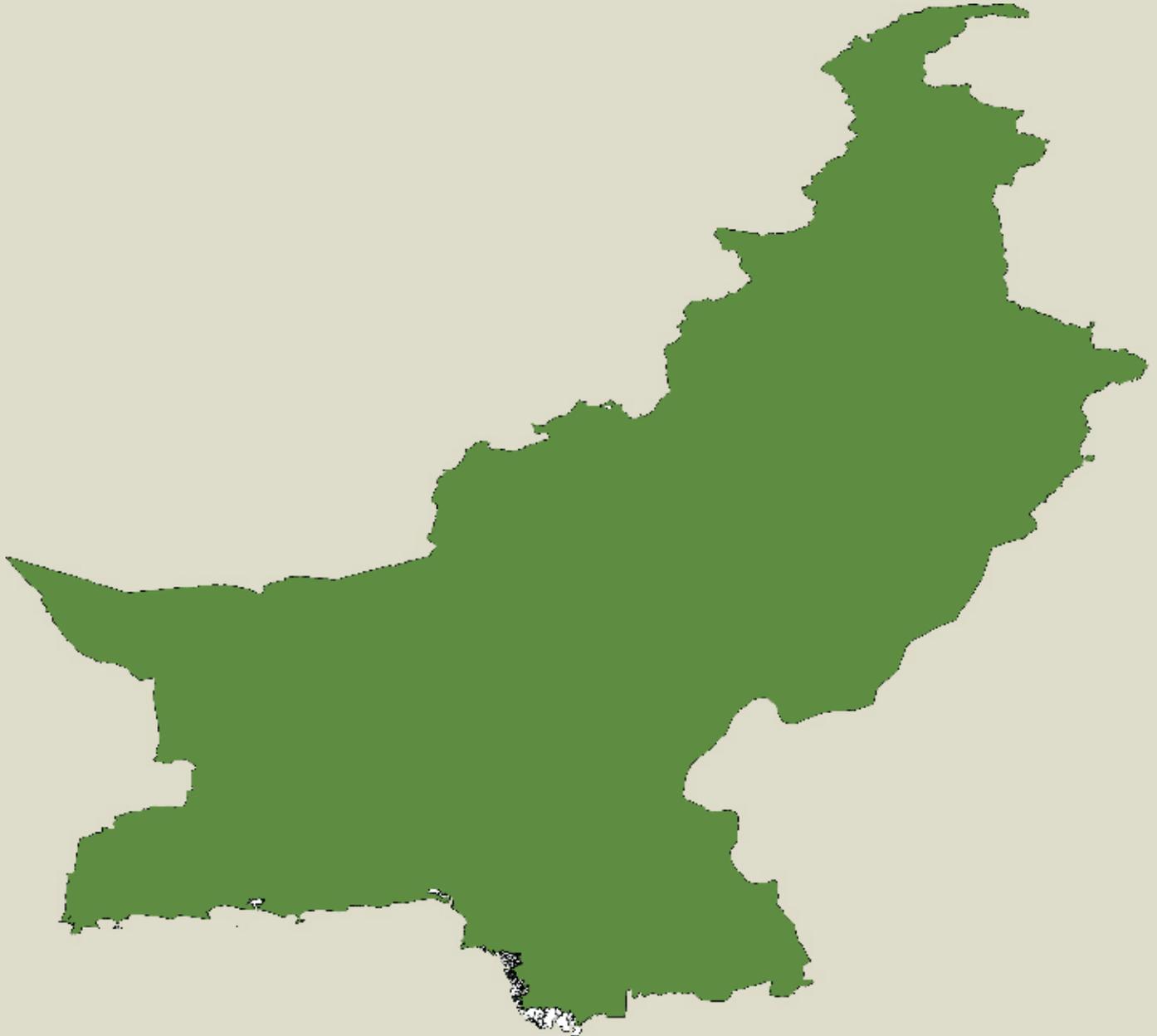


November 2018

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

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES
रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, NOVEMBER 2018

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Editorial

Vernacular media in Pakistan covered and analyzed foreign policy challenges to the country and suggested few ways for how to deal with the deteriorating relations with the US in particular. It was argued that the US was using India to build pressure on Pakistan. However, main agenda of Washington is to curb China's activities in the region. Given these apprehensions of the Pakistani leadership, Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to China was seen as counter-balancing act to 'India-US alliance'. One columnist wrote that the '*This (China) selfless friend of ours supports us on all issues, including the Kashmir. It supports us in defence related matters for which it did not care about its trade interests with India.*' It was argued that all is not well between the US and New Delhi, as President Trump had rejected India's invitation to be special guest on the latter's Republic Day parade. Reasons given for that were that India was not following the US instructions seriously whether in case of stopping buying oil from Iran or not buying weapons from Russia.

One article by Masood Azhar argued for standing up against India because of its anti-Muslim policies. It argued that it was because of cowardice of the Muslims that the Babri Masjid could be brought down in December 1992. *Azhar argued that now is time to fight for reconstructing the mosque at the same place. That would bring back the lost glory of Muslims in South Asia and the world at large, back.*

Foreign policy continued to be discussed in detail given the economic crisis the country is going through. It was argued that no matter what a situation would be, China would stand by Pakistan. This was again proved when China said that it would help Islamabad in coming out of the current financial crisis and also would support it at the IMF to get bail out. By doing this, China was angering New Delhi. Saleem Safi wrote that Imran Khan has been unable to figure out how to approach with China. His policies have been ambiguous and at worst not well designed. Chinese did not take his and his government's erratic approach well. It was the army that came forth couple times to assure China that all was well between the two countries.

On the domestic front, Imran Khan was mostly criticized for his policies so far. It was argued that every next day there was a flip-flop from the side of the Prime Minister on some policy. While some maintained that there might not be a visible change but there have been less corruption, loot and hooliganism. Others maintained that Imran Khan's first hundred days have been failure.

There has been no clear direction where the country is headed to. Rather than focusing on main issues, Imran Khan's government was busy in political vendetta. Additionally, many western countries were building pressure on Islamabad to let Asia Bibi leave the country in which Imran Khan was targeted mainly, it was argued.

Nazir Ahmad Mir

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

INTERNAL

A moment of reflection, Editorial, *Dawn*, 01 November¹

This is also a moment to reflect upon what we have become as a nation, and how we have arrived here. Such is the emotive power of religion in today's Pakistan that the mere allegation of blasphemy, however flimsy, can trigger horrific violence. Even an acquittal by the apex court — as in the present instance — can provoke right-wing elements to threaten mayhem on the streets. *While Muslims comprise the largest number of those at the receiving end of such accusations, non-Muslims like Aasia Bibi are disproportionately targeted. Moreover, they are especially vulnerable, because paroxysms of faith-based violence can consume entire communities.* Indeed, many blasphemy allegations are rooted in personal enmity and a desire to appropriate the victim's property. But that is immaterial in the eyes of some sections of society; to them, those accused of blasphemy are guilty in perpetuity, legitimate targets for vigilante violence regardless of whether the criminal justice system exonerates them. Seeding bigotry in society for political gain has been ruinous for thousands of innocents in this country.

Khan's finest hour, Khurram Husain, *Dawn*, 01 November²

Last night he took an unequivocal and strong line against religious bigotry and hatred that we have not seen taken in almost two decades. The last time I recall a leader of this country being this clear in dismissing the politics of hate was in the early years of the Musharraf regime, and therein might lie a problem. Because Musharraf's resolve fizzled out as the increasingly heavy burdens of rule weighed him down. *What the TLP leadership said in their speeches all day following the announcement of the verdict, joined in by Samiul Haq, was nothing short of incitement to rebel and mutiny within the armed forces, and calls for the violent overthrow of the sitting, democratically elected, government.* In other words, some might say the words were truly treasonous,

¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1442733/a-moment-of-reflection>

² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1442735/khans-finest-hour>

the real treason, not the treason of twitter trolls who bandy this word around like a toy gun. This begins as a rhetorical battle, but soon it will morph into something far more real. There will need to be concrete steps against those who engaged in the kind of hate-mongering and incitement to rebellion and violence in the wake of the judgement. This was Imran Khan's finest hour, thus far, but he is in the game for much longer than an hour. Having found the right words, let's hope he can find the right actions to put behind them.

Course correction? Najam Sethi, *The Friday Times*, 02 November³

The fanatics have now declared that the three judges are "Wajib al Qatl", meaning they are "worthy of death". There was a moment, however, when hope for Aasia Bibi seemed to dim. That happened when the judges withheld their decision after concluding the hearing. This allowed the fanatics time to plan and organize widespread protests in the event of an acquittal. It is now clear, however, that the decision was taken on advice to give Imran Khan's new government time and space to firm up its bearings to face the challenge of the fanatics. Certainly, there are some potential "course correction" signs to decipher. After a long and often bitter impasse in US-Pak relations over a "solution" acceptable to all stakeholders in the civil-war in Afghanistan, experts are suggesting that the two sides are finally ready to take reciprocal steps to break the deadlock before the Afghan elections next year. Pakistan has also offered unconditional talks to India, an unprecedented move to end the proxy wars that have only served to feed religious fanatics. But the current proponents of "realignment with pro-West forces" may think the time is ripe for it now. Imran Khan's government needs a significant financial bailout from the West and its Muslim allies like Saudi Arabia and the UAE; the opposition PPP and PMLN are under the Miltablishment fist and dare not mount any significant opposition; the media is obediently towing the line. The only fear is that any such Pakistani realignment should not play into the hands of an anti-Iran coalition because that could have serious consequences for domestic stability.

³ <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/tft/course-correction/>

Past choices, Moeed Yusuf, Dawn, 20 November⁴

Imran Khan's rhetoric in opposition was populist and devoid of substance. His simplistic solutions to complex problems, his regular use of anecdotes as facts, and of misinformed statistics, embarrassed even his closest political confidants. Yes, one could argue that this isn't any different to many other conservative populists who have risen to power in recent years. But the problem was the sense one picked up that he truly believes in much of what he says. If so, and if he was *going to try and turn his political rhetoric into action when in power, we'd be toast. No surprises then that wherever the prime minister has tried to stick to his old rhetoric, he's run into problems. The political domain is an obvious example. Khan has stuck to his aggressive rhetoric on taking his political opponents to task on corruption.* But the politicized manner in which the process has progressed has sent the bureaucracy into a freeze, if not silent rebellion, and has brought the system to a near halt. Back to his U-turn comment. If what he was getting at is an acknowledgement that he is going to have to separate his past rhetoric from his choices as prime minister, this is not only positive, but necessary. Public acceptance of this compulsion is all the better; it'll avoid him having to justify every U-turn.

'U-turn' and leadership, Dr Muhammad Babar Chohan, Daily Times, 29 November⁵

The statement of the PM Imran Khan citing 'U-turns' as a symbol of leadership appears to be a manifestation that he is politically following the pragmatic approach by challenging the objectivity and precision of the rational approach. *This suggests that he may not indeed be following a conceptually invariable foundation based on rigidity and fixed observations.* He appears to be a proponent of using flexible practical inquiry against widely accepted pseudo-contextual beliefs, political status quo, invariable ideological perceptions, and conceptually shallow judgments of the majority. *He appears to be a pragmatist and pragmatists actually re-describe the widely held beliefs and claims, by taking pragmatic reversals, demonstrating how they accelerate or frustrate*

⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1446738/past-choices>

⁵ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/327406/u-turn-and-leadership/>

specific purposes. It is important to reiterate that a 'U-turn' must always be pragmatic. The PM appears to define the whole elephant in a holistic manner thus attempting to convince the majority against their widely held beliefs and perceptions. His argument labelling 'U-turns' as a symbol of great leadership is in line with the practical wisdom of the pragmatic approach making *phronesis* superior to other Aristotelian virtues in political planning, strategic thinking and innovative governance.

EXTERNAL

PM's China visit, Editorial, Dawn, 05 November⁶

In the joint statement, there is no assistance package announced, just boilerplate diplomatic language reaffirming the deep strategic ties between China and Pakistan. At least two points need to be made here. *First, if a formal assistance package had not been already agreed to, what was the urgency for Mr. Khan to leave Pakistan in the midst of a national crisis?* Surely, Mr. Khan was not going to negotiate in person with senior Chinese officials — the Chinese officials have themselves pointed to detailed negotiations needing to take place between the relevant authorities of the countries. *Second, and more importantly, given that it is an ongoing issue, why have the "detailed discussions" yet to take place? It is possible that China is driving a hard bargain, but that would not be unexpected.* However, did the Pakistani side prepare for hard negotiations? Or have the PTI government's economic managers once again shown their inexperience and expected that a rescue package will be assembled because of Pakistan's geopolitical importance or perhaps Prime Minister Khan's political standing? As Mr. Khan comes home empty-handed, he will return to a country recovering from days of protests and yet another state *capitulation to violent religious extremists.*

A toxic Twitter war, Zahid Hussain, Dawn, 21 November⁷

Trump's South Asia policy has brought Pakistan-US ties to a new low. It is even worse than what it was in the 1990s when Pakistan was under all kinds of US sanctions. The interaction between the two countries has been reduced to a low

⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1443677/pms-china-visit>

⁷ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1446901/a-toxic-twitter-war>

official level though military-to-military contacts may still have survived. While the illusion of any strategic convergence has been absent for long, even a transactional relationship is now hard to maintain. *It is apparent that Islamabad is no more dependent on US aid, and the latest American measures are not likely to force it to comply with the US demand, though Islamabad would need to take some action in its own interest against the militant groups allegedly operating from its soil.* The recent hostility is unprecedented. Trump's demand for unquestionable compliance is unacceptable to Pakistan. The US policy of using pressure tactics to bring Pakistan to its knees has not worked, and the latest Twitter war between the two leaders would have further widened the trust deficit.

Troubled ties, Touqir Hussain, Dawn, 26 November⁸

The sad reality is Pakistan did have a part to play in the failure of the Afghan war. Washington finds Pakistan's Afghan Taliban policy as indefensible as its support for jihadists. Unfortunately, the feeling in the US is that Pakistan has become a negative force for US interests in the region by allying with Washington's rival China and having tense ties with US allies like India. The relationship with Washington is important. *But Pakistan should never walk into it blindly again. It must set the terms of engagement beforehand as America has no sense of history except its own. If it is 'America first' on one side it should be 'Pakistan first' on the other.* Let the chips fall where they may. It is also ironical that ties with Pakistan address strategic interests but through the framework of a transactional relationship, as Pakistan does not have permanent strategic value for the US. In fact, the emerging regional and geopolitical context gives Pakistan a negative strategic value. It is now better for America's adversaries than for America. Not just the ordinary public but the foreign policy community in Washington too ends up finding Pakistan as the wrong ally. Trump speaks for both strands of opinion. *It is not Pakistan but its services that have been important to the US.*

⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1447736/troubled-ties>

ECONOMIC ISSUES

CPEC shifts gears, Khurram Husain, *Dawn*, 08 November⁹

Clearly, China is concerned about the rising belligerence being shown towards Iran by the United States. The language can even be read to suggest that China views with concern the possibility that Pakistan may veer too far into the Saudi Arabian orbit, and become too enmeshed in the diplomatic push by the kingdom to isolate Iran in its own region. *The visit to Beijing was a sobering moment for Imran Khan, whose body language appeared diminutive, fidgety and nervous through it all. At the Shanghai Expo, he even read his speech from a piece of paper, something he and his followers had berated Nawaz Sharif for doing as if it were a sign of weakness.* The Chinese stage is too heavily adorned with agreements, treaties and all manner of understandings to be changed significantly now. The momentum behind the relationship is virtually unstoppable now. One feels that inexorable momentum in the pronouncements emerging from the Chinese side, where statements given by Pakistani ministers are denied by the Chinese on some occasions. The latest joint statement does not herald a new era in Sino-Pak relations, but it certainly shows that gears are changing, and many of the terms of the long-term plan are now ready to be activated.

Afghanistan in CPEC, Editorial, *Daily Times*, 14 November¹⁰

The Afghans have signaled support for their country's inclusion in the Corridor. Indeed, there has been welcome talk of drawing lines between economics and politics for the sake of regional connectivity. That being said, both Kabul and Islamabad should have a clear understanding that two-way cross-border attacks cannot continue. And while New Delhi may fear being encircled by economic powerhouse and regional rival Beijing it should recognize that a prosperous and stable South Asia is in everyone's interests. *Though the Indian side will naturally raise repeated concerns of how CPEC runs through what it views as contested territory. In fact, the question of*

⁹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1444289/cpec-shifts-gears>

¹⁰ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/321884/afghanistan-in-cpec/>

unresolved border issues between Afghanistan and Pakistan will have to be addressed accordingly. But for now, these will seemingly be put on the backburner. The long and short of it is that the question of Kabul joining CPEC is a matter for Afghanistan, Pakistan and China to decide.

SECURITY SITUATION

Who's the real enemy? Editorial, *Dawn*, 02 November¹¹

The protesters are misguided, but democratic dissent and media freedoms are undermining state and society — the obscene contrast between the seemingly friendly treatment meted out to the true enemies of the state and those championing democratic and constitutional freedoms is on full display. A dangerous tendency by elements in the state to cast legitimate, constitutionally protected dissent as a threat to the nation and national security, while always seeking to appease violent religious extremist's needs to be confronted and lawfully challenged. The mainstream media here has found itself under ferocious attack simply for doing its job and reporting events, facts and information. Editors have been threatened; the distribution of newspapers disrupted; news channels taken off air or consigned to anonymous slots; and, preposterously, a staff member of this newspaper has been summoned by a high court in a treason petition. Where a firm line needed to be drawn, obfuscation, pretence and denial have been delivered. At the heart of the state's vacillating response appears to be confusion or perhaps rejection of the foundational values of this country.

The Warning Signs are here – is anyone listening, Raza Rumi, *Daily Times*, 04 November¹²

Asia Bibi, a poor Christian farm worker, wrongfully accused of blasphemy was acquitted by the Supreme Court (SC) after nearly a decade. This was a rare occasion whereby the highest court in Pakistan overturned a blasphemy conviction and delivered a clear verdict. The hope was that this verdict would

¹¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1443031/whos-the-real-enemy>

¹² <https://dailytimes.com.pk/318277/the-warning-signs-are-here-is-anyone-listening/>

become the basis for a robust national debate aimed at reviewing the man-made laws that have been flagrantly abused over the years. Not unexpectedly, Asia Bibi's acquittal prompted a severe backlash with all shades of Islamists joining hands, baying for blood and pressurising the state to retreat. Within days of the landmark judgment, the euphoria has evaporated and the state has once again surrendered to the demands of the extremists. ...

The will to counter extremism, Muhammad Amir Rana, Dawn, 04 November¹³

Recent state-led and independent policy discourses on countering extremism have emphasized addressing the key question of religion, which is integral to the issue of identity in Pakistan. *The state has outsourced both religious and national identity narratives to different religious actors, who use them to expand their influence in society.* The state believes that religion can unite the nation and can create a cohesive society. *However, religious actors exploit this notion to promote their own goals and motives, which are largely embedded in their sectarian and religious strands. That is why religiously motivated outfits, including their political wings, have not only failed the state's ideological project but have also undermined the common good of society.* More than religious groups' exploitation of the ideological design of the state, it was the state's insistence to keep using them to achieve its different purposes that has created this dilemma. In the process, the state outsourced this national project even to sectarian groups, with their own lethal hate agendas. This attitude expanded the threshold of tolerance for hardliner religious groups among almost all institutions, from political parties to security institutions.

Mainstreaming FATA- Issues and Challenges, Syed Akhtar Ali Shah, The Express Tribune, November 08¹⁴

While the hullabaloo in the wake of a logical conclusion of a judicial process eclipsed everything else, there are certain areas of public policy that remain central to the future of Pakistan. One such overshadowed issue is the mainstreaming of tribal areas into Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. ... The baggage of history matters, as our present largely depends on the path we treaded in the

¹³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1443481/the-will-to-counter-extremism>

¹⁴ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1842669/6-mainstreaming-fata-issues-challenges/>

past; what path dependency theorists tell us. Knowing the history of erstwhile Fata is crucial to understanding most of the problems it is afflicted with today. Even in the British colonial days, the area was perceived to be Yaghistan and Elaqa Ghair while in the wake of 9/11, international analysts began calling it 'most dangerous place on earth' and 'epicenter of terrorism.' Thus, clarion calls were made, both at domestic and international levels, for mainstreaming of the so-called ungoverned space through a series of reforms. The big challenge before us is how to get rid of this perception of 'ungovernability' and 'safe haven' of the area. ...

Our extremism problem, Raashid Wali Janjua, *Daily Times*, 09 November¹⁵

This religiously charged minority acted as a hard inner core of religious fanaticism around which other segments of population also coalesced reveling in their new found social elevation and political emancipation. The political and military governments relied mostly on short term expedient solutions while dealing with religious extremism. The story of religious appeasement that began with the Lal Masjid clerics continued with the likes of TLP which after its first baptism with fire during the Faizabad sit-in was mollycoddled into a ceasefire mode. It was a matter of time when the firebrand Maulvis were back on the streets challenging the writ of the state. The first reason is the lack of preparation of the people to fight the extremists. *Government has not prepared the nation to understand and tackle the virulence of religious extremism.* It is time the state came out of denial mode to confront the homespun extremism that acts as the support base for terrorism. Lack of interfaith harmony and pluralistic political ethos has resulted in a self-righteous mindset that equates dissent and diversity with heresy and sin. *It is time the state and society forged a consensus to attack the visible and invisible symbols of extremism like outdated Madaris, hate speeches, violent protests, and ritual obsessed religiosity. Some of the clerics spawning a culture of violent religious extremism in the country are like the proverbial shiver that is ever ready to climb up any spine that is available. The government would do well to deny them its spine. It should not allow clerics to pass judgment or edicts on the faith of fellow Muslims.*

¹⁵ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/319929/our-extremism-problem/>

Pakistan's own war, Editorial, Dawn, 28 November¹⁶

Mr Khan's view on the war in Afghanistan is wrong-headed, his views about the war against terrorism, militancy and extremism inside Pakistan are reckless. *From the Pakistani Taliban insurgency to the sectarian attacks inside Pakistan, the roots of militant violence in this country can be traced to the myopic and self-serving policies of the state itself. Indeed, past and present civilian and military leaders have not only asserted that the fight against militancy is Pakistan's own war that must be fought for Pakistan's sake but many in the national leadership have also recognized the strategic and policy mistakes that allowed militancy, terrorism and violent extremism to erupt in this country.* Mr Khan's unwillingness to recognize the war being fought by the state inside Pakistan as a war of necessity and for the survival of this country is not a tenable position for the prime minister. Particularly when it comes to the fight against violent extremism and the remnants of terrorist networks in the country, the civilian side of the security apparatus will need to lead from the front. The prime minister's thinking about and approach to the fight against militancy must evolve

URDU & ELECTRONIC MEDIA

URDU

Ulemaas refuse to accept judgment about Asia Bibi's acquittal, Mirza Abdul Qudoos, Ummat, November 01¹⁷

Tehreek-e-Laibak Pakistan (TLP) and other religious groups across the country have spoken against the release of Asia Bibi in the blasphemy case. *Rejecting the judgment, they have said they would not end their protests. The religious-voices say that the judgment was given under duress from external pressures of the Europe and the US.* They demanded that Asia should be put in the ECL so that she could not move out of the country. ... TLP leader Pir Muhammad Afzal Qadri condemned the judgment and said that no one, who will have belief in the Prophethood, will accept the judgment. *Speaking to Ummat, Qadri*

¹⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1448123/pakistans-own-war>

¹⁷ <http://ummat.net/2018/11/01/news.php?p=story1.gif>

said that 'We had an idea that because of pressure from external patrons, something such was coming. That is the reason we were protesting in front of the Punjab Assembly before the judgment was delivered. If her appeal would have been rejected we would have dispersed peacefully.' The head of the second group of the TLP Ashraf Asif Jalali said 'our honor has been questioned and we came to the field by showing our allegiance to the Prophet. Our blood, our children, body and everything will be sacrificed to protect the Prophethood. This is not a colony of America. This is place of lovers of the Prophet. Asia deserves death and we will make that sure.' ... *Shabab Islami Pakistan's amir Muhammad Hanif Qureshi said while talking to Ummat that the decision has put the Islam and its teachings in danger because the blasphemers have been given relaxation.* ... He said 'we are on the roads because our sentiments are hurt. Unless and until Asia Bibi is hanged, we will not stop protests. We are waiting for orders from our old and religious people.'

China stands with Pak, Editorial, Daily Khabrain, November 05¹⁸

China and Pakistan have signed 15 agreements of cooperation and memorandum of understanding. These include cooperation between China's Academy of Sciences and Metro Logical Department of Pakistan, in higher education, Islamabad Police and Beijing Police, cooperation in agriculture, industry and technical issues. The two prime ministers agreed on the benefits of CPEC. *Prime Minister Khan said that economic zones and commercial parks will boost Pakistan's economy. The Chinese officials assured Islamabad that China would help Pakistan to deal with the economic crisis. ... Prime Minister of Pakistan expects that China invests in Pakistan so that the situation in the country improves. For that Imran met heads of the Chinese companies and invited them to invest in Pakistan. ... The visit to China will indeed have positive impact on Pakistan's economy. China has announced to deposit US\$1.5 billion in the State Bank of Pakistan. Plus \$6 billion in CPEC is also a relief.* This will make the Muslim countries think well of Pakistan. The efforts by Pakistan and China prove that they are good friends. An IMF delegation is visiting Islamabad in coming days. Imran should keep it in mind that America has said that it would not let IMF to lend money to Pakistan. This message was directed at China as well. Still China stood with Pakistan.

¹⁸<http://epaper.dailykhabrain.com.pk/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2018-11-05/72040/01.jpg>

Pro-Israel statement embarrasses the government and the assembly, Ummat, November 13¹⁹

Punjab Assembly member of the PTI Asma Hadid has flip flopped on her statement in which she had praised Israel. *It is surprising that no single religious or political group raised any issue with her statement in the assembly. Nor the government said anything.* On Monday Asma said that no resolution was passed on 30 October in favour of Israel. She said that a scuffle ensued after the debate on Israel. After witnessing the commotion I said why do not you go there and help your Muslim brethren instead of fighting in Pakistan? She said that she was of the view a solution should be found which would save lives of Muslim men, women and children. *Hadid had said in the assembly that we criticize Jews but when we offer prayers we pray for Ibrahim and the Jews also. Now for the Jews Baitul-Muqadus is holy and therefore the Muslims Ka'ba, therefore the conflict should end.* While talking to Ummat on the matter, opposition leader Raja Zafar Ul Haq said that until the Palestine issue is settled, there can be no soft policy on Israel. ... *It seems that Asma Hadid is unaware about the atrocities committed by Israel on hapless Palestinians. She is not aware about the PTI vision either.* Strong anti-Israel and anti-PTI sloganeering was carried out by public in Agrataj. The women wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami has demanded that the government should clear its position on the matter.

Foreign policy and clear situation, Showkat Ali Shah, Nawa-i-Waqt, November 13²⁰

Former foreign minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri had gone to India to tell them same thing but he was humiliated. If there is any different solution then why do not you tell it? Pervez Musharraf would have sought same solution to Kashmir that he had for the Kargil. *It needs to be cleared that though both India and Pakistan are nuclear powers and the former is stronger but Pakistan's military is more 'war hardened'. Its morale is high. Do they have support of some external power?* We do not have good relations with Kabul. ... Without

¹⁹<http://ummat.net/2018/11/13/news.php?p=news-02.gif>

²⁰<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2018-11-13/page-10/detail-8>

America, Ashraf Ghani government will not last a single day. Its army will be in tatters. The situation will go back to square one. *China indeed is our friend. China and India are fighting to become regional hegemon. We should keep in mind that China will stand with us to some extent not beyond that.* China thinks that America will come to terms with it. That is why they do not seek a direct confrontation. ... *It is good that we have good relations with Iran because we can afford to send forces on such along border and that will affect the eastern border.* Also because of terrorism on the Pak-Afg border, we cannot afford confrontation with Iran. But we are not active in that front because of America's relations with Iran which are marred by Israel. The way Iran fought with Iraq it became clear that Iran is the only country which can speak to the US as an equal. *In the Riyadh-Tehran confrontation, Pakistan is trying delicate act of balancing.* ... Had Imran Khan read the Arab history and given the current situation, arbitration between the two seems impossible.

China and Imran Khan, Saleem Safi, Jang, November 14²¹

It is unfortunate for Imran Khan that the Chinese do not consider him as much anti-west as he intends to project himself. *Worst, instead of seeing CPEC from strategic perspective, Imran Khan saw it from his views about Nawaz Sharif. When the Chinese President Xi Jinping was supposed to visit Pakistan to survey the areas for the BRI, he had to cancel it because of the protests by Imran Khan and Tahir-ul Qadri.* ... When it appeared after the Panama papers crisis that Nawaz might not come to power again, some 'powerful' messaged to Beijing to reach out to Imran Khan. China invited Imran to Beijing which he denied saying that he would not leave the country until decision on the Panama papers was taken. This angered the Chinese. ... Then it was expected that the Chinese President would call Imran on his victory of the July 2018 elections which he did not. That was perhaps the reason that in the first cabinet meeting it was announced the CPEC projects would be re-opened, a bombshell for China. *Also the prime minister's advisor on trade Abdul Razzaq Dawood said in Europe that work on the CPEC was stopped for a year. This made the Chinese restless. It is here that the Army Chief visited Beijing and assured it about the CPEC.* Chinese were again angered when Imran Khan came back from Saudi Arabia, announcing that the Kingdom would be partner in the

²¹https://e.jang.com.pk/pic.asp?npic=11-14-2018/Karachi/images/06_004.png

CPEC. Again the army intervened and assured the Chinese. *In this background, Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to China was exaggerated. It was said that money will flow to Pakistan. The reality was different. Imran was received by deputy minister of transport in China. When talks took place, the ministers had not done homework.* When help was sought from China, no solid answer was given. China said it would help but according to which agenda, on which project and when there was none offered. *How successful was the visit could have been easily inferred from the hand-shake between Xi and Khan where the latter was clearly upset.* Still the spokespersons will say that the visit was successful. I am afraid they may deteriorate the relations further instead of improving them.

Taliban agrees on Hekmatyar as presidential candidate after agreement,

Mohammad Qasim, *Ummat*, November 15²²

It appears that the Afghan Taliban has given its consensus to field Gulbuddin Hekmatyar as joint presidential candidate for the upcoming elections in Afghanistan. On the other hand, Kabul government has rejected America's plea to delay the Presidential elections. After the decision, President Trump said that America would not provide security for the elections. *These changes are taking place as it is believed that without an agreement with the Taliban, the elections will serve no purpose. It is also expected that after the elections, Hekmatyar can emerge as a presidential candidate. According to the report received by Ummat, US special representative Zalmay Khalilzad has conveyed this message to President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah that America wants the elections to be delayed until an agreement is signed with the Taliban.* And when the agreement is signed, a candidate who will unite the country and will bring the Taliban in the government should be chosen as the President. However, both Ghani and Abdullah have rejected the demand. *According to a reliable source, Afghan-President and his companions believe that America and the Taliban have reached an agreement secretly. They just need to sign it. These secret talks were going on for over a year. That is why Khalilzad was appointed as special envoy. ...* On their side, the Taliban could not name a candidate for the president. They, however, agreed on Hekmatyar as a joint candidate. ... According to the source, many Taliban

²²<http://ummat.net/2018/11/15/news.php?p=story5.gif>

fighters were associated with Hekmatyar in past. Some are still in field fighting. Similarly, there has been no rivalry between Hizb-e-Islami and the Haqqani Network in the past. The government wants the elections to be held before the agreement so that the Taliban will be given governorship of provinces only.

U-turn and the leader, Saleem Safi, *Jang*, November 21²³

Though they cannot make Pakistan a 'naya Pakistan', but its proponents do intend to invent a new dictionary that can justify their use of the language/words. *What was unfair or illegal for others is fair and legal for PTI. If Nawaz Sharif or his family has property abroad that is illegal. But for the PTI leaders, like Jahangir Tareen and Aleema Khanum, it is allowed. ...* On begging: when the PML-N or PPP were asking loans from other countries, it was called begging by the PTI. But when they approach to other countries or the IMF, it is seen as an achievement. Of late, the PTI has tried to re-define a leader also: *It is said that one who does not take U-turns, cannot be a leader. ...* But it remains reality that U-turns do not take one to its goals. It, rather, after leaving the place, brings it back to the same. An U-turner can be a guide but certainly not a leader. For instance, Muhammad Ali Jinnah had led the Muslims of South Asia to form a safe country for them. Had he taken a U-turn on finding that there was possibility for a compromise, what would have that ended up in? ... *By saying that U-turns are characteristics of a leader, Imran is trying to follow Zia-ul Haq who took U-turn by saying that the elections would be held in ninety days but took 9 years; Imran also follows leaders like Pervez Musharraf, Nawaz Sharif and Altaf Hussain.* It is then better that the Prime Minister surrenders to Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain. Shujaat is bigger leader if U-turns are the features for being one. I had told much earlier that it is not necessary that a cricketer can be a leader but some wanted to test Imran. Now it is to be seen will these people continue to support Imran or they will take a U-turn.

Baloch rebels attack Pakistan and China, Muhammad Aslam Khan, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, November 26²⁴

²³https://e.jang.com.pk/pic.asp?npic=11-21-2018/Karachi/images/06_004.png

²⁴<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2018-11-26/page-10/detail-9>

The attack on the Chinese consulate in Karachi is direct attack on China. These attackers of Pakistan's sovereignty are called by some of our so-called intellectuals 'unhappy youth'. And these people demand death sentence for the son of Pakistan, Hafiz Saeed. Conspiracies are being hatched to make Balochistan and CPEC controversial. The enemy is spreading out its tentacles everywhere in the country. Are we close to a major war? On Friday, at 9.30am the Chinese Consulate in Karachi was attacked. Two policemen and two unknown civilians were killed. ... *The Baloch separatist group Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) has claimed the attack. It has threatened more such attacks against the Chinese. 13 people including Baloch separatist leader Harbiyar Marri, have been booked for the attack. The list includes BLA commander Aslam 'Acchu' alias Miraq Baloch.* ... It is said that the terrorists did a reconnaissance two months ago of the consulate area. ... The supporters of these Baloch separatists need to be asked the question now: has not it become indispensable to punish the guilty? After the attack, now there are voices asking for completion the Safe City Project as soon as possible. ... Sometime back, the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Sun Weidong had said that 'Baloch separatism is ending. It is no more a threat to Pakistan, China or CPEC in Balochistan. Pakistan has improved a lot in security aspect.' He had called the 'Baloch rebels' not 'true Pakistani because if they were they would have thought about Pakistan's interests.' *According to the ambassador, ten thousand Chinese are working in Pakistan. About sixty thousand Pakistanis are working in CPEC.* ... *Though ASP Suhai Aziz is being praised for her bravery, the attack is just trailer. While praising the heroes, villains need to be identified. If there is need, Harbiyar and his associates need to be put on trial.* The international community needs to be told that countries supporting these terrorists, need to be asked to stop.

We will not let Pakistan to be a colony of USA: Maulana Fazl-ur Rahman,
News, Jasarat, November 26²⁵

If I were powerful enough I would not let this government to run for a day. We will not allow Pakistan to be colony of the West or America. The direction in which the country is being taken is not natural path or destination of the country, *Maulana Fazl-ur Rahman said while addressing the Million March*

²⁵<https://www.jasarat.com/2018/11/26/181126-01-26/>

convened by MMA at Sikhar to save the sanctity of finality of prophet hood. Maulana further elaborated that democracy is now democracy only for the sake of its name. These so-called democratic rulers are not people's representatives. This government is imposed upon us fraudulently which is hell bent to end the ideological identity of Pakistan. Pakistan is being made slave of international institutions. We are not talking against state but we are saying take lessons from Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. ***Pakistan's ideology is being changed. The ruling dispensation is harming its ideological identity. This is the first government which tried to interfere with Madrasas.*** We will not let the freedom of Madrasas to be curtailed. We will defend the physical boundary of the country as well as the ideological boundaries.

Costly war for Pakistan, Editorial, Daily Khabrain, November 28²⁶

America got involved whole world in its war in Afghanistan. Pakistan also became a partner and it had to bear the maximum cost, both in terms of loss of infrastructure and loss of human lives. Few days back Prime Minister Imran Khan visited North Waziristan along with the army Chief Gen. Qamar Bajwa. ***Imran, while inaugurating many welfare projects, said that no other country sacrificed as much as Pakistan has in fighting against terrorism.*** Pakistan and its people paid price for war in Afghanistan. Now efforts should be made to bring peace in Afghanistan and to end terrorism. ***America may be having some vested interests in the war but Pakistan wants peace in Afghanistan. ...*** Imran Khan's statement that now onwards Pakistan will not fight war of any other country and no one will be allowed to enter in the country, should be a welcome position for the people of North Waziristan.

100 days of Imran Khan, Dr. A. R. Khalid, Nawa-i-Waqt, November 28²⁷

Opponents of the Prime Minister Imran Khan and conspiracies against his government have counted the first hundred days of his government by taking stock of every single day. ***His critique however never accepted this much of time and straight away started criticism. Every one released trailers of their criticism with hope that main part will come on the hundredth day.*** I criticised the decisions, like making the governor house museum and the Prime Minister

²⁶<http://epaper.dailykhabrain.com.pk/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2018-11-28/73611/07.jpg>

²⁷<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2018-11-28/page-10/detail-9>

House a university. First question that came to my mind is what will Imran keep in the museum? ... Though criticism was unwelcome from the beginning but the opponents waited for the hundred days to criticize the failures of the government strongly. However it did not help. *It is true there is no big visible change: no 'black money' has been brought back; nor was any big corrupt person punished; neither has the economic condition improved nor has been peace and security in the country achieved.* Consequently, Imran has failed and his government is unsuccessful is alleged. *But better way to judge his success- or failure- is to make a comparison between Imran Khan's hundreds days and hundred months rule of Asif Zardari and Nawaz Sharif.* In his 100 days, Imran saved sinking economy by bringing billions of dollars. The governments of Zardari and Nawaz could not bring money; Imran did not accept any commission or gift; nor did he accept anything from the treasury. *Imran has served honestly. There has been no corruption, dishonesty, vested interest loot, enmity, anti-people policies in his tenure so far....*

ELECTRONIC

Khabar kay peechay, 07/11/2018²⁸

Anchor Farid Raees introduced the topic by saying that IMF delegation is on a visit to Pakistan. IMF has entrapped Pakistan in the past in debts. *Rais asked that when Saudi Arabia has already given US\$6 billion and rest for the \$12 billion requirement was assured by China as was said by Finance Minister Asad Umar, then what is the need to go to the IMF?* Former Finance Minister Dr. Salman Shah said that the bail out will address the balance of payment crisis but not the foreign debt and foreign reserve requirements. *He said that the \$12 billion was for balance of payment while the debt and foreign reserve requirement is additional.* Dr. Shah was of the view that one can repay the debts without going to IMF but will not get new loans within the international financial structure. On the possible conditions of the IMF for the bail out, Shah said those may include to control the current account deficit, what percentage

²⁸<http://www.zemtv.com/2018/11/07/khabar-kay-peechay-7th-october-2018/>

of GDF will go for that and how to improve foreign reserves, among others. ... Dr. Shah said that Pakistan will have to take on reforms which were ignored previously. Dr. Abid Suleri said that the major problem for reforms has been political capital of the respective governments and other times no political consensus. *Dr. Abid said that China is unlikely to give cheque as bail out like Saudi Arabia. China is a controlled economy and would like to sign agreements of investments.* He said that Pakistan can compete with China in some things, like rice. Economist Shabbar Zaidi was of the view that it was inevitable for Pakistan to go to the IMF. Pakistan should ask for \$10-15 billion, he said.

Off the record, 13/11/2018²⁹

Anchor Kashif Abbasi asked his guests to analyse 100-days performance of the PTI led-government. *Abbasi viewed that it is too early to judge the performance but at least there should have been direction in the policy, which is missing.* Muhammad Zubair of PML-N said that it is the responsibility of the government to fix the economy. It cannot make excuses. *If the government has plans to fix the things, why then is there increase in inflation and fall in rupee. And this happening when, according to the government, dollars are coming in the country.* Ali Muhammad Khan of PTI said that the opposition should offer 'way forward', instead of criticising the policies. *He was of the view there is indeed direction in the PTI policies like corruption is targeted, austerity drive is going on, and other policies are being implemented. However, Chaudhry Manzoor of PPP was of the view there is no direction in any policy of the current government.* It has burdened the common man of Pakistan. Where is the direction in foreign policy, internal policy, economy, in education, police reforms, and in others? *Manzoor said that the 'mistakes' made by the current dispensation could have been avoided.* On that Ali Khan said that is not it success in foreign policy that Islamabad could get loan from Saudi Arabia and China. *He also talked about the management of the TLP and other religious groups' protests in absence of the Prime Minister peacefully. On asking that would the 'agreement' prevent the TLP led groups to restrain from coming and blocking roads in future, Ali Khan said we will deal with the problem then according to the requirements.* Chaudhry Manzoor said that the agreement was

²⁹<http://www.zemtv.com/2018/11/13/off-the-record-13th-november-2018/>

complete compromise from the government side while the TLP and others not changing their position on anything.

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Sindh				
Quaidabad ³⁰	16/11/2018	Naqeebullah Mehsud was innocent, was killed in a fake encounter,' says inquiry team.	01	0
Karachi				

³⁰ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1445991>

Karachi ³¹	23/11/2018	Terror attack on Chinese Consulate in Karachi; 3 terrorists killed	07	01
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa				
Bajaur ³²	21/11/2018	Two killed in roadside IED blast in Bajaur [REDACTED]	02	0
Balochistan				
Gwadar ³³	01/11/2018	Five labourers shot dead in Gwadar	05	03

³¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1447192>

³² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1446989/two-killed-in-roadside-ied-blast-in-bajaur>

³³ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/317326/five-labourers-shot-dead-in-gwadar/>