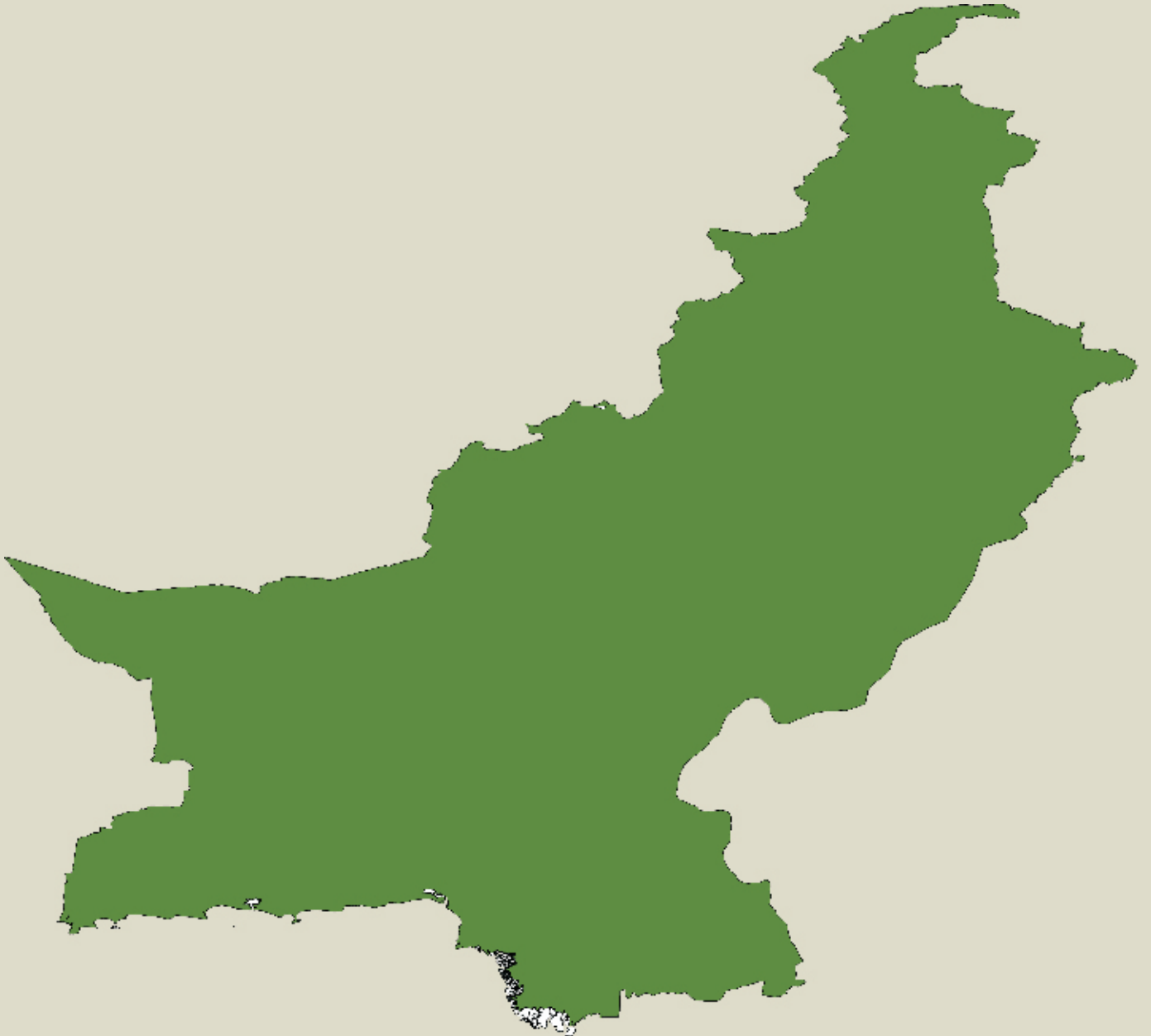


September 2018

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, September 2018

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Editorial

The hyped Economic Advisory Committee (EAC) constituted by Prime Minister Imran Khan to restore the ailing economy of Pakistan faced the public's ire when noted economist Atif Mian was first inducted and then asked to step down from the council. The formation of the eighteen member EAC was part of Imran Khan's strategy to steer the country out of the economic crisis. The step was taken allegedly due to Mian's minority religious Ahmadiyya faith. Soon after the announcement of his inclusion religious groups questioned the PTI government over his minority faith. Although the government stood by its decision firmly by defending the decision but due to pressure arising from all quarters the PTI finally changed its stance and asked the professor to quit the EAC. Most of the English dailies reacted strongly to the decision and criticized the Imran Khan government's incompetence's to take decision on national matter and started a debate on the lack of minority rights in Pakistan. But at the same time the vernacular and broadcast media did not give much coverage to the issue.

Amid Pakistan's unstable relations with US, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and US military chief General Joseph Dunford visited Islamabad in the beginning week of this month. The delegates held talks with Prime Minister Imran Khan, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Pakistan's army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and the significant part of the agenda was to discuss situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan's shaky relations with the US. But before the visit, in a dramatic step US administration canceled a \$300 million aid package to Pakistan citing Islamabad's perceived unwillingness to act against militant groups. It has to be noted that this decision comes after Trump announced at the beginning of the year that it will suspend aid to Pakistan due to its supposed "lies and deceit." The political analysts believe that Imran Khan agrees to the military's policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan and therefore they speculate that that the civilian and military government must have spoken to Pompeo in the same terms and language.

A new debate on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is shaping up in the political circles of Pakistan on whether it is time to relook and rethink its terms of engagement with China vis-à-vis CPEC. The new debate has yet again gotten the spot light on the loopholes and skewed planning strategy of the CPEC. Many argue that China is benefitting more from the project and it

subordinates Pakistan's interests to those of China. Many experts in Pakistan also point out to the environmental and humanitarian costs of projects in Sindh, and says a 'lack of direct payoff from Gwadar port could further infuriate insurgency-hit Balochistan'. On the other hand, some also argue that Pakistan cannot afford to annoy the Americans at this crucial point when it urgently needs an IMF bail-out to stabilize the economy. The flow of US aid is necessary for the economic reconstruction effort as it gives impetus to industrialization and helped combat food insecurity. But if it wants the inflow of American dollars intact, Pakistan has to take certain dramatic anti-CPEC steps in the future.

The month ended with India first accepting the offer to talk on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly then calling off the foreign ministry level talk the next day citing the killing of police man in Kashmir by Pakistan backed terrorists and glorification of terrorists by Pakistan. Sushama Swaraj and his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mehmood Qureshi were supposed to meet at the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting. Pakistani media blamed India for the fiasco and underlined that India is trying to dig old issues to call off bilateral engagement. A few experts in the media said that the real reason for Modi is the upcoming general elections in 2019 and keep the Pakistan rhetoric on to increase his vote bank.

Zainab Akhter

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

Two disconnects, Cyril Almeida, Dawn, 09 September¹

Because the mistakes are now piling up, it's easier to sketch out what's going wrong. Governance that loose, woolly term that means something different to everyone is off-track and it's because of two disconnects. The first is between Imran and Asad Umar, the PM-FM symbiosis and closeness that's missing. It is the PM-FM relationship on which all functional government or lack thereof is built and it's easy enough to explain why. All government, especially the big, sweeping, hope-y change kind, starts with money — how much is available, how much can be raised, how much can be spent? Because government is essentially about money and, in Pakistan, government is always about not having money. *Inevitably, that puts a strain on the PM-FM relationship in office — no PM likes to be told no, certainly not a Pakistani PM and definitely not Imran — and so going into their jobs, there needs to be a rock solid understanding between the PM and the FM.* Imran, it is becoming apparent, believes he knows numbers. We can't really be sure yet if he actually knows his finance and numbers, but in the dam talk you can see that numbers to Imran is about belief — if you want the impossible, start by believing. The other disconnect is systemic. It is now transparently obvious that 2018 has been first and foremost about keeping one chap out and, as a result, bringing another chap in. That has created multiple distortions, many effects of which were predictable and that are quickly becoming apparent. It has left Imran with multiple dependencies and constraints — towards his political allies, towards the court and, of course, towards they-who-cannot-be-mentioned. Because Imran is discovering all of this for the first time, it's looking like amateur hour to most others.

Analysis: What drove PTI govt to reverse Atif Mian's nomination, Amir Wasim, Dawn, 10 September²

¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1431831/two-disconnects>

² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1432021/analysis-what-drove-pti-govt-to-reverse-atif-mians-nomination>

Highly-placed sources told Dawn that the government had to swallow the bitter pill of taking a U-turn on the issue of Atif Mian's nomination as EAC member within three days after receiving reports that some religious groups were planning to stage sit-ins in Islamabad on Friday (Sept 7) at a time when foreign dignitaries, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Saudi Minister for Information Dr Awwad Bin Saleh Al Awwad in Islamabad were scheduled to arrive in Pakistan. Within three days of its rhetoric about the rights of minorities, the PTI government bowed down to pressure from religious groups and asked Atif Mian, who belongs to the Ahmadi community, to step down from the prime minister-led EAC. The PTI leaders said that the government had made the decision to avoid any controversy. Talking to Dawn, a PTI leader termed the situation "unfortunate", saying that the move had damaged the party's image. *He said the party had taken the decision keeping in view the last year's incident when the previous PML-N government had to accept most of the demands of the Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan after its sit-in at Faizabad against proposed changes to the Khatam-i-Nabuwat declaration for election candidates.* The PTI leader admitted that his party had not supported the then government at that time due to political compulsions and now the opposition had done so in a "tit-for-tat" move.

Bigotry beats merit again, Mehboob Qadir, Daily Times, 10 September³

His removal had nothing to do with these cardinal attributes, his capability or professionalism. That decision was only taken because of his Ahmadi faith. This is a strange and illogical decision by all standards. It has seriously dented PTI's principled moral platform, and has raised serious questions about their ability to withstand various internal and external pressures which are still to come. Atif Mian was their first litmus test and that too, one of their own choosing. It wasn't the actual protest but the threat of an agitation which caused this inglorious melt-down. This is not how affairs of the state are run. This is not how wise, honorable and resolute men behave. *However there is one great disappointment. PTI stood for an egalitarian order and against a deeply entrenched political system which was supported by various regressive religious groups, including certain sponsors of militancy. That major plank out of your moral chariot is gone after this regrettable decision, which has uncovered your potentially serious vulnerability.* it appears our country has

³ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/295497/bigotry-beats-merit-again/>

slid into an abyss where men's worth is judged by their religion, the length of the prayer mark on their foreheads and how outlandish their dress can get. The closer their appearance and mind is to the medieval times, the more credible it seems to become. One would suggest that we look for better, competent and reliable human beings and not self-righteous mullahs, priests, pundits or lamas. One shabby decision and see how badly the newly formed Economic Advisory Council is disintegrating? Hear also the splinter in sounds from the society below and the painful moans of dwindling, dissipating hope.

Fazlur Rehman's power play, Editorial, Daily Times, 14 September⁴

Be that as it may, where the MMA president has overstepped the mark is by declaring "jihad" against PTI efforts to register and monitor madrassas; as well as streamlining curricula. Despite being in accordance with the National Plan of Action (NAP) Rehman has chosen to denounce them as evidence of the ruling party's western-backed and anti-Islam agenda. Such a narrative is extremely unfortunate and brings with it serious ramifications. Especially as it had been hoped that all parties across the great divide had learned the lessons of last year: whereby the subsequent fallout of the Khatam-e-Nabuwat controversy played a role in the *emergence of groups with links to religious extremism as 'legitimate' political players.* While contributing to the assassination attempt on the then man at the Interior. For while the PTI chairman is unaffectionately known to his detractors as "Taliban Khan" due to his commitment to talking to such groups as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) – not forgetting the shameful Economic Advisory Council (EAC) fiasco – Rehman will not curry their favour by effectively inciting violence against the sitting Prime Minister. Rather, the citizenry will be left feeling increasingly alienated and frightened. In addition, criticism of Khan does not mean that a convenient blind eye can be turned to the MMA president's staunch opposition to registering madrassas with the National Counter-Terrorism Authority (NACTA) or the FATA-merger. This is to say nothing of his well-known and unenlightened views on women's voting rights.

International Developments

⁴ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/297673/fazlur-rehmans-power-play/>

US aid cut, Editorial, Dawn, 03 September⁵

The aid cut-off is not new and has already been factored into budgetary estimates, so perhaps the measure is designed to placate hawks inside the Trump administration. But it will surely rankle in Pakistan and rightly so: more than the aid, it is the hectoring and aggressive tone of the Trump administration towards Pakistan combined with an apparent disregard for a peace process in Afghanistan that is a problem. But a cautious public reaction can be accompanied by a robust defence in private. The focus in Afghanistan should be a peace process with the Afghan Taliban, and while Pakistan has consistently expressed an interest in supporting a peace process, it can only do so much in the face of political disarray in Afghanistan and reluctance in the US to engage the Taliban in dialogue. *The longest war in US history will not change dramatically in military terms, but political support for the war in the US can only further deteriorate. President Donald Trump clearly only reluctantly agreed to extend the war in Afghanistan and is reported to be frustrated with the lack of progress that he was promised by his generals.*

Pompeo's visit, Editorial, Dawn, 07 September⁶

With Mr. Pompeo scheduled to travel to India immediately after a short, hours-long stay in Islamabad, the possibility of the inaugural 2+2 ministerial meeting taking aim at Pakistan was also high. The joint statement following the meeting in New Delhi yesterday between the Indian foreign and defence ministers and their US counterparts delivers an explicit and harsh rebuke meant for Pakistan, likely delighting hawks in Delhi and Washington and further complicating Pakistan's ties with the latter. *Presumably, the strong US rhetoric against Pakistan in public is backed by specific demands behind closed doors. But it remains an odd approach for several reasons.* First, the US persistence in seeing Pakistan through a security lens and primarily in terms of the war in Afghanistan has prevented a rational discourse between the two countries. Second, for many years it has been apparent that the war in Afghanistan will not be won militarily and can only be ended by a political settlement at the negotiating table. The US pressure on Pakistan to curb alleged Afghan Taliban and Haqqani network sanctuaries on its soil does little to help the ultimate goal of bringing the warring Afghan parties to the negotiating table. Yet, where the US is wrongheaded in its approach, Pakistan would be

⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1430667/us-aid-cut>

⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1431473/pompeos-visit>

mistaken to remain in denial about elements of its counter-militancy, counterterrorism and counter-extremism strategies.

A faulty beginning, Zahid Hussain, *Dawn*, 12 September⁷

Numerous taskforces have been formed to chart out the plan of action in various fields; but until they start functioning there will be chaos. Additionally, events over the past week have revealed an amateurish approach to handling critical issues related to governance. Populist rhetoric seems to have substituted policy. It is voodoo economics and politics in action — dams will be built through public donations and ‘unutilized state land’ can be used to reduce our debt burden. Just wait for the 100-day miracle, we are told. There is no doubting Imran Khan’s commitment to bring change. His focus on human development and environmental issues is commendable. *But it’s the economy that needs to be fixed first. It’s surely ‘change vs more of the same’. But what kind of change has not been clearly defined. Without a clear vision it will be more of the same or worse. It is certainly a good idea to seek the services of technocrats to develop a framework for change but there is a question about the willingness of the elected leadership to heed their advice and recommendations.*

ECONOMIC ISSUES

CPEC confusion, Editorial, *Dawn*, 11 September⁸

While both governments spoke of renewing ties, broadening the base of their cooperation and inviting others to participate in their bonhomie, at least one of the ministers let it slip that there are powerful apprehensions about the entire deal within Pakistan. Long before we heard the words of the commerce adviser, who hails from the business community, we have heard various trade and business bodies articulate the very same concerns in very similar language. Going forward, it is necessary to heed the substance of both voices that spoke on Monday. There is no doubt that CPEC should continue, and certainly grow with time. China is arguably Pakistan’s most important neighbours and has been a consistent friend through the decades. But as we move forward, it is important that Pakistan’s own interests, and political traditions, be kept front

⁷ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1432421/a-faulty-beginning>

⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1432205/cpec-confusion>

and center. *To what extent does the new government wish to heed the voice of the business community when formulating its approach to CPEC? How far is the new government willing to go to honour its commitment to the electorate to conduct an audit of some CPEC projects like the Orange Line train, or to bring greater transparency to future CPEC negotiations such as those around the ML 1 project, or to place details of past agreements before parliament?* All of these are commitments made by the PTI before and after the election and we need to know where they stand today. Following Mr. Dawood's remarks, the Chinese embassy in Pakistan also issued a strongly worded reaction denying the interview altogether. It is clear that the time to choose the future course of CPEC has arrived.

Judicial responsibilities and dam funds, Aamir Yaqoob, *Daily Times*, 17 September⁹

There is no division of opinion on the urgency of building new dams but a fragile democracy, such as ours, is hardly ready to pay a cost as heavy as the one required to build the Diamer-Bhasha dam. Recent public utterances of the Honorable Chief Justice of Pakistan in support of the dam fund are arguably in conflict with the code of conduct of the position he holds. Saqib Nisar warned that anyone who attempts to hinder the construction of new dams could soon find himself/herself facing a trial under Article-6 of the Constitution. This effectively means that individuals opposing the construction of the Diamer-Basha dam (and other dams) as well as the incumbent government's plan to crowd fund these mega infrastructure projects could be declared as enemies of the state. One may admire his enthusiasm and intention but this eagerness can jeopardize the impartiality of the court and cause of dispensation of justice. Similarly, the principle of institutional balance and separation of powers is seriously put under question when a Chief Justice assumes charge of the noble mission of building dams. Dispensation of justice is the basic responsibility of the institution of judiciary. Despite that, pending cases in the Supreme Court hit an all-time high of more than 40,000 on July 31, 2018, according to a report published in a reputed national daily on August 19, 2018. In line with Article 10 of the judicial code, a judge must endeavor to minimize suffering of litigants by deciding cases in the

⁹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/298971/judicial-responsibilities-and-dam-funds/>

shortest possible time. *Therefore, it is high time for the judiciary to focus on its primary task of supplying speedy justice to people. This is only possible if Honorable Chief Justice leaves his ambitious plan of fundraising and building dams to the newly elected Prime Minister and his cabinet.*

SECURITY SITUATION

Paradigm shift in civil-military relations, Dr Moonis Ahmer, *Daily Times*, 07 September¹⁰

Never before in the recent history of Pakistan has any PM spent so much time discussing matters related to internal and external security with the top army brass. Although, the top leadership of the Navy and Air Force was not present, the level of confidence expressed by the military high command in the new government was unprecedented. This meeting lasted for more than six hours, and was termed historic. Given the age-old rocky relationship between the Army and various civilian governments – particularly those led by PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif – it is too early to pass a judgment that all will be well between the two centers of power. The paradigm shift in the civil-military relationship will take place only when the civilian leadership on account of its performance, capability and capacity will be able to assert its position to an extent that Army's top brass – including its huge security establishment – will be subservient to the policies framed by the parliament and implemented by the government. That the role of National Security Committee (NSC) will be to act as a bridge between the Army and the civilian leadership. Four realities must be taken into account while analysing any paradigm shift in civil-military relations. First, the perception and to some extent reality that the Army has taken advantage of the fragility of political parties and the failure and their leadership to deliver since the country was founded. Second, the perception that the Army and to some extent the Navy and Air Force deviated from their professional duties and meddled in political matters by overthrowing civilian governments or influencing the political-electoral process is not far from reality. Furthermore, the perception that there are certain 'no go areas' in Pakistan's foreign policy and national security matters where the civilian

¹⁰ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/293952/paradigm-shift-in-civil-military-relations/>

government has no writ also isn't exactly false. Pakistan's history is replete with examples of political parties and their leaders, who on account of their fragility and insecurity, approached the military for intervention.

Doomed Reset? Najam Sethi, *The Friday Times*, 07 September¹¹

*The problem for Pakistan is that a pro-Pakistan or even "friendly" Afghanistan is inconceivable in the present circumstances. For a variety of historical reasons, the Tajiks, Uzbeks and most other Afghans, including non-Taliban Pakhtuns, hate Pakistan. Even the Taliban, who are not anti-Pakistan, have strong "ideological" ambitions in the region inimical to Pakistan. So what should Pakistan do? If, in the quest for a peace settlement in Afghanistan, Pakistan helps the US significantly degrade the Taliban – the one stakeholder which is not anti-Pakistan – and thereby strengthen and consolidate the disparate anti-Pakistan forces in Afghanistan, it will be undermining its own national security in the long term by making one more enemy in the region. If it doesn't, it risks being destabilized itself by the US-India axis. Thus Pakistan is damned if it does and damned if it doesn't. President Trump is desperate to show "positive" results in Afghanistan. But the US-puppet Ghani regime in Kabul is riven with internal fissures and crumbling on the eve of parliamentary and presidential elections while the Taliban are rampant and disinterested in talks that don't serve their interests. Meanwhile, Pakistan is extremely vulnerable on two fronts. Its economy is tanking and needs an urgent IMF injection administered by the US. **And the new political dispensation engineered by the Brass and led by Imran Khan is too brittle to inspire confidence and hope. Under these conflicted circumstances, the US-Pak outlook for "resetting" Kabul and Islamabad is not bright.***

The State's response to extremist politics, Saadat Hassan, *Daily Times*, 11 September¹²

Many severe security challenges persist in Pakistan that affect the lives of its citizens. Although terrorism and extremism continue to be the most daunting challenges that Pakistan must overcome today, the internal security landscape

¹¹ <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/tft/doomed-reset/>

¹² <https://dailytimes.com.pk/295862/the-states-response-to-extremist-politics/>

is continually evolving and has become increasingly complex. Tens of thousands of Pakistani civilians have been killed. However, new extremist groups have risen in recent years. These include Barelvi groups like Tehreek Labaik Pakistan (TLP), Majlis-e-Tahaffuz-e-Khatme Nabuwwat Movement and Majlis-i-Ahrar Islam. These groups strongly opposed the appointment of Dr Atif Mian to the Economic Advisory Council (EAC). They depicted him as a traitor for being Ahmadi, and created a narrative that he was working against Islam. This is despite the fact that numerous members of the Ahmediyya community — such as Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan and Dr Abdul Salam — have proven themselves to be true and loyal Pakistanis. The Atif Mian episode exposed their aggressive mentality of extremist Islamists in Pakistan. *The anti-Ahmadi stance is also in violation of Articles 25 and 27 of the Constitution. Furthermore, the mullahs have no solutions to offer for our political, economic and diplomatic problems. The rise of Barelvi extremism has heralded in a new era of political violence.* Further weakening of the writ of state and demoralizing of the civil administration and police will bolster these violent forces. If the state continues to succumb to such forces, it could seriously challenge the state prerogative of monopoly of violence. Negotiated deals are not the best medicine for state legitimacy. Furthermore, these new religious movements may fan sectarian strife in Punjab province and deepen the inter-Sunni sect divisions. Militarization of the new Barelvi groups cannot be ruled out either.

Perilous times for Ahmadi Pakistanis, Imran Ahsan Mirza, Daily Times, 12 September¹³

The Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan is passing through a perilous period of attention and scorn. There is a relentless campaign by religious extremists, who are bent on harassing and targeting Ahmadis. *This is not a new phenomenon for the Ahmadiyya Community, however, in the recent past this drive has intensified many fold. It is appalling that our current leadership and the religious clergy misinform the public about Ahmadis. Moreover, existing legal frameworks don't even permit the community to provide a rebuttal to such allegations, which subsequently incites hatred on a daily basis. Scholars of Pakistani history are well versed with the contributions of the Ahmadiyya community, towards the establishment of this nation.* Moreover, Ahmadis

¹³ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/296434/perilous-times-for-ahmadi-pakistanis/>

have excelled in the fields of science, technology, public service, medicine etc. The removal of Dr Atif Mian, sets a prejudicial and harmful precedence where removing an Ahmadi from a government institution, due to his beliefs was made an example of before the nation. Religious intolerance was given a new platform, by letting prejudice serve as a legitimate reason for the termination of employment. This has many repercussions for both the nation and the beleaguered Ahmadiyya community of Pakistan. The PTI government inadvertently or perhaps deliberately abandoned safeguarding the rights of Ahmadis; who as citizens of the nation, are guaranteed safeguards against discrimination in accordance to Article 27 of the constitution. This will lead to increased vigilante behavior by countless intolerant sections of society and numerous extremist elements spreading across the country. *Religious denominations in majority will continue to encroach upon the rights of smaller denominations. This competition is bound to result in violence, especially when the government seems to have relinquished its responsibility of enforcing fairness among its citizens. Ahmadis have been on the receiving end of violence for long enough, and are witness to its deep and profound impact.*

Pakistan and Ahmadis, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Daily Times, 13 September¹⁴

People have wondered how an economist enjoying the respect of his peers worldwide could be denied inclusion simply because of his faith in Ahmadiyyat. Those who argue that it is consistent with the constitution and laws of Pakistan which describes them as non-Muslims assert that they should not claim to be Muslims. If they accept their status as non-Muslims, they can enjoy all those rights and protections which other minorities are entitled to according to the Pakistan constitution. Others argue that nobody should have the right to define or categorize who is a Muslim and who is not. The debates and controversies which have emerged are familiar ones and by no means something new. One argument I have made innumerable times is that since Pakistan is signatory to the UN Charter and accepts the moral status of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), it is under legal-ethical obligation to remove all provisions in the Pakistan constitution which contradict such a commitment. Concrete policy needs to be developed which provides substantive relief to Ahmadis. Most toil like other Pakistanis and their aspirations are not very different from them. Securing the welfare of their

¹⁴ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/296968/pakistan-and-ahmadis/>

families and a bright future for them is what occupies most of their attention. They should be allowed to join the mainstream in the economic sphere while in the private sphere they should be entitled to religious freedom.

Violence against Shias, Editorial, *Daily Times*, 17 September¹⁵

According to Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, issued its first report of the Global Extremism Monitor (GEM). The GEM monitored all violent terrorist activities in 2017, across the globe. 27,092 incidents were recorded, during which 84,023 people died across 66 countries. *The report also emphasized that more than their western enemies, terrorist groups and ideology focus on Muslim minorities, pocketed within majority Sunni populations. For these extremists, their first task is to rid Islam of “heretics”, then turn to the rest of the world; as stated by the Islamic State, the Haqqani Network and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. The most horrifying finding, however, is that 95 percent of all sectarian violence across the globe, is against Shia Muslims. Pakistan houses the second largest Shia population in the world, with an estimate of over 18-20 million Shia citizens. The Shia community is targeted by bomb-blasts, firings and target killings of prominent members of the sect. Unfortunately, Pakistanis Shia and Sunni alike — have become used to this violence. It has become part and parcel of living in Pakistan; and to accept that Shias are killed as a matter of routine violence.* These trends reflect the failure of the state to curtail persecution and safeguard the lives, beliefs and places of worship of minority communities over a period of seventy-one years. More recently, what went unnoticed by both the interim government and the newly elected PTI was the election campaign that Ahmad Ludhianvi of the Ahle-Sunnat-wal-Jamat (ASWJ) ran on a predominately anti-Shia manifesto. The violence against Pakistani Shias can be placed within the same spectrum of intolerance, bigotry and misuse of Islamic slogans that is prevalent in Pakistan. Alongside the economy and terrorism; tackling extremist ideology needs to be a national priority. The linkage between violence and Islamist extremism must be evaluated, around the Muslim world. Otherwise, we will continue to live in this era of darkness, where Muslims are becoming each other’s deadliest enemies.

¹⁵ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/299213/violence-against-shias/>

An opportunity, Moeed Yusuf, Dawn, 18 September¹⁶

Pakistan believed that the US wanted military victory and remained dismissive of its interest in a political settlement. It resisted US pressure to act decisively against the Taliban, instead denying their presence on Pakistani soil. First, the battlefield in Afghanistan is now at a truly hurting stalemate. This may sound counterintuitive given that the Taliban have recently captured headlines courtesy of their massive offensives and ability to run over major provinces like Ghazni. Yet, they are no closer to being able to hold on to the urban or peri-urban territories they run over. They don't have a path to military victory. Besides, even regional actors believed to be supporting them do not want this outcome. Second, the US has shown its intent by announcing the appointment of a special envoy for the Afghan peace process. Crucially, the envoy will sit in the State Department that has been most supportive of pushing a peace process over all other options. For those who understand Washington's bureaucratic milieu, the meaning is clear: US focus on political settlement is for real. *Simultaneously, we have gotten past the single biggest impediment to initiating serious negotiations in Afghanistan: the absence of direct talks between the US and the Taliban.* For years, the two sides have been stuck because the US has wanted Pakistan to neutralize the Taliban under its sway while Pakistan has pushed for talks while resisting forceful action against them. A drive in earnest towards political settlement creates an obvious overlap: Afghanistan, the US, and Pakistan can now work together to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table.

Back to square one, Hassan Aslam Shad, Daily Times, 24 September¹⁷

India and Pakistan also follow the deeply flawed narrative of terming one another's sane suggestions (be they for dialogue or engagement) as being the case of "the devil quoting scripture". The deep mistrust between the two countries has reached a point where each side is seen as the proverbial devil coming with dirty hands and quoting scripture to advance its nefarious designs or hidden agenda. Such approaches — whether these are driven by policy or political imperatives (such as looming elections that drive popular slogans) — should not become the state narrative dictating an automated response. India

¹⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1433630/an-opportunity>

¹⁷ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/301842/back-to-square-one-4/>

and Pakistan need to take a holistic view of their complex bilateral relationship and develop a deeper understanding of the value attached to the issues in dispute by the other, have the courage to open (and keep opened) doors of negotiation and, despite acrimony and setbacks, continue to appeal to shared values so as to construct mini-consensus on smaller issues before tackling simmering larger disputes. I will end this article with a beautiful quote by Abraham Lincoln who once said, “I don’t like that man. I am going to have to get to know him better”. *All those hoping for some — and I mean, some — thaw in the never-ending bitterness and acrimony between India and Pakistan would have breathed a sigh of relief. Prime Minister (PM) Khan offering the olive branch to India and India’s earlier acceptance of Pakistan’s offer heaved in relief from the never-ending chorus of allegations and counter allegations. But the relief — and the ensuing hope — was short lived.*

URDU & ELECTRONIC MEDIA

URDU

Goodbye Commander Haqqani, Mohammad Aslam Khan, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 05 September¹⁸

‘My commander, prominent leader of modern guerrilla warfare’ Jalaluddin Haqqani has passed away. He was ill for years. He was waiting to become martyr for decades. The Americans called him the founder of the Haqqani Group. *Jalaluddin Haqqani called his ‘allegiance to Mullah Omer’ eternal and as way to his success. He sacrificed his five sons in jihad in Afghanistan.* Though there were rumours about his death many a times in last five years but he passed away on Tuesday, 4 September 2018 which was announced by the Afghan Taliban. ... I got a chance to meet Jalaluddin when he visited Islamabad in 2001. He had said to me that *jihad* is only option against the US. All pictures that the international media have of Jalaluddin are from my collection. ... *Jalaluddin had explained the concept of allegiance in the 1980s and said that during the war against the Soviet Union Mullah Omer was fighting under his command. Then the time changed and Jalaluddin showed his allegiance to Mullah Omer. Now he cannot break the allegiance.* This was off

¹⁸ <https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2018-09-05/page-14/detail-8>

the record discussion. ... Jalaluddin said that the 'puppet government' had offered him governorship of three provinces which he refused. He did that to just seek blessing of the God. ... *Jalaluddin had come to Pakistan to hold talks with Islamabad which failed. He asked that I would ask questions in English and he would answer in Arabic. It was because Arabic was spoken by many and its translations into English was common.* It was his last interview.

Federal minister for religious affairs played role in removing Dr. Atif, Report Wajih Ahmed Siddiqui, *Ummat*, 08 September¹⁹

Federal Minister of religious affairs Noor-Ul Haq Qadri and former advisor to the Prime Minister Dr. Bara Awaan played crucial role in removing Dr. Atif Mian from Economic Advisory Council (EAC). *Many other sections of the society have said that Atif Mian was threat to security of Pakistan. Atif Mian had the agenda to sabotage the CPEC.* He is there to protect American interests and would have increased Pakistan's debt. *According to the source Finance Minister Asad Umar was not in favour of removing Dr. Atif from the EAC. ... Noor-ul Haq contacted Imran Khan to the religious scholars. Babar Awaan and Sheikh Rasheed also advised Imran Khan to get rid of Atif Mian.* There was anger and disappointment among religious scholars and the PTI supporters after Dr. Atif Mian's appointment, according to the PTI sources. Women members of the PTI had openly asked for Dr. Atif's removal. ... The sources said that Atif Mian was removed on Thursday itself but announcement was made later. *Imran Khan had taken separate opinions on this from Noor-ul Haq and Fawad Chaudhry. Imran Khan agreed with the religious scholars and removed Dr. Atif Mian. Later agreeing with the Prime Minister Fawad Chaudhry said that it is not good if an appointment becomes so controversial.* Therefore, the government has removed Dr. Atif Mian. The government wants to take along every section of the society. *According to the source, the religious scholars have advised Imran Khan not to appoint any Qadiani at any important position and not involve them on important decision making because they do not accept Partisan's constitution and its decisions.* According to the source, America has started to 'image building' of Dr. Atif Mian at the Princeton University and he is called world's famous economist who can make huge money. His book on debts is called a magic trick

¹⁹ <http://ummat.net/2018/09/08/news.php?p=story1.gif>

for getting rid of debts. But no one is telling why did not the US acted on his book and got rid of its debts. ...

Expansion of CPEC is commendable, Editorial, Jang, 11 September²⁰

(The editorial talk about the apprehensions casted on the CPEC and what is being done to dispel those fears). CPEC will not only be beneficial for China and Pakistan but whole region. The reality comes out despite the fact that some countries see the project as China's way to hegemonies the world. *However to dispel any such reservations Pakistan and China have decided to invite friendly countries to join the project. The two countries have also decided to include social sections and regional welfare areas into the project so that to make it more developmental oriented and inclusive.* These decisions were taken in the meeting held between Pakistan's Planning, Development and Reforms Commission and China's Developmental and Reforms Commission. *According to the sources China expressed this wish to engage common friendly countries of the two countries in Special Economic Zones (SEZ). They want to put an end to the reservations spread by the US and its allies about the CPEC.* The countries who can invest in the CPEC are Turkey, Russia, Saudi Arabia and other European countries. *Then there will be no reservations.* On the request of Pakistan by including the areas like clean water, health, education and technical training in the CPEC, China has again proved that it is Pakistan's best friend. These decisions will increase the CPEC's uniqueness and will be better for whole world. Therefore whole world should come out of their cocoons and join the project with open hearts.

Madrasahs under pressure, Report, Ummat, 12 September²¹

The federal government of PTI and the Sindh provincial government have started to harass Madaris-e-Deeniya (religious madrasahs). *Without taking into loop the united leadership of Madaris-e-Deeniya, a fifteen page form is issued to the madrasahs and they are told that if they do not fill it their registration will be cancelled.* The responsible persons of the madrasahs who have always cooperated and participated in talks on the issue and are ready to disclose sources of their income, have rejected the way of dealing with the madrasahs. *They have said that whatever decision will be taken in this regard*

²⁰ https://e.jang.com.pk/09-11-2018/lahore/pic.asp?picname=08_002.png

²¹ <http://ummat.net/2018/09/12/news.php?p=story2.gif>

will be taken from the platform of united federal Madaris-e-Deeniya. According to the management bodies of the madrassas, they have earlier also expressed their will to open the accounts of the madrassas and to give all other important information to the authorities. But there was ban on opening accounts for the madrassas and obstacles were created for setting up new madrassas. ... The five madrassas of the country got worried after this unilateral decision. ... Spokesperson of Federal madrassas Al-Arbia in Karachi Moulana Mohammad Ibrahim Sikargahi said to *Ummat* that 'We are concerned about issuing the forms to the madrassas without our consent. Similarly the Sindh government has issued the forms and has not taken us into consideration. It is trying to build pressure on the madrassas. ... On one question *Ibrahim Sikargahi said that 'madrassas are largest NGOs of Pakistan in which 25 lakh students receive religious and modern education. They are taught till matric and this is done in service of God. If the government wants any information or bring in new system it should talk to the management. We have never said no to talks. ... The unilateral decision of the government is not welcome. It is agenda of anti-Islam people. They should stop it or their will be issues.'* He said a meeting of the madrassas will be soon after which further action will be taken.

China is ready to get blackmailed on CPEC, Asadullah Ghalib, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 13 September²²

CPEC is \$62 billion project which is huge. *CPEC is China's project and was presented to Pakistan in 2006. It is not our need but China's. Zardari was used by China. Nawaz and Shehbaz Sharif were made happy. Now there is new government and China will make it happy as well. My dear Pakistanis- do not lose heart, China will go nowhere. It just needs to make people happy.* The people who received no contracts till now, need to be given something. There were jubilations in New Delhi over Razak Dawood's interview in *Financial Times* in which he said that Pakistan is stopping work on the CPEC for a year. He later rebuffed his statement and said that it was manipulated. ... *The current government has received shocks only whenever it has opened its mouth. First shock came from the phone call of the American foreign minister. America had to say something and we heard something different. Second shock came in the form of letter from Narendra Modi. New Delhi wanted to say something and*

²² <https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2018-09-13/page-7/detail-1>

our foreign office inferred something different. Third, now we made the visit by Chinese foreign minister something different. After seeing changing position of Pakistan, Beijing has said that it is ready to work on the priorities of new government in Islamabad. CPEC is important part of China's dream project, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). There is a challenge for China that because of the Bhasha Dam, it will lose about 150 mile water and it will take one decade to remedy that part. We should think over it. Instead of focusing on the Bhasha Dam, we should demand making of the Kalabagh Dam.

Does Imran's Naya Pakistan mean Qadianistan? Shahnawaz Farooqi, *Jasarat's Friday special*, September 14²³

There are some well-known points in Imran Khan's 'new Pakistan' slogan. *One is that Imran's 'naya' Pakistan is establishment's Pakistan.* Second thing is his Pakistan belongs to 'Electables'. Third, his Pakistan is capitalists' Pakistan. The fourth point is his Pakistan is name of agreement with MQM like terrorist organizations. The fifth point is Imran's Pakistan is based on slogans and influence. The sixth point is that Imran's Pakistan is not new Pakistan. *The thing which is unknown to everyone however is that Imran's naya Pakistan belongs to Qadianis. Information minister's tone and tenure is evidence for this.* Though the PTI and PML-N do not wish to see face of each other but in patronising the Qadianis both parties are on same pages. Ex-speaker of National Assembly Ayaz Sadiq is batting for Atif Mian. Known columnist Javed Chaudhry also wrote a column supporting Atif Mian's inclusion in EAC. *If we see the things in this context then we can say that long live Qadiani campaign has emerged in whole country after Imran assumed the power. It seems that Qadianization process has started in the country and conspiracy is hatched to convert Islamic Republic of Pakistan in to Qadianistan.*

Determination of Army Chief, Editorial, *Jang*, September 28²⁴

World knows that Pakistan has paid irreparable costs for itself in the 'war on terror'. Over 80,000 soldiers and civilians were killed and billions of dollar worth property was lost. And then all this is not acknowledged. *It is impossible to think that without Pakistan's participation the war would not have engulfed a big area of the world. It is unfortunate that the world is not*

²³<https://goo.gl/fbY3qY>

²⁴ https://e.jang.com.pk/09-28-2018/lahore/pic.asp?picname=06_002.png

acknowledging Pakistan's role the way it should. It was a step-wise war and the places where terrorists had created their basis, were cleared. In all this people had to move out from their places and now they are being replaced. Pak-Army Chief has said recently during a visit to Waziristan that terrorists will not be allowed to re-assemble. Gen. Bajwa gave briefing about the resettlement process, development projects, security measures on the border on which he expressed his satisfaction. He said that for gaining complete control over the areas, the 'stability' operations should continue. He praised courage of the army and appreciated the sacrifice that the people of Waziristan have given. *After the success of operation of 'Zarb-e-Azb', operation 'Radd-ul-Fasaad' was launched and it continues till today. By saying that 'terrorists will not be allowed to return' Gen. Bajwa meant that post-success situation remains as much important as it was before.* It shows the resolve of the army chief and that Pakistan will not let terrorism to resurface in the country.

How far can you run? Editorial, Ummat, September 28²⁵

Apart from 'wealth' and 'woman', thinkers have called 'land' also a cause of turmoil and crisis. *Big chunks of land, huge palaces, farm-houses, agricultural land and big plots if analysed keenly it will come out they belong to few big families of Pakistan.* The ruler section of Pakistan has looted the country and also made it sure that their relatives get their part as well. Because of that 220 million people of the country are suffering. They live in tattered hoses without basic facilities like water, food, electricity, etc. ... *Now these looters are feeling heat as the court has started to take action. Still they do not stop cheating and lying. They run here and there. They are ready to go to jail but not to return the looted wealth....* According to the reliable source, the list of 'financial terrorists' that FIA had asked for, there are five hundred big and small fishes. Three hundred belong to Sindh. *It should be remembered that the king of 'fixing and breaking', Asif Ali Zardari and his sister are going through an inquiry. Links of their assets and wealth somewhere connect with Benazir Bhutto's rule when her husband was first called 'Mr. 3 per cent' and later 'Mr. cent per cent'. ...* Still he thinks that sometime in future he will be president of Pakistan and his son prime minister. As if Pakistan is like their looted wealth, their property and Zardari, Bilawal and Faryal Talpur are its inheritors. ... The court has now started to take action. Former Chief Justice of Pakistan Chaudhry Iftekhhar

²⁵<http://ummat.net/2018/09/28/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

Muhammad Chaudhry's son can also be arrested. *Some may be able to get away from restrictions and punishments but no one will be spared from Allah's justice.*

ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Special Report on Imran Khan's Meeting with the Media, Breaking Views with Malick, Zem TV, 31 August²⁶

Imran Khan's meeting with journalists was discussed in detail. Hamid Mir started by saying that Rauf Klara asked Imran about the logic of including Fehmida Mirza and Zubaida Jalal. He said that he asked Imran as to why he chose not to go to UNGA meeting and Imran answered that he was dealing with serious issues and he did not want to waste four days at this juncture. He also said that he would visit countries which can bring some benefits to Pakistan. The commentators held that Imran wanted to replicate his KPK governance model at the national level. Malik asked, *"Is Usman Buzdar a seat-warmer for Jehangir Tareen?"* Hamid Mir said that he had reliable information that Jehangir Tareen did not even know Usman before he was nominated by Imran as CM of Punjab and therefore the rumour that he was picked up by him was baseless. Malik said that he had information that Imran was impressed with Usman because while other leaders were busy demanding minister ship, Usman was demanding a hospital for his constituency. Rauf Klasra said *that Imran evaded questions about transfer of district police officer (DPO) of Pakpattan upon complaints by Khawar Maneka, ex-husband of Imran's wife.* He said that the behavior of his government ran counter to the moral high ground that Imran had taken before the elections to bring change to Pakistan. He asked as to what was Ahsan Jameel Gujjar (who is married to Farah a close friend of Bushra Maneka, Imran's current wife) doing in Punjab CM's house that day. He also said that recommendation for Usman might have come from Ahsan Jameel Gujjar and Farah. Hamid Mir revealed that Khawar Maneka's family members were visiting the local shrine during the night and it was known to the local police when they stopped Maneka family members for the first time on 5th August. *However, between then and 23rd August the police stopped the Manekas at least five times. Khawar then suspected that his ex-wife could be behind such harassment. The children, however, defended their*

²⁶ <http://www.zemtv.com/2018/08/31/breaking-views-with-malick-31st-august-2018/>

mother (Bushra Maneka) to begin with but felt later, upon repeated incidents of police harassment, that there must be some deliberate conspiracy behind such repeated action by the police. Then there was another theory that Khawar's brother was elected as MNA from PML-N party and therefore he was being victimized by the new government. Rauf Klasra said that Imran was unaware of the controversies that Fayaaz Ali Hussain Chauhan had raked up because of his abusive behavior. Hamid Mir revealed that he was quite surprised by the assertion by Shah Mahmood Qureshi that he did not ask for the ministry that he was heading now and that foreign policy would now be framed within the foreign office and not outside it. This, according to Mir, was an important issue that ought to have attracted serious attention from the media person. Mir said it was unfortunate that out of the 90 minutes that the media had with Imran, 50 minutes were wasted on the Khawar Maneka's issue. Klasra was, nevertheless, appreciative of Imran's patience while dealing with a very frank, open and assertive media. *Klasra said that Imran responded to criticism from the media that he had picked up many corrupt politicians by saying that the media should give him at least three months or 90 more days and then look at the performance of his government to prove whether he was right or wrong in his decision. He also defended Usman Buzdar and said that he was confident that the media would change its mind about Buzdar after 90 days.*

New Debate on CPEC, Faisla Aap Ka, Aaj News, 10 September²⁷

Asma Sherazi, the anchor of the show opens the debate on *the renewed debate on CPEC in Pakistan and the role of US*. One of the guest Abid Solera underlines that all the political parties in Pakistan agree to the transformational potential of CPEC but he says that at this point the priority of the Pakistan government has to be first to control the fiscal deficit and second is to restore the decreasing dollars crisis (Balance of Payment) and also to defer the payments to China by a certain amount of time. He also talked about the early harvest plan that there is no long term plan or pledge or money paid by China to Pakistan in this regard. America according to him is in direct war with China on the tariff issue, US has put duty tariffs on Chinese import. Rana Tanveer is of the view that the new debate on CPEC is due to the American pressure. Amid

²⁷<http://videos.aaj.tv/programs/2018-09-11/faisla-aap-ka-10-september-2018-aaj-news.html>

the economic crisis the US has given red signals to discontinue the promised IMF loan if Pakistan do not revive or Infact terminate the road infrastructure project with China. US fears that the money paid as loans to Pakistan might be used to pay the Chinese debt associated to BRI. This was made clear during US Secretary of State Pompeo’s visit to Pakistan in the first week of this month. *The anti-CPEC lobby is at work at the behest of US and Pakistan is succumbing to the pressure, he added.* Nabil Gaboa makes it clear that *the current tension is between US and China for the CPEC. The Americans were not happy with CPEC from the beginning and he added that even I am of the view that the project is just benefitting China and not Pakistan. He also makes a point by saying that if Pakistan is thinking that it can go ahead without the IMF bail then it is living in a fool's paradise.* Shibli Faraz informs that the visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to Pakistan, Immediately after the US delegate hints to the tug of war between China and US to influence Pakistan and bargain their way through the road and belt initiative. China readily agreed to cooperate with Pakistan to review the deal and make it more transparent. *Another interesting point to which agreed upon by China and Pakistan in the meeting was the involvement of a third front, friendly with both countries to invest in CPEC, buzz is that it can be either Afghanistan or Iran.*

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
	14/09/2018	3 Levies personnel martyred in Pishin blast	03	02

Pishin ²⁸				
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²⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1432889>