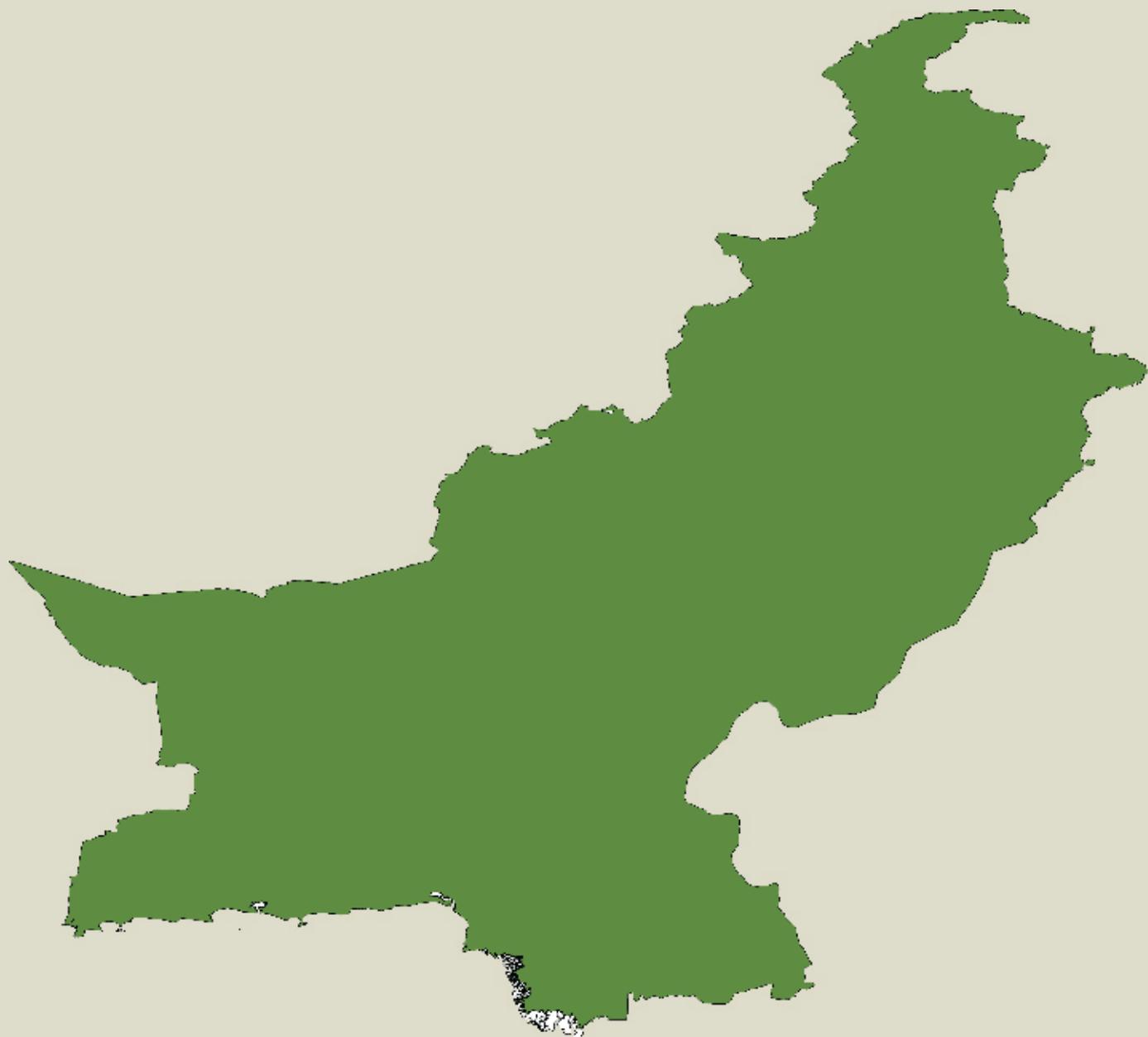


December (16-31) 2016

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



*Prepared by
Dr Ashish Shukla &
Nazir Ahmed
(Research Assistants, Pakistan Project, IDSA)*

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
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रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, December (16-31) 2016

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB: Asian Development Bank
AIIB: Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ANP: Awami National Party
APC: All Parties Conference
ATC: Anti-Terrorism Court
CPEC: China- Pakistan Economic Corridor
CTD: Counter Terrorism Department
ECP: Election Commission of Pakistan
IED: Improvised Explosive Device
IHC: Islamabad High Court
IMF: International Monetary Fund
ISI: Inter-Services Intelligence
ISPR: Inter Services Public Relations
JI: Jamaat-i-Islaami
JuD: Jamat-ul- Dawa
JUI-F Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam (Fazal)
KP: Khyber Pakhthunkhwa
LHC: Lahore High Court
MQM: Muttahida Qaumi Movement
NAB: National Accountability Bureau
NADRA- National Database and Registration Authority
NAP: National Action Plan
PAT: Pakistan Awami Tehreek
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PPP: Pakistan People's Party
PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
QCG: Quadrilateral Coordination Group
QWP: Qaumi Watan Party
RRG: Rapid Response Group
TTP: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

EDITOR'S NOTE

Pakistan uses non-state actors to achieve its foreign policy objectives is an open secret. So is its role in a number of terrorist attacks inside the Indian Territory. The recent indictment of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) Chief Maulana Masood Azhar by National Investigation Agency (NIA), for perpetrating a deadly attack on Pathankot Air Force base last year, shows that Pakistan has been continuing its policy of using non-state actors as strategic assets. Instead of reining the anti-India jihadis, Pakistan along with Chinese help has been shielding such jet black terrorists. It regularly accuses India of fomenting trouble for Pakistan. The latest addition is “attempts to sabotage CPEC” and “indulgence in Water Terrorism.” India on its part is gearing itself to optimally utilise its share of water in accordance to the provision of Indus Water Treaty (IWT) which Pakistan sees an attempt by India to reduce water inflows into Pakistan. It has even approached the World Bank for arbitration in regards to two Indian hydroelectric power projects – Kishanganga and Ratle.

Justice Qazi Faez Isa's report on Quetta carnage has dropped a bombshell on the federal and provincial government of Balochistan. The report contained several adverse remarks against the Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan and his ministry. Interior Minister himself came out in open to defend himself. He not only termed the report “one-sided” but also argued that the report was made public without recording his version. The opposition parties seem to be united in condemning the interior minister and asking for his resignation over the issue. PTI leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi not only accused Chaudhry Nisar of attacking the apex court of the country but also posed a number of questions before him. PPP spokesman Farhatullah Babar too argued that in the wake of such a stinging indictment by the inquiry commission, Interior Minister should have resigned himself. He went on to state that the Quetta report had actually exposed how the poor planning and lack of government has resulted in the monumental ineffectiveness of National Action Plan (NAP).

National Accountability Bureau (NAB) seems to be in the eye of the storm because of its plea bargains. Jammat-e-Islami Chief Sirajul Haq has termed the plea bargain scheme as the institutionalised corruption by none other than the institution responsible to check the corruption in the country. PTI Chairman Imran Khan echoed the opposition's sentiment and demanded resignation of the present NAB Chief Qamar Zaman Chaudhry. The anti-corruption watchdog had recently drew criticism even from the apex court of Pakistan over the issue of plea bargain. Punjab Chief Minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif has also termed the plea bargain scheme a fraud and called for a review of the NAB law.

In Russia, Pakistan found another supporter of multibillion dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). As per the media reports, in his interview on Radio Pakistan Alexey Y Dedov, Russia's ambassador to Pakistan, stated that CPEC was a component of China's Silk Road and his country Russia was also working on a similar Eurasian Economic Union. He further added that China and Russia were having discussions to merge the projects. Meanwhile, the details about the construction activities on the western route of CPEC has been made public. As per the newspaper reports, the work on the 2500 Km long Western Route had commenced in the month of September. Under the project, the 235 Km road from DI Khan to Zhob would be dualised. There are also plans to make Karachi-Peshwar railway tracks signal free in the next phase of CPEC.

Dr Ashish Shukla

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

NATIONAL POLITICS

Leaked report on Hamid Mir attack case, *The Nation*, December 18¹

The inquiry report of a judicial commission, which investigated 2014 gun attack on journalist and anchorperson Hamid Mir in Karachi, leaked on Sunday (December 18). "There was complete failure on the part of all the law enforcing agencies in the performance of their duty to properly investigate the case," the commission report states on page 37. Leak of the 41-page report came a day after Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan questioned the release of what he termed a 'one-sided' inquiry commission report on the August 8 terrorist attacks in Quetta and vowed to confront its contents at all forums, including parliament and the Supreme Court.

Nisar chooses to challenge commission report, *The Nation*, December 18²

Strongly reacting to the report of the inquiry commission on August 8 Quetta carnage that contained adverse remarks against him and his ministry, Interior Minister *Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan on Saturday (December 17) said the report was 'one-sided' and was released without getting his version. The powerful interior minister, who claimed to be in an aggressive mood during his press conference at Punjab House, said that Justice Qazi Faez Isa-led commission report levelled allegations at a personal level against him, and was made public without taking his version. "Even the questions sent to me by the commission have no relevance with the Quetta incident," the minister said, and added that he had offered prime minister to resign to respond to these allegations, which was refused by Nawaz Sharif. "I offered the prime minister to resign if my press conference could cause embarrassment to the government," he said, adding that the PM had stopped him to hold this press conference.*

PTI asks Nisar to resign over Quetta report, *The Nation*, December 18³

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Sunday (December 18) demanded resignation of Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan over the Quetta incident report. While talking to media, PTI leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi accused Nisar of attacking Supreme Court through his aggressive press conference and sought answers of various questions. "PTI's youth convention was baton charged despite the fact that the party had been granted permission

¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Dec-2016/leaked-report-on-hamid-mir-attack-case-puts-leas-under-microscope>

² <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Dec-2016/nisar-chooses-to-challenge-commission-report>

³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Dec-2016/pti-asks-nisar-to-resign-over-quetta-commission-report>

for it," said Qureshi. *The PTI leader questioned that how the meeting of banned organisation was held in Islamabad even though Section-144 was imposed in the city. "Who gave permission to banned outfit members to sit in the meeting? What will be the strategy regarding terror cases after the conclusion of 21st amendment and military courts?"*

Nisar must be shown the door: PPP, *The Nation*, December 18⁴

[...]PPP Spokesman Senator Farhatullah Babar said, *"The interior minister should have resigned after such a stinging indictment by the inquiry commission, but instead, he has chosen to clear himself through a monologue on the media and by ranting against the opposition". "The shocking level of inaction revealed by the report is an indictment of Balochistan and federal governments as well as the NAP," he said.* PPP Vice-President Sherry Rehman condemned the government's inaction and failure to implement the NAP in two years even after the Peshawar Army Public School episode. [...]The senator further said, *"Combating terrorism is a persistent and serious issue that requires a strong strategic plan. The Quetta commission report exposed how NAP's poor planning and lack of government oversight has led to its monumental ineffectiveness"*. The report also revealed the interior ministry's unreliability and its seemingly nonchalant approach towards the very real threat of terrorism.

PPP to file contempt petition against Nisar, *The Dawn*, December 19⁵

The Pakistan Peoples Party has decided to move a contempt petition against Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan for what the party called speaking against a Supreme Court judge who headed an inquiry commission on the Aug 8 Quetta tragedy. "Our legal team will file a contempt petition against Chaudhry Nisar for speaking ill of the judicial commission's report [on the carnage] since the comment is in fact a contempt of the Supreme Court," PPP general secretary Sardar Lateef Khosa told journalists after attending the chehllum of the party's late leader Jehangir Badr in Lahore on Sunday (December 18).

Make Abbottabad report public: Justice Iqbal, *The Nation*, December 19⁶

Chairman of Abbotabad Commission Justice Rtd Javed Iqbal has demanded that the Commission report be made public emphasising that the commission has identified those responsible for the incident. Talking to media persons after

⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Dec-2016/nisar-must-be-shown-the-door-ppp>

⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1303221/ppp-to-file-contempt-petition-against-interior-minister>

⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/19-Dec-2016/make-abbottabad-commission-report-public-justice-javed-iqbal>

meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Interior, Justice Javed Iqbal said the former Army chief and DG ISI were not held responsible for the mishap. He said it was responsibility of the government to implement recommendations in the report. He said the commission has not cleared any one and pointed out those who were responsible at a particular stage and who did not discharge their duties.

Zardari's 'surprise' vexes pundits, *The Express Tribune*, December 27⁷

All eyes are fixed on today's (Tuesday's) events at Garhi Khuda Bukhsh where the PPP is likely to announce an anti-government movement. Political pundits are wondering about its timing and whether the PPP would make a solo flight or work to form a grand alliance of opposition parties against the government. Everyone is also curious about the 'good news' that PPP Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari promised at a public rally at the Karachi airport on Friday (December 23). *"The party is expected to announce a campaign against the government and set a few days' deadline," a veteran PPP leader told The Express Tribune requesting anonymity. "Since the PML-N has conveyed its willingness to negotiate, Zardari sahib is ready to give them time," he added.*

Zardari & son coming to Parliament, *The Nation*, December 28⁸

Former president Asif Ali Zardari, who recently returned from an 18-month self-exile, yesterday revealed his promised surprise – which turned out to be not as much impressive as the hype it had created in the media. *The co-chairman of Pakistan People's party announced that he and his son, party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari - would contest elections to be a part of the current Parliament and 'teach' Nawaz Sharif 'certain things'.* Addressing a huge gathering at Garhi Khuda Bux on the 9th death anniversary of his late wife, former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, Zardari said he would contest elections from Nawabshah while Bilawal would be a candidate from Larkana.

THE PANAMA PAPERS

Bind Tight And Apply Pressure, Editorial, *The Nation*, December 17⁹

*The Senate passed the Panama papers Inquiries Bill 2016 with majority vote on Thursday (December 15), though it is doubtful that the bill will be able to pass through the National Assembly and enacted. [...]*While the bill will be killed in the lower house, the movement and discussion over it is quite important. Aitizaz Ahsan reminded the government lawmakers that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had also failed to fulfil his commitment and gave conflicting statements in parliament and before the Supreme Court. This lends

⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1275956/zardaris-surprise-vexes-pundits/>

⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/28-Dec-2016/zardari-son-coming-to-parliament>

⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/17-Dec-2016/bind-tight-and-apply-pressure>

outside support to the same claim being made by the PTI in the National Assembly. While PTI and PPP will never see eye to eye, the fact is that the process at the Supreme Court has stalled, and the issue of the conflicting statements needs clarification. While the PM is not legally bound to provide a clarification, his attendance in Parliament, will be enough to make it seem as if he earnestly wants what is better for political stability and accountability.

Withdraw Qatari prince's letter from SC: PTI, *The Dawn*, December 19¹⁰

The Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf has asked Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to withdraw the letter of the Qatari prince from the Supreme Court if he stands by his speech on the floor of the National Assembly. Talking to reporters after a meeting of the party's parliamentary group here on Sunday, PTI vice chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi said the prime minister should come to parliament and explain his position over his alleged contradictory statements made in the National Assembly and the Supreme Court about the contents of the Panama Papers about foreign assets purportedly owned by him.

ECP rejects plea to merge all cases, *The Nation*, December 27¹¹

A four-member bench was chaired by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice Sardar Muhammad Raza to hear separate references against Imran Khan and Jahangir Tareen. While hearing the arguments of Talal Chaudhry's lawyer Akram Sheikh, the CEC remarked that we are only discussing whether this case is eligible enough be heard or not, the arguments on its merit will be done later. Jahangir Tareen's lawyer said that the commission can only discuss the accusations that have been leveled in the reference, which include queries regarding Bani Gala property. "Niazi services case is irrelevant to the commission and is just being raised unnecessarily," he added. *At this point, Akram Sheikh requested the commission to merge other cases against Imran Khan and Jahangir Tareen with this reference and give him time to submit further documents. His request was rejected by the CEC, who stated that the reference and petition are two different things and they cannot be merged.*

¹⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1303219/pti-asks-pm-to-withdraw-qatari-princes-letter-from-sc>

¹¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/27-Dec-2016/ecp-rejects-plea-to-merge-all-cases-against-imran-tareen>

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

MQM lawmaker confesses to killing dozens, *The Nation*, December 17¹²

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) Kamran Farooqui has confessed his involvement in dozens of killings and role in various incidents of violence in Karachi. Farooqui was picked up by Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) during a raid on his residence in North Nazimabad on Thursday. He was later handed over to police. Farooqui was elected MPA from the PS-111 constituency of Karachi's old city areas.

NAB plea bargain is institutionalised corruption: JI, *The News*, December 22¹³
Jamaat-e-Islami Chief Sirajul Haq on Thursday (December 22) termed plea bargain scheme of country's top anti-corruption body institutionalised corruption, a day after Executive Board meeting of the National Accountability Bureau accepted plea bargain request of former Finance Secretary of Balochistan for Rs2 billion. The NAB had earlier put Mushtaq Raisani's corruption figure at Rs40 billion after arresting him earlier this year and seizing Rs.730 million hard cash during a raid at his residence. "Offering plea bargain to culprits is sort of institutionalized corruption by NAB where the criminals can get free by offering a small amount," said the JI chief on his Twitter account.

Shahbaz Sharif calls for review of NAB law, *The News*, December 26¹⁴

Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif on Monday (December 26) called the National Accountability Bureau's plea bargain scheme a fraud and said such offers are made to to unscrupulous elements with a punishment in law abiding societies. According to Geo News, the chief minister called for review of NAB's law which he said was introduced by a dictator, without naming Gen (retd) Pervaiz Mushraff. He said only a small amount of embezzled money could be recovered by striking plea bargain deals. Earlier in the day, PTI chairman Imran Khan called on NAB chairman Qamar Zaman Chaudhry to step down for what he said his failure to curb corruption. Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan has also opposed the NAB's plea bargaining and went on to say that chief

¹² <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Dec-2016/mqm-s-farooqui-confesses-killing-dozens-admits-role-in-12-may-carnage>

¹³ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/173727-JI-chief-terms-NAB-plea-bargain-institutionalised-corruption>

¹⁴ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/174594-Shahbaz-Sharif-calls-for-review-of-NAB-law-opposes-plea-bargain-scheme>

of anti-corruption body should be appointed by Supreme Court of Pakistan, a demand which Imran Khan also supported in his media talk.

Imran Khan asks NAB chief to step down, *The News*, December 26¹⁵

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Imran Khan on Monday (December 26) called on the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) chief Qamar Zaman Chaudhry to step down from his office, days after the anti-corruption watchdog drew criticism by striking a plea bargain deal with a bureaucrat from Balochistan to settle a case of massive corruption. Speaking to the media, Khan said the NAB chairman should resign since he had failed to curb corruption in the country. He agreed with Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan who thinks NAB chief should be appointed by the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

EDITORIALS AND OPINION

Quetta inquiry report, Editorial, *The Dawn*, December 17¹⁶

The catalogue of errors, mistakes, oversights, criminal wrongdoing, hubris and policy misguidedness is so overwhelming that it is scarcely possible to read the report of the inquiry commission on the Aug 8 Quetta bombing of the legal community. Surely no state apparatus in a country and in a province so wracked by violence for so long can be allowed to be so utterly incompetent in so many ways. *Yet, the report of the inquiry commission led by Supreme Court Justice Qazi Faez Isa lays bare such sweeping failures as to call into question the very edifice of the country's counterterrorism and counter-insurgency strategies.* [...] But Balochistan has had a militarised security policy for more than a decade, military campaigns have been waged in every one of the seven agencies of Fata and counterterrorism operations have been conducted for years from Karachi to Peshawar. By now, the stunning failures laid bare by Justice Isa should have been addressed to a great extent.

Another NAP Failure, Editorial, *The Nation*, December 18¹⁷

Senate Chairman Mian Raza Rabbani at the outset of the proceedings of the house on Friday (December 16) invited the attention of the government towards the expiry of the 21st amendment on January 7. The amendment gives the military courts it's powers to try terrorism suspects and is expiring due to the impending activation of the 2- year 'sundown' clause mentioned in the original act. And while Mr Rabbani and other legislators fought fiercely to resist the "handing over of legislative powers to the military" and the inclusion of the 2-year time period initially, it seems they are singing a different tune today. They want legal cover for the military courts reinstated, and they want

¹⁵ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/174588-Imran-Khan-asks-NAB-chief-to-step-down>

¹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1302758/quetta-inquiry-report>

¹⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/18-Dec-2016/another-nap-failure>

it fast. Warning of a “legal vacuum” the Senate Chairman informed the government that the Senate had already passed the anti-terrorism bill and the witness protection bill to fill the gap and the two bills have already been sent to the National Assembly. It was now their job to take up the bills and see them become law. [...] *The fact that the Senate Chairman draws attention to renewal of the legal cover for the courts, and not the long overdue reform of the justice system, shows how unwilling the parliament is to tackle this problem. In the end this too will be chalked up as another “failure of the NAP”, which seems to be in abundance these days.*

Another year of NAP, Amir Rana, *The Dawn*, December 18¹⁸

[...] *Security institutions made a few adjustments in their operational strategy, but failed to completely transform their counterterrorism approach.* The statistics show some improvements, for which every institution is trying to take the credit. Although a downward trend in incidents of terrorism has been apparent since 2010 — owing to multiple reasons — terrorists’ operational infrastructure and support networks, albeit weakened, remain intact. [...] Apart from its findings on the Quetta bombing, the commission has come up with some comprehensive recommendations. However, it is not certain whether the government will take the advice seriously. [...] *Nobody ever asked about the fate of 16 committees on NAP implementation; the interior minister heads 13 of them.* [...] The Justice Isa commission recommended the activation of Nacta according to its constitutional mandate. Apparently, the authority showed some progress in 2016. It worked on a ‘red book’ of terrorists containing complete information on and profiles of them. It made available the list of banned organisations on its website and included two more groups on that list, the Lashkar-i-Jhangvi al-Aalmi and Jamaatul Ahrar; Nacta had included these two names when Justice Isa asked the federal government about their status. It rationalised the Fourth Schedule lists and advised banks to take immediate action against individuals on the lists. Nacta was also assigned the responsibility of developing the task force to curb terror financing.

Confrontation and status quo, H. A. Rizvi, *The Express Tribune*, December 27¹⁹
The outgoing year of 2016 can be described as the year of confrontation and political status quo. The confrontation focused on the Panama Leaks (April onwards) between the PML-N government at the federal level and in Punjab on the one hand and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on the other. Despite the persistent efforts of the PTI to build pressure on the ruling PML-N through public rallies, tough talking and the threat to lock down Islamabad, the PML-N federal government managed to survive. The circumstantial factors helped

¹⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1302942/another-year-of-nap>

¹⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1275780/year-confrontation-political-status-quo/>

Nawaz Sharif to hold on to power. The Supreme Court postponed the Panama case because the Chief Justice was retiring, although 80 per cent of the case process had been completed. The military did not appear to be interested in direct assumption of political power. The major opposition parties could not join together to challenge the PML-N federal government; most of them were reluctant to acknowledge the fact that Imran Khan had emerged as the principal opposition leader. Imran Khan's own political disposition did not make it easy for the opposition leaders to join him. [...] *The most serious challenge for the ruling PML-N in 2017 is how to protect its total monopoly of state power, resources and patronage in Punjab. This monopoly will become more important as the country moves closer to the new general elections.* [...] The political edifice headed by Nawaz Sharif has completed another year. Its political survival in 2017 depends on its capacity to pursue a stable relationship with the opposition, the military and the judiciary. Can the PML-N push the Panama and the news item issues to oblivion and sustain its monopoly in Punjab?

PPP's Threatened March, Editorial, *The Nation*, December 27²⁰

Pakistan People's Party's (PPP) threat of street agitation has been hovering at the edges of the political discourse for quite a while without really concerning the government overmuch. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) was busy battling a more direct foe in Imran Khan, and the support of the PPP – even an ambivalent, wavering support – could be counted on as the bedrock of that battle. With the return of PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari that bedrock has certainly shifted, and with December 27 – Benazir Bhutto's death anniversary and deadline for the acceptance of PPP demands – almost upon us, the government seems a little too late in tackling the problem. [...] *With political manoeuvring matching the public rhetoric, the PPP's threats are starting to look real and the government is scrambling to avoid another showdown in the streets. Speaker National Assembly has invited all parties to "initiate debate" on the PPP's four demands but such a weak proposal is too little and definitely too late.*

Alliance in the air?, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, December 29²¹

After years of eschewing any meaningful alliances with other political groups or parties, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is now indicating that, being unable to get satisfaction either from the courts or the PML-N government, that it may consider an alliance with the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) if 'they are sincere in offering opposition to the government.' Considering that many view the PPP and the PML-N as two sides of the same coin this may

²⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/27-Dec-2016/ppp-s-threatened-march>

²¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1278836/alliance-in-the-air/>

represent something of a shift in position by Imran Khan, perhaps a move towards a more pragmatic engagement in the political process generally and away from the default position of confrontation and 'everybody is wrong' – except the PTI.

Changing trains, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, December 30²²

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) changes its political outerwear regularly. A change of outerwear makes the changing of trains easier and the latest hop-on wearing fresh duds is that the PTI is willing to board the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) train 'if they are sincere in offering opposition to the government.' [...] *Unfortunately, the PTI appears to have failed to read the signboards at the political station. The PPP is in no mood to form an alliance with anybody least of all the platform-hopping PTI and its garrulous leader.* The PPP is after all in the process of cobbling together something of a parliamentary coup — if it can be pulled off — and the PTI are going to be excess baggage at a time when the last thing it needs is an awkward load. With 'long marches' these days generally coming down to a short ride on a well-appointed train finding the PPP and the PTI sharing a carriage is in the realm of the deeply unlikely.

FOREIGN POLICY

Pakistan to get four MI-35 copters from Russia, *The Nation*, December 20²³

Minister for Defence Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Monday (December 19) said that Pakistan would get four advanced MI-35 helicopters from Russia in 2017. Talking to a private TV channel, the minister said that Pakistan has paid \$153 million for the purchase of helicopters. He also said the government is also in contact with other countries for the export of 100 Super Mushshak trainer aircrafts. Maldives and Azerbaijan are ready to buy Super Mushshak trainer aircrafts, he added. Rana Tanveer said that important developments are expected regarding sale of JF-17 thunder jets in 2017. He disclosed that the production capacity of Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF) has escalated to \$100 million from \$25 million whereas rapid growth has also been witnessed in Karachi Shipyard.

Pakistan backed HIA-Kabul talks, *The Express Tribune*, December 27²⁴

A senior leader of the Hizb-e-Islami Afghanistan (HIA) has said that Pakistan has neither interfered nor opposed its peace talks with the administration of President Ashraf Ghani. "Pakistan had supported the HIA-Kabul negotiations which led to the signing of a peace deal in September," Dr Ghairat Baheer, the head of HIA's political affairs committee, told The Express Tribune in an

²² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1278837/changing-trains/>

²³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/20-Dec-2016/pakistan-to-get-four-mi-35-copters-from-russia>

²⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1275819/pakistan-backed-hia-kabul-talks-says-hekmatyars-aide/>

exclusive interview. [...]Afghan diplomatic sources endorsed Dr Baheer, saying that Pakistan had not interfered in peace talks with the HIA. "It's a fact that no one from Pakistan has ever dissuaded us from peace negotiations with Kabul. Conversely, Islamabad fully supported the peace process," said Dr Baheer, who is now part of a six-member committee that oversees the implementation of the agreement that allows the HIA to play an active role in politics. [...]When his attention was drawn to the Taliban's demands for peace talks with Kabul, Dr Baheer said neither side should set any preconditions for dialogue. "All sides should put their conditions on the table," he said and referred to the unconditional talks between the HIA and the Kabul administration.

Pak-China-Russia to facilitate Afghan peace, *The Nation*, December 28²⁵

Pakistan, Russia and China on Tuesday (December 27) agreed to continue their efforts for peace in Afghanistan, the foreign ministry said. A statement issued by the foreign ministry said that the three countries vowed to facilitate "Afghan-led, Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan according to the known principles of reintegration of the armed opposition into peaceful life." The trilateral meeting between Russia, China and Pakistan was held in Moscow. "The third round of the trilateral consultations on regional issues of special representatives on Afghanistan and senior officials of Russia, China and Pakistan was held in Moscow on December 27, 2016. The participants also met with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov," said a joint statement. "The sides exchanged views on the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, expressed particular concern regarding the increased activities of the extremist groups including the ISIL (Daesh) affiliates in the country," it added. *The Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China as the UN Security Council permanent members confirmed their flexible approach to delisting Afghan individuals from the UN sanctions lists as their contribution to the efforts aimed at launching peaceful dialogue between Kabul and the Taliban.* "The parties agreed to proceed with consultations in an expanded format and would welcome the participation of Afghanistan," it said.

Islamabad snubs NSG proposal, *The Express Tribune*, December 30²⁶

Pakistan has rejected a draft proposal that, if adopted, would pave the way for India to become a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) but make it difficult for Islamabad to join the exclusive club of civilian nuclear trading

²⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/national/28-Dec-2016/pakistan-china-russia-vow-to-facilitate-afghan-peace-process>

²⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1279186/islamabad-snubs-discriminatory-nsg-membership-proposal/>

nations. The two-page document was prepared by former NSG chairman Rafael Mariano, who was acting on behalf of the current chairman, to end the current stalemate over Pakistan and India's bid to join the 48-member organisation. The proposal may open the way for India to join the NSG but it will require Pakistan to first win a separate NSG exemption to engage in civilian nuclear trade with member states. [...] *Reacting to the latest proposal, Foreign Office spokesperson Nafees Zakaria said that the Grossi formula was an internal document of the NSG, which had not yet been shared with Pakistan.* [...] "We understand that the NSG countries are still discussing the document and there is no consensus on it within the NSG," the spokesperson told reporters at his weekly briefing on Thursday (December 29). "What we have been able to gather from media reports and public commentary on the Grossi proposal, by experts like Daryll Kimbal, is that the proposal seeks to propose the 2008 NSG exemption for India as a requirement for NSG membership. This would be clearly discriminatory and would contribute nothing in terms of furthering the non-proliferation objectives of the NSG," he added.

EDITORIALS AND OPINION

A new global order, Shahid Javed Burki, *The Express Tribune*, December 25²⁷
[...] It will be defined by a number of forces in play, each interacting with one another. At this this moment in world history three of these forces are of critical importance: the presence on the world stage of four actors, each vying to play an important role; the split between nationalism and liberalism, two trends that had come together in the second half of the twentieth century to underpin the socio-economic systems in many parts of the world; and the rise of extremist version of Islam in several parts of the world that refuses to accept the established structure of governance. Let us begin with the first: interactions among four contenders on the world stage. These are the United States, China, India and Russia. What needs to be noted is that relations among these four players have taken binary forms. The institutions currently available were designed for multilateralism not for bilateralism. *The future world order will be shaped by at least five bilateral relations: Sino-American, Sino-Russian, American-Russian, Sino-Indian, and American-Indian. China is one element that is common to these relations. In this context the most important relationship will be the one involving Beijing and Washington.*

²⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1274819/new-global-order-emerging/>

Geo-politics and Afghanistan, Imtiaz Gul, *The Express Tribune*, December 29²⁸

[...] *The third session of a trilateral “working group” comprising Russia, China and Pakistan held on December 27 in Moscow also underscores what is playing out in the region.* [...] In a joint statement the three nations also reiterated their interest in facilitating peace talks between Kabul and the Taliban. *The most striking in the statement was the collective “particular concern” over “increased activities of extremist groups including the IS (Daesh) affiliates in the embattled country. A cursory look as to what is driving the new developments and guiding the Moscow-Beijing-Islamabad consultations entails some worrying as well as encouraging realities.* Firstly, the stalemate on ground in Afghanistan, with 2016 having been the bloodiest year in over a decade of conflict between Taliban insurgents and Kabul. Secondly, the realisation that only a regionally-led and coordinated solution might work following failure of international, US-led efforts to normalise Afghanistan. This might also result in the cooption of Iran, one of the two strategic neighbours of Afghanistan, into the dialogue, which should serve as a big facilitating factor. Third, the birth of Daesh, which most regional players view with extreme skepticism, resonated also by Ambassador Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of Russia to the UN, in a rather dramatic way only days before the Moscow meeting.

[...] The most startling was Churkin’s revelations on the expansion/activities of the IS/Daesh influence in Afghanistan. Some excerpts from his statement are quite alarming. He stated that *“There is also information about the presence in Afghanistan of IS camps and safe harbors where people from central Asian states and northern caucas’ republics are being trained and where 700 terrorist families from Syria have already arrived.* The intensive nature of facilities in Syria and Iraq make fighters look at Afghanistan increasingly frequently because they can find refuge there and can find a new platform for expanding their influence to CA and Russia as well as China. Some of our partners are not averse to contacts with the extremist and terrorist groups existing in Afghanistan. We know many events when ISIL fighters were re-deployed into northern provinces of Afghanistan by helicopters without any identification signs”.

²⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1277926/geo-politics-afghanistan/>

MILITARY AFFAIRS

COAS vows to protect KSA's territorial integrity, *The Nation*, December 18²⁹
Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa called on Saudi King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud on Sunday (December 18), Inter-Service Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement. *The Saudi king and the COAS agreed that both the countries share great history of cordial relations and deep spirit of brotherhood which has transformed into an enduring partnership, said the ISPR statement.* It was also acknowledged in the meeting that both Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are vital players in regional stability, "with significant responsibility towards the entire Muslim ummah". Both leaders re-emphasised the need to continue working to eliminate the menace of terrorism and reinforce the mechanism to roll back extremism with even greater vigour.

Army will play role for national security: COAS, *The Nation*, December 28³⁰
Chief of Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa on Tuesday (December 27) said that the army will continue to perform its role to strengthen national security. According to a press release of the ISPR, Gen Bajwa said this while addressing officers of Rawalpindi Garrison here at the GHQ auditorium. It said that the army chief address focused on professional matters and security challenges. He acknowledged and appreciated the role and sacrifices of officers as leaders in strengthening the institution particularly during the operation Zarb-e-Azb. Gen Bajwa shared his thoughts about prevailing security environment and challenges confronting Pakistan, the armed forces and the way forward.

PM House rejects Musharraf's comments, *The News*, December 21³¹
The spokesperson of the Prime Minister House on Tuesday (December 20) categorically denied the comments made by former president General (retired) Pervaiz Musharraf during an interview stating that the differences between Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and himself started when the latter told him to remove two serving major generals under his command. According to a statement issued here the spokesperson termed this statement as utterly baseless, malicious, untrue and concocted. No such issue was discussed between the two, he added. In an interview to a private TV channel, Musharraf had stated that the differences had started when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif told him to remove two serving Major Generals under his command.

²⁹<http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Dec-2016/general-bajwa-calls-on-saudi-king-vows-to-guard-holy-mosques>

³⁰<http://nation.com.pk/national/28-Dec-2016/army-will-play-role-for-national-security-coas>

³¹<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/173253-PM-House-rejects-Musharrafs-comments>

Never asked Raheel Sharif to help me: Musharraf, *The Dawn*, December 27³²
A week after an interview that made headlines, former president General (retd) Pervez Musharraf said on Monday (December 26) he never sent a "request" to ex-army chief General Raheel Sharif to help him leave the country by keeping the government from pressuring the courts. Musharraf made the statement while speaking in a talk show on Channel 92. "No one approached me, nor did I approach anyone... Raheel Sharif did not discuss anything with me, nor did I send him any request," Musharraf said, adding it is all "conjecture" and that his statement to Dunya News is being "distorted" by media outlets. Musharraf was referring to a talk show on Dunya News last week where he had said: "Well he [Raheel Sharif] did help me and I am absolutely clear and grateful. I have been his boss and I have been the army chief before him... He helped out, because the cases are politicised, they put me on the ECL, they turned it into a political issue."

Pakistan has defeated terrorism: Bajwa, *The Express Tribune*, December 29³³
Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa said Pakistan has successfully defeated terrorism and is now in a consolidation phase. Gen Bajwa was visiting the Bahadur Ranges near Attock on Thursday (December 29) wherein he witnessed Pak-Jordan joint exercise "Fajr-ul-Sharq 1," said military's media wing Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). Speaking at the occasion, Gen Bajwa said that the armed forces are fully trained and ready for response to full spectrum threat adding that the country's achievements in counter-terrorism operations were being taken as successful case studies.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Karachi operation, Editorial, *The Dawn*, December 18³⁴

[...]The traditional colonial-era model of policing has failed the metropolis miserably, while corruption and ineptitude within the ranks have created a negative public image of the police. *And while the Rangers-led law-enforcement operation, in progress since September 2013, has brought down levels of violence considerably, Karachi remains a dangerous place awash with guns, and criminals not afraid to use them.* On his maiden visit to the Sindh capital after taking up his new post, army chief Gen Qamar Bajwa reiterated that despite the change in the military's high command, the gains of the operation would be consolidated. [...] *Circumstantial evidence suggests that crimes such as targeted killings and kidnappings for ransom, as well as acts of terrorism, have come down. However, as the army chief pointed out, militant*

³² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1304604/never-asked-raheel-sharif-to-help-me-leave-the-country-musharraf>

³³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1278726/pakistan-successfully-defeated-terrorism-says-gen-bajwa/>

³⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1302939/karachi-operation>

groups' sleeper cells are still believed to exist, while 'banned' groups continue to function.

The sun must set on military courts, Editorial, *The Dawn*, December 18³⁵
[...]*With the sunset clause of the 21st Amendment set to take effect early next month, a stark choice awaits the country's elected representatives: contemplate an extension to the life of the military courts and in doing so further perpetuate the gross distortions to the Constitution and justice system in the country, or, at long last and however belatedly, take up the issue of criminal justice reform. [...]It is the lack of justice system reforms that makes possible the creation of abominations such as military courts in the first place. If no reforms are attempted, the demand for ad hoc systems of justice will invariably be mooted. Justice system reforms are not easy, but neither are they as hard as they are made out to be. Under its chairman Raza Rabbani, the Senate is trying to nudge parliament to take up the matter of terrorism-related legal reforms. Two bills covering anti-terrorism and protection of witnesses passed by the Senate should be taken up by the National Assembly — and the sooner it is done, the better. As Mr Rabbani has warned, a legal vacuum may appear on Jan 7. And if history is any guide, dealing hastily with vacuums or emergencies tends to create further problems. Judicial reforms must be undertaken in a determined, but measured way.*

The cup is half full, Talat Masood, *The Express Tribune*, December 27³⁶
[...]*General Sharif's great contribution was that he brought the insurgency under control. This was no ordinary achievement considering that Taliban and other foreign and domestic insurgents had complete control of North Waziristan and had strong pockets spread across the tribal agencies. Having succeeded in securing Fata, the military was able to stem the progression of terrorism. Consequently, the economic situation stabilised, but for attracting investment there has to be sustained peace and less bureaucratic hurdles. [...]Security of the CPEC project and that of Balochistan as a whole would remain a major challenge for our armed forces for the next few years. But as economic conditions improve insurgency in Balochistan is likely to fade. Key to the future prospects of Balochistan, Fata and relatively less developed areas depends on the government's capacity to focus on their economic and political development. Involvement of local population and giving them a sense of ownership in economic opportunities will be central to erase their genuine or perceived grievances.*

³⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1302940/the-sun-must-set-on-military-courts>

³⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1276761/cup-half-full/>

[...]Future of India-Pakistan relations would primarily hinge on Modi's policy. The prognosis is that the situation is unlikely to change unless India engages and mellows down its hostile posture. While Pakistan on its side will have to control the militant organisations like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad not only to satisfy New Delhi but in its own national interest.

Musharraf and army, Saleem A. Sethi, *Daily Times*, December 27³⁷

The most frequent question asked soon after he claimed that the army and its then chief, Raheel Sharif, pressured and manipulated the government and judiciary to get him off the hook was how can he do that and what can be his purpose or purposes. This wasn't difficult to know. But the sad fact unfortunately is that we no more believe anything which doesn't fit in some great conspiracy theory. This didn't.

Shining Balochistan, Editorial, *The Nation*, December 28³⁸

Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa made an important speech at the passing out parade of new Frontier Corps recruits in Quetta. He expressed solidarity with the Baloch people and also said that the military was committed to completing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which would usher in a new era of development in the province. *He appreciated the grit of the honourable people now joining law enforcement agencies of Balochistan; who have shunned anti-state elements at work and embraced the true spirit of patriotism.* [...]The construction of highways and the deep-sea port of Gwadar in Balochistan are major components of the project, which has been targeted by anti-state elements, and right now, this problem is where the focus of the state lies. But the province cannot be just a road that stretches to the sea. Where are the plans for schools, hospitals, housing and jobs in Balochistan? Balochistan has been reduced to two words, "militancy" and "Gwadar", and its people keep becoming invisible. If Balochistan has to shine as the province that cradles the CPEC, it must be treated as such.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

Senate passes resolution for demonetization, *The Nation*, December 19³⁹

Senate on Monday passed resolution demanding the government to demonetize the Rs 5,000 demonization's currency note to fight corruption. Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Senator Umsan Saifullah presented the resolution in the house demanding of the government to withdraw the Rs5,000 banknote from circulation. He added that the measure will help control

³⁷ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/25-Dec-16/musharraf-and-army-in-keeping-with-tradition>

³⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/28-Dec-2016/shining-balochistan>

³⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/19-Dec-2016/senate-passes-resolution-asking-govt-to-demonetize-rs5000-banknote>

corruption in the country. However, the government opposed the resolution. Law Minister Zahid Hamid said that withdrawing of the banknote will create monetary crisis in the country. He opposed the resolution. However, the Upper House adopted the resolution with majority vote.

CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

Russia supports CPEC project: Envoy, *The Nation*, December 17⁴⁰

Russia says it "strongly" supports the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project as it is crucial for Pakistan's economy and regional connectivity. According to an interview on Radio Pakistan, this was stated by Russian Ambassador to Pakistan Alexey Y Dedov. Dedov pointed out that CPEC is a component of China's Silk Road and his country was also working on a similar Eurasian Economic Union. He added that China and Russia are holding discussions to merge the two projects.

Construction work of western route commenced, *The Nation*, December 17⁴¹

Construction activities on the western route of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have already commenced. An official source told the media on Saturday (December 17) that the total length of Western route is around 2500 km, out of which 790 km is common route from Khunjab to Hakla while road length from Hakla to Gwadar is 1710 km. The road from Hakla to Dera Ismail (DI) Khan agreed in All Party Conference (APC) held on May 18 is altogether a new alignment comprising a 285 km, 4-lane Motorway. The project is divided in five sections for early completion. *The construction activities on the project have commenced since September this year. He said that the 235 km road section from DI Khan to Zhob will be dualised. Its design has been completed and PC-I is being forwarded to planning commission for soliciting approval.*

Missing the point, Ijaz Nabi, *The Dawn*, December 18⁴²

[...]The four CPEC pillars are thus: energy projects, Gwadar port, rail/road networks, and the associated industrial and commercial activity. [...]For CPEC to be a real 'game changer', the provinces will be pivotal. The centre — responsible for trade, credit and fiscal policy — is important for ensuring that CPEC-related public investment attracts significant flows of private investment. However, the provinces must create the right investment climate to physically host such investments. In doing so, they will become partners with the federal government in managing the economy as envisaged in the 18th Amendment, and not as mere appendages as they are now.

⁴⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Dec-2016/russia-supports-cpec-project-envoy>

⁴¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Dec-2016/construction-work-of-cpec-s-western-route-commenced>

⁴² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1302950/missing-the-point>

China to set up steel factory at Gwadar, *The Nation*, December 19⁴³

Acting Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Zhao Lijian on Monday (December 19) said that his country would set up a large steel factory at Gwadar to further expedite economic developments being carried out under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework. "Both China and Pakistan will very soon sign an agreement to establish the steel factory, three times bigger than the free economic zone being set up in Gwadar city," said the Chinese envoy. Industrial cooperation, he said, was the forth pillar of CPEC initiative and both the countries would discuss it in the next meeting of Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of CPEC to be held in Beijing this month. "After completion of energy projects, transport infrastructure and development of Gwadar port, industrial cooperation between China and Pakistan will be the main topic at the next JCC," he added.

CPEC: Karachi-Peshawar tracks to go signal-free, *The Dawn*, December 19⁴⁴

Under the next phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Karachi-Peshawar railway tracks will be made signal-free and gate-free, Radio Pakistan reported Sunday (December 18). Work on the project will be initiated in January and the first phase will focus on the Rawalpindi-Peshawar tracks. A fence similar to those at the motorway will be built around the tracks, and an underpass or overhead bridge will be built at every gate on the tracks, official sources claim.

Chinese Embassy takes on CPEC critics, *The News*, December 23⁴⁵

Deputy Chief of Mission, Muhammad Lijian Zhao, has become the prime source of information on the CPEC, using Twitter to clear the air on several issues. Responding to criticism that China is using prisoners as labour to save costs, he tweeted, 'This is nonsense. The person spreads rumor like this has a hidden agenda'. When asked why the Embassy feels the need to counter the propaganda, Zhao replied: 'just try to clarify and present the facts and true picture to the public'. Chinese officials have been regularly meeting with the senior political leadership of all the parties and taking them into confidence.

⁴³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/19-Dec-2016/china-to-set-up-large-steel-factory-at-gwadar-envoy>

⁴⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1303092/in-next-phase-of-cpec-karachi-peshawar-railway-tracks-to-be-made-signal-free>

⁴⁵ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/173958-Chinese-Embassy-takes-on-CPEC-critics>

Khattak has no issue with eastern route, *Daily Times*, December 26⁴⁶

The Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sunday (December 25) said that neither the KP government has a problem with China's Government nor "we have any problem with the Eastern route of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor". He was speaking to a public gathering at Swabi attended by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan. The chief minister said: "We want to recall the promises made by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in the all parties conference called to discuss the layout of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor which was attended by all the provincial chief ministers". The CM added that the central government and the federal ministers were continuously speaking lies about the administered framework of the CPEC. He said the KP government in the leadership of Imran Khan would never drag their feet from the affairs of provincial interests.

Pakistan's enemies targeting CPEC: Gen Bajwa, *The News*, December 26⁴⁷

General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Monday (December 26) reiterated to thwart all the attempts being made to hurt the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He was addressing the passing out parade of Baloch recruits in the provincial capital. The army chief extended an olive branch to the Baloch dissidents 'playing into enemy hands' to come back and work for Pakistan's progress. The COAS said enemies are unhappy with Balochistan's progress and targeting the CPEC, adding that we are determined for the timely completion of this hugely beneficial project. This will change Pakistan's destiny, he said.

\$30bn in CPEC projects implemented: Iqbal, *The Nation*, December 27⁴⁸

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform Ahsan Iqbal said on Tuesday (December 27) that projects worth \$30 billion have been implemented under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Addressing academics from Peking University in China prior to 6th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) scheduled on December 29 the minister said that CPEC was the biggest project under China's One-Belt One-Road initiative that will unite the entire region. He said that with the addition of new projects in the 6th JCC, investment in CPEC will further increase. He said that CPEC related industrial cooperation will kick-start an economic revolution in Pakistan while the economic zones will generate investment and employment opportunities for the country. Eight industrial zones will be set up in all provinces of the country, he said, adding

⁴⁶ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/khyber-pakhtunkhwa/26-Dec-16/khattak-has-no-issue-with-china-or-cpecs-eastern-route>

⁴⁷ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/174562-Pakistans-enemies-targeting-CPEC-Gen-Bajwa>

⁴⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/27-Dec-2016/30bn-in-cpec-projects-implemented-so-far-ahsan-iqbal>

that there is recommendation of 2 zones within Balochistan, including Gwadar free zone.

CPEC: Is Pak ready?, Pervez Tahir, *The Express Tribune*, December 29⁴⁹

[...] *Our industrial health requires not just reduced transactions costs, but reduced production cost as well. The huge trade imbalance with China shows that. The benefit of cheaper goods for consumers has to be weighed against this imbalance eventually reflecting in fiscal imbalance.* Cheaper import of goods at the cost of local industry and jobs in a slow growing economy has its own set of problems. *In our case, investment has a greater role than trade. The most important avenue will be the relocation in Pakistan of Chinese industries experiencing higher labour costs. Joint ventures and various forms of partnerships with local investors provide the next best avenue.* [...] As part of reaping the full benefits of CPEC, the development of Gwadar has to move beyond physical infrastructure to include its people. An honest manifestation of this neglect was witnessed recently in a meeting of students from Gwadar studying in Lahore with the Punjab Chief Minister. There is then the regional dimension to maximise benefits. As CPEC investments materially reduce the transport and communications costs, new connectivity will become a lot cheaper, especially with large, better educated, populations. When the Commander of the Southern Command invited India to join the CPEC and “shun enmity”, the offer was rooted in hard political economics.

SECURITY SITUATION

TERRORISM

7 prayer leaders held, 35 booked, *The Dawn*, December 19⁵⁰

As many as 35 people were booked and seven prayer leaders arrested during the last 24 hours on the charge of violating the new laws promulgated by the government after the Army Public School (APS) attack in Peshawar in December 2014. Police in Taxila arrested the seven prayer leaders under the Punjab Sound Systems (Regulation) Act 2015. The arrested people were identified as Hafiz Waseem, Maulana Asif, Maulana Nasir Ijaz, Maulana Aabid Khan, Maulana Aabid Hussain, Maulana Ghulam Murtaza and Khateeb Umer Khattab. Cases were registered against 16 people in Rawalpindi for not providing details of their tenants to the police.

⁴⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1278847/cpec-knowledge-connectivity/>

⁵⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1303197/7-prayer-leaders-held-35-booked>

Sectarianism is my past: Masroor Jhangvi, *The News*, December 21⁵¹

Masroor Nawaz Jhangvi said he has become more moderate and distanced himself from his previous anti-Shia rhetoric after winning a provincial assembly seat. Jhangvi's December election to the Punjab provincial assembly caused a stir in the country due to fears his political ascent would increase sectarian divides in Jhang, a dusty town with a history of violence between Shia and Sunni communities. Old video clips on the internet show Jhangvi starting speeches by shouting "Shia are infidels". The 29-year-old is on a domestic list of people with suspected ties to militant groups. Jhangvi's assassinated father, Haq Nawaz Jhangvi, was a fierce anti-Shia cleric who founded a feared Sunni sectarian group, Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan. He was killed by suspected Shia militants in 1990.

Masroor Jhangvi presented 'peace award', *The Express Tribune*, December 29⁵²
The federal government has presented a 'peace award' to controversial religious cleric Masroor Nawaz Jhangvi. Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Muhammad Yusuf conferred the 'peace award' to Jhangvi during a gathering of the National Peace Council in Islamabad. The development comes weeks after Jhangvi became member of the Punjab assembly after winning the PP-78 Jhang by-election. He defeated his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) rival candidate Haji Azad Nasir Ansari by a margin of close to 13,000 votes.

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA AND FATA

Afghan national shot, injured, *The Nation*, December 28⁵³

One Afghan national was shot injured while eight others were arrested when Khasadar cops opened fire on a group attempting to illegally cross Torkham border into Pakistan on Monday night (December 26). Official sources while confirming the incident said a group of Afghan nationals comprising nine persons unlawfully attempted to enter Pakistan through Jamatgai, a hilly area adjacent to Torkham border. After the Afghan nationals ignored repeated warnings by the on-duty Khasadar personnel, the cops resorted to open fire, which resulted in injuring one of them. The wounded person was identified as Jan Agha, son of Qadeer.

⁵¹ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/173473-Moderate-Masroor-Nawaz-Jhangvi-sectarianism-past#>

⁵² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1278548/controversial-cleric-masroor-jhangvi-presented-peace-award/>

⁵³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/28-Dec-2016/afghan-national-shot-injured-in-khyber-agency>

BALUCHISTAN

Suspected militants ambush convoy of officials, *The Dawn*, December 18⁵⁴

Suspected militants attacked the convoy of a district police officer and the assistant commissioner in Balochistan's Awaran district on Saturday (December 17). "Five levies and police personnel were injured in the attack," said security officials. However, the district police officer and the assistant commissioner remained unhurt in the attack.

'Unprovoked' mortar fire by Iran's forces kills one, *The Dawn*, December 19⁵⁵

A person was killed and two others injured when mortar shells, reportedly fired by Iranian border guards, hit a vehicle in Panjgoor district of Balochistan near Pak-Iran border on Sunday (December 18). A senior district administration official, who wished not be named, told Dawn News that Iranian border guards reportedly fired nine mortar shells into Pakistani territory. "One mortar shell hit a civilian vehicle near the Pak-Iran border in Panjgoor district," he said. The incident resulted in the death of one individual while two others were injured who were rushed to nearby hospital for emergency medical treatment.

Eight injured in Kohlu bomb blast, *The Nation*, December 28⁵⁶

An improvised explosive device (IED) exploded in Kohlu on Tuesday (December 27), injuring eight persons. According to details, unidentified miscreants planted an IED at the rooftop of main market in Kohlu bazaar for sabotage bid which injured eight persons and also smashed windowpanes of nearby shops. On getting the information, the police and bomb disposal squad reached the site and started investigations.

PUNJAB

Five suspected terrorists killed, *The Dawn*, December 19⁵⁷

Five suspected terrorists were killed in an 'encounter' with the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on Sunday (December 18) in Dera Ghazi Khan, according to a statement released by the CTD Punjab. The statement claimed the CTD received information that eight or nine 'terrorists' suspected of involvement with proscribed organisations including the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan and militant Islamic State group were hiding in DG Khan's Choti Bala

⁵⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1302941/suspected-militants-ambush-convoy-of-govt-officials-in-baluchistans-awaran-district>

⁵⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1303095/unprovoked-mortar-fire-by-irans-forces-kills-one-in-baluchistans-panjgoor>

⁵⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/28-Dec-2016/eight-injured-in-kohlu-bomb-blast>

⁵⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1303080/five-suspected-terrorists-killed-in-ctd-encounter>

area. "The terrorists included Tehseen and Kamran who had earlier escaped from police custody with the help of some other terrorists," the CTD said.

820 outlaws held in November, *The Nation*, December 28⁵⁸

The district police arrested 820 criminals including 104 members of four notorious gangs during a vigorous crackdown carried out in the month of November. The police also recovered drugs, illegal arms and looted money worth Rs4.4 million from their possession. According to DPO Ashfaq Ahmed Khan, the police arrested 820 criminals including 44 of Category A and 265 of Category B from different areas of the district. The police said that seven criminals arrested had been involved in 15 murder cases, 65 criminals in 21 cases of robbery and six criminals in cases of street crime. In a crackdown on illegal weapons, the police arrested 51 outlaws and recovered one rifle, seven guns, 39 revolvers, four carbines and 130 bullets from them. In a crackdown on drug-peddlers, 137 outlaws were arrested and 20.16 kg of hashish, 0.18 kg of opium and 3,337 bottles of liquor from their possession while 48 criminals were arrested in a crackdown on gambling dens. On the other hand, the police also busted four gangs involved in the incidents of robbery and street crime and arrested 18 members of the gangs. The police also recovered motorcycles and Rs2.8 million from their possession.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Madressah reform, Editorial, *The Dawn*, December 25⁵⁹

THE government has been going around in circles where madressah reform is concerned. Its weak attempt at getting these religious schools to agree to uniform control by the state bore little fruit, and the emphasis is now on another old favourite of the authorities: curriculum reform. [...] Nevertheless, there has been growing realisation in this debate that madressahs are not simply the result of the failure of the 'secular' education system. *Growing conservatism in society is a big factor in the mushrooming of madressahs across the country. [...]* The country seeks to deal with — albeit half-heartedly — the seminaries through the five boards that represent five schools of thought or sects in Islam. What is still not accepted is that underneath there are so many divisions. There are a large number of seminaries that work as satellites without any outside control and aided by their own sources of finances. They consider themselves as not answerable administratively to the board they might be linked to in theory on the basis of schools or sects. This is against the old norm where seminaries belonging to a school of thought or sect would be under the administrative influence of an order or individual.

⁵⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/28-Dec-2016/820-outlaws-held-in-nov>

⁵⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1304368/madressah-reform>

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

India indicts Jaish chief Masood Azhar, *The Nation*, December 19⁶⁰

India's top counter-terrorism agency on Monday (December 19) charged Jaish-i-Mohammed (JeM) and its leader Masood Azhar with perpetrating a deadly attack on the Pathankot air force base in January this year. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) alleged that all four gunmen who stormed the air base on Jan 2 were "Pakistani nationals" and that Masood Azhar, the top leader of JeM, was the mastermind behind the attack. "All the terrorists are accused of waging war against India. This was a criminal conspiracy to attack our security infrastructure," said a senior official at the NIA in New Delhi. The presentation of a charge-sheet to a trial court wraps up India's investigation into the 18-hour siege at the Pathankot air base in which seven Indian security personnel and the four assailants were killed.

India steps up efforts to utilise Pakistan's waters, *The News*, December 24⁶¹

A high-level meeting was held by senior Indian government officials on Friday (December 23), in a bid to utilise water from the rivers which had been provided to Pakistan under the Indus Water Treaty. [...] *Islamabad is already unhappy with some of India's existing water projects. It has asked the World Bank, which brokered the signing of the treaty between the two countries, for a court of arbitration to consider two Indian hydropower projects in the Indus basin, the report said.* In the past, disagreements between the two countries had been settled within the legal framework provided within the treaty. The World Bank's role in the Indus Water Treaty is limited and strictly procedural. In September, Modi also reviewed provisions of the treaty with Pakistan. He along with other government officials evaluated the pros and cons of the treaty.

Pakistan insists on arbitration, *The Dawn*, December 27⁶²

World Bank president Jim Yong Kim called Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Monday (December 26) and discussed with him the minister's request to help settle the Pakistan-India water dispute, official sources told Dawn. *The latest dispute concerns two hydroelectric power plants — Kishan-ganga and Ratle — that India is building on the Indus rivers system. In his Dec 23 letter to Dr Kim, the finance minister said that delaying arbitration would seriously prejudice Pakistan's interests and rights under the Indus Waters Treaty.* The letter explained that Pakistan was not withdrawing its earlier request to the bank to appoint the chairman of the Court of Arbitration and since this process

⁶⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/national/19-Dec-2016/india-indicts-pakistan-based-militants-over-air-base-attack>

⁶¹ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/174175-Hostile-India-steps-up-efforts-to-utilise-Pakistans-waters>

⁶² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1304704/pakistan-insists-on-arbitration-at-water-dispute-talks>

had already been “inordinately delayed,” Islamabad wanted the bank to appoint the chairman as soon as possible. Pakistan believes that further delay would hurt its interests as India is working day and night to complete the two disputed projects. And once they are completed, it will be difficult to undo them. [...] *But last week, Dr Kim sent a letter to the finance ministers of India and Pakistan, informing them that he had decided to ‘pause’ the bank’s arbitration and urged the two neighbours to decide by the end of January how they wanted to settle this dispute. Pakistan had asked the bank to appoint the chairman of the Court of Arbitration while India demanded the appointment of a neutral expert.* Dr Kim said he was ‘pausing’ arbitration to protect the Indus Waters Treaty, which has successfully resolved previous disputes between the two neighbours.

JKLL blasts India’s water terrorism, *The Nation*, December 28⁶³

Jammu and Kashmir Liberation League (JKLL) President Justice (r) Abdul Majeed Mallick said that India could not succeed in its nefarious designs by suspending the water supply to Pakistan. The people of the state will never allow Pakistan to be barren at any cost, he said. Mallick, also the former chief justice of AJK High Court, categorically said while addressing the convention of his party held in Mirpur late Sunday (December 25).

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Excesses in IHK, Editorial, *The Dawn*, December 19⁶⁴

AN Indian rights group — the Concerned Citizens Collective — that includes individuals known for taking a position on the most dangerous issues in their country, came up with a strong statement on India-held Kashmir. Coming at the end of a four-day probe, during which group members met some 150 people of various ages and from all walks of life living in the troubled area, the statement read: *“The high proportion of injuries on the face and above the waist demonstrate that there is official intention to shower hundreds of pellets on the agitated population, not to disperse but to kill or permanently disable it.”* The group has demanded a ban on pellet guns, that have been decried globally but that still continue to be allowed by the Modi government bent on demonstrating its belligerence in defiance of all good sense and against historical evidence. This not only puts the administration in New Delhi among the ranks of the most oppressive governments anywhere, it also gives it some additional points for blatantly wanting to perpetrate its excesses in the most crude of ways.

⁶³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/28-Dec-2016/jkll-blasts-india-s-water-terrorism>

⁶⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1303142/excesses-in-ihk>

**EXCERPTS FROM URDU MEDIA &
SELECT JIHADI LITERATURE**

“Too much of *Bharati jungi junoon*”, Editorial, *Jang*, December 18⁶⁵

India has been continuously violating the cease-fire agreement along the LoC. Recently, one school van was fired on by Indian troops in Nakyal Sector in which ten school children were injured and the driver was killed. ... A strong protest was registered with the Indian Deputy High Commissioner in Islamabad. Even school children are not spared by the Indian troops. Pakistan has protested against it and said that violation of the ceasefire was not acceptable. ... The situation in Kashmir is so severe that more than 100 people have been killed and hundreds injured since July 8, 2016. ... India is not only trampling on human values but also disregarding international rules and UN resolutions. *Pakistan has been emphasising on negotiations which India continues to reject.* India is in a state of denial. It sabotaged the SAARC Conference and later mistreated Sartaj Aziz in Amritsar. Aziz was not allowed to give press conference. India should realise that war-mongering (*jungi junoon*) would wreak havoc in the region!!

Kashmir and Dangers of the Third World War? Editorial, *Jang*, December 21⁶⁶

[...]The increasing terrorist acts in the world are not limited to any particular country. The First World War began when the Austrian prince was killed in Bosnia, somewhat like the the assassination of Russian ambassador to Turkey in Ankara. *The occurrence of terrorist acts, one after another, whether by individuals, groups and states, indicate that the world has become a Darul-Harb, (abode of war). It is no more a Dar-ul-aman (abode of peace). Today's world is a global village; therefore, the currents of peace or war will not remain limited to a particular region or area; they will travel far and wide.* Even a small fraction of the weaponry, which has been procured by the developed and developing world in the last few decades, is enough to destroy the whole world.

[...]Under the shadow of the United Nations, international community should note that if justice is to prevail in the world, then injustice and crimes whether committed by any state, group or individual, need to be eliminated. ... *India, instead of working towards creating peace and stability in the region, has been creating new history by committing grievous crimes and atrocities in Kashmir.* India is resorting to unprovoked firing at the border with Pakistan.

⁶⁵ <http://e.jang.com.pk/12-18-2016/karachi/pic.asp?picname=233634>

⁶⁶ <http://e.jang.com.pk/12-21-2016/karachi/pic.asp?picname=235326>

Ashraf Ghani's Attack on Pakistan, Rahimullah Yusufzai, *Jang*, December 24⁶⁷

When Ashraf Ghani became the President of Afghanistan after the controversial elections, he was favourably inclined towards Pakistan. Later, he went against it. Gone are the days when Ghani, Nawaz Sharif and former Army Chief Raheel Sharif were claiming that **"the enemy of Afghanistan is the enemy of Pakistan"** (*Afghanistan ka dushman Pakistan ka dushman*). Now they are bitterly attacking each other....The relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan is at its worst if one goes by Afghan President's speech in the recent Heart of Asia Conference in Amritsar where he made Pakistan the main target of his attack. ... **He snubbed Pakistan by saying that \$500 million aid offered by Sartaj Aziz to Afghanistan should instead be used for fighting terrorism and extremism in Pakistan!**

By referring to a former diplomat of Taliban Rahmatullah Kakazada, Ashraf Ghani said that if Pakistan stopped providing sanctuary to Taliban, Afghanistan would be able to contain Taliban within a month. However, Ghani should know that Kakazada has rejected it by saying that he had been quoted out of context. ... **Mr Ghani spoke rightly that some Afghan Taliban leaders were present in Pakistan. But he failed to talk about the presence of Pakistani Taliban and separatist Baloch leaders in Afghanistan and their using of the Afghan territory against Pakistan.** In fact, Ghani had accepted in the 5th Heart of Asia Conference that the Pakistan Taliban leader Mullah Fazlullah was in Afghanistan and the Afghan forces had carried out many targeted operations against Pakistani Taliban in Afghanistan. General Rahmatullah Nabil, the former head of the secret agency NDS had resigned by saying that Ashraf Ghani was going easy with Pakistan which was spreading terrorism in Afghanistan. ... Ashraf Ghani's criticism was like rubbing salt on the wounds. It is unlikely that he was unaware of the strained India-Pakistan relations.

[...]Some would say that Sartaj Aziz should have given a befitting reply to Afghanistan on the spot. But he preferred to control his emotions and gave a sensible statement **which was appreciated by the Russian President's representative Zamir Kabulov.** Sartaj Aziz, by controlling his emotions, resisted the temptation to answer Afghanistan in the same language. **This might have been a conspiracy by India (Bharati sazish) to create schism between Afghanistan and Pakistan** that was foiled by Sartaj Aziz. ... President Ghani was rightly concerned about the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan. His second in command, Abdullah Abdullah is trying his best to control and contain the Taliban. However, there is no sign of unity in their efforts so far. Abdullah has claimed that he is being ignored in decision-making. Uzbek leader and vice president Abdul Rashid Dostum has accused Abdullah who is a Tajik and President Ghani who is a Pashtun that they were working only for their ethnic groups and were ignoring the Hazaras, Uzbeks and Turkmens. **Blaming Pakistan is easy but the fact remains that it can neither bring the Taliban to the negotiating table nor act against them.** But they should talk about the failures of the Afghan President who failed to establish effective coordination between the Afghan intelligence agency NDS and the ISI. **He also failed to stop the Indian secret agency RAW from using Pakistani Taliban and Baloch separatist from destabilising Pakistan.** However, it is necessary

⁶⁷ <http://e.jang.com.pk/12-24-2016/karachi/pic.asp?picname=237419>

for Kabul and Islamabad to stop criticising each other and stop relations from deteriorating further.

Politics of the CPEC, Saleem Safi, Jang, December 27⁶⁸

CPEC was basically the dream of the Chinese which would benefit Pakistanis as well. We should have been with the our real friends, but we are always running on the wrong side. *Unlike the US, China does not have enough acquaintance with the internal politics of Pakistan and therefore it did not understand it. Whatever it was told (even wrong information) by the astute Pakistani politicians, they believed it.* ... In trickery and flattering, there is no precedent of the current rulers, therefore they are quite famous in China's power circles this time. *But I am sure that when the Chinese would come to know about the real issues with the CPEC and the way they were misguided, their opinion vis-à-vis the rulers will change and they may come running to Imran Khan.* How is CPEC the game changer for Pakistan's economy and social issues? How does it provide solution for the regional issues? Few examples are here:

- 1) The process was started by Pervez Musharraf but Ahsan Iqbal motivated the Chinese leadership by his skills about the benefits of the CPEC and Nawaz Sharif brought in his business experience to convince the Chinese leadership further;
- 2) The Chinese believe in action rather than talks; there are five other projects going on at the same time and few are far ahead in their progress than the CPEC but nobody talks about them. *About the CPEC there is more talking because of which China's and Pakistan's enemy India got worried and started sabotaging the project.* People also started thinking what was the benefit of such an enterprise;
- 3) China has been a neutral friend of Pakistan, irrespective of religion, region or party in in office. *For the first time, however, the PML (N) has made the Chinese role a controversial issue in Pakistan. Preferring eastern route over the western route was a decision of the Pakistani rulers for their personal, regional and political interest;*

Pervez Khattak is left alone. I know that Pervez Khattak would not take my suggestion but still I would tell him that he along with other small provinces should only confirm their participation for the next GCC and try to be permanent members of this forum and the working group. *For the health of the federal structure of the country, the representation of other units should be increased. They should also ask for details regarding every project and agreement.* ... Believe me that *if the CPEC is carried out according to its original*

⁶⁸ <http://e.jang.com.pk/12-27-2016/karachi/pic.asp?picname=239014>

plan, it would unite Pakistan but if the goals of the rulers were met, this project would further weaken the basis of federal system of our country.

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
Awaran ⁶⁹	18/12/2016	Convoy ambushed	0	5
Panjgoor ⁷⁰	19/12/2016	One killed in firing	1	2
Kohlu ⁷¹	28/12/2016	Eight injured	0	8
KP & FATA				
Khyber ⁷²	28/12/2016	Afghan national injured	0	1
Punjab				
D.G. Khan ⁷³	19/12/2016	Five suspected terrorists killed	5	0

⁶⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1302941/suspected-militants-ambush-convoy-of-govt-officials-in-balochistans-awaran-district>

⁷⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1303095/unprovoked-mortar-fire-by-irans-forces-kills-one-in-balochistans-panjgoor>

⁷¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/28-Dec-2016/eight-injured-in-kohlu-bomb-blast>

⁷² <http://nation.com.pk/national/28-Dec-2016/afghan-national-shot-injured-in-khyber-agency>

⁷³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1303080/five-suspected-terrorists-killed-in-ctd-encounter>