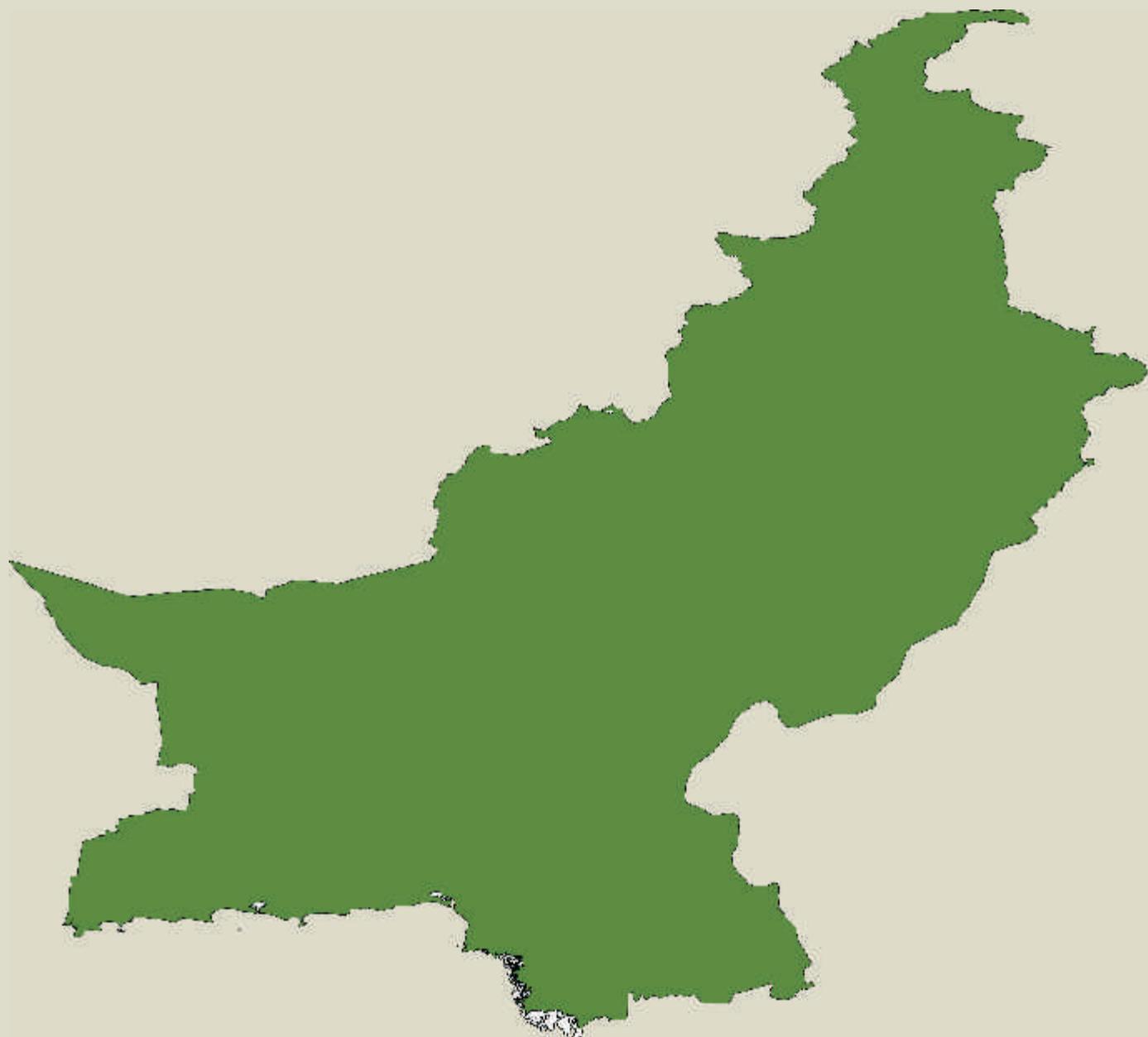


February 2016

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



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

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES
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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, FEBRUARY 2016

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB: Asian Development 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
FIA: Federal Investigating Agency
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
NCA: National Command Authority
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PPP: Pakistan People's Party
PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
QWP: Qaumi Watan Party
TTP: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

EDITORS' NOTE

The current (February) issue of *Pakistan News Digest* (PND) covers important socio-political, security and economic developments in Pakistan during the previous month. The evolving internal as well as regional security landscape in Pakistan has been a cause of concern for the region in particular and the international community as a whole.

The presence of Islamic State's (IS) in Pakistan is not new. However, for the first time, it was discussed with some sense of urgency in Pakistan's Senate during this month. In the second week of February, Director General of Intelligence Bureau informed a Senate Standing Committee on Interior that several militant organisations including Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), and Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have developed a soft corner for the IS and some of them have even started coordinating with it.

In an interesting move, Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in Punjab lodged an FIR in the Gujranwala police station against the four alleged Pathankot attackers and their accomplices based on information received from India. The vernacular media in the country denounced such step taken by termed the lodging of the FIR as a clear demonstration of weakness of the Pakistani state for having succumbed to Indian pressure. However, the FIR, for all its worth, gave a clean chit to Maulana Masood Azhar, the Jaish-e-Mohammad Chief, who was named by India as the mastermind of the attack. Maulana Abdul Aziz, of Lal Masjid fame, who has been under severe criticism from the civil society for backing radical anti-military and ant-state elements like TTP, came out with a public 'pardon' of former military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf and others for the Lal Masjid Operation. Nevertheless, the Lal Masjid Shuhda Foundation not only disassociated itself from the Maulana's decision but also termed the pardoning against the spirit of Sharia. He seems to have mellowed down under pressure from the military and civil society. The federal government, especially the Interior ministry has been under tremendous pressure to act against the venom spitting Maulana. However, as of now, the government has not taken any stern action against him.

The apex court of Pakistan nullified the Special Court's decision in treason trial against General Pervez Musharraf. The special court had also ordered inclusion of retired Chief Justice Abdul Hameed Dogar, former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Ex-federal minister Zahid Hamid in the trial for treason.

There is hardly any doubt that Pakistan gives utmost importance to its friendship with China and takes all the steps to allay all the concerns expressed by its all-weather friend. Reports from media this month reconfirmed that

Pakistan Army was taking special measures to protect Chinese investments in the country. It has reportedly turned Gwadar into a virtual fortress.

Pakistan joined a 20-nation military maneuver for a military exercise "Thunder of the North" in Saudi Arabia. The military exercise, involving ground, air and naval forces, is going to be the most important military maneuver ever staged in the region. The prime minister and the army chief were supposed to attend the closing ceremony.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

NATIONAL POLITICS

Govt to speed up implementation of NAP, *The Dawn*, February 2¹

The government is facing internal pressure for taking a series of aggressive steps for ratcheting up the pace of implementation of National Action Plan (NAP) on countering-terrorism and extremism. [...] At a meeting held at the Prime Minister House for reviewing the progress of National Action Plan, PM **Nawaz Sharif emphasised that “successful implementation of NAP is an imperative for everyone”. He said: “Terrorism will be eliminated from every nook and corner of the country.”** [...] A general perception in the military is that half a dozen elements of NAP which had been entrusted to the army and Operation Zarb-i-Azb were progressing well, whereas areas assigned to civilians were lagging behind, particularly madressah reforms, terror financing, banned organisations and hate speech/extremist propaganda.

Peaceful protests if demands not met: Imran Khan, *The News*, February 8²

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Sunday (February 7) put forth five demands to the government and threatened to launch ‘peaceful protests’ if these demands were not fulfilled. Addressing a public meeting here, Imran Khan demanded that management of PIA and Steel Mills must be reformed; petrol and kersone oil prices be reduced further by at least Rs5 and diesel by Rs20; tax payers money which he claimed was plundered stashed away overseas be brought back to Pakistan; three new taxes on electricity be withdrawn and its prices be reduced by Rs3 per unit; and salaries of poor workers of Steel Mills be released immediately. The PTI chief warned that in case these demands were not his party would be left with no other option but to take to the streets and stage peaceful protests.

Maulana Aziz ‘pardons’ Gen Musharraf, *The Dawn*, February 8³

Maulana Abdul Aziz, who has been under increasing pressure in recent weeks, announced on Sunday (February 7) that he had forgiven former military ruler Gen Pervez Musharraf and the other characters involved in the Lal Masjid operation. He was accompanied by family members, including his wife Umme Hassan and Haroon Ghazi, the son of his late brother – Abdul Rasheed Ghazi – who was killed in the 2007 military operation against the mosque, at Sunday’s (February 7) press conference. He said that he and his family forgave Gen

¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1236958/govt-under-pressure-to-speed-up-implementation-of-naps-civilian-part>

² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/96663-Peaceful-protests-if-demands-not-met-Imran-Khan>

³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238106/cornered-maulana-aziz-pardons-gen-musharraf>

Musharraf and others “for the sake of peace in the country”, adding that he had wanted to forgive the military ruler far earlier, but it took him time to convince all of his family members. But, as he pointed out, this did not mean that Gen Musharraf was cleared of all wrongdoing in the Lal Masjid operation case, which is currently pending before the Supreme Court. “I cannot forgive the blood of others who were killed during the operation, because they don’t belong to my family; only their relatives can forgive,” he said, adding that Umme Hassan wanted to wait until the cases against us had been decided to dispel the impression that they had reconciled.

Aziz’s ‘pardon’ to Musharraf termed against Sharia, *The Dawn*, February 9⁴
Lal Masjid Shuhada Foundation has termed Maulana Abdul Aziz’s decision to withdraw the murder case against former president Pervez Musharraf against the spirit of Sharia. The foundation held a meeting in Lal Masjid on Monday (February 9) and declared that Maulana Aziz had imposed a ‘clergy dictatorship’ on his family to hide the tyranny of a military dictator. [...]“This decision is against Sharia and we would like Maulana Abdul Aziz to take it back,” Mr Asad said, adding: “Maulana Aziz is talking about the implementation of Sharia in the country but his own acts are contrary to the principles of Sharia.”

Draft Hindu marriage law crosses first hurdle, *The Dawn*, February 9⁵
After decades of filibustering, a National Assembly committee on Monday (February 9) approved a draft law on Hindu marriages, paving the way for registering marriages in the minuscule religious minority of Pakistan. [...]Committee chairman Chaudhry Mahmood Bashir Virk regretted the long-drawn tactical delay in framing family law for the Hindu community. ***“It was unbecoming of us Muslims in general and the political leaders in particular. We were required to facilitate the legislation, not obstruct it,” he said while talking to Dawn. “If we 99pc of the population are afraid of 1pc, we need to look deep inside what we claim to be and what we are,” he added.***

IDPs to be compensated for damaged houses, *The Dawn*, February 9⁶
The government has completed the survey of damage caused to the houses of internally displaced persons (IDPs) of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) because of fighting there. The affected people will be compensated according to the extent of damage. According to the government decision, those IDPs whose houses have been destroyed will be provided Rs 400,000 and

⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238313/maulana-azizs-pardon-to-musharraf-termed-against-sharia?preview>

⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238375/draft-hindu-marriage-law-crosses-first-hurdle>

⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238324/idps-to-be-compensated-for-damaged-houses>

the owners of damaged houses will get Rs 110,000. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Senate functional committee on less developed areas on Monday (February 8). The committee was informed that an amount of Rs19.9 billion had already been paid to affected people and about 80 per cent IDPs had returned to their homes.

Aziz provided security by PPP govt: Nisar, *The Dawn*, February 17⁷

Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan on Tuesday (February 16), in an implicit response to Pakistan People's Party (PPP) lawmakers' criticism of his 'inaction' against Lal Masjid cleric Abdul Aziz, alleged it was the previous PPP-led government which had 'provided Aziz security guards.' ***In a press conference in Islamabad, the interior minister said no one was above the law "but the government cannot arrest someone just to appease a section of society."*** "I never said that there is no FIR registered against Abdul Aziz, he had at least 31 cases registered against him," said the minister, adding that "out of these, 12 were of a serious nature."

NAB 'falls in line' after PM's criticism, *The Dawn*, February 18⁸

[...] On Wednesday (February 17), NAB spokesperson Nawazish Ali Asim issued an official statement that vowed to improve the accountability process in line with the PM's criticism and directives. The statement claimed that the government was not interfering with NAB's work and that the bureau would act upon the PM's advice. ***"The non-interference policy of the government has helped NAB become an independent organisation and it respects the opinion of Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif," the spokesperson said.*** [...] The PM had lashed out at NAB on Tuesday (February 16) and threatened to clip its powers over what he termed "harassment of government officers".

Nawaz Sharif received money from Laden, *The Pashtun Times*, February 29⁹

A new book authored by the wife a former operative of Pakistan's spy agency has once again made the claim that Nawaz Sharif received money from al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden. The book, Khalid Khawaja: Shaheed-i-Aman, is authored by Shamama Khalid, the wife of former ISI operative Khalid Khawaja. ***"Chief of PML-N Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif received funding from Osama Bin Laden, founder of Al-Qaeda, to contest elections against Benazir Bhutto's led Pakistan People's Party (PPP) after the end of Zia regime," the book states, as per the report Pakistan's Dawn news agency.*** The

⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1239930/lal-masjids-abdul-aziz-provided-security-by-ppp-govt-says-nisar>

⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240296>

⁹ <http://thepashtuntimes.com/wife-of-former-isi-operative-claims-nawaz-sharif-received-money-from-osama-bin-laden/>

book claims that Mr Sharif's pledge of introducing an Islamic system attracted Khawaja as well as Bin Laden. But even though the Al Qaeda head honcho funded Nawaz Sharif heavily, the latter backtracked from all his promises after coming into power.

190 seminaries being run on foreign funding: Nisar, *The Nation*, February 25¹⁰
Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan on Wednesday (February 24) said that 190 madrassas in the country are being run on foreign funding. ***In a written reply to the National Assembly, the minister said that 147 foreign funded seminaries are operating in Punjab, 30 in Balochistan, 7 in KP while 06 in Sindh province.*** Answering a question about total number of seminaries in the country, he said that total of 717 madrassas existed in the whole country while number of registered Madrassas in the country is 699. He said that total of 72 unregistered seminaries were closed down in Sindh, 2 in Punjab, 167 in Sindh and 13 in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The National Assembly was informed that 2,471 cases had been registered for possessing hate speech material while 9,945 cases had been registered for misuse of loudspeaker under the National action Plan.

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

Charsadda varsity rejects advice for VC's removal, *The Dawn*, February 2¹¹
The Bacha Khan University Charsadda's administration on Monday (February 1) 'condemned' the government's fact-finding committee on the Jan 20 terrorist attack in the varsity for holding it responsible for security lapses on campus. It also rejected as regrettable the committee's advice for the removal of the university's vice-chancellor over the attack, which claimed 21 lives.

SHC asks Sindh govt about NAP, *The Express Tribune*, February 4¹²
The Sindh High Court (SHC) has asked the provincial government to give details on where the additional special courts, proposed under the National Action Plan (NAP), will be set up before it nominates judges to head them. ***The provincial apex committee had proposed 10 new anti-terrorism courts (ATCs) to be established in Karachi to 'swiftly' deal with the trials of terrorists.*** [...]The number of the ATCs in the city was increased from five to 10 on the directives of the Supreme Court to effectively curb terrorism, target killings, extortion, kidnappings and other heinous crimes.

¹⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Feb-2016/190-seminaries-being-run-on-foreign-funding-nisar>

¹¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1236946/charsadda-varsity-rejects-advice-for-vcs-removal>

¹² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1039778/implementing-nap-where-will-you-set-up-additional-atcs-shc-asks-sindh-govt/>

KP accountability chief resigns in protest, *The Dawn*, February 11¹³
Retired Lt Gen Mohammad Hamid Khan, the director general of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ehtesab Commission, resigned on Wednesday (February 10) in protest against promulgation of an ordinance by the provincial government that drastically amended the Ehtesab Act of 2015. The ordinance, promulgated on Tuesday (February 9), makes approval of the five-member commission mandatory for arresting a suspect and reduces the maximum period of physical custody of a suspect from 45 to 15 days. The ordinance provides that no legislator will be arrested by the commission without prior intimation to the Senate's chairman or the speaker of the national or provincial assembly, as the case may be. Similarly the chief secretary will have to be informed before the arrest of a civil servant.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

K-P's curriculum: Khan's real fight, *The Express Tribune*, February 4¹⁴
Imran Khan and company are getting ready to stage street protests again. The electoral fraud saga refuses to fade from Khan's narrative. "I will continue fighting the forces of status quo," he insists. While he draws derision from his detractors due to his fixation on what many consider is his 'quest for power', he faces a minefield of issues in the province his party is ruling. One of the battles he faces, and which all parties need to fight on a war-footing, is on the education front. This becomes even more pressing if a recent private review of some of the textbooks being taught in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's (K-P) schools is any indicator. [...]The second and more critical front that Khan needs to take into account is that of the kind of material being taught in K-P's textbooks. [...]Consider what the last chapter in the class five Islamiyat textbook has to say. It lauds conquerors Muhammad bin Qasim and Mahmood Ghaznavi for their "occupation" of the subcontinent, and accuses Hindus of "plotting to subjugate and enslave Muslims of the subcontinent upon gaining independence from the British". But "Muslims considered enslavement to Hindus worse than to the British" (pp58-60).

The Balochistan Narrative, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 4¹⁵
There is no way around this fact; Balochistan, despite being the largest, remains the least developed, least secure, and sadly least news-worthy of Pakistan's provinces. Yet for the most part, this alarming fact rarely becomes part of the parliament's conversations. A veritable media gag enforced by attacks on journalists, and continued presence of militancy and the armed forces has kept the province in the dark. It is commendable whenever initiative is taken to right

¹³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238765/kp-accountability-chief-resigns-in-protest>

¹⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1039715/k-ps-curriculum-khans-real-fight/>

¹⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/04-Feb-2016/the-balochistan-narrative>

this wrong, and the National Seminar on Prospects of Peace and Prosperity in Balochistan must be given plaudits. And while a change in narrative is no substitute for concrete policymaking, it definitely is a start. [...] **The Chief of Army Staff began on a positive tone, admitting – which is a first for the armed forces – that “politics of violence” have hurt Balochistan, and the use of force brings nothing but destruction.** [...] For the foreseeable future the security state in Balochistan is here to stay because the narrative of unnamed and uncounted ‘foreign foes’ is still in force. There was no indication in Raheel Sharif’s address that the restrictions around the province are going to be relaxed and the media is going to be allowed access. Without this, alleged progress cannot be independently monitored and allegations of human rights violations cannot be investigated. Physical development alone cannot lead to progress, a culture of accountability and open discourse needs to be cultivated too.

Above the law, Zahid Hussain, *The Dawn*, February 10¹⁶

[...] The case of Maulana Aziz is yet another example of the selective use of the National Action Plan that has long lost its way. With no less than the federal interior minister often defending him one cannot blame the security agencies for their inaction. [...] It is not just about Maulana Abdul Aziz and his Lal Masjid brigade, but the way the National Action Plan is apparently being set aside to protect certain extremist elements. Most banned organisations have continued to operate under new banners, in Punjab particularly.

What NAP missed, Rauf K. Khattak, *The Dawn*, February 17¹⁷

[...] There is one grievous omission from the measures which NAP outlined. It is social and economic justice and equality between classes and regions. Why is it that there are so many men who blindly follow the merchants of death, to do the dirty work for them in exchange for money? The answer is simple: they have no stake in this life and in this country. [...] Make an economic and regional profile of all those that we have arrested, hanged, killed and are fighting against and only one dark picture will emerge — a pathetic, miserable figure. He talks about great ‘jihad’, Islam in danger and says that anyone who does not take up arms in order to establish ‘God’s law’ in this country and drive away all ‘infidels’ from Muslim lands, is a kafir. [...] NAP is indulging in administrative and military whip-cracking. This is fine but we have been using these methods for the last decade. Our wound is large and cannot be covered by band-aids. Where is the statesmanship?

¹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238496/above-the-law>

¹⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240010/what-nap-missed>

FOREIGN POLICY

Pakistan to blame: Imran Khan, *The Express Tribune*, February 4¹⁸

In an exclusive interview given to Voice of America (VOA), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan has emphasised the need for both Pakistan and Afghanistan to remove tensions in bilateral ties and build mutual trust to assist the reconciliation process. ***“I am very sad that the relationship is not good and I am also sad to say that Pakistan is to blame.*** We did not have consistent policies dealing with Afghanistan and then the interference in the past in affairs of Afghans has caused a lot of bad blood,” he said. However, Khan was optimistic that things would get better between the neighbours. [...] Urging Afghanistan’s Taliban to negotiate a peaceful resolution to its conflict with the Kabul government, Khan said, “They (the Taliban) must come to the table and they must resolve this dispute through talks and negotiations. War is never a solution. In fact, war leads to unintended consequences just like in Iraq and Syria.”

Talks to help end terrorism: Afghan envoy, *The Dawn*, February 11¹⁹

The newly-appointed Afghan Consul General, Dr Abdullah Waheed Poyan, has said that Pakistan and Afghanistan need to put in concerted efforts for restoration of sustainable peace in the region. He told a press conference at the Afghan consulate on Wednesday (February 10) that the ongoing quadrilateral talks would help end terrorism in both the countries and would pave the way for lasting peace in the region. [...] “Afghanistan wants equal relations with all countries,” he said, adding being immediate neighbour his country had social, cultural, political and religious relations with Pakistan. He said that both the countries needed to strengthen bilateral relations in all fields, especially trade and commerce.

India's defence build-up, *The Express Tribune*, February 25²⁰

Pakistan on Thursday (February 25) said that the defence buildup pursued by India will disturb stability in the region, Radio Pakistan reported. At a weekly news briefing in Islamabad, Foreign Office spokesperson Nafees Zakaria while raising concern over the exceptional treatment being meted out to New Delhi by the Nuclear Supplier Group said, “Pakistan seeks peace in the region and is therefore against any arms race.” Zakaria categorically rejected any obstacles in the way of Pakistan-India foreign secretary level talks.

¹⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1038256/pakistan-to-blame-for-bad-blood-with-afghanistan-imran-khan/>

¹⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238736/talks-to-help-end-terrorism-in-region-says-afghan-envoy>

²⁰ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1054296/indias-defence-build-up-will-disturb-stability-in-region-fo/>

EDITORIALS AND OPINION

Talking 'talks', Editorial, *The News*, February 8²¹

Another meeting to push forward the Afghan reconciliation process has ended with yet another call to the Afghan Taliban to join the talks. It is clear that all actors participating in the talks are now tired of the cycle of violence that has impacted life in Afghanistan for the last decade and a half. However, the third meeting of the Quadrilateral Coordination Group, which includes Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the United States, seems to be making little progress in terms of involving the most important actor: the Afghan Taliban. After the meeting on Saturday (February 6), the group announced that it was hopeful that some Afghan Taliban groups would be able to join the next round of talks on February 23. [...] **While it is clear that the Afghan conflict needs a political settlement, the four-party talks seem to be going nowhere in particular. Back-channel efforts seem to be at a standstill for now.** This work needs to be revived before the next meeting of the group. Otherwise, the QCG will end up as yet more talk of 'talks'.

Decentralised chaos, Syed Talat Husain, *The News*, February 8²²

[...]The Taliban movement, despite its projection to the contrary, is not a unified entity. Internal rivalries have destroyed harmony. [...]The advent of the Islamic State has created another centre of power within Afghanistan's combat zones, splitting up resources and breaking down old loyalties. [...]For Islamabad, Afghanistan's expanding disorder raises red flags – which won't be lowered by being a central figure in the talks. Even the talks create tough problems for Islamabad. **The international expectation is that the Taliban are just a phone call away from their handlers. They will do so if the ISI says so. This is not the case. The Taliban, now factionalised and spread deep into Afghanistan's badlands of war and local conflict, aren't sitting by the phone waiting for their next orders from Aabpara.** They are busy adjusting to new realities that they know matter more to them than what Islamabad's interests are. **Unfortunately, Pakistan's Afghanistan managers continue to pretend that they have 'cards' in their hands, which in reality is little more than bombastic bluff designed to generate impact and to 'stay relevant' to the dialogue process.** This egregious deception is now hanging around our neck like a heavy stone that we can neither lift nor take off. What can we do then? **We can start by admitting that we cannot 'deliver' the Taliban.**

²¹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/96739-Talking-talks>

²² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/96740-Decentralised-chaos>

A road map for Afghanistan, Editorial, *The Dawn*, February 9²³

[...]Now it appears that talking and fighting will take place simultaneously, giving the Afghan government and the QCG some additional leverage at the negotiating table — or at least not losing further ground to the Taliban at the outset. Also sensible is the reported phased approach to a peace process. [...]For a year now, it has been clear that the Pakistani state is committed to helping create an intra-Afghan peace process and has wanted to work with the Afghan government to address mutual security concerns. The Afghan side should respond with equanimity when obstacles in the peace process appear, as they will inevitably.

Diplomatic Agenda 2016, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 9²⁴

With its third year in power nearly coming to an end, the PML-N government's foreign policy looks to remain unchanged in the coming year. An internal document circulated by the foreign secretary reveals that improved bilateral relations with the neighbour are to dominate the agenda in 2016. However, given the cyclical nature of the relationship between the two countries, the Foreign Office will have to be more effective than it has been so far. Indeed, it will have to steer clear of giving in to the temptation of accusing India of misdeeds - as Sartaj Aziz did in 2015 - whenever the eastern neighbour does the same. ***The cancellation of the NSA level talks following Pathankot is yet another example of how easy it is for talks to get derailed.*** [...]The current impasse however, is by no means insurmountable. But given that Pakistan's findings from the SIT constituted to investigate Masood Azhar's connection to Pathankot have come out negative, India is not likely to agree to holding dialogue just yet. The Foreign Office needs to be prepared for the worst, and must start making contingency plans.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

Nine-Zero in-charge presented in court, *The Express Tribune*, February 4²⁵

Rangers have arrested the security in-charge of MQM headquarters Nine Zero. The paramilitary force said that Minhaj Qazi has confessed to have killed KESC managing director Shahid Hamid and numerous other people. "The Rangers have arrested a notorious militant wing's most wanted criminal – Minhaj Qazi alias Asad," said a Rangers statement issued on Wednesday (February 3). "He (Qazi), during initial interrogations has also revealed several target killings including a murder of managing director of KESC Shahid Hamid."

²³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238267/a-road-map-for-afghanistan>

²⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/09-Feb-2016/diplomatic-agenda-2016>

²⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1039986/nailed-rangers-present-nine-zero-security-in-charge-in-court/>

Terrorist Abu Abdullah hanged, *The News*, February 4²⁶

Key facilitator of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, terrorist Bilal Ahmed alias Abu Abdullah was executed in Kohat Central Jail early on Thursday (February 4) morning. Bilal s/o Faiz Ahmed was arrested two years back from his native village Suraj in Sialkot. Bilal aka Abu Abdullah was sentenced to death by military court Kohat after he was found guilty. Security sources said he was key facilitator of TTP and involved in terrorist activities against Pak Army across the country.

COAS for coordinated global response against terror, *The Nation*, February 5²⁷

Army Chief General Raheel Sharif yesterday said that terrorism was a global phenomenon and required a coordinated global response. Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) made these remarks during his visit to National Counter-Terrorism Training Centre (NCTC), Pabbi, KPK and witnessed Pak – Sri Lanka – Maldives Trilateral Exercise 'Eagle Dash-I'. Two weeks-long exercise was focused on counter-terrorism operations and sharing of field combat experience of three armed forces. **Owing to successes in Operation Zarb-e-Azb, a large number of friendly countries have requested Pakistan Army to organise training for their troops in Pakistan's state-of-the-art Counter-Terrorism Training Centre.** Pakistan Army has already conducted joint exercises with Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, China and Jordan to enhance its combat efficiency. Pakistani troops have also imparted counter-terrorism training to police and other law enforcement agencies of all four provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir.

Chinese Investment: Army leaves little to chance, *The Dawn*, February 9²⁸

A heavy police presence, guarded convoys, new checkpoints and troop reinforcements have turned parts of the southern port city of Gwadar into a fortress, as Pakistan's military seeks to protect billions of dollars of Chinese investment. Securing the planned \$46 billion economic corridor of roads, railways and pipelines from northwest China to the country's Arabian Sea coast is a huge challenge in a country where militants and separatist gunmen are a constant menace. **The army and interior ministry have sent hundreds of extra soldiers and police to Gwadar, the southern hub of the so-called China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and more are on their way.**

²⁶ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/96013-Terrorist-Abu-Abdullah-hanged-in-Kohat-Jail>

²⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/05-Feb-2016/coas-for-coordinated-global-response-against-terrorism>

²⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238167/to-protect-chinese-investment-pakistan-army-leaves-little-to-chance>

Zarb-i-Azb has eradicated terror: PAF chief, *The Dawn*, February 10²⁹

The operation Zarb-i-Azb has eradicated the menace of terrorism to a large extent. However, keeping in mind the porous border with Afghanistan, the border control mechanism needs to be improved. This was stated by the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman, at a seminar organised by the Royal Aeronautical Society, Pakistan Division, on Tuesday (February 9).

97 al Qaeda, LeJ militants arrested, *The Express Tribune*, February 12³⁰

Around 97 al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militants, including three commanders, were arrested in Karachi and a planned attack to break US journalist Daniel Pearl's killer out of jail was foiled, Director General Inter-Service Public Relations Lt-Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa said on Friday (February 12). The men are accused of involvement in major attacks on two air bases, the Karachi airport, several regional intelligence headquarters and on police installations between 2009 and 2015, DG ISPR said. ***The LeJ's Naeem Bokhari and Sabir Khan, as well as Farooq Bhatti, deputy chief of al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), were captured by forces in recent raids, military spokesperson Lieutenant General Asim Bajwa said.***

Pakistan joins 20-nation military manoeuvre, *Daily Times*, February 15³¹

Armed forces from around 20 countries gathered in northern Saudi Arabia Sunday (February 14) for 'the most important' military manoeuvre ever staged in the region, the official news agency SPA reported. The ***'Thunder of the North' exercise involving ground, air, and naval forces sends a 'clear message' that Riyadh and its allies 'stand united in confronting all challenges and preserving peace and stability in the region', SPA said.*** Saudi Arabia is currently leading a military campaign against Iran-backed rebels in its southern neighbour Yemen. Last December, it also formed a new 35-member coalition to fight 'terrorism' in Muslim countries.

COAS held discussion with Qatari leadership, *The Nation*, February 23³²

Army chief General Raheel Sharif yesterday met the Qatari leadership in Doha to discuss facilitation in the Afghan reconciliation process, ISPR said. Army Chief General Raheel Sharif who is on an official visit to Qatar separately called on Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani and Qatar Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa al-Thani in Doha on Monday

²⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238589>

³⁰ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1045422/more-work-left-to-be-done-to-clear-karachi-of-militants-says-dg-ispr/>

³¹ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/national/15-Feb-2016/pakistan-joins-20-nation-military-manoevre-in-saudi-arabia>

³² <http://nation.com.pk/national/23-Feb-2016/coas-discusses-afghan-peace-with-qatari-leadership>

(February 22). Matters related to regional security and enhanced bilateral defence cooperation came under discussion during the meetings. **Facilitation of reconciliation process in Afghanistan through Qatar office was discussed in detail.**

Zardari terms Raheel's decision 'premature', *The Dawn*, February 24³³

Former president and co-chairman of PPP Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday (February 23) stunned his admirers and critics alike when he termed the decision of Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif of not taking an extension in service 'premature'. The Tuesday's (February 23) statement of Mr Zardari is contrary to his earlier response to Gen Sharif's announcement of his retirement plan a month ago in which he hailed his decision. [...] **"Our party considers Gen Raheel's decision premature which can turn people's hopes into disappointment."** Mr Zardari's statement sparked debates on private TV channels. Critics called it a volte-face to his January's statement in which he hailed Gen Sharif's decision. Mr Zardari's offices in Islamabad and Karachi said the statement was not issued by them.

Musharraf alone was responsible for emergency, *The Dawn*, February 24³⁴

The federal government still believes that former President Pervez Musharraf is solely responsible for clamping the Nov 3, 2007, emergency which led to confining of a number of superior court judges in their houses and sacking of another over 100 judges. The stand was reiterated by Attorney General Salman Aslam Butt before a three-judge Supreme Court bench, headed by Justice Asif Saeed Khosa, hearing an appeal of former Chief Justice Abdul Hameed Dogar. Justice Dogar had challenged the Dec 12, 2015, order of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) which upheld the Nov 27, 2015, order of the three-man special court hearing a treason case against former President Pervez Musharraf which had ordered the investigation team concerned to re-investigate the treason case by 'interrogating' Musharraf, former prime minister Shaukat Aziz, former minister Zahid Hamid and former chief justice of Pakistan Abdul Hameed Dogar as well as people who could be presumed to be associated with the commission of the alleged crime.

Zarb-e-Azb final phase set in motion, *The Nation*, February 25³⁵

Army Chief General Raheel Sharif yesterday gave the go-ahead for the final phase of Zarb-e-Azb military operation in the Shawal Valley of North Waziristan. He gave his nod during a briefing in Shawal on Wednesday (February 24) and directed that the remaining terrorists should be eliminated

³³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1241595>

³⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1241593>

³⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Feb-2016/zarb-e-azb-final-phase-set-in-motion>

from their hideouts in ravines and jungles. General Raheel said the operation should isolate the terrorists and sever their links indiscriminately with abettors and facilitators anywhere across the country. The forces have been reinforced in the operation area, he said, adding that the local support for terrorists in Shawal Valley has diminished as people want to get rid of them.

Rangers nab three RAW-trained terrorist, *Daily Times*, February 25³⁶

The Rangers arrested three men of target killers trained by the Indian intelligence agency Research and Analyst Wing (RAW) in a raid in Usmanabad, Garden, the security force said. According to the local newspaper report, a Rangers spokesperson said that Fahim alias Mirchee, Nasir alias Khaji and Riaz alias Lakar were rounded up after a brief encounter and their weapons were seized.

SC nullifies special court's decision in treason case, *The News*, February 27³⁷

The Supreme Court on Friday (February 26) annulled the decision of the special court conducting a treason trial against former military ruler Pervez Musharraf, which had ordered inclusion of former chief justice Abdul Hameed Dogar, former prime minister Shaukat Aziz and ex-federal minister Zahid Hamid in the treason case. A three-member bench of the apex court, headed by Justice Asif Saeed Khan Khosa and comprising Justice Tariq Masood and Justice Tariq Pervez, announced the verdict reserved on the petition filed by Justice Dogar challenging the Islamabad High Court (IHC) refusal to hear his plea against the earlier verdict of the special court in the treason case.

Gen Raheel vows to annihilate terrorists, *The Express Tribune*, February 29³⁸

Army chief General Raheel Sharif has pledged a relentless war until terrorists are decimated as he reviewed progress made so far in the last phase of the ongoing military operation in North Waziristan Agency. The reiteration of counterterror resolve by the army chief came a day after four army men, including an officer, were killed in a ground battle with fleeing terrorists in the strategic Shawal Valley, where some militants are still holed up. All the 19 terrorists were also killed in the skirmish in the Mangroti area of Shawal. The fallen army men were identified as Captain Umair Abdullah Abbasi, Havaladar Hakim Ali Abro and Sepoys Rashid and Hameed.

³⁶ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/national/25-Feb-2016/rangers-nab-three-raw-trained-terrorist>

³⁷ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/101329-SC-nullifies-verdict-to-include-Dogar-Aziz-Zahid-in-treason-case>

³⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1056249/shawal-operation-review-gen-raheel-vows-to-annihilate-terrorists/>

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Exit the General?, Kunwar Khuldune Shahid, *The Nation*, February 4³⁹

Pakistan Army Chief General Raheel Sharif merely saying that he would retire on his due date is a justifiable cause for celebration in the country. It's believed to be the biggest triumph for democracy since August 31, 2014 when the Army Chief generously decided in the corps commanders' meeting not to bring down the guillotine that had been raised through the joint PTI-PAT expeditions in the capital. ***Since decapitating democracy no longer had the backing of US, or China, judicious as always the establishment settled for amputation by reaffirming control over the foreign policy. [...] General Sharif's dedication to successful talks between Kabul and Taliban, over the past couple of years, has been second only to his zealous leadership of Operation Zarb-e-Azb. By accommodating the Taliban in Kabul, the Pakistani establishment would safeguard democracy in the neighbourhood as well. [...]***The establishment's plan is simple: accommodate Taliban in Kabul to parry away Indian influence and in turn curb terrorism in Pakistan. The anti-establishment conspiracy theorists would be told that this counter-terrorism policy is the mid-90s brainchild of democracy's poster child Benazir Bhutto, and her interior minister Naseerullah Babar. Shielding Hafiz Saeed, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi and Azhar Masood is obviously a part of the bigger picture to secure Pakistan.

NAB and the Army, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 25⁴⁰

[...]On February 22, a former official from the Defence Housing Authority (DHA), retired Lt Col Tariq Kamal – who had been arrested in relation to the case – asked NAB to investigate whether General Kayani was involved in “irregularities/misappropriation” related to DHA Valley contracts or whether “his name was used by the decision makers just to benefit Bahria Town”. [...] Logic dictates that the former chief be investigated if his brothers are involved, but under present law there seems to be confusion over whether NAB can pursue the case or not. One panel of opinion – composed almost exclusively of embattled politicians and retired army officers – believe that NAB cannot investigate cases which involve the armed forces. There is authority behind this; financial corruption in the armed forces is dealt under the army acts of 1958. However, there is strong precedent for exceptions, and considering that NAB curtailment is on the card, it is imperative that the NAB gets to investigate this highly damaging case.

³⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/columns/04-Feb-2016/exit-the-general>

⁴⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/25-Feb-2016/nab-and-the-army>

ECONOMIC ISSUES

Pak shelves plan to privatise power firms, *The Express Tribune*, February 4⁴¹

Pakistan has shelved plans to privatise its power supply companies and will miss deadlines to sell other loss-making state firms, renegeing on promises Islamabad had made to the IMF in return for a \$6.7 billion bailout three years ago. Two government officials with direct knowledge of the situation said International Monetary Fund officials meeting with Pakistani officials in Dubai this week were angered by the backtracking, but they expected the IMF would still release the remaining \$1.6 billion to be disbursed.

Pakistan on path to rapid economic growth: WB, *The Dawn*, February 10⁴²

World Bank President Jim Yong Kim has said that Pakistan is now on the path of increased economic growth and prosperity. He was talking to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in separate meetings held here on Tuesday (February 9). Mr Kim, who is on his first visit to Pakistan, applauded the prudent economic policies of Pakistan government, saying that the country's economic outlook had become stable which was the result of the efforts of its financial team. He said Pakistan had an opportunity to become more ambitious in reforming its economy and reducing poverty in the country.

CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

How CPEC will benefit Pakistan?, *The Dawn*, February 2⁴³

Chinese investors need to spell out how exactly Pakistan will benefit from the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), said political and military leaders at a seminar on Monday (February 1). They also stressed that the CPEC should not be politicised or made controversial. [...]Participants claimed that CPEC would be a game-changer for the country and would play an important role in the development of the province and Pakistan. They said law and order in the province had improved but more efforts should be made to ensure that this improvement was permanent. Peace, they said, would create an investment-friendly environment in the province.

Seminaries on CPEC route to be razed, *The Dawn*, February 2⁴⁴

The Mansehra police have ordered the demolition of five seminaries under construction along the proposed China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in the district. "We have issued notices to the relevant caretakers asking them to

⁴¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1040145/pakistan-shelves-plan-to-privatise-power-firms-angering-imf-sources/>

⁴² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238591>

⁴³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1236949/chinese-companies-need-to-explain-how-cpec-will-benefit-pakistan>

⁴⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1236938/seminaries-under-construction-on-cpec-route-to-be-razed>

immediately demolish the five seminaries being built on the CPEC route in Mansehra as no new seminary can be put up on the route under the National Action Plan on security," Mansehra DPO Ahsan Saifullah told a news conference here on Monday (February 1). The DPO said the caretakers were given three days to pull down their respective seminaries and that if the orders were not complied with, then the district administration would do the job.

PM inaugurates Gwadar-Hoshab Road, *The Express Tribune*, February 4⁴⁵

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif inaugurated on Wednesday (February 4) the Rs13 billion Gwadar-Turbat-Hoshab Road (M-8), a part of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Army chief General Raheel Sharif drove the prime minister on the newly-constructed 193-km long highway, which will connect the western, central and eastern routes of CPEC with the Gwadar Port.

Political leaders demand due share for KP in CPEC, *The Nation*, February 9⁴⁶

Political parties' leaders and lawmakers from Southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Monday (February 8) warned of strong agitation campaign if the region was ignored in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. Speaking at a joint news conference on Monday (February 8), ANP Senior leader Senator Afrasiab Khattak said that the proposed western route under CPEC was incomplete without inclusion of southern districts of KP. He said that this route has much significant due to close proximity with neighboring Afghanistan and Central Asian States therefore it should not be ignored.

Despite allocations of \$35 billion for energy projects of the total \$46 billion of CPEC, he regretted, no mega energy project except Suki Kinari hydro power project (HHP) on Kunhar River in Manshera has been launched under the economic corridor in KP.

NHA approves purchase of land for CPEC, *The Dawn*, February 11⁴⁷

The National Highway Authority (NHA) has approved a Rs13 billion PC-1, envisaging acquisition of land for the western route of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The approval was granted in a meeting of the NHA executive board headed by the authority's chairman here on Wednesday (February 10). "Work on the 288 kilometre section of the western corridor from Burhan to Dera Ismail Khan will start soon. The project has been divided into five sections so that work can be completed in the given timeframe," an official told the meeting.

⁴⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1039480/nawaz-inaugurates-gwadar-hoshab-m-8-portion-of-cpec/>

⁴⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/09-Feb-2016/political-leaders-demand-due-share-for-kp-in-cpec>

⁴⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238781/nha-approves-purchase-of-land-for-cpecs-western-route>

Apex body resolves to overcome CPEC hurdles, *The Dawn*, February 17⁴⁸

A meeting of the Apex Committee of Balochistan decided on Tuesday (February 16) to expedite the pace of implementation on the National Action Plan (NAP) in the province. [...]The meeting decided that different law-enforcement agencies would launch joint intelligence-based operations against terrorists and their facilitators. It expressed concern over hurdles being created for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project and decided to overcome all obstructions. The meeting discussed the implementation of NAP in the province and decided that law-enforcement agencies would be asked to expedite actions against terrorists. The chief minister said he was satisfied with the progress of work on the CPEC project.

Avoiding another Kalabagh, Shah Rukh Hashmi, *Daily Times*, February 22⁴⁹

[...]The CPEC is the result of the dealings between two sovereign governments, not a product of para-diplomacy between China and the provincial government of Punjab. [...]Owing to the strategic depth of Pakistan, eastern alignment would be volatile and vulnerable to the regional actor from the east. The advocates of this route point out the same regarding western alignment but the pragmatic gestures from Iran nullify this argument. Additionally, western route, like the Indus Highway, would be another line of communication and connectivity between the units of the federation, thereby empowering the centre's ability to be more connected with the federating units. ***Unfair distribution and encapsulation of the major share in one province will have negative consequences for Pakistan by invoking resentment among the smaller units.*** Right to development is a constitutional right of all the units of Pakistan and deliberate attempts to snub this legitimate concern of stakeholders will provoke a wave of criticism, making the CPEC another Kalabagh.

SECURITY SITUATION

TERRORISM

84,000 websites blocked, SC told, *The Nation*, February 5⁵⁰

Around 84,000 websites containing objectionable contents were identified and blocked while 400,000 obscene websites has been circulated to all the Internet Service Providers for blocking on domain level, said the PTA. In a report submitted to the Supreme Court on Thursday (February 5) said that the Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited, a licensee, has confirmed

⁴⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240039/apex-body-resolves-to-overcome-cpec-hurdles>

⁴⁹ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/22-Feb-2016/cpec-avoiding-another-kalabagh>

⁵⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/national/05-Feb-2016/84-000-websites-blocked-sc-told>

blocking of approximately 200,000 links containing obscene material over the internet.

Religious extremism a strain of virus: Bilawal, *The Nation*, February 9⁵¹

Religious extremism is just one strain of a virus that is not limited to the Islamic world, said chairman, Pakistan People's Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. He was addressing a moot organised by the United States Institute of Peace in Washington. [...] Bilawal mentioning that all forms of religious extremism are a serious threat to the nation said his mother in her final election campaign and her posthumously published book "Reconciliation," had laid out a road map to combat religious extremism through reconciliation, democracy, social justice, and a new Marshall Plan. [...] He also alleged that extremism in Pakistan was founded by opponents of his grandfather Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and that world then had myopically funded his policy because of Pakistan's strategic importance in the first Afghan War. Bilawal regretted that world also ignored his mother Benazir Bhutto in the 1980s when she warned that supplying arms, training and support to the mujahadeen to fight the Soviets had created a Frankenstein that would come back to haunt us. "Many declared these men freedom fighters and dubbed them the moral equivalent of George Washington," he added. "After 9/11, again the international community ignored BB when she warned that we must not run with the hare and hunt with the hound," he said, mentioning that supporting dictatorship on the one hand while preaching democracy with the other was counter-productive.

IS emerging as a threat, warns IB chief, *The Dawn*, February 11⁵²

The director general of the Intelligence Bureau, Aftab Sultan, informed the Senate Standing Committee on Interior on Wednesday (February 10) that the militant **Islamic State group was emerging as a threat in the country because several militant groups had soft corner for it**. He named Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan as examples. Though IS and Afghan Taliban were rivals, the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) coordinated with it, he added. The interior ministry has been denying the presence of IS in Pakistan, saying that it was an Arab organisation. But Mr Sultan said the IB had busted a big IS network after several members reached Punjab following Karachi's Safoora Goth carnage in May. He held the banned TTP responsible for major terror incidents in the country and said the group had been realigning with Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and Sipah-i-Sahaba. [...] **Aftab Sultan also confirmed the presence of Al Qaeda in the sub-continent and said evidence of their involvement in killings of some police officers had been found. He said local TTP leader Abid Muchar and Kazan Gul, who were wanted in 100 terror cases, had been**

⁵¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/09-Feb-2016/religious-extremism-a-strain-of-virus-bilawal>

⁵² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238771/is-emerging-as-a-threat-warns-ib-chief>

neutralised in an IB-led operation. He said the TTP Fazlullah group was still the strongest militant group and operating in coordination with other outfits. [...] **In reply to a question, he said foreign hands had not been involved in most of terrorist attacks as local terrorists, mostly from tribal areas, were behind them.**

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA AND FATA

Two women injured in grenade attack, *The Nation*, February 5⁵³

Wife and daughter of an ex-subedar of Frontier Corps (FC) got injured in a hand-grenade attack in Maraj colony in the limits of Takhatbhai Police Station late Wednesday (February 3) night. Shokat Ali resident of Maraj colony Takhatbhai told police that 4 months ago he was retired from Frontier Corps Orakzai Scouts as Subedhar. He said that on Wednesday night he along with his family members was sleeping in his house when unidentified persons hurled a hand grenade at his house.

Taliban kill 9 Khasadars in Mohmand, *The Express Tribune*, February 19⁵⁴

Militants from a Taliban splinter group attacked and killed at least nine security personnel in two separate attacks in Lower Mohmand Agency between Wednesday (February 17) night and Thursday (February 18) morning, security and government officials said.

15 militants killed in air strikes, *The Dawn*, February 24⁵⁵

[...] "About 15 terrorists were killed and eight hideouts destroyed in air strikes in Lawara Mandai, Khar Tangi and Maizer areas of Dattakhel tehsil, near the Pak-Afghan border in North Waziristan tribal agency," an ISPR statement said. [...] Sources said jet fighters pounded militant hideouts in several areas of the tehsil first on Monday (February 22) night and again on Tuesday (February 23) afternoon. They said foreigners were among those killed. The militants lost two vehicles in the strikes, the sources added. According to them, the area belonged to militant commander Hafiz Gulbahadar.

Air strikes, clash kill 34 militants, *The Dawn*, February 28⁵⁶

An army officer, four soldiers and at least 34 suspected militants were killed in a clash, air strikes and a landmine explosion on Saturday (February 27) as the security forces kicked off a ground offensive in Shawal and Dattakhel areas of North Waziristan Agency (NWA). The offensive has been dubbed the last phase of Zarb-i-Azb operation. According to an Inter Services Public Relations

⁵³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/05-Feb-2016/two-women-injured-in-grenade-attack>

⁵⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1050175/resurgence-taliban-kill-9-khasadars-in-mohmand-agency/>

⁵⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1241578>

⁵⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1242424>

(ISPR) statement, the clash took place after troops surrounded a group of fleeing militants in Mangroti, near the Afghan border. At least 19 militants were killed and an unspecified number injured in an intense exchange of fire. An officer, Captain Umair, and three soldiers lost their lives in the clash.

BALUCHISTAN

Three FC soldiers dead, dozens hurt, *The News*, February 6⁵⁷

Three FC soldiers and six civilians lost their lives while 25 others sustained wounds when a powerful blast ripped through Jinnah Road on Saturday (February 6), official sources confirmed. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan strongly condemned the Quetta blast. [...] The PM directed the concerned authorities to provide best treatment facilities to the injured. He said those involved in terrorism will be brought to justice.

Six gunned down in Panjgur, *The Dawn*, February 11⁵⁸

Six people were shot dead in an attack on a house in Bonistan area of Panjgur district on Wednesday (February 10) night. "Victims were invited to a dinner and were sitting at the guest house when armed men barged into the room and sprayed them with bullets," a police official said. The attackers who came on motorbikes fled. Police and personnel of other law-enforcement agencies reached the scene of the attack and shifted bodies to the district hospital Panjgur. "The cause of killing was not known so far," police officials said, adding that investigation was in progress. Six persons killed in the attack were identified as Muhammad Ismail, Noor Shoaib, Muhammad Nazar, Momin Ghulam Jan and Islamil.

Baluchistan assembly calls for eradicating terror, *The Dawn*, February 11⁵⁹

The Baluchistan Assembly unanimously adopted two separate resolutions condemning the suicide attack on Frontier Corps personnel near the Quetta district courts and the terrorist attack on Bacha Khan University, Charsadda, urging the government to take concrete steps against terrorists. The session was held with Speaker Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani in the chair here on Tuesday (February 9) evening. Awami National Party's parliamentary leader Eng Zamarak Khan Piralizai moved an adjournment motion that states the house expressed condolence with the teachers and students who were killed in the terrorist attack on Bacha Khan University.

⁵⁷ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/96455-Three-FC-soldiers-among-9-dead-in-Quetta-blast-dozens-hurt>

⁵⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238775/six-gunned-down-in-panjgur>

⁵⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238585/baluchistan-assembly-calls-for-eradicating-terror>

Three bullet-riddled bodies found, *The Dawn*, February 20⁶⁰

Three bullet-riddled bodies were found in Chaman, a town located close to the Pak-Afghan border, on Friday (February 19). According to sources, Levies personnel received information that three bodies had been dumped in Shakh-Darreh, a locality on the outskirts of Chaman. The personnel rushed to the site and found the bodies, which were shifted to the district hospital. "The victims had multiple bullet wounds in the head and other parts of their bodies," said an official, quoting doctors who examined the bodies.

SINDH

Police kill 12 LeJ, Qaida militants, *The Nation*, February 23⁶¹

Pakistan police on Monday (February 22) killed at least 12 militants involved in target killings and attacks on officers in the southern port city of Karachi, an official said. Police raided a house where the militants were hiding out in Pipri district, some 50 kilometres north east of central Karachi, triggering a gunbattle which lasted more than two hours. Two policemen were wounded in the exchange, officials said. Rao Anwar, a senior police official who led the raid told reporters that the militants belonged to al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent and the anti-Shia Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) group.

PUNJAB

Seven TTP, LeJ men killed in 'encounter', *The Dawn*, February 18⁶²

Seven suspected terrorists belonging to banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) were killed in an 'encounter' in Sheikhpura late on Tuesday (February 16) night. A Counter Terrorism Department spokesman told Dawn on Wednesday (February 17) they received information that about 10 to 15 suspicious men riding six motorcycles were travelling towards Sharaqpur for an attack on law-enforcement personnel late on Tuesday night. He said Sheikhpura police were alerted to arrest the suspects. He said as a police party challenged the terrorists near a drain bridge in Sharaqpur area, they opened fire which was retaliated. He said when the firing stopped from both sides, the CTD teams found seven unidentified men dead who were killed in 'firing by their accomplices'. Some five of their accomplices fled taking an advantage of darkness.

⁶⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240739>

⁶¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/23-Feb-2016/police-kill-12-lej-qaida-militants-near-karachi>

⁶² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240308>

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

What next after Charsadda?, Abdul Basit, *The News*, February 8⁶³

The discussions in Pakistan after the Bacha Khan University attack have focused on gaps in the country's counterterrorism framework, weak border management at the Durand Line and the non-implementation of recommended security protocols in education institutions. [...] **We ended 2015 on a high note; and the terrorists started 2016 on a high. In 2015, we prevented an APS-like attack, the terrorists pulled off another on the Bacha Khan University in 2016.** [...] A tough choice confronts Pakistan: is the country ready to act against militant groups on its soil that are involved in cross-border militancy? More importantly, what are we going to do about: a) Pakistani militant groups like the TTP, Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, and Lashkar-e-Islam based in Afghanistan; and b) transnational groups like Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State's Afghanistan affiliate, IS-Khorasan which operate on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border? [...] **Rather than closing down educational institutions it is time to shut down terror sanctuaries without differentiating between 'good' and 'bad' Taliban. Rather than arming our teachers we need to disarm the militants.**

Quetta targeted again, Editorial, *The Dawn*, February 7⁶⁴

Quetta was once again attacked yesterday, this time a bomb killing Frontier Corps personnel near the district courts and adjacent to the so-called red zone in the city. That militants can strike in the heart of Quetta is worrying enough; that they could belong to any of several groups and affiliates is more worrying. While the banned TTP has quickly claimed responsibility for the attack, there is a fair amount of uncertainty at this stage — the TTP and breakaway factions have in recent months taken to claiming any attack that can be fit into the narrative of the Taliban's war against Pakistan. While Baloch separatists or, in the security establishment's favoured parlance, the so-called foreign hand could also likely be behind the bombing on Saturday (February 6), the incident has raised a very familiar set of questions.

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

Rajnath blames Pak for terror in India, *The Express Tribune*, February 4⁶⁵

[...] **"Most of the terrorist attacks in India emanate from Pakistan, and it will have to show some sincerity and take concrete steps to rein in various terror groups operating against India from its soil," Rajnath Singh**, India's union home minister, told a news conference in Jaipur on Wednesday (February 3). According to India Today, Singh also said that India would stand by 'its

⁶³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print/96742-What-next-after-Charsadda>

⁶⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1237891/quetta-targeted-again>

⁶⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1040000/action-against-terrorists-indian-minister-asks-pakistan-to-walk-the-talk/>

neighbour', if it was ready to take decisive steps in weeding out terrorism. "India will stand by Pakistan if it takes decisive action against terrorists and their organisations."

Kashmir Day to see a long human chain, *The Nation*, February 5⁶⁶

Thousands of people will make a human chain on Kashmir Day here (Sialkot) to express complete solidarity with the oppressed people of Held Kashmir. Talking to newsmen, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Sialkot leader Arshad Mehmood Baggu, Sheikh Attiqur Rehman, Mian Mohsin and Arif Mehmood said that the people will observe the Day with traditional zeal, enthusiasm.

Clean chit to JeM chief, *The Nation*, February 9⁶⁷

The Pak-India relations are once again on the razor edge as New Delhi has refused to accept Islamabad's clean chit to Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Maulana Masood Azhar in the Pathankot attack case. In a second report shared with India, Pakistan told that the JeM chief was not found involved in the terror attack. In the first report, Pakistan had informed India the Pakistani cell phone numbers given as evidence had no record in Pakistan. [...]Pakistan is mulling to send a special investigating team to Pathankot in consultation with the government of India for further investigations. A senior government official told *The Nation*, India was perturbed over the Pakistan's assertion that the JeM chief had nothing to do with the Pathankot attack.

Pakistan seeks early date for talks, *The Express Tribune*, February 19⁶⁸

Pakistan on Thursday (February 18) sought an early date for the crucial foreign secretary-level talks with India after the latter's envoy recently suggested that the meeting was not conditional to progress in the Pathankot attack investigation. Speaking at his weekly news briefing, Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Muhammad Nafees Zakaria said Pakistan had noted the policy statement given by India's High Commissioner Gautam Bambawale. "In view of the statement, it is our view that the date of the foreign secretary-level talks should now be decided as early as possible," he told reporters.

Pathankot attack: FIR lodged in Gujranwala, *The Dawn*, February 20⁶⁹

In what appeared to be a surprising move, Pakistan lodged on Friday (February 19) an FIR against the four alleged attackers of the Pathankot airbase in India and their accomplices. India has alleged that Pakistan's territory was used for

⁶⁶ <http://nation.com.pk/national/05-Feb-2016/kashmir-day-to-see-a-long-human-chain>

⁶⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/09-Feb-2016/clean-chit-to-jem-chief-pak-india-ties-on-razor-edge-again>

⁶⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1050156/ties-with-india-pakistan-seeks-early-date-for-foreign-secretary-talks/>

⁶⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240762>

the Jan 2 terrorist attack and has been pressurising Pakistan to act against the people involved in it. The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab police lodged the FIR in Gujranwala police station against the alleged attackers under sections 302, 324 and 109 of the Pakistan Penal Code and sections 7 and 21-I of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

Pakistani investigation team likely to visit India, *The Dawn*, February 20⁷⁰

A team of Pakistani investigators is likely to visit India next month for collecting evidence relating to alleged involvement of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terrorists in the Pathankot airbase attack. "The investigation team's visit is expected," a senior diplomat told Dawn on Friday (February 19), adding that dates for the visit were yet to be finalised. The registration of FIR by the Counter-Terrorism Department of Punjab police has, however, paved the way for the visit of the six-member investigation team constituted by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif weeks after the attack on the airbase on Jan 2.

Pursuing policy of good ties with India: PM, *The Nation*, February 25⁷¹

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said that Pakistan's policy of establishing good relations with all its neighbours, including India, is aimed at giving boost to the regional trade for the collective good of the people of these countries. Talking to Indian High Commissioner Gautam Bambawale who called on him at PM House yesterday, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif extended a very warm welcome to the newly-appointed Indian high commissioner and expressed confidence that Gautam Bambawale will work to bring the two countries closer. The prime minister said it was Pakistan's policy to pursue good relations with all its neighbours including India. "Our policy is aimed at bringing economic stability in the region. The mutual cooperation between the two states can lead to numerous benefits in socio-economic uplift of both the countries," he added.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Kashmir issue in present age, Liaqat Baloch, *The Nation*, February 5⁷²

[...]In August 1947 at the time of partition, the relevant states of India were given an option that they could affiliate themselves with India or Pakistan. Because it had become impossible for them to exist independently. A referendum was held in Silhat and NWFP and the majority of people decided in favour of Pakistan. ***But India entered its army in Kashmir and forced the ruler of Kashmir to announce the affiliation with India without referendum. The Muslims of Kashmir protested severely against it. Indian army treated***

⁷⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240750>

⁷¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Feb-2016/pursuing-policy-of-good-ties-with-india-pm>

⁷² <http://nation.com.pk/national/05-Feb-2016/kashmir-issue-in-perspective-of-present-age>

them cruelly. Pakistan also entered its army in Kashmir in order to save the Muslims from the cruelty of Indian army. Kashmiri Muslims supported Pak army completely. The total liberation of Kashmir was near but India involved UNO in this matter and requested to stop the war so that Kashmiris should be given the right of self-determination. The UNO guaranteed a referendum after evacuating it from the armies of India and Pakistan. India made lame excuses and did not evacuate Kashmir. Indian stubbornness and obstinacy is a major obstacle in referendum. [...]Kashmir issue is alive after passing 60 years. It is only because of the spirit of Jihad of Kashmiri Muslims. In 2014 the fake elections were held in occupied Kashmir once more. The ruling party BJP was defeated badly. Its candidates were contesting on 87 seats but won only 25 seats.

Kashmir Day, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 5⁷³

Today marks the 26 years that Pakistan has been expressing its support and unity with the people of Indian-occupied Kashmir by dedicating February 5th as Kashmir day. [...]Ironically Kashmir Day was first observed in 1990 on call of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who was the opposition leader and chief minister of Punjab at the time. He appealed for a nationwide strike to protest against the Indian occupation of Kashmir and called for people to pray for the Kashmiri freedom movement's success. Here we are twenty-six years and three terms in office later; our PM has failed at dispensing freedom to the people of Kashmir. Passionate speeches are delivered at international forums, third party interventions are called for but the opposing party is nowhere near even agreeing to come to the negotiating table.

Indian objections to F-16 sale, Editorial, *The Dawn*, February 19⁷⁴

The sale of F-16 aircraft has appeared to annoy India more than it helps Pakistan's overall counter-insurgency efforts. It should not. But the very fact that it does — that New Delhi appears to feel it necessary to protest the American sale of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan — demonstrates the extent to which the Pak-India relationship needs to be protected from reactionaries in India. [...]The objections to the sale of F-16s to Pakistan are not the only recent Indian intervention. It is fairly well established that Indian authorities attempted to — and perhaps succeeded in— temporarily blocking the sale of JF-17 aircraft to Sri Lanka. There too the Indian intervention was neither bashful nor remotely principled. It was simply a case of leveraging influence to ensure a politically desirable — if short-sighted — outcome.

⁷³ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/05-Feb-2016/kashmir-day>

⁷⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240468>

The Pathankot FIR, Editorial, *Daily Times*, February 21⁷⁵

It is welcome news that Pakistan has initiated a formal probe into the involvement of the miscreants who mounted a brazen assault on the Pathankot Airbase in Indian Punjab on January 2, 2015. [...] Though the finger of suspicion is being pointed at members of the JeM, led by Chief Maulana Masood Azhar, for their involvement in the attack, their names have not been included in the FIR due to inadequate evidence. The registration of the FIR alone will not make a marked difference. A thorough investigation should be conducted to find the culprits and take the case to its logical end. If solid evidence proves the involvement of the JeM chief in the across-border attack, he must be brought to trial in accordance with the law. Furthermore, if the security agencies succeed in finding and prosecuting the offenders, it will pave the way towards the normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan.

Avoiding an arms race, Editorial, *Daily Times*, February 26⁷⁶

[...] The NCA declared that India's growing development of weapons would have "adverse ramifications for peace and security" in the region and asserted that it would take all possible measures to make national security robust, including maintaining its "full spectrum deterrence". However, this assertion was qualified by a denunciation of an "arms race" with India, and the NCA once again proposed a Regional Strategic Restraint Regime that was tabled to no avail for the first time in 1998. India, however, has been reluctant to embrace a regional mechanism, and the lack of such a regional architecture to prevent the pile up of weapons has been decried by security experts. The NCA also raised concerns over the west's antipathy to India's nuclear activity while bemoaning what was implied to be a disproportionate focus on Pakistan's nuclear programme. ***The developments in India were described as upsetting the balance of power, resultantly exacerbating Pakistan's security dilemma.*** Nonetheless, the NCA re-emphasised Pakistan's desire for establishing the Strategic Restraint Regime in South Asia and the inescapable need of a meaningful and sustained comprehensive dialogue process for resolution of all outstanding disputes, ushering in an era of peace and prosperity in the region.

⁷⁵ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/21-Feb-2016/the-pathankot-fir>

⁷⁶ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/26-Feb-2016/avoiding-an-arms-race>

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

INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

India got the answer, Editorial, *Daily Jasarat*, February 9.⁷⁷

Pakistan has informed India about the investigation report which India has sought after Pathankot attack. Pakistan did not out rightly reject the Indian allegations but asked for the evidence. The evidence sent by India were not enough and nothing was found out which could indicate the involvement of Masood Azhar. During the investigation period Pakistan had restricted the movement of Masood Azhar and other leaders of his organization. **After receiving the answer through this report the Indian leaders have remained silent and surely they might be busy in constructing another conspiracy.** May be within couple of days they will insist Pakistan to do more. They have been doing same with the chief of Jamat-ud-dawa, Hafiz Mohammad Sayeed who was given a clean chit after judicial investigation. But Indian leaders are still demanding action against Hafiz Sayeed. Given the track record of Indian leaders, we believe that none of their allegation should be taken seriously and whatever they say should be thrown back to them.

FIR on Pathankot reflects weakness, Editorial, *weekly Al-Qalam*, February 24.⁷⁸

The attack on Pathankot airbase was not the first in India. The pressure put on Pakistan after the attack by India was not something new either. [...]As usual India started a malicious campaign and tried to put pressure on Pakistan but unfortunately our present government behaved in a way that whole nation feels ashamed. **Registering an FIR against unknown persons in Pakistan with regard to Pathankot attack was basically for the sake of friendship with India. Indian sponsored terrorism in Pakistan is going on unabated which the government of Pakistan has officially announced several times. Everyone is aware of this and because of their interference, situation is very tense. But has Pakistan protested and has India ever registered any FIR in India for the attacks in Pakistan?** But Pakistan has shown the weakness and has done something which is a sign of humiliation for whole Pakistan. For the sake of friendship with India the politicians have made Pakistan a colony of India.

Kashmir Solidarity Day, Editorial, *Al-Qalam*, February 10.⁷⁹

[...] **When we say Kashmir is Jugular vein, it is not just a slogan but a reality and it is becoming clear day by day.** Pakistan had a clear and solid stand on this issue but some decisions taken during the dictatorship of Parvez Musharaf badly affected our stand. During that period India consolidated its rule in

⁷⁷ <http://jasarat.com/news.php?date=09-02-2016&news=02&category=editorial>

⁷⁸ <http://alqalamonline.com/index.php/idarti/5317-533-idaria-pathankot>

⁷⁹ <http://alqalamonline.com/index.php/darti/5317-531-idaria-e-yakjihte-e-kashmir>

Kashmir and international community got the impression that Kashmiris have accepted the Indian rule. Modi government is also trying to strengthen the occupation of Kashmir but there is no need to be scared because the freedom movement is very strong and stands on its own legs. However it is high time that Pakistan begin to support Kashmiris in this movement. ***The policy of calling Mujahideen Terrorists should be rejected now. The current situation of Parvez Musharraf should be a lesson for all political leaders.*** During his time he did everything for India but what has India done in return. Have they stopped interfering in Pakistan? The government in Pakistan should not pay attention to what India says about *Mujahideen* so that our future is safe and secure.

Nawaz weakened Pakistan's stand on Pathankot, *Daily Ummat*, February 24.⁸⁰ ***The renowned legal experts and foreign policy giants believe that Nawaz Sharif succumbed to Indian pressure and thus weakened Pakistan's stand on Pathankot issue. Registering an FIR in Gojranwala, Nawaz government conveyed to the world that there is Pakistani hand behind terrorism in India.*** Without enough and solid evidences they should not have registered an FIR. The senior Supreme Court lawyer, Owais Ahmad Khan, told *Ummat* that involving Pakistan in Pathankot case is wrong. [...]Former diplomat Rustam Shah said that there is no doubt that FIR was registered under pressure. ***He further said that there are chances that special interrogation team of Pakistan will visit Pathankot to investigate the matter. In return certainly Indian team will also visit Pakistan and if they demanded Hafiz Sayeed and Masood Azhar then what answer will Pakistanis give.***

TALKS WITH TALIBAN IN AFGHANISTAN

Russia, Iran and India be made part of process, *Daily Tawar*, February 9. Former president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai has suggested that Russia, Iran and India should be included in the contact group of four countries. ***Talking to Faras News Agency, Hamid Karzai said that the war in Afghanistan is not just an internal matter but external powers are involved as well. To address the Afghan issue the neighboring countries like Russia, Iran and India should be allowed to play their role.***

Bringing govt and Taliban together, Editorial, *Daily Nawai Waqt*, February 25.⁸¹ The Afghan government and Taliban are possibly going to meet next month. It was declared in a joint statement after the quadrilateral meeting in Afghanistan. Pakistan has accepted to host the talks. The peace in Pakistan is linked with peace in Afghanistan and that is why Pakistan strives for peace in

⁸⁰ <http://ummat.net/2016/02/24/news.php?p=news-23.gif>

⁸¹ <http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2016-02-25/page-14/detail-1>

Afghanistan. For this purpose the Quadrilateral coordination group was formed. **Out of these four countries if America shows some sincerity and seriousness, stability and peace can return to Afghanistan. The Indian presence and intervention in Afghanistan has to end and only America can do that very easily. If America does not show any seriousness then these talks are doomed to fail.**

Direct talks between Taliban and govt, Editorial, *Daily Dunya*, February 25.⁸²
[...]For the reconciliation between Taliban and Afghan government some important steps need to be taken. Firstly, all groups should be allowed to participate in talks. [...]Secondly, both sides should agree on ceasefire. All violent activities should be halted from both sides. Thirdly, America should desist from provoking Taliban. It is true that the key for peace in Afghanistan lies not with Ashraf Ghani but with America. Fourthly, Ashraf Ghani should keep eye on all those elements within establishment who have direct contacts with New Delhi, who are paid by Afghanistan and serve Indian interests. **The peace in Afghanistan is not in the interests of India because if there is peace in Afghanistan and relations between Taliban and Afghan government are not sour, then India have to close all those training camps at Pak-Afghan border. In those training camps Baloch separatists are trained and attacks in various cities of Pakistan is planned.**

INTERNAL SECURITY SITUATION

External and internal help, Syed Adnan Kareemi, *Daily Jang*, February 9.⁸³
After every tragedy we put the blame on the shoulders of our enemy. **There are some internal limitations as well. We were busy in blame game after Bacha Khan University attack and the attack on Jinnah Road in Quetta took us by surprise.** In this attack 10 people including security personnel and 40 were injured. These attacks are testing our resolve as Balochistan and Quetta are important topics for media. [...]There is no doubt that support for Baloch separatists is coming from external sources. The vulnerable and poverty-stricken people of Balochistan do not hesitate in picking up weapons who is being exploited in the garb of rights and eventually made a terrorist. **The neighboring country is playing a dominant role in destabilizing Pakistan. They are adopting a "use and Throw" policy which has been proved time and again. They change their agents but their agenda has never changed, which is to undermine the sovereignty of Pakistan.**

⁸² http://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2016-02-25&edition=LHR&id=2198631_43695683

⁸³ http://e.jang.com.pk/02-09-2016/lahore/pic.asp?picname=10_07.gif

Peace in Karachi, Editorial, *Daily Jang*, February 1.⁸⁴

Meanwhile there was urgent need of analyzing some important aspects of National Action Plan. In this connection, Prime Minister made an announcement that Rangers would stay in Karachi till peace is achieved. During the two and half year term of present government, the manner in which Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif expressed his determination and courage in facing the challenges exhibits his resolve and political acumen in handling the awkward situations in the country.

BALUCHISTAN

Oppression in Balochistan is at its peak: BSO, *Daily Tawar*, February 5.

The spokesperson of Baloch Students Organization has severely condemned the army operation in various areas of Awaran like Teertaj, Siyahgazi, Goristani and Bolan saying that army has cordoned whole area and burned down houses of Raza Jehangir, Dr. Sulaiman Baloch who is Jr. vice chairman of BSO. ***The army has harassed women also. Houses were razed in Teertaj and siyahgazi. In Goristani village houses were burned down with all cattle inside.*** The BSO spokesperson said that government is trying to crush the Baloch liberation movement by killing its leaders and razing their houses. ***The BSO spokesperson further said that last week a school teacher was abducted in Turbat by provincial authorities and after some days his dead body was thrown away.*** Moreover two days ago another dead body was recovered who was identified as Yasir S/O Showkat Sehrai who was picked up by army from Mushkay on September 13, 2013. The spokesperson further said that the authorities are expanded their policy of ethnic cleansing and the custodial killing has gone high.

⁸⁴ http://e.jang.com.pk/02-01-2016/Lahore/pic.asp?picname=09_02.gif.

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

| Place | Date | Description | Killed | Injured |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Balochistan | | | | |
| Quetta ⁸⁵ | 6/2/2016 | Nine dead, dozens injured | 9 | 25 |
| Panjgur ⁸⁶ | 11/2/2016 | Six gunned down | 6 | 0 |
| Chaman ⁸⁷ | 20/2/2016 | Three bullet-riddled bodies found | 3 | 0 |
| FATA | | | | |
| Takht Bhai ⁸⁸ | 5/2/2016 | Two women injured | 0 | 2 |
| Mohmand ⁸⁹ | 19/2/2016 | Nine Khasdars killed | 9 | 0 |
| Dattakhel ⁹⁰ | 24/2/2016 | 15 militants killed | 15 | 0 |
| Peshawar ⁹¹ | 28/2/2016 | 34 militants killed in | 39 | 0 |
| Punjab | | | | |
| Shekhupura ⁹² | 18/2/2016 | Seven terrorists killed | 7 | 0 |
| Khyber Pakhtunkhwa | | | | |
| Mardan ⁹³ | 5/2/2015 | Two women injured | 0 | 2 |
| Sindh | | | | |
| Karachi ⁹⁴ | 23/2/2016 | Police kill 12 militants | 12 | 2 |

⁸⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/96455-Three-FC-soldiers-among-9-dead-in-Quetta-blast-dozens-hurt>

⁸⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1238775/six-gunned-down-in-panjgur>

⁸⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240739>

⁸⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/05-Feb-2016/two-women-injured-in-grenade-attack>

⁸⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1050175/resurgence-taliban-kill-9-khasadars-in-mohmand-agency/>

⁹⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1241578>

⁹¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1242424>

⁹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1240308>

⁹³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/05-Feb-2016/two-women-injured-in-grenade-attack>

⁹⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/23-Feb-2016/police-kill-12-lej-gaida-militants-near-karachi>

