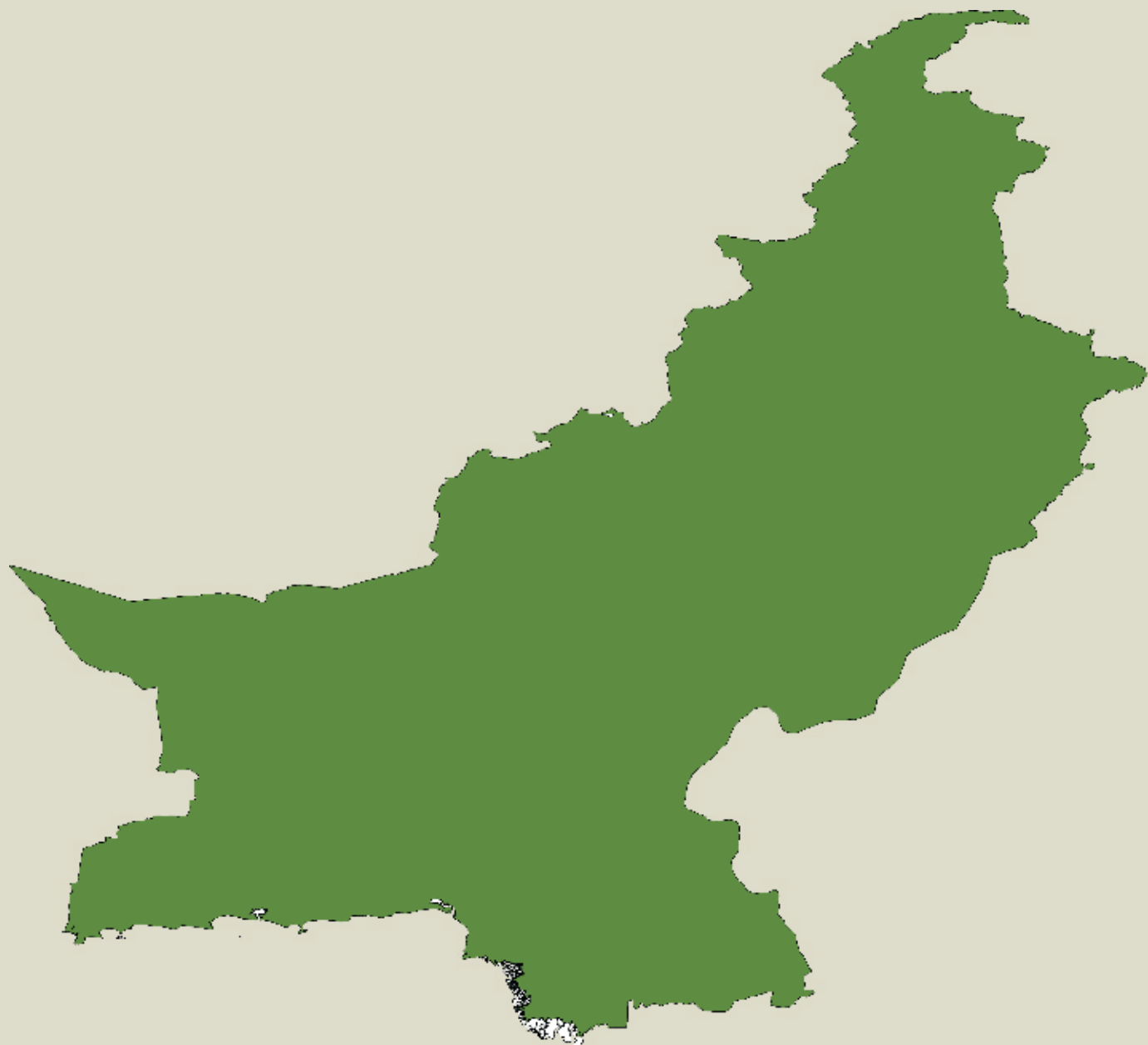


July 2015

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



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

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रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANP: Awami National Party
APC: All Parties Conference
ATC: Anti-Terrorism Court
CIA: Crime Investigation Agency
CPEC: China- Pakistan Economic Corridor
CTD: Counter Terrorism Department
ECP: Election Commission of Pakistan
FBR: Federal Board of Revenue
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
KKH: Karakoram Highway
KP: Khyber Pakhthunkhwa
LHC: Lahore High Court
MQM: Muttahida Qaumi Movement
NAB: National Accountability Bureau
Nacta: National Anti-Terrorism Act
NAP: National Action Plan
NEC: National Economic Council
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PML-Q: Pakistan Muslim League Quaid
PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

NATIONAL POLITICS

Imran warns of bloody revolution, *The Express Tribune*, July 2¹

Terming the 2013 general elections 'the most controversial', Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman **Imran Khan said on Wednesday that when governments can't be changed through the ballot, then the only option left is a 'bloody revolution' or 'martial law'**. [...]He said 22 political parties had put a question mark on the 2013 elections and the arguments of the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) had endorsed PTI's point of view about rigging in the polls. "The ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had printed millions of additional ballot papers with the help of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to alter the election results."

Inclusive development top priority, says Ahsan Iqbal, *Daily Times*, July 3²

[...]Ahsan Iqbal on July 2 said that ensuring united and strong Pakistan through shared prosperity and inclusive development is the top priority of the government. "The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will bring dividends to all the provinces and regions of the country, and would strengthen the federation through equal development," he said. [...] **He pointed out that Gwadar would be connected to Khunjerab through multiple routes as the port would serve different markets and destinations across the region.** He said that the **western alignment of the CPEC is the first and foremost priority of the government, which would be operational by December 2016.** Three different routes include: route 1 from Gwadar-Quetta-Zhob-DI Khan-Islamabad to Khunjerab; route 2 from Gwadar-Sukkur-Indus Highway to Khunjerab; and route 3 from Gwadar-Sukkur-Karachi Peshawar Motorway to Khunjerab.

Dar rejects proposal to privatise Neelum-Jhelum project, *The Dawn*, July 7³

On July 6, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar rejected proposals for privatisation of the Neelum-Jhelum hydropower project **to meet a financing gap caused by an escalation of its cost by 52 per cent.** Informed sources said the cost of the 969MW strategic project **had risen to Rs 418 billion from Rs274bn** approved at the fag-end of the PPP government. A revised PC-1 finalised with fresh cost estimates is awaiting clearance by the Central Development Working Party and the Executive Committee of National Economic Council. [...] **After**

¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/913358/imran-warns-of-bloody-revolution/>

² <http://dailytimes.com.pk/national/03-Jul-2015/inclusive-development-top-priority-of-govt-says-ahsan-iqbal>

³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1192822/dar-rejects-proposal-to-privatise-neelum-jhelum-project>

completion, the project is estimated to produce more than Rs45bn worth of “cheaper and cleaner” energy every year and contribute over Rs5bn annually to the Azad Kashmir government. It will also improve Wapda’s financial position and replace some of the expensive thermal projects being run on imported furnace oil. **The project located near Muzaffarabad in Azad Kashmir envisages diversion of water from the Neelum river through a 42km tunnel underneath the Jhelum river.**

NAB submits 150 mega corruption cases to SC, *The Nation*, July 8⁴

National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on July 7 submitted before the Supreme Court of Pakistan a report of 150 mega corruption cases, involving high-profile figures like Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, his brother and Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif, former premiers, ministers and top bureaucrats.**The document shows that NAB is conducting an inquiry against the Sharifs for building a road at the cost of Rs 126 million in the suburbs of Lahore to facilitate traffic to their sprawling Raiwind estate where the ruling family resides.** [...]The report reveals that former president Asif Ali Zardari **is facing probes for corruption of billions of rupees and for having assets beyond resources.** Former premiers **Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Raja Pervaiz Ashraf** are also facing probes. Former prime minister **Raja Pervaiz Ashraf is being scrutinised for the rental power plants (RPP) case.** The NAB list shows the **incumbent finance minister Ishaq Dar is also being investigated for corruption.** Some other prominent persons under investigation include former ambassador to US **Hussain Haqqani**, former interior minister **Aftab Khan Sherpao** and former Balochistan chief minister **Nawab Aslam Raisani.**

Top leaders’ integrity & NAB’s inaction exposed, *The Nation*, July 8⁵

During the past three decades, a total of eleven elected prime ministers ruled the country.....While Junejo and Benazir are no more in this world, and Shaukat Aziz left the country shortly after completing his term, all other prime ministers, except Balochistan’s Jamali, are facing NAB cases. [...]To set the record right, Mr Junejo was an honest leader.....and the name of Benazir Bhutto has not been mentioned in the list of mega corruption cases because she died while Swiss money cases were still pending. Now, it is Mr Asif Ali Zardari who is a party in those cases. ...But what is...regrettable is the failure of the NAB to take the pending cases to their logical conclusion. **Had the apex court not really forced it, the NAB would not have presented the list. The performance of the NAB is simply disappointing. Corruption is widespread in**

⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/08-Jul-2015/nab-submits-150-mega-corruption-cases-to-sc>

⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/national/08-Jul-2015/top-leaders-integrity-nab-s-inaction-exposed>

society but the NAB doesn't seem very active to deal with the corrupt. It is perhaps for this reason that the NAB is taken to mean "No Action Bureau".

Afghan peace talks justify my stand: Imran, *The Dawn*, July 9⁶

Afghan peace talks have provided PTI chief Imran Khan a chance to **defend his stance on talks with Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)**. [...] Going to his twitter handle the PTI chairman shared his thoughts with his over 2.6 million followers, saying, **"Ironic how I was attacked for suggesting peace talks & now Pak is hosting, with US approval, talks between Afghan govt & Taliban in Pak."**

NAB submits list of mega corruption cases before SC, *The Dawn*, July 13⁷

On July 13, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) submitted a modified report on 150 mega corruption cases before the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC). Earlier on July 7, NAB officials had submitted a list before the SC as per the court's directives. [...] However, the court had expressed dissatisfaction over the report and had asked NAB to include two additional columns in the report for further details. **Interestingly, the NAB record lacks the details of cases against some top figures, including Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Shahbaz Sharif, former president Asif Ali Zardari and former Pakistani envoy to the US Hussain Haqqani.**

Govt fails to activate PPO courts, *The Nation*, July 15⁸

An official of the Ministry of Law told *The Nation* on July 14, that the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance (PPO) which has been promulgated to defeat the menace of terrorism and establish protection and peace in the country is not working. **The seriousness of the government authorities can easily be assessed from the working of a PPO court in Lahore which has not heard even a single case since its establishment.**

JuD raps govt for 'annoying' Kashmiri leaders, *The Dawn*, July 16⁹

The Jamaat-ud-Dawa has criticised Islamabad for what it called annoying Kashmiri leadership to appease New Delhi. **Abdur Rehman Makki told an iftar dinner here on Wednesday that the government was losing trust of the Kashmiri leadership and damaging the freedom movement by taking one-sided steps for building friendship with India and resorting to back-channel**

⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1193351/afghan-peace-talks-justify-my-stand-imran>

⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1194194/nab-submits-revised-list-of-mega-corruption-cases-before-sc>

⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/15-Jul-2015/govt-fails-to-activate-ppo-courts-an-official-divulges-no-funds-or-infrastructure-provided-for>

⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1194797/jud-raps-govt-for-annoying-kashmiri-leaders>

diplomacy. He demanded the government should review its policies and not “damage” the Kashmiri freedom movement, which was at its peak at present.

Thousands arrested in Zarb-e-Azb: Fatemi, *The News*, July 24¹⁰

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs, Tariq Fatemi has said that thousands of terrorists had been arrested in operation Zarb-e-Azb and they will be brought to justice soon. In his address at Heritage Foundation, USA, Fatemi said, “**Over 190,000 Pakistan military personnel are taking part in Zarb-e-Azb, launched 13 months ago.**” Pakistan has cleared Shawal area near Pak-Afghan border, he maintained. Fatemi **lauded the efforts of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, saying that he was playing effective role to restore peace.**

PM forms panel to review criminal laws, *The Express Tribune*, July 31¹¹

In an attempt to improve the justice system, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif **constituted a committee of nine jurists to review the criminal laws of the country.** The ministry of law, justice and human rights divisions, in a statement, revealed that the committee has been asked to present its recommendations within six months. [...]According to the notification, Attorney General for Pakistan Salman Aslam Butt will be heading the committee while the other members include PBC Vice Chairman Azam Nazeer Tarar, Supreme Court Bar Association president Fazl-e-Haq Abbasi, former SCBA president Kamran Murtaza, former SCBA president Asma Jahangir, Rasheed A Rizvi advocate, Muhammad Akram Quraishi, Khawaja Haris Ahmad and Abdul Lateef Afridi. PBC’s secretary will act as secretary of the committee.

ECP orders parties to submit asset details, *The Express Tribune*, July 27¹²

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has **requested all political parties to submit details of their assets latest by August 29, 2015.** Under the Article of the Political Parties Order 2002, all the political parties in the country are required to submit a consolidated statement of accounts of the party duly audited by a Chartered Accountant within 60 days of close of the financial year. Along with a financial statement, parties are also required to submit a certificate signed by the party leader stating that the party did not receive any funding from sources, which is prohibited under the Political Parties Order, 2002. **Any party failing to submit its statement of accounts under Article 13**

¹⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-192011-Thousands-of-terrorists-arrested-in-operation-Zarb-e-Azb-Fatemi>

¹¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/929664/strengthening-justice-system-premier-forms-panel-to-review-criminal-laws/>

¹² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/927262/ecp-orders-political-parties-to-submit-asset-details/>

