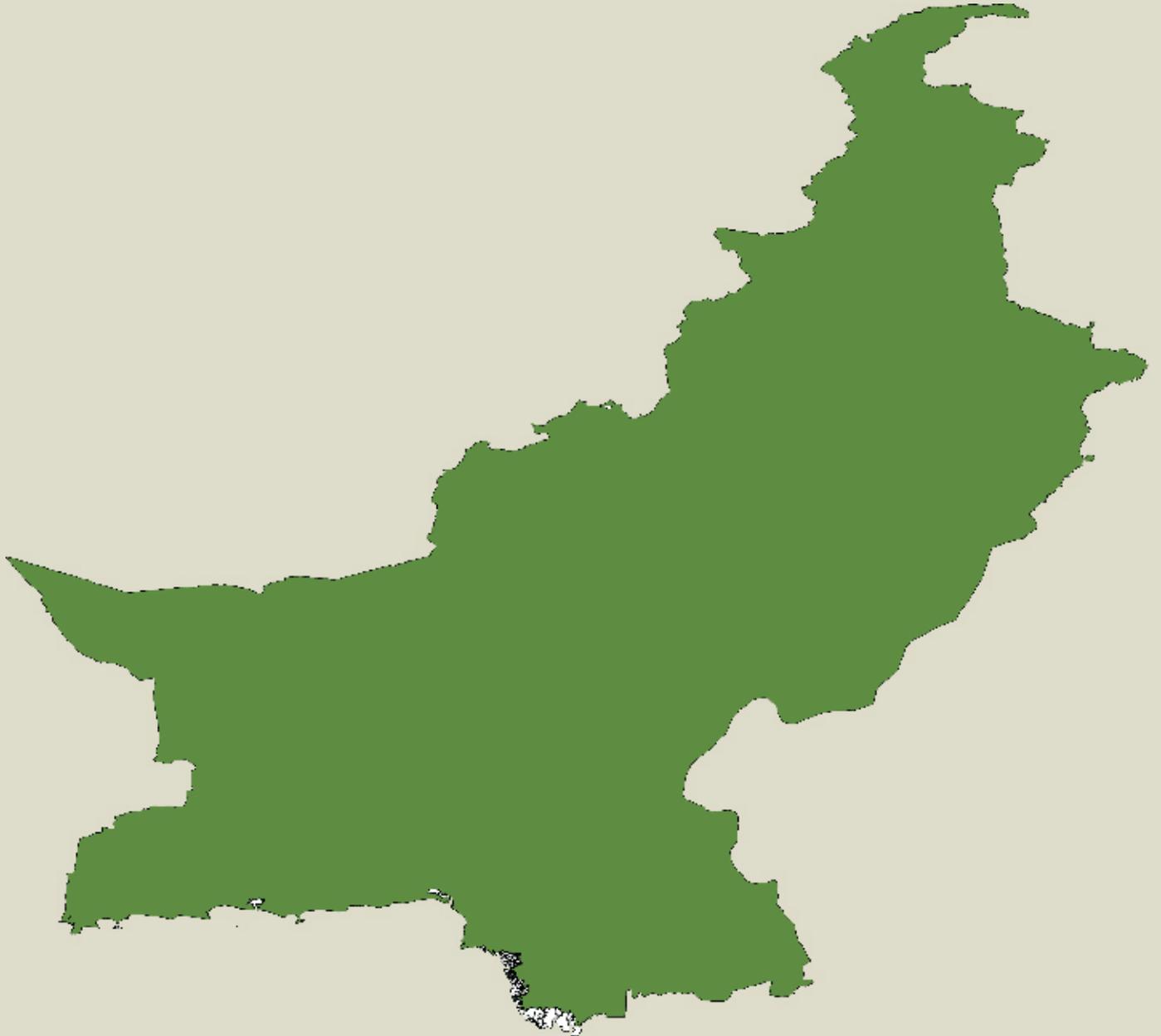


MARCH 2018

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
Dr. Ashok Behuria

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES
रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, March 2018

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Editorial

The allegations and counter allegations of horse trading in the recently concluded Senate elections 2018 in Pakistan for 52 vacant seats yet again exposed the flawed democratic setup of the county. It is an open secret that the candidates are mostly handpicked by the powerful heads of the party for the Senate elections. The latest election was no different with loyalties shifting overnight, money used to buy tickets/seats in the house, raising questions about the sanctity of the democratic system of elections. It has to be noted here that Pakistan's Senate election is held through an indirect ballot, with members of the four provincial assemblies and the national assembly voting for the candidates. This indirect election system makes it easy for legislators to sell their votes and engage in horse-trading.

Although PML-N emerged as the largest party in the 104 member house with 33 seats, it lost the chairmanship to a little known opposition candidate Sadiq Sanjrani backed by the opposition Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and a bloc of independent senators from Balochistan who represent a political alliance that recently broke away from the PML-N. This was yet another big blow to the ruling party which is already reeling under a slew of corruption cases facing its leadership. Nevertheless, the only silver lining in the elections was the selection of Krishna Kumari as the first Dalit Woman Senator in the country. She won the election on the reserved seat for women from Sindh Province on a PPP ticket.

With the country gearing up for the next general elections, the chief of army, General Qamar Bajwa captured the attention of the media through a fiery debate over a so called '*Bajwa Doctrine*'. Many experts in Pakistan questioning the timing of such a doctrine held it as a direct threat to the democratic process of the country. The ISPR came out with clarifications underlining that the concept was only related to security and had nothing to do with politics, the judiciary, or the 18th Amendment. It has to be noted here that the 18th amendment that has lent greater autonomy to the provinces was passed unanimously by parliament with all major political parties on board after lot of debate and discussion in the legislature. According to some reports in the media the army of Pakistan wanted a reversal of the said amendment because it granted more money to the provinces leading to shrinking of the central revenues which impacted defence allocations in the budget.

One expert in the article, '*Is it the Chiefs' Doctrine,*' in daily *Dawn* succinctly summarized the military's current thought process, "While generals do not

seek to take over power, some feel that is the easiest thing to do in a crisis situation. They do not want to give a free hand to elected civilians either". The long shadow of the military, in a nexus with the judiciary, is likely to continue to hover over the emerging political setup. It is apparent that most of the country's law-enforcement and investigative agencies are already operating under the watch of the security establishment, he added. The doctrine was critical of the lavish infrastructural projects such as motorways and metro buses that bear the stamp of the PML-N government; these are perceived as a massive drain on the economy as is the Benazir Income Support Programme. Some experts believe that this is a clear indication of the military's efforts to dismantle the PML-N government and destroy the political career of Nawaz Sharif.

The general elections in the country has triggered the formation of a number of new political parties. Towards the end of this month the chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo along with few other lawmakers announced the launch of a new Balochistan-based political party, '*Balochistan Awami Party* (BAP)' supposedly comprising the political and tribal elite of the province. In yet another blow to the PML-N, a few disconcerted members, joined the newly formed party in Balochistan along with five independent senators and few deserters from the PML-Q. As Pakistan inches closer to the elections, there is likely to be more concerted efforts to wean away PML-N party workers and weaken the party further. It remains to be seen how the leadership of PML-N meets these challenges.

Dr. Zainab Akhter

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Sharif brothers' new role, Editorial, Dawn, 01 March¹

Even though Shahbaz Sharif is considered to have been the biggest recipient of his older brother's coaching, the Punjab chief minister's appointment as PML-N president in dynastic fashion may still not be deemed to reflect a true Sharifian continuation. The Nawaz element must be seen to be fully reinforced and operative. *And so, when Shahbaz Sharif took over the reins of the party it was thought necessary to also elevate Nawaz Sharif to the position of PML-N's eternal guide.* But it is not about the party it's about the man, whose decision it is primarily to set the direction for his successor as party chief. Yes, the loyal younger brother is known to have a mind of his own but as the new president of the PML-N he cannot be expected to practice his reconciliatory craft in a way that overwhelms Nawaz Sharif's visibly popular agitation.

Punjab-centric politics by PML-N, Editorial, Dawn, 03 March²

In effect, the PML-N has embraced the fracturing and regionalization of the electorate in a cynical bet that because *Punjab is the most populous province, sweeping elections there will carve a path to power at the center.* With the collapse of the PPP as a national political party, the recent electoral dominance of the PML-N and the emergence of the PTI as a contender for federal power have exacerbated the Punjab-centric nature of politics in the country. If Shahbaz Sharif does choose to use his stint as PML-N president to appeal to a broader, inter-provincial audience, he will have to overcome a historical belief that the PML-N is a Punjab-centric party. That will involve not just holding rallies in other provinces, but investing time and energy in cultivating and growing a party machine in those provinces.

¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1392482/sharif-brothers-new-role>

² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1392886>

Best of luck, Krishna Kumari, Editorial, Daily Times, 05 March³

We congratulate Kumari on this victory, and wish her all the best in overcoming the obstacles she will face from here on. She belongs to the highly marginalized Sindhi Hindu community, most of which is “employed” as agro-based bonded labour – much like Kumari and her family once were. The community has also been brutalized by the abductions and forced conversions of its women. Once again, it is powerful Muslim landowners who are often behind such crimes. *We hope that Kumari’s election to the Senate heralds the beginning of a legislative and institutional reform process to improve the lives of Sindh’s long suffering Hindus.* Finally, the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) needs to be lauded for awarding ticket to Kumari. Despite its flaws, the PPP continues to be a pro-minorities and progressive political force. We also hope that other parties will follow this trend.

Flawed democratic process, Editorial, Daily Times, 06 March⁴

The reports of horse-trading that continue to plague last Saturday’s process represent a dark stain on Pakistan’s democratic record. This is to say nothing of corruption rankings. *Media reports suggest that the phenomenon of votes-for-cash has been widespread, which, of course, is an alarming development. It will only dwindle the public trust in democratic institutions and lend credence to the long-held view of the establishment that all politicians and, more importantly, ‘politics’ are corrupt.* The biggest obstacle to the country’s fledgling democracy is that there appears no mechanism for self-correction. Instead, what we have is much moralizing from far too many low-riding horses. The way to get around this votes-for-cash is, of course, to introduce proportional representation. Many countries across the globe practice this system that ensures a measure of transparency and minimizes fraudulent practices. This is also a fair mechanism where the standing of political parties in the Lower House can be well-reflected in the Upper House. Yet even this is not enough. For political turncoat-ting is simply horse-trading on the cheap.

Money and politics, Ahmed Bilal Mehboob, Dawn, 06 March 06⁵

No evidence is produced in support of such claims but candidates winning without sufficient votes from their respective parties is cited as the major ground for such allegations. For example, the PPP won at least two additional seats in Sindh, apparently with the support of MQM MPAs. It also managed to win two seats in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa despite its relatively small number

³ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/210448/best-luck-krishna-kumari/>

⁴ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/210893/flawed-democratic-process/>

⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1393400/money-and-politics>

of MPAs there. The PTI won a seat in Punjab which could only be possible with the votes from the MPAs of other parties adding to PTI votes. Many parties have openly and forcefully called for a change in the system of Senate elections. It is unlikely that such a change will be possible in the short run but the question of placing adequate checks and controls on the role of money in politics has very much taken center stage and will need to be addressed.

Assessing paradigm shift in Pak-Russia ties, Baber Ali Bhatti, *Daily Times*, 06 March⁶

The US appears to be more inclined towards India regardless of the fact that Pakistan has been its front line ally in the so called 'war on terror' and suffered the loss of armed forces and civilians. Therefore, a paradigm shift in defence policy framework and defence cooperation of Pakistan is the need of time. In the predictable future, Pakistan and Russia may find various grounds to carry out joint ventures. Recently, the US has surpassed Russia as the largest arms exporter to India. *Surprisingly, Pakistan is still an untapped market for Russian arms and military equipment. Russia can utilize Pakistan's markets for economic gains as Pakistan bought the helicopters worth millions of dollars.* Keeping in view these points, defence cooperation between Russia and Pakistan seems imperative especially when the regional arrangements and security order support cooperation.

Senate election and horse-trading, Zahid Hussain, *Dawn*, March 07⁷

Pakistan's Senate elections have all that is manifest in the country's flawed democratic process. Candidates are mostly handpicked by all powerful party heads. Cronies are accommodated in the house. *Loyalties are shifted overnight and one is not surprised to see the turncoats returning to the house under a different party banner each time. Money can buy a party ticket or even a seat in the august house standing as an independent.* The latest election has not been any different to what we have witnessed in the past, raising questions about the sanctity of the elected forum representing the federation. Allegations of horse-trading and the purchase of votes have tarnished the image of parliament. While crying foul, political leaders are still not willing to reform the system and make their party more democratic in order to stop the corrupt practices.

⁶ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/210919/assessing-paradigm-shift-pak-russia-ties/>

⁷ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1393723/senate-election-and-horse-trading>

Losing the Afghan market, Editorial, Daily Times, 07 March⁸

Today, we are paying the price — quite literally — for our own myopia. For India has swooped in to cut by 50 percent the Pakistani market. The latter, after all, heavily subsidizes its exports. And it, along with China, does not bring with it the (false) stigma of being an ‘enemy’ nation. For while Beijing threatens traditional US hegemony in the region it is fast on its way to superpower status; meaning that it will be treated for now with American kid gloves. Whereas India is Washington’s strategic partner for the 21st century. Indeed, the latter enjoys an enhanced role in Afghanistan under the Trump Town South Asia vision. Naturally, it will not be putting boots on the ground there. *But it will be splashing the cash on investment projects across our western border. Already, it is said to be offering air tickets at discounts of 75 percent. Meaning that Afghan medical tourism is no longer destined for this country.*

High hopes for US visit, Editorial, Daily Times, 08 March⁹

But be that as it may, this US overture should not be dismissed out of hand. It is, after all, a starting point and one that suggests Trump Town may well be willing to listen; at least, for a while. Another conciliatory message was exclusively for Pakistan. The State Department has once again noted the important role that this country can play in any anticipated peace process. Pakistanis expected to take sole responsibility for getting the Taliban to the negotiating table but it must not take the fall when the latter do not prove willing partners for an American-defined peace. This is where the Afghan government and US must also share the burden. Recent events indicate that the US strategy may be changing. *Instead of cash-strapping Pakistan to make it go after the Haqqani Network, diplomacy and negotiations are being revived. Washington has its own set of policy objectives but they will not be achieved through humiliation of the country and especially its men in uniform.* The plain fact is that Pakistan and its people have made numerous sacrifices in fighting a war that was initiated by the superpower in the first place.

⁸ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/211441/losing-afghan-market/>

⁹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/211948/high-hopes-for-us-visit/>

The Rise and Rise of Maryam Nawaz, Asha'ar Rehman, Dawn, 11 March¹⁰

This is not the Maryam of old; she has shed much of the tentativeness that was there during her initial public appearances. She has overcome the pauses in speech she inherited from her father, making them sound as if they originate from a habit to first deliberate upon everything that is relayed to the public. *This is Maryam Nawaz, the new face of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)*. Maryam continues to shed weight and sports hues that help build a halo of light around her. She is already a changed woman from the picture of her flashed purely out of a pressing election need in 2013. The arrival of Maryam Nawaz Sharif over the last five years as a major player in the politics of PML-N has been a surprise many are still finding hard to come to terms with. Maryam herself believes that it is difficult for a daughter to enter politics as opposed to a son. Hamza wanted to be like his famous uncle. He emulated his idol for years and carried Mian Nawaz Sharif's blessings to whatever territory in Punjab he was sent to conquer. This, some of the political commentators would remark at the time, was still not enough to make him the 'young' and 'change-seeking' PML-N answer to Imran Khan. The PML-N, rather suddenly, found another option in the charming Maryam. *In earlier episodes, Nawaz would meekly submit to the orders to sign his resignation, with the likes of Chaudhry Nisar consoling him by his side. Now he was ready to fight. And it was no coincidence that he had the backing of Maryam who as a resistance leader who happened to be a woman, most starkly signified the change that the PML-N claimed to have undergone.*

New leadership, Dr Niaz Murtaza, Dawn, 13 March¹¹

The desire for new leadership is strong in Pakistan, especially in middle-class bosoms sick of traditional leaders. For many of them, despite their education, the emergence of new leadership is a mysterious chance event, influenced only by prayers and chants. The analysis revolves around the core factions and their interests that propel new leaders, their attempts to broaden their coalition and develop an agenda accordingly and the opportunities that may be available to prevail over the old guard. This review indicates that the major leaders in current-day Pakistan's history came from elite backgrounds and did not rise through grass-roots politics. *Their practiced agendas largely reflected the concerns of upper- and middle-class constituencies despite the lofty rhetoric of some of them. Thus Pakistani politics and economics have*

¹⁰ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1394406/the-rise-and-rise-of-maryam-nawaz>

¹¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1394957/new-leadership>

largely remained elitist till today. The masses have remained leaderless and being an aggrieved majority represent large numbers and unmet desires from which new mass-oriented leadership could emerge. But they have been divided along ethnic and sectarian lines, often by the establishment. The latter has also imposed a conservative, faith-based narrative on the country. All this makes it difficult for anyone to espouse a progressive agenda and survive and rise in politics.

Time to call out the Generals, Obed Pasha, *Daily Times*, 14 March¹²

After a winning stride in popular politics, Nawaz Sharif lost at the hands of the establishment in the wheeling-dealing game of Senate elections. The hidden forces first manipulated the Balochistan assembly to overthrow the PML-N government, and then successfully tied rival PTI and PPP together to jointly nominate an independent candidate as the Senate Chairman. If Nawaz Sharif is serious about continuing with the offensive, however, it is about time that he explicitly and loudly calls out the role of military generals in manipulating the judiciary, media houses, and politics. People already know who pulls the strings in the country's power corridors, and it is high time that a national political leader takes this discourse to the public. *Nawaz Sharif's current wave of popularity will only strengthen by openly defying the military establishment, and could probably save him from future upsets. This path is full of difficulties, but it is the only way forward.* Nawaz Sharif should challenge the generals and their destructive policies that have held 200 million people hostage for decades. If he cannot find the courage to do so, then he should spare us all and revert to toady politics.

The new power troika, Zahid Hussain, *Dawn*, 14 March¹³

Moreover, the deepening political crisis has propelled the military back in the driving seat in what is seen as a nexus with the judiciary that too is perceived to have become an arbiter of power. *Has the backing of the military given greater impetus to judicial overdrive and brought the executive under increasing pressure?* Many observers have gone so far as to describe it as 'judicial extremism' that is encroaching even on parliament's powers to legislate. Some recent Supreme Court judgements striking down legislation passed by parliament are seen to have caused imbalance in the distribution of power among various institutions of state. One may agree that the ineffectiveness of parliament to resolve political issues has increased the burden on the apex court, but the judiciary must also refrain from getting

¹² <https://dailytimes.com.pk/214538/time-to-call-out-the-generals/>

¹³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1395166/the-new-power-troika>

involved in issues that come under the domain of other institutions. Whatever the reason may be, such growing assertion by the security establishment and the courts has further distorted the balance of power thus intensifying the clash of institutions. The emergence of a new troika of power is reminiscent of the 1990s, the decade of elected civilian rule when the military and president who then enjoyed sweeping powers along with the prime minister formed the troika of power.

Can the identity crisis of MQM be resolved? Farhan Hanif Siddiqi, *Herald-Dawn*, 17 March¹⁴

Altaf Hussain's absence has engendered a power struggle between Farooq Sattar and Rabita Committee members, which shows little signs of abating. To Farooq Sattar's credit, he has remained a party loyalist during the 1990s when MQM reeled under a military operation. His drawback is his inability to unite conflicting muhajjir elites. In fact, he has done well in alienating them. To Amir Khan's credit, he has the support of a majority of the Rabita Committee members, is apt in organizational matters but carries the charge of betraying MQM by forming MQM-Haqiqi while the party suffered in the 1990s. The identity and organizational crises are fueled further by the powerlessness experienced by the local government where the party receives little in terms of funding and resources from the provincial government dominated by PPP. *This adds to the muhajjir electorate's sense of alienation and disempowerment. With personal infighting, an ineffective local government and loss of the party's supreme, the muhajjir vote bank is in a fix.* However, MQM's crisis has not translated, at least for now, into perceptible gains for other political parties. This may change in the next election.

Is it the chief's 'doctrine'? Zahid Hussain, *Dawn*, 21 March¹⁵

But the virtues ascribed to Gen Qamar Bajwa make him appear head and shoulder above his predecessors; a messiah the country has long been waiting for. If media circles are to be believed, the so-called doctrine promises to bring about a revolutionary change in foreign policy, making a clean break from the 'chauvinistic' approach of the past 70 years. This is quite amazing. According to this 'doctrine', the general envisions better relations with neighboring countries and balance in dealing with world powers. Violent extremism is certainly not acceptable but the mainstreaming of tamed jihadists is important under the perceived doctrine. Successive military rulers seized power on the pretext of turning things around and fixing problems but they ended up leaving the country in the same mess if not worse. Similarly, while there may

¹⁴ <https://herald.dawn.com/news/1154052/can-the-identity-crisis-of-mqm-be-resolved>

¹⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1396575/is-it-the-chiefs-doctrine>

be little doubt regarding the expressed intentions, the views enunciated on the political situation, economy and other issues have exposed the widening cleavage between the elected civilian government and the security establishment that has strengthened multiple power centers. *The long shadow of the military, in a nexus with the judiciary, will hover over the emerging political setup. It is apparent that most of the country's law-enforcement and investigative agencies are already operating under the watch of the security establishment.*

The MMA is back, Editorial, Dawn, 22 March¹⁶

The decision of the various parties to be part of the alliance, especially the JUI-F and JL, raises significant questions. Is the revival of the MMA proof that these parties had lost all hope of striking some kind of a partnership with a strong mainstream party? Or was a grouping of these right-wing outfits thought to be their best bet to attract votes in the general election? Perhaps a bit of both led to the MMA's restoration. In the run-up to the elections, none among the so-called secular parties has appeared keen to embrace a religious party. There was also realisation of the need to consolidate the religious vote bank and to offer a united countrywide front. It was the religious parties' answer to the seemingly more popular, 'secular' parties to their left and the extremist option emerging on their right, in KP, Balochistan and elsewhere. *Reviving old times when religious parties exercised considerable influence over the voters in Karachi would perhaps be one of the aims of the MMA*

The 'Bajwa doctrine', Editorial, Dawn, 25 March¹⁷

Previously, when such misgivings were expressed, it presaged a period of either democratic turmoil or military rule. Gen Bajwa has been quoted as insisting that the military has left the era of coups and democratic tinkering behind and expressing an unambiguous desire to see the democratic project continue. That positive message should not be obscured by controversy over other remarks pertaining to the 18th Amendment or an unprompted expression of support for the superior judiciary. *Perhaps Gen Bajwa can clarify the proper context of all remarks attributed to him. Third, the military as an institution should recognize that for democracy to survive and deepen in the country, all institutions must remain within their constitutional domains.* Military input in national security and foreign policy is overwhelming, but there is an undeniable role for the military leadership in helping shape those policies. Economic policy, center-province relations and governance matters, however, are civilian domains. Improvement in all those areas is desirable, but it must flow through constitutional channels and be

¹⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1396830/the-mma-is-back>

¹⁷ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1397410/the-bajwa-doctrine>

overseen by those with legitimate credentials. Being well-meaning is not the same as having the necessary expertise.

Waiting for the next Naqeebullah, Abbas Nasir, Dawn, 25 March¹⁸

But can one also hope that the larger issue of forced disappearances and summary executions also be addressed? I, for one, am not optimistic. *When viewed against the battle the country is waging against terrorist groups, the legislative and judicial framework appears wholly inadequate. Where extrajudicial killings and disappearances are, and should be, repugnant and unacceptable in any civilized society, the system finds itself incapable of prosecuting and sentencing those guilty of heinous crimes.* Here lies my worry and concern. One Rao Anwar can be taken out of commissioning for a while perhaps but the pressure and, to some warped minds, the rationale remains to 'take out' those considered guilty. Such a situation and attitude will always lead to bloody miscarriages of justice. Regardless of high-and-mighty doctrines, pledges to dispense justice, and declarations of a commitment to the common man, without meaningful reform we will always be waiting for the next Naqeebullah Mehsud.

End of the MQM road for Sattar, Editorial, Daily Times, 28 March¹⁹

The battle for Karachi is on. If, that is, the MQM-P does not eat itself first. *Indeed, there are those who are already questioning if the party will be able to reign supreme in a city that it has effectively dominated over the last four decades.* The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) appeared to get in on the act by removing the former from the post of MQM-P convener. Sattar has said he does not recognize ECP jurisdiction in the matter; preferring to travel down that increasingly well-worn path of relying on public opinion. He has also spoken of hidden hands that "managed" the decision against him, which he sees as undeniably political in nature. For Sattar sees this as partial payback for standing up to party founder Altaf Hussain following the latter's August 2016 tirade that saw him chant, "down with Pakistan"; while denouncing the nation as "a cancer for the entire world." Though Sattar has been quick to term the ECP ruling part of a broader conspiracy to crush the party as a whole above and beyond the 'minus Altaf' formula — just as the country readies to go ballot-boxing. Whether or not the ECP has the authority to do what it did may well become irrelevant in the larger-scale of things. At

¹⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1397228>

¹⁹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/220555/end-of-the-mqm-road-for-sattar/>

least as far as party workers are concerned, many of whom are said to be increasingly frustrated over the in-fighting. *That this kicked off over the awarding of Senate tickets may or may not suggest that personal fiefdoms have been of greater importance than coming up with a comprehensive and people-friendly manifesto in time for this summer's general elections.*

SECURITY SITUATION

What the FATF is going on? Syeda Mamoon Rubab, *The Friday Times*, 02 March²⁰

Now that the decision to grey list Pakistan has been taken, an action plan would be prepared and negotiated by FATF and Pakistan by June. Pakistani officials say that some of the concerns being expressed by the countries that nominated Pakistan, which include the US, UK, France and Germany, are unreasonable and unjustified. Therefore, that leaves the question about how far can Pakistan go to address the concerns. Pakistan does not have a choice. It has to successfully conclude the negotiations with FATF, otherwise blacklisting could be its fate. That's the real pressure. *In other words, if Pakistan was looking for ways to avoid the grey list ahead of the February plenary, it now has a harder job of escaping the blacklist at the June plenary.* China preferred silence for a couple of reasons. First, it did not deem it fit to fight a losing battle and, secondly it did not want to court controversy ahead of becoming the vice chair of FATF. China was elected to the position on Feb 23. The GCC, which is led by Saudi Arabia, meanwhile was also mindful of the upcoming full FATF membership of the Kingdom in June. China and Saudi Arabia are normally considered Pakistan's 'best friends' on the world stage. But the fact that foreign policy is driven by narrow views of self-interest was on full display at the FATF plenary.

FATF setback: Pakistan is a victim of its own inaction, Imtiaz Gul, *Daily Times*, 03 March²¹

Both the civilians and the military establishment knew this was coming, but no credible measures for compliance were taken until a presidential decree allowed authorities to symbolically seize all of Jamaatud Dawa related assets, only a few days before the Paris meeting. So far, the civil-military establishments have been in denial. Now they shall have to work out a plan of action in consultation with the FATF to begin 'compliance to FATF protocols'. This also includes the primary driver of the 'grey-listing' – the Indian

²⁰ <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/tft/what-the-fatf-is-going-on/>

²¹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/209770/fatf-setback-pakistan-victim-inaction/>

concerns. *New Delhi has convinced Washington and even Beijing that Pakistan's compliance to FATF requirements will be credible only if it conclusively acts against the 'terrorist infrastructure' (Jamaatud Dawa, Jaishe Mohammad etc). All this is related to our infatuation with Kashmir.*

FATF grey list implications, Babar Ayaz, Daily Times, 10 March²²

Like always we are told that 'poor us' have once again been a victim of the US and Indian conspiracy. At the same time the government is putting up a brave face and telling the people not to worry about being put on the grey list. We have been through this slippery path before in 2008 and 2012. But what worries the analysts is that this time we have been put on the watch list on the insistence of the US which is following a hostile policy towards Pakistan in collaboration with India. Although Pakistan has made rules and regulation to comply with FATF guidelines on piece-meal basis, but as in all the cases its implementation record has not been satisfactory. Some of the actions were taken at the last moment before going to the Paris meeting of the FATF. For instance Pakistan promulgated an ordinance aimed at reigning in the LeT, Al-Qaeda and Taliban, etc. which have been banned by the UN Security Council. It is only a matter of time that we may also be put to take similar action against the India specific terrorist groups such as Jaish Mohammad and Hizbul Mujahideen. *Apparently the move of the Pakistan establishment to get a fatwa passed by over 1800 ulema of various sects indicates that these non-state jihadi groups are in the process of being curbed or at least this is what we want to tell the world that Pakistan would not be supporting private jihads of terrorist groups in Afghanistan and India. It is because of such policies of using non-state actors as an instrument of our national security and foreign policy that Pakistan was left to fend for itself in the Paris meeting.*

Op-edge: the terror financing question, Ahsan Hamid, Daily Times, 11 March²³

The way FATF's decision unfolded exposed serious loopholes in Pakistan's lobbying efforts on international platforms. But can we really blame our negotiators for failing us or is it our flawed policies and actions back at home that have yet again embarrassed us on the world stage? I choose to believe in the latter. Though we may not escape the 'grey list' of FATF in coming June, enforcement efforts coupled with sagacious advocacy can send a message to the international community that Pakistan is a responsible state committed to rooting out terrorist financing at home. The system of *Zakat* enshrined in Islam has proven to be the most effective tool in eradicating poverty and

²² <https://dailytimes.com.pk/212771/fatf-grey-list-implications/>

²³ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/213125/op-edge-the-terror-financing-question/>

inequality. Pakistanis are very generous when it comes to helping their penurious fellow citizens. *However, the notorious groups leave no opportunity un-availed in exploiting this virtue of Pakistanis to fund their activities. Their modus operandi has so far been successful in getting them huge funds from their open-handed philanthropic financiers.* The philanthropists, in most of the cases, have no idea where the money is being utilized. And honestly, they don't consider it their responsibility either. In their heads, the government must have regulated the charity in the first place to operate.

De-radicalizing face of Pakistan, Gulshan Rafiq, Express Tribune, 14 March²⁴

Pakistan is a patriarchal society where social practices and oppression against women are overflowing. It is not unprecedented for women to be dealt with as chattel. They are not just victimized as far as human services, training and legacy, yet in addition much of the time move towards becoming casualties of aggressive behavior at home, barbaric and banned traditions, for example, *karo-kari* and marriage to the Quran to keep the family property inside the family. *Publications by extremist associations have likewise filled in as a successful apparatus to spread radicalization among women. Extremist organizations utilize their publications to advance their belief system, and their restricted meaning of jihad to persuade ladies to convince male relatives to participate.* On account of an absence of access to dependable data, ladies can without much of a stretch succumb to such radical promulgation.

Raiwind attack, Editorial, Dawn, 16 March²⁵

There is the broader issue of Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts having reached the point of diminishing returns. While the frequency of attacks across the country is significantly lower compared to the situation before Operation *Zarb-i-Azb*, there are still enough acts of militancy to suggest that terrorist networks are either regenerating or have been able to avoid detection by the state. While terror groups have been known to pivot away from old targets and towards new ones, and the TTP certainly has no compunction in attacking civilians. *Domestic networks that facilitate and arm attackers do play a significant role, but it is clear that the leadership of anti-Pakistan militants has found sanctuary in Afghanistan. Solving that problem will require three-way cooperation among Pakistan, Afghanistan and the US.*

²⁴ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1659013/6-de-radicalising-face-pakistan/>

²⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1395575/raiwind-attack>

Why are Islamists uniting again? Qamar Cheema , *Daily Times*, 24 March²⁶

The five parties certainly aren't on the same page regarding various issues, but the MMA has been revived nonetheless because Islamist leaders believe it is time for the spiritual sanitization of their supporters. Perhaps through collective sanitization, they can make changes on a larger scale and can achieve their preferred outcome for the elections. This should be a cause for concern. *According to the MMA, the last time it reared its head was because of anti-US sentiments, which were ripe because of American invasions in Afghanistan and Iraq. But many believe MMA was a construct of General Pervez Musharraf. This time, however, the MMA says that a collective campaign is needed for the glory of Islam.* MMA considers itself a consortium of political parties which believe in evolution and not revolution, and wants to use American discriminatory policies in Muslim world as a political tool, blaming the Western powers for the conflicts in the Muslim world. The Trump administration's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel will likely fit into the MMA narrative, as well as the Rohingya Genocide in Myanmar. The PTI won KP in 2013 because it promised the youth change. This is something young people know Islamists cannot deliver. This is what has them worried, and motivated them to unite to deal with the PTI together. The MMA alliance is an attempt to retain KP, they know they can't accomplish anything at the federal level. The MMA will fight hard to ensure its own survival and to keep its vote base intact. Last time, the MMA was able to win 50 seats in the 2002 elections. In 2013, the JUI-F and JI won thirteen and 3 seats respectively. Let's see how they perform this time around.

PROVINCES & REGIONS

Balochistan

What does 'victory' for Balochistan mean? Editorial, *Daily Times*, 14 March²⁷

Nothing in this hard country is as straightforward as it seems. And the fear is that, far from center-staging the ongoing troubles within the province — Balochistan will become yet another front in the proxy war between the military establishment and the ruling PMLN. Indeed, the dye was more or less cast early this year when a coup from within dissident party ranks, supported by non-partisan allies, sought to oust the then Chief Minister. Naturally, there has been much talk of 'hidden hands' pulling the

²⁶ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/219538/why-are-islamists-uniting-again/>

²⁷ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/214540/what-does-victory-for-balochistan-mean/>

strings in Balochistan. Gen Bajwa has made no secret of essentially selling CPEC to the local people as a panacea to prevailing security and economic challenges. And with the backing of Mr. Sanjrani by both the PTI and PPP there does, indeed, seem to be something afoot. Imran Khan's party has spent much of the last eight years fielding allegations of entering into a certain understanding with the military establishment. As for Asif Ali Zardari, he is no longer the same man who dared to take on the security apparatus in a (one-sided) war of words some three years ago. Indeed, this is not the first time that the two parties have joined hands. *If such whisperings are true; if the military establishment and its civilian surrogates are behind the recent political swings in Balochistan to, in part, fulfil what many see as a vendetta against the Centre.*

Balochistan Awami Party, Editorial, Daily Times, 31 March²⁸

Recent manoeuvrings in Balochistan, from the ousting of a sitting chief minister to the recent election of the Chairman of the Senate, were aimed first and foremost to further weaken the Centre. But just in case such subtleties were lost on the ruling regime the province's dissenting lawmakers have launched a new political party. *That the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) was announced from the CM Secretariat is significant, given that Abdul Quddus Bizenjo is also part of the new set-up. The BAP is all set to contest this summer's general elections.* Though it has still to sit down and come up with a manifesto; something it says will be done over the next month. All of which suggests that this grand finale of sorts has been some time in the making. Indeed, there have long been contentions that the military establishment may have backed the political shake-ups that have hit Balochistan since the beginning of the year. But be that as it may, there is no getting around the fact that when ordinary citizens are kept in the dark — this significantly reduces the power of accountability. For a political party should have at its core the mandate of the people. And this includes addressing the views of separatists. The latter have said they are committed to a joint and peaceful struggle to secure their demands; holding a couple of meetings in Geneva towards this end late last year. And it was there that the spokesperson of the proscribed Baloch Republican Party (BRP) categorically dismissed ideological links to the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) or any other sectarian groups. *Similarly, claims of being funded by India's RAW were rejected; with the focus remaining on reforming exploitative power imbalances. Tellingly, the BRP has said that the security apparatus alone is empowered to hold dialogue with the resistance movement.*

²⁸ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/221733/balochistan-awami-party/>

FATA

War, masculinity, and the Pashtun long march, Saif Ullah Nasar, *Daily Times*, 8 March²⁹

In the ten-day long sit-in, the Pashtuns, who are otherwise known as 'primitive' and conservative, repeatedly shouted, '*Nar Pashtun, Batur Pashtun*,' (who is) the manly and brave Pashtun? Thousands of protestors chanted arduously and unequivocally, 'Manzoor Pashtun, Manzoor Pashtun' the young star and leader of the sit-in. Much was the zeal that the participants of the march intercepted any speaker who reiterated the long-held myth of '*ghayourqabail*' (fearless tribesmen). The marchers emphatically rejected such notions of manhood which manipulate them into laying down their lives recklessly for the state's sake. 'No more deaths,' the crowd would roar, and ask mockingly, 'what *ghairat* (honour) is it to live under colonially sanctioned FCR?' In fact, tears in the eyes of Manzoor Pashtun and other men while recounting torture stories at the hand of the Pakistani military and the suffering of hundreds of women defy such narrative about Pashtun men. *Unfortunately, the rhetoric of 'brave tribesmen' is tenaciously held and widely promoted by the Pakistani state itself. The state invokes it from time to time so as to exploit the hyper masculinity of the tribesmen in proxy wars as cheap labour or non-military combatants. Unsurprisingly, the primary victims of such conflicts are the tribesmen themselves.*

The Pakhtun spring, Khurram Husain, *Dawn*, 15 March³⁰

Their stories are finding so much traction in the wider society, that the beginning of a grass-roots movement appears to be in the making. What is particularly interesting about this movement is that it is spontaneous, and has an amorphous leadership drawn from a younger generation with no links to organized politics. *What is dismaying to see is how their efforts have been ignored by the big mainstream political parties, as well as the mainstream media. What is even more terrible in seeing this unfold is the memory of the enormous sacrifices made by the people of Peshawar, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa more broadly, as well as Quetta during the 'war on terror'.* We have forgotten the early years of the terrible conflict with the TTP that got going following the Lal Masjid operation, when bombings in Peshawar had become an almost daily occurrence, including, in one case, targeting a market frequented by women and children specifically. What is sad to see is how the play of democratic politics has missed these voices almost entirely. The self-correction of democracy, one of the most powerful social forces in the world,

²⁹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/211891/war-masculinity-and-the-pashtun-long-march/>

³⁰ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1395375/the-pakhtun-spring>

relies on harvesting these grievances and channeling them into the mainstream political life of the system.

Suppressing a youth movement will harm Pakistan's future, Raza Rumi, Daily Times, 18 March³¹

The securitization of discourse is so acute that for many days the mainstream media tried to blackout the Pashtun Tahfuz Movement. Traditionally, Pakistan's holier-than-thou television channels are not interested in Balochistan or federally administered tribal areas (FATA). There are few rating meters installed there and it is bad business to cover events related to these areas. Their self-satisfying slogans ring hollow as the imperatives of news programming are largely profit oriented. In the case of PTM, the mainstream media were also exercising self-censorship. When the young men (and a few women) of PTM reached Balochistan and expanded the ambit of this mobilization with more direct criticism of state policies and excesses in the name of 'security', they were clamped down using the old remedies of the postcolonial state. Cases were registered in Balochistan against PTM leaders, including 24-year-old Manzoor Pashteen, for violating sections 153 (provoking with the intent to cause riot) and 153-A (causing enmity among groups) of the penal code. *This is double injury. First, the FATA population lives under the colonial legal system, i.e. the Frontier Crimes Regulation. And second when it protests for enforcement of constitutional rights and why people go missing another colonial legal provision is used.* Section 153A is vaguely worded colonial era relic and has been used in the past as well. *In 1957, a Pakistan court used this to convict Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan aka Bacha Khan*

Restoring Pashtun dignity in Pakistan, Dr Saira Bano Orakzai, Daily Times, 23 March³²

Pashtuns have been subjected to many dignity violating incidents since the establishment of Pakistan in 1947, both at the macro and micro level. Using a pre-colonial terminology of 'Tribal', with a historical baggage of 'primitiveness' and 'savagery' attached to it, is used in all the constitutions of Pakistan. The constitutions of 1973 reinforced both the 'tribal' and 'federally administered' terms giving not only a sense of lack of 'progress' and 'modernization' in the areas and among the people, but also a spatial indicator and pejorative label to depict the inability to govern itself. The strong ethno-centric sense of the Tribal connotation emphasize both an

³¹<https://dailytimes.com.pk/216242/suppressing-a-youth-movement-will-harm-pakistans-future/>

³² <https://dailytimes.com.pk/218319/restoring-pashtun-dignity-in-pakistan/>

emotional /psychological marginalization and a spatial disconnect from Pakistan. The Tribal areas is neither a correct regional term nor had anything to do with the strategically important mountainous regions and the people living in it. *The stereotyping of the Pashtuns living in this region, the attitude meted against them by the security forces and by the provinces of Pakistan emerges from this term of tribal as being uncivilized and thus Pakistan's security forces are on a civilizing mission in FATA, taking over the 'white's man burden' to end conflict through a misguided concept of peace.* The need has never been so urgent for the people in leadership position to lead with dignity and to be aware of the volatility of experiencing an assault of self-worth of individuals in conflict zones. Pakistani is playing a leading role in the peacekeeping operations around the world. One of the central concept in peacekeeping is to treat the people in conflict zone with dignity and respect and not to indulge in anything that is a cause of indignity and thus harbinger of conflict and violence. Pakistan's security forces need to apply this fundamental concept to its own people too in order to facilitate a reconciliation and healing process and to honour Pashtun dignity as a way to begin a new phase of peace in the Pakistan.

The FATA media blackout, Kiran Nazish, *Daily Times*, 24 March³³

While the Pashtun march this February brought some media coverage to the plight of FATA's tribals, it was not until some notable individuals got involved in the march that mainstream media began to cover it. I know friends who are head of news content at TV channels who said they had sent their vans and reporters to the spot, but didn't feel it was 'safe enough' for them to cover the march. Nonetheless, most coverage of the issues Pashtuns face are in print media, and not the electronic media, which is far more popular. Pakistanis in most parts of the country have no idea about how the people of FATA and Waziristan have literally sacrificed their lives and livelihoods for this country's so-called counter-terrorism operations. This is what media blackouts do. Keeping nations blindfolded by mean of those who can see. The Pashtun Long March has brought the issue of unexplained disappearances to the fore. Occasionally, people like Manzoor Pashteen the valiant young man who started the recent Pashtun Long March — contacted me online, and would send me new stories of disappearances. I ignored all of them, for my own safety but at times I asked other journalist colleagues to cover them. No one did, because for most journalists, FATA is the red line, and red means deadly....*You come at your will and go at ours. Don't you know who rules here? This is our territory", he went on. He continued to talk about how he could take me somewhere where no one would find me or find*

³³ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/218785/the-fata-media-blackout/>

out about what he would do to me. My translator and I sat still, in the echo of their intimidating laughs.

Kashmir

Trouble in Kashmir, Editorial, *Daily Times*, 07 March³⁴

Things have only worsened since the Hindu nationalist government of Narendra Modi took the reins at the center in 2014. India-held Kashmir's people have to live under the suffocating footprint of the Indian military. While India claims to respect democratic norms, it has used thoroughly undemocratic methods to crush Kashmiri resistance; these include the barbaric use of pellet guns on civilians, including children, as well as the much-publicized incident last year when Indian troops tied a man to a jeep as a human shield. Such atrocious activities will hardly win Kashmiri hearts and minds; they will only increase the disaffection of the valley's people and further distance them from Delhi. *Moreover, the BJP's attempt to tinker with the Indian constitution to remove Kashmir's special status has not gone down well. India must realize that clamping down on Kashmir is not the solution; the only remedy lies in talks, involving all three parties: India, Pakistan and the Kashmiris.*

Sehrai's succession, Shujaat Bukhari, *The Friday Times*, 23 March³⁵

He nominated his long-time associate Ashraf Sehrai as the new chairman but will continue to head the Hurriyat Conference as a conglomerate. Though three leaders representing the struggle for the "right of self-determination" — Syed Ali Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Yasin Malik—have been together for nearly two years under a new banner of the Joint Resistance Leadership, Mirwaiz leads another faction of the APHC. Now Geelani, in agreement with the Majlis-e-Shoora or general council of his party, has made the choice. *Sehrai was also seen as a natural successor given their unbending companionship of nearly six decades. Sehrai never failed him like the others in the Jamaat-e-Islami and remained with him through thick and thin. He may not match his charisma but he is very close to him ideologically and intellectually. Insiders say that Sehrai is also a hardliner when it comes to Kashmir as a dispute so he will continue the legacy.* Age may not be on his side but he certainly is in better health than Geelani and can run affairs on a day-to-day basis. The next step would be to take Sehrai to the "hot seat" or the chairmanship of the Hurriyat Conference. The other challenge for him is whether he can reunite the resistance leadership as it existed before September 2003.

³⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1393718/trouble-in-kashmir>

³⁵ <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/tft/sehrais-succession/>

RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA

The China-India tango, Khurram Husain, *Dawn*, 08 March³⁶

More recently, the Indian government called on all its officials to refrain from attending a 'Thank you India' rally being organized by the Dalai Lama in Delhi, which is an annual affair and always sees attendance by high-level Indian officialdom, as well as searing rhetoric directed towards China during the speeches that take place there. This time the event has been rescheduled and moved back to Dharamsala. There was no open advisory from the government to do this apparently, just a quiet word whispered to the Dalai Lama to keep things tame, and an internal communication letting government officials (including from the states) to refrain from attending. The gesture has been interpreted by columnists and observers of Indian foreign policy as a clear bow to Chinese sensitivities. *As of a few days ago, this hardening of the Chinese positions in Doklam was officially acknowledged by the India's defence minister. Yet, India's diplomacy continues to favour going soft on Chinese sensitivities, by pulling away from the Dalai Lama as well as staying out of the ongoing crisis in the Maldives.* Any warming of ties between China and India, or more specifically, any graduation of ties beyond the border dispute and overlapping regional agendas, has deep implications for Pakistan, as the events in the Paris meeting of FATF might have just given us a glimpse of. And such a warming of ties, if you look at the history, is almost inevitable, provided emotion doesn't hold rationality hostage.

Keeping India out of Pakistan-Bangladesh relations, Col (R) Muhammad Hanif, *Daily Times*, 08 March³⁷

Since 1971, India and the Awami league governments have been jointly organizing propagandist programs to create and maintain hatred among the people of Bangladesh and Pakistan. This includes many projects, such as setting up of the war museum, exchange of wartime documents, Indian army soldiers' mausoleum, making documentaries and feature films and issue of postal stamps. In this regard, India has recently circulated a movie via YouTube showing 1971 war events, boasting self-proclaimed superiority of the Indian military. *But in the changed geopolitical and strategic environment around South Asia and with emerging economic opportunities, it is important for both Pakistan and Bangladesh to forget about their bitter past, shun India's spoiler role and develop mutually beneficial relations with each other to improve their economies and wellbeing of their people.* In this context, it would be wise if Sheikh Hussina Wajid also forgets the bitter past,

³⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1393790/the-china-india-tango>

³⁷ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/211364/keeping-india-pakistan-bangladesh-relations/>

shuns India's spoiler role, and endeavors to improve BD's relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh should join the CPEC to exploit vast trade opportunities within South Asia, with West Asia, the Central Asian Republics, China and Russia.

Bringing up Modi, diplomatically, Latha Jishnu, *Dawn*, 12 March³⁸

India is now going all out to address China's sensitivities even if it means stepping back from the muscular nationalism that has characterized the BJP's approach to neighbours. Institutional frameworks that were given short shrift earlier are back at the center of a more realistic policy that is being pieced together by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) since there is a realisation that not much has worked to India's advantage with the exception of relations with Iran. *The question is how willing Modi supporters and the BJP's ideological mentor, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, are willing to accept the new reality.* Convinced of their latent superiority, the saffron brigade of Hindu supremacists believes China is a competitor that needs to be contained and that India and the US are natural allies in such a project. To concede that China is more powerful and far too rich to be considered in the same league as India is anathema to it. Besides, there is the deep-rooted yearning to avenge the defeat of 1962. The frustration with the government's inability to deal with the volatile Pakistan border prompted another general to state that "restoring ceasefire requires statesmanship, not brinkmanship."

India's Military Spending and South Asian Security, Syed Zain Jaffery, *Modern-diplomacy*, 16 March³⁹

Despite the fact that, India's unbridled military modernization is the primary impetus behind South Asian instability, global power's economic expediencies in South Asia also undermines delicate conventional parity between India and Pakistan. For instance, Indo-US strategic partnership, which apparently touted as US' China containment policy, seems more of a Pakistan containment policy. Much of the US provided weapon-tech to India is more useful against Pakistan in a conventional warfare. Almost 70% of Indian military troops and weapon system are deployed against Line of Control, (LOC). Interestingly, peaceful settlement of Doklam issue between China and India as well as sky-rocketing bilateral trade between both countries, which has reached to \$84.44 billion last year, makes prospects of conflict almost impossible. India is following a policy of coercion at regional level primarily, against Pakistan which shares history of hostility and violence due to longstanding territorial disputes such as Kashmir. There is growing perception in New Delhi that militarily strong India can dictate South Asian

³⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1394769/bringing-up-modi-diplomatically>

³⁹ <https://modern diplomacy.eu/2018/03/16/indias-military-spending-and-south-asian-security/>

affairs. That's why India has been consistently opposing diplomacy and dialogue for peaceful resolution of disputes. Therefore, to meet its foreign policy goals, which are based on coercion and usage of hard power, India spends massive in military build-up. *India has been trying to create an environment conducive to wage limited war against Pakistan. For that, India has not just developed its military doctrine, Cold Start Doctrine, but also initiated and sponsored sub conventional war in Pakistan's chaotic province, Balochistan.*

URDU & ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Urdu

Pakistan's Position on International Scenario: Facts & Fictions, Khurram Abbas, Hilal Magazine, March Issue⁴⁰

We would see that despite so much of negative publicity made by European countries and our neighbours *Bharat*, Pakistan even now continues to be an important Member in the galaxies of Middle East, West Asia, South Africa and also South America. We have also succeeded in having very cordial relations with Brazil in South America. *We are well aware that despite its best efforts our Enemy (Bharat) has until now has failed to get Membership of Nuclear Supply Group (NSG). This could be attributed to our cordial relations with Brazil in South America. Secondly, Bharat has also failed to fulfil its long cherished dream to obtain Permanent Membership of Economic Cooperation Organization at Shanghai.* Apart from this Pakistan has maintained its distinct position in 8 out of 10 international organizations. In other international organizations also Pakistan enjoys rather commands respect and credibility. Despite Pakistan's internal heterogeneous elements and internal bickering, Pakistan has, no doubt, been acknowledged as an important country in the Islamic world. On the other hand, Pakistan has been held in high esteem in several other countries. Pakistan has maintained its strong stand on Palestine issue and an impartial attitude towards inter-State problems of the Middle East countries. To be brief- all the countries have concurred on this view - that apart from impediments/hassles and challenges from the Western countries and our neighbours *Bharat*, our country has

⁴⁰ <http://hilal.gov.pk/images/Pdf-Docs/eng-march18.pdf>

bravely faced the problems of terrorism, refugee problem and internal unrest within the country.

Prosperous Balochistan and contribution of Army and UAE, Mohiuddin bin Ahmad Din, *Daily Ausaf*, 07 March⁴¹

Baluchistan is the largest state of Pakistan in term of area. But it has very less population. It is largely backward region due to attitudes of its tribal heads and chiefs. Central government provides funds for prosperity and development of Baluchistan but tribal heads and ruling elite do not let those funds reach to common Baluchi People. Army has contributed a lot in term of education and upgradation of level of education. We regret the era of Pervez Musharraf when farsightedness was not adopted towards issue of Baluchistan and which culminated in killing of Akbar Bugti. Last Sunday General Qamar Bajwa announced the program of "*Prosperous Balochistan*". Bajwa said while laying the foundation of Desalination plant, sponsored by UAE and Switzerland. It will reduce the water crisis in Baluchistan. General was on today visits to Baluchistan. External plots and conspiracies are on peak in regard to Baluchistan. Deprivation of Baluch people are used by privileged people and nation, sitting outside Pakistan. So that Baluch could be segregated from rest of Pakistan. *India's role is known to everyone. USA is a silent supporter of greater Baluchistan project. There were time when Russia used to be supporter of Baluch rebels. Thanks God ties between Russia and Pakistan are progressing nowadays.*

Amnesty international should take notice of arrest and detention of Hurriyat leaders, Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, 09 March⁴²

Indian occupational forces have stopped the call of March to Shopian given by Hurriyat Conference. Movements of citizen were barred in different areas of Srinagar on Wednesday. And different leaders of Hurriyat including Mirwaiz Umar Farooq was arrested. Number of innocent youths killed by Indian forces are increasing. And international institutions are silent. *Fact of the matter is every day occupied Kashmir witness brutalities against, children, youths, elderly and women.* Women are abused in the name of search operation. The world should take note of tense and deteriorating situation in Kashmir. Indian forces have killed around 13 citizens in last few days. No one can differ that till AFSPA like acts are there killing will be continued. *Pakistan should demand international organizations and specially amnesty international and other human rights organizations to send fact finding mission.* So that the world could know the real situation and so called face of Indian republic could be exposed.

⁴¹<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2018-03-07/42889/p1007.gif>

⁴² <http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2018-03-09/43086/p1001.gif>

Winds are informing arrival of PPP, by Raza Irfan Khawaja, *Daily Ausaf*, 19 March⁴³

Now Nawaz Sharif is reading his defeat in coming general election after defeat in senate election. Adyala jail's cleaning process is also frightening him. Since time has passed so nothing is going to change the fate of Nawaz Shareef. Promises are made for common man of Pakistan. Now it is time to fly. Birds are preparing to change their nests. *Specially the south Punjab which is famous for change. They are waiting for direction of wind. Chief justice also said that this time free and fair election will be held. It indicates that last election was not fair.* Asif Ali Zardari was demonized after 2008 general election. In 2013 Zardari became factor that worked from downing the hero status of PPP to zero. Same were prediction before senate election. After change of government in Baluchistan and obtaining 10 senate seats in Sindh and 2 in KPK indicates that Asif Ali Zardari is an influential politicians. This momentum is going to give a new life to PPP. In fight between PMLN and PTI, PPP is only watching the game. I wish I could see Imran Khan as prime minister of Pakistan but winds blowing in favor of PPP.

Tension between India and Pakistan: Track II and Back Channels Active, Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, 21 March⁴⁴

To reduce ongoing tension between Pakistan-India 14 track 2 and two back channels started working. Pakistani diplomats and their families are being harassed in variety of ways in India. Taking note of this development Pakistan has asked its high commissioner to country for consultation. As per our observation India's one sided tension with Pakistan is on peak. And the tension of this scale was never seen in last one decade. India is indulging in worst kind of terrorism at LoC and working boundary. Hundreds of innocent civilians got killed or received injuries due to these violations.

Now back channel diplomacy has resuming their duty in a condition when Pakistani diplomats are being harassed and even their lives are in danger. We don't think that this useless practice is going to benefit the country. But rather India is selling this impression to the world that its relation with Pakistan is getting better. And there is no major issue expect Pakistan is exporting terrorism. This type of diplomacy never resulted in any benefit to Pakistan. But put Pakistan under pressure. Instead of track two diplomacy Pakistan should ask leadership of USA, UK, Russia, China, Iran and Afghanistan to further with their third party mediation offer. *And pressurize India to accept UNSC resolution on Kashmir with a timeline. As far as army aggression is*

⁴³<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2018-03-19/44092/p1008.gif>

⁴⁴<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2018-03-21/44278/p1001.gif>

concerned Pakistan army is giving them befitting reply. Though the current track II dialogue is consist of 15 individuals, who are ex-diplomate, ex-army man and journalists. But they cannot influence *Modi government of anything which consider Kashmir as integral part of India and not ready to demilitarize it at any cost.* Since India had occupied Kashmir by sending their troops there. So this occupation could be finished through dialogue. If UN send peace keeping forces there then Kashmiris can participate in plebiscite freely.

Electronic Media

Interview: Balochistan CM Quddus Bizenjo, Zem TV, 02 March⁴⁵

In the “*Amne Samane*” programme in Abb Tak TV, the new chief minister of Balochistan, Abdul Quddus Bizenjo, was interviewed by Nur-ul-Arfin Siddiqui. He was asked many uncomfortable questions. The first one was how could he represent his constituency of over 58,000 people as MPA and the entire population of Balochistan as the new Chief Minister, when he bagged only 540 votes in the last elections. *He tackled the question by saying that the anchor should have talked about his close opponent could secure only 95 votes!* And about his role as Chief Minister, he said that he was doing everything possible to bring back normalcy to the state. The fact that he could travel without patrol in the state meant that the state was getting out of the state of militancy. He seemed too critical of the erstwhile PML-N government led by Sanaullah Zehri, who was forced to resign in response to a vote of no-confidence tabled against him by a breakaway group from PML-N led by A Q Bizenjo.

Jirga with Saleem Safi, Geo News, 11 March⁴⁶

On the latest Episode of *Jirga*, Saleem Safi interviews Mustafa Kamal founder of the Pak Sarzmeen Party about his party politics and quiz him on the political turmoil in MQM of which he was a part. When asked about the difference in dealing with the Muhajjir Issue as compared to the MQM, Mustafa Kamal underlines that I am not in favour of selective politics and I believe that Muhajjir rights will be preserved only when we think about an inclusive society. “My party talks about the right of all the other minorities in Pakistan, especially in Karachi. My fight is not with other Pakistani’s but to make sure everyone lives in peace”. While as the MQM has done more bad than good to the Muhajjir, so much so that now they are considered a security

⁴⁵ <http://www.zemtv.com/2018/03/02/aamne-saamne-2nd-march-2018/>

⁴⁶ <http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2018-03-21/44278/p1001.gif>

risk in Pakistan. People think twice or thrice before employing the people of this community. Altaf Hussain destroyed the party as well as many generations of the youth of Karachi, *Altaf Hussain ne Muhajiro ko nuskan pohunchaya hai aur inko ek security risk bana diya hai*". The people of this community were more educated thirty years back and there was acceptance for them in the Pakistani society but the leaders of MQM gambled their future for petty political gains. The current turmoil in the party according to Mustafa Kamal has been caused by Altaf Hussain and now the party is on the point of destruction. "My doors are open for the people as well as MQM workers and I will accept them and purify them of their sins and accept them as part of my party.

Why Media has not given coverage to Pashtun Long March? , Capital TV, 15 March⁴⁷

The anchor Mehruk Fahad Qureshi opens the debate on "*why Media has not given coverage to Pashtun Long March*" with his guests on the program Hum Sab. She starts by asking the famous columnist Khurram Hussain about the Pashtun Tahfuz Movement (PTM) and why has he referred to it as the *Pashtun spring* in this article. Khurram underlines that for 15 years Pakistan and other powers have been discussing and debating about the issues of the tribal areas but the region still remains backward and isolated. In these years a whole generation has been born and grown up to be youth. It is this educated youth who are now raising questions and asking for their rights within the framework of the Pakistani Constitution. Instead of repeating the debate with the same stakeholders as past, it's time that the government listen to the narrative of the youth of this region who has something fresh and new to add to the whole Pashtun debate. These youth who have spent the whole life in war like situation are now trying to tell something. "For 15 years they have been listening to us and now it's time we sit with them and try and understand their grievances". Another guest and social worker Jibran Nasir *highlights the fact that the mainland Pakistani's have always looked at the tribal regions in a very superficial manner, they have little knowledge of their background. Adding to it the mainstream media on which they depend for news has not been able to reach to the grassroots of the issue, of why the movement at the first place.* These indigenous voices are voiceless and they are represented as a token by the powerful elite who feels it's better to keep them uneducated to run their own shops. Tahir Khan, a Pashtun himself adds, In the name of war on terror they have killed more innocent people than terrorists. The condition of Pakistan is such that even for

⁴⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAxcPv5-bF0>

killing terrorists they have taken help from the US, it is an irony that the so called enemies of Pakistan are killed by the US. Pervez underlines that although Pakistan claims to have cleared the area of terrorists but the vacuum left due to these gruesome operations have not been filled which worsening the situation day by day. The PTM can be one factor that can help to fill these gaps, if only government is ready to listen to a fresh perspective by the youth.

On the Front with Kamran Shahid, Duniya News, 27 March⁴⁸

On this edition Kamran Shahid try to understand the logic and reason behind the recent meeting of PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi with the Chief Justice of Pakistan. It has to be noted that recently Nawaz Sharif has said that he should not have highlighted the memo gate scandal and Shabaz Sharif is giving lectures on why it's the need of the hour for everyone to unite for the sake of Pakistan. Given this, questions are being asked in Pakistan if Nawaz Sharif is feeling guilty about his acts in the past. *Talking on this Humayau Guhar underlines that Shabaz Sharif was not happy with Nawaz Sharif's attitude and was not in favour of him locking horns with the judiciary and army.* Today he is talking about change in ideology (*Mai Nazaryati hogaya hu*). Which does not make any sense. Does this means that he want to close the past chapters and start afresh just because the elections are around the corner. Mazar Abbas is of the view that the meeting between PM and CJ should not have happened at this particular time when Pakistan's politics is in a mess. The speculation mongering are already rift in the media that PM must have tendered apology on behalf of Nawaz Sharif. This looks like an unprecedented event because it is an open secret that PM still considers Nawaz Sharif as his supreme leader. But Nawaz Sharif's party had to bear the brunt of his controversies as cases are lodged against many of his party cadres for their anti- judiciary stance and speeches. *Guhar adds to the debate by saying that it's not an easy task to change nazaryal/ideology so easily and fast. This is a long transition for which one has to build his ideology, nourish and nurture it with rule of law.* Just mincing the words do not change anything, he added. Nawaz Sharif has said that he will reveal the deeds of Raheel Sharif when it is the right time, but the question is when the right time is? Looks like he is trying to take the back seat, no more attacking judiciary so that he can get a way back to his political career.

⁴⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nELfBIU-xKM>

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Sindh				
Karachi ⁴⁹	14/03/2018	Rangers attacked in Lyari; one personnel martyred, five terrorists killed	06	04
Balochistan				
Qillah Saifullah ⁵⁰	16/03/2018	Blast At Home Of Taliban-Linked Pakistani Cleric Kills Seven	07	10
Chaghi ⁵¹	21/03/2018	Landmine blast kills two in Balochistan	02	0
Quetta ⁵²	07/03/2018		01	00
Punjab				
Lahore ⁵³	15/03/2018	Five policemen among nine killed in Lahore	09	20

⁴⁹<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1659427/1-rangers-attacked-lyari-one-personnel-martyred-five-terrorists-killed/>

⁵⁰ <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/pakistan-balochistan-blast/29103584.html>

⁵¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1396680/landmine-blast-kills-two-in-balochistan>

⁵² <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2018/03/07/gunmen-kill-police-officer-guarding-shiites-in-pakistan.html>

		suicide attack		
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⁵³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1395369/five-policemen-among-nine-killed-in-lahore-suicide-attack>