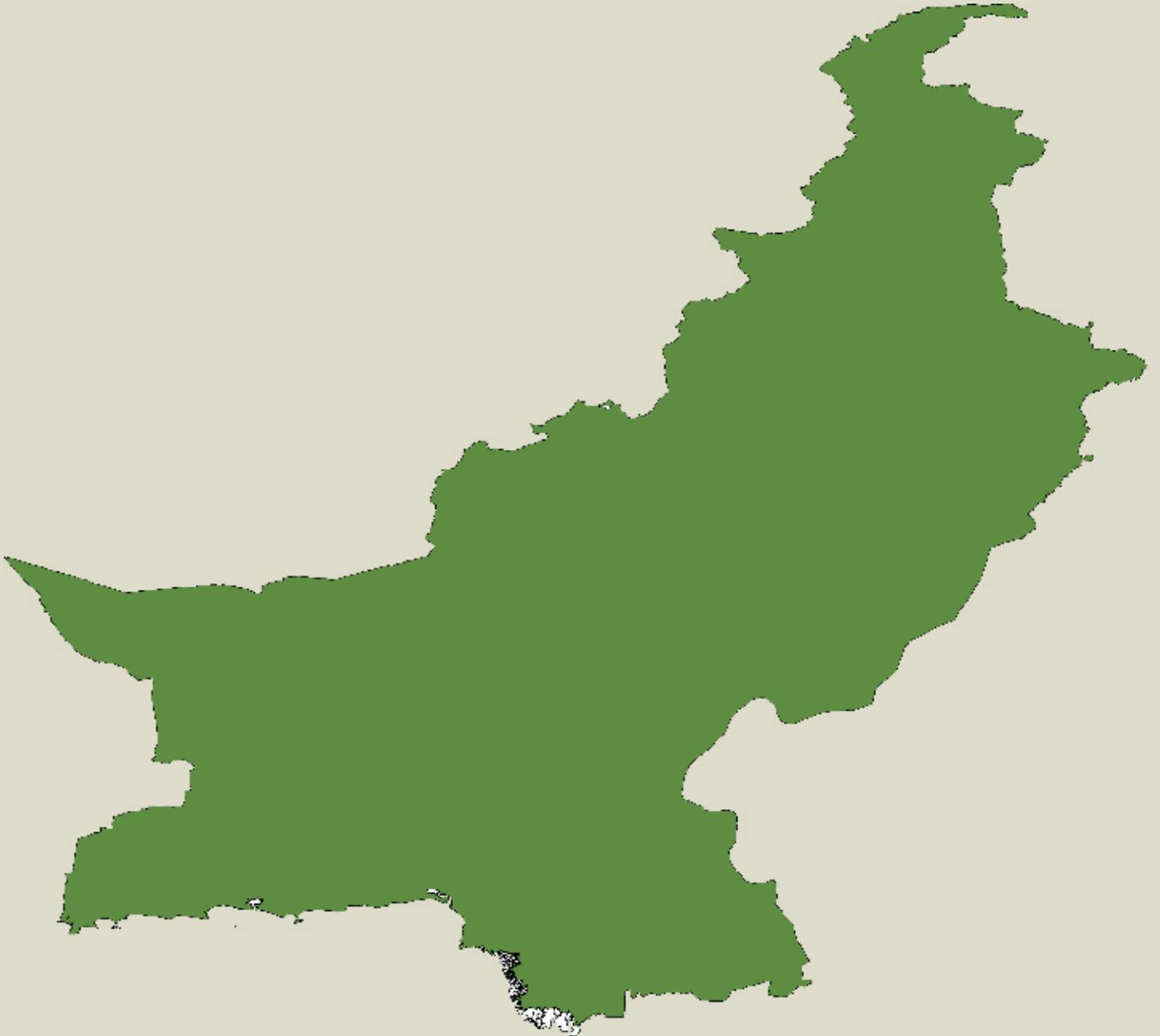


MAY 2018

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



Prepared by
Dr. Zainab Akhter
Dr. Nazir Ahmad Mir
Dr. Mohammad Eisa
Dr. Ashok Behuria

idsa
INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES
रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES
1-Development Enclave, Near USI
Delhi Cantonment, New Delhi-110010

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, May 2018

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Editorial

After years of playing around the idea of the merger of FATA into KP, the outgoing PML-N government pushed the issue to the forefront. After much lobbying the National Assembly finally passed the Federally Administered Tribal Areas Reforms bill, 2018 for the merger of Fata with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Surprisingly the Senate endorsed the proposed law with an overwhelming majority with 71 votes in favour of the bill. The PML-N's allies JUI-F headed by Maulana Fazlur Rehman and PkMAP headed by Mehmood Achakzai voted against the merger. It has to be noted that they have consistently been opposing the merger, calling instead for referendum. These tribal leaders see the mainstreaming of FATA as a threat for the survival of their regional parties and fear of seeing their support base erode. Also, for religious leader Maulana Fazlur the merger possess a threat of bringing the vast network of seminaries that operate under JUI-F control under direct scrutiny.

With Promises of more political and judicial powers to GB, the Government of Pakistan promulgated the Gilgit-Baltistan Order-2018, replacing the GB Empowerment and Self-Governance Order of 2009. The new order has sparked a debate and protest across the region and is said to be a Prime Minister centric order. According to analysts the order impart more power to the Prime Minister and he will have the final authority on legislation and policies of the government. Also, no one can challenge or question the validity of this order. Termed as 'G-B Emperor Order' on Social Media, the proposed order has drawn immense criticism on Social Media. It is regarded as eyewash which has deprived the people of G-B of their basic constitutional and political rights. Some have even gone to the length of saying that the new order tend to roll back whatever little autonomy and right to self-rule was given by the previous order of 2009 led by the Sartaj Aziz Committee. Analysts from the region believe that if passed and implemented, the proposed G-B order of 2018 will have a backlash and amplify the grievances of people in G-B and push them further to the margins.

Towards the end of this month, the government of Pakistan and opposition finally came to a mutual agreement in naming former Chief Justice Nasir-ul-Mulk as the country's caretaker prime minister, thus ending weeks of political wrangling. Mulk was the chief justice of Pakistan's Supreme Court for over a year in 2014 and is known for his neutral political overlook. His term as caretaker government will start from 01st of June when the ruling PML-N government completes its five year term. It has to be noted here that the

responsibility of the caretaker government is mainly to make sure that the elections are held on time, and to ensure the affairs of the government run smooth during the interim between the successive governments. The role is largely ceremonial as the caretaker government is constitutionally given limited decision making power on major policy issues.

On the India-Pakistan front, the overtures for talks by the Pakistani Army was responded by India agreeing to ensure ceasefire along the borders in line with 2003 ceasefire agreement between the two nations. The understanding was reached between the two director generals of military operations who made a “special” hotline contact on to review the prevailing situation along the Line of Control in Kashmir and the Working Boundary. But soon after the agreement the ceasefire violations from the Pakistani side was seen to be breached recently on several occasions therefore raise questions about the efficacy of such bilateral ceasefire agreement between the two neighbours.

Dr. Zainab Akhter

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Pakistan's pivot to Russia, Kamran Yousuf, *The Express Tribune*, 07 May¹

In August last year, US President Trump unveiled his much-awaited strategy for Afghanistan and the wider South Asian region. Trump singled out Pakistan for not doing enough to curb terrorism and threatened to halt security assistance if it continued to play a “double game.” ... *One of the first things Pakistan did after Trump announced a new policy was to reach out to China. And Beijing did not take long to lend support to Pakistan. What was significant though was the prompt statement issued by Russia, acknowledging Pakistan's pivotal role in fighting terrorism and for regional peace and stability.* Coming from Russia, a country with whom Pakistan has had antagonistic relationship for almost 6 decades - thanks to the Cold War - was not an ordinary development. ... *That statement was not the result of just a phone call but a consequence of years of painstaking and covert efforts by the two sides, seeking a new beginning.* Although Pakistan began to reach out to Russia during Musharraf regime, 2011 was the turning point. It was the same year when Pakistan's fragile alliance with the US had gone haywire. ...

MMA 2.0, Editorial, *The Nation*, 15 May²

The recently revived alliance of religious-political parties, Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA), chose Lahore to kick-start its campaign for the upcoming elections. *The rally, a gathering of five religious-political parties, was anything but a political alliance as every party came up with its respective flag. Such a show of disunity reveals the fragility of the coalition.* The primary focus of the rally's leadership was the deteriorating economic situation of the country. Condemning the prevailing economic model was the only theme all religious parties' leaders were united against. As usual, the speakers relied on anti-American slogans and fumed their anger against those who kowtow to its demands – which considering the hostility in recent Pak-US relations is, an obsolete concern to say the least. ... *Why did MMA choose to launch its campaign from Lahore? Is it because that the alliance is anticipating prospects of winning some seats from Punjab as well? Maybe. But it is also true that with the emergence of new religious-political parties on the political landscape of Pakistan, it will be an arduous task for MMA to unite the conservative religious vote as it did in 2002.* Whether MMA can defeat the new radical and aggressive religious-political groups, who are also relying on the same vote bank, with an even more rigid interpretation of

¹ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1704034/6-untold-story-pak-russia-bonhomie/>

² <https://nation.com.pk/15-May-2018/mma-2-0>

religion and sectarian agendas, is the real challenge MMA will confront in the upcoming elections.

Nawaz, the 'traitor', M Ziauddin. *Daily Times*, 17 May³

Currently it is Mr Nawaz Sharif who has been placed on this dishonourable pedestal. The media is having a field day. Part of the media is doing it willingly with an eye on its financial margins, others not-so-willingly and some others are doing it in the belief that they are contributing to a genuine national cause and saving the country in the process from certain disaster. Not that Mr Sharif has not given the 'designers' and the willing media enough paint to colour him jet black with the disreputable epitaph. *It was in the interest of the Indian government and its media to interpret the quote in question the way that suited their vested interest, especially the part where Nawaz says '...,should we allow them...?'. It was a rhetorical question, but the Indians interpreted the 'we' to mean that the former PM was admitting that the state of Pakistan had allowed the terrorists to go and carry out the Mumbai mayhem.* One of course, would not be too unhappy to see Nawaz Sharif being designated as a traitor but those who are identifying him as such would have to prove their allegation in a court of law and not by simply obtaining the desired verdict through a shrill media trail. And not even by the National Security Committee's rejection and denunciation of Nawaz Sharif's 'claims' which the NSC has spurned as 'incorrect', 'misleading' and 'fallacious'.

The role of religion in polls, Muhammad Amir Rana, *Dawn*, 20 May⁴

Apparently, using religious sentiments for acquiring political gains is not confined to religious parties; mainstream political parties have also mastered the art. However, religious sentimentalism is not merely political rhetoric; it has become a life-threatening reality to the extent that mere dissent can bring harm. Although political parties condemned the attack on the interior minister, no one dared challenge the driving force of religious sentimentalism. Perhaps they are not willing to do what they perceive as tantamount to putting their political careers at risk. There is little doubt that these parties will exploit religious and nationalistic sentiments. If such sentiments reach at a level where it could trigger hatred against political opponents, violence could be the outcome. *In this scenario, the religious vote base in these regions may slip from the hands of the MMA and shift to new sectarian and hyper-*

³ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/240938/nawaz-the-traitor/>

⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1408803>

nationalist political actors. The hatred and violence will help new religiously inspired actors maximize their vote bank. This might not translate into electoral success but will surely increase their street power and weight as pressure groups.

Credible elections, Dr Niaz Murtaza, Dawn, 22 May⁵

Pakistan desperately needs credible polls that produce political stability. A regime with a clear public mandate can tackle serious national problems more easily. But public mandates have often been usurped in Pakistan via various rigging tools. These tools have become less blatant over time given local and global pressures but still remain potent. For example the main tools during the 1990s were ones like vote suppression, vote extortion and vote buying. With vote buying and vote extortion, it appeared that certain sections of the establishment were getting strong candidates to switch parties via carrot-and-stick approaches. *After sitting out the 2008 and 2013 polls, there are worrying signs that some quarters could be getting ready to play an active role in the 2018 polls. While hard evidence is missing, many of the emergent patterns seem similar to the subtle tactics used for vote suppression, vote buying and vote extortion in the 1990s.* The controversial dismissal and lifetime barring of a prime minister, selective accountability and suspicious changing of loyalties by opportunist politicians are perceived as some signs. The end result may be a hung parliament. *While this may suit the aims of the powers that be, unfortunately, it will also mean a weak government without the authority to deal effectively with festering national problems.*

A counterproductive strategy? Umair Javed, Dawn, 21 May⁶

In the absence of any explanation for what they seek to gain from this positioning, one can assume that he sees his defined political goals being best served through a confrontation with the judiciary and the military. *That Nawaz's personal political career is at a dead-end for the immediate future is more or less confirmed. The odds of him returning to elected office in any capacity are contingent on an unprecedented upheaval in electoral and party politics.* Admittedly, the same was said when he was shipped off to exile during the Musharraf era, but the key difference this time around is that it's happening within the bounds of a legal system that enjoys some manner of constitutional and political cover. It's an ouster of a qualitatively different kind than the one seen last time. *The 'theory' introduced by Nawaz & co. is*

⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1409236/credible-elections>

⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1409032/a-counterproductive-strategy>

that a story of confrontation and victimisation works well internally in the party and with their core electorate. Getting people riled up about his encirclement by what he terms 'khalai makhlooq' is a way of consolidating support, and consequently, getting people within the party to fall in line behind his faction. Nawaz's favourability ratings as documented in a recent survey by Herald appear to have fallen, with a sizable segment of the sample holding strongly negative views. Even if survey data is deemed insufficient, qualitative evidence through both history and recent events seem to point towards the counterproductive nature of Nawaz's strategy.

Imran's 100-Day plan, Editorial, Daily Times, 22 May⁷

Imran Khan knows how to work the crowds. That much has never been in doubt. And it was the same story at the weekend when he unveiled his party's commitment to the people of Pakistan for the first 100 days of a PTI government. *As expected. This is an ambitious plan that falls rather short on substance. In other words, the 100-Day plan lacks in detail. There was no mention of how to realize any of this in practical terms. Thus there has been no outlining of enforcement mechanisms of any sort.* It therefore seems that Khan has not learned the lessons of his last defeat where he talked big but stumbled and fell when it came to walking the walk. A good place to start would be setting a final date by which all parties publish election manifestos. For an informed citizenry holds the key to democratic dispensation. Next, should come allotted spaces whereby each party is to give its final election broadcast. All messages should run at an equal and fixed length. What should not happen is those wishing to run the country for the next five years being allowed to hold press conferences willy nilly to try and outdo rivals. It is important that the last leg of election campaigns be conducted in a coherent and cohesive manner. Yet what Pakistan presently has is anything but. *There are no completed manifestos anywhere to speak of. The brouhaha that has been prompted by PTI's 100-Day plan should be an embarrassment to all. Not least because it does not even touch on what a full year of a Khan government might look like. Let alone an entire five-year tenure. And this is the best that is on offer. Pakistanis surely deserve better.*

Challenges to democracy, Zahid Hussain, Dawn, 23 May⁸

The unceremonious ouster of arguably the country's most powerful elected figure continues to cast long shadows over the fragile democratic political process. It remains to be seen whether the much-touted transition could

⁷ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/243003/imrans-100-day-plan/>

⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1409417/challenges-to-democracy>

change the existing power dynamics and bring political stability to the country or would it result in further weakening of the elected bodies, with non-elected institutions filling the void. *The apprehensions about installation of a hybrid political system with the military and judiciary becoming an informal part of the power troika are not without reason. In fact the country is already experiencing this creeping phenomenon.* Parliament has been reduced to a chaotic debating club with the leadership showing no deference to the elected house. *Despite the fact that Pakistan has entered the longest uninterrupted period of elected civilian rule in its history, democracy appears to be weakening. While elected governments and political leadership ceded space in policy spheres, the military has increased its overreach into areas outside of its professional domain.* Lack of internal policy cohesion and focus on national issues has further weakened the democratic process. One of the factors obstructing the growth of a democratic culture and ethos has been the absence of democracy within the political parties. *Most have turned into family enterprises or revolve around personalities.* The government's failure in institutionalizing a consultative decision-making process too has been a major factor in the expansion of space for unelected institutions such as the military and judiciary.

Do we really need caretakers? Ahmed Bilal Mehboob, *Dawn*, 28 May⁹

Primarily, *a caretaker government has to attend to day-to-day matters which are necessary to run the affairs of the government and to assist the ECP in holding elections in accordance with the law.* The latter stipulates that the caretaker government shall not make major policy decisions, or any decision that may preempt the exercise of authority by the future elected government. The caretaker government has also been barred from entering into major contracts, international agreements and promoting or appointing public officials except for short-term appointments. Most significantly, the caretaker government cannot even transfer public officials unless it is considered expedient and after approval of the ECP. These provisions have significantly constrained the functions of the caretaker government and clearly laid down the dos and don'ts. *Since the ECP has to approve even the transfer of public officials, it is safe to assume that the commission will be the de facto super government.* Now that the functions and powers of the caretaker government have been defined in very specific terms and it has become very clear that there is not much for the caretakers to do, it is only natural to ask whether we really need a non-elected caretaker government during the election period. *Why can't we allow the elected government to continue during the election period in caretaker mode like the rest of the world and create safeguards so*

⁹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1410465/do-we-really-need-caretakers>

that caretakers do not in any way act in a partisan manner to influence the election?

The Civil-Military Clash, Editorial, *The Nation*, 30 May¹⁰

Ever since the former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was ousted by the Supreme Court on July 28, following investigations into the Panama Papers scandal, we have seen a silent tussle between the government and the military, with PML-N often alluding to a hostile “establishment” which was engineering into the field of politics, and which was behind the ‘judicial’ coup. *The worsening tension between the civil and military forces, however, has so far been an indirect badly-kept secret, and is yet to be discussed on any official channels of the state. ... Broken civil-military relations have been a repeated reality of our country’s past, yet the officials streams of the state always maintains an uncomfortable silence while discussing the clashes of the military and civil.* This has resulted in much misinformation and conspiracies being spread and has resulted in alienation of civilians. It is time we deliberate on this as a nation.

SECURITY SITUATION

Militant comeback, Editorial, *Daily Times*, 16 May¹¹

The Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Security (APAPPS) came into formal effect this week. Hailed as a new framework of engagement, it has at its core a seven-point agenda, including: reciprocal flushing out of militant safe-havens on either side of the border that pose threats to the other. Yet its ‘inauguration’ was overshadowed by clouds of darkness. *For militants appear to be making a comeback to North Waziristan. And groups such as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its breakaway faction Jamaat-ul-Ahrar reportedly operate from bases in Afghanistan to launch attacks here. Over the weekend, the TTP claimed responsibility for targeting the Pakistan Army; leaving seven soldiers dead.* Security force offensives left around one million displaced and disarmed. Yet as locals made their way back to North Waziristan towards the end of last year, they may not have been the only ones. Indeed, they suggest that some militants have been allowed back, too, as part of a deal outlined by Gen Bajwa back in March; whereby he promised to “forgive” the latter as long they downed arms and pledged not to challenge

¹⁰ <https://nation.com.pk/30-May-2018/the-civil-military-clash>

¹¹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/240569/militant-comeback/>

the state's writ. Thus the sticking point for the local population is that the combatants have failed to uphold their end of the accord.

Why do ethnic identities scare Pakistan? Zulfikar Rao, *Daily Times*, 31 May¹²

During all these years the party and its leadership rather naively thought religious zeal imbued by favorable clerics will provide all the cohesion needed to transform the multi-ethnic populations of different geographic regions into one nation. *Therefore, we can't find an even tentative formula which may have outlined how the federating units and the federation would work once Pakistan was had.* This is why when we finally got Pakistan, we could not agree on what kind of Constitution was best suited for a multi-ethnic state like ours for almost a decade. To deprive the Bengalis of their legitimate right to have more seats in the Parliament, those at the helm of the state came up with the parity formula which turned all of West Pakistan into one unit. This not only alienated Bengalis but also the Sindhis, Pakhtun and Baloch; and created an everlasting wedge between smaller provinces and the federation. *Even after the cessation of East Pakistan in 1971, our state institutions failed to realize that religion could no longer serve as a cohesive bond between ethnicities, without letting provinces have autonomy and therein giving the people the right to rule themselves.* Today, while most politicians have learnt this lesson, the deep state remain uncomfortable with the Pakistani people's ethnic identities.

PROVINCES & REGIONS

FATA

Hazara protests, Editorial, *Dawn*, 02 May¹³

What the Hazaras have had to endure over the last several years in Balochistan is nothing less than a blot on this nation. Hundreds of them have been murdered in sectarian attacks, largely in the form of targeted killings or devastating truck bombings. *They have been driven into enforced ghettoization for the sake of safety, rendering their children's education disrupted and thriving businesses abandoned.* Tens of thousands have chosen to risk the perils of illegal migration to Australia over their restricted existence

¹² <https://dailytimes.com.pk/246773/why-do-ethnic-identities-scare-pakistan/>

¹³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1405138/hazara-protests>

and the dangers that lurk on the streets of the province's heavily securitized capital. Time and again the community has protested, demanding that the state ensure their right to life. The media is paying but perfunctory attention, instead of keeping the issue front and center. *The slow yet steady decimation of the Hazara community has been relegated to a footnote, even as we congratulate ourselves for having triumphed over violent extremism.*

Hazara massacre, Irfan Husain, Dawn, 05 May¹⁴

The Hazaras have not been protesting for better living conditions, or schools, or jobs: all they are demanding is the basic human right to live. This right is enshrined in our Constitution, international law and in all religions. And yet, a spokesman for the Lashkar-i-Jhangvi, while accepting responsibility for most of the Hazara killings a few years ago, added that his group was exacting vengeance for the death of Osama bin Laden at the hands of American commandos. *In fact, some suggest that the slaughter of Pakistani Hazaras began in earnest after 9/11 when the Afghan Taliban found safe haven in Quetta. Part of their baggage was apparently the desire to continue the genocide in Afghanistan where they had killed thousands of Hazaras for supposedly siding with the Northern Alliance.* Pakistani groups like the Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan who had fought with the Taliban turned their guns on the Hazaras. Had they been even half-serious in taking the tough measures involved in cracking down on hate speech in our television chat shows, classrooms and mosques, we might have a chance to end the massacres the Hazaras are being subjected to. Instead, we are stuck in our normal cycle of killings of minorities, crocodile tears from politicians and the media, and then business as usual.

The Pakhtuns & the Baloch, S. Akbar Zaidi, Dawn, 07, May¹⁵

With a growing and educated, highly political middle class, it is not surprising that Pakhtun nationalism will be the most vocal although not necessarily the most militant compared to any other in Pakistan. *There is also the small fact that for four decades Pakhtun society and social structures have borne the brunt of war and devastation, all giving rise to demands which are deemed just.* The recent manifestation of disenchantment in the way things are done and run in Pakistan is being articulated through the rising expression of injustice and dismissive treatment, particularly amongst the Baloch and the Pakhtuns. Specific conditions exist in both ethnic and national groupings, and this is being made clear by how their different

¹⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1405766>

¹⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1406109/the-pakhtuns-the-baloch>

representatives act out their frustrations with the federation and its dominant constituent. Belonging to very different social formations, the Baloch and the Pakhtuns have conveyed their concerns very differently. *Pakhtun and Baloch nationalisms are not about to go away; if anything, they are only going to become much stronger.*

Pakistan's defiant Pakhtuns, Dr Saira Bano Orakzai, Daily Times, 17 May¹⁶

The illusion of freedom given to Pakhtuns living in FATA's conflict zones has been broken with the current Pakhtun uprising, as it has finally brought the human suffering they have endured, as well as the enforced disappearance of more than 30,000 people to the limelight. The tribal Pakhtuns relationship with the Pakistani state and the rest of its citizens is broken. However, the rest of the country is slowly becoming aware of the human rights nightmare the tribal people have suffered. However, efforts are being made to stop this as well. There is an almost complete media blackout of PTM rallies, and they are being made to look like anti-state elements. *However, the Pakistani state continues to suffer from vertigo, staying trapped in an adversarial relationship with its own citizens.* Until this changes, reconciliation is impossible. The state should not take this movement lightly, for the stories the PTM is telling the world are true. They are a symbol of resistance against state oppression and the continuation of British policies. The PTM has become the voice of all communities suffering in Pakistan. Be that the Hazara or Baloch community or other victims of extra judicial killings and disappearance in different parts of the country. Amid this crisis, why is the state still showing a limited response to the PTMs demands?

FATA merger not off the table, Editorial, Daily Times, 18 May¹⁷

The FATA merger will go ahead. Just not on this government's watch. This was largely to be expected. After all, the timetable to have the tribal areas fully incorporated into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) was, from the beginning, rather ambitious. This does not mean that the JUI-F and PkMAP will accept the merger without creating a ruckus. Both have been vehemently opposed to it right from the start; preferring to push for a separate province for the whole of the tribal areas. And while they are keen to stress that this reflects the will of the locals, boasting that party representatives go out and about and talk to people, neither has ever floated the possibility of a referendum to settle the self-determination question once and for all. Instead, members from both parties have, in the past, suggested that since no woman in FATA can dare step outside the home without her husband's permission those who have expressed interest in the merger have been co-opted by a foreign-driven

¹⁶ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/240941/pakistans-defiant-pakhtuns/>

¹⁷ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/241477/fata-merger-not-off-the-table/>

agenda. Yet all this does is to urgently remind stakeholders of the importance of mainstreaming FATA. *More likely, tribal leaders such as Maulana Fazlur are more concerned about seeing their support base erode. Not to mention the prospect of the merger bringing under scrutiny the vast network of seminaries that operate under JUI-F control.*

FATA: reformed or deformed? Talimand Khan, *Daily Times*, 28 May¹⁸

The passage of the contentious bill in the form of the 31st Constitutional Amendment to merge FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the last week of the parliament's tenure cannot be seen as a democratic execution by the parliament. *In fact it needs to be understood that the merger took place without seeking the consent of the people of FATA.* Out of the current 11 members of the National Assembly from FATA, only two voted in its favour. Perhaps, parliament could exercise this right of amending the Constitution once the consent of the people of FATA was obtained through proper and acceptable methods. *But history is replete with evidence and examples of how a security state uses its black and grey varieties of propaganda to turn majority of its population, even the intelligentsia, into useful idiots and expendable agents.* Their newfound zeal for FATA indicates that till the publication of the FATA reforms committee report, FATA was on another planet, its people were treated as occupied subjects and the time had come to liberate them. In fact the merger option of FATA in the name of reforms, like the military courts insertion into the Constitution, came out of the womb of Zarb-e-Azb, a military operation in North Waziristan in 2015. *The so called FATA reforms aimed at merger were tailored as a cover up to the post Zarb-e-Azb situation to change the region's strategic dimension according to emerging alignments, regional, international and army's geo-strategic and economic interests not of the people of FATA. If the status of FATA was a human or constitutional rights issue, which already existed for the 70 years of independence, if one does not count the colonial era, why did it surface in 2016? Two basic questions require a response. Why was a haphazard merger the only answer? Why did the merger assume the name of FATA reforms?*

FATA in the interim, Editorial, *Daily Times*, 30 May¹⁹

There is the question of the Council of Elders which will hear all criminal cases. This is a *Jirga* by another name and the Deputy Commissioner enjoys the freedom to appoint its members. The most worrying part of all is how the new Regulation provides that no civil court has the jurisdiction to challenge anything in the tribal areas. Thus what happens in FATA stays in FATA; quite

¹⁸ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/245565/fata-reformed-or-deformed/>

¹⁹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/246265/fata-in-the-interim/>

literally. *The most crucial being: why did the FATA Interim Governance Regulation, 2018 not go to Parliament? This is a legitimate query.* For now that the KP and Sindh assemblies are already dissolved and with Balochistan and the Punjab completing their respective tenures tomorrow the people of FATA and KP will likely have to wait until the next Parliament to receive clarity on several points. *These include the possibility of introducing a sunset clause to the Regulation as well as resolving once and for all the issue of civilian court jurisdiction. Yet as things currently stand, the incumbent regime has effectively thrown out the baby with the bathwater. That is, in its rush to put the merger on the books so as to avert any future stalling on this front when new assemblies are elected it has bypassed the elected representatives of the tribal people.*

GB

Gilgit-Baltistan Order 2018: an eyewash, Zaigham Abbas, Daily Times, 15 May²⁰

The proposed reform ordinance gives overriding powers to the prime minister of Pakistan. *It confers legislative, executive and judicial powers to the prime minister, whereas people of Gilgit-Baltistan don't have any representation in Pakistan's federal legislature, thus effectively deprived of any role in PM's election.* Termed as 'G-B Emperor Order' on Social Media, the proposed order suggests that: "The Prime Minister shall have the powers to adopt an amendment in the existing laws or any new law in force subject to the legislative competence under sub-section 2," As many as 50 subjects of legislation have been conferred to the Prime Minister. *It is interesting to note that the three years exercise of Sartaj Aziz led committee has come up with reforms which tend to roll back whatever little autonomy and right to self-rule was given by the previous order of 2009.* As the administrative head of the federation, the constitution of Pakistan does not empower the Prime Minister to legislate nor does he enjoy any such power in other four provinces. The order if passed will effectively give the ultra-constitutional powers to the Prime Minister. The proposed G-B order has drawn immense criticism on Social Media. It is regarded as eyewash which has deprived the people of G-B of their basic constitutional and political rights. *Amid the political campaign of PML-N to give 'respect to voting', the proposed G-B order, if passed, will no less than be a mockery of its own slogan. By denying the self-rule and constitutional rights to Gilgit-Baltistan the current government is embarking on a dangerous path as the calls for region's empowerment have grown rapidly in recent times.*

²⁰ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/240029/gilgit-baltistan-order-2018-an-eyewash/>

Storm in Gilgit-Baltistan, Rehman, Dawn, 17 May²¹

The National Security Committee is reported to have discussed the draft of the measure titled 'Government of Gilgit-Baltistan Order, 2018', on May 3 and advised the federal government to further consult the stakeholders. Any other observer might have said the same thing because, among other objections, a lack of consultation with the people concerned is writ large on the document. On the grounds mentioned here and for various other reasons. *The issue about the constitutional status of Gilgit-Baltistan framed by politicians and students both is that if GB is accepted as a part of Pakistan.* It should be treated at par with its provinces in every respect, and if it is a disputed territory, in the context of the Kashmir issue, it may be given the status allowed to Azad Kashmir or India-held Kashmir. This matter is not beyond resolution, especially in view of Article 125 in the Order 2018, which says: "The provisions of this Order shall not derogate from, or in any manner prejudice, the declared stand of the Government of Pakistan regarding the right of self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir in accordance with the United National Resolutions." *The draft order has been severely criticized by the alliance of opposition parties, the GB Bar Council and the High Court Bar Association.*

Analysing Gilgit Baltistan Order-2018, Masud Ahmed Khan, Daily Times, 19 May²²

Prime Minister enjoys powers in Gilgit Baltistan as he cannot enjoy the same in other provinces. Moreover, no one can challenge/question the validity of this order. The article 41 of new order says that "the executive authority of the government shall extend to the matters with respect to which the assembly has the power to make laws, provided that in any matter with respect to which both Prime Minister and the assembly has the power to make laws, the executive authority of the government shall be subject to and limited by the executive authority expressly conferred and this order by law made and by the Prime Minister". According to article 60 (4) of order "any law which the Prime Minister is competent to enact then the law made by the Prime Minister, whether passed before or after the act of the assembly shall prevail and the act of the assembly shall to the extent of the repugnancy, be void". The Prime Minister has the power to levy taxes in the area according to article 65. *On 12 May 2018 the joint opposition in Gilgit Baltistan rejected this order being Prime Minister centric. They claimed that earlier Gilgit Baltistan Council dealt 54 subjects per legislation according to schedule 3*

²¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1408187/storm-in-gilgit-baltistan>

²² <https://dailytimes.com.pk/241858/analysing-gilgit-baltistan-order-2018/>

and 61 subjects by Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly according to schedule 4 of 2009 ordinance. As per the new 2018 reforms schedule 3 and 4 has been mixed to make 62 subjects that too under Prime Minister. The popular demand of people of Gilgit Baltistan is its merger with Pakistan as its fifth province. There is a requirement of consultation with all political parties, civil society, lawyers and youth of the area to avoid misunderstandings/confusion on new order. Before giving a final shape to this order, it must be discussed in Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly.

GB and provincial dreams, Editorial, Daily Times, 24 May²³

The Gilgit-Baltistan Order-2018 is now a reality. It replaces the GB Empowerment and Self-Governance Order of 2009. In tangible terms, this means that the GB Assembly will be empowered to take political, administrative, financial and judicial decisions. The move has been touted as providing the local population with rights on a par with the country's four provinces. *The only sticking point being that the people of GB do not want any sort of quasi-official status. The overwhelming majority seek nothing short of a fully-fledged province. In brief, it opposes integration with Kashmir; despite a UN Security Council resolution recognizing GB as part of the disputed territory.* The Centre, however, has never been willing to play ball on the self-determination front. To do so, it argues, will weaken its claim to the jewel in the crown. Therefore, the GB Order-2018 is meant to represent a genuine compromise. Another way of looking at it might be to see it as according a certain legitimacy. To the federal government, that is. In other words, to offset Indian claims to the region. Particularly given how the latter's renewed interest comes in the wake of CPEC. Indeed, last year both New Delhi and Washington raised objections to the Corridor on the grounds that it runs through 'disputed' territory. Thus the fear is that the people of GB will have their dream of provincial sovereignty sacrificed for the promise of economic return. And that the price of this will be extremely high. Already there are concerns about the environmental fallout.

GB Order 2018 is not a step forward, Editorial, Daily Times, 28 May²⁴

The GB Order 2018 was meant to be a step forward from the one passed during the Pakistan People's Party government in 2009. Under that ordinance, the process of self-empowerment a cornerstone of republican values enshrined for the rest of Pakistan in the country's constitution had been started with the formation of a legislative assembly to be elected by the GB people on the principle of adult franchise. The 2009 order severely restricted the GBLA's autonomy since all its affairs were to remain under the

²³ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/243869/gb-and-provincial-dreams/>

²⁴ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/245561/gb-order-2018-is-not-a-step-forward/>

scrutiny of a 17-member GB Council to be headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Meaning that real power over all legislative affairs lied with the authorities in Islamabad. Against this backdrop, the 2018 ordinance is hardly a step forward. Infact, it makes matters worse by assigning an advisory role to the Council. Meaning that the latter's power of scrutiny gets transferred to the PM sitting in Islamabad. With 62 legislative subjects under the exclusive domain of the Prime Minister the GBLA is unlikely to have any empowering role in the region's government, once the 2018 order gets enforced. *There are similar concerns over the lack of judicial authority vested in the GB courts whose jurisdiction remains limited to the region. Such a judicial authority will not be able to check any violations of the fundamental rights of the Gilgit Baltistan people.*

Gilgit-Baltistan's political prisoners -I, Zaigham Abbas, Daily Times, 26 May²⁵

The region remains deprived of access to Pakistan's judicial system and remains a black hole in terms of justice, liberty and human rights. *The sorry state of political liberties and the stories of injustice are not permitted to escape GB's mighty mountains, thus they remain unheard.* The plight of GB is made worse by the negligence of both the print and electronic media, which continues to report only on the natural beauty of the region, thus common people and their issues have effectively become irrelevant to the rest of the country. The popular narrative about Gilgit-Baltistan is a mixture of landscape beauty, majestic lakes, mountains, highest literacy and CPEC. One wonders if people and their real issues are ever taken into account in this exotic façade. *Nosheen Ali, a renowned researcher on GB terms this phenomenon the "Depeopling" of the region. The narrative of development as espoused by CPEC and the attention surrounding this mega-project has aroused immense interest in territories like Gilgit-Baltistan.* Yet there seems to be little interest from state authorities in initiating meaningful political reforms in the region. The mantra of development is presented as a panacea to GB's problems, while in reality the state of human rights and political liberties continue to be targeted. Development — both economic and political run parallel to each other, yet in the case of GB, the latter is visibly absent.

²⁵ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/244794/gilgit-baltistans-political-prisoners-i/>

Kashmir

Kashmiri killings, Editorial, *Dawn*, 08 May²⁶

There are less lethal ways to control crowds, but it is doubtful that India believes in these, preferring, instead, to unleash maximum brutality upon the Kashmiris. *While earlier, perhaps, a narrower segment of society was seen taking up arms against the Indian state due to the regime's militarized handling of Kashmiri dissent, a wider cross section of society intellectuals, students etc. now appear willing to fight as they have lost faith in any political process aimed at securing their rights.* Moreover, under Narendra Modi's rule, there have been moves to roll back the autonomous position Kashmir has in the Indian constitution. The militarized response to Kashmiri unrest has been an abject failure, and if such state-sponsored brutality continues the whole region may be engulfed by a renewed wave of protests with Kashmiris doing all they can to secure freedom. India must deal with Kashmir with respect, and respond to the legitimate grievances of the held region's people. *However, considering the right-wing clique that currently holds power in Delhi, and its counterparts in Kashmir, this is difficult to expect. The Hindutva brigade should realize that force has failed to dampen the Kashmiri spirit for over three decades, therefore, a new approach is required.*

To whom do Kashmir and Kashmiris belong? Syed Nazir Gilani, *Daily Times*, 28 May²⁷

If Pakistan is a safe haven for terrorists and "Kashmir and Kashmiri are Indian", there is hardly anything left up for dialogue between Islamabad and Hurriyat. India has developed an art to engage Pakistan and Kashmiri leaders, with full control over its lips and watchful of the opposition's loose lips. Unfortunately, Pakistani and Kashmiri participants don't take long to 'lubricate' their tongues and start talking 'openly and honestly'. Indian state craft is concentrating on vulnerable journalists on both sides and others who have an NGO-cum-business interest around Kashmir. Non-Kashmiris (some Kashmiris as well) with no interest or stake in Kashmir seem to have woken up to seek peace between India and Pakistan and their starting point is a demand to end 'violence' or 'terrorism' in Kashmir. They do not have much to say about the state terrorism inflicted by Indian security forces on the people of Jammu and Kashmir. If New Delhi is not 'misguided' by the revelations volunteered by General Pervez Musharraf and General Asad Durrani in their

²⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1406313/kashmiri-killings>

²⁷ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/245541/to-whom-do-kashmir-and-kashmiris-belong/>

two respective books and interactions, Indians could not deny the signature of Kashmiri sentiment behind the united Hurriyat. Hurriyat has a constitution that was adopted on July 31 1993 and people have continued to support it, on the terms set out in the constitutional discipline.

RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA

Kishanganga dispute, Editorial, Dawn, 23 May²⁸

As the country hurtles towards the chaotic flux of a fast approaching election, a critical dispute is set to be decided upon in an international forum. Pakistan has just activated its request for arbitration in the case of the Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project, or KHEP, that India has just commissioned on the Neelum River. Today all that is left for Pakistan to object to be the level to which the dam can be drained, particularly for desilting purposes. The scope of the objections has been narrowed, but the implications for Pakistan have not. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already threatened to use water as a weapon against Pakistan in 2016, even though his reference was carefully worded to refer only to the waters of the eastern rivers over which India retains full control under the treaty. Nevertheless, the level of belligerence at the top levels of the Indian government in water politics, as well as the level of control that KHEP gives to India over Neelum river flows makes this a particularly important case for Pakistan. The World Bank has, thus far, looked to postpone its involvement in the matter by referring it back for bilateral settlement. *But that did not work. The time has come for the bank to step up, and discharge its obligations under the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) by taking Pakistan's request for arbitration more seriously.*

A bridge too far?, Editorial, Dawn, 24 May²⁹

While both countries have contributed to the impasse over the decades, it is undeniable that in recent years a hawkish approach towards Pakistan by the BJP-led government under Narendra Modi, and a harsh security crackdown in India-held Kashmir, has massively undermined even the possibility of talks. A ceasefire declared in IHK by the Indian government at the start of Ramadan was tacit recognition that repressive security tactics in the region

²⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1409416/kishenganga-dispute>

²⁹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1409637/a-bridge-too-far>

had caused a backlash among the people that has threatened to grow into a genuine mass, populist uprising against the Indian state. Even that small gesture by the Modi government was almost immediately undercut by violence across the Working Boundary and Line of Control. More generally, the Modi government has been willing to use all manner of tactics to disrupt the minimum amount of people-to-people contact and diplomatic engagement that has existed in previous stretches of a deep freeze in ties. *Meanwhile, there is no indication that backchannel contacts at the NSA level caused India to consider a high-level meeting with Pakistan. The end of the parliamentary term in Pakistan and the upcoming general election will likely give India a further excuse to delay re-engagement.* The fierce and counterproductive Indian stance can be contrasted with more positive signals emanating from Pakistan, including from the security establishment. Pakistan's military leadership has been reported to be willing to engage India in dialogue and Mr. Dulat has suggested that India invite army chief Gen Bajwa for talks, presumably for military-to-military dialogue.

Thus spake Modi, Shujaat Bukhari, *The Friday Times*, 25 May³⁰

First, that Delhi has been facing a tough time defending civilian deaths during encounters and Operation All Out was becoming counterproductive in many ways. Hence, a ceasefire was needed to change the situation. Peace overtures with Pakistan, that first came with reconciliatory messages from the army chiefs of India and Pakistan and the latest being Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman saying any comments on wanting peace would definitely be taken seriously, when he was asked about Pakistan Army's recent indication of supporting a peaceful resolution. Reopening of Track-II after the Neemrana Dialogue resumed last month and other measures through the backchannel suggest that Delhi was willing to do business, despite heightened tensions along the border which has claimed many lives last week. *Since Modi is facing pressure on many counts ahead of the 2019 elections, he is preparing the ground to see that SAARC summit takes place and instead of rhetoric, he might prefer to sell the idea of peace to the electorate. Relations with Nepal and Maldives are also indicative of this desire. In order to get Pakistan on board for a successful SAARC, it is imperative to cool tempers in and around Kashmir. The next few months will an interesting time.*

³⁰ <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/tft/thus-spake-modi/>

India's hybrid warfare: Pakistan's response, Sajjad Haider, *The Nation*, 25 May³¹

... After the nuclearisation of Pakistan, there has been a growing thinking in the Indian military that a conventional war could be both untenable and cost prohibitive. *This notion gave rise to hybrid war under the rubric of nuclear weapons as the preferred strategy by India. There is growing evidence of hybrid warfare in the Indian strategy of pressuring Pakistan through media, subversion, cyber warfare and diplomatic maneuvers aimed at its isolation.* The stipulated objective is weakening of Pakistan to the extent that it accepts Indian hegemony in the region and abandons its principled stance on Kashmir and other key national policy issues. *The hybrid war that has been waged is not merely Pakistan-specific but is embedded in the regional geo-political gimmickries.* Simultaneously, India with the support of some other world players is fueling secessionist movements in Balochistan and has created a 'second front' with Afghanistan through its political, economic clout and support for Tehreek-e-Taliban in carrying out terrorist attacks inside Pakistan....

Normalizing ties with India, Munir Akram, *Dawn*, 27 May³²

Unfortunately, since its inception, Narendra Modi's BJP government made normalization conditional on Pakistan's disavowal of support to the Kashmiri freedom struggle and acceptance of culpability for Mumbai and other terrorist incidents in India. It evolved an enveloping strategy to destabilize Pakistan domestically, through sponsorship of Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) terrorists and Baloch insurgents, and to isolate it internationally as a sponsor of terrorism. Pakistan's several military operations in Fata and actions in Balochistan have succeeded in containing cross-border terrorism sponsored by India from Afghanistan. Cross-border attacks will be further restricted once Pakistan fully fences the Pak-Afghan border. Likewise, India has little hope now of isolating Pakistan given the central role it is expected to play in promoting a negotiated settlement in Afghanistan and the political convergence that has emerged among Pakistan, Russia, China and Iran on Afghanistan and terrorism. *Finally, India has been unable to suppress the ongoing popular revolt of the Kashmiri people for over two years. It may calculate that opening a dialogue with Pakistan could help to end the revolt. For Pakistan, the most critical issue in any normalization process will be (and has always been) Kashmir. No government or leader in Pakistan will be able to normalize relations with India while it continues a campaign of brutal suppression in India-held Kashmir (IHK).*

³¹ <https://nation.com.pk/25-May-2018/india-s-hybrid-warfare-pakistan-s-response>

³² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1410265>

Pak-India peace, Editorial, Dawn, 31 May³³

With a month-long ceasefire declared by the Indian government inside occupied Kashmir seemingly already in effect, and now the militaries on both sides pledging to “exercise restraint” in case of a flare-up in violence along the LoC and Working Boundary, the oppressed people of India-held Kashmir may get a respite from hostilities while border populations in Azad Kashmir and the Working Boundary can also look forward to a resumption of the 2003 ceasefire that had frayed. A decision to uphold the 2003 agreement is also significant because it suggests both pragmatism and recognition of the need to protect hard-won gains in the long and tumultuous road to bilateral normalization and eventual peace. *Positive signals sent by the Pakistani military leadership in recent months appear to have been received in India and a willingness to reciprocate shown.* As ever, there is no room for complacency, but the moment should be seized by both sides to try and effect further positive change.

The continuous Indian threat, The Nation, 31 May³⁴

India’s National Security Strategy was launched in the form of India Armed Forces Joint Doctrine. *This particular doctrine substantiates that India has evolved and moved from credible minimum deterrence to credible deterrence. Furthermore, the doctrine explicates that there is no restriction in development of their nuclear assets which means Indians would develop their armed forces horizontally as well as vertically.* Moreover, the joint doctrine explains that Pakistan and China are direct military threat to the India’s hegemonic posture. *India may soon change this role in the global arms industry by transforming itself into a leading weapon exporting nation as the country has shifted its focus towards indigenous defense production.* In addition to that, the document also reiterates that surgical strikes will become a formal retaliatory toolkit against terror provocations especially against Pakistan. ...

³³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1411125/pak-india-peace>

³⁴ <https://nation.com.pk/31-May-2018/the-continuous-indian-threat>

Urdu

India can create tension in China-Pak relations, Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 30 April³⁵

Thousands attended funeral prayers of 20 year old student Shafeeq Shabir who was killed when the car in which he was travelling was fired on by the Indian forces in Anantnag. *Indian forces refused to hand over the bodies of 'three youths' to their families, martyred in Kupwara. ... JKLF Chairman Yaseen Malik was manhandled by Indian police in Srinagar. He was arrested when he got injured. The police labelled the Hurriyat leaders as terrorists and threatened them that they would be killed.* At the same time, China and India have announced new steps to resolve their border dispute. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed in Wuhan on to resolve the border crisis. *The countries also agreed to improve their defence and military ties.* According to report, Modi expressed India's reservations on the One Belt Road initiative. *... India has been always bent to weaken and destabilize Pakistan. Otherwise, for centuries Hindus and Muslims have lived peacefully. Creation of one Muslim country did not break all the hell loose! Why cannot Hindu and Muslim states go together? ...* India spends a large chunk of its budget on defence. Following the suit, Pakistan also spend a big amount on defence. India's defence budget is almost equal to Pakistan's total budget presented few days back. Both the countries face challenges of poverty, illiteracy and lack of basic health and education system. ... If the Kashmir issue is resolved, all the tensions between India and Pakistan will wither away. India is not ready to take on Kashmir. Instead it has deployed seven lakh 'brutal' army to commit all kinds of atrocities in Kashmir to consolidate its 'occupation'. *... According to a report in Global Times while on his visit to the country, China has asked Modi to resolve Kashmir through negotiations. While China was emphasizing on this, India was spreading venom against the CPEC. India has been trying hard to create tensions in China-Pakistan relations.*

³⁵ <https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2018-04-30/page-14/detail-0>

The volcano of Kashmir, Editorial, Ummat, 01 May³⁶

The head United Jihad Council (UJC) and commander of Hizb-ul Mujahidin Syed Salahuddin has said that Kashmiris have deep faith and love for Pakistan. *The UN and international community do not pay attention to the demands of Kashmiris and atrocities carried out in Kashmir by Indian forces. They have instead adapted criminal policy and are silent spectators.* Though the policies of Pakistani rulers have been cowardly and apologetic, Kashmiris will keep fighting and will achieve freedom. ... Kashmiris have been disappointed by the rulers of Pakistan but people of Pakistan lend full support to their Kashmiris brethren. *Peace in the region is impossible unless and until Kashmiris are given right to self-determination: Whether they want to opt for India or Pakistan or to be an independent state.* ... The UN Resolutions passed on Kashmiris were never implemented because of nexus between great powers and extremist Hindus. International community says India and Pakistan should try to resolve the issue by dialogue. *But Pakistan is dealing with uncivilized, murderers of humanity and anti-peace leaders who do not want to listen sensible conversation. Nor they want third party arbitration. Kashmiris have no external support. Nor can they buy weapons. They are alone, fighting over eight lakh Indian army in 'occupied' Kashmir.* Even Pakistan has stopped to support them morally, diplomatically and politically. ... According to Salahuddin, whatever the position of rulers of Pakistan, but people of Pakistan will support us. Gen. Pervez Musharraf's policy on Kashmir continues till this day. *Pakistanis and Kashmiris more surprised by the fact that Nawaz Sharif has become Prime Minister of Pakistan thrice. He claims to be supportive of Islam and Pakistan. More surprisingly he is of Kashmiri origin. Still his policy has been less pro-Kashmiris and more pro-extremist Hindu rulers.* ... If the criminal silence of Pakistan and international community continues, Kashmir can erupt as volcano anytime. And that can be a danger for the region and the world.

FATA: remedy necessary, Editorial, Jang, May 03³⁷

Seven districts of FATA, which suffered a lot because of extremism and terrorism, are returning to normalcy. *The army has sacrificed a lot and made painstaking efforts to restore normalcy in the areas. These tribal areas want to be mainstreamed.* Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi along with army chief Gen. Qamar Bajwa and Khyber-Pukhtunkhwa governor Iqbal Zafar visited one of the cities of FATA. Abbasi said on the occasion that FATA will be mainstreamed. There will be development and welfare in the areas. ... It is

³⁶ <http://ummat.net/2018/05/01/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

³⁷ https://e.jang.com.pk/05-02-2018/lahore/pic.asp?picname=08_001.png

a positive sign that the people of FATA, who were ignored and marginalized upto now, will be given same rights that all other citizens of Pakistan are provided. *Big political parties are in fovour of merging FATA with Khyber-Pukhtunkhwa. They want to know opinion of the people of FATA, however.* There should be an end to the colonial laws like Frontier Crime Regulations (FCR). FATA have suffered a lot. *Because of the military operations of Pakistan army, 'Operation Zarb-e-Azb' and 'Radd-ul-Fasaad', to eliminate terrorists those crossed over from Afghanistan after the US invaded the country in 2001, thousands Pashtuns were killed and lakhs render homeless.* They need to be resettled. It is expected that the people of FATA will receive all help and development measures from the country.

Give respect to Pakistan! Irshad Bhatti, Jang, May 17³⁸

My dear leader (Nawaz Sharif), let's assume that you do not consider the 1947, 65 and 71 important; let's assume that the atrocities committed in 'occupied' Kashmir and firing along the LoC have no value for you; let's assume that 70 lives of Pakistanis and property loss of billions of dollars do not matter to you; let's assume that the Samjhuta express blast and killing of Indian Muslims on the name of cow protection do not affect you. ... *But my leader you should have accepted that you have not read German-Jew Alice Davidson's book The Betrayal of India, in which he argues that India distorted facts about the Mumbai to defame Pakistan.* Among the ten people involved in the Mumbai attacks, only one of them Ajmal Kasab was arrested but he was arrested on 8 November 2008, not on 26 November. *My leader you have not read former IG Maharashtra S.M. Ashraf's book, Who Killed Karkare? In which he writes that Ajmal Kasab was arrested twenty days before the Mumbai attacks from Nepal. Then India declared him a Pakistani terrorists. You even do not know that the head of Mumbai anti-Terrorist Squad Hemant Karake was killed because he had collected proofs against extremist Hindus who were involved in terrorism in India.* ... My leader, let's assume that you have no regard for such documents. For you it is important that Mumbai was doing of our non-state actors. Then why did not you talk for last four years when you were the prime minister? Why did not it occur to you that you would punish the killers of 150 innocent people? ... *My leader you should not talk about commissions now. Because of you do there could be a commission on what was Narendra Modi, who talks proudly about the 'breaking of Pakistan' doing in your house? What was Sajjan Jindal discussing with you in Murree?* Is it possible that the two countries are enemies and their prime ministers are friends? ... Then my leader, country is mother and mother cannot be terrorist. Therefore for the purpose of saving

³⁸ https://e.jang.com.pk/05-17-2018/lahore/pic.asp?picname=08_009.png

your family, wealth and children, do not hurt the country. I do not know when you will give respect to voters and votes but at least respect Pakistan!

Nawaz's suicide attack on his own party, Aslam Lodhi, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, May 21³⁹

Nawaz Sharif was most popular leader and the PML N most loved party. *Against all the odds, PML N was expected to win the 2018 elections with two-third majority. After that it could have amended the Article 62(A) and ended Nawaz's disqualification.* ... Suddenly Nawaz Sharif gave such a repugnant statement that changed whole scenario. The statement became most popular in India which incited hatred against Pakistan. The reaction from army was strong. National Security Council meeting was convened in which the statement was condemned. Some sections started calling him traitor. *The statement has made the PML N leaders defensive. In the PML N meeting under the leadership of Prime Minister Khaqan Abbasi in which Nawaz Sharif was also present, the statement of Nawaz Sharif was condemned. Over 50 party members have left the party and still more are leaving. No one else has put the PML N in this situation but Nawaz Sharif. Nawaz's statement was a suicide attack on his own party.* Its consequences will be severe in the elections. Nawaz Sharif made Pakistan nuclear which a feather in his cap. But his tilt towards India is incomprehensible. *Pakistan nation can die but cannot be friends with India (Paksitani qayoom mar sakti hai Baharat se mohabbat nhi kar sakti).* *The reason for that being India has been threat to Pakistan from the very beginning. The problems and terrorism that is happening in Pakistan, separatist movement in Balochistan, attacks on CPEC, stoppage of waters from the rivers originating from Kashmir by construction of dams on them, are all India's doings.* It was not a moment to give such a statement in India's favour. If he had given it, he should have issued a retracted. ...

India's water-aggression, Editorial, *Jang*, May 21⁴⁰

India's leaves no chance to hurt Pakistan and play as its historical rival. *Indian Prime Minister Narendra (Singh) Modi visited Leh on Saturday and inaugurated controversial Kishanganga Hydro Power Project. The project is close to Pakistan's border, using Pakistan's share of water to produce 330 MW of electricity.* This is violation of the Indus-Water Treaty. Before this Pakistan has raised the issue of India's efforts to block the water from flow to Pakistan at the World Bank and the Bank had arranged two

³⁹ <https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2018-05-21/page-15/detail-10>

⁴⁰ https://e.jang.com.pk/05-21-2018/lahore/pic.asp?picname=08_002.png

meetings but India's egotism did not allow any consensus to emerge. *Pakistan has strongly protested against the India violation of the water agreement and has sent a high level delegation led by Attorney General Pakistan Ashtar Ausaf Ali to Washington.* At a time when our enemy is trying to make us to crave for every drop of water, there is need for identifying new water resources. The India's water-aggression should be exposed and instead of trying to reach to an agreement, our position should be presented strongly. Ignoring India's water aggression will increase the crisis further.

Pakistan's stand and chances of getting in green-list, Editorial, Jang, May 24⁴¹

Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a body appointed by the UN, had decided to analyse to include Pakistan in the watch-list for its role in money-laundering and funding of terrorists again in June 2018. *In the Asia-Pacific Joint Working Group meeting, there will be chances to highlight Pakistan's steps to stop money-laundering and support to terrorism. On the other hand, in the June meeting the chances of including Pakistan in the watch-list will further diminish.* It should be remembered that being in the watch-list means there will be close scrutiny to foreign aid, loans and investments which will have negative impact on economy. According to the source, Pakistan delegation will inform the group about steps taken against terrorism and National Action Plan (NAP). *Despite the fact that Pakistan has been victim of terrorism and has made huge sacrifices in fighting the menace, it is unfortunate that it is accused of supporting terrorists. This dubious policy is not good for the region. Pakistan is an important state in the region and before putting sanctions on it, international community should analyse its implications.* Similarly it also reflects our diplomatic weakness. It got clear when no country supported us apart from Turkey. Strong diplomatic efforts can bring us out. Otherwise the enemy forces get encouraged to isolate Pakistan.

Next elections will also be fraud? Editorial, Ummat, May 28⁴²

Political parties have started issuing their election manifestoes. Tahreek-e-Pakistan took the lead and issued its manifesto first. ... *According to the election rules and regulations, any criticism of judiciary and army will be prohibited. No statement can be issue against ideology of Pakistan,*

⁴¹ https://e.jang.com.pk/05-24-2018/lahore/pic.asp?picname=08_002.png

⁴² <http://ummat.net/2018/05/28/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

autonomy and stability of the country. Statements, insulting and hurting judiciary and army will not be allowed. Violent activities and participation in them, damaging government and non-government property will be considered violation of code of conduct. National contestants will be spending 40 lakhs and provincial contestants 20 lakhs on their respective constituencies for campaigning. ... *People were expecting before the next elections, accountability of disqualified, corrupt and irresponsible will be completed and these negative elements will be eliminated.* After cleaning politics, people will have option to elect true representatives who would have set Pakistan on tract of development and prosperity. *The cases of corruption against politicians in National Accountability Bureau (NIB) and in the court are limited in number and still continuing. The decision are likely to come late and the dream to clean Pakistani politics from corrupt politicians, remains a dream. Like in past, looters and corrupt will be elected again.* They will accumulate wealth but will not care about people's needs. ... There seem least chances of good people getting elected. Those who do not have twenty lakhs cannot fight elections. It is clear that a poor and gentle man is not going stand with rich, influential and privileged. It can be said with surety that next elections as usual will be fraud.

India's war mongering is threat to regional peace, Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, May 31⁴³

DGMOs of India and Pakistan talked on hotline the other day. They talked about the situation along the LoC and managing boundary. They agreed to stick to the ceasefire and resolving border issues through negotiation. *When the DGMOs were talking on the hotline, a mine blast took place in 'occupied' Kashmir on which India forces cracked down on common people. Many people got injured and one was martyred in Pulwama. On the other hand, war mongering of India has reached to point that it has approved seven trillion rupees for buying weapons (dosri taraf Baharati hukumat ke jangi junoon ka yeh a'alam hai ke es ne taqreban sa'at kharab rupey ke defa'i sa'az-o-samaan ki khreedari ke sa'doon ki manzoori di hai).* This much of amount for buying weapons shows that India in reality wants a war. Or it has some aggressive intentions against some of its neighbours. India does not have technology of some weapons which it has bought from Israel. India's is the forth military power after the US, Russia and China in the world. *It is easy for India to receive weapons as the US, Russia and Israel are always forthcoming to sell them to it. It has huge pile of weapons already. Despite the fact that India is using them against Pakistan or in 'occupied' Kashmir, it is unfortunate that Russia continues to sell it weapons.*

⁴³ <https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2018-05-31/page-14/detail-2>

Electronic Media

Point of view, Zemtv, 02 May⁴⁴

Dr. Danish introduced Nawaz Sharif's 'big and provocative' statements in public, rallies which have increased in number. Nawaz says that he is fighting some 'invisible forces' in the next elections. He said if PML N does not win, it will be a 'puppet' government whether of PTI or PPP. *Asad Umer of PTI said that Nawaz Sharif is desperate. He does not know what he talks about. He cannot fight the law. He had 'managed' the institutions and first time he is facing the law which is unable to reconcile with.* As far as 'invisible forces' are concerned, those are 'shadows' of Nawaz's misdeeds. There is no kind of intervention otherwise. *Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmad of PPP was of the view that Nawaz has ruled by ruining the institutions. He targeted Zardari by implicating him in false cases. He fought with every army chief.* In his rule, the economy has touched new low. Gen. (R) Amjid Shib was of the view that Nawaz has nothing to say. He has been involved in corruption and loot. *It is Nawaz's strategy to portray himself as a 'victim' to win sympathy. If there are some 'invisible forces', Nawaz should name them. He has worked with such 'invisible forces' before.* He was part of every 'conspiracy' before 1999.

Breaking Views, Interview of Imran Khan, Zemtv, 06 May⁴⁵

In the Programme Breaking Views, Mohammad Malick interviews PTI's chief Imran Khan. When asked about the chances of PTI's government formation post the upcoming general elections, Imran Khan categorically states that he will stare clear of collation governments, especially with PML-N, PPP and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam. He believes that all these parties are corrupt and are faces of corruption in Pakistan and that PTI's main aim is to fight against the menace of corruption, strengthen democratic institutions and reduce the economic deficit of the country. He adds, that if *"we form collation with any of the above, our mission to fight corruption will be hindered"*. He underlines that corruption has weakened the morality of the nation and that if PTI comes to power they will work towards strengthening National Accountability Bureau (NAB). When Malick asks about the difference in the agenda of the PML-N which is development and PTI which is Corruption, he replies that PML-N has not worked so hard to strengthen its media cell as compared to other development work. The ruling party controls the media and use money power to sell its agenda of development. He adds that in order to save his black money stacked outside the country, Nawaz Sharif has destroyed the democratic intuitions and judiciary of the country. When asked about the care taker government to be appointed in Pakistan and what if they don't agree to the

⁴⁴ <http://www.zemtv.com/2018/05/03/point-of-view-with-dr-danish-2nd-may-2018/>

⁴⁵ <http://www.zemtv.com/2018/05/06/breaking-views-with-malick-6th-may-2018/>

arrangement, *he replies that then there will not only be protests but demonstrations all over Pakistan.* When probed about his relationship with the army, he gives it back to the PML-N by saying that the army has always helped PML-N in the past and now when army is not with Nawaz he has set his guns to fire the military establishment. *The problem with Nawaz Sharif is his philosophy, "if you are not with me, you are against me" which is backfiring now.*

Jirga with Salim Safi, Jirga with the youth of Gilgit-Baltistan, Geo News, 12 May⁴⁶

Salim Safi underlying the issues of GB says that the list of complaints are increasing among the people of GB, as for more than 70 years this region has kept away from the basic rights prescribed under the constitution of Pakistan. One of the youth from the audience bring to the notice of the Jirga that *today we are talking about implementing constitutional rights in GB but if we dig deeper and probe, "we the people of GB are lack the basic human rights, e.g. Education, health and freedom.* Majority of the people of GB wants to be with Pakistan but also at the same time demands for their basic democratic rights. Afzal Ali Shigri prominent writer from GB underlines that when we ask for provisional status of the region the government of Pakistan cite the Kashmir issue as a problem, as the status of GB and Kashmir are intertwined. "They say India will protest if GB is given provisional status but my point is that is Pakistan ready to isolate the people of GB at the cost of India"? Akbar Hussani, a prominent figure from the region says that the issues of GB can be resolved in one day but for that the government of Pakistan need will power. The government does not have a clear intention improve the status of the region. There was an intense discussion on the Sartaj Aziz Committee Report and how the PML-N government is trying hard to pass the bill hurriedly without even consulting the people of GB. Afzal Shigri notes that there has been recent drastic changes made to the drafts bill on reforms of GB headed by Sartaj Aziz and now the ruling government is trying to introduce it without even consulting the stakeholders. *For the time being, some protests by the people of GB has postponed the bill but the day is not far when they will try to bring the reforms in GB without the knowledge of the people of the region. If that happens, the people of GB will have to take out protest, GB Tahafuz Movement to save GB.*

⁴⁶ <http://www.unewstv.com/128470/jirga-with-saleem-safi-gilgit-baltistan-12-may-2018>

FATA-KP Merger Bill Passed, Zara Hatkay with Mubashir Zaidi, Zem-TV, 24 May⁴⁷

Mubashir Zaidi informed on the onset that the National Assembly on Thursday passed a bill clearing the way for the merger of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) *with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province with an overwhelming majority with 229 members in favour and one voted against it. The bill was opposed by government allied parties Jamiat-e-Ulema-Islam (JUI-F) and Pashtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP).* Mubashir informs that the opposing factions fear that the number of senators from KP will reduce as compared to Punjab and they are afraid of losing their hold in the region. Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said, "The committee report was assessed by civil and military leadership including the army chief," adding that the bill was approved with a consensus of the government and opposition members. Mubashir adds that for once all the political parties were on the same page and all of them showed commitment to the cause burying their political rivalry aside. PTI Chairman Imran Khan said the bill's approval was a great victory for the country. "There was a huge gap in the tribal areas which the enemy could have benefited from. The vacuum in FATA has now been filled," he added. Zarar Kodu underlined that the amendment will bring an end to colonial-era laws governing the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), extending the writ of Pakistani courts to its districts and increasing development assistance to its residents. Asatullah Khan highlights that the unanimous passing of the bill *proves that there can be political consensus on critical issues in Pakistan. It also shows that civil military can also come on the same page if it is needed. It has to be noted here that the army has pushed for the merger of the two regions. Zarar adds that it is by these processes that the democracy and parliament is strengthened.*

Jirga with Saleem Safi: Gilgit Baltistan Governance Ordinance, Interview of GB Chief Minister-Hafiz Hafeezur Rehman, Geo-News, 27 May⁴⁸

Saleem Safi opens the discussion by underlining that GB as a region has always remained the least priority for the government, especially the media only cover it as a perfect tourist place and do not raise the basic issues faced by the people. *The government has recently passed an important ordinance called the GB Governance Ordinance act 2018 in a move to provide and improve the democratic rights of the people of the region.* When asked about

⁴⁷ <http://www.zemtv.com/2018/05/24/zara-hut-kay-24th-may-2018/>

⁴⁸ <http://www.unewstv.com/129355/jirga-with-saleem-safi-gilgat-baltistan-governance-ordinance-27th-may-2018>

the new order and what changes it has brought as compared to the 2009 GB act, the CM replies that the earlier order of 2009 had lots of loopholes and structural defects and with this new order, the PML-N has tried to address these structural vacuums. Earlier according to the order, many basic issues which could be resolved at the region level were referred to the Prime Ministers office, as a result of which they would take ages to finally find the apt solutions, he adds. When asked about taking the people of GB in confidence before passing the ordinance the CM replies, the people of GB has been demanding for province status or they want to be part of the constitutional umbrella of Pakistan but GB is part of the Kashmir issue so it has to be dealt with care. Similarly, GB is part of Pakistan and by giving in to the blackmailing of India we are making their claims more strong. We need to empower the portion of land which we have. To this CM says that the government argues that GB cannot be made a province as the population is not so thick, it's sparsely populated. He further adds *that we are planning to run and experiment with the 2018 order for two years and if does not work we are planning to convert the order into some sort of an interim constitution like that of Azad Kashmir.*

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
Quetta ⁴⁹	17/05/2018	Pakistani army kills senior militant, seven suicide bombers	08	04
Quetta ⁵⁰	27/05/2018	Female teacher gunned down in Balochistan's Kech district	01	00

⁴⁹<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-militants/pakistan-kills-senior-lashkar-e-jhangvi-militant-in-baluchistan-raid-idUSKCN1II0DJ>

⁵⁰ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1720440/1-female-teacher-gunned-kech-district/>

Punjab				
Attock ⁵¹	03/05/2018	2 killed, 14 injured in attack on bus in Attock	02	14

⁵¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1405391>