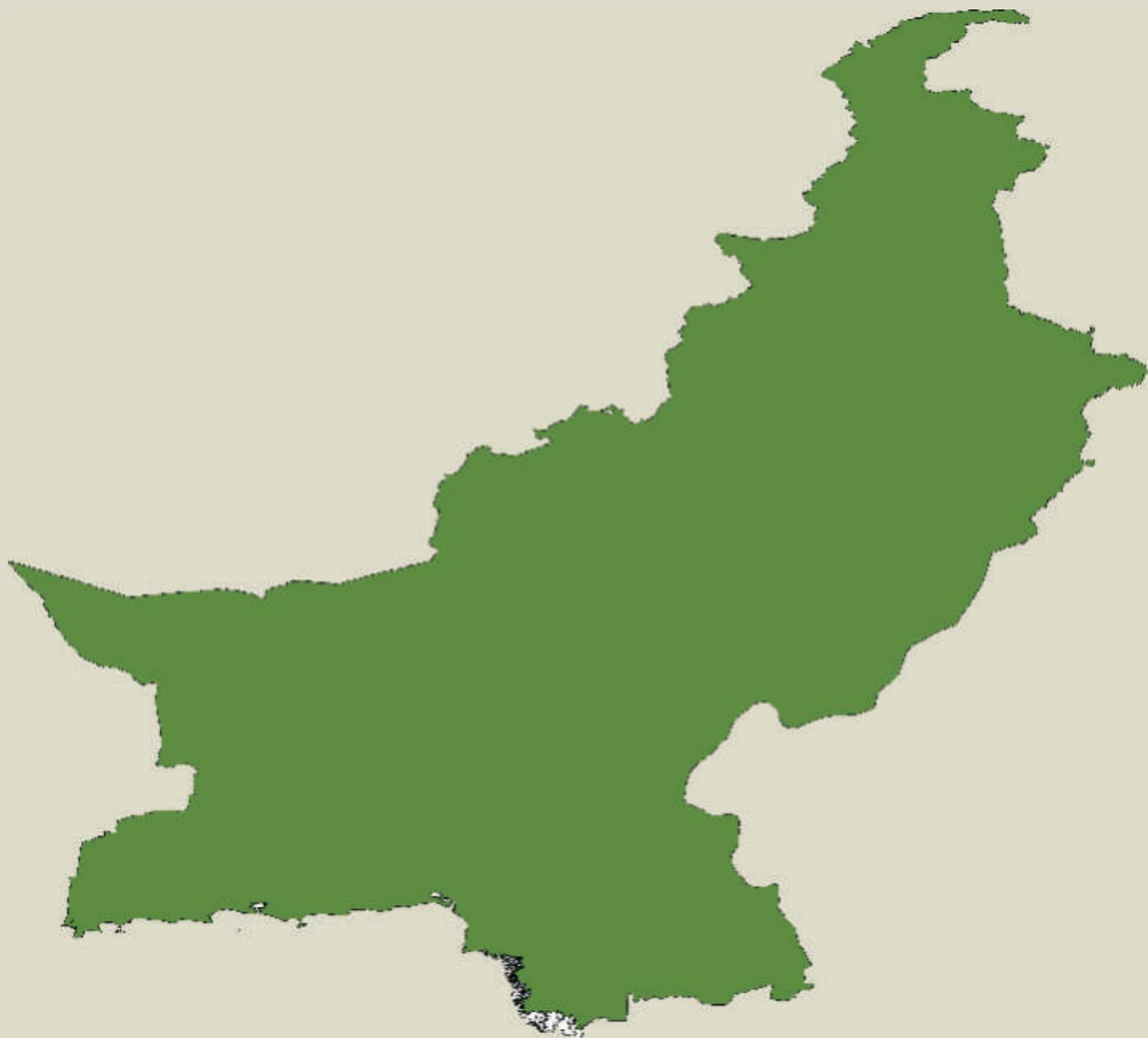


June 2022

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



Prepared by
Dr. Zainab Akhter
Dr. Nazir Ahmad Mir
Mr Afroz Khan
Dr. Ashok Behuria

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POLITICAL DEVELOPEMNTS

Pakistan, politics and PTI, Inam Ul Haque, *The Express Tribune*, 02 June 2022¹

If popular mood and pulse are any guide, Imran Khan's narrative (irrespective of its merits or otherwise) has mobilised Pakistan up to and including the upper middle class, for the first time after the populist politics of ZA Bhutto. However, unlike Bhutto's, Imran's five attributes — neo-Islamism, nationalist outlook, charisma, spine to stand up and be counted, and 'relative' integrity — endear him to many Pakistanis, tired of the tried cabal of politicians. **However, PTI's abysmal record at governance and his own combative obsession with rhetorical battles of no/ insignificant consequences make him a difficult leader. Yet, given his attributes, he needs to be correctly packaged, 'used' and not wasted in the larger national interest.** ... Even if PTI returns with 100% majority in next elections, governance is not PTI's forte and it will be more of the same. When some PTI legislators were asked if they had any shadow government following developments in the various state institutions/organs after losing power, naive expressions were betraying their inexperience. ... Mr Khan also needs to shun campaign style container politics for more pragmatic postures, accommodating and not confronting all other stakeholders like judiciary, military, media and even the opposition. ... And for the civil-military relations, when I confronted some PTI bigwigs as to why Imran Khan locked horns with the Military Establishment (Miltablishment) over the change of command at the ISI, their agitated retort was that it was the handiwork of PTI's kitchen cabinet, the filibustering school kids. **No Army chief would allow any politician and/or civilian official in whatever capacity to interfere in the routine working of the Army, like postings and transfers.** ...

Why is Imran Khan dangerous for Pakistan's democracy? Benazir Jatoi, *The Express Tribune*, 03 June 2022²

Imran Khan lost the parliamentary Vote of No Confidence (VNC) on 10th April, after almost four years as prime minister. The constitutional right of the opposition to bring this vote is not new to our political system, having been introduced against most sitting prime ministers in the past. Yet this is the only time it has been successful by 174 votes out of 342. Now Khan attempts to show street power. He has drawn crowds and interestingly, many overseas Pakistanis have come out against his ousting, accepting him as an honest politician on a crusade to make Pakistan independent from foreign interference and corrupt politicians of the past. **Despite his crowd pulling ability, Imran Khan and his PTI are not safe for Pakistan's democracy; and both those in Pakistan and overseas Pakistanis, protesting from the comforts of liberal democracies, should**

¹ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2359628/pakistan-politics-and-pti>

² <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2359712/why-is-imran-khan-dangerous-for-pakistans-democracy>

know why: Khan has undermined Pakistan's institutions and processes that oversee and uphold the country's fragile democracy. His worst onslaught has been on parliament. During his almost four years in power, Khan has shown a disdain for engaging with parliament and the parliamentary processes. ... Khan refuses to accept the important constitutional role of being in political opposition. He is a natural agitator and effective at questioning those in power. The problem is he refuses to do this as leader of the opposition. Instead, he prefers headline seeking, emotion evoking, rancorous street protests. ... The constitution, the rule of law and democratic norms and systems are fundamental for Pakistan's survival. Both Khan's rhetoric and action show there is not much difference between him and previous military dictators. Khan alludes, in letter and spirit, to the likes of Ayub and Zia, both dictators who violated the constitution and undermined the rule of law. Modi is now who Khan praises in public, showing how he views authoritarianism as ideal. PTI seeking elections through the Azadi march is just a red herring. The reality is that power, not democracy, is the thing important to Imran Khan. This may be beneficial for PTI and its supporters, it is very detrimental to Pakistan and its future.

Radical calls, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, 08 June 2022³

Recourse to extremist tendencies is quite unfortunate. The current discourse by PTI supporters to self-immolate or opt for suicide attacks, if any harm comes to ex-PM Imran Khan, is highly regretted. That was not expected, at least, from egalitarian political party fans and especially as Khan himself had been a torch-bearer against radicalism and militancy. This indicates a sense of disgust prevalent in the party, and the lack of confidence in the affairs of the state since they have taken on the role of the opposition in national politics. ... **What really hurts is that senior party leaders, and those who had held high offices, are playing to the gallery. Likewise, social media is abuzz with stuff that goes on to threaten with suicide attacks, if any harm comes to their leader.** ... Khan himself had hinted at an alleged conspiracy to eliminate him, and the fear found ripples by security agencies too. ... Khan is in need of a proper security shield, and the moment the government addresses this concern in a holistic manner, such misconceptions on his person's well-being can be conveniently put to rest. This is an opportunity for the political breed to train their supporters, and make sure that taking law in hand will have its punitive consequences. Pakistan has had enough of nuisance in the form of extremism.

GB issues, Editorial, *The News*, 10 June 2022⁴

Gilgit-Baltistan has been on the fringe of Pakistan's mainstream politics but its role as a gateway to China and as the mainstay of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is immense. **The HRCP has in its recent report of a fact-finding mission to the**

³<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2360487/radical-calls>

⁴ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/964764-gb-issues>

region highlighted some issues that need consideration. A particular concern is about the deteriorating human rights situation there. The mission met with lawyers and political workers who particularly expressed their disappointment at being left out as successive governments have failed to integrate the region with the rest of the country. The HRCP consulted a wide spectrum of people most of whom have been demanding at least a provisional provincial status or a system of government similar to that of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir. ... Another major concern is about the issue of State Subject Rule which the local people think is paving the way for exploitation of natural resources by external private corporations and individuals not resident in GB. There is a need for a more inclusive approach to development in the region. There is also a surge in suicide cases in various parts of the region, most of all in Ghizer where an increasing number of women are putting an end to their lives. The HRCP believes that some cases of honour killing have been labeled suicides so that the police can close their investigations. For a functioning federation it is imperative that all its federating units receive their due consideration. An appropriate allocation of resources and a sense of inclusion is what is needed.

Turnaround Pakistan, Ahsan Iqbal, *The News*, 28 June 2022⁵

As we get ready to celebrate Pakistan's 75th independence anniversary, I am reminded of my passion and euphoria at the 50th independence anniversary in 1997 when I initiated Vision 2010 with the aim of seeing Pakistan as a middle-income country by 2010. In 1999, the imposition of martial law dashed the dream. In 2013, back in power I worked on Vision 2025 to put Pakistan in the top 25 economies of the world by 2025. In 2017, the PWC report confirmed our journey by projecting Pakistan as being in the top 20 economies by 2030. But, the winds of Naya Pakistan crash-landed that journey. **Today we stand at another milestone of history with my generation losing the gains of the past 25 years. To me the central issue is how our children and their generation stand before history 25 years later in 2047 when Pakistan will celebrate its centenary. Will our next 25 years be like our past 25 years or will we make a break from history? When we came into government after a no-confidence motion, there were two choices before us. One, take a 'populist' position by running a high budget deficit by expanding the hole in the economy through further subsidizing petroleum products or use the historic inflation figures generated under the PTI government for political gains by going for fresh polls by plunging the country into a period of political uncertainty with devastating impact on the economy.** ... That is why against all the odds, the PML-N led coalition government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has opted for the second choice: take all the necessary measures to Turnaround Pakistan. ... Through the Turnaround Pakistan Conference, we not only want to generate concrete, actionable and innovative ideas to overcome key challenges, but also create a community of the 'Champions of reforms'. This community will not only serve as the nerve centre to advise the government on key policies, but also make it accountable for implementing the agreed steps. We truly believe that together, we

⁵ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/969681-turnaround-pakistan>

shall rise again, as we have done several times in the past. I encourage and invite you to be part of these efforts and join hands with the government to turnaround Pakistan.

Cracks In The Coalition, Editorial, *The Nation*, 29 June 2022⁶

It is easier to unite under a coalition when a common enemy and a common goal of power can be seen over the horizon. However, when that common enemy or goal fades away, and material financial and influential decisions are required to be made, these unwilling alliances can be all too brittle. **Such is the case with the government coalition. A different set of parties, with wildly different ideologies, have spent barely a few months in government when the cracks in their coalition have started to appear.** ... The majority party, the PML-N, will have to proceed with caution and display leadership in keeping the coalition together. PPP will also have to be responsible, as it has often been referred to as the 'guarantor' in this alliance. The series of speeches that took place in the National Assembly session on Monday, where one after the other, nearly all coalition partners made angry outbursts over the "change of attitude" of the PML-N accusing it of backtracking from the commitments it made ahead of the no-confidence vote against former prime minister Imran Khan, should be a cause of concern for the coalition leadership. **The strength of the coalition will play a part in their performance in the July 17 by-elections. Already the PML-N faces several disadvantages, including the presence of TLP in several constituencies, thus depriving it of a particular variety of religious votes, and the allotting of tickets to PTI dissidents, a political gamble which may offend loyalist voters.** The government is far from secure at this point.

Imran's narratives, Zameer Ahmed Malik, *The News*, 30 June 2022⁷

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan may have a charismatic personality but charisma is of no use without farsightedness. He considers taking U-turns to be a high standard of leadership. After leaving the PM Office, the former PM has been seen toeing a narrative which can be divided into five parts. **The first is that the institutions of the state sided with the opposition; the second is that there was an American conspiracy against him; the third is that all his opponents are traitors and corrupt; the fourth is that he helped passed a UN resolution against Islamophobia in UN; and the fifth is that he wanted an independent foreign policy.** ... Not all of Imran Khan's narratives are true and the nation is not ready to accept them but one of his narrative which has been well received by the people is the narrative of hatred, because Imran Khan had once said that he know how to play with the minds of the people and he has succeeded in doing this. He knows that people in Pakistan hate America and this is the narrative by which he is keeping his political life alive but religious parties have been doing it since Pakistan's inception and historically this narrative has never won them votes.

⁶ <https://nation.com.pk/2022/06/29/cracks-in-the-coalition/>

⁷ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/970225-imran-s-narratives>

Tax the rich, Editorial, *The Nation*, 08 June 2022⁸

It is being reported that the coalition government is considering some hard and politically challenging decisions given how the ongoing economic crisis is taking a disproportionate toll on the lower- and middle-income classes. Reports suggest that the government is mulling introducing a string of new tax measures in the upcoming budget to raise around Rs300 billion in additional revenue in 2022-23 (FY23) and is tasking the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to finalise areas and sectors in the next couple of days. These new tax measures include a proposal for a luxury income tax which will emulate what is otherwise known as a wealth tax, and if approved, real estate, including big houses in affluent areas will be taxed. ... **If such measures are actually instituted, this will be an example of equitable policy making which is the need of the hour. Every time the economy experiences any kind of growth, it is the upper classes that derive all of the resulting dividends while the purchasing power of the lower- and middle-income classes improves marginally, if at all.** ... Of course, if the government does decide to go ahead with these measures, it will face significant opposition from elite quarters around the country. However, this is what is required in the interest of the country at this point in time, and the model of progressive taxation has proven to be a success in many parts of the world.

Charter of the economy, Editorial, *Dawn*, 09 June 2022⁹

With the economy in turmoil and no easy fixes on hand, it would be ideal if lawmakers from across the political divide were to pledge to work together to improve it. Given the reality, however, the prime minister's desire for a 'charter of the economy' is likely to remain a pipe dream. ... **For Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's wish for a 'charter of the economy' to become reality, it is also necessary that he first acknowledge his own party's role in precipitating public distrust in economic decision-making at the government level.** ... Given Pakistan's electoral history, aspiring prime ministers must at some point accept that their party's economic plans are likely to be cut short before its mandated five years are up. While the transiency of power may be acceptable as a feature of Pakistani democracy, the economy need not be subject to it. There first needs to be an agreement that cynical politicking over the economy should not be a means to gain public support, as it makes future decision-making all the more difficult. Before parties arrive at that understanding, however, it seems more reasonable to expect the sun to rise from the west than to see them actually working together for the greater good.

⁸ <https://nation.com.pk/2022/06/08/tax-the-rich/>

⁹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1693909/charter-of-the-economy>

Inequalities within Pakistan, Syed Mohammad Ali, *The Express Tribune*, 10 June 2022¹⁰

The sitting government is caught in a catch 22 of implementing stringent austerity measures to secure further international loans and the imperative for providing relief to the ordinary citizens, at a time when another bout of elections may be just around the corner. Whether the coalition government manages to hang onto power for another year or we soon see another group of politicians managing to negotiate a formulation which enables them to assume power, it is about time that our policymakers pay greater attention to contending with the lingering disparities plaguing Pakistan. **There is an evident spatial dimension to inequality within the country whereby administrative demarcations, such as districts and provinces, produce evident differences not only in terms of incomes of their inhabitants, but also in terms of their human development prospects. ... Pakistan has continued to experience uneven development for long, whereby some provinces, and certain districts within them, have made significant progress while others are evidently lagging.** ... Yet, it is not enough to focus on provincial differences to understand the prevalent inequality dynamics in the country. Focusing on differences between distinct income groups also provides valuable insight. Balochistan and Sindh are said to have the largest number of poor people compared to their relative share of the national population, whereas Punjab has the largest proportion of rich people, even after adjusting for its larger share of the national population. ... Understanding the varied ways in which inequality is manifested across Pakistan remains vital for creating well-informed and context-specific poverty alleviation strategies, rather than relying on one-size-fits-all prescriptions that have clearly been unable to make Pakistan more equitable till date.

Tough IMF conditions, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, 17 June 2022¹¹

The IMF loan conditions continue to take their toll on Pakistan, with recent reports suggesting income tax rates for upper-middle-income earners and above, as well as continuing increases in energy prices. FBR Chairman Asim Ahmad has in a recent statement admitted that while the government is trying to protect people with salaries below Rs200,000 per month from any further tax increases, the IMF is already objecting to the tax cuts for middle and low income earners contained in the Federal Budget 2022-23. ... **The small base of high earners cannot feasibly be taxed enough to meet the IMF target of collecting an additional Rs120 billion from salaried persons, especially when we consider that last year, taxes on salaried people only generated Rs150 billion, and the increased exemption figure means that more than 60 per cent of taxpayers from last year will pay no taxes in the coming year. At present, the government seems to be mulling raising tax rates beyond those announced on people who make more than Rs300,000 per month. The IMF is also worried that the federal government's claimed surplus budget —**

¹⁰ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2360800/inequalities-within-pakistan>

¹¹ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2361871/tough-imf-conditions>

another of the Fund's demands — is untenable because it doesn't match up with the provincial budgets presented so far. ... There is a desperate need for quick planning of economic relief packages that do not fall foul of the IMF. Unfortunately, while the government is proving to be capable of making tough decisions, decisiveness is another matter.

Pakistan and crisis management, Dr Abdus Sattar Abbasi, *The Nation*, 24 June 2022¹²

I was amazed listening to the Minister of State (MoS) for Foreign Affairs that Pakistan is now ahead of some developed countries in compliance of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) regulations and fulfilled requirements on thirty-four indicators of FATF while the process of whitelisting has started with the recent announcement of the global body. **It is not the first time that Pakistan emerged out of a crisis as a strong nation. I am sure, most of us cannot forget March 03, 2009, a terrible day for Pakistan cricket, when terrorists attacked Sri Lankan cricket team and suddenly international cricket vanished from Pakistan. ... Then what happened, Pakistan became the Champions Trophy winners, Babar Azam, the number one batter of ODIs and T20Is, and several others among top five rankings. The devastation of the 2005 earthquake is in our memories with the exemplary response of the entire nation to extend every support to the victims. ... Pakistan has surprised the world with her abilities to counter terrorism. We suffered the most, we sacrificed the most, we lost the most but we arose as the most successful nation in combating the terrorism. ...** Four factors including people & leadership, financial position, stakeholder support, and supply chain risk management can provide sustainable recovery and effective review of the crisis to avoid incessant shocks. ... We remained fortunate to have a close liaison with key stakeholders both globally and in the region, however, we certainly failed at some key occasions. Our supply chain of essential goods and services is no more stable as evident by recurrent shortages, therefore needs serious attention and long-term planning for a stable future, it is certainly not possible without a strong financial position which is currently on default lines thus needs instant and reliable measures to avoid a greater crisis.

¹² <https://nation.com.pk/2022/06/24/pakistan-and-crisis-management/>

SECURITY SITUATION

Old TTP in new bottle, Mosharraf Zaidi, *The News*, 01 June 2022¹³

Last week, many of us received a screenshot via WhatsApp forward with a sense of shock, awe and disgust. It was titled "Peace talks between TTP (Pakistani Taliban) and The Pakistani Govt" (sic). It contained eight points of negotiation between the two 'parties' – the mass murdering terrorists of the TTP and something purportedly resembling the government of Pakistan. Of the eight points, the screenshot claims that four points have been agreed and four are still in contention. ... **The TTP enjoyed enormous influence in the Pakistani discourse from before it was formally founded, starting from the siege of Lal Masjid in July 2007 till December 16, 2014 – the day the TTP slaughtered 150 children and teachers at the Army Public School in Peshawar. In this period, it ruthlessly coerced, bullied, intimidated, killed, murdered and destroyed all that stood in its path using the innocence and naivete of its victims: the Pakistani people. It also became more than the sum of its parts, beginning as an umbrella for like-minded terrorist entities and growing into a rainbow coalition of sometimes ideologically very different terror groups. What united the TTP? The destruction of the Pakistani state, and the enslavement of the Pakistani people.** ... Usually, once a terrorist group has been beaten and dismantled so comprehensively, it is never heard from again – at least not on the battlefield. So the fact that TTP terrorist 'leaders' are allegedly in a negotiation with Pakistan is, in and of itself, something worth exploring more. How did it regain consciousness? ... If Pakistan isn't careful, groups like the TTP will take control of the green, amber and red lights in our public discourse. We will all pretend it was corrupt and incompetent politicians that brought us to our knees. We all know better.

Truce with TTP, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, 02 June 2022¹⁴

The ceasefire with TTP is holding. The good point is that the banned outfit and the military authorities have made some headway, and agreed to extend the truce for an indefinite period. **This trust could go a long way in furthering peace and prosperity in one of the most volatile bordering regions of the world, and pave the way for exterminating terrorism. Nonetheless, there are some contentious issues that are being ironed out, and Kabul's patronage has blessed it with due acknowledgment.** ... The talks provide a moment of realisation, and the prime target is to chalk out a roadmap for serenity. ... Some of the demands from TTP are untenable, to say the least, such as release of convicted criminals and calling off mop operations inside Pakistan. Whereas, other points related to CBMs and ensuring harmony can be worked out. This necessitates some critical balancing, and a firm denominator to bring under the peace umbrella all nonstate actors. The

¹³ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/962360-old-ttp-in-new-bottle>

¹⁴ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2359632/truce-with-ttp>

region desperately needs a break from jingoism. The fault-lines are many and need to be watched out.

Afghan Taliban's double game?, Kamran Yousuf, *The Express Tribune*, 06 June 2022¹⁵

Pakistan has finally broken the silence on the ongoing talks with the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The government has welcomed the ceasefire while revealing that the Pakistani side, comprising officials both from the civil and military officials, is talking to the TTP. Federal Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has said the negotiating team has the mandate to discuss all issues and any decisions to be reached through talks will be approved by the government and the Parliament. ... According to sources, Pakistan was ideally seeking TTP's complete elimination after the Afghan Taliban returned to power in August last year. **But the Afghan Taliban, because of their close relationship with the TTP, have refused to take the TTP head-on. Instead they are pushing for a peace deal. If the deal is struck between Pakistan and the TTP, it would be a win-win situation for the Afghan Taliban. In that case, the Afghan Taliban would neither face pressure from Pakistan nor would there be fears of the TTP joining forces with Daesh, which is the sworn enemy of the Afghan Taliban.** ... It is believed that the TTP is under immense pressure from the Afghan Taliban to show some flexibility while at the same it is pushing Pakistan to sort out issues through political means instead of use of force. In other words, the Afghan Taliban have been employing the same strategy that Pakistan has adopted for over the years with Americans. ... There were reports suggesting that the TTP enjoys support from the Afghan Taliban and is operating out of Afghanistan with impunity. That was the reason that despite progress in talks, there are concerns that prospects of a long-term peace deal are grim.

Pakistan, Afghanistan and Pakistani Taliban, Inam Ul Haque, *The Express Tribune*, 09 June 2022¹⁶

The Pakistani military authorities under the Peshawar Corps and Foreign Office have been in talks in Kabul with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) through a 57-member representative Jirga of Wazir, Mehsud and other tribes since first the week of June 2022. As a confidence-building measure, both sides have agreed to extend indefinitely the already announced ceasefire. **This round of talks is also facilitated and mediated by Sirajuddin Haqqani, the chief of Haqqani network and acting Interior Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), besides IEA's intelligence, interior ministry and tribal affairs officials.** ... Pakistan's growing impatience with the TTP was demonstrated by its cross-border aerial strikes on 16 April this year. Settling the TTP issue, IEA feels, is basic for its recognition or otherwise by Pakistan/others. Mindful of this important leverage, a

¹⁵ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2360192/afghan-talibans-double-game>

¹⁶ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2360634/pakistan-afghanistan-and-pakistani-taliban>

pragmatic IEA would want to address this legacy problem. IEA would also want to extend its writ throughout Afghanistan including TTP stronghold in the east; hence IEA's efforts to make the talks successful "at any costs". ... Reportedly, various sub-committees are formed to assess damages besides monitoring progress of the talks. A three-member representative committee would smooth over nagging differences. A joint arbitration committee (Pakistani security forces, TTP and IEA) would record progress of ground implementation under instructions from a guidance committee, etc. Both sides, reportedly, agreed to a three-month implementation process. ...

TTP Talks Prospects, Editorial, *The Nation*, 20 Juen 2022¹⁷

On Saturday, reports emerged that the Afghan Taliban has expressed optimism that the talks between the TTP and Pakistan government could succeed, in addition to the fact that an indefinite ceasefire has been agreed upon. **At face value, such developments are encouraging, however there are still a lot of vague details regarding the contours of a potential agreement. Certain demands have been tabled by the TTP that cannot be accepted keeping in mind the national interests of the country and its citizens. The TTP has demanded: a reversal of the merger of semi-autonomous tribal areas into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) province; withdrawal of all military presence from the tribal region; enforcement of Sharia Law in the Malakand region of K-P; release of over 100 commanders and fighters; presidential pardon for two key militant commanders; and complete freedom of movement for the TTP members in the Malakand region. These demands are unviable as they would be tantamount to ceding constitutional sovereignty in these regions to a group that is existentially and ideologically opposed to the country. ... A deal in Pakistan's interest will ensure that there is a complete disbandment and demilitarisation of the TTP. It is imperative that the government takes into account the considerations of marginalized groups, and those that have most been affected by the TTP's violence.**

Talks With TTP, Editorial, *The Nation*, 24 June 2022¹⁸

No matter what political controversies, votes of no-confidence and institutional disagreements may go on in the state set-up, on the issue of national security and the agenda of scourging the country of terrorism, all institutions, the parliament and the opposition need to be on the same page. **This is why the recent meeting between military leadership and political leaders at the Prime Minister's House was reassuring due to the military's promise to the political leadership that no extra-constitutional concessions would be given to the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in the ongoing dialogue and any deal made with the terrorist group would be subject to parliamentary approval.** This was imperative in a number of ways. The TTP "problem" has been a serious cause of suffering and

¹⁷ <https://nation.com.pk/2022/06/20/ttp-talks-prospects/>

¹⁸ <https://nation.com.pk/2022/06/24/talks-with-ttp-3/>

detriment to the country and most of our political efforts to curtail the issue have not been effective. The ongoing ceasefire is a welcome step but also gives way to a highly precarious situation. ... **Any effort at tackling this debilitating problem that has plagued the country for years must be a collaborative effort, with all parliamentarians and the security apparatus presenting a united front, and keeping each other in the loop.** Unfortunately, the National Counter Terrorism Authority (Nacta), and other similar efforts have broken down due to a lack of cooperation and efficiency with severe consequences for the country. The TTP is highly volatile and susceptible to attacking at the slightest imagined provocation—the leadership across institutions and political parties must work together to work out a roadmap that makes us secure and to ensure this effort, like previous initiatives, does not fall through.

Defence budget in a tough economic scenario, Talat Masood, *The Express Tribune*, 29 June 2022¹⁹

The defence budget has traditionally been a major component of Pakistan's national budget and for FY2022-23 it was no exception. **It constituted 2.1% of the country's gross domestic product and is an 11% increase over the original 1.37 trillion-rupee budget of last year. The increase was meant to offset the inflation which is 12%, a 10-year high. For armed forces the government made an exception as generally it overlooked inflation while allocating funds to other government agencies. From the data published in the press, the defence budget represents about 16% of the total government outlay for the year.** ... Considering the state of the national economy and removal of subsidies on energy and fuel for meeting IMF conditionalities, defence spending will remain very tight whereas the security situation is fairly disturbing. Whereas Afghanistan's Taliban government is better disposed toward Pakistan but the hostile activities of TTP, BLA, IS-K mostly operating from Afghanistan are a cause for serious security concern. ... The security of Chinese citizens and that of CPEC is also the responsibility of Pakistan Army. Its expenditure is not debited to the defence budget, but forms part of the national outlay. ... **The objective of projecting the potential of Pakistan is to highlight what could be achieved and contrast it with where we stand. It is indeed a sad commentary on our present and past leadership that they have failed to place Pakistan on a path of prosperity and to benefit from the enormous advantage of geography and the resilience of its people. But Pakistan's economy is unlikely to get better if its extremely self-destructive politics continues.** And unfortunately, there is no effort or signs that it is going to improve.

¹⁹<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2363751/defence-budget-in-a-tough-economic-scenario>

Talks with TTP, Ayaz Amir, Daily Dunya, 01 June 2022²⁰

Reports are that the government of Pakistan and TTP have agreed on an indefinite ceasefire. It is good news. *At the same time there are doubts: Give the past record talks with people who call themselves jihadis do not succeed (Maazika record dekhein tu jo apane aap ko jihadi samjhte hain u'nse muzakiraat kabhi kamyaab nahin huye). Momentarily agreement talks place but not a lasting solution is found.* On the demand of TTP two of its commanders have been released. One of them is Muslim Khan who was scared across the country. ...

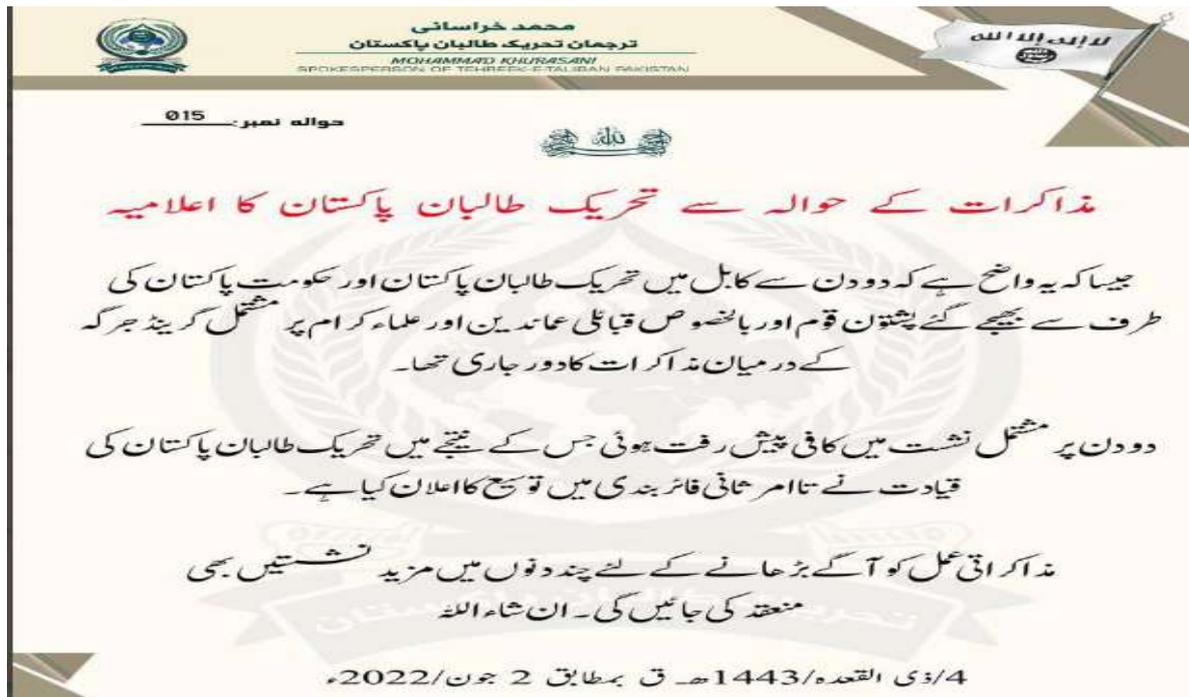
The discourse in Pakistan that the country's security was endangered by the US drones attacks tend to overlook that fact that all TTP leaders that had declared war on the state of Pakistan were killed in these drone attacks (Saareke saare amir Pakistani Taliban jinhood ne riasat-e-Pakistan ke khilaf elan-ejung kiya huwa tha drone hamloon ka nishana baney). They could not have been touched by Pakistan. Either Pakistan should say that America created the Taliban then we can say that America made Islamabad pay for its policies. But America did not create extremism and terrorism. It is the situation after America left that could neither be controlled by Pakistan nor by the Afghan Taliban. After the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, how has Pakistan benefited? In fact it has given a free hand to TTP. The situation has reached to a point where TTP is talking to the state of Pakistan as an independent entity.

Given the demands of TTP it seems unlikely that any solution can be reached. TTP demands that the Pakistan Army should be removed from the border areas and the decision of merging FATA with Pakistan should be revoked. Also it is being said that TTP is demanding financial compensation for its killed members. The thinking that TTP will drop weapons and will join the Pakistan society is wishful. ...

TTP is not playing a one-day match. It has a long plan with the example of Afghanistan in mind where it sees that America could be kicked out after two decades of struggle. TTP's intentions are not hidden as its leader Noor Wali Mehsud has clearly said that in the former FATA areas TTP should be in power. It seems that the direction of Pakistan's thinking is wrong. Main threat is from the Western Border while the country's focus is the Eastern border. Whoever is in power in India should be none of our concern. If the tension on the Eastern border reduces its good for the country.

²⁰https://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2022601&edition=LHR&id=6103258_47521809

TTP announces indefinite ceasefire, TTP, 02 June 2022



TTP's statement in regard to ongoing talks: *As it is known that for the last two days talks were going on between Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the delegation of Pashtuns, especially the Grand Jirga consisting representatives from Tribal groups and religious scholars that was sent by the Government of Pakistan to Kabul. The two days' talks progressed a lot and finally TTP leadership decided to declare an indefinite ceasefire. To carry forward the dialogue process, more sessions of dialogue will be held in a few days, God Willing!*

4 Zu al-Qa'dah /1443 hijri as on 2 June 2022

Not the people, now rich should sacrifice, Editorial, Jang, 05 June 2022²¹

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that the prices of energy were raised out of compulsion. Over 80 million poor people would be given financial compensation to deal with high inflation. The rich would have to sacrifice as well now and this will start with me, the premier added. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a cut in the quota of petrol to his cabinet and MNAs. In Sindh and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) also the governments have cut the 40 and 35 percent of the petrol given to members of the assemblies respectively. Indeed, by saving the elite from the consequences of a bad economy and putting the common people in trouble is unfair. *The situation demands maximum measures to cut the concessions given to the elite and shield the poor as much as possible. In reality in difficult times the elite have always demanded sacrifices from the poor and the elite have never been touched by*

²¹ <https://e.jang.com.pk/detail/145546>

such difficulties. No matter how much inflation and unemployment hurt the common people, landlords and merchants, for high civil and military officials and other powerful people and owners of hundreds of acres of land, sugar and flour mills and housing societies they have often turned out to be opportunities to make money. During the four-year long rule of the previously PTI led government various factors that were responsible to hit its performance like the Corona pandemic, the Ukraine crisis, high international inflation, and international political crisis apart the government lacking a clear economic policy has brought the country on the brink of collapse. After assuming power, the situation demanded that the current government should have rolled out its economic polity from day one. No delay should have been made in announcing the cabinet. All the concessions given to the minister and members of the assemblies should have entirely ended. That did not happen. Now it's the time for that instead of common people the elite should bear the brunt and sacrifice more. It is hoped that the government will leave no stone unturned to make this work.

Demand to take parliament in confidence over the issues of TTP and Afghanistan, Editorial, *Roznama Ausaf*, 13 June 2022²²

The top leadership of Pakistan's People Party agreed that the issue of Afghanistan should be dealt with by the parliament. For future course of action the party has formed a three member committee to discuss the issue with the coalition partners. The people's Party chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that during the party meeting the issue of terrorism especially in the context of the TTP and recent development in Afghanistan was discussed. In this meeting, Yusuf Raza Gilani, Raja Parwez Ashraf, Faryal Tarpur, Chief Minister of Sindh Murad Ali Shah and many other leaders participated. *Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan are complex from day one, except for the brief period when the Taliban controlled Afghanistan. After the American invasion, a well-organised network of anti-Pakistan forces was created. After the arrival of the Taliban government Baloch terrorist groups have been flushed out of Afghanistan. But the issue of TTP which has support among the tribal communities of Afghanistan has not been solved. The Taliban government has facilitated the negotiations between TTP leadership and Pakistani leadership.* There is information about the success of these dialogues.

Appoint a new chairman or end NAB, Saleem Safi, *Jang*, 15 June 2022²³

It has been proven time and again that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in reality is the National Avenge Bureau. Every bad act was conducted by using NAB. One thing that it did not do, was accountability. From many judgments given by the highest courts in the country it can be easily said that NAB is not an accountability institution but an institution meant for political engineering. Most of the previous chairmen of NAB need to be held accountable first, Javed Iqbal in particular. ... *Though NAB has never done its work, during the rule of Imran Khan and the people*

²²https://www.dailyausaf.com/epaper/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2022-06-13/163040/p8_01.gif

²³ <https://e.jang.com.pk/detail/155389>

who brought him to power used the institution so badly it played a pivotal role in destroying the country's economy and humiliating the politics. In the last four years a lot of wealth was taken away from the country because of NAB. Basically, formed during Gen. Pervez Musharraf's rule, the basic law of NAB is against justice. Generally, it is believed that if an allegation is leveled against someone the accuser has to prove it; in case of NAB it is the opposite: The accused has to prove him or herself innocent. It is totally a cruel law because of which NAB and its chairmen have become biggest mafias. ... When some people like this writer say that NAB should end, some people infer that these people do not want an institution for stopping corruption in the country. We say that finally every corruption case goes to the courts in any case. Additionally, if NAB could have stopped corruption in the country it should have shown some impact which it did not. In fact many international institutions said that corruption had increased during the rule of Imran Khan. Almost 99 percent of cases rejected by NAB were rejected by the Supreme Court. Instead of focusing on NAB, institutions like FIA and FBR should be strengthened. Focus should be given to prosecution matters. The issue of delaying cases should be addressed. In regard to NAB there will always be controversy for this reason or that. Therefore it is better to get rid of this problem.

American President to strengthen ties with Islamabad, Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 17 June 2022²⁴

Pakistan's ambassador to America Sardar Masood Khan has had a meeting with the US President Joe Biden. *According to a statement issued by the Pakistani embassy the President said that America wanted strong ties with Pakistan. Pakistan has always sacrificed for America's interests and fulfilled its every just and unjust demand without any conditions.* The bitterness and mistrust found in the Pakistan-US relations today is because of Washington's attitude towards Pakistan that never lets it be satisfied with Pakistan, no matter what the latter does. Despite being part of the US' war on terror because of which Pakistan paid a heavy price in terms of material and human costs, America has never been happy with Pakistan. It kept repeating its demand: 'Do more'. The other day (finally after a long hiatus) American President Joe Biden during his meeting with the Ambassador of Pakistan to the US said that Washington wanted to have strong trade, investment, cooperation in security and other relations with Pakistan. It's a welcome development. Pakistan is going through a severe crisis at the moment. America should cooperate with Pakistan so that the latter comes out of the crisis.

Reservation and concerns about the talks with TTP, Rasheed Ahmad Khan, *Daily Dunya*, 17 June 2022²⁵

In a meeting chaired by PPP's chairman Bilawal Bhutto it was said that the issue of holding talks with TTP should be brought in the parliament. All stakeholders should

²⁴ <https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/17-Jun2022/1566881>

²⁵ https://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2022-06-17&edition=LHR&id=6127465_77504656

be taken into account while designing any policy or setting any goals in this regard. *This was not the first time that PPP has expressed its reservation on talks with TTP. Nor is the PPP the only one that has raised such reservations on the issue. Other sections like media, political commentators and civil society in Pakistan have also raised some questions on holding talks with TTP. One reason for that is the experience of holding talks with TTP and the subsequent agreements which unfortunately did not turn out to be good. Every time TTP emerged stronger and attacked Pakistani security forces and innocent Pakistanis. ... In the ongoing talks, despite the participation of civil and military leadership and also a 50-member Jirga, TTP did not show any flexibility on its position. It has stuck to its demands: Ending merger of FATA with KP and imposition of its own legal, political and social laws in FATA. Second reason for expressing reservations on the ongoing talks with TTP is that till now it's not known that despite being a banned terrorist organization on what terms and conditions is the state talking to TTP. To start with TTP has refused to drop weapons and accept the constitution of Pakistan. ... If the statements of the senior leaders of the Afghan Taliban are assessed properly on the TTP issue, it would emerge that the Taliban want Pakistan to give relaxation to TTP so that an environment of trust is created. The decision to release TTP leaders is part of this thinking. Also TTP has declared an indefinite ceasefire. The Government of Pakistan, acknowledging that it is part of the talks, is seeing these as positive developments. Does that mean that TTP will accept the constitution of the country is still a difficult question to get an answer? Second, as former Prime Minister Imran Khan had said, some groups of TTP are participating in the talks. That means some groups are not part of the dialogue process. And if these groups continue their attacks, then the ceasefire can and any time. These are the reasons that PPP has said that any development with regard to the talks needs to be brought in the parliament so that the entire nation is taken into confidence.*

New wave of terrorism!, Editorial, *Ummat*, 21 June 2022²⁶

The issue of terrorism in the tribal areas, especially in North and South Waziristan is almost over two decades old. During this many military operations were launched to eliminate the menace. They yielded some results as well. During the 'Operation Zarb-e-Azb' many terrorists were either killed or they fled to Afghanistan. ... Because of the policies of the president of Ashraf Ghani, terrorists had established safe havens in these areas and could easily move. *Last year after the fall of Kabul to the Taliban, since the latter was considered friendly with Pakistan, it was assumed that terror activities in the tribal areas would come down. However, this did not happen. Now the Afghan Taliban is facilitating talks between the government of Pakistan and the banned TTP. A ceasefire has been announced. Despite that terror acts are going on. On Sunday 4 youth associated with a group working for human rights were killed. These were patriot youth and their families believe that TTP is involved in their killing. On the one hand TTP has announced a ceasefire and on the other the killing of innocent people continues. This is a matter of concern. It has*

²⁶ <https://www.ummat.net/2022/06/21/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

only two meanings. Either the TTP is unable to control its cadre or there are some other terrorist groups that operate independent of the TTP. Whatever may be the reason, Islamabad needs to talk to the Afghan Taliban and TTP on this serious issue. ... There is no doubt that the people of Waziristan have been suffering because of terrorism for the last two decades. Now they are waiting for a peaceful future. The government should involve the Jirga of the region in the talks as well as the Jirga remains the oldest and used way to address various conflicts in the areas. Similarly serious talks should be held with the Afghan Taliban as well. They should be told that Pakistan has sacrificed a lot for Afghanistan and now they should also make some serious efforts for restoring peace in Pakistan. Elements involved in terrorism should be targeted by the Afghan Taliban.

Pakistan-Iran power supply agreement, Editorial, Roznama92 News, 23 June 2022²⁷

Pakistan and Iran have agreed to supply 100 MW of electricity. According to the statement, the agreement has been signed by the officials of NTDC and the Iranian company Tavanir. The power crisis in Pakistan has intensified. Under these circumstances, we should have used all the means to generate energy. Unfortunately, the government did not pay attention to it. Gilgit-Baltistan can generate several thousand megawatts of electricity. Naturally, there is a need to install special machinery on the mountains and waterfalls but this is being neglected. The government has agreed to buy 100 MW of electricity from Iran. This agreement is welcome but its agreement should not be delayed like in the past. ... The government should implement the agreement immediately so that the energy crisis can be overcome. In addition, the ruling coalition should complete the gas pipeline as well so that the issue of gas shortage will be addressed once for all.

Talks with TTP and the Afghan Taliban, Saleem Safi, Jang, 25 June 2022²⁸

Where have those 'army generals' gone who had issued a statement saying that there was no link between the Afghan Taliban and TTP? Why are Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Imran silent as they used to say that it was wrong to link the Afghan Taliban and TTP? Who are those members of the establishment and media persons who used to say that the Afghan Taliban were fighting Jihad while the TTP was a creation of R&AW and NDS (Kahan hain establishment ke karkunde, woh media persons jo rozana quom ko yeh dars diya karte the ki Afghan Taliban tau jihad kar rahe hain lekin Pakistani Taliban R&AW aur NDS ki pyaada-waar hain)? At least now they should apologize to the nation. Pakistan has paid a heavy price for this baseless assumption that TTP and the Afghan Taliban were different. All the leaders of TTP, like Nek Muhammad, Baitullah Mehsud, Maulvi Nazir and Abdullah Mehsud have been part of the Afghan Taliban and have all sworn their alliance to the Taliban head Mullah Muhammad Omar. They had started a war against the state of Pakistan for

²⁷

https://www.roznama92news.com/efrontend/web/index.php/?station_id=2&page_id=7&is_common=&xdate=2022-06-23&n=n1

²⁸ <https://e.jang.com.pk/detail/164669>

that Pakistan did not support the Afghan Taliban against the US led invasion. No one can separate the Afghan Taliban from TTP and vice versa. ... Although the Afghan Taliban did not participate in the TTP's war against Pakistan which they could not for various reasons, the TTP did fight along the Afghan Taliban against the US led forces in Afghanistan. In fact first three suicide attacks in Afghanistan were carried out by TTP, not by the Afghan Taliban. ... *Literature and letterheads of both the groups were the same. Still the state of Pakistan was making a fool out of itself by believing that the two had no link. Pakistan was linking the TTP with Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani. However, when the Taliban broke prisons in Afghanistan 3000 leaders of TTP, including Maulvi Faqir Mohammed were released. The situation is like that the Afghan Taliban have formed their government in Afghanistan and the Pakistani Taliban thinks the government belongs to it as well. Whole Afghanistan belongs to the TTP like it belongs to the Afghan Taliban. ...* What choice does Pakistan have? Should we fight a war with the two? No. We cannot. The only option is to talk. Question is how would talks resolve the issue? The approach adopted by the government of Imran Khan was not correct. It was wrong to release TTP members in exchange of the ceasefire announcement by the terrorist group. Second, parties like ANP and PPP were not consulted for holding talks. ... This writer believes that talks are the only option. But the talks should take place between Pakistan and the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The matter should be given to the Emirate and through them a solution should be found to the problem. The Pakistani Taliban does not only follow the same ideology but is also a part of the government in Kabul. Therefore, talks should take place through the Afghan Taliban only.

Gwadar Port: The Story of Oppression, Muzammil Suhrawardy, Roznama Express, 29 June 2022²⁹

Gwadar is a game-changer for Pakistan, goes without saying. I have spent the last four days in Gwadar to find out how true it is. During those four days, I was trying to know the reality of Gwadar. *If we talk about Gwadar port, it has been built but is not functional. Can the Gwadar Dam be a harbinger of a better future for Pakistan? China has control of the port system of Gwadar. At the same time, there is also Gwadar Port Authority. It would not be wrong to say that the port of Gwadar is severely neglected. Everyone has heard how important the strategic position of Gwadar is: It will become a world passage, ships will anchor in Gwadar, and so on and so forth. But do we know the fact that today, due to our carelessness, the port of Gwadar has reached such a stage that no large ship can dock there. We have not extracted sand from the Gwadar dam for the last four years due to which 11 feet of sand have come to the port and due to this large ships can no longer come there.* Extracting sand from the port is a continuous process and is not a big deal. But can

²⁹

https://www.express.com.pk/epaper/PoPupwindow.aspx?newsID=1109364223&Issue=NP_LHE&Date=20220629

anyone ask why the sand has not been removed for the last four years? The port at which large ships cannot anchor, how can it change the fate of Pakistan? You could say that for the last four years the port of Gwadar has been criminally neglected. A complete script has been worked out to destroy it. It is true that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has ordered sand extraction to start the work of sand extraction. It is hoped that this work will start in July. But the question is why the work that happens not only every year but twice a year, has not happened in four years? ... Anyone who brings their goods to Gwadar has to take them back to Karachi for delivery in Pakistan. Then it goes all over the country. We have built a port but it is not connected to the country. M8 is not working. So Gwadar is deserted. Is it China's fault or Pakistan's fault?

To be self-sufficient requires a farsighted economic policy, Editorial, Daily Dunya, 30 June 2022³⁰

While speaking in a conference the other day, themed 'Turnaround Pakistan', *Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that though Pakistan has finally got approval from the IMF for a loan of \$2 billion, our real goal is self-sufficiency. These temporary financial assistance from international institutions would not help in resolving the economy of the country. It is welcome that the current dispensation thinks that foreign loans cannot help in achieving self-sufficient economy.* It needs to be understood that a nation does not develop and prosper by foreign loans but by its military strength, resources and self-dependency. And Pakistan is an example itself of how the foreign loans have turned out to be brief reliefs, nothing more. ... *These foreign loans never address the structural flaws in the economy. This has made the country entirely dependent on foreign loans. All previous governments have claimed to make Pakistan a self-sufficient economy but all failed to achieve the goals. If the current regime is serious it needs to take account of all the issues because of which Pakistan has failed in the past to achieve the goal of self-sufficiency. Because of the political confrontations and vested interests Pakistan has not been able to formulate a strategy that could have helped to become self-dependent and lessen dependency on foreign loans. One important factor to become a self-sufficient economy is to get people out of poverty and create income avenues for that.* However, the situation is entirely opposite. The recently presented budget puts more burden on the shoulders of the people. ... The fact is that till this day Pakistan has not been able to give direction to its economy. Pakistan needs to increase its exports. Agriculture and food industry should be expanded. Indeed such developments will not take place in days. Therefore, issues that need immediate solution cannot be overlooked or delayed. Issues like inflation need to be addressed on a priority basis. At the same time every government should work to make Pakistan a self-sufficient economy.

³⁰https://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2022-0630&edition=LHR&id=6154235_45485747

Najam Sethi Show, 24 News HD, 8 June 2022³¹

The host Ayesha Naaz asked Najam Sethi about the recent developments around the acceptance of resignation by the PTI members. The government has decided to accept around 50 resignations tendered in the national assembly of the PTI members. It will increase the strength of the government in the assembly in the post-by-election period. How do you see these developments? *Najam Sethi responded that initially it was decided to conduct by-elections in Punjab to strengthen the position of Hamza Shehbaz with 15-16 seats out of 20 in bye-elections. Right now they have their own governor in the state. It will be easy for them to manage everything without administrative interferences. Initially, it was decided that government will accept the resignation of a few important members of the PTI. After that, they will go for bye-elections and win some of those seats.* This will secure their strength in the National Assembly. Now they agreed to accept 50 resignations which mean they want to secure a two-thirds majority in the joint house of the parliament to remove President Arif Alvi. The joint session of parliament has around 442 seats (342 seats in National Assembly and 100 seats in the Senate). They need 295 seats to impeach Arif Alvi. Even if they accept resignations and win bye-elections still it will not be easy for them to remove Arif Alvi from his office. They are hopeful that some of the members of the PTI will do floor crossing. Right now one question is doing rounds whether this government is going to continue or not after the budget. If we accept this rumour for a moment then the question arises if this government knows that they will not be able to continue then why they are doing various initiatives to stabilize the country. They are taking unpopular decisions to improve the condition. They can easily declare a fresh date for the election and appoint a caretaker government instead of taking tough decisions.

Exclusive Interview with Russian Ambassador to Pakistan, Rubaroo with Shaukat Paracha, Aaj News, 12 June 2022³²

The host asked questions about the current situation in Ukraine and any possibility of the end of this ongoing war. To which Russian Ambassador to Pakistan Danila Ganich said that Russian forces are progressing and currently 1/5 of Ukrainian

³¹<https://youtu.be/agpbm-SPHW8>

³²<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSAcnMkSQA>

territory is under Russian control. The host asked about the Russian position on the Taliban government, *the ambassador said that he completely agrees with the statement of the Pakistani foreign minister that the primary task of the international community is to stop Afghanistan from collapsing economically. We should engage with the Taliban and persuade them to fulfil the obligations which are expected from it which include respecting human rights, inclusiveness and other issues. The approach of threat and ultimatum of the west is not the way to find the solution.* The frozen Afghan fund should be released immediately. On the question of the possibility of any dialogue between India and Pakistan especially after the incident of August 2019, the ambassador said that both the countries are part of SCO. This was agreed that both the countries will keep their differences out of this platform while joining the group. They will work to improve their relations. I hope both countries will do it. *Talking about the accusation of conspiracy against Imran Khan, the ambassador said that he does not want to comment on the internal matters of Pakistan. But he said that Imran Khan was an honest leader and he was working for the betterment of his people. He cannot say anything about foreign conspiracy especially when the courts in Pakistan have commented on this issue.* When asked about Imran's claim of the supply of cheap oil and wheat from Russia, the ambassador said that the two governments had signed a MoU to work in this direction. He refused to say anything further.

Off The Record with Kashif Abbasi, ARY News, 16 June 2022³³

The host Kashif Abbasi started the discussion by mentioning the recent hikes in petrol prices. He said that the current government accused the previous government of not doing anything to control the inflation and hike in petrol prices. They promised that they will change everything when they will come to power. Forget about reducing the price they failed to even control the price and continued to hike the prices. Maryam Nawaz is saying that they have no option other than the hike in the prices because Imran Khan's government has made certain agreements with the IMF. They are not able to manage things effectively. *Musharraf Zaidi said that every government does these types of theatrics to come into power and after coming to power they repeat the same thing.* Kashif asked another guest Wasim Badawi how the country reached this stage? *Wasim said that people argue that the economy of the state should be dragged into party politics but the economic condition of the*

³³ <https://dai.ly/x8bqo3n>

country has reached this stage due to power politics. When Imran used to say that petrol is expensive because the Prime Minister is corrupt, that's not the right way of politics. Everyone including him knows why prices go up and down. Mazhar Abbas said that all the important sectors of Pakistan's economy were systematically destroyed by the leader. We are at this stage because of this. The interest of the certain political class for their own personal interest destroyed the economy of the country. He further said that the noconfidence motion was a policy mistake by this government. Now they are giving answers to the question that the previous government should have answered.

View Point with Samina Pasha, GNN, 26 June 2022³⁴

The discussion started with the recent local body elections in Sindh province and widespread mismanagement and violence during the whole process. Host Samina Pasha asked her guest senior journalist Imran Yakub Khan about the reasons for this mismanagement and law and order failure during the elections. *Imran Yakub Khan said that it is the failure of the election commission to conduct a free and fair election but the bigger responsibility here is of Sindh's local administration. They are the ones responsible for law and order. The election commission is dependent on the provincial administration for security and other necessary things needed for election.* The Pakistan People's Party failed to ensure a smooth and fair local election in the province. Samina asked about the accusation of former Prime Minister Imran Khan about the elections commission's inability and credibility. To this, the guest responded that it does raise questions about the credibility of the election commission but one thing should be understood that the local elections are different from the national elections. The national election is conducted by the caretaker governments and they are largely free from the rigging. Another guest *Zafar Hilali (senior journalist) said that the recent incident has not only shown the weaknesses of the election commission in conducting elections but also shown structural and administrative problems in conducting local elections. Irrespective of the PTI's accusations, the election commission is indeed incompetent.* The host also raised the issue of conflict of interests in the current coalition government. The MQM has accused the PPP of not doing enough for Karachi. *The MQM leader Khwaza Izhar ul Hasan told the host that there is no such thing as a conflict between the allies, we are just saying that the current government like the other previous government*

³⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQI-i3QmHF8>

should not ignore the people of Karachi. The act should not be repeated. The city should get its due share of development.

Muqabil with Haroon Ur Rashid, 92News HD, 28 June 2022³⁵

The host Sarwat Valim started the discussion with the senior journalist Haroon Ur Rashid by mentioning the current instability in the ruling coalition. The MQM and the Jamat-e-Islami have criticized the government for not delivering on the promises made during the coalition formation. She also discussed the political crisis in Punjab. *Haroon Rashid said that the current Hamza Sharif government is illegal. The Supreme Court has already said that the votes of those 25 members of the assembly will not be counted. The PML-N claims that they will win the bye-elections but the surveys are telling a different reality.* The only method they can use to win is by rigging the elections. The host also asked Haroon Rashid about the rumours of the extension to the current Army Chief. He responded that the ISPR has already made it clear that there will not be any extension to the current Army Chief. Around seven generals are going to retire in October-December this year. We should wait for the right time and comment on anything without substantial proof would not be wise. On the question of the return of Parwez Musharraf, he said that there is no chance for him to return back to Pakistan. On the question of a US-based policy group's statement that Imran Khan should not have gone closer to Russia, Haroon Rashid said that there is a limit to American interference in Pakistan's national politics. *On the question of Jirga in Afghanistan, Haroon Rashid said that the Jirga does not have any agenda.*

³⁵ <https://youtu.be/n94s2FodMTk>

BOMBING, SHOOTING AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Sindh				
Karachi ³⁶	26/04/2022	4 people including 3 Chinese killed in a suicide bomb attack	04	4

³⁶<https://www.dawn.com/news/1686920/3-chinese-nationals-among-4-dead-in-suicide-attack-at-karachi-university>

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
Peshawar ³⁷ Kech district ³⁸	04/03/2022	At least 30 dead, dozens injured in Peshawar imambargah blast.	30	50
	26/01/2022	Ten Soldiers martyred, one militant killed	10	01
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa				
KP ³⁹	12/06/2022	1 security personnel killed in a terror attack	01	00
KP ⁴⁰	08/06/2022	4 terrorist killed during an operation in North Waziristan tribal district and Balochistan's Noshki district.	04	00
KP ⁴¹	03/06/2022	1 soldier killed in a terrorist attack	01	00
KP ⁴²	April	24 law-enforcement	24	26

³⁷<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2346343/at-least-30-dead-dozens-injured-in-peshawar-imambargah-blast>

³⁸<https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/10-soldiers-martyred-1militant-killed-and-3-apprehended>

³⁹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1694423>

⁴⁰ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1693697/four-terrorists-killed-in-north-waziristan-noshki-ispr>

⁴¹<https://www.dawn.com/news/1692924/sepoy-martyred-in-gun-battle-after-terrorists-attack-military-post-in-north-waziristan-ispr>

		personnel killed		
South Waziristan ⁴³	27/04/2022	SI killed	1	
Peshawar ⁴⁴	04/03/2022	57 dead, 200 injured in Peshawar's imambargah attack	57	200
North Waziristan ⁴⁵	29/03/2022	Four terrorists killed in North Waziristan operation	04	00

⁴²<https://www.dawn.com/news/1687008/24-law-enforcement-officials-martyred-in-ttp-attacks-since-late-last-month-in-kp>

⁴³<https://www.dawn.com/news/1687110/police-official-martyred-in-south-waziristan-attack>

⁴⁴<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2346343/57-dead-200-injured-in-peshawars-imambargah-attack>

⁴⁵<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2350051/four-terrorists-killed-in-north-waziristan-operation>