

May 16-31, 2016

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



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

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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-Islami
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

The issue of leak of Panama Papers that had united the opposition against the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif seems to have subsided after government and opposition agreed to form a joint parliamentary committee to draft the Terms of References (ToRs) for a proposed inquiry commission that will probe the scandal. This became possible when the apex court refused to form a toothless commission and forced government to negotiate with the opposition and decide the ToRs. The Prime Minister, during his address to the National Assembly on May 16, suggested to form a parliamentary committee to devise consensus ToRs to following which the Speakers of the National Assembly constituted a 12-member body and set the timeline. The committee, which comprises members from government as well as apposition, has initially agreed on a four-point preamble to finalise the ToRs.

Although Panamagate is losing its steam, Imran Khan and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari— two major opposition leaders—have been continuously attacking Nawaz Sharif for one reason or the other. Whereas Bilawal has challenged Nawaz Sharif to admit his failure for not having appointed a regular Foreign Minister, Imran took off on him for approving federal budget via video link from London. Imran accused the Prime Minister of running the affairs of Pakistan as a “Kingdom.”

The Pakistan-US ties, that were already under strain due to the US Congress' decision of not giving any subsidy to Pakistan for buying F-16 fighter jets and using aid cuts to pressurize Pakistan to deliver on many fronts, seems to have reached a new low after the drone strike that killed the Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansoor in Balochistan. The attack came a month after the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) meeting in Islamabad on May 18, 2016, where Pakistan was urged to try its best to facilitate reconciliation-talks by bringing the Taliban to the table. It is believed that since Pakistan could not bring Mullah Akhtar Mansoor to the negotiation table, the US had to resort to the attack and eliminated him. However, there is another hypothesis doing the rounds that Mullah Mansoor was critically indisposed since December 2015 and lost his control over Taliban. Hence, it could have been a joint plan by Pakistan and US intelligence to take him out as he had outlived his utility, to send a strong signal to the Taliban leadership to behave. Officially, Pakistan has protested violation of its sovereignty and held the attack as a serious blow to talks. Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, the The Interior Minister, has himself hinted that Mansoor was not opposed to talks. Both, the civilian and military leadership have criticised the areal strike in the country. Imran Khan denounced the strike as an attack on Pakistan's national integrity, while Gen. Raheel Sharif merely conveyed his 'displeasure' by saying that such

actions were detrimental to the Pak-US ties and would affect regional stability. Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) information secretary Hafiz Hussain Ahmad argued that the drone strike was part of a larger conspiracy against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He also demanded the deportation of US ambassador in protest.

In general, there is a strand of thinking in Pakistan that the Iranians provided intelligence on Mansoor's movement to the US, who was reportedly returning from Iran to Pakistan, however, the attack on a moving target with such accuracy could not have been possible without local intelligence on the ground. Pakistani establishment's credibility on drone strikes has always been doubtful. Since Musharraf's time, the Pakistani establishment has officially protested and raised the question of violation of sovereignty while privately encouraged Americans to go after high value targets. One should not forget that Pakistan successfully got rid of some top TTP leaders, with the help of US drone strikes, such as Qari Hussain, Baitullah Mehsud, Waliur Rehman and Hakeemullah Mehsud.

Meanwhile, Afghan Taliban Shura announced Mullah Mansoor's successor. Maulvi Haibatullah Akhundzada, who had served as the head of the Judiciary during Taliban rule (1996-2001) was appointed as the new chief of the group. He is believed to be a hardliner, and some even refer to him as a "Stone Age Mullah" because of his fatwas during the Taliban regime. Now the important question is what would be the fate of peace talks after this incident. While the US administration has reiterated its continued assistance to the Afghan government and called on the remaining leadership of the Taliban to engage in peace talks as the "only real path" to end the war in Afghanistan, the Taliban on their part have made it clear that a change in leadership did not mean a change in policies of the movement. Given the credential of the hard-line cleric Maulvi Haibatullah Akhundzada, the peace process seems to be going nowhere.

Earlier the US had expressed frustration over Islamabad's failure to crack down on Haqqani network. The US House of Representatives even passed the National Defence Authorisation Act blocking \$450 million in aid to Islamabad unless it did more to fight the network. Before that the Congress had cancelled the subsidy for F-16 fighter aircraft too. Then Sartaj Aziz, the advisor to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs, had admitted that the Pakistan-US ties were under strain.

On the economic front, Pakistan's projection of the CPEC as a solution to all economic problems of the country continues. Many Pakistanis hope that with the successful implementation of CPEC Pakistan would become a Suez Canal

for China which would consequently transform Pakistan's economy and change its fate. President Mamnoon Hussain has recently argued that the CPEC would not only benefit Pakistan and China but the whole world. To make the connectivity project more viable, Pakistan is also considering linking Gwadar port with the Iranian port of Chabahar.

Any Indian advancement in the defence sector is viewed by Pakistan as a threat to its own existence. Pakistan's reaction to India's supersonic interceptor missile test [nuclear-capable K-4 Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles] validates the point. Soon after the test, Sartaj Aziz stated that Pakistan would address the development at an international level. He also stated that such Indian advancement disturb the balance of power in the region and Pakistan will not be far behind to upgrade its defensive capabilities through acquiring advanced technology. Since the successful launch of the supersonic interceptor gives India the second strike capability, Pakistan is now planning to move towards acquiring second strike capability.

Pakistan has also expressed serious concern over India's Geospatial Information Regulation Bill which intends to penalize the individuals and organisations for depicting Jammu and Kashmir as a disputed territory. It has approached the United Nations Secretary General in this regard and termed it to be in violation of UNSC resolutions.

In an interesting development, Gautam Bambawale, the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, has confirmed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would attend the upcoming South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) conference to be held in Islamabad later this year. The High Commissioner also hinted that a breakthrough was expected soon as for as the resumption of the dialogue was concerned. It remains to be seen how India-Pakistan relations would shape up in the coming days, given India's continued efforts to engage Pakistan.

Dr Ashish Shukla

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

NATIONAL POLITICS

Joint opposition ends NA, Senate boycott, *The News*, May 17¹

The joint opposition has announced to end boycott of the National Assembly and Senate. Speaking to media after the meeting of the joint opposition here (Islamabad) on Tuesday (May 17), Khursheed Shah said, "Parliament is our forum. How can we run away from it."

GDA wants army to take over, *The Dawn*, May 23²

Delivering his presidential address at a convention of workers here on Sunday (May 22), Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) chief Pir Sibghatullah Shah Rashdi, who is the spiritual leader of the Hur Jamaat and also heads the Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F), said that the **army should take over the country for five or eight years to bring all criminals and plunderers of the national exchequer to justice.**

Bilawal asks PM to admit failure in appointing FM, *The Nation*, May 25³

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Wednesday (May 25) asked Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to admit that he failed to appoint an actual foreign minister. "Given disastrous state of (our) foreign policy can the PM just admit he can't handle the portfolio & appoint an actual foreign minister?", he wrote on his official Twitter account.

Drone strikes are attacks on national integrity: Imran, *The Nation*, May 26⁴

Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan Wednesday (May 25) denounced the United States (US) drone strikes in Pakistan as an attack on national integrity. Talking to media in Battagram, Khan said that allies never attack each other. He said that drone attack in Balochistan was a failure of the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Imran accuses Sharif of running a 'kingdom', *The Dawn*, May 30⁵

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will set a unique precedent on Monday (May 30) when he gives his formal approval to the federal budget via video link from London — something his biggest critic, Imran Khan, says is a decision that

¹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120621-Joint-opposition-ends-NA-Senate-boycott>

² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1260001/gda-wants-army-to-take-over-country-bring-plunderers-to-justice>

³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-May-2016/bilawal-asks-pm-to-admit-failure-in-appointing-fm>

⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/26-May-2016/drone-strikes-are-attacks-on-national-integrity-imran>

⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1261521/imran-accuses-sharif-of-running-a-kingdom>

could only have been taken in a “kingdom”, not a democracy. [...]Under the Constitution, the federal budget must first be approved by the PM-headed NEC before it is laid before the National Assembly. But speaking to representatives of the National Press Club from his Bani Gala ‘pulpit’, the head of the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) posited that Finance Minister Ishaq Dar’s taking over was a living example of how things would work in a kingdom.

THE PANAMA PAPERS

Opposition walks out, *The News*, May 16⁶

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif briefed the National Assembly about his family’s business history, but opposition leader Syed Khurshid Shah in his brief speech rejected the PM’s clarification and the opposition members walked out of the session on Monday (May 16).

Nawaz Sharif’s strategy, Qasir M Chaudhry, *Daily Times*, May 17⁷

As expected, the ball is back in the court of prime minister, and we arrive back at square one. ***The Chief Justice of Pakistan has refused to form a ‘toothless’ commission with vague terms of reference to probe an indefinite number of individuals over infinite period of time.*** Instead, the Chief Justice has suggested the government to reconsider the legislation to empower the commission and provide the precise names of individuals and companies to probe.

Fazl vows all out support to PM, *The News*, May 17⁸

Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, the chief of his own faction of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) attacked his rival Imran Khan reiterating stance that he would continue to support Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in the face of Panama Papers scandal. ***“I assure mister prime minister that masses stand by you. People of Dera Ismail Khan are with you since we support peace, stability and strengthening of democracy we will not let any conspiracy succeed against this democratic system”, said the JUI(F) chief.***

Jl demands proper legislation, *The Nation*, May 17⁹

Ameer Jamaat e Islami Sirajul Haq, has stressed that the 1956 Act about enquiry commissions should be amended so that Commission under the Chief Justice of Pakistan to probe into the Panama leaks had the powers to take final

⁶ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120375-Opposition-walks-out-after-Khurshid-rejects-PMs-clarification>

⁷ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/17-May-16/nawaz-sharifs-strategy>

⁸ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120633-Fazl-vows-all-out-support-to-PM-attacks-Imran-Khan>

⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-May-2016/ji-demands-proper-legislation-for-enquiry-commission>

decisions against the guilty. [...]He said that the ***Panama leaks was not an accident, it was the divine rod which would fall on those plundering public money.***

Both sides of the aisle agree on ToRs panel, *The Express Tribune*, May 19¹⁰

The government and the opposition have agreed to form a joint parliamentary committee to draft the terms of reference (ToRs) for a proposed inquiry commission that will look into the Panama Papers scandal. [...]During his address to the National Assembly on Monday (May 16), Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif suggested forming a parliamentary committee to devise consensus ToRs for establishing a judicial commission.

NA speaker constitutes 12-member body, *The Express Tribune*, May 24¹¹

National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has constituted a 12-member parliamentary committee which will decide the terms of reference (ToRs), timeline and the relevant forum to investigate the Panama Papers revelations. A notification in this regard was issued on Tuesday (May 24).

Govt, opposition agree on 4-point preamble, *The News*, May 26¹²

The 12-member parliamentary committee comprising members of the government and opposition have agreed on a 4-point preamble to finalise terms of reference (TORs) for the judicial committee to probe Panama Papers.

Opposition helps Nawaz, *The News*, May 27¹³

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif appears to be getting out of hot waters on the issue of the Panama Papers as the opposition not only offered to exclude his name from the proposed ToRs for the Judicial Commission but also agreed to expand the scope of the inquiry beyond the PanamaLeaks. ***The preamble of the proposed ToRs for the Judicial Commission as agreed by the government and opposition on Thursday (May 26) resolves not only to probe the Panama Papers but other offshore companies, transfer of funds originating from corruption, commission and kickbacks, and written off loans.***

¹⁰ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1106216/panama-gate-both-sides-of-the-aisle-agree-on-tors-panel/>

¹¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1109249/na-speaker-constitutes-12-member-body-probe-panama-papers-leaks/>

¹² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/122955-Govt-opposition-agree-4-point-preamble-Panama-Leeks-ToRs>

¹³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/123189-Opposition-helps-Nawaz-get-out-of-hot-waters>

'Panama Leaks will soon lose importance', *The Express Tribune*, May 31¹⁴

Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) information secretary Hafiz Hussain Ahmad said on Monday (May 31) the Panama Papers scandal issue was a "crafted bubble balloon". Panama Papers leaks lacked authentic evidence, he told a press conference at Darul Ifta in Dera Ghazi Khan. Ahmad said the issue would lose its importance once budget was announced and debates were held over the plan for the new fiscal year. [...] **He said the recent US drone strike in Balochistan that killed a Taliban leader was part of a conspiracy against China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.** "United States has violated Pakistan's territorial sovereignty several times," he said. **He demanded that the government deport the US ambassador.** "Our regional boundaries are not secure... due to a flaw in the country's foreign policy," he said.

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

PTI wants GB declared a province, *The Dawn*, May 22¹⁵

The central leadership of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) has called upon the government to **declare Gilgit-Baltistan a constitutional province of the country and threatened that construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will not be allowed in the region if their demand is not accepted.** The PTI leaders at a convention held on Saturday (May 21) announced that party members in the National Assembly would register their protest in the parliament about "injustices" being done by the PML-N government to the people of GB.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Time For A Responsible Opposition, Editorial, *The Nation*, May 18¹⁶

Too much attention has been paid to the government response to the Panama papers – and in an obvious way it should be. The government response has been dissected, analysed and criticised by a zealous media and speculation has been allowed to run rampant. [...] **Perhaps it is time the opposition's role in this controversy be analysed more critically too – after all it is a crucial part of the dialectic argument that is the basis of a functional government.**

A balance sheet for May 28, Pervez Hoodbhoy, *The Dawn*, May 30¹⁷

[...] **From Pakistan's perspective, its nuclear weapons have already delivered by reducing India's willingness and ability to use its superior conventional military capability.** [...] In 2016, Pakistan is threatened not so much by India as by a multitude of Islamist militant groups that are waging bloody war against

¹⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1113189/burning-issue-panama-leaks-will-soon-lose-importance/>

¹⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1259928/pti-wants-gb-declared-a-province>

¹⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/18-May-2016/time-for-a-responsible-opposition>

¹⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1261059/a-balance-sheet-for-may-28>

our state and society. [...] **The bombs proved equally useless in stopping the drone that took out Mullah Mansour a few days ago, or the team of SEALs that hunted down Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad.** Apart from issuing sullen remarks about the violation of its sovereignty, Pakistan could do nothing to challenge American power.

FOREIGN POLICY

Pak-US ties badly hit in past 15 years: Zardari, *The News*, May 17¹⁸

Former president Asif Ali Zardari has stated that halting finance for F-16s fighter jets purchase by the US authorities clearly indicates distance in Pak-US relations. In a statement on Tuesday (May 17), Asif Ali Zardari said, "Pak-US relations are badly affected in the past 15 years."

Pakistan takes lead for Afghan peace again, *The Nation*, May 18¹⁹

[...] Foreign Office spokesman Nafees Zakaria said yesterday that Pakistan will host "the fifth QCG meeting on Afghan Peace and Reconciliation Process on 18 May 2016 in Islamabad." [...] National Security Adviser Lieutenant General (r) Nasir Janjua said in Islamabad yesterday that **Pakistan wanted peace and stability to prevail in Afghanistan**. He said Pakistanis had shared their homes and hospitality with migrants coming from Afghanistan. "Our hearts beat for Afghanistan. We are a peace loving nation and wish for prevalence of peace and stability in Afghanistan," he added.

Pakistan qualifies for NSG: Aizaz Chaudhry, *The News*, May 18²⁰

Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Aizaz Chaudhry on Tuesday (May 17) told a US envoy his country has the "credentials" to join a club of nuclear trading nations, signalling Islamabad may apply alongside India and force a showdown in the consensus-based group next month.

QCG agrees to give peace a chance, *The Express Tribune*, May 19²¹

Senior officials from Pakistan, Afghanistan, the United States and China agreed on Wednesday (May 18) to give peace a chance, saying talks remain the only option for bringing an end to the lingering conflict in Afghanistan. The meeting of the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG), headed by Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry, was held in Islamabad after a gap of three months against the backdrop of growing differences among the countries involved in the Afghan peace process.

¹⁸ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120596-Pak-US-ties-badly-hit-in-past-15-years-Zardari>

¹⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2016/pakistan-takes-lead-for-afghan-peace-again>

²⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120637-Pakistan-qualifies-for-nuclear-suppliers-club-Aizaz-Chaudhry-tells-US>

²¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1105906/afghan-peace-talks-quadrilateral-group-agrees-to-give-peace-a-chance/>

US House seeks to tighten restrictions on Pakistan, *The News*, May 20²²

U.S. lawmakers are looking to use a defense policy bill to increase restrictions on military aid for Pakistan, expressing frustration with what they see as Islamabad's failure to crack down on Afghanistan's militant Haqqani network. ***The \$602 billion National Defense Authorization Act, or NDAA, passed by the House of Representatives late on Wednesday (May 18) would block \$450 million in aid to Islamabad unless it does more to fight the network, which lawmakers see as a major threat to U.S. forces in Afghanistan.*** The bill requires the Pentagon to certify that Pakistan is conducting military operations to disrupt the Haqqani network, not letting the network use North Waziristan as a safe haven and actively coordinating with Afghanistan's government to fight the network along their border.

Zardari questions US commitment, *Daily Times*, May 22²³

In a rare letter to the editor of *The New York Times*, former president and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari has questioned the United States' commitment to the security needs of Pakistan. Responding to an NYT editorial which attacked Pakistan being a "duplicitous and dangerous" partner for the US and Afghanistan, Zardari wrote, ***"What was once a strong partnership allied against threats to the region from Russia and non-state actors is sadly frayed." "Despite our common security interests and a deep democratic kinship, there is ambiguity toward the bilateral relationship from officials in both countries," he said*** citing the struggle between Pakistan and the US over the purchase of F-16 fighter jets.

Will continue to go after threats on Pak soil: US, *Daily Times*, May 24²⁴

President Barack Obama on Monday (May 23) said American forces would continue to go after threats on Pakistani soil, as he confirmed Taliban chief Mullah Akhtar Mansour was killed in a US air strike while hailing his death as an 'important milestone' in efforts to bring peace to Afghanistan. [...] ***He called on the Taliban's remaining leadership to engage in peace talks as the 'only real path' to ending the attritional conflict.*** "The Taliban should seize the opportunity to pursue the only real path for ending this long conflict — joining the Afghan government in a reconciliation process that leads to lasting peace and stability."

²² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/121349-US-House-seeks-to-tighten-restrictions-on-Pakistan-aid>

²³ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/22-May-16/zardari-questions-us-commitment-to-pakistans-security-needs>

²⁴ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/24-May-16/will-continue-to-go-after-threats-on-pak-soil-us>

Mansoor was opposed to talks, questions Nisar, *Express Tribune*, May 25²⁵
[...]Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan hinted, in a news conference, that the Taliban's participation in the Murree process had full blessings of Mansoor. [...] **Nisar also sought to quash the widespread impression that Pakistan controlled the Afghan Taliban. "Would he be travelling alone in a rented car, if he had official support in Pakistan," he said. "They [Taliban] are men of free-will, still Pakistan managed to bring them to the negotiating table."** Pakistani officials say a quartet-backed fledgling peace process is all but dead because now the Taliban would not trust anyone.

Lukewarm response to Iran offers led to Chahbahar pact, *The Nation*, May 26²⁶
Analysts dominantly view the newly inked agreement by three neighbouring countries of Pakistan – Iran, India, and Afghanistan – on Chahbahar deep seaport and trade route to Central Asia as Tehran's reaction to lukewarm response from Islamabad on the offers it made on the energy and trade sectors. **While holding Gwadar far better trade and strategic route than Chahbahar, they, however, highly value friendly ties of Pakistan with Iran for which they want Islamabad to adopt independent policies to protect its own interests.** Former Army General Ziauddin Butt said Pakistan and Iran relations were not so fragile which can be affected by one move. He said though Chahbahar pact with India targets increase in trade, it was signed after Pakistan rejected different offers from Iran to facilitate it on energy and business sectors. He said Chahbahar is much inferior to Gwadar, yet the pact on it with India shows Tehran's diminishing hopes from Pakistan.

TALIBAN CHIEF AKHTAR MANSOOR KILLED

Charred bodies found in Quetta identified, *Daily Times*, May 22²⁷
Remains of a car with two burned bodies in it have been found in a deserted area near Afghanistan border. The unidentified bodies were taken to Civil Hospital Quetta where they were later identified as Muhammad Azam and Wali Muhammad, belonging to the Taftan and Killa Abdullah areas.

Afghan Taliban chief Mullah Mansour killed, *The Dawn*, May 23²⁸
Afghan government Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah confirmed on Sunday (May 22) that Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour was killed in a United States (US) drone strike in Pakistan a day earlier. [...]Afghanistan's

²⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1110044/rejoinder-islamabad-nisar-questions-claim-mansoor-opposed-talks/>

²⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/26-May-2016/pakistan-s-lukewarm-response-to-iran-offers-led-to-chahbahar-pact>

²⁷ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/22-May-16/charred-bodies-found-in-quetta-identified>

²⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1259979/afghan-taliban-chief-mullah-mansour-killed-in-balochistan>

main intelligence service, the National Directorate for Security (NDS) also confirmed Mansour's death. [...]Pakistan is "seeking clarification" about a US drone strike against Mansour, Foreign Office Spokesman Nafees Zakaria said on Sunday (May 22), after US officials earlier said Mansour was 'likely killed' in an air strike on Pakistani soil. "I have seen the reports. We are seeking clarification," Zakaria said in a statement.

War, peace, death — and the Taliban, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, May 23²⁹
[...]What is clear is that Mansoor and a man he was with were killed in a drone strike inside Pakistan. He was returning to Quetta from Iran and had a valid Iranian visa in the name of Wali Muhammad, s/o Shah Muhammad, and was carrying a Pakistani passport and ID card. Considering the fact that the vehicle the two men were in was reduced to a gutted shell, **one might reasonably wonder at the survival of any documentation**. [...]Members of the Pakistan government were notified after the strike, and took 24 hours to craft a response, which was along the well-trodden path of a condemnation of American violation of Pakistan sovereignty.

US drone attack violation of Pakistan's sovereignty: PM, *The Dawn*, May 23³⁰
Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Sunday (May 22) criticised the drone strike which the US carried out in Balochistan a day earlier and said that a strong protest had been lodged with the US over the attack. Talking to reporters after his arrival in London for a medical check-up, **he described the air strike in the Dalbandin area of Balochistan as a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty**. Mr Sharif was quoted by TV channels as having said that it was not clear that Afghan Taliban chief Mullah Akhtar Mansour was among the two people reportedly killed in the air strike, adding that details of the incident were still being collected.

New twist in Afghan peace, Editorial, *The Dawn*, May 23³¹
[...]Pakistani officials have acknowledged that the so-called influence, though not control, that the state here has over the Taliban is partly a result of providing sanctuary to Afghan Taliban leaders. If there were no sanctuary, there would be no influence — and certainly none of the control that the outside world accuses Pakistan of having over the Taliban. [...]What is indisputably in the interest of Afghanistan, Pakistan and other regional and international powers is for the Afghan question to be settled through dialogue. However, given that the US has now bluntly stated that the Taliban leader was an

²⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1108860/war-peace-death-taliban/>

³⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1260041/us-drone-attack-violation-of-pakistans-sovereignty-says-pm>

³¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1260056/new-twist-in-afghan-peace>

impediment to negotiations and reportedly eliminated him, it is not clear who dialogue can be conducted with among the group or even if the Taliban will be able to stay united.

PPP submits motion to discuss Mansoor's killing, *Daily Times*, May 24³²

The Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) on Monday (May 23) submitted an adjournment motion in the Senate to discuss the 'security calculus in the region and implications of extending drone strikes to Balochistan' brought into focus by the killing of Taliban leader Mullah Mansoor in a drone strike the other day.

Mullah Mansour or Muhammad Wali, *The Express Tribune*, May 24³³

While Afghan Taliban chief Mullah Akhtar Mansoor may have used a fake name to obtain a Pakistani identity card, his credentials with the authorities are all genuine, verifiable on specific helpline numbers. Mansoor was reportedly killed in Balochistan in a US drone strike on May 21. A Pakistani CNIC and passport found at the site identified the victim as Muhammad Wali, a resident of Karachi. [...]While getting an identity card is a struggle for many Pakistani citizens, especially those living in districts other than their permanent address, the fact that Mullah Mansoor was able to get a Pakistani CNIC as well as a passport raises quite a few questions.

Iran denies Taliban chief was in the country, *Daily Times*, May 24³⁴

Iran on Monday (May 23) denied reports that Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour entered Pakistan from the Islamic republic before being killed in a United States (US) drone strike, state media reported.

Taliban elect Mansour's successor, *The Express Tribune*, May 25³⁵

Afghan Taliban on Wednesday (May 25) named Mullah Akhtar Mansour's successor as the group confirmed the late chief was killed in a US drone strike in Balochistan. [...]While confirming his death, the group also announced Mullah Mansour's successor. **"Maulvi Haibatullah Akhunzada has been appointed the new chief of the group," a Taliban statement said.** Sirajuddin Haqqani and Maulvi Yakub have been appointed as deputy chiefs of the group. [...]The election of a new leader took time as the Rahbari Shura wanted to evolve a 'broad-based consensus' to avoid any controversy, said the Taliban leaders.

³² <http://dailytimes.com.pk/islamabad/24-May-16/ppp-submits-motion-in-senate-to-discuss-mansoors-killing>

³³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1109001/mullah-mansoor-muhammad-wali-fake-name-genuine-credentials-cnic/>

³⁴ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/24-May-16/iran-denies-taliban-chief-was-in-the-country>

³⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1110117/afghan-taliban-confirms-mullah-mansour-killed-us-drone-attack/>

US repeats 'do more' mantra, *The Nation*, May 26³⁶

The United States says Pakistan needs to do more to root out terrorists using its soil to find refuge. "We have been very clear-eyed and very clear in our interaction with Pakistan where we've believed that they need to do more to root out terrorists, who find safe haven(s) on some of their territory, and we're going to continue to do that. I'll leave it there," State Department Spokesman Mark Toner told reporters. However, the US would continue to work with Pakistan and provide necessary tools to confront the threat of terrorism, Toner said in the daily press briefing while answering a series of questions related to Afghan Taliban chief Mullah Mansour's death.

Mansour's body has not been handed over: Aziz, *The News*, May 26³⁷

Addressing a press conference at the Foreign Office, Foreign Affairs Adviser Sartaj Aziz confirmed that Mullah Mansour had been killed in an American airstrike on Saturday (May 21). He also said that Mansour's dead body has not been handed over to anyone. **"According to the Afghan Taliban, Mullah Mansour was traveling with a different name," said Sartaj Aziz. "It has been confirmed that it was Mullah Mansour who had been killed in the drone strike." Sartaj Aziz further went on to state that Mansour's killing had proven to be an immense setback for the peace of the region.** He said that the drone attack had undermined the Afghan peace process and managed to worsen the situation.

Army displeased at US drone aggression, *The Nation*, May 26³⁸

Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif yesterday conveyed military's displeasure to the US over the recent drone strike saying it was detrimental to Pak-US ties and regional stability. **General Raheel's reaction came during a meeting with the Ambassador of US David Hale at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, a statement issued by Inter Services Public relations (ISPR) said.**

Obama's message to Taliban, *The News*, May 27³⁹

US President Barack Obama, while commenting on the selection of a hardline cleric as the new Taliban chief, said that it had dashed the US hope for peace in the war-torn country. However, he warned that Taliban must forget the possibility of their becoming the rulers of Afghanistan. He expressed the resolve to continue to assist the Afghan government in multifarious fields.

³⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/26-May-2016/us-repeats-do-more-mantra>

³⁷ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/122937-Mullah-Mansours-body-has-not-been-handed-over-to-anyone-Sartaj-Aziz>

³⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/26-May-2016/army-displeased-at-us-drone-aggression>

³⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/123192-Obama-to-Taliban-forget-about-becoming-rulers-anytime-soon>

EDITORIALS AND OPINION

Strained ties with the US, Editorial, *The Dawn*, May 16⁴⁰

A complicated, but vital relationship — an assessment offered by the US State Department spokesperson — is an apt description of the state of Pak-US relations. But the latest stresses in the bilateral relationship have not come as a surprise. For a couple of years now, as the US military engagement in Afghanistan has diminished markedly, the possibility of a changed relationship between Pakistan and the US has been clear. [...] **Where once there were initiatives such as the Kerry-Lugar civilian-focused aid and attempts to spur regional trade and productivity, now there is little more than haggling over bills and military hardware. Inside Pakistan, the civil-military dynamic has clearly affected the trajectory of the Pak-US relationship and pushed it in the direction of being wholly security-based.** But part of the blame must surely lie with the civilians and the present PML-N government in particular. So invested is the government in the Chinese relationship and the possibilities that CPEC offers that it appears to have become oblivious to all other foreign relationships, barring perhaps the occasional ill-planned attempt to begin a process of normalisation with India.

Relations with Afghanistan, Talat Masood, *The Express Tribune*, May 17⁴¹

[...]Afghans want the Pakistan military to compel the Taliban to engage in a dialogue that leads to a political settlement. Our military feels that it has limited influence over them and it is for the two Afghan antagonists to find a political solution. Pakistan, at best, can facilitate the dialogue process and even that is becoming problematic. [...] **Today, Pakistan finds itself in a catch-22 situation. Its failure to persuade the Taliban to come to the negotiating table has unfairly earned the ire of the Afghanistan government and provided the US with an opportunity to start a blame game.** [...]Already, the Taliban exercise considerable control over several provinces, especially those in the east and south, close to the Pakistan border. [...]Pakistan is sceptical of US motives in the region and its growing strategic ties with India. It is also not sure whether the US will retain interest in Afghanistan after Barack Obama leaves office or would there be a repeat of past events.

Bangladesh's hysterical vengeance, Mohsin Raza Malik, *The Nation*, May 18⁴²

[...]At present, the Bangladesh government is pursuing its well thought-out policy of imparting hate and vengeance against Pakistan to its youth. **In fact, now Bangladesh's hatred towards Pakistan has somehow become its iconic state symbol. Regrettably, in its hatred and vengeance against Pakistan, the**

⁴⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1258535/strained-ties-with-the-us>

⁴¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1105131/managing-relations-with-afghanistan/>

⁴² <http://nation.com.pk/columns/18-May-2016/bangladesh-s-hysterical-vengeance>

Awami League government now feels no hesitation at all in arbitrarily trying and mercilessly hanging its own citizens. [...] Considering the Jamaat-e-Islami a potential hurdle in way of its self-styled modernisation and pro-Indian policies, the Bangladesh government is trying to eliminate JI by executing its leaders in the name of war crimes. Now, after Motiur Rahman Nizami's execution, the government is all set to hang another ICT convict Mir Qausem Ali, a JI leader and its key financier.

Dwindling talks, Editorial, *The News*, May 20⁴³

The fifth meeting of the Quadrilateral Crisis Group, consisting of Pakistan, China, Afghanistan and the US was doomed to failure before it even started. Afghanistan decided not to send a delegation to Islamabad for the meeting, instead getting its ambassador to Pakistan to represent them. [...] Since the role of the QCG is to facilitate peace talks between Afghanistan and the Taliban, the differences between Afghanistan and Pakistan have made any chance of a breakthrough virtually nil.

The Afghan scenario, Editorial, *The News*, May 27⁴⁴

The selection of Maulvi Haibatullah Akhundzada as the new Afghan Taliban chief has come as something of a surprise since a power struggle was expected between Sirajuddin Haqqani and Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob. Experts are saying Haibatullah, who was the head of the judiciary in Afghanistan under Taliban rule and is not known to have significant military experience, was the consensus choice to prevent inter-Taliban fighting. He is also thought to be closer to Haqqani so the true power, including the decision on whether to start peace talks with the Afghan government, may rest with Haqqani rather than Haibatullah.

The many faces of Pakistani sovereignty, Ayaz Amir, *The News*, May 27⁴⁵

[...] On sovereignty indeed the Pakistani governing classes need to take a basic lesson in gynaecology. Sovereignty is a bit like virginity – once lost it is lost forever. **Pakistan has been losing its sovereignty for as long as one can remember.** [...] **If the Americans had abused our sovereignty, which they did, was the Sheikh strengthening our sovereignty?** The same question can be asked with regard to Mullah Mansour. What was he doing in Pakistan and how did he have a Pakistan ID card and passport on him when he was killed?

⁴³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/121299-Dwindling-talks>

⁴⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/123092-The-Afghan-scenario>

⁴⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/123096-The-many-faces-of-Pakistani-sovereignty>

Will Taliban finally come to talks?, Tahir Khan, *The Express Tribune*, May 28⁴⁶

The Afghan Taliban have ruled out changes in policies under their new leader, Maulvi Haibatullah Akhundzada, debating whether he would agree to join the peace process contrary to his predecessor. Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid says that changes in the Taliban leadership do not mean policies of the movement will alter. "Policies of the Islamic Emirate are not attached with personalities. Our policies are formulated collectively by the leadership council and religious scholars; not by an individual," Mujahid told *The Express Tribune* on Friday (May 27).

MILITARY AFFAIRS

Gen Raheel meets Chinese prime minister, *The News*, May 16⁴⁷

Chief of the Army Staff General Raheel Sharif called on Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Monday (May 16) to enhance bilateral economic and security ties, Xinhua news agency reported. ***The Chinese premier said military-to-military relations have reinforced China-Pakistan ties, especially economic cooperation, calling on both the sides to strengthen high-level contact and deepen exchanges in various fields.*** "Economic cooperation and security collaboration between the two should be pushed forward "like two wheels," he was quoted as having said.

China's naval chief lauds Pakistan's pivotal role, *The Express Tribune*, May 19⁴⁸

The head of China's navy on Wednesday (May 18) acknowledged Pakistan Navy's role in ensuring maritime security and stability in the region. ***"Pakistan, as a responsible state, is playing a pivotal role for maritime security and stability in the region, which has greatly helped in shaping a secure environment for freedom of navigation in the region,"*** Commander of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), Admiral Wu Shengli, said in a meeting with Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Zakauallah.

Determined to confront terrorism, extremism: Raheel, *The News*, May 26⁴⁹

Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif on Thursday (May 26) said that Pakistan was determined to confront the global phenomenon of terrorism and extremism. The Army chief was addressing participants of the Command and Staff College during his day-long visit to Quetta. "No other military of the world has been able to synergise effects as much as Pakistan Army could do single handedly. I am rightly proud of commanding this dynamic and resolute force," he said.

⁴⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1111631/new-leader-will-taliban-finally-come-talks/>

⁴⁷ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120540-Gen-Raheel-meets-Chinese-prime-minister>

⁴⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1106219/chinas-naval-chief-lauds-pakistans-pivotal-role/>

⁴⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/122956-Army-Chief-Pakistan-determined-confront-global-terrorism-extremism>

Zarb-e-Azb goes on: COAS, *The News*, May 27⁵⁰

The Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Raheel Sharif, on Thursday (May 26) said that the Operation Zarb-e-Azb against terrorists was still going on as more work was needed to be done to eliminate terrorism from the country. He appreciated the security institutions for nabbing the networks of foreign spies.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

Ishaq Dar hints at increase in defence budget, *The Express Tribune*, May 25⁵¹

Spelling out the government's priorities for its fourth budget that he will be unveiling on June 3, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said on Tuesday (May 24) that the federal government would meet defence needs of the country and make efforts to avoid putting extra burden on existing taxpayers. "The government will meet the defence needs of the country in the new budget," vowed Dar, while addressing a pre-budget seminar organised by Express Media Group. As against Ministry of Finance's indicative defence budget of Rs860 billion for fiscal year 2016-17, the Ministry of Defence has sought Rs920 billion. [...]Military authorities also want to take 100% of the Coalition Support Fund that the United States disburses in return for the country's services in the war on terrorism.

CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

Transforming Pakistan's economy, Ahmed Rashid Malk, *The Nation*, May 17⁵²

Pakistan is entering into a new phase of economic development. [...]Pakistan could easily benefit from China's US\$ 11 trillion economy and world's largest in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP). [...]Chian got interested in Gwadar by the dawn of this century. Gwadar will also transform the economy of China. It has over US\$ 5 trillion sea-borne trade passes through the South China Sea where the Straits of Malacca is a choke point. In future, much of China's sea-borne trade would go through Gwadar Port via land access into western China. This introduces a new dimension in China's global trade. ***Pakistan would become a Suez Canal for China's trade in the Middle East, providing it an alternative access as a friendly state to address its future vulnerability in the South China Sea. In return, the economy of Pakistan would be transform from US\$ 237 billion to much larger economy.***

⁵⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/123186-Zarb-e-Azb-goes-on-as-much-needed-to-eliminate-terrorism-COAS>

⁵¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1110051/ishaq-dar-hints-increase-defence-budget/>

⁵² <http://nation.com.pk/columns/17-May-2016/cpec-transforming-pakistan-s-economy>

Whole world to benefit from CPEC: President, *The Nation*, May 26⁵³

President Mamnoon Hussain has said that Pak-China relations are a model for the world and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will benefit the whole world. The president said this while in a meeting with Chairman Peking University Council Prof. Zhu Shan Lu who along with a delegation called on him at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad on Wednesday (May 25).

Linking Gwadar with Chabahar, *The News*, May 27⁵⁴

Adviser to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz has said that Pakistan was considering linking Gwadar with the Iranian harbour Chabahar.

EDITORIALS AND OPINION

Monetary policy statement, Editorial, *Express Tribune*, May 23⁵⁵

[...]The monetary policy statement painted a rosy picture, where expansion in industrial and services sector would "salvage some of the lost momentum" due to agricultural slowdown. It mentioned increase in foreign exchange reserves and improved trade deficit, but also pointed out the increase in oil prices. These oil prices, the fall of which has already aided Pakistan, have risen almost 70 per cent since they bottomed out. With exports continuing to fall, the trade deficit is likely to worsen from now on, putting pressure on Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves. The SBP may have managed to convey good news so far, but the next few months are going to be crucial — especially as the IMF programme ends and inflation starts to rise.

SECURITY SITUATION

TERRORISM

US adds two Pakistan-based groups to terror list, *The Nation*, May 26⁵⁶

The United States Wednesday (May 25) designated two Pakistan-based Islamist groups with links to the Taliban as global terrorist threats. As "Specially Designated Global Terrorists", US citizens are forbidden from associating with the Tariq Gidar Group (TGG) and the Jamaat ul Dawa al-Quran (JDQ). [...]According to the US State Department, the TGG is linked to the Tehreek-i-Taliban -- the Pakistani Taliban -- and is based in Darra Adam Khel, Pakistan. The faction, US officials believe, was responsible for the December 2014 massacre at an army-run school in Peshawar that left more than 130 children dead. The TGG is led by Umar Mansoor, who is said to also have

⁵³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/26-May-2016/whole-world-to-benefit-from-cpec-president>

⁵⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/123190-Linking-Gwadar-with-Chabahar-being-considered-says-Sartaj>

⁵⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1108863/monetary-policy-statement/>

⁵⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/26-May-2016/us-adds-two-pakistan-based-groups-to-terror-list>

ordered the January 2016 attack on a university in Charsadda that left more than 20 dead.

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA AND FATA

Four bullet-riddled bodies found, *The Nation*, May 18⁵⁷

Four bullet riddled bodies were found near Azad Naurang area in the jurisdiction of Shaheed Asmatullah Khan Khattak police station of Naurang town on Tuesday (May 17). [...]The deceased were later identified as Naseem Khan, Farmanullah, Dakter Khan and Umeeullah belonging to village Tap Takhtikhel bordering the frontier tribal region. "Three of the killed men including Naseem Khan, Farmanullah and Dakter Khan were proclaimed offenders and they were wanted by police in several heinous nature cases including those relating to terrorism and possessing explosives", claimed the official.

Policeman killed as twin blasts strike Peshawar, *The Nation*, May 18⁵⁸

A police official was killed and at least 17 people were injured in twin blasts in Mithra, Peshawar today, Waqt News reported. According to reports, a police convoy was the target of the improvised explosive device (IED), as two people were injured in the first explosion. The second remote controlled blast took place when investigation teams arrived at the scene, killing one person and injuring at least 17.

JUI-F leader shot dead in DI Khan, *The News*, May 19⁵⁹

Jamiat Ulema e Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) local leader Haji Alam Shah was gunned down at his residence by unidentified assailants in Paroda tehsil in Dera Ismail Khan on Wednesday (May 18). According to police, three unidentified persons barged into the house of Alam and opened fire at him, killing him on the spot. The police have registered an FIR and an investigation has been started.

Three terrorists killed, *The News*, May 20⁶⁰

Three people were killed in an explosion that destroyed a motorcycle in the provincial capital on Friday morning (May 20). Police claimed the three men were suspected terrorists and one of them was wearing a suicide vest which went off on Safaid Rang Road.

⁵⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2016/four-bullet-riddled-bodies-found>

⁵⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2016/twin-blasts-strike-peshawar-s-mathra-area>

⁵⁹ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/khyber-pakhtunkhwa/19-May-16/jui-f-leader-shot-dead-in-di-khan>

⁶⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/121410-Three-killed-in-Peshawar-car-explosion>

FC soldier killed in Bannu, *Daily Times*, May 23⁶¹

A Frontier Corps soldier has been killed by unidentified armed men in the jurisdiction of Kaki Police Station on Sunday (May 22). According to police, some unknown assailants opened firing on FC personnel named Jahangir Khan near his house and killed him on the spot. Police registered the case and further investigation is underway.

Three FC personnel shot dead, *The Nation*, May 26⁶²

Gunmen killed three personnel of Frontier Constabulary (FC) after opening fire on their vehicle at Patang Chowk here Wednesday morning (May 25). Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Abbas Majeed Marwat said the vehicle of the FC was approaching Patang Chowk from Ring Road when unidentified assailants opened fire at them killing three soldiers on the spot. District Officer FC Ameer Badshah and two constables, Gul Rehman and Gul Rasool were moving towards headquarters as usual when their vehicle was attacked in the jurisdiction of police station. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

[TTP claimed the responsibility, on its official website, of the attack but mentioned four deaths.]

BALUCHISTAN

Three officials, contractor kidnapped near Turbat, *The Dawn*, May 16⁶³

Three government officials and a contractor were kidnapped from Dasht area of Kech district late Sunday night (May 15). According to sources, Fida Ahmed, a sub-divisional officer in the road and building department, and Mohammad Ibrahim and Rahim Jan, sub-engineers of the irrigation department, accompanied by contractor Mehboob Dashti, were returning to Turbat after inspecting development projects in a nearby area.

Two terrorists killed in Awaran clash, *The Nation*, May 18⁶⁴

Two extremists were killed in exchange of firing with the security forces here on Tuesday (May 17). Security sources said unknown miscreants ambushed security personnel in district Awaran. In retaliatory action, two extremists were killed while others managed to escape leaving behind bodies of their accomplices.

⁶¹ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/khyber-pakhtunkhwa/23-May-16/fc-soldier-killed-in-bannu>

⁶² <http://nation.com.pk/national/26-May-2016/three-fc-personnel-shot-dead>

⁶³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1258598/three-officials-contractor-kidnapped-near-turbat>

⁶⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2016/two-terrorists-killed-in-awaran-clash>

Cop killed, four injured in blast, *The News*, May 20⁶⁵

A Balochistan Constabulary officer was killed and four others injured in a remote-controlled bomb blast in the Eastern Bypass area on Thursday (May 19). Police sources said that unidentified men planted a remote-controlled bomb in the provincial capital. "The bomb exploded when an official Balochistan Constabulary van was passing by, killing one constable on the spot and injuring four others," they said. [...] The deceased was identified as Head Constable, Aataa Muhammad and the injured were revealed to be Raziq, Abdul Wahid and Shabbir Hussain.

Two charred bodies found, *The Dawn*, May 22⁶⁶

Two charred bodies and the remains of a car were found on Sunday (May 22) in Balochistan's Noshki district near the border with Afghanistan. The bodies, which were transferred to the Civil Hospital Quetta, were later identified as Wali Muhammad, resident of Balochistan's Killa Abdullah district and Muhammad Azam hailing from Taftan town in the province's Chaghi district. "Their bodies had been severely burnt from explosive material and there were iron marks on their faces," a senior doctor who declined to be named since he was not authorised to speak to media told Dawn.com.

US strike crosses 'red line' on Balochistan, *The Dawn*, May 23⁶⁷

The US drone strike targeting Taliban chief Mullah Akhtar Mansour was the first-ever in Balochistan, which has long been a 'red line' for Pakistan. There have been about 391 drone strikes by the US in Pakistani territory, primarily targeting Al Qaeda and Taliban leaders since 2004, according to a database maintained by Long War Journal. All but four of these strikes took place in the tribal agencies. The only previously reported strikes that took place in settled areas were in Hangu district (2013) and three in Bannu (2008).

5 killed in firing, *Daily Times*, May 24⁶⁸

Unidentified armed men opened fire at a vehicle in Mand area of Kech Turbat district, leaving five men dead on Monday (May 23). Levies Force said that five people aboard a vehicle were on way when unidentified armed men opened indiscriminate firing, leaving all five critically injured. The assailants managed to escape from the scene. The attackers also set the victim's vehicle on fire before fleeing the area.

⁶⁵ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/balochistan/20-May-16/cop-killed-four-injured-in-blast>

⁶⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1259976/two-charred-bodies-found-near-pak-afghan-border-in-balochistan>

⁶⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1260044/us-strike-crosses-red-line-on-balochistan>

⁶⁸ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/balochistan/24-May-16/5-killed-in-firing>

Two policemen killed, *The Express Tribune*, May 24⁶⁹

Two policeman were killed while seven other people, including four police personnel, were injured in an IED blast in Quetta on Tuesday (May 24). A police mobile passing through the city's Spini Road was targeted. "Up to 3kg of explosives hidden in a cane, blew up when the police mobile passed by the area," said provincial Home Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti.

Pak forces arrest six NDS terrorists, *The News*, May 26⁷⁰

Balochistan Home Minister Sarfaraz Bugti on Thursday (May 26) said Pakistan's security and intelligence agencies have arrested six operatives of Afghan intelligence agency involved in terrorist activities. He said the suspects, most of them Afghan refugees, were planted by Afghan intelligence agency National Directorate of Security and Indian intelligence RAW and confessed to killing more than 40 Pakistanis in various acts of terrorism.

Two people killed, six others injured, *The Dawn*, May 29⁷¹

Six people, including two women and a child, were injured in a hand grenade attack in Balochistan's Chaman area, a town near the Pak-Afghan border, on Sunday (May 29). Police said miscreants lobbed a hand grenade at a house in Chaman Bazaar. [...] In a separate incident, two people, including a Levies man, were gunned down by unidentified men on motorcycles in Turbat. Levies officials said unknown assailants opened fire at two people in the Zamran area and fled.

PUNJAB

Two Dolphin Force personnel injured, *The News*, May 17⁷²

Two members of the Dolphin Force were injured when unidentified assailants opened fire on them at the city's Band Road area. [...] Police disclosed that the firing incident took place at Band Road's Malipur area, in which officials Tabassum and Shahzad were injured.

CTD kills four 'terrorists' in Lahore, *The News*, May 18⁷³

The counter-terrorism department (CTD) of Punjab Police claimed to have killed four alleged terrorists in a shootout near Aiman Abad area on Tuesday

⁶⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1109392/blast-hits-police-mobile-quetta-seven-injured/>

⁷⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/122958-Afghan-refugees-asked-to-leave-as-Pak-forces-arrest-six-spies>

⁷¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1261395/two-people-killed-six-others-injured-in-separate-attacks-of-violence-in-balochistan>

⁷² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120579-Lahore-Two-members-of-Dolphin-Force-injured-as-unidentified-assailants-open-fire>

⁷³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120639-CTD-kills-four-terrorists-in-Lahore>

night (May 17). Sources in CTD Punjab said three terrorists fled the scene after the encounter.

CTD kills six 'terrorists' in Muzaffargarh, *The News*, May 20⁷⁴

The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) conducted a raid here (Muzaffargarh) on late Thursday night (May 19), killing six suspects allegedly affiliated with a banned organization. Official sources said those killed in the shootout included Yasir alias Punjabi who was wanted for his alleged involvement in several acts of terrorism.

SINDH

Two gunned down in Karachi, *The News*, May 27⁷⁵

Two people were shot dead and another injured in a suspected targeted killing attack in Karachi's Jaffer Tayyar society, police said. According to police, the armed assailants, riding on motorcycle, opened fire on the deceased sitting outside a house in the area. Police recovered 9mm bullet shells from the site of the incident. The deceased have been identified as Asim and Amir Haider.

Three 'Al Qaeda militants' in Karachi killed, *The Dawn*, May 30⁷⁶

Police on Sunday (May 29) claimed to have killed three suspected Al Qaeda militants who were allegedly planning an attack on the chief of a law enforcement agency. Malir SSP Rao Anwar said the suspected militants belonged to the outlawed Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) and were killed after an alleged encounter in Quaidabad area of the metropolis.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

The curriculum and extremism, Madiha Afzal, *The Express Tribune*, May 17⁷⁷

[...]Pakistani textbooks glorify armed jihad. They extol warfare that occurred pre-Partition against (armies of) other religions, and they glorify these wars in the name of religion. Pakistan is not alone in having fought wars, but it is one of very few countries (Israel is another that comes to mind) that invoke religion in war. ***In Pakistan Studies textbooks, the wars with India post-Partition are labelled as jihad.*** [...]These narratives are spouted by politicians, religio-political groups, the media, the neighbourhood mullah and by militant groups. The propaganda of militant groups — out there, unregulated — is doubly dangerous in the hands of an unthinking and gullible population. ***Worse, the narratives of some mainstream politicians, especially those belonging to***

⁷⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/121190-Punjab-CTD-kills-six-terrorists-in-Muzaffargarh>

⁷⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/122972-Two-gunned-down-in-suspected-target-killing-in-Karachi>

⁷⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1261412/three-al-qaeda-militants-in-karachi-killed-for-planning-attack-on-lea-chief>

⁷⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1105130/the-pakistani-curriculum-and-extremism/>

religious parties, do not lie far from the narratives of militant groups, lending the latter further acceptability.

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

'Pakistan will address Indian missile test, *The Dawn*, May 16⁷⁸

Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, in an apparent response to India's supersonic interceptor missile test, said on Monday (May 16) that Pakistan would address the development at an international level, Radio Pakistan reported. ***Expressing concern over India's missile test, Aziz said it will disturb the balance of power in the region, and added that Pakistan will continue to upgrade its defensive capabilities by acquiring advanced technology.***

Pak concerned over Indian move on Kashmir, *The News*, May 17⁷⁹

Pakistan has expressed serious concern to the United Nations Secretary General and the President of the UN Security Council with regard to the Indian government's efforts to introduce a controversial ***"Geospatial Information Regulation Bill" in the Indian Parliament.*** [...] In violation of UNSC resolutions, the official map of India has been depicting the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir as part of India which is factually incorrect and legally untenable. Through the passage of this bill, the Indian government would penalize the individuals and organizations who depict Jammu and Kashmir as a disputed territory.

Pak voices concern over India's missile launch, *The News*, May 19⁸⁰

Pakistan on Thursday (May 19) voiced its serious concern over India's test fire of supersonic interceptor missile and warned to take all necessary measures to augment the country's defence capabilities. ***"We are not oblivious to our defence needs and we will be compelled to upgrade our defensive capabilities through suitable technologies,"*** the Foreign Office spokesman said in a weekly press briefing held here (Islamabad) at the Foreign Office.

'Modi to attend SAARC conference in Islamabad', *The News*, May 20⁸¹

Emphasizing the importance of reinitiating the stalled dialogue process between India and Pakistan, Indian High Commissioner Gautam Bambawale

⁷⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1258687/pakistan-will-address-indian-missile-test-at-international-level>

⁷⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120600-Pak-concerned-over-Indian-move-to-violate-UN-resolutions-on-Kashmir>

⁸⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/121180-Pakistan-voices-serious-concern-India-supersonic-missile-launch>

⁸¹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/121188-Modi-to-attend-SAARC-conference-in-Islamabad>

on Thursday (May 19) said Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the upcoming South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) conference in Islamabad. [...] Commenting further on bilateral ties between the two South Asian neighbours, the Indian high commissioner said **talks must be held on all issues, including Kashmir**. "India is ready and will go ahead with the talks," he added. Bambawale also hinted that a breakthrough was expected soon in the resumption of the dialogue process. He, however, added that no date has yet been finalised for the foreign secretary-level talks.

US urges Pak to cooperate with India, *The News*, May 27⁸²

The United States of America has urged Pakistan to cooperate with the Indian authorities to fully investigate Mumbai attacks. US State Department deputy spokesperson Mark Toner, in a daily media briefing on Thursday (May 26) said, "Mumbai attacks were terrible tragedy. **We continue to urge the Pakistani government to cooperate with the Indian authorities to fully investigate these attacks. US wants to see justice done and we continue to urge Pakistani cooperation.**" To a question, Mark Toner said, "Pakistan needs to address all groups operating on their soil – Taliban groups that are operating on their soil and their territory. We've urged them to do so in the past. We continue to urge them to do so and have worked with them on addressing the very real threat on their own soil."

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

The Arms Race, Editorial, *The Nation*, May 16⁸³

The reported testing of nuclear-capable K-4 Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) by India last month from its nuclear-powered INS Arihant has taken India closer to achieving "second-strike capability". [...] What it actually means is that the arms race between India and Pakistan continues, because for minimal deterrence to remain credible (the doctrine that justifies us having nuclear weapons in the first place), Pakistan must also move towards having some form of a second strike capability. [...] **The ensuing arms race has inhibited any dialogue between the two countries to resolve their issues, because the default option is always there: using military defence.** And that is where the line is drawn. This is how the security dilemma has worked for us, and it is too far gone now for Pakistan to back down. Thus we scramble for the F-16s from the US. [...] **Meanwhile Turkey has stepped into the vacuum created by the US, and has agreed to modernise the Pakistan Air Force's fleet of F-16s at a cost of \$75 million.** This is a good development, as unlike the US, Turkey

⁸² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/123206-US-urges-Pak-to-cooperate-with-India-to-fully-investigate-Mumbai-attacks>

⁸³ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/16-May-2016/the-arms-race>

already has a positive image in Pakistan, and dealings with it may go more smoothly.

Talking peace with India, Uzair M Younus, *The Express Tribune*, May 19⁸⁴

[...]The successful testing of an interceptor missile as part of India's Ballistic Missile Defence Programme is yet another setback in the arms race. **It casts a shadow over Pakistan's rapid development of tactical nuclear missiles, and further nudges the military balance of power in India's favour.** So what does one do? Make peace and stop the bleeding for a little while. The decades-long quest to free Kashmir and the blinding desire to have military parity with a much-larger neighbour has been futile. **Instead, the dwarf would advise to develop a different weapon: money.** Pakistan's geography is such that the country can connect the energy-starved regions of China and India to the energy-rich republics of Iran and Central Asia. A peace, even of a temporary nature, would bring the political stability necessary for large-scale investments.

A nuclearised Indian Ocean, Ali Sarwar Naqvi, *The News*, May 20⁸⁵

[...]The induction of nuclear weapons and platforms in the Indian Ocean by any one state of the 32 littoral states around it will have the consequence of jeopardising the security of all the others. As the state undertaking this enterprise is India, it can directly affect the security dilemma of Pakistan, which is already concerned about India's land-based nuclear and missile capabilities. [...]Unfortunately, the Indian Ocean is fast becoming an arena of global strategic competition, largely due to the US's attempt to establish its influence in the Asia Pacific region, to counter possible Chinese presence in the area. In this scheme of things, the US could well be encouraging India to go ahead with its aggressive designs of dominating the Indian Ocean with the building of nuclear capable sea-based platforms. In any case, India has since long had plans for developing a strong and powerful blue water navy.

⁸⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1106030/talking-peace-with-india/>

⁸⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/121303-A-nuclearised-Indian-Ocean>

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

INDIA-PAKISTAN

Iran-India trade transit: cause of concern, Editorial, *Daily Jang*, May 25⁸⁶
India, Iran and Afghanistan signed 12 agreements on Monday. The most significant among them is the trade transit agreement. ***This agreement means India is trying to encircle Pakistan. It wants to create differences between Pakistan and other Muslim nations and finally India wants to create problems for CPEC. Under this agreement, India – a poor country- will provide 50 crore dollars for the upgradation of Chabahar port and will invest in the railway line up to Zahidan, which is close to Pakistan.*** By this India will be able to export its goods through Afghanistan to Chabahar and from there to rest of the world. The Indian media reported that the objective of this trade route is to bypass Pakistan and get access to Afghanistan and European markets. The Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said this agreement is not against any country but for promoting regional peace, but this is reality that since Pakistan and China signed a 46 bn dollar project, India has tried hard to sabotage it. India brought in America also who sees Chinese access to Gwadar and through it to Arabian ocean as threat. It is surprising that even Iran considers Gwadar port threat to Chabahar and Bander Abbas port and so does not like to see Gwadar port functioning.

PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN

Afghan issue: New development, Editorial, *Daily Jang*, May 20.⁸⁷
The representatives of America, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan held fifth quadrilateral meeting in Islamabad for peaceful political solution to Afghan issue. ***The group neither agreed on any specific strategy to bring Taliban on negotiating table nor was any date or venue decided for the next meeting. But all agreed that the only way to Afghan peace is dialogue. It was also agreed that all the countries, striving for peace in Afghanistan, should invest their resources for this purpose.*** [...]It should be mentioned here that Afghan government itself is reluctant to play any constructive role but blames Pakistan for doing nothing. Afghan government expects certain things from Pakistan which it cannot deliver. However, the agreement between Hizb-e-Islami and Afghan government, wherein Hizb-e-Islami will be considered as a political party, is a welcome step.

⁸⁶ http://e.jang.com.pk/05-25-2016/lahore/pic.asp?picname=09_01.gif

⁸⁷ <http://e.jang.com.pk/05-20->

Mansoor was killed 10 months ago: Hamdullah, Daily Nawai Waqt, May 23.⁸⁸
The chairman of Senate Standing Committee and Religious Affairs Centre, Hafiz Hamdullah, has said that Mullah Akhtar Mansoor was killed 10 months ago and now Americans have enacted the drama of his killing by drone attack.

US wants to pit Taliban against Pakistan, Daily Ummat, May 24⁸⁹

The pressure, built on Pakistan, by representatives of four countries to bring Taliban to the negotiating table clears some air over the killing of Mullah Akhtar Mansoor. **Pakistan was blamed to have its hand in glove with Taliban but when Pakistan proved it wrong, Afghan government and US administration started giving an impression that those, not in favor of talks, should not be spared. Talks should continue with those who are willing to talk. According to sources, Pakistan had rejected this strategy and finally it led to the killing of Mullah Mansoor.** In the meetings between Pakistani officials and Taliban, Mullah Mansoor had categorically said that he can't take the decision to join the talks by his own. There are Taliban commanders who have been waging Jihad for last 20 years. They don't want to talk until complete withdrawal of American forces. Had Mullah Mansoor accepted to joint he talks his own commanders would have taken his life. [...] **According to sources the news about the acrimony between Pakistan and Taliban leadership is wrong and baseless. These rumors are spread to give an impression that Pakistan also has hand in the killing of Mullah Mansoor.** [...] The sources have revealed that Taliban's contacts with Iran are not new. The bond became stronger after 9/11, because Iran did not want American dominance in the region and now the presence of Daesh in Afghanistan has brought Iran and Taliban close to each other. Iran is supporting Taliban in their fight against Daesh.

Moulvi Haibatullah is new Taliban chief, Daily Ummat, May 26.⁹⁰

[...] **Sources have revealed to Daily Ummat that Taliban Shura appointed Haibatullah as Ameer only after Siraj-ul-din Haqqani refused to be Ameer because of personal reasons.** Some senior members of Shura suggested that Mullah Yaqoob be given more time to gain experience in field.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Turkey to upgrade F-16 aircrafts, Editorial, Daily nawai Waqt, May 16.⁹¹

Pakistan and Turkey have signed agreement to upgrade F-16 aircrafts. **The Turk regional coordinator for foreign economic forum, Walken board, has told**

⁸⁸ <http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2016-05-23/page-1/detail-5>

⁸⁹ <http://ummat.net/story/2016/05/24/14954/>

⁹⁰ <http://ummat.net/2016/05/26/news.php?p=r-03a.gif>

⁹¹ <http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2016->

media that to upgrade the F-16 aircrafts, 7.5 crore dollar agreement has been signed. Pakistan has been buying F-16 from America since 1980. After that Pakistan made Thunder aircraft with the help of China but the question is why Pakistan is not able to upgrade F-16 aircrafts. Now agreement has been signed with Turkey for the up-gradation of aircrafts.

Aitzaz Ahsan might be on Indian payroll: Sana-ullah, Daily Jang, May 18.⁹²
The Law Minister of Punjab, Rana Sana-ullah Khan has said that Aitzaz Ahsan was always on payroll and now his opposition to CPEC shows he is on payrolls of our neighboring country (India).

⁹² <http://e.jang.com.pk/05-18-2016/lahore/pic.asp?picname=1351.gif>

STATISTICS**BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES***(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)*

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
Awaran ⁹³	18/5/2016	Two extremists killed	2	0
Quetta ⁹⁴	20/5/2016	Cop killed, four injured	1	4
Noshki ⁹⁵	22/5/2016	Two charred bodies found	2	0
Mand ⁹⁶	24/5/2016	Five killed in firing	5	0
Quetta ⁹⁷	24/5/2016	Two policemen killed	2	7
Punjab				
Lahore ⁹⁸	17/5/2016	Two Dolphin personnel injured	0	2
Lahore ⁹⁹	18/5/2016	Four terrorists killed	4	0
Muzaffargarh ¹⁰⁰	20/5/2016	CTD killed six terrorists	6	0
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa				
Peshawar ¹⁰¹	18/5/2016	Policeman killed	1	17
DI Khan ¹⁰²	19/5/2016	JUI-F leader shot dead	1	0
Peshawar ¹⁰³	20/5/2016	Three killed	3	0
Bannu ¹⁰⁴	23/5/2016	FC soldier killed	1	0

⁹³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2016/two-terrorists-killed-in-awaran-clash>

⁹⁴ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/balochistan/20-May-16/cop-killed-four-injured-in-blast>

⁹⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1259976/two-charred-bodies-found-near-pak-afghan-border-in-balochistan>

⁹⁶ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/balochistan/24-May-16/5-killed-in-firing>

⁹⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1109392/blast-hits-police-mobile-quetta-seven-injured/>

⁹⁸ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120579-Lahore-Two-members-of-Dolphin-Force-injured-as-unidentified-assailants-open-fire>

⁹⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/120639-CTD-kills-four-terrorists-in-Lahore>

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/121190-Punjab-CTD-kills-six-terrorists-in-Muzaffargarh>

¹⁰¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2016/twin-blasts-strike-peshawar-s-mathra-area>

¹⁰² <http://dailytimes.com.pk/khyber-pakhtunkhwa/19-May-16/jui-f-leader-shot-dead-in-di-khan>

¹⁰³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/121410-Three-killed-in-Peshawar-car-explosion>

¹⁰⁴ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/khyber-pakhtunkhwa/23-May-16/fc-soldier-killed-in-bannu>

Patang Chowk ¹⁰⁵	26/5/2016	Three FC soldiers killed	3	0
Sindh				
Karachi ¹⁰⁶	27/5/2016	Two gunned down	2	0

¹⁰⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/national/26-May-2016/three-fc-personnel-shot-dead>

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/122972-Two-gunned-down-in-suspected-target-killing-in-Karachi>