaz Sharif but that did not mean it was propping Imran Khan up as its man. Because that meant replacing one popular but incompetent leader with another which was not what the establishment would have wanted.

Most of the commentators and surveys were of the view that no party was in position to get simple majority. But the main contest was between the PTI and PML N. It was maintained throughout that whatever might be the results, it would be a controversial elections and there would protests by the losing parties. Since Imran Khan's PTI won unexpected number of seats, the opposition alleged that the elections were rigged and Imran Khan was unfairly made to win the elections.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Election 2018 will not lead to political stability, Raza Rumi, *Daily Times*, 01 July¹

According to even the most optimistic assessments, the PTI is still short of the numbers needed to form the government. The PMLN remains a formidable foe and PTI gains in KP remain uncertain due to the past voting behavior of electorate there. Moreover, the emergence of Muttahida Majlis e Amal (MMA), an alliance of religious parties will present tough competition in many parts of the province. *Similarly, while the Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan was initially designed to cut PMLN to size by chopping its Barelvi support, it is also going to take away some support from the PTI candidates. With all its gains and engineered strength via the infamous electables (a code word for turncoat, opportunist politicians that always want to stay in power), PTI would need coalition partners and the PPP is the likely choice. In short, July 25 will witness a truncated tally for PMLN whereby it may retain a large number of seats but unable to form the government or be short of allies. The mood of Punjab voter is different this time however. There is anger against the permanent institutions of the state and there is unprecedented political consciousness. Some of that can be seen on social media.* Having said that the elections and the incoming coalition are not going to create stability. A fractured polity may result in a hung parliament with adequate room for intervention of the extra-democratic forces. Our shortsighted political elites are unable to learn obvious lessons from the country's history. Their bickering and lack of consensus on the rules of the game will further delay and dilute democratic consolidation.

PPP manifesto, Editorial, *Daily Times*, 02 July²

In its manifesto the party had declared it would ensure local government elections, but we had to wait until 2016 to see them in Sindh. To its credit, the PPP has always spoken of empowering women, and has introduced some positive legislation towards this end. However, much remains to be done. By 2015, it had the lowest average wage for unskilled female workers. *The province also had the dubious distinction of showing the lowest percentage of employed women relative to men — 14pc to 86pc. In 2014, after six years of PPP rule, the province had the highest incidence of violence. Meanwhile, the issue of press freedom, a growing area of concern in this country, has been given short shrift in comparison to its 2013 manifesto.* The most worrying aspect is that all three manifestos glanced over civil service reform with vague

¹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/260560/election-2018-will-not-lead-to-political-stability/>

² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1417417/ppp-manifesto>

statements about even vaguer plans. Considering Asif Zardari's guarantee of a government job for every family in the country, it suggests that there will be no reform but just a ballooning of an already bloated bureaucracy cementing the notion of growth without development and, in the process, doing away with concepts of competence and meritocracy. But, this time the PPP has a new face in Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari. Would he, somewhere in the future, be able to claim that the PPP will transform Lahore into Karachi, without it sounding more like a threat? Will he be able to deliver on his promises? For as Carl Jung put it, "you are what you do, not what you say."

The PML-N paradox, Zahid Hussain, Dawn, 04 July³

It is evident that the long absence of Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Maryam from the country has seriously affected the PML-N election campaign. The internal squabble over ticket allocations and the defections have caused creeping demoralisation among the supporters. There is no evidence of any sympathy wave for Nawaz Sharif sweeping across Punjab that could enhance the party's electoral fortunes. Moreover, the widening rift between the Sharif brothers has further compounded the party's predicament. The PML-N paradox has been exposed by the two opposite narratives espoused by the brothers. While the elder Sharif and his daughter have shown no change in their hard-line confrontationist position, the younger sibling has taken an increasingly conciliatory path. In fact, Shahbaz has publicly challenged Nawaz's stance on khalai makhloq being behind his ouster and undermining his party. Yet another predicament facing the PML-N and its leadership in the run-up to the elections is the possibility of the former prime minister and Maryam Nawaz being convicted on graft charges. *Some PML-N leaders believe that Shahbaz's reconciliation offer could provide a way out of this situation. But what would that way out be — one that is acceptable for Nawaz as well as the military establishment? It is quite evident that the establishment will not agree to anything less than the former prime minister leaving politics.*

Corruption and Electability, M.A.Niazi, The Nation, 06 July⁴

The judiciary and the investigating agencies may well be neutral, but the accountability occurring has provoked ousted Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif's daughter Maryam to say that the PML (N) supporters should be targeted for that not other crimes, and prohibited from contesting elections anyhow. It might be noticed that the PML (N) is not the only party being affected by accountability, but while the PTI is next, the PPP has escaped so

³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1417867/the-pml-n-paradox>

⁴ <https://nation.com.pk/06-Jul-2018/corruption-and-electability>

far. Actually, the experience of corruption by the elected being used to justify military takeovers and dismissals of governments may now be wearing thin. That might explain why the PML (N) is not in greater disarray than at present. The problem is not of corruption, but of punishment of corruption. Ouster has not led to punishment. The PML (N) would like to argue that it has not been corrupt at all, but that would only increase the resentment at ouster, not change it in any way. However, an extra element that seems at play in Pakistan, and not in the West, is that of the manipulation of the process. Perhaps it might not be as blatant as at present, where it seems that one party is being singled out, but there has always been the perception that elections are not transparent, and 'desired results' are always obtained. Desired by whom? *The PML (N) is hesitant about claiming it is the military, the PPP much readier. Whoever it is, it should be remembered that the electorate is showing few signs of being willing to be manipulated by this charge. One problem is that many voters do not see corruption as a problem, so long as it is in their favour. They only mind corruption when they do not benefit.* The PTI narrative, that such corruption ends up preventing the government delivering services may not survive the flood of 'electables' who have received tickets, and who will form the bulk of any majority it might obtain.

'Road to New Pakistan', Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, 11 July⁵

Politicians are known for treating their election manifestos as a mere formality before elections. What with Khan? Is he serious about his intentions or does he too know he has set himself a big target — with the potential to remain elusive — and can hardly be there or thereabouts? Well, he answers the question himself as he unfolds his list of vows to the nation, perhaps bearing in mind his tumbled claims of nipping corruption in the bud within 90 days only. "No one should expect that this manifesto will be implemented easily," the PTI chairman tells the audience, adding that fulfilling the promises will be a great 'challenge' for him and his party, particularly those on the economic front. *Promises are usually forgotten. Well, that at least appears true in case of our politicians who survive — rather thrive — on the short memories of the constituents. Seldom are they seen pursuing their electoral promises, let alone coming nearly good on them, at the least. On a contrary note, let's hope the PTI chairman will lay the foundation of his 'Naya Pakistan' in the next five years, if his party comes to power. Even if the PTI tries, in earnest, in pursuit of the pledged targets, it will be a true service to the nation.*

⁵ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1754567/6-road-new-pakistan/>

Women and Elections, Editorial, *The Nation*, 16 July⁶

*There is a severe paucity of women participation in the electoral process at both end of the spectrum - the political representation of women and women voter turnout -resulting from the deeply entrenched patriarchy and misogyny that characterizes the socio-political culture of our society. At the representation end the issue remains that law makers refuse to allow constitutional changes for increased participation of women. Even if an argument can be made for the number of reserved seats for women being sufficient, it belies the real issue of the inherent nepotism and dynastic leaning of politics whereby male representatives use female family members as proxies. Other obstructions include withholding of funds for campaigning of female members by parties and parties using the reserved seats for female members as a front to covertly represent their male members. This suppresses, frustrates the work and ideologies of actual female political workers struggling for the party. At the elective end, we see women who are irrevocably cognizant of their right and need to vote but are obstructed by the same patriarchal and misogynistic values. **The establishment must accommodate female voters to allow for a fair and inclusive election. This entails setting up separate polling and providing security against harassment and coercion. It is imperative that our legislation and polity facilitates women to avail political positions and votes as more than a token statistic of 10%, or as proxies for male members.***

Can Imran Khan really bring change? Dr Samee Lashari, *The Express Tribune*, 17 July⁷

There are logical reasons to be skeptical about the ability of the political class in general, and Khan in particular, to deliver desired results out of the elections. In the first place, the civil-military relations will be a big challenge for the PTI chief. Complex in nature and essence, the military's role in political developments in Pakistan has been spoiling our capacity to become a democratic country. There are two important factors that would complicate the relationship between Khan as PM and the military establishment, and likely turn him into a failure. One, Khan would find it hard to challenge the establishment and influence the direction of foreign and defence policies vis-à-vis India, Afghanistan, China, Russia and the United States, and redefine them according to his own vision. Unfortunately, political polarization in the country would give him little

⁶ <https://nation.com.pk/16-Jul-2018/women-and-elections>

⁷ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1759631/6-can-imran-khan-really-bring-change/>

space to rely upon the political parties. Two, amongst the institutions of the state, parliament is the most disunited. Since it gives birth to the executive as well, the discordant relationships of the forces present in parliament provide avenues of opportunity to judiciary and civil-military bureaucracy to render parliament subdued. *The future direction of democratization in Pakistan will largely depend upon the performance of Khan's government in three important aspects. One, an important factor of his popularity among the youth of the country is that he himself has not been tested in any public leadership position though his party has produced a mixed result of better performances in some sectors while broken promises in others.*

Elections 2018: Perspective and Prospects, Mohsin Raza Malik, *The Nation*, 25 July⁸

Besides the mainstream mass media, social media has also played a role in poisoning the country's political environment. Voters and supporters of all political parties kept on using social media to freely express their likes and dislikes even before the polling day. They actively defended and rationalized each act and policy of their favorite leaders while missing no opportunity to defame and discredit other leaders. We also saw some political parties talking about 'political engineering', and making complaints for not being provided a level playing field ahead of these elections. Moreover, a number of terrorist attacks recently made on various election rallies in KP and Baluchistan have also resulted in adding the elements of fear and violence to these polls. *It has widely been predicted that there would be a hung parliament in Pakistan following these elections where no political party would be in a position to form next government alone. In fact, PTI and PML (N) are currently the two major political parties in the country. These two parties are being considered the primary competitors in these polls.* Though PML (N) has been the largest parliamentary political party, it is currently in disarray. This troubled party is being considered the miserable victim of the on-going political engineering in Pakistan. As a matter of fact, the results of almost every general election in Pakistan have been controversial. However, the 2018 General Election has been rendered controversial even before the polling day, thanks to our 'reformist' state institutions. *Therefore, the 'experienced opposition' would give 'naive government' a hard time. Though there would be a harmonious civil-military relationship, but the so-called judicial activism would be an irritant between the executive and the superior judiciary in Pakistan.* On the other hand, if the so-called status quo parties, particularly PML (N), succeed

⁸ <https://nation.com.pk/25-Jul-2018/elections-2018-perspective-prospects>

in forming next government in Pakistan, there would again be a confrontation between the executive and other key state institutions, including the judiciary and the security establishment. In either case, Pakistan and Pakistanis would be the ultimate sufferers.

Dreaming a New Pakistan, Farasat Latif, *The Nation*, 26 July⁹

Pakistan politics is a perfect model where a tiny number of educated populace dreams of a flawless political regime, free of vulture culture resulting in an ideal society where survival is beyond just bare existence! Where basic needs are readily available! The tragedy begins where that tiny group of human brain diggers cannot distinguish between the basics needed to lay the foundations of a just society. It is quite understandable where the choices are limited, and one tends to pick what is easily cheaply available, meaning accessible, approachable to them. Remember we are not talking about the common man who can pick and choose his leader who can make his dreams come true. We are looking at the steps, the ladders, the dressings from a middleman who decides, designs, the doctrine for an appropriate leader suitable to their culture and causes. If in an ideal world, the common man was to be involved in the exercise of ascendancy to power of leader of his choice, the results of politics would not only be different but would bear fruits as well. There are hurdles here which would deter the dogma of development much needed for durable, dependable political structure! In a country where commerce has collapsed, media provides a viable business opportunity for hawks and money mongers! *It is undoubtedly the best business prospect for merchants of immortality. Hence, strictly speaking, the media based elections are most unlikely to bring results beneficial to the nation's much-cherished stability for designing a modern state!*

The China challenge, Muhammad Amir Rana, *Dawn*, 29 July¹⁰

Foreign policy and strategic affairs have traditionally remained a difficult area between civilian governments and the security establishment, and have always been a source of friction between them. Even if they cede much of their control over foreign strategic affairs to the security establishment, civilian governments cannot run away from international diplomatic stresses, mainly caused by Pakistan's complicated position on different regional issues as well as the alleged presence of non-state violent groups on its soil. What makes things more complicated in this changing world is the fact that the economy, foreign policy and security affairs are no longer seen as separate strands; they constantly cut across each other's domains. *Strategically*

⁹ <https://nation.com.pk/26-Jul-2018/dreaming-a-new-pakistan>

¹⁰ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1423580>

speaking, Pakistan's political governments' role in the country's relations with the US, and to some extent with Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia, has been a limited one; but China will be a different story because of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and China's emerging role in Pakistan's socioeconomic transformation. While the Chinese embassy in Islamabad has issued a statement that it is ready to work with the future government, the PTI has appeared uneasy about its relationship with China. The party, it seems in an effort to build trust with the Chinese, set up an internal Pakistan-China Cooperation Unit a week before the general election. In its manifesto, too, the PTI has emphasised its desire to take friendship with China to new heights.

MQM's reckoning? *Editorial, Dawn, 31 July*¹¹

Perhaps it would be premature to write the Muttahida's political obituary; still, the electorate, part of which is possibly on the lookout for a national party to solve their problems, has sent a definite message to the MQM, that emotional slogans and entreaties to ethnic sentiments are not enough, and the voter wants results. *Amongst the prime reasons behind the MQM's predicament was the constant infighting between the PIB and Bahadurabad factions.* The MQM has cried foul over rigging allegations; yet, it is ironic that in elections past the party was accused by its opponents of indulging in rigging, stuffing ballot boxes, and in general, 'managing' the poll process under the threat of violence. Today, despite all allegations of irregularities during voting, it is a fact that there is an air of political freedom in Karachi, and the people are generally free to vote as they choose. Perhaps the first step would be to acknowledge the wrongs of the past, especially the party's violent strikes and its promotion of an aggressive political culture in Karachi. The election results may be humbling for the MQM, but this could be a moment to introspect, shed the baggage of the past and look forward to a less controversial future.

¹¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1423956/mqms-reckoning>

ECONOMIC ISSUES

Economy set to face tougher challenges in FY19, Salman Siddiqui, Daily Times, 01 July¹²

The government has set a GDP growth target of 6% for fiscal year 2019. However, “we [BIPL Securities] estimate economic growth at 4.8% in fiscal year 2018-19”, BIPL Securities Economist Jahanzeb Zafar stated the other day. Poor performance on the economic front also suggests that Pakistan may face a crisis in fiscal year 2019 if corrective measures are not taken on time, he said. “Pakistan has been facing the problem of a current account deficit since last year and in 2018-19 it faces a balance of payments crisis as well as currency weakening ... all this suggests a crisis in the making,” he added. *“We expect...11% more currency devaluation in FY19, two percentage points hike in key interest rate to 8.5% by December 2018 and upward adjustment of energy/utility prices to reduce fiscal burden. “As a result, inflation is likely to average 8.5% in FY19; but current account deficit might scale down,” Insight Securities’ analyst Zeeshan Afzal said in a comment to his clients.*

Fitch warns of growing risks to Pakistan’s economy, Report, Dawn, 04 July¹³

Pakistan’s declining foreign exchange reserves and widening current account deficit are adding to the country’s external financing risks” said a sharply worded press release issued early in July. *“Further and considerable policy efforts would be required to stabilize the external position, and a new government has limited time to act after the July 25 elections, as external debt obligations will pick up more rapidly in 2019,”* the release continued, without elaborating what steps might be required to arrest the trend. It pointed to “three separate step depreciations since mid-December 2017, of a cumulative 13pc against the dollar” as some of the steps taken by the monetary authorities thus far. Although these “eased some pressure on reserves and may eventually support a narrowing of the current account deficit, but their magnitude so has not been sufficient to prevent external finances deteriorating more sharply” than was expected back in January when the ratings agency last downgraded the outlook on Pakistan’s B rating to ‘negative’. “We now project the current account deficit to reach 5.3pc of GDP in the fiscal year ended June 2018 (FY18), compared with 4.7pc previously. Export performance has improved, but imports have risen on

¹² <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1746853/2-economy-set-face-tougher-challenges-fy19/>

¹³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1417844>

higher oil prices and strong household demand. Loose fiscal policy has added to imbalances. *The fiscal deficit is likely to rise to around 6pc of GDP in FY18, compared to our January forecast of 5.0pc, and the government is becoming increasingly reliant on external borrowing — particularly from Chinese policy banks.*"

Tumbling economy, Editorial, Dawn, 18 July¹⁴

The currency depreciations by themselves may not be the solution to the external sector deficits, but they are a necessary precondition. *The economy is currently burning around \$1.2 billion of foreign exchange reserves every month, and given the size of the current account deficit and minus the short-term debt obligations that need to be met in the near future, this leaves barely enough for two months of imports.* Without a depreciation, levels of aggregate demand (especially for imported consumer goods) will remain unsustainably high, and the interbank market will need to be resupplied with dollar liquidity at regular intervals, through whatever means. With persistent shortages of foreign exchange in the interbank market, there is little else for the policymakers to do as a starting point other than get the price of the currency (the exchange rate) to reflect the fundamentals. It is now important to know what that entails: a sharp reduction in aggregate demand and government expenditures, mid-year revenue measures, continuing depreciation of the currency, high inflation, and higher interest rates. *All of these are now around the corner, and their cumulative impact is a sharp deceleration in growth. There is a lot the country needs to be prepared for if the situation on the external front is to be stabilized, and the time for that preparation to begin is now.*

¹⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1420792>

Economic policymaking, Ishrat Husain, Dawn, 30 July¹⁵

Tax policy is a living example of this phenomenon. Every incoming government starts policy formulation without examining the previous experience. The same mistakes are repeated again and by the time it completes its tenure no tangible results are achieved, compelling its successor to deem the policy a failure and restart the process. Compared to other factors, top-down driven, whimsical and ad hoc policies have done much damage to the economy. The resulting loss of credibility creates uncertainty among stakeholders contributing to lackadaisical implementation. *The finance ministry's dominance in economic policymaking and almost exercising veto power has given rise to short-termism and excessive preoccupation with the sole objective of balancing the books without realising the impact on long-term development goals.* Each ministry dealing with economic and social development and their counterpart departments in the provinces should have an economic advisory cell headed by a grade-21 professional expert in the field. These officers should also be selected through open competition, with members of the economist cadre given equal opportunity to compete for these positions.

Weak economy forcing Pakistan to seek loan from IMF: report, Anwar Iqbal, Dawn, 30 July¹⁶

The report by Avascent, a consulting firm which advises international defence contractors, reviews the impact of this economic slowdown on Pakistan's defence purchases, but it also includes a brief review of the national economy. The report claims that negative trends in its relationship with the United States, a depreciating rupee, and its untenable foreign exchange position, is forcing Pakistan to reach out to other countries for support, particularly China. The report points out that Pakistan has received over \$5 billion in bilateral and commercial loans from China this fiscal year, including a \$1 billion loan in early July. *In addition to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) — a package of infrastructure projects worth an estimated \$62 billion — Pakistan has also turned to Beijing as a source of defence imports. "Over the next decade, Beijing will become the single most important arms supplier for the Pakistani military," the report adds.*

¹⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1423794>

¹⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1423780>

SECURITY SITUATION

Redefining national security, Ahmad Faruqi, *Daily Times*, 04 July¹⁷

Pakistan's military planners had projected India as "a pushover adversary that is cowardly because the Hindu has no stomach for a fight". They have raised very high expectations about the superiority of Pakistan's armed forces, illusions repeatedly shattered by defeats. Often, Islamabad has "completely misunderstood Indian intentions and capabilities" and jumped the gun with hubris and folly. Ayesha Siddiqi in a piece noted that, "the military desperately needs reforms to cater to the real security needs of the country. The argument is indeed valid since the manner in which the country's armed forces are being run today means lesser security at a higher cost." My call for a paradigm shift in national security encountered two main objections: I had ignored "domestic political compulsions" and had "too readily assumed that rational political choices would be followed." *Now, 70 years on, Pakistan has come to a fork in the road. It can stay in a state of permanent conflict with India, training and arming militant groups, distinguishing good and bad Taliban, and arming itself with the latest weaponry. Or it can get on the road to prosperity by accepting the sage counsel offered by the Abbottabad Commission. The choice is not that hard.*

The Challenge of Religious Militancy, Afrasiab Khattak, *The Nation*, 07 July¹⁸

An important but not properly debated aspect of GE 2018 is participation of militant/suspected terrorist organizations in the electoral process as a part of the "mainstreaming" launched by state security agencies. The recent criticism of Nawaz Sharif at not taking the case against accused persons in Mumbai terrorist attack to logical conclusion clearly indicates the split between civilian and military ruling elites on the issue. The split also explains the inability of the state to act decisively against the religious militancy in Pakistan. After 9/11 the project of religious militancy underwent some changes as it wasn't anymore possible to continue it in the old form. So a distinction was created between "good" and "bad" terrorists. Afghan Taliban are for example "good Taliban" like LeT and JeM as they don't fight inside Pakistan and are ready to be used as foreign policy tool for the country's military establishment. The reported death of a Taliban Commander Abdullah in a US drone strike in Datta Khel (North Waziristan) on July 4 is a proof of the presence of Taliban in the former FATA region. It belies the

¹⁷ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/262063/redefining-national-security/>

¹⁸ <https://nation.com.pk/07-Jul-2018/the-challenge-of-religious-militancy>

claims of clearing the area from terrorists. *Pakistan has gone in once again into grey list by the international watchdog of terror financing and is not far from getting into the black list. The country is facing international isolation on this issue. Traditional and close friends like China feel frustrated over Pakistan's failure to decisively act against religious militancy which is justly regarded by China as a serious hurdle on the path of Belt & Road Initiative.* After launching CPEC and joining Shanghai Cooperation Organization, it isn't possible for Pakistan to keep on appeasing religious extremism. Pakistan has already wasted long years in supporting Talibanisation in Afghanistan. The country could have leaped forward on the road of economic development by getting into Central Asian markets. Unfortunately the Jihadist tail has been wagging the dog far too long. It has internally radicalized the state and society and has externally led to the country's isolation.

Terrorism and Elections, Kashif Ahmad Mohaar, *The Nation*, 21 July¹⁹

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Islamic State (IS) have claimed responsibility for carrying out those heinous attacks. According to a report by Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies at least 158 people have been killed and 670 wounded in six weeks leading up to general election. So, pre-emptive measures are imperative to rule out any chances of future attacks. Now question arises what might have been the possible objectives to carry out those fatal attacks? The answer, simply, is to sabotage the election process. Both the external and internal enemies wish to destabilize democratic process in the country. One can see that the terrorists targeted political parties irrespective of their political or religious ideologies. The attacks were massive and targeted election rallies of BAP, ANP, and JUI-F. *So, the purpose seems to be spreading chaos for sabotaging upcoming election. Second, antagonistic powers have tried their level best to internally destabilize and externally isolate the country. This resurgent wave of terrorism is not an exception in that regard. Perhaps, the election campaigns were the 'soft targets' for them to cause a massive destruction.* Therefore, it was carried out. However, certainly, people of Pakistan are very courageous and brave; they have rendered infinite sacrifices against war on terror with great courage. And it is impossible to shatter their valour. In this regard, Election Commission of Pakistan took a right step in the right direction-to continue election process.

¹⁹ <https://nation.com.pk/21-Jul-2018/terrorism-and-elections>

RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA

Indian envoy hopes bilateral ties will improve after elections in Pakistan, Nadir Guramani, *Dawn*, 05 July²⁰

India's High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria, while addressing a seminar in Islamabad, hoped that the relations between India and Pakistan will improve after the 2018 general elections. "We hope that Pak-India relations will improve following the general elections in Pakistan," Bisaria said, adding that the two countries started facing strained relations since 1999. "There has been a mutual contract to not harass diplomats from either side," the Indian high commissioner said while referring to the agreement which was announced through a statement simultaneously issued by the Foreign Office and the Indian Ministry of External Affairs in March this year. The statement reads: "India and Pakistan have mutually agreed to resolve matters related to the treatment of diplomats and diplomatic premises, in line with the 1992 'Code of Conduct' for treatment of diplomatic/consular personnel in India and Pakistan." He also said that poverty is both countries' mutual enemy and that the people of both nations do not hate each other. "The truth is that terrorist events hindered the talks between the two countries," he said while adding that the two countries need to take baby steps in order to make their relationship better.

Streamlining Indo-Pak relations, Asad Hussain, *Daily Times*, 26 July²¹

Pakistan has also blamed India for its involvement in Balochistan and Karachi. The arrest of Kulbhushan Jadhav from Chabahar confirmed that Indian intelligence agencies are indulged in spreading terror and chaos and funding non-state actors to yield irregularities in Pakistan. The recent bloodiest wave of terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan is the part of the same story. India is doing this to disrupt the smooth democratic transition in Pakistan and interrupt the 2018 general elections. The current Indian manoeuvres highlight three important paradigms of New Delhi's strategy. First, India has demanded punitive measures against the organisations listed above for reopening dialogue. Secondly, this pre-condition for holding the peace talks is coupled with Indian endeavours to isolate Pakistan internationally and regionally and to get it declared as a terrorist state by the toothless UN and the mighty US. Thirdly, with the help

²⁰<https://www.dawn.com/news/1418151/indian-envoy-hopes-bilateral-ties-will-improve-after-elections-in-pakistan>

²¹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/273144/streamlining-indo-pak-relations/>

and assistance of the US, India is increasing its role in the Indian Ocean and Afghanistan and becoming Asian power by pushing Pakistan to the back burner. This will inevitably disturb the balance of power in the region and will hurt Pakistan's strategic interests. *Pakistan has adopted a very rational stance that if Pakistan has been financing these organisations then why is Pakistan facing the most disastrous bloodshed? According to a report, 80,000 civilians and arms forces personnel have been martyred in these attacks. Thus, to further avoid bloodshed, the two nations must rethink their paradigms of decision making.*

Defeat of extremists in Pakistan polls welcomed in India, Jawed Naqvi, Dawn, 27 July²²

While Mr Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf party looks set to form the next government, the good news from India's point of view is that religious extremists have been shown the door by the watchful electorate. This could heighten the already existing chatter that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would be around to bless the new government in Islamabad along with other Saarc players should such an invite go out for the inauguration. "I really want to fix our ties," Mr. Khan said to India in an address on Thursday. "You take one step forward, we will take two." The 65-year-old former captain of Pakistan cricket team said he was a "little disappointed" the way Indian media has portrayed him "like a Bollywood villain... as though all will be bad if I come to power...I have widely travelled in India because of cricket and I want good relations with India," he said in a half-hour address as the opposition cried foul. *Among those who have wagered on an improvement in India-Pakistan ties is former Indian spy chief A.S. Dulat. He believes that relations would improve dramatically before the 2019 Indian elections. The late Shujaat Bukhari had spoken knowledgeably in his Srinagar-based newspaper about the possible revival of the stalled Saarc summit in Pakistan. There is rumour of talks being held regularly between the National Security Advisers of the two sides.*

URDU MEDIA

When will be the request heeded? Imtiaz Alam, Jang, July 02²³

Someday there will be ray of hope and an end to dark: We have spent decades in waiting that to come. Every election in Pakistan has been controversial.

²² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1423175>

²³ https://e.jang.com.pk/07-02-2018/lahore/pic.asp?picname=08_005.png

*Which single election is there which was not questioned! Politicians have been banned, parties got broken, formed and high-jacked. ... This time it seems as if there is a catastrophe going to come if the PML N wins the elections. Which tactic is not being used (to stop PML N from winning)! Accountability is mostly for PML N leaders; disqualification for them; and 'lotas' rebel in PML N. In Balochistan whole party at the provincial level is being high-jacked. From his disqualification as party president-ship till now, where he is accused of being traitor for an interview in which Nawaz talked about national security and the former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi for sharing the details of national security meeting with 'traitor' Nawaz Sharif, both have been summoned by the Supreme Court. The Article 6 which entails treachery is being thought over to be imposed on them. *It seems that such things will not stop happening until the PML N is expelled before the 25 July elections. And even then, if there is requirement, what is wrong in using same tactics that has been used so far to 'appropriate results'.* However whatever is happening, it is again making the supposed free and fair elections controversial. It also destroys the purpose of the opinion of people. What big task had Nawaz Sharif carried out if he wanted to change the 'status quo'? What tool did he have that could have damaged the country or which they had tried earlier? *Unfortunately there has no party from the beginning that could really work for emancipating people and change their destiny. Few families (landlords, rich, tribal leaders and regional leaders) who have run whole system. Few days back they were in PPP, yesterday in PML N or PML Q and today they have changed their party on the name of 'change'. Billions of rupees are spent on elections and majority becomes just spectator in this. The wealth of the people fighting elections, 90 per cent are billionaires or land lords. 60 per cent of these do not pay taxes.* In such environment of loot if there is a hope that is people should start asking questions to their leaders. ... PML N does not seem to be getting majority. But it does not seem to be facing a big loss either. *PML N will remain largest party in Punjab. PPP can have better seats than it had earlier. Zardari can be big game changer.* ... Unless and until there are free and fair elections, there can be no respect for people's mandate. If the authority does not go to the elected representatives of people, it is nothing but nonsense. Oh I wish! When is this status quo going to break!*

Who destroyed Pak-economy? Khalid H Lodhi, Daily Jasarat, July 03²⁴

In a recently ended session of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Pakistan was put in grey list of countries that support terrorism. This meeting was attended by finance minister Dr. Shamshad Akhtar of caretaker government.

²⁴<http://www.jasarat.com/2018/07/03/180703-04-9/>

Though Dr. Akhtar briefed the session about the stringent actions Pakistani government has taken against money laundering, financial support to terrorism, banned organization and other groups, Pakistan was put in the grey list which raises many questions. Now any moment Pakistan could be black listed and can face sanctions, like Iran. FATF is under pressure from India and the USA. These two countries are also pressurizing Turkey, Saudi Arabia and China to take action against Pakistan. These actions of the enemy countries have set alarm bells off. Their next step may be about Pakistan's nuclear program. Pakistan's economy was destroyed through an organized global plan and Pakistan's Nawaz government was part of it. There is zero doubt that Ishaq Dar played an economic chit man's role. On the other hand Pakistan is moving towards deadliest drought. These are part of deep international conspiracies. When great powers want to destroy a country they first target the economy and then their natural resources. For this purpose they use influential politicians and major businessman of that country and influence elections as well to establish favorable government. Have a look what American author John Perkins says in his book *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*: 'Economic hit men (EHMs) are highly paid professionals who cheat countries around the globe out of trillions of dollars. They funnel money from the World Bank, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and other foreign "aid" organizations into the coffers of huge corporations and the pockets of a few wealthy families who control the planet's natural resources. Their tools include fraudulent financial report's rigged elections, payoffs, extortion, sex, and murder. They play a game as old empire, but one that has taken on new and terrifying dimensions during this time of globalization.' *India is committing terrorism in the region and providing financial support to terrorist organizations. India's ambition against Pakistan is now open particularly in Baluchistan and Kashmir.* Western press has also started reporting this. Water crisis in Pakistan is also part of India's agenda. Pakistan is under clutches of almost 105 influential political families. Earlier there were 22 families which were extended by now in 100 plus families. All national wealth is with them. First politicians spend crores of rupees to win elections and then they loot the national wealth. Then this looted wealth is siphoned off the country and destroys the economy of Pakistan.

Kashmir's struggle for independence is not terrorism, Editorial, Daily Ausaf, July 11²⁵

Attention of the world is again diverted from ground realities of 'occupied' Kashmir. Indian stubbornness is continuing even after the report of UNHRC. *India, by not giving access to international organizations members, has*

²⁵<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newsrc=issues/2018-07-11/54993/p1001.gif>

increased its brutalities on the Kashmiris. All deprived and suppressed nations got independence, but oppressed Muslims of Kashmir and Palestine are resisting Indian and Israeli brutalities respectively with courage to get basic and universal right of freedom. We at the same time understand that these two oppressed nations will continue with the same zeal until great powers of the world do not do their due to solve the issues. We think the UN General Secretary should take notice of the recent actions taken by Indian authorities against Asia Andrabi and Hurriyat leaders and warn India about hard actions. If this criminal silence continues then the threat to international peace could not be eradicated.

Election and indifference towards Kashmir issue, Mohammad Sadiq Jiraal, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, July 05²⁶

For over seventy years, 'occupied' Kashmir has been experiencing heinous atrocities at the hands of Indian forces. There is hardly any day when there are no protests. When from morning till the evening only Indian forces are visible, how horrible life of Kashmiris would be! *The issue was raised by Dr. Maleeha Lodhi at the UN General Assembly. She said that grave human rights violations are taking place in 'occupied' Kashmir: Chemical weapons are used and people are made blind.* On this the Indian representative at the UN got angry. ... *A seminar was organised by the Hamid Nizami Institute on the Freedom Movement in 'occupied' Kashmir and the newly imposed governor rule. The speakers including Senator Gen. (R) Abdul Qayyum, journalist Fazal Hussain Awaan, Oriya Maqbool, Brig. (R) Gazafar Ali and Ajiz Ahmad Bhat said that the governor rule in 'occupied' Kashmir has exposed India's undemocratic policy on Kashmir.* Retired Indian generals, journalists, scholars and civil society have criticised the move. India has lost Kashmir. The speakers said that stable and strong Pakistan is important for Kashmir's freedom. *Our leaders and politicians are however insensitive towards Kashmir and have disappointed the Kashmiris. It is so insensitive from our side that the group that had opposed creation of Pakistan, its leader Fazl-ur Rehman is heading the Kashmir committee.* And the result is zero. ... *Despite the deteriorating overall situation in Kashmir, our political parties and leaders have not given any clear-cut policy or strategy regarding the issue even at the time of elections.* Everywhere across the world, political parties spell out their foreign, economic, security policies at the time of elections. In Pakistan however our rulers at maximum can speak few words for Kashmir only. *Kashmiris are Pakistan's unpaid army. From the creation of Pakistan up to now, lakhs have sacrificed their lives. They consider Pakistan as their own.* But our attitude is disappointing.

²⁶<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2018-07-05/page-6/detail-10>

Jihad will liberate 'occupied' Kashmir, Khadim Rizvi, Ummat, July 05²⁷

Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) is first time fighting elections. *Its performance in some by-polls have shocked many. Others are surprised that recently formed Tehreek-e-Labaik has fielded candidates in 550 constituencies. In Karachi they had largest rally which has befuddled the 'candle mafia' and their leaders in the west.* The leader of the TehreekKhadim Hussain Rizvi said that electronic media is ignoring rallies of his party. Rizvi praised *Ummat* for its reporting the *dharana* (protest) of the party against the change in the Last-Prophethood clause. ... *Khadim said that the party has not done any adjustment with any political party as that will be compromise on its ideology. If some party is of the same ideology like us then we can think about forming an alliance with it.* Our ideology is belief in the Last-Prophethood. Protection of Islam; protection of mosques; protection of the Quran and hadith. Keeping up Islamic values and giving rights to minorities. That does not mean to mix Islam with other religions. *Thank God our position in elections is better. I cannot say how many seats we will win. Whatever number of seats we may get, we are still strong because our ideology is strong. ... Our constitution is that there should a welfare state based on the Islamic principles in which rulers will live a simple life like their subjects so that corruption ends.* Everyone lives a simple life. Instead of having four dishes, she should have one dish. This can help from protecting people from sugar and blood pressure. *Kashmir issue is our priority. Kashmir will be freed, God willing, with Jihad. If it could have been resolved through talks that would have happened 70 years before. But no progress is made. Jihad is only way and, God willing, Pak-army will fight this jihad. ...* Tweeter and Facebook have banned Tehreek-e-Labaik because they are afraid of us. They have banned over sixty web-pages in last few days and closed accounts. During the Karachi rally our 15-20 social media accounts were closed. ... This is a record that apart from the Tehreek, Facebook has not targeted any other party.

Will the PML-N boycott the election? Dr. Safdar Ali Bhut, Daily Ausaf, July 05²⁸

Verdict is about to come in a case in which Nawaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz and Cap. Safdar are named. *It may go any side but most probably it will go against the Sharif family. If it happens then reaction of PML-N will be*

²⁷<http://ummat.net/2018/07/05/news.php?p=story1.gif>

²⁸http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2018-07-05/54392/p10_04.gif

important. There are chances that Nawaz may boycott the 25 July elections. Though this decision may not get support from Shehbaz Sharif. This will leave a huge impact on PML-N and political landscape of Pakistan. If PML-N boycotts the election then road will be clear for PTI and it can form the government alone. If the NAB verdict comes in support of Nawaz then it will pump fresh blood in PML-N cadre and party and it will jeopardize the future of PTI. It also may result in change of thinking of several politicians. If PML-N does not boycott the election despite adverse verdict then tone of Nawaz will be become harsher and situation may worsen further. NAB's verdict will be challenged in high court and it cannot pronounce the judgment till 25 of July, 2018. There is possibility of Nawaz and Maryam going to jail as well. Nawaz has to control his narrative; otherwise he may lose the grip on situation. If they go jail they can gain sympathy of voters or people might abandon this party by calling it a dead part. On the other hand, number of people contesting election on the symbol of Jeep is increasing with every day. Though they are independent but they may form a group after the results and indulge in horse trading. Our politicians are creating more divide in already divided political landscape. I respect Chaudhry Nisar but by creating Jeep group he did not favored the country. One rumor is doing rounds that Jeep group will be so influential that PTI will be compelled to accept Chaudhry Nisar as prime minister. Though I do not believe in Khalai Makhlooq but external elements are spreading hatred in our country and some among us are working as their agent.

PTI in trouble for its role in amending Last-Prophethood Law, Najum-ul Hasan Arif, Ummat, July 06²⁹

In regard to role in the controversial Amendment bill for the Last-Prophethood Clause, the name of third important person has come out: It is Shafqat Mahmood of Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf (PTI), who is fighting election from NA-130, Lahore. *Strong anger is found in lovers-of—Prophet against Shafqat Mahmood and they protested against him yesterday. According to the resource, even if PTI cancels ticket of Shafqat, still there will be protests against him.* Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) has announced protests for today (Friday, 06 July) across the country in this regard and has appealed to the people to build pressure on the Election Commission to stop people in involved in the bringing forth the controversial bill from contesting elections. After the Islamabad High Court (IHC) ordered to make the Raja Zafar-ul Haq Committee report public, apart from Anusha Rahman of Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML N), Shafqat Mahmood's name came forth. Immediately there were protests on Wednesday in NA-130. *It should be remembered that PML N's law minister Zahid Hamid had to resign after his name figured among the*

²⁹<http://ummat.net/2018/07/06/news.php?p=story3.gif>

list of people who had role in bringing forth the bill. For her role, Anusha Rahman, who is considered close to Nawaz Sharif and Ishaq Dar, was not given ticket for elections.... The name of Shafqat Mahmmod was not there earlier. Now when the IHC made the report public, Shafqat's role has come forth. According to the source, PTI workers have also refused to vote for Shafqat. They say that they will support PTI but will not vote Shafqat. ... The spokesperson of Tahreek-e-Labaik Peer Aijaz Ashrafi while speaking to Ummat after the report was made public said that it was the Tahreek-e-Labaik who had filed the case against the controversial bill, it cannot ignore the issue. Workers of the party will protest at every place against such elements who are against the Last-Prophethood. ...In answering a question, Ashrafi said that the Tahreek was trying get a copy of the report submitted by the PML N in IHC so that it could see whether the same copy has been submitted or here again some cheating has been done. Ummat contacted the Central Additional Secretary of PTI Arshad Dad in this regard. On asking whether the PTI has asked Shafqat in this regard, Arshad said that 'Shafqat has cleared his stand on this in press conference in which he rejected the allegation. The stand of the PTI on this issue is same'.

Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif, Saleem Safi, Jang, July 11³⁰

As a journalist I have observed it that most the politicians are set on wrong tracks, not by illiterates but educated people. These people mostly are not politicians but technocrats, bureaucrats, intelligent or journalist. ... Like Imran Khan, Nawaz Sharif is surrounded by such people on whose advices he entirely believes in and is dependent on. As soon as he comes to power, jostling starts among such people to get close to Nawaz. And the last time federal advisor Irfan Siddiqui achieved first position and was closest to Nawaz. ... *I have personal information that by allying with Khawaja Asif, Ahsan Iqbal, and sometimes with Pervez Rasheed, Irfan was responsible creating rift between Nawaz and Chaudhry Nisar.* Similarly not only he played role in creating rift with the judiciary but the letter in which Nawaz had accused the judiciary of interfering in the work of executive was prepared by Irfan. Likewise the group that was responsible for deteriorating relations with the army was his. After coming to power the group that was asking Nawaz to file case against Pervez Musharraf was Irfan's. On the one side Shehbaz Sharif, Chaudhry Nisar and even Ahsan Iqbal were trying to stop Nawaz from confronting the army and on the other hand this group kept inciting him. Same group asked Nawaz to take action against the Taliban which an issue with the army. Same group released photograph of a meeting between the army chief and Nawaz Sharif and it only forced the army to take the controversial tweet back. Whatever happened with Nawaz Sharif is

³⁰https://e.jang.com.pk/07-11-2018/lahore/pic.asp?picname=08_004.png

because of success of this group and failure of Nisar and Shehbaz group. Ideologically and in terms of setting the record straight Nawaz Sharif's position might have been right but we are aware about the ground realities in Pakistan.

Terrorism of own, Editorial, Daily Jasarat, July 17³¹

National counter terrorism authority's chairman Dr. Salman Ahmad revealed that political leaders' and candidates' security are at risk. Almost all major political parties' leaders are at risk. He said while briefing to election commission. Should it be counted as success of National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) or something else! *If the NACTA was aware about the fact that six leaders will be targeted then what is the meaning of briefing. There should be proper investigation by a Joint Investigation Team (JIT). How can the NACTA came to know that politicians are about to be targeted with their names? It means NACTA has some source which is aware of conspiracies of terrorism.* NACTA was supposed to combat terrorism but it is commenting on issue. This was job of electronic media. Suicide bombers are useless for investigation agencies. Right after an attack, if it is termed as suicide attack all possibilities out to find out people behind it are lost. Then investigation starts and since it is declared suicide attack so it heads in that direction. Haji Ghulam Ahmad Bilour is saying that Haroon Bilour was not targeted by Taliban. Rather Mr. Bilour says he was targeted by our own people. Though the banned organization has claimed the responsibility, the issue should be investigated. But Ghulam Ahmad Bilour is insisting the he had investigated it. Caretaker government is beating about the bush that anti-state elements are trying to postpone the election. The question remains same: Why political leaders and people are not provided with security. Though caretaker prime minister has ordered for security of candidates and their workers but will those leaders get security whose security was snatched by the apex court? If any of them is targeted, who should be blamed for?

July 25 elections and reservations, Nafees Siddiqui, Jang, July 23³²

Pakistani nation has too many expectations from the 25 July 2018 national elections. *Some sections in particular are hoping a 'change'. However it is difficult to guess whether the issues that the country is facing will be resolved by the elections. ... There is an unprecedented political polarization in the country.* No single political party seems to gaining simple majority. ... There are only few major political parties in Pakistan. After the 'Fall of Decca', only PPP was a major political party. From nowhere PML N emerged as its main rival. Though there were many religious groups in the country, Zia-ul

³¹<http://www.jasarat.com/2018/07/17/180717-04-6/>

³²https://e.jang.com.pk/07-23-2018/lahore/pic.asp?picname=08_007.png

Haq imposed martial law and once more Muslim League (PML-Z) was formed. These Muslim League parties kept fighting PPP but could not survive for long. Only the PML N has been able to survive and it has become a dynasty party. For last three decades. PPP and PML N have ruled the country for the most. ... *Punjab decides who will rule the country. For some time, the wave was in favour of PTI in Punjab. Then Nawaz Sharif and his daughter decide to return to Pakistan which has changed the situation. Also Bilawal Bhutto's visit to Punjab has had deep influence on the overall election mode in Punjab. No party seems to be winning 100 seats individually, provided that there is not a big rigging.* It will be first time that no single party will emerge as strong contender to form government. *If the government is formed by patching together different groups, it will be weak government.* ... At this moment the political polarization in the country is extreme. All the three major parties are criticising each other strongly. It will be difficult to bring them together to form government in case of hung assembly. ... Polarization has increased because of media debates and speeches of the leaders. Not only that there seems no legislature emerging from these elections but a government formed in this background will have no legitimacy.

Message from Srinagar for Imran, Mohammad Aslam Khan, Nawa-i-Waqt, July 30³³

In the power corridors of New Delhi, there was complete mourning. *The press club in New Delhi had turned into graveyard on the news from Pakistan that Nawaz Sharif was losing and the PML N was being kicked out of power.* On the night of 25 July, all so-called liberals were mourning like women, who have lost their husbands. *On the other hand, in Srinagar people were happy that the head of the Kashmir Committee for over a decade Moulana Fazl-ur Rehman had lost the election. I was getting calls from Srinagar, saying that 'Please, in future make an honest, sensible and sympathetic person to the Kashmir cause the Chairman of Kashmir Committee.'* They were saying that 'MoulanaFazl-ur Rehman has exploited resources and powers of the Kashmir Committee to waste time and helped the government in New Delhi.' There is a message for the new leadership of Pakistan from 'occupied' Kashmir. 89 year old Syed Ali Shah Gilani and Moulvi Omer Farooq have shown the political and religious parties the way that what and how Pakistan should go from here. *Gilani has welcomed Imran Khan's statement that Kashmir issue remains the main bone of contention between and Pakistan and it should be resolved through talks.* ... Moulvi Omer Farooq expressed his wish for better relations between India and Pakistan. Omer said that Kashmiris are keenly following developments regarding the Article 35. ... If it is touched, there will

³³<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2018-07-30/page-14/detail-10>

be strong reaction in Kashmir and the responsibility for that would lie on the Indian shoulders. ... *A Joint Investigation Team (JIT) should be set to look into the damage that MoulviFazl-ur Rehman has done to the freedom movement in Kashmir for past over a decade.* The report should be presented and discussed in the parliament so that its failure in not highlighting the misery of helpless Kashmir is brought to light.

'Occupied' Kashmir's leaders welcome Khan's statement on Kashmir, Editorial, Ausaf, July 30³⁴

The leadership of 'occupied' Kashmir has supported the statement of Imran Khan in which he invited the Indian leadership for dialogue, as a brave and principled position on Kashmir. *The leadership termed it as welcome step and as per desire of Kashmiris. Syed Ali Gilani, the Liberation Front, Anjuman Shari Shi'an, Dukhtaraan-e Millat, Peoples League, Salvation Movement and Meer-e- Karwan-e-Islami called Imran Khan's speech a historical one.* Syed Ali Geelani said that first speech of Imran Khan reflects the policy of Pakistan. He hoped that all political and religious organization will not leave any stone unturned to play their part to build a formidable Pakistan. While freedom leader welcomed the Imran Khan's offer of moving two steps if India moves one step to solve the Kashmir issue, he sought Indian leaders' sincere and serious response to solve the Kashmir issue. So that bad situation of the sub-continent could be corrected. *It is reality that the issue emerged as by product of division of India and was core reason behind several wars. After dozen of failed dialogues Kashmiri people's eyes are filled with aspirations and ambitions, looking towards future prime minister of Pakistan to solve it. Imran Khan's invitation worked as spreading petrol on fire for Indian extremist leaders.* Few channels started making hue and cry. Without solving Kashmir issue it is next to impossible achieve peace in South Asia.

One should take notice of governor of Sindh's statement, Editorial, Daily Jasarat, July 31³⁵

Governor of Sindh Mohammad Zubair has alleged that elections were conducted to ensure victory of one party. Attempt was made to initiate fight between people and army. He was very harsh about army where he said that army was not supposed to participate in counting process. ... *Governor also questioned that did RTS stopped functioning or they were made to stop operating. Interestingly Governor of Sindh is brother of PTI leader Asad Umar.* Army is facing complaint of interfering in politics. He is the second major person after Nawaz Sharif who has alleged army's involvement. In fact election commission should clear the air before army. Is there any interference

³⁴<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2018-07-30/56875/p1001.gif>

³⁵<http://www.jasarat.com/2018/07/31/180731-04-4/>

in failure of RTS, delay in result declaration, forceful absence of polling agents, and counting? The Election commission should also explain if army has stopped them to give Form-45. It should also explain if any institute has forced it to delay the result or send the polling agents out or any related directions. Since these allegations are coming from a governor, they must be taken seriously. *The Governor also advised the election commission to take notice of videos and to open two constituencies as sample. Though the EC has ordered recounting at 27 constituencies but it is maintaining silence about those constituencies which received more objections.* Now the allegations and slogans have crossed the limits and its appropriate time for the army to explain the allegations.

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
Quetta ³⁶	09/07/2018	Five Dead, Four Injured In Various Incidents, 3 Abductees Rescued In Quetta	05	04
Quetta ³⁷	16/07/2018	Two civilians, Levies personnel martyred in Quetta gun attack	00	05
Quetta ³⁸	20/07/2018	Four terrorists killed in Balochistan operation: CTD	04 01	00 0

³⁶<https://www.urdupoint.com/en/pakistan/five-dead-four-injured-in-various-incidents-367855.html>

³⁷<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1736358/1-two-civilians-levies-personnel-martyred-quetta-gun-attack/>

³⁸ <https://www.geo.tv/latest/199879-four-terrorists-dead-in-ctd-operation-in-balochistan>

Quetta ³⁹	26/07/2018	Suicide blast outside polling station in Quetta kills 31	31	30
KP				
Dera Ismail Khan ⁴⁰	24/07/2018	Six militants killed in South Waziristan operation	07	00
Islamabad				
Islamabad ⁴¹	04/07/2018	At least 3 PTM supporters dead, 20 injured in 'Taliban' attack	03	20

³⁹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/273341/suicide-blast-outside-polling-station-in-quetta-kills-31/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1415729/six-militants-killed-in-south-waziristan-operation>

⁴¹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/248702/at-least-3-ptm-supporters-dead-20-injured-in-taliban-attack/>

