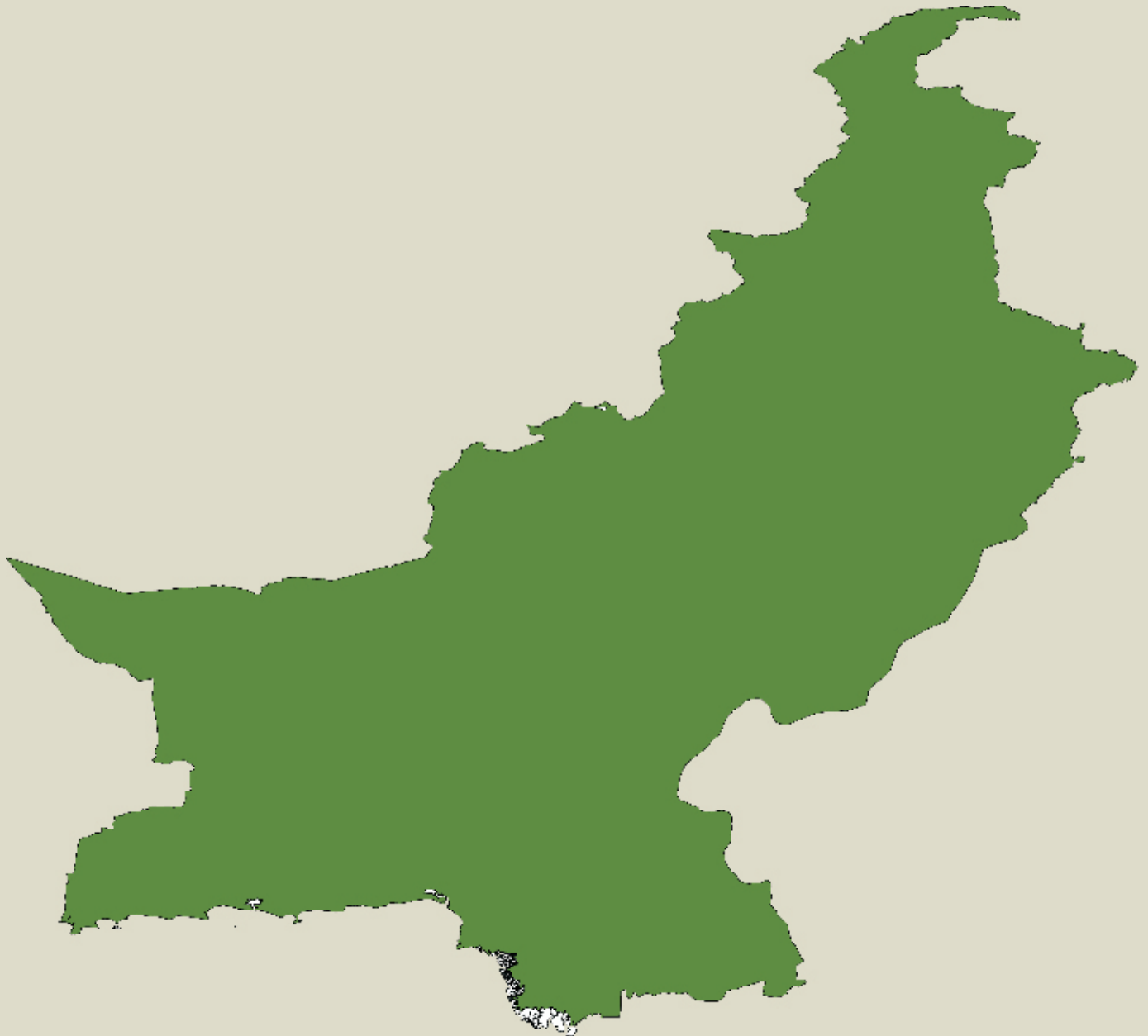


January 2014

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



*Prepared by
Shreyas Deshmukh
and Yaqoobul Hassan
(Interns, Pakistan Project, IDSA)*

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, January 2014

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ABBREVATIONS

AAP: Aam Adami Party
AFIRM: Armed Forces Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine
AG: Attorney General
ATF: Anti-Terrorist Force
BRP: Baloch Republican Party
BSA: Bilateral Security Agreement
CLGF: Commonwealth Local Government Forum
CMH: Combined Military Hospital
DG: Director General
DGMOs: Directors General of Military Operations
ECNEC: Executive Committee of the National Economic Council
EFF: Extended Fund Facility
ESCAP: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and
FIA: Federal Investigation Agency
GHQ: General Head Quarters
IMF: International Monetary Fund
ISAF: International Security Assistance Force
IWT: Indus Water Treaty
JI: Jamaat-i-Islami
JSMM: Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz
KP: Khyber Pakhthunkhwa
MQM: Muttahida Qaumi Movement
MWM: Majalis-i-Wahadat-Muslimeen
NAB: National Accountability Bureau
NADRA: National Database and Registration Authority
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSA: National Security Adviser
NSC: Natinal Security Council Pacific
PAJCCI: Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industries
PBS: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics
PC: Privatisation Commission
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PMO: Prime Minister's Office
PPP: Pakistan People's Party
PSDP: Public Sector Development Programme
PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
QI: Qualified Intermediaries
QWP: Quami Watan Party
SBA: Standby Agreement
SBP: State Bank of Pakistan
SMEDA: Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority
SOE: State Owned Enterprises
SRO: Statutory Regulatory Order

TTP: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan
VBMP: Voice for Baloch Missing Persons
WAPDA: Water and Power Development Authority
WP: Withholding Foreign Partnership
WT: Withholding Foreign Trust

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

Demand for Separate Province for Urdu Speakers

In a no holds barred attack on his party's former coalition partners, MQM chief Altaf Hussain on January 4 evening said if their demands are unacceptable to the ruling PPP then Urdu speaking Sindhis should be given a separate province. He also threatened that the demand of a separate province can quickly turn into a demand of a separate country for Urdu speakers of Sindh.¹

Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah has said that Sindh is inseparable part of the country and an indivisible entity.² No one could dare to divide Sindh, he declared while speaking to the media at a ceremony held at the Chandka Medical College here on Sunday to mark the 86th birth anniversary of Pakistan People's Party founder chairman Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

A group of Sindhi intellectuals on January 6 held a protest demonstration outside the British Deputy High Commission at Clifton in Karachi against MQM chief Altaf Hussain's reported statement demanding a division of Sindh on ethnic lines; termed the clarification of MQM leaders 'insufficient' and vowed to continue a peaceful protest against 'the party undermining the solidarity' of Pakistan and Sindh.³ Endemic violence in Karachi continues unabated. A strike was observed in Karachi after the call was made by the Ulema Action Committee over the law and order situation in the city and by the MWM to assert its demand for a military operation against terrorists.⁴

In the meanwhile the PTI is bringing changes to the party structure in Sindh. Party insiders have revealed that its sluggish leadership in Sindh may result in another drastic restructure.⁵

¹Altaf threatens separate province for Urdu speaking Sindhis, Dawn, January 4, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078153/altaf-threatens-separate-province-for-urdu-speaking-sindhis>

² Qaim declares Sindh indivisible, inseparable, Dawn, January 6, 2014 <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078673/qaim-declares-sindh-indivisible-inseparable>

³Sindhi intellectuals protest at UK mission against MQM chief, Dawn, January 7, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078793/sindhi-intellectuals-protest-at-uk-mission-against-mqm-chief>

⁴ Karachi at standstill over religious parties' strike call, Dawn, January 24 <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082381/karachi-at-standstill-over-religious-parties-strike-call>

⁵Cleaning house: Reshuffle in PTI Sindh chapter on the cards, Express Tribune, January 24, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/662732/cleaning-house-reshuffle-in-pti-sindh-chapter-on-the-cards/>

Political Developments in Balochistan

The contestation between PTI and QWP continues in Balochistan. PTI and Qaumi Watan Party, which remained coalition partners in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government for a brief period, confronted each other in the provincial assembly for the first time after parting ways as the latter joined the opposition benches on January 6.⁶

As the party's popularity graph plummets in the province, Pakistan PTI Chairman Imran Khan has fired the elected president of PTI in Balochistan. Qasim Khan Suri, the youngest elected president of Balochistan's PTI chapter, was quietly shown the door last week when two senior PTI leaders recommended that Khan kick him out from the party to pave the way for 'nawabs' and 'sardars' – the traditional politicians in the province.⁷

PTI seems to be cleaning house in the two provinces in which it fared poorest in last year's elections. The president of the party's Balochistan chapter was unceremoniously removed from office a few days ago over what was claimed to be poor performance in the province.⁸

Relief and rehabilitation work in the earth quake area of Balochistan continues. Balochistan Chief Minister Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch visited the earthquake-hit district of Awaran on January 8, saying the second phase of rehabilitation in the area would include the reconstruction of homes.⁹ Speaking with the media during his visit, the CM said work has been initiated on the construction of these homes, adding that the army, FC and provincial administration contributed to the rehabilitation effort.

Khyber Pakhtunkwa

As many as 70 'front-line health workers' in Jamrud tehsil of Khyber Agency have refused to take part in a three-day polio vaccination campaign beginning in the region on Saturday, citing security concerns.¹⁰

Assailing the PTI government in KP for not being able to fulfill promises it made before coming into power regarding elimination of terrorism, Senator Mian Raza Rabbani on January 13 condemned recent terrorist incidents in the militancy-hit province.¹¹

⁶ PTI under fire in PA from former ally, Dawn, January 7, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078900/pti-under-fire-in-pa-from-former-ally>

⁷ Out of favour: Imran Khan fires PTI Balochistan President, Express Tribune, January 21 <http://tribune.com.pk/story/660908/out-of-favour-imran-khan-fires-pti-balochistan-president/>

⁸ Cleaning house: Reshuffle in PTI Sindh chapter on the cards, Express Tribune, January 24, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/662732/cleaning-house-reshuffle-in-pti-sindh-chapter-on-the-cards/>

⁹ Relief for Awaran: CM promises reconstruction of homes, Express Tribune, January 9 <http://tribune.com.pk/story/656714/relief-for-awaran-cm-promises-reconstruction-of-homes/>

¹⁰ 70 workers in Khyber refuse to administer polio vaccine, Dawn, January 15, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079763/70-workers-in-khyber-refuse-to-administer-polio-vaccine>

¹¹ Rabbani, others lash out at PTI in Senate, Dawn, January 15, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080281/rabbani-others-lash-out-at-pti-in-senate>

NATIONAL POLITICS

Bills to Increase Minority Seats Tabled, Dawn, January 29¹²

Two similar constitution amendment bills seeking increase in minorities' representation in the national and provincial legislatures and a bill suggesting severe punishment to the police officers for registering a false case were tabled in the National Assembly on January 28. Another bill making it binding upon the federal government to include translation of holy Quran, Hifz and Tajweed-ul-Quran as compulsory subjects in universities, schools and colleges was moved by members of the JI.

MUSHARRAF'S TREASON TRIAL

PPP chairperson Bilawal Bhutto Zardari criticised General (retd) Musharraf on Twitter after the latter was hospitalised on his way to the treason case hearing on January 2. Musharraf was scheduled to appear before a special court but, according to government officials, he complained of pain in his heart and instead was taken to the Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology in Rawalpindi.¹³

Reacting to Musharraf's trial, PML-Q President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain submitted on January 7 a constitution amendment bill to the Senate secretariat seeking to replace the words "high treason" in Article 6 with "offence against state". The PML-Q chief submitted the bill a day after he had presented himself for trial along with retired Gen Pervez Musharraf, for supporting the imposition of emergency by him on Nov 3, 2007. Through the bill, he has proposed that in sub-sections 1, 2 and 3 of Article 6, the words "high treason" be replaced with "offence against the state".¹⁴

PTI Chairman, Imran Khan expressing his apprehensions said that a 'new NRO' is being prepared to save Pervez Musharraf from treason trial. Talking to media here January 7, Imran Khan claimed that in the past Nawaz Sharif and Asif Ali Zardari were allowed to move abroad through "NRO."¹⁵

In a strong rebuff to former military ruler Pervez Musharraf, Defence Secretary Lt General (retd) Asif Yasin Malik said on January 7 that the army had no stake in the treason indictment of the former president. Spelling out the military's stance on Musharraf's trial, Malik said that the army had no interest in the case. "Pakistan Army has no connection with the trial of former army chief Pervez Musharraf in the special court," Malik told the media soon after attending the meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Defence and Defence Production.¹⁶

¹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083494/bills-to-increase-minority-seats-tabled>

¹³ I can't believe this coward ever wore the uniform of our brave armed forces: Bilawal, Express Tribune, January 2, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/653667/expert-views-talks-are-a-complex-long-term-process/>

¹⁴ Shujaat wants Article 6 amended, Dawn, January 8, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079056/shujaat-wants-article-6-amended>

¹⁵ 'New NRO' being prepared for Musharraf: Imran, The News, January 8, 2014, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-133258-New-NRO-being-prepared-for-Musharraf:-Imran>

¹⁶ No love lost: Army has no stake in treason trial, says defence aide, Express Tribune, January 8, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/656278/no-love-lost-army-has-no-stake-in-treason-trial-says-defence-aide/>

Saudi Arabia Foreign Minister, Saud Al Faisal has said that his country does not interfere in internal affairs of Pakistan, adding that Pervez Musharraf has not been discussed in meetings with Pakistani officials. Addressing a joint press conference, Advisor on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoy excellent relations and both the countries reiterated their desire to further expand these relations for the benefit of the people of the two countries.¹⁷

POLICY TOWARDS TERRORISM

The National Assembly's Standing Committee on Interior and Narcotics Control approved on January 13 a draft of the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Ordinance (ATO) 2013, with some members expressing reservations and writing dissenting notes. The committee, however, did not approve the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance (PPO) 2013 which was termed by some members 'a black law' and similar to the Indian law called Protection of Terrorism Act (POTA) 2002.¹⁸

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said extraordinary circumstances entail extraordinary steps during a meeting of the federal cabinet on January 20. He said all institutions would have to play their respective roles to bring offenders to justice and directed the Ministries of Law and Home Affairs to implement the Tahafuz-e-Pakistan ordinance and strengthen the security situation of the border.¹⁹

Leader of the Opposition in National Assembly, Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah said on January 23 the entire nation was united to fight terrorism and the time had come to arrive at a final decision to wipe out the elements taking lives of innocent people. Speaking to media representatives here at the CMH, Shah said: "We are thinking why our security personnel and civilians are being targeted. We must sit together and the government will have to take a final decision against terrorists."²⁰

The federal government is planning a targeted operation against banned outfits in the country's settled areas — including Punjab — as part of its wider strategy to combat extremism and militancy. The operation also aims at preempting any attempt by members of these groups in major cities and towns once a ground offensive begins against their hideouts in the tribal areas, a high-ranking government official said.²¹

Advisor to Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz has said that force would be used against all foreign terrorists and political parties would be taken into confidence in this regard. Speaking at School of Advanced International

¹⁷Saudi FM dubs Musharraf case internal matter of Pakistan, The News, January 8, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-133271-Saudi-FM-dubs-Musharraf-case-internal-matter-of-Pakistan>

¹⁸ NA committee approves draft of anti-terrorism law, Dawn, January 15, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080394/na-committee-approves-draft-of-anti-terrorism-law>

¹⁹Extraordinary situation entails extraordinary steps, says PM, Dawn, January 20 <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081518/extraordinary-situation-entails-extraordinary-steps-says-pm>

²⁰Govt must decide on fighting terrorism: Khurshid Shah, Dawn, January 24, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082394/govt-must-decide-on-fighting-terrorism-khurshid-shah>

²¹ Government planning operation in settled areas, Express Tribune, January 27, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/663886/government-planning-operation-in-settled-areas/>

Studies in Washington, DC, Sartaj Aziz said action would be taken against those Taliban who did not respect constitution of Pakistan.²²

A National Peace Convention held here on January 5 to promote sectarian harmony lashed out at the government for trying to hold peace talks with the Taliban and called for dealing firmly with terrorists. Speaking at the convention held at D-Chowk, leaders and members of organisations belonging to different religious sects – Muttahida Majlis Wahdatul Muslimeen, Sunni Ittehad Council and Voice of Shuhada Pakistan – announced that they would demonstrate complete unity and harmony by jointly celebrating Eid Miladun Nabi.²³

Deputy Secretary National Assembly Moazzam Kalru was kidnapped near the suburbs of Multan on 25 January. According to the police, Kalru was kidnapped from Multan's Nawabpur area when he was en route by car to his farmhouse.²⁴

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Global End of Year Survey: After US, Pakistan considered biggest threat to world peace, *Express Tribune*, January²⁵

In a 2013 global survey conducted by Worldwide Independent Network/Gallup, the public perception of United States saved Pakistan the embarrassment of being labeled the biggest threat to world peace today. 24% of the world believes America represents the biggest threat to peace. In comparison, only 8% believe it is Pakistan, which is closely followed by neighbours China (6%), and Afghanistan (5%) and Iran (5%).

US, Pakistan seek stability amid Afghan doubts, *Dawn*, January²⁶

The United States and Pakistan resume talks next week after a three-year hiatus as they seek stability in often turbulent ties amid mutual concerns over Afghanistan's future. Pakistan and the United States started a “strategic dialogue” in 2010 to work through their complicated relationship, but the talks were quickly frozen due to repeated crises — including over the secret 2011 US raid that killed Osama bin Laden.

Bills to increase minority seats tabled, *Dawn*, January²⁷

Two similar constitution amendment bills seeking increase in minorities' representation in the national and provincial legislatures and a bill suggesting severe punishment to the police officers for registering a false case were tabled in the National Assembly on January 28. Another bill making it binding upon the federal government to include translation of holy Quran, Hifz and Tajweed-ul-Quran as

²²Will use force against all foreign terrorists: Sartaj Aziz, The News, January29, 2014, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-135875-Will-use-force-against-all-foreign-terrorists:-Sartaj-Aziz>

²³ Multi-sect peace convention wants action against TTP, Dawn, January6, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078628/multi-sect-peace-convention-wants-action-against-ttp>

²⁴ Deputy Secretary NA kidnapped in Multan, Dawn, January25, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082635/deputy-secretary-na-kidnapped-in-multan>

²⁵<http://tribune.com.pk/story/652982/global-end-of-year-survey-after-us-pakistan-considered-biggest-threat-to-world-peace/>

²⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082600/us-pakistan-seek-stability-amid-afghan-doubts>

²⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083494/bills-to-increase-minority-seats-tabled>

compulsory subjects in universities, schools and colleges was moved by members of the JI.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Controversial politics, Dawn, January 5²⁸

With local government elections due in Sindh sooner or later, people can expect politicians to ramp up the rhetoric and start playing to the gallery in order to win votes. MQM leader Altaf Hussain's demand for carving out a separate province from Sindh for Urdu speakers 'if' the community was not given its rights must be read in this context. The Muttahida chief made the remarks while addressing a rally in Hyderabad on Friday; he also alluded to the fact that the demand for a separate province 'might' evolve into a movement for a separate country. MQM leaders clarified on Saturday that their chief had not called for a categorical break-up of Sindh but considered this the 'last option'. Altaf Hussain is no stranger to controversy; his telephonic orations delivered from London have touched many a raw nerve in the past while this is not the first time he has discussed altering Sindh's and Pakistan's geography.

Cruelty in Lyari, The News, January 6²⁹

The Slaughter House area in Lyari lived up to its name. The images of brutality that the word 'slaughter' implies have been converted into reality by the actions taken in the area to drive away hundreds of Christian and Hindu residents who had lived there for decades. The problems began in October when gangs of criminals began threatening the minority communities, already stricken by fear due to the ongoing violence around them, as part of a plan to drive them out and capture the land they lived on. Such incidents are not uncommon in Lyari or in the rest of Karachi, where land mafias have repeatedly targeted the poorest of the poor, those least able to defend themselves. But what is shocking is that the authorities have not come to their help.

Saudi royal's visit, Dawn, January 9³⁰

There are sound geopolitical reasons why Saudi Arabia would like to know where Pakistan stands, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's tour de force being only one of them. As the outcome of the Saudi foreign minister's visit to Islamabad shows, the two sides have renewed their commitment to deepen their defence cooperation and, in the words of Prince Saud Al-Faisal, "stand by each other". For Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, the first visit in six years by a Saudi personage marked the beginning of a new era, while Sartaj Aziz felt satisfied that the two countries stood together "on the many

²⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078431/controversial-politics>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/05-Jan-2014/altaf-s-mischief-again>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-224402-Altafs-demand>

²⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-224837-Cruelty-in-Lyari>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1078223/lyaris-dispossessed>

³⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079380/saudi-royals-visit>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-225472-Saudi-visitor>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/656502/saudi-mission/>

challenges” they faced. Contrary to reports that the visit was Musharraf-oriented, the Saudi prince said the focus of the negotiations was on regional and international affairs. This means Iran, Syria and Afghanistan must have occupied centre stage in the talks, given the changes in the offing.

The LG polls circus, Dawn, January 16³¹

IT is hardly news that the local government elections have again been postponed — this merry-go-round has been whirling for a long time. What is new, this time, is that Pakistanis have not been told when these twice-postponed polls will be held. [...] Yet among the ironies of Pakistan’s traumatic history is that it is the military strongmen who have been quick to organise LG elections. Their motives were, of course, far from altruistic and democratic, for invariably they made these elected institutions serve as an electoral college to give legitimacy to their rule. That elected governments should be tardy on this score is a matter of shame. No LG elections were held during the last five years, and, again, the elected governments have been in the saddle for more than seven months, but the administrations of the two most populous provinces have shown no sincere desire to let the people choose their local representatives. In fact, the two resolutions passed unanimously by the National Assembly in November were a true reflection of our politicians’ view of LG elections when the lawmakers demanded the polls’ postponement and indirectly criticised the judiciary for its “stubbornness” because it insisted on the polls. The truth is our political governments fear the consequences of a vote that may not necessarily reflect the May 11 preferences.

LB elections postponed?, Azam Khalil, *The Nation*, January 17³²

They are two different political parties with distinct ideologies; their leaders spare no chance to get at one another. Yet when it comes to local government elections, strangely enough both Mr Asif Ali Zardari and Mian Nawaz Sharif have the same objective and that is not to allow delegation of administrative and financial powers at the local levels. Therefore no one was surprised when the PPP led government in Sindh and the PML-N led government in Punjab petitioned the Superior Judiciary along with the election commission and obtained directions which have now resulted in the orders of the Supreme Court to the ECP to issue a new schedule for local body elections in Sindh and Punjab.

The rule of the fox, *The News*, January 19³³

[...] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan and Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Memom have all confidently asserted that the operation in Karachi will continue, that it is a success and that all the political parties in the city are on board with the plan. The facts and numbers show that their

³¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080561/the-lg-polls-circus>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-226738-Delayed-polls>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/08-Jan-2014/lb-elections-mess>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/02-Jan-2014/lb-elections-in-disarray>
³² <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/17-Jan-2014/lb-elections-postponed>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/12-Jan-2014/can-the-local-bodies-deliver>
³³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-227337-The-rule-of-the-fox>

confidence is misplaced. The best way to judge the operation in Karachi is by finding out if it has led to a reduction in violence.

Checking corruption, *The Express Tribune*, January 20³⁴

The Supreme Court had in December 2013 ordered that the allegations against Mr Ashraf be probed and the whole affair of the RPPs looked into. The indictment of former prime minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf in the case involving RPP brings us into the heart of yet another corruption scandal, which has shaken our country and reared up its head again and again over the past few years. Mr Ashraf was accused of involvement in allocating permits for non-functional RPPs during his tenure as minister for water and power in the cabinet of Yousaf Raza Gilani and for amassing millions of rupees through such acts. The Supreme Court had in December last year ordered that the allegations against Mr Ashraf be probed and the whole affair of the RPPs looked into.

No progress in education, *Dawn*, January 21³⁵

The findings of the Annual Status of Education Report, 2013 are not very encouraging, showing a continuously high trend of underachievement in Pakistan's schools, particularly in Sindh. There are several depressing statistics, such as the fact that 57pc of grade five students cannot read a grade two English sentence, or that half of such students cannot read a grade two story in Urdu, Sindhi or Pashto. The survey, which covered 138 rural districts and 13 urban centres, found that Punjab has the best educational indicators, while Sindh is at the bottom. The study shows that there are more out-of-school children in the rural areas while children studying in private institutions performed relatively better than their peers in state schools.

Better news, *The Express Tribune*, January 23³⁶

In a country where good news is as rare as hens' teeth and even rarer coming from Balochistan, it is indeed welcome to see that the Commonwealth has praised the Balochistan provincial administration for its holding of local bodies elections. The Secretary General of the CLGF has written to the Balochistan administration to congratulate it on taking the lead — nationally — in the holding of local government elections on December 7, 2013.

The Mohajir question, Niaz Murtaza, *Dawn*, January 23³⁷

Altaf Hussain's demand for a separate province, despite subsequent clarifications, has reignited debate on the role, status and even nomenclature of Mohajirs. Such debates take two extreme positions. Some argue that Mohajirs should not use the term 'Mohajir' since its meaning does not accurately describe their present status. But then people, places and groups are often conversely, some Mohajirs and even periodically

³⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/660783/checking-corruption/>

³⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081705/no-progress-in-education>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/660412/our-education-emergency-2/>

³⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/661994/better-news/>

³⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082152/the-mohajir-question>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/19-Jan-2014/the-karachi-card>

the MQM when under pressure, argue that Mohajirs are a distinct ethnic group which deserves its own province or country.

The Youth Loan Scheme: what is at stake?, Tahir Nisar, *The Express Tribune*, January 25³⁸

The Prime Minister's Youth Business Loan scheme is the first major initiative of the current government targeting the country's chronic youth unemployment problem. Initial media reports suggest that around 6.5 million people have downloaded the loan application forms and more than 50,000 applications have been made. This is a clear sign of how eager Pakistan's youth are to seize every opportunity that will allow them to fully exploit their individual potential and join an elite class of people that, through their entrepreneurial acumen, are contributing enormously to wealth creation and economic growth.

Legalizing illegalities, *Daily Times*, January 26³⁹

To find a solution to the embarrassment in the missing persons saga that has engaged the Supreme Court for some years now, the government has decided to give a legal cover to all the issues concerning missing persons. Rights groups and all the major political parties in parliament have condemned the Protection of Pakistan (Amendment) Ordinance 2014, calling it anti-democratic, usurping the right of parliament to legislate, and anointing the security and law enforcement agencies with complete immunity. Already, the intelligence and security agencies operate in a culture of complete impunity, as revealed in the SC and even the Peshawar High Court. Parliament too has been unable to question their activities.

Postponing Musharraf's trial, *The Nation*, January 26⁴⁰

What could have been a groundbreaking and reaffirming moment in our national history is now becoming a case of constant postponement and reluctance displayed by the government; former military ruler Pervez Musharraf's treason trial looks like a matter of waning interest merely. The treason case was due to commence on December 24, 2013 but has been delayed over and over again due to the former president's apparently deteriorating health and security threats. No one doubts the authenticity of the medical reports explaining the multiple conditions Musharraf suffers but it does seem a little too coincidental to bring up evidence of ailment right around the time when one is summoned by the court. The timing is either immaculate or pre-determined but either way, it only proves that exit doors are forever open for the powerful in Pakistan.

³⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/662909/the-youth-loan-scheme-what-is-at-stake/>

³⁹ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/26-Jan-2014/legalizing-illegalities>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/25-Jan-2014/a-bad-law>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1082242/laws-slippery-slope>

⁴⁰ <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/26-Jan-2014/postponing-musharraf-s-trial>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/663370/musharraf-s-trial/>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/12-Jan-2014/the-musharraf-saga>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-228703-Follow-my-heart>

Fata for us, *The News*, January 27⁴¹

The isolation of the seven federally administered tribal areas, lying along the Pak-Afghan border, adds to their problems. The different set of rules they operate under has contributed to keeping these agencies separated from the rest of the country. Over the years this has been identified as one reason why problems have multiplied in Fata, ranging from militancy to the lack of development, and lack of democracy. Major political parties have shown some recognition of this, with eleven groups agreeing at a meeting in Islamabad that political, administrative, social and economic reforms were essential so that people in these regions could claim their democratic rights – and come at par with people elsewhere in the country. The ANP, Jamaat-e-Islami, PML-N, MQM, JUI, QWP, National Party and Pakhtunkhwa Milli Party have sent the draft of the Fata reforms agenda they agreed on to the government.

Can Musharraf's trial sustain democracy?, Dr Hasan Askari Rizvi, *The Express Tribune*, January 27⁴²

One month has passed since the federal government initiated the trial of former president and army chief General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf under Article 6 of the Constitution. The federal government and the top leaders of the ruling PML-N are confident that this case will be dealt with as a purely legal and constitutional issue and that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has no personal interest in pursuing the Musharraf case. A number of political activists think that Musharraf's conviction will deter other generals from engaging in political adventurism. [...] Pervez Musharraf will expand the domain of the case. This is expected to happen when he records his statement (if that ever happens). He is expected to talk about several people in the civilian and military circles. One of the arguments of the defence lawyers is going to be that the November 3 decision was not made solely by him.

Welcome to the circus, *The Nation*, January 28⁴³

Once again, when the public is clamouring for action by the state, and the government seems to be slowly turning away from their conviction to negotiate, the TTP adds to the constant confusion by saying they are ready to talk. After everything that has happened recently, with the constant attacks on civilians, law enforcement agencies and high profile murders such as of Chaudhary Aslam, the terrorists' actions seem to be in stark contrast with their words. Either that or they are smart enough to know the effects of what this offer will have on the country. Those that have been pushing for negotiations will feel that they were right all along and will raise a ruckus demanding that PML-N take this offer seriously. The regime itself will be left stuttering for a response, and will delay saying anything concrete until the last possible moment.

⁴¹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-228864-Fata-for-us>

⁴² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/663738/can-musharrafs-trial-sustain-democracy/>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/24-Jan-2014/consultation-was-not-possible-with-general-musharraf>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/662473/the-musharraf-shemozzle/>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/661563/musharraf/>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-227801-A-new-system>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1080540/the-coup-lovers-brigade>

⁴³ <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/28-Jan-2014/welcome-to-the-circus>

While attacks were on the rise, Nawaz Sharif did nothing more except condemn those incidents without revealing what he planned to do about them.

Would-be partners' diplomatic minuet, *Daily times*, January 29⁴⁴

The Pakistan-US strategic dialogue got off to a start in Washington after a hiatus of three years marked by irritants and breakdowns. [...] It is Kerry who announced the resumption of the dialogue on a visit to Islamabad last August. Kerry also has to his credit the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Act promising Pakistan aid of around \$ 7.5 billion over five years. Kerry may therefore be considered a consistent friend of Pakistan. While underlining the desire for a transition from a purely transactional relationship to one that could answer to the description of a deeper strategic one, Sartaj Aziz cautioned the US not to see Pakistan exclusively through the lenses of Afghanistan and terrorism. [...] Apart from the 'conditionalities' to make the relationship a truly meaningful one going forward from this year's US/NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan, Sartaj Aziz complained that Washington seemed to have a 'tilt' towards India, reflected in the fact that India's concerns were forcefully conveyed to Pakistan but Pakistan's concerns did not enjoy the same emphasis when the US conveyed them to India. Sartaj Aziz wanted all these 'conditionalities' to be met if the US was serious about a relationship that could transcend the suspicions and complaints of the past and move forward on an even keel. [...] The US's clout extends beyond bilateral ties and Washington is able to influence, both positively and negatively, its western allies and the international donor/lending agencies. Pakistan therefore needs to tread carefully when engaging with Washington, whose goodwill we are not in a position to do without for the foreseeable future.

Time for niceties is over, Ejaz Haider, *The News*, January 29⁴⁵

Pakistan's National Security and Foreign Affairs Advisor, Mr Sartaj Aziz, is in Washington, leading a ministerial-level delegation to hold a 'strategic' dialogue with the United States. The question, once again, is whether this round can deliver anything or that relations between Pakistan and the United States can actually be strategic. Mr Aziz told US Secretary John Kerry that he had been thinking hard to "discover the meaning of this strategic partnership" since Kerry's "visit to Pakistan in August 2013". This is what Mr Aziz said: "At what stage does a normal transactional relationship become strategic?...The most important prerequisite for a strategic partnership...is mutual trust at all levels and among all key institutions.... The second most important element...is the expectation that US will not look at Pakistan from the two specific lenses of Afghanistan and terrorism. These are legitimate US concerns, but these must be balanced by giving due importance to Pakistan's own security concerns. There is, in fact, need for a careful attention to the long-term effect of US policies on Pakistan's security...Similarly, there's a strong perception in Pakistan that a lot of pressure is exerted on Pakistan on issues of concern to India. Our legitimate concerns are not conveyed to India with the same intensity. If these important prerequisites are met, then the contribution of other elements of this important relationship, such as expanded trade, high level of private investment, long-term

⁴⁴ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/29-Jan-2014/would-be-partners-diplomatic-minuet>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/27-Jan-2014/pak-us-strategic-dialogue>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1083914/the-regional-reality>

⁴⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-229282-Time-for-niceties-is-over>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/663737/a-new-chapter-in-us-pakistan-relations/>

partnership on some major projects, will become far more significant and mutually reinforcing.”

Back to square one, Dawn, January 30⁴⁶

Unexpectedly, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif went to parliament on 29th January and spoke from the floor of the National Assembly about his government’s plans to combat terrorism and militancy. [...] only logical conclusion: the dialogue option was being discarded in favour of the use of force against the TTP. But, befitting a prime minister who is giving new meaning to the terms secretiveness and holding one’s cards close to one’s chest, Mr Sharif sprang a surprise that virtually no one saw coming. The government is appointing a four-member committee to give the dialogue option one more chance, the prime minister announced.

Dead men can tell tales, Dawn, January 30⁴⁷

Once again, there are grim tidings from Balochistan. Barely a few days after the horrific attack on a bus of Shia pilgrims in Mastung, 13 bodies have been found in two locations in Tutak, Khuzdar district. According to reports, local shepherds made the grisly discovery when they came upon two half-buried bodies in a desolate area. [...]Khuzdar is a hotbed of the Baloch insurgency, with a marked security presence, and a large number of enforced disappearances have allegedly taken place here. [...]The state is increasingly perceived as being accountable to no one but itself. This impression is enhanced, ironically enough, by the protracted and largely unsuccessful efforts of the Supreme Court to compel security operatives to operate within the ambit of the law and produce before it those individuals that have allegedly been forcibly disappeared.

Saving the Seraiki Underdog, Ayesha Siddiqa, The Express Tribune, January 30⁴⁸

Prior to the 2013 elections, many experts had visualised the failure of the PPP in the country except for South Punjab. It was believed that this was due to the party raising the slogan for creating a new province of South Punjab, an idea that later turned into that of two provinces South Punjab and Bahawalpur. The election results were a total shock as the PML-N seemed to have almost swept the PPP off its feet in southern Punjab. Notwithstanding allegations of election rigging, the voters did disappoint those like former PM Yousuf Raza Gilani, who was in the forefront of raising the slogan. Does the election result mean people are no longer interested in a Seraiki province and the idea is basically a hoax?

⁴⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083730/back-to-square-one>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/29-Jan-2014/unnerved-and-undecided>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-229494-Talking-to-the-TTP>

⁴⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083729/dead-men-can-tell-tales>

⁴⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/664930/saving-the-seraiki-underdog/>

In hearts, not on flagpoles, Kamila Hyat, *The News*, January 30⁴⁹

How many of Pakistanis would recognise a flag with a green and red stripe, and a blue triangle in which a white star appears? Most of people would not know this emblem – but Baloch children do, with rough drawings of the image appearing in many places. The fact that this flag flies over buildings in the province is something we should all note with the greatest concern for the integration and solidarity of our country. It signals sentiments in that province which will not change as a result of actions such as those the inspector general of the Frontier Corps has proudly announced his forces had carried out. Replacing the Baloch nationalist flag and compelling children in schools to sing out the national anthem, despite their reluctance, will not do a thing to allay this concern or make the problem go away. search of their missing loved ones buried perhaps like those found in Khuzdar.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

ENERGY

Nepra approves 27 paisa hike in power tariff, *Dawn*, January 3⁵⁰

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority approved on Thursday an increase of 27 paisa per unit in power tariff for all companies of Wapda under monthly fuel adjustment. The Central Power Purchase Agency had requested Nepra to allow a 45-paisa increase for the next billing month on account of higher generation cost during November last year.

Poor planning leads to hike in fuel prices, *Dawn*, January 5⁵¹

The six months of PML-N rule has led to hike in electricity tariff and increase in prices of oil and gas, for which analysts blame poor policies and weak financial management. They allege that the government has no plan and neither is it trying to formulate one to address this multi-headed hydra.

Five projects of 5,700MW capacity to be completed by 2016, *Dawn*, January 13⁵²

Five hydroelectric projects with capacity to produce about 5,700MW of electricity would be completed by 2016, said an official of the Wapda on January 12.

Development: Engineering design of Kalabagh dam completed, *Express Tribune*, January 14⁵³

The Wapda announced on January 13 that it has completed the detailed engineering design of the Kalabagh dam project, in the light of observations and concerns of the provincial government. An official of the Ministry of Water and Power said that the efforts of the government to develop a consensus among all the provinces has not been fruitful and work could commence only after it had been reached.

⁴⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-229496-In-hearts-not-on-flagpoles>

⁵⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078057/nepra-approves-27-paisa-hike-in-power-tariff>

⁵¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078420/poor-planning-leads-to-hike-in-fuel-prices>

⁵² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080170/five-projects-of-5700mw-capacity-to-be-completed-by-2016>

⁵³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/658774/development-engineering-design-of-kalabagh-dam-completed/>

Hydropower: Dasu dam expected to be cleared, *Express Tribune*, January 16⁵⁴

The government is set to clear the 4,600MW Dasu hydropower project at an estimated cost of Rs735.6 billion amid growing concerns of meeting foreign funding requirements, which have been assessed at \$3.5 billion (Rs383 billion). The CDWP is expected to clear the Dasu hydropower project today for final approval of the Ecnec. Headed by Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal, the CDWP has the mandate to approve up to Rs1 billion worth of projects, and recommend them for the approval by Ecnec.

Iran-Pakistan pipeline: Foreign Office calls meeting to decide project's fate, *Express Tribune*, January 16⁵⁵

The Foreign Office has stepped in to clear the air about the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project and called a high-level meeting among different ministries on January 16 in an effort to set policy guidelines. The move comes in the backdrop of the US refusal to give assurances that the pipeline would be exempt from sanctions and subsequent reluctance of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources to press ahead with the project.

Iranian gas: IP could get back its lost 'I' to become IPI again, *Express Tribune*, January 30⁵⁶

India's Minister for External Affairs Salman Khurshid indicated on January 20 that his country may rejoin the multibillion dollar IP gas pipeline in what appears to be a significant shift in New Delhi's policy. "If there is seriousness from all sides we are ready to import natural gas from Iran and Central Asia through Pakistan," Khurshid told a group of Pakistani journalists visiting New Delhi at the invitation of the Indian government.

Nawaz, Zardari launch Thar coal power project, *Dawn*, January 31⁵⁷

: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and former president Asif Ali Zardari Friday jointly performed ground-breaking of the US 1.6 billion dollar Thar coal power project to help the country meet its energy needs. The project, scheduled to complete in 2017, will initially provide 660 MW of power for Pakistan's energy starved industrial units. The project will be carried out by SECMC a joint venture between Engro Powergen and Government of Sindh.

FISCAL ISSUES

Economic rescue on the cards: Ishaq Dar calls for public shaming of tax evaders, *Express Tribune*, January 16⁵⁸

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on January 15 urged the country's business community to stop opposing the publication of a tax directory. Flatly refusing one of KCCI major demands, Dar said, "You all should accept it with an open mind and let tax thieves get

⁵⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/659276/hydropower-dasu-dam-expected-to-be-cleared/>

⁵⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/659269/iran-pakistan-pipeline-foreign-office-calls-meeting-to-decide-projects-fate/>

⁵⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/665262/iranian-gas-ip-could-get-back-its-lost-i-to-become-ipi-again/>

⁵⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1084003/nawaz-zardari-launch-thar-coal-power-project>

⁵⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/659377/economic-rescue-on-the-cards-ishaq-dar-calls-for-public-shaming-of-tax-evaders/>

embarrassed.” In his address to KCCI members in Karachi, the minister also said that the tax directory of parliamentarians and the directory of businessmen were due to be published by January 31 and February 15, respectively.

Current account: Deficit widens to \$1.58b in first half, SBP data shows, *Express Tribune*, January 22⁵⁹

Pakistan’s current account deficit widened to \$1.58 billion in the first six months of fiscal 2014 as opposed to a deficit of \$83 million in the corresponding period of fiscal 2013, according to data released by the SBP on January 22. However, December witnessed a current account surplus of \$285 million. This was in contrast to a deficit of \$572 million in November.

TRADE

For promotion of trade: Pakistan looks to resolve dispute with Russia, *Express Tribune*, January 7⁶⁰

In its desire to have balanced relations with major global powers, Pakistan has decided to resolve the long outstanding dispute of \$76 million in claims against the Russian government, which has become a major stumbling block in the effort to further economic relations with the country. The 15-year old claims by Pakistani investors against the Russian government have impeded efforts to seek its investment in the energy corridor which the PML-N government has envisaged.

Import of petroleum coke allowed by road from India, *Dawn*, January 9⁶¹

The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet allowed on January 8 import of petroleum coke (pet coke) from India for cement industry by road and took a notice of an increase in fertiliser prices. Pet coke is a by-product of the oil refining process.

First-half: Trade gap shrinks as imports slow down, *Express Tribune*, January 16⁶²

Pakistan’s trade deficit contracted about one-tenth to \$9.1 billion in the first half of the current fiscal year on the back of falling imports, but it still stood over a billion dollars more than the IMF original projection. The wide gap between the actual trade deficit and the IMF’s original projection indicates the lack of accurate estimates of the IMF and the Pakistani negotiating team, putting foreign currency reserves under pressure.

IMF LOAN

IMF assured of rising interest rate, *Express Tribune*, January 7⁶³

Pakistan has assured the IMF that it will keep increasing the interest rate and purchase dollars from the open market to buffer reserves. The development comes after the

⁵⁹<http://tribune.com.pk/story/661665/current-account-deficit-widens-to-1-58b-in-first-half-sbp-data-shows/>

⁶⁰<http://tribune.com.pk/story/655671/for-promotion-of-trade-pakistan-looks-to-resolve-dispute-with-russia/>

⁶¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1079280/import-of-petroleum-coke-allowed-by-road-from-india>

⁶² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/659271/first-half-trade-gap-shrinks-as-imports-slow-down/>

⁶³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/655689/imf-assured-of-rising-interest-rate/>

IMF blamed the State Bank of Pakistan for its failure to prioritise the most pressing challenge of building reserves.

INVESTMENT

Healthy finances: PSO to enter into LNG import business, *Express Tribune*, January 24⁶⁴

While regaining market share in petroleum products, PSO is going to start importing LNG because of its sound financial health and will make arrangements with international suppliers and transporters to overcome energy crisis in the country. In the first quarter (July-September 2013) of the current financial year, PSO recorded a turnover of Rs364 billion, notching up 12% growth over the corresponding period a year ago. Quarterly after-tax earnings rose 81% to a record Rs7.8 billion against Rs4.3 billion last year.

Oil, gas exploration: New blocks to attract \$371m investment in first phase, *Express Tribune*, January 24⁶⁵

The government has provisionally awarded licences for 50 blocks to exploration and production companies for the search of oil and gas across the country, which will attract an investment of \$371 million in the first phase. Of the 50 blocks, state-owned exploration companies such as OGDC and PPL have won rights for 39 blocks, reflecting poor participation of foreign companies in the bidding round despite attractive incentives in the new petroleum policy.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Financial overview: Dar acknowledges inflation has gone up, *Express Tribune*, January 2⁶⁶

While admitting that inflation had gone up and the government's claim to increase the tax net had been unrealistic, Federal Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar on January 1 blamed various factors including the previous government's policies for the current mayhem. Speaking at the special cabinet meeting headed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, the finance minister gave a detailed briefing on the state of the economy, the government's policy actions and the future roadmap for the country.

Muzaffargarh, Ahmadpur East selected for new N-power plants, *Dawn*, January 3⁶⁷

Muzaffargarh and Ahmadpur East have been selected as sites for new nuclear power plants, according to PAEC Chairman Dr Ansar Parvez. He was speaking at the 'dome-laying ceremony' of the fourth 340mw unit at the Chashma Nuclear Power Complex (also known as Chashma-IV) on January 2 that marked the completion of civil works at the unit and would be followed by installation of a reactor.

⁶⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/662609/healthy-finances-psy-to-enter-into-lng-import-business/>

⁶⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/662639/oil-gas-exploration-new-blocks-to-attract-371m-investment-in-first-phase/>

⁶⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/653739/financial-overview-dar-acknowledges-inflation-has-gone-up/>

⁶⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078065/muzaffargarh-ahmadpur-east-selected-for-new-n-power-plants>

Ruling party speeds up privatisation process, *Express Tribune*, January⁶⁸

In a mad rush to sell off sensitive and important national assets, the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz has left behind the privatisation zeal of even the Musharraf government. Its haste is fuelled in part by a desire to please some US friends, according to well-placed sources. Already, fears have been expressed in certain quarters that the unusual haste will have an economic fallout: not only will the shares of these organisations be lost but the nation will also lose its valuable assets.

Wave of terrorism dangerous for Pak economy: IMF, *The News*, January⁶⁹

The IMF has released its report on the state of Pakistan's economy. The report highlights that Pakistan's economy will remain under pressure from external payments in 2014. According to the report, the wave of terrorism in Pakistan is dangerous for the country's economy. The report states that incidents of sectarian violence are harmful. The IMF adds that it is not possible for Pakistan's exports to grow rapidly, while the rupee depreciated at a rate of 6.6 percent against the dollar in 2013. The report further adds that Pakistan's financial policies will improve in line with the independence of the State Bank.

Buy-out: Chinese firm to acquire Masood Textile Mills, *Express Tribune*, January¹⁴⁷⁰

Majority shareholders of Masood Textile Mills have formally agreed to sell 52% shareholding through a Share Purchase Agreement with a Chinese group and two other acquirers, according to a notice sent to the KSE on January 13.

Govt decides to privatize Lakhra coal power project: Dar, *The News*, January²⁷⁷¹

The government has decided to privatize Lakhra Coal Power Project, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar informed the Privatization Commission on January 25. During a meeting with Privatization Commission, the finance minister said the government is committed to undertake the disinvestment of public sector entities in a transparent manner and assured to fully protect interests of their employees.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Pesco politicking, *Dawn*, January 10⁷²

Minister of State for Water and Power Abid Sher Ali's outburst against electricity thieves in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa isn't new. [...] On Jan 8, he accused the PTI ministers and MPAs of protecting power thieves and inciting the public to block the recovery of bills by Pesco staff in many parts of the province. He also warned that power supply to Bannu where he said theft and default was among the highest in KP would be cut off. As expected, his remarks created a commotion in the KP legislature where a PTI member from Bannu threatened to stop the supply of (hydel) power from his province to Punjab if the PML-N government in Islamabad chose to disconnect

⁶⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/655424/ruling-party-speeds-up-privatisation-process/>

⁶⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-133272-IMF-issues-report-on-Pakistans-economy->

⁷⁰ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/658771/buy-out-chinese-firm-to-acquire-masood-textile-mills/>

⁷¹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-135474-Govt-decides-to-privatize-Lakhra-coal-power-project:-Dar>

⁷² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079483/pesco-politicking>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/03-Jan-2014/pesco-caught-in-the-middle>

power supply to his city from the national grid. Such verbal sparring between the two rival parties on electricity shortages and losses being suffered by Pesco on account of massive power theft and low bill recoveries has been going on for quite some time and is unlikely to stop soon.

Deliberate misstatements, *The Express Tribune*, January 12⁷³

It is becoming increasingly clear that, after a strong start, the Nawaz Administration is losing its nerve on economic management. First, there was the failure to crack down on tax evasion. Then there was the panic over the rupee's declining value. And now thirdly tried to inaccurately put the blame on the caretaker government for the few paltry tax increases it did levy in the federal budget for fiscal year 2014. For Finance Minister Ishaq Dar to have deliberately misstated the facts to his own cabinet colleagues and the nation would have been embarrassing enough. For the misstatements to be corrected by officials at the International Monetary Fund kicks up this particular episode to something of a diplomatic disaster.

Fatca is here!, Syed W Quadri, *The News*, January 14⁷⁴

Ongoing compliance structure, reporting and eventual withholding guidelines regarding US persons' account will be described by the US government in the inter-governmental agreement between the American and Pakistani governments. Fatca regulation is beyond KYC and AML requirements, fairly independent and is in addition to the historical income tax treaty between the US and Pakistan. Subsequently, US departments of justice and treasury and their agencies may instruct Pakistani banks, financial institutions and other entities to withhold 30 percent of the gross proceeds of certain financial transactions, mainly of contenders and non-compliers, and remit to the IRS through QI, WP as well as WT. [...] The fairly long-phased global implementation of Fatca – beginning on July 1, 2014, and continuing through 2017 as provided for in the final regulations of the treasury and IRS under Chapter 4 with a price tag of over \$25 billion in implementation costs – speaks of its significance and wide scope.

Conflicts of interest, *The Express Tribune*, January 16⁷⁵

There is a reason why even the strongest proponents of economic liberalisation and privatisation have a problem with the PML-N's approach to the process: the Nawaz Administration takes almost no efforts to guard against real or perceived conflicts of interest, leading far too many to believe that the game is rigged in advance. The composition of the Privatisation Commission board is highly problematic and will likely subject the government to allegations of corruption. One of the members, for instance, is a beneficiary of privatisation, having bought a formerly state-owned company in the past. [...] There are potential conflicts of interest affecting many other members as well, which suggests that public perception is not something that the Nawaz Administration thought much about before setting up the board.

⁷³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/657807/deliberate-misstatements/>

⁷⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-226461-Fatca-is-here!>

⁷⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/659171/conflicts-of-interest/>

The state of the economy, *The News*, January 18⁷⁶

The cautious optimism of the State Bank of Pakistan's annual report on the economy will not be shared by many. It projected a growth rate of 3 to 4 percent for this fiscal year, which is a bit higher than the predictions of the IMF, which foresees growth of 2.5 to 3 percent, and the World Bank, whose projection stands at 3.4 percent. It is still a welcome dampener from overly-fanciful government estimates of economic growth of 4.4 percent. As it is, all such projections should be seen with some scepticism since they are usually revised – downward in Pakistan's case – and bear only a passing resemblance to the actual figures.

Bad strategies all around, *The Nation*, January 18⁷⁷

The United States Congress has finally passed the spending bill for the fiscal year 2014 after much debate and delay. The 1,582-page document also incorporates conditions attached to the US aid program for Pakistan. It binds the US administration to withhold \$33 million in funds if the Pakistan government fails to drop charges against Dr Shakil Afridi and release him. Dr Afridi conducted an intelligence gathering operation, under the guise of a vaccination campaign in Pakistan for the CIA to help trace Osama Bin Laden. He is currently serving a 33-year imprisonment

Not all bad, *The Nation*, January 20⁷⁸

It has been part of the received wisdom of modern economics that subsidies are bad. Economists from developed countries, and who man the international financial institutions, rail against them virtually as a matter of course. Thus it was a pleasant surprise to hear State Bank Governor Yaseen Anwar say that unless the subsidy on electricity was not increased, inflation could rise. He said this in the course of an informal chat with the press in Karachi on Saturday. He even put a figure on inflation, saying that it could rise to 10.5 or 11.5 percent. However, he did not give a figure of how far he thought the subsidy should go up. He did say that the average price for electricity was Rs 8.50 per unit while the cost was Rs 14 per unit. That implies a subsidy of Rs 5.50 per unit, which the government is committed, under the IMF package terms, to eliminate.

This should show, merely as an example, that the IMF pursues policies which cast governments as anti-growth, and anti-people. People not only find the present power bills onerous, but cannot face a tightening of the screw in the shape of higher inflation. Yet that is exactly what the IMF has got the government to agree to. The government claims to have agreed to the IMF conditions so that it would take the country to a high-growth trajectory. If they lead to strangling what will be at best a fragile recovery, at least initially, then the government will have every right to be disappointed{...}.The government has an obligation to make the IMF reconsider the question of subsidies, not on humanitarian grounds, which it does not recognize anyhow, but on economic. If the country is to repay the IMF loan, it would best be done by sufficient economic growth. For that, the power crisis must end. And the subsidy continue.

⁷⁶ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-227126-The-state-of-the-economy>

⁷⁷ <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/18-Jan-2014/bad-strategies-all-around>

⁷⁸ <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/20-Jan-2014/not-all-bad>

Nuclear power generation, K. Iqbal, *The Nation*, January 20⁷⁹

Last November, PM Nawaz Sharif performed the ground breaking ceremony of Pakistan's largest nuclear power projects, Kanupp-II and Kanupp-III. China is providing the two reactors alongside a concessional loan of \$6.5 billion for the construction of these \$9.59 billion plants. When completed in November 2019, these would add 2,200MW to Pakistan's electric power, at a very cheap rate. This would indeed mitigate the problems of power shortage and high per-unit cost of electricity. Average price of power generated by Chashma-3 and 4 would be around Rs9.59 per unit, much less than the price of electricity generated by thermal plants running on gas or oil. Due to economy of scales, new Kanupp category plants would produce cheaper electricity than the Chashma class power plants. Nuclear power compares favorably with all other sources except hydro-electric power.

On to the second review, Dr Ashfaque H Khan, *The News*, January 21⁸⁰

[...] It is absolutely clear that the current IMF programme is all about building foreign exchange reserves and paying off the IMF loan on time. Dr Muhammad Yaqub, the former governor of Pakistan's central bank, called this programme a 'self-serving programme' and Dr Ehtisham Ahmed – a former senior official of the IMF – termed this as 'development lending'. Dr Ehtisham believes that the geo-political environment has changed dramatically with the agreement of the major powers with Iran which opens up an alternative exit strategy from Afghanistan. As such, Pakistan is losing its strategic importance and, therefore, should not expect much leniency from the IMF.

IP pipeline: fading fast, Ali Rizvi, *The News*, January 22⁸¹

Pakistan's natural gas supply hovers around four billion cubic feet per day and is expected to fall to less than one billion cubic feet per day in another decade. This implies that overall gas shortfall is expected to reach a staggering eight billion cubic feet per day, with the potential of crippling Pakistan's GDP growth rate in the next decade – if there is any more crippling to be done that is.

Amending Laws to Allow Chinese Investment, RanaSajjad Ahmad, *The Express Tribune* January 23⁸²

China has demanded that all mega power projects, including the Bhasha Dam, the Gadani and Lakhra coal plants, the Tarbela extension project and several transmission lines be handed over to China without any competitive bidding in exchange for a \$22 billion dollar Chinese investment in Pakistan. Surprisingly, it was also mentioned in this report that the Pakistani government is seriously considering this offer and is contemplating either using a loophole in Pakistan's public procurement rules or amending these rules to close the deal.

⁷⁹<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/20-Jan-2014/nuclear-power-generation>

⁸⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-227614-On-to-the-second-review>

⁸¹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-227800-IP-pipeline-fading-fast>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/17-Jan-2014/dealing-with-the-energy-crisis>

⁸² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/661992/amending-laws-to-allow-chinese-investment/>

The Rich List, *The Express Tribune*, January 24⁸³

Jim O'Neill's did not include Pakistan in his next list of countries that had the potential to have a positively disruptive impact on the global economy. It is rare to see Pakistan make it near the top of any global list of countries for positive economic achievements. So perhaps, it is understandable to see Pakistanis excited by Jim O'Neill's projections that the total size of the Pakistani economy could reach \$3.3 trillion by 2050, which would make it then the 18th largest economy in the world. [...] He does not predict that it is Pakistan's destiny to become that large an economy. He merely suggests that it has the potential to become that large.

Rs100,000 per Pakistani, Dr. Farrukh Saleem, *The News*, January 26⁸⁴

In 2009, every man, woman and child in Pakistan was indebted to the tune of Rs46,000. In 2011, every man, woman and child in Pakistan was indebted to the tune of Rs61,000. As of the last day of 2013, every Pakistani man, woman and child carried a debt burden of Rs100,000. Lo and behold, between June 2013 and September 2013, our total debt and liabilities, according to the SBP, went up by a colossal Rs1.1 trillion. In effect, the PML-N has been borrowing Rs6 billion a day every day of the year. [...] For the year 2013-14, the blackest of all the black holes – the PSDP – is going to suck in Rs1.15 trillion or a wholesome five percent of our GDP. The PSDP was meant to escalate the rate of our economic growth. Clearly, the PSDP has done no such thing. For the record, no government has ever done an impact assessment of the trillion-rupee PSDP.

Lofty goals, little vision, Dr Muhammad Yaqub, *The News*, January 26⁸⁵

The Pakistani economy is in a deep mess with low rates of savings, investment and growth, high rates of monetary expansion and inflation, large budget and current account deficits, a huge external and internal public debt, and increasing unemployment, income inequality and poverty. [...] It was hoped that the PML-N would part ways from its own past and that of other governments and use its political mandate early in its tenure to initiate fundamental economic reforms that could show positive results by about the time the next general elections were to be held around 2018. Instead, the government seems to have decided to rely on short term patchwork of internal and external borrowings/use of privatisation proceeds to cover the wide financing gaps in the budget and the balance of payments, and avoid taking difficult policy decisions that are vital for the revival of the economy. [...] The recent focus of the government has been on averting a potential external debt default. Debt default would have disrupted foreign trade and international financial flows for the country. It also carried enormous risks for the IMF which had a large amount of repayments due to be paid to it by Pakistan in 2013 and 2014. It was in the interest of both the IMF and the government to agree on an arrangement to avert a potential balance of payments crisis. The government and the IMF were quick to work out a patchwork in the form of an EFF arrangement that was intended to ensure enough foreign exchange resources for repayment of a large chunk of the outstanding IMF debt, and stretching

⁸³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/662477/the-rich-list/>

⁸⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-228709-Rs100000-per-Pakistani>

⁸⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-228706-Lofty-goals-little-vision>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-227129-Enforce-the-law>

out the repayment period for the residual amount by covering them under an EFF rather than a standby arrangement.

Privatisation – pros & cons, Dr Kamal Monnoo, *The Nation*, January 29⁸⁶

A controversy about the Privatisation of Pakistan’s SOE has been brewing from the very onset of this (PML-N) government taking office. Regrettably, the uncertainty about the fate of our public sector organizations compounds with each passing day and ‘uncertainty’ as we know in the corporate world is any organization’s worst enemy. In its typical autocratic style, the PML-N government wants to embark upon perhaps the country’s biggest ever privatisation drive – some say with an estimated value in excess of Pak Rupees 1 trillion. [...] Ironically, the Board of the PC, which is already claiming victory on the front of ‘ensuring transparency’, is itself embroiled in controversy. The Chairman of the PC will be well served by realizing that a clean chit on transparency has to come from neutral observers and stakeholders and cannot be ‘self-proclaimed’.

SECURITY SITUATION

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said here on January 1 that he planned to strengthen the NSC and make it an institutionalised forum with the power to take relevant decisions. In the past, he said, stakeholders spoke differently, but now everyone should come and speak at this forum and then implement decisions taken there.⁸⁷

The corps commanders met at General Headquarter in Rawalpindi on January 2, expressing satisfaction over the military’s operational preparedness to deal with any probable threat, Dawn News reported. The commanders met under the leadership of Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif and discussed the country’s security situation.⁸⁸

COAS, General Raheel Sharif said January 6 that “there cannot be a bigger sacrifice for the motherland than one’s life or precious limbs.” During his visit to the AFIRM, COAS paid rich tributes to the sacrifices, valour and determination of the soldiers who were injured in the ongoing war on terror.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/29-Jan-2014/privatisation-pros-cons>. For details see other opinion pieces that appeared in: <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083185/privatisation-kerfuffle>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-229136-Transparent-privatisation>,
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1081293/zombie-idea>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1080889/already-privatised>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/659115/what-is-the-state-silver-anyway/>

⁸⁷ Plan to strengthen NSC, says Sharif, Dawn, January 2, 2014,
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1077817/plan-to-strengthen-nsc-says-sharif>

⁸⁸ Corps commanders satisfied over operational preparedness, Dawn, January 2 <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077930/corps-commanders-satisfied-over-operational-preparedness>

⁸⁹ No bigger sacrifice for motherland than one’s life or precious limbs: COAS, The News, January 6, 2014, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-133162-No-bigger-sacrifice-for-motherland-than-ones-life-or-precious-limbs:-COAS->

A Utah-based gun manufacturer has turned down a \$15 million deal to supply Pakistan with precision rifles, citing concerns they could eventually be used against US troops.⁹⁰

TERRORISM

Funding terrorism: Illegal cash flows may be aiding terrorists, *Express Tribune*, January 6⁹¹

Terrorist groups in the FATA and Balochistan have been receiving billions of rupees each month through banking channels and money exchange companies, sources in FIA have revealed. These companies in collusion with some bankers have been transferring huge amounts to unnamed bank accounts in Quetta and Peshawar. The FIA has recently found evidence of transfer of billions of rupees to the two cities in the last few months.

TALIBAN TALKS

Disclosing that dialogue with some militant groups was in a crucial phase, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan renewed on January 12 the government's offer of talks to the banned TTP and other groups so far averse to the process. Speaking at a press conference here he said it would be clear in a few days if the process would gain momentum, but hoped for a positive outcome.⁹²

The banned TTP has put forward an offer for peace talks to the Pakistani government. In statement issued here on January 19, TTP spokesman Shahidullah Shahid said the Taliban were ready for meaningful dialogue. The TTP spokesman said Taliban were ready for talks, however, the government should show its power and sincerity.⁹³ Minister for Interior Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan on January 27 apprised the National Assembly that the government was decisively consulting all stakeholders including the politicians and security agencies to heed afresh offer of dialogue from Pakistani Taliban.⁹⁴

Although the government and the military continued to discuss matters behind closed doors, government officials took pains on January 28 to argue that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had made up his mind to take the battle to the TTP stronghold in North NWA. "*More than one option is being considered for going into NWA; it's just a matter of time now,*" a government official privy to the development told Dawn.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Utah gun maker turns down \$15M deal with Pakistan, Dawn, January 6, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078729/utah-gun-maker-turns-down-15m-deal-with-pakistan>

⁹¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/655400/funding-terrorism-illegal-cash-flows-may-be-aiding-terrorists/>

⁹² Minister renews peace talks offer to TTP, Dawn, January 13, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080211/minister-renews-peace-talks-offer-to-ttp>

⁹³ Ready for meaningful dialogue with government: TTP spokesman, The News, January 19, 2014, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-134709-Ready-for-dialogue-with-Pakistani-government--TTP>

⁹⁴ Decisive consultation underway amid fresh TTP talks offer: Nisar, Dawn, January 28, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083089/decisive-consultation-underway-amid-fresh-ttp-talks-offer-nisar>

⁹⁵ PML-N resolves to take battle to TTP bastion, Dawn, January 29, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083446/pml-n-resolves-to-take-battle-to-ttp-bastion>

Talking peace with the Taliban has probably been the most divisive topic in Pakistani politics today. Complex issues regarding strategy, counter-insurgency, radicalism, civil-military relations and negotiations have essentially been condensed to a singular question: To talk or not to talk? With the government once again reaching out to Maulana Samiul Haq to break the ice for talks with the TTP, the debate over how to handle Pakistan's militancy problem – probably the most divisive topic in the country – has resurfaced again.⁹⁶

By bringing Maulana Samiul Haq into the ambit of the much-hyped peace talks the government seems to have recognised the markers that divide various militant outfits. But will the policy to take all 'stakeholders' on board pay off? Is a political settlement to the conflict in Pakistan a possibility at last? And most importantly, how far is the conflict along the Durand Line a local problem now?⁹⁷

Pakistan is planning to enlist Saudi Arabia's help in brokering a peace deal with the TTP in its quest for peace in the long term. When Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al Faisal meets Pakistani officials during his two-day visit beginning January 6 one of the key agenda items would be to explore the possibility of Riyadh's role in the government's peacemaking efforts, *The Express Tribune* has learnt.⁹⁸

JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on January 7 said talks with TTP – stalled by US drone strike – were a must for peace. "There are hurdles in the way of formulating an effective strategy including a forum for this purpose but talks with the Taliban are a must for peace," Fazl said while addressing the media at National Press Club.⁹⁹

Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Memon said on January 11 that the federal government should ensure there is a ceasefire from the Taliban side if the government is to engage them in peace talks.¹⁰⁰

Speaking to COAS General Raheel Sharif, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif Monday expressed his grief over bomb blast on January 20 near the GHQ, adding that the government has decided to take difficult decisions in order to establish peace in the country.¹⁰¹

The chief of his own faction of the JUI-S, Maulana Samiul Haq who had received the go ahead from Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to initiate dialogue with the Pakistani Taliban has excused himself from the process. Maulana Samiul Haq said he had informed the prime minister of receiving a positive response for the TTP on January

⁹⁶Taliban talks are a complex, long-term process, *Express Tribune*, January 2, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/653667/expert-views-talks-are-a-complex-long-term-process/>

⁹⁷Comment: Time to test Samiul Haq's much-vaunted influence on the Taliban, *Express Tribune*, January 2, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/653665/comment-time-to-test-samiul-haqs-much-vaunted-influence-on-the-taliban/>

⁹⁸Taliban talks: Govt eyes Saudi mediation for peace, *Express Tribune*, January 6, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/655425/taliban-talks-govt-eyes-saudi-mediation-for-peace/>

⁹⁹Peace process: Talks with Taliban are a must, says Fazl, *Express Tribune*, January 8, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/656319/peace-process-talks-with-taliban-are-a-must-says-fazl/>

¹⁰⁰Fed Govt should ensure Taliban Ceasefire before Talks: Sharjeel, *Dawn*, January 11, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079831/fed-govt-should-ensure-taliban-ceasefire-before-talks-sharjeel>

¹⁰¹Govt has decided to make tough calls for peace, PM tells army chief, *Dawn*, January 20, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081503/govt-has-decided-to-make-tough-calls-for-peace-pm-tells-army-chief>

2. He added that despite repeated contact, the prime minister did not convey the future course of action.¹⁰²

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced on January 29 that his government would pursue peace talks with Taliban militants despite a recent spate of attacks, naming a four-member committee to facilitate the talks. The premier announced the constitution of a four-member team – comprising his Advisor on National Affairs Irfan Siddique, veteran journalist Rahimullah Yusufzai, former ambassador and expert on Afghanistan affairs Rustam Shah Mohmand and former ISI official Major (Retd) Amir Shah – to hold talks with the militants. He said that Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan would assist the committee.¹⁰³

Members of a high-powered committee formed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to initiate peace talks with the Taliban arrived in Islamabad on January 30 for consultations prior to their meeting with the premier.¹⁰⁴

The Pakistani Taliban on Friday have started consultations to respond to the latest dialogue offer by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, said a Taliban leader.

The political shura or council started its meeting at an unknown location to discuss the government's offer and forward recommendations, said the TTP leader, who spoke on the condition of anonymity as he is not authorised to speak to the media. *"The political council will forward its decisions to the central council for a final decision"*¹⁰⁵

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA AND FATA

Army takes control of Peshawar Central Jail, Dawn, January 2¹⁰⁶

More than 200 security personnel were deployed in and around Peshawar Central Jail in addition to the army personnel postings to guard the jail which according to security sources, was on account of routine rehearsal arranged to cope with an emergency situation.

70 workers in Khyber refuse to administer polio vaccine, Dawn, January 15¹⁰⁷

As many as 70 'front-line health workers' in Jamrud tehsil of Khyber Agency have refused to take part in a three-day polio vaccination campaign beginning in the region on Saturday, citing security concerns.

Pakistan sets up military base in Swat Valley, Dawn, January 16¹⁰⁸

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on January 15 announced the setting up of a permanent military base in the troubled Swat Valley where Taliban insurgents shot schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai in the head. The scenic northwestern district slipped out of government control after Taliban fighters led by cleric Maulana Fazlullah, now chief

¹⁰²Maulana Samiul Haq detaches himself from TTP talks, The News, January 22, 2014, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-135094-Maulana-Samiul-Haq-detaches-himself-from-TTP-talks>

¹⁰³PM Sharif announces another push for Taliban peace talks, Dawn, January 29, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083531/pm-sharif-announces-another-push-for-taliban-peace-talks>

¹⁰⁴High-powered committee holds informal meeting, Dawn, January 30, 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083777/high-powered-committee-holds-informal-meeting>

¹⁰⁵Taliban begin consultations to respond to govt talks offer, Express Tribune, January 31, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/665793/taliban-begin-consultations-to-respond-to-govt-talks-offer/>

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077912/army-takes-control-of-peshawar-central-jail>

¹⁰⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1079763/70-workers-in-khyber-refuse-to-administer-polio-vaccine>

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080532/pakistan-sets-up-military-base-in-swat-valley>

of TTP, took control of the area in 2007 and waged a brutal campaign of beheadings, violence and multiple attacks on girls' schools.

Jets pound suspected militant hideouts in North Waziristan, Dawn, January 21¹⁰⁹

Pakistan military's fighter jets pounded several suspected militant hideouts in Mir Ali area of the North Waziristan tribal region, killing at least 24 people and wounding 15 others. "This hadn't been planned before, and Pakistan Air Force jets were called to hit hideouts of the militants involved in attacks on security forces," said one military official who spoke on condition of anonymity. Tribal elder Malik Jan Mohammad in Mir Ali said 15 people were killed whereas a Taliban source put the death toll at 27, including civilians.

Key militant commander Adnan Rashid killed in N. Waziristan, The News, January 21¹¹⁰

According to security sources, Taliban commander Adnan Rashid has been killed in military strikes in North Waziristan. The Taliban have not denied nor is confirmed Rashid killing. Earlier on January 21, military jets and gunship helicopters pounded militant hideouts in the Mir Ali area of North Waziristan. Unconfirmed reports state that Rashid's house was targeted in the strikes. Adnan Rashid was sentenced to death for the attack on former president General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf in 2004. He was imprisoned at the Bannu prison and was freed along with 400 inmates when militants stormed the prison in 2012. Rashid was also the mastermind of the 2013 Dera Ismail Khan jail break in which over 170 prisoners escaped.

North Waziristan strikes killed 36 foreign fighters: sources, Dawn, January 22¹¹¹

At least 36 of the 40 killed during the air strikes in the North Waziristan tribal region on Monday night and Tuesday were foreign fighters, security sources told Dawn.com on January 20. Thirty-three Uzbeks and three Germans were among those killed during the air strikes which also injured at least 15. Important commanders were also among those killed in the onslaught. These include Wali Mohammad and Asmat Shaheen. Maulvi Farhad Uzbek and Shaheen Betini were also among those killed.

Thousands flee North Waziristan after airstrikes, Dawn, January 25¹¹²

Thousands have fled North Waziristan region, which lies along the Pak-Afghan border, after airstrikes this week targeting suspected Taliban militant hideouts killed dozens of people, elders and officials said on January 25. The airstrikes took place as domestic pressure grew on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to take tougher action against Taliban militants following a string of attacks across the country in the past week.

¹⁰⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1081721/jets-pound-suspected-militant-hideouts-in-north-waziristan>

¹¹⁰<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-134961-Key-militant-commander-Adnan-Rasheed-killed-in-N.-Waziristan>

¹¹¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1081945/north-waziristan-strikes-killed-36-foreign-fighters-sources>

¹¹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082634/thousands-flee-north-waziristan-after-airstrikes>

BALUCHISTAN

Balochistan unrest: VBMP claims 161 extra-judicial killings in 2013, *Dawn*, January 1¹¹³

VBMP, a non-profit rights group on December 31, 2013, alleged that 161 Baloch political workers were subjected to extra-judicial killings in different parts of Balochistan, Pakistan's largest province in land mass, during the year 2013.

IG FC reveals 50 insurgent camps operating in Balochistan, *Dawn*, January 3¹¹⁴

Inspector General Frontier Corps Balochistan Major General Ejaz Shahid on January 3 revealed that more than 50 militant camps of Baloch insurgents are operating in the province.

MPA injured in Quetta explosion; two killed in Naseerabad blast, *Dawn*, January 4¹¹⁵

Member of Balochistan Assembly and Advisor to Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch on Zakat Mir Majid Abro was injured in a bomb explosion in the Western Bypass area of Quetta on January 4, police said.

Minister rules out presence of Afghan Taliban in Balochistan, *Dawn*, January 7¹¹⁶

Terming reports about presence of Afghan Taliban as baseless and far from reality, Balochistan Home Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti on January 6 said that there is no Taliban Shura in Quetta. "No sign of Afghan Taliban factor in the province," he told reporters, adding that foreign hands were involved in the prevailing unrest in Balochistan, Pakistan's least developed and area wise the biggest province.

Missing persons: 209 cases of Baloch political workers so far, *Dawn*, January 9¹¹⁷

Commission on enforced disappearances has hitherto received 209 cases of missing Baloch political workers from Balochistan, Pakistan's least developed and insurgency-hit province.

Sectarian killings in Balochistan, *Dawn*, January 10¹¹⁸

Most sectarian attacks in this part of the province are claimed by the LJ and its affiliates such as the Jaish-ul-Islam. Although the location of these groups — in pockets within Quetta city, parts of Mastung district including Splinji and Kobo, and towards Machh and Kalat — is well known, apprehending them is not simple, according to police.

¹¹³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1077542/balochistan-unrest-vbmp-claims-161-extra-judicial-killings-in-2013>

¹¹⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1078156/ig-fc-reveals-50-insurgent-camps-operating-in-balochistan>

¹¹⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1078353/mpa-injured-in-quetta-explosion-two-killed-in-naseerabad-blast>

¹¹⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1078764/minister-rules-out-presence-of-afghan-taliban-in-balochistan>

¹¹⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1079185/missing-persons-209-cases-of-baloch-political-workers-so-far>

¹¹⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079540/sectarian-killings-in-balochistan>

Gas pipeline blown up in Dera Murad Jamali, *The News*, January 11¹¹⁹

Unidentified miscreants blew up a 24-inch diameter gas pipeline in Dera Murad Jamali here on January 10 night. According to police, the bombing damaged part of the pipeline in Notaal suspending gas supply to many districts of the restive province of Balochistan including the provincial capital Quetta.

Security forces launch operation in Mastung; three detained, *Express Tribune*, January 24¹²⁰

Security forces detained at least three suspected individuals during a full scale operation in Mastung's Kanak and Derringer areas on January 23. The operation was launched Friday morning by security forces which included personnel from the Frontier Corps, police, ATF and Levies and recruits from Balochistan Constabulary.

Militants blow up gas pipeline in Dera Bugti, *Dawn*, January 27¹²¹

A pipeline, carrying natural gas, was blown up in Balochistan's Dera Bugti district late on January 26 disrupting the gas-supply to the Sui plant from well number 15 in Pir Koh gas field, Dawn News reported.

SINDH

Sindh's eighth polio case of 2013 confirmed, *Dawn*, January 2¹²²

The turn of the new calendar year did not end the miseries of the city's children who continue to be at the risk of the crippling polio disease with the eighth case of 2013 in Sindh only to be confirmed by the authorities in 2014.

Taliban bombing kills senior police officer Chaudhry Aslam, *Dawn*, January 9¹²³

A powerful explosion targeted a convoy of police vehicles in Karachi on January 9 killing senior police official Chaudhry Aslam Khan. Chaudhry Aslam, who had survived numerous assassination attempts in the past, died along with two other officers when the bomb targeted the convoy on the Lyari expressway in Karachi.

Rangers want continuity of present police setup in Karachi, *Dawn*, January 15¹²⁴

The Director General Rangers Major General Rizwan Akhter on January 14 expressed concern over the news circulating in the media regarding high-level postings in the police department, and said that the Rangers wanted that the present police setup in the city should continue for a year.

¹¹⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-133745-Gas-pipeline-blown-up-in-Dera-Murad-Jamali>

¹²⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082380/security-forces-launch-operation-in-mastung-three-detained>

¹²¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083050/militants-blow-up-gas-pipeline-in-dera-bugti>

¹²² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077740/sindhs-eighth-polio-case-of-2013-confirmed>

¹²³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079405/taliban-bombing-kills-senior-police-officer-chaudhry-aslam>

¹²⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080482/rangers-want-continuity-of-present-police-setup-in-karachi>

AFGHAN SECURITY SITUATION

Complete US pullout not desirable: Jilani, Dawn, January 1¹²⁵

The withdrawal of all American troops from Afghanistan is not desirable, says Pakistan's new ambassador as the United States prepares to begin the pullout. "Even the talk of US pullout has started having its impact. Pakistan has started to receive more Afghan refugees than before," said Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani. "This shows that the people of Afghanistan too have fears."

US declares Taliban leader global terrorist, Dawn, January 8¹²⁶

The US Department of State on January 6 declared Qari Saifullah, a Quetta-based Taliban commander, a specially designated global terrorist. Qari Saifullah is the Taliban's shadow deputy governor and an operational commander in Afghanistan's Zabul province, but the designation identifies him as a resident of Quetta.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Sartaj Aziz on the war on terror, Daily Times, January 10¹²⁷

Sartaj Aziz delivered his and his government's views on the subject of the WoT. [...] He said, was "fighting the wrong war with the wrong methods against the wrong people" (he did not elucidate who or what the 'right' war, methods and enemy should be).

Karachi's sectarian backyard, Razeshta Sethna and Zia Ur Rehman, Dawn, January 14¹²⁸

In a city drawn into a spiral of violence where crime, politics and extremism are interlinked, law-enforcement agencies are poorly resourced and conviction rates low, where religious institutions with political agendas teach lessons of hate and sectarian fault lines are ripped apart, it is difficult to clearly identify the causes of sectarian violence. Since 2007, increasing violence in Pakistan with militants targeting political leaders, the military and police, clerics, tribal leaders, Shias, and schools has found an urban epicenter in Karachi. In its latest security report, the PIPS reported a 53pc increase in sectarian violence for 2013. More than 85pc of such attacks and 68pc of the people killed were concentrated in Karachi, Quetta, Gilgit and Kurram Agency. [...] The banned sectarian group LJ, sharing operational and ideological ties with Al Qaeda and the TTP, demonstrates how militancy elsewhere in the country affects the city through a lethal nexus.

¹²⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077584/complete-us-pullout-not-desirable-jilani>

¹²⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079051/us-declares-taliban-leader-global-terrorist>

¹²⁷ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/10-Jan-2014/sartaj-aziz-on-the-war-on-terror>

¹²⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080324/karachis-sectarian-backyard>

Nawaz Sharif in Swat, *Daily Times*, January 17¹²⁹

In a first since Swat was cleared of the Taliban led by Mulla Fazlullah, PM Nawaz Sharif visited the valley for what turned out to be a dual purpose. First and foremost, he was briefed by the military on the situation in the area. The PM approved the setting up of a brigade-level cantonment spread over three stations, Malakand, Khwaza Khela and Kanju. The decision seems to indicate the desire of the military to wind up operations and reduce the number of troops, which currently boast a division (40,000 troops) in Khwaza Khela and smaller deployments in Kanju. It also reflects the confidence of the military that their clearance of the area of the malign presence of Mulla Fazlullah and his Taliban fanatics, once headquartered in the area, is by now an established fact of life, requiring a smaller permanent presence only to ensure they do not stage a comeback.

Tableeghi Markaz bombing, *Dawn*, January 18¹³⁰

On 16th Jan blast at Peshawar's Tableeghi Markaz throws up a number of questions. [...] It is surprising that the militants would choose to strike a target that represents conservative religious thought. Perhaps this, yet again, shows that in the militants' holy war, nothing is sacred. Tableeghi centres have been bombed in the past, most notably in Swat last January. While the TTP has been quick to distance itself from the Peshawar blast, we should remember that the Pakistani Taliban are not a homogenous group, as numerous outfits are functioning under the militants' umbrella. So while the 'official' TTP spokesman may have denied responsibility, there is a distinct possibility that hardliners within the militants' ranks carried out the bombing. But why target the TableeghiJamaat, an apolitical, largely peaceful group that concentrates on preaching? After all, the group and many in the militant movement are ideologically linked, pledging allegiance to the Deobandi school of thought, even though the Tableeghis stress peaceful preaching, while the militants wish to spread faith by fire and the sword. There are a number of possibilities; some observers feel the militants are not happy with the movement, criticising the Tableeghis for emphasising preaching over jihad. Some Al Qaeda-linked Takfiri groups have actually issued fatwas against the TableeghiJamaat. So the bombing possibly was carried out to 'teach' the Tableeghis a 'lesson'. Sectarian militants may also be responsible, while the role of foreign elements cannot be ruled out.

Swat deradicalisation project – I, Dr Fawad Kaiser, *Daily Times*, January 20¹³¹

Broad examination of the Swat deradicalisation project reflects that modules stress the importance of religious dialogue to address a detainee's understanding of Islam, a strategy critical for challenging the extremist's mind, which relies on religion for legitimacy of his behavior. A deradicalisation project was launched by the Pakistan army in the Swat region of KP in 2009 for the rehabilitation of a cohort of militant detainees, excluding screened out hardcore militants, after they were arrested by the successful military operation in 2009. The programme involved three programmes,

¹²⁹ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/17-Jan-2014/nawaz-sharif-in-swat>

¹³⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081012/tableeghi-markaz-bombing>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/660007/attack-in-peshawar-3/>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/18-Jan-2014/tablighi-markaz-attacked>

¹³¹ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/20-Jan-2014/swat-deradicalisation-project-i>

‘Sabawoon’, focusing on juveniles, ‘Mishal’, working on adult detainees, and ‘Sparlay’, which included working with family members of detained militants. Four modules incorporating a psycho-social educational curriculum were designed, which provide formal education to juveniles along with psychological counseling and family therapy culminating in vocational training.

Shameful capitulation, Zahid Hussain, *Dawn*, January 22¹³²

Half the battle was lost long ago when Pakiatan’s national leaders embraced the militant narrative and legitimised violence. Now it is complete capitulation. So, it doesn’t matter how many more people are killed, religious places bombed or soldiers blown up; it is not our war anyway. Murderers claim responsibility, even come live on TV talk shows to flaunt their views. Never mind, they are our misguided brothers just angered by the presence of US forces across the border and the drone strikes killing their leaders. Forget the thousands of innocent lives lost in the terrorist attacks; forget soldiers and police officers killed in the line of duty; forget the teenager from Hangu who gave his life to save his schoolmates from a suicide bomber — Government must talk to those angry fellows and address their grievances. “Give peace a chance” is now a favourite mantra to justify capitulation. Dialogue is the only option, they chant in unison.

Action or what?, *The News*, January 23¹³³

The government has decided to shroud its military action against the TTP in North Waziristan in secrecy at a time it needs to level with the public. The ubiquitous military sources claimed that Adnan Rashid, the militant convicted of an attempted assassination on Pervez Musharraf – and who had escaped from prison in Bannu – had been killed but the TTP denied this. Those same sources also say that of the 50 people killed so far, 36 were foreign militants. This too should not be taken at face value since airstrikes are rarely that precise and trying to convince us that most of the militants are foreigners could be a ploy to garner support for the action. What we can say with some certainty is that the prospects of talks have stalled, perhaps forever.

Lawlessness codified, *The News*, January 24¹³⁴

Under pressure from the Supreme Court, the government has devised a novel solution to the problem of ‘missing’ persons by making a previously illegal action legal. The PPO, which has been sold to the public as a necessary counterterrorism measure, was amended on the orders of the Supreme Court to tackle the vexing issue of illegal detentions. Rather than deny law-enforcement agencies the right to pick up whoever they want for any reason they desire, the ordinance will now allow the government to hold suspects without charge for as long as they want and without having to inform anyone, including the courts, where they are being detained. Previously the ordinance had only given the government the power to keep suspects without charge for no more than 90 days. On top of that, the PPO also gives the government the extraordinary

¹³² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081840/shameful-capitulation>

¹³³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-228052-Action-or-what>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1081845/military-operation-is-needed>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/22-Jan-2014/bombardment-in-north-waziristan>

¹³⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-228245-Lawlessness-codified>

power to revoke the citizenship of anyone declared an enemy combatant. Since the government and military have already made clear that they consider Baloch separatists to be unpatriotic we can expect the PPO to be wielded as a weapon against them. This is an audacious move at a time when the Supreme Court has been trying to locate and free those held illegally. The court is yet to rule on the constitutionality of the PPO but the intention behind the ordinance is as clear as the sun.

A stillborn process, *Dawn*, January 25¹³⁵

[...]The news of Maulana Samiul Haq's 'quitting' the peace process designed to bring religious militants to the bargaining table with the state must have been greeted with mirth. After all, when did the maulana-led process ever begin? An ostensibly hurt Samiul Haq released a statement on Jan 22 in which he blamed Nawaz Sharif's "lack of seriousness" for the failure of his grand push for peace. However, Prime Minister House retorted with a sharply worded statement on Jan 23 that Mr Sharif had never actually tasked the maulana with "any specific mission". Who to believe? Our politicians have mastered the art of spin and are known to dismiss statements on record as 'siyasibayan'. But most people familiar with the hurly-burly of Pakistani politics had regarded SamiulHaq's original claims of opening dialogue channels with the militants with scepticism. After all, reports indicated the prime minister had never explicitly assigned the cleric the role of go-between and gave him the vaguest of go-aheads to attempt mediation. The maulana, never media shy, made it appear as if he had been officially anointed the state's peace emissary to the Taliban

Sindh blasts, *The News*, January 26¹³⁶

Sindh is getting no respite from the fear of violence that has enveloped the province. Right after Karachi had suffered through a resurgence of targeted attacks and strikes by various groups, there were nearly 50 simultaneous cracker attacks in both the urban and rural areas of the province. The coordinated nature of the attacks, which seem to be warning shots rather than direct attacks meant to inflict heavy civilian casualties indicate the work of an organised and dedicated outfit. Although no one has claimed responsibility for the attacks, the general consensus seems to be that the banned JSMM is behind the blasts. The nationalist group had called for a province-wide strike on Saturday to protest against MQM chief Altaf Hussain's remarks calling for Sindh to be divided and Karachi made a separate province. The police have arrested 100 people in response but have not confirmed if the suspects were linked to the JSMM.

Stopgap measures, *Dawn*, January 26¹³⁷

It is a sign of the times that militants can terrorise the state to such an extent that people's freedom of movement has to be curtailed. In reaction to Tuesday's deadly

¹³⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082521/a-stillborn-process>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-226921-Smokescreens>

¹³⁶ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-228704-Sindh-blasts>

¹³⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082769/stopgap-measures>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/25-Jan-2014/killing-of-hazara-shias>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-228551-After-the-funerals>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1082240/popular-outrage>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/23-Jan-2014/useless-condemnation>

bombing in Mastung, in which at least 28 Shia pilgrims were killed, the Balochistan government has stopped bus travel for pilgrims between Pakistan and Iran “for the time being”. [...] Balochistan Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch has suggested that PIA launch flights between Quetta and the Iranian city of Mashhad, adding that ferries should also ply from Gwadar and Karachi to ports in Iran. The real solution lies in uprooting the terrorist infrastructure in Balochistan and wherever else the militants have safe havens in the country. [...] Suggesting alternative routes or enhancing security for travellers are well-meaning steps, but they fail to address the core issue

Defining the Counter-Terrorism narrative, Saad Rasool, *The Nation*, January 26¹³⁸

A new National Security Policy for Pakistan is being formulated behind closed doors of the GHQ and Interior Ministry, wrapped in a shroud of secrecy and a mist of confusion. [...] there are three components of the new policy – Secret, Strategic and Operational. Per statements of the Interior Minister, a Joint Intelligence Directorate will be set up, under the new policy, for central coordination and intelligence-sharing among the 26 intelligence agencies in the country. The policy will pursue a dual strategy of carrot and a stick: while talks with Taliban remain part of the mix, a security offensive will also be pursued. [...] Furthermore, per the official reports, a special meeting on the Federal Cabinet, chaired by the PM himself, has been called on Monday, in order to review and approve this new Security Policy.

Faustian bargain?, Babar Sattar, *Dawn*, January 27¹³⁹

[...] If you are an apologist, supporter or sympathiser of the TTP, you’re not on their target list and the state tries to appease you. If you are critical of TTP-led terror, you’re marked and the state leaves you to fend for yourself. In this situation what side should a rational mind pick? Remember Swat? Within a year or so we saw a coercive consensus transformed into a conformist consensus under the brutal Fazlullah regime. Wouldn’t you fear those who demonstrate their intent and capacity to maul fellow citizens without any qualms? When those under threat don’t resist coercion in the interest of self-preservation, a conformist consensus is born. But this doesn’t happen until the state acts as a neutral bystander twiddling its thumbs watching one set of citizens force another into submission by threat or use of force. [...] Any citizen who happens to be at the wrong place at the wrong time is a legitimate general target for terrorists. Then there are specific group and individual targets: Hazaras, Shias generally, and now journalists are group targets; religious leaders who speak against the terror-driven tyrannical model of faith or anchors critical of terrorists or perceived as liberal are on individual hit lists. Political parties, of liberal persuasion, and individual leaders, vocal about their opposition to terror, have been marked as group and individual targets respectively.

¹³⁸ <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/26-Jan-2014/defining-the-counter-terrorism-narrative>

¹³⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082946/faustian-bargain>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/27-Jan-2014/time-to-declare-open-jihad-against-the-taliban>

Counting bodies, *The Express Tribune*, January 27¹⁴⁰

For years, Pakistan and India have played with the fate of fishermen who accidentally cross territorial waters while out at sea. These unfortunate persons have usually ended up in jails in each other's countries, often with families quite unaware of where they are or what has become of them. Now things seem to be taking an even darker turn. [...]For well over a month, the body of an Indian fisherman, who died while being held in custody in Pakistan, has been lying at an Edhi centre morgue. The refusal to hand it over to his family across the border is tied in to a tit-for-tat game that it seems has been played over some time. Indian authorities, too, have failed to return the bodies of Pakistanis who have died in prison, sometimes holding onto these until they can be 'exchanged' for another body.

Classified report, Kahar Zalmay, *Daily Times*, January 28¹⁴¹

Strange Arabic music infiltrated the air and, as it faded, the flag hoisting the Islamic Emirates of Waziristan could be seen. Imran Khan remained standing during the entire ceremony. Excitement coupled with fear dominated the ambience of a small cave in Miranshah. Apparently, Maulana Fazlur Rehman was continuously repeating some mantras on his worry beads, Maulana Samiul Haq was exploring his beard, Munawar Hasan and Imran Khan were conversing with each other in murmurs but inside their hearts the only wish, prayer and craving was the timely arrival of the TTP chief, Mullah Fazlullah as the drones were also hovering. They were preparing some kind of joint presentation, separately. On a piece of paper were written some demands and statistics: more than 50,000 Pakistani citizens have died, including 5,000 soldiers, 500 schools have been blown up in the tribal belt and KP province, dozens of polio workers have died in attacks reportedly carried out by the Taliban. All this was shuttled among them in three rounds. Some intellectual rubbish was communicated to Imran Khan on his Thuraya satellite phone. The voices on the other side closely resembled Orya Maqbool Jan and Ansar Abbasi...

Terrorism and journalists, *Daily times*, January 29¹⁴²

The Taliban claimed responsibility for killing three Express News TV workers in broad daylight in Karachi on January 18. It was the third attack on the media group. Following the attack a statement was issued by the Taliban warning journalists of dreadful consequences if they kept pursuing the 'anti-Islamic' agenda of the government. They also released a list of journalists who according to the Taliban deserved death because of their harsh stance against the group. The list has not been made public, though certain media houses claim to have received it.

¹⁴⁰ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/663734/counting-bodies/>

¹⁴¹ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/28-Jan-2014/classified-report>

¹⁴² <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/29-Jan-2014/terrorism-and-journalists>

Seeking stability in Afghanistan in 2014, Dr Qaisar Rashid, *Daily Times*, January 29¹⁴³

If the US enters into an agreement with the Taliban, the Kabul government becomes secondary in the eyes of the Taliban. Furthermore, Karzai also thinks that Pakistan should be a party to any dialogue with the Taliban

Back to square one, *Dawn*, January 30¹⁴⁴

Unexpectedly, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif went to parliament on 29th January and spoke from the floor of the National Assembly about his government's plans to combat terrorism and militancy.[...] only logical conclusion: the dialogue option was being discarded in favour of the use of force against the TTP. But, befitting a prime minister who is giving new meaning to the terms secretiveness and holding one's cards close to one's chest, Mr Sharif sprang a surprise that virtually no one saw coming. The government is appointing a four-member committee to give the dialogue option one more chance, the prime minister announced.

TTP's Achilles heel, Jamal Hussain, *Daily Times*, January 30¹⁴⁵

Wars, as Clausewitz suggests, are violent clashes of opposing wills, each seeking to prevail over the other. [...] In the current unconventional and asymmetric warfare that the state of Pakistan is engaged in against the TTP, the latter, despite no recourse to the teachings of Clausewitz or for that matter any formal academic training in warfare, are applying this simple principle against Pakistan very effectively. Combining a psychological warfare blitz with random but sensational attacks on key national installations and targeting high profile political and military/police personnel who are engaged in anti-TTP operations, they have virtually caused a paralysis in the decision making capability of the present politico/military leadership. Only after the elevation of the rabid Fazlullah as the head of the TTP, they appear to have overplayed their hand, giving a much needed wakeup call to the leadership and the administration, which have finally realised that the Taliban's terror can no longer be tolerated.

In hearts, not on flagpoles, Kamila Hyat, *The News*, January 30¹⁴⁶

How many of Pakistanis would recognise a flag with a green and red stripe, and a blue triangle in which a white star appears? Most of people would not know this

¹⁴³ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/29-Jan-2014/seeking-stability-in-afghanistan-in-2014>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/660011/an-endless-endgame/>

¹⁴⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083730/back-to-square-one>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/29-Jan-2014/unnerved-and-undecided>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-229494-Talking-to-the-TTP>

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/30-Jan-2014/ttp-s-achilles-heel>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/25-Jan-2014/a-new-ball-game>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-229281-The-incompetent-state-and-Pakistani-paralysis>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/24-Jan-2014/taliban-talks-in-jeopardy>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/18-Jan-2014/no-more-tinkering-please>

¹⁴⁶ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-229496-In-hearts-not-on-flagpoles>

emblem – but Baloch children do, with rough drawings of the image appearing in many places. The fact that this flag flies over buildings in the province is something we should all note with the greatest concern for the integration and solidarity of our country. It signals sentiments in that province which will not change as a result of actions such as those the inspector general of the Frontier Corps has proudly announced his forces had carried out. Replacing the Baloch nationalist flag and compelling children in schools to sing out the national anthem, despite their reluctance, will not do a thing to allay this concern or make the problem go away. search of their missing loved ones buried perhaps like those found in Khuzdar.

Of justice for the Hazaras, I.A. Rehman, Dawn, January 30¹⁴⁷

The emergency measures taken after the nationwide protest at the latest round of killing of pilgrims in Mastung district offer little assurance that a way to end the ordeal of the Hazara community has been found. [...] the anti-Hazara militias will have greater freedom and capacity to continue their murderous attacks on the beleaguered community. What does this portend for the Hazaras (the Shia majority among them, as the small numbers of Sunni Hazaras are not targeted) and Balochistan? [...] There is every reason to apprehend that the Hazaras will not be the only victims of their violence. The governments of Pakistan, Punjab and Balochistan must together realise the consequences of tolerating the anti-Hazara forces. Hitherto the world has tended to treat the Hazara killings as manifestations of sectarian intolerance. If the killings are not ended the verdict against Pakistan could be much harsher.

Creating barriers to stupidity, Gil Bukhari, *The Nation*, January 31¹⁴⁸

It wouldn't be hyperbole to say that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's decisions announced in the National Assembly on Wednesday left the nation in shell shock. To a country expecting a detailed strategy and an all-out war on militancy after being under siege for several months, not only the intent to 'talk' with the Taliban, but the choice of persons to do the job was no less than another powerful blast. Names of two journalists from the Jang media group, Mr. Rahimullah Yousafzai and Mr. Irfan Siddiqui, the ex-ambassador to Afghanistan during Taliban rule and member of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf now, Mr. Rustam Shah Mohmand, and the (in)famous Major (Retd) Amir of the ISI, one of two central protagonists in "Operation Midnight Jackal", as the government's representatives was perplexing to say the least. Both decisions, to talk, and to talk through the chosen four, appeared to reek of capitulation and lack of will to take the fight to the militants. And it may just be what it appears to be. However, if it turns out to be what it appears to be, Mian Sahib has almost certainly put the last nail in his political coffin, if not in the entire country's.

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083724/of-justice-for-the-hazaras>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1083722/a-part-of-history>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/30-Jan-2014/balochistan-bleeding>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/28-Jan-2014/the-ugly-face-of-sectarianism-in-balochistan>

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/31-Jan-2014/creating-barriers-to-stupidity>

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

India, Pakistan exchange nuclear facilities list, Dawn, January 1¹⁴⁹

India and Pakistan have exchanged lists of their nuclear facilities as part of a 1988 pact that bars them from attacking each other's nuclear installations.

An Indian External Affairs Ministry statement says the exchange, both in New Delhi and Islamabad, has been each New Year's Day since 1992. The Indian ministry also said January 1, that both countries exchanged lists of prisoners held in their jails who are citizens of the rival country.

Shahbaz stresses on resolution of Indo-Pak issues through dialogues, The News January 6¹⁵⁰

Punjab Chief Minister, Shahbaz Sharif Monday, stressing on the resolution of all issues between Pakistan and India through dialogues, said that the two neighbourly countries achieved nothing except wars during 65 years. Shahbaz Sharif in a meeting with the Indian High Commissioner, Dr. T.C.A. Raghavan here said that the people of both countries wanted to live like friends peacefully.

Pakistan, India work on new mechanism to enhance trade, Express Tribune, January 7¹⁵¹

The Indian High Commission and the LCCI have joined hands in an effort to evolve a new mechanism for regular interaction every month to address issues hampering trade between Islamabad and Delhi. The two sides agreed on this during a visit of Indian High Commissioner Dr TCA Raghavan to the LCCI on January 6.

Trade talks with India resume tomorrow, Dawn, January 13¹⁵²

Pakistan and India will resume secretary-level trade talks in New Delhi on Jan 14. The meeting, being held after a gap of 16 months, will only maintain the 'momentum of talks' as part of the composite dialogue process, because substantive talks between the two countries will only be held after general elections in India. The term of Lok Sabha will end on May 31.

Firing at Tatapani sector: Indian troops violate truce, injure civilian, Express Tribune, January 13¹⁵³

Indian troops again violated the ceasefire on the LoC on January 11, injuring a 55-year-old civilian in Tatapani sector, some 180 kilometres from Muzaffarabad, local residents and the administration told The Express Tribune.

¹⁴⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077706/india-pakistan-exchange-nuclear-facilities-list>

¹⁵⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-133123-Achieved-nothing-except-wars-in-65-years,-Shahbaz-tells-Indian-HC>

¹⁵¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/655692/pakistan-india-work-on-new-mechanism-to-enhance-trade/>

¹⁵² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080225/trade-talks-with-india-resume-tomorrow>

¹⁵³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/658032/firing-at-tatapani-sector-indian-troops-violate-truce-injure-civilian/>

Pakistan, India resume trade talks, *The News*, January 14¹⁵⁴

Pakistan and India will resume secretary-level trade talks in New Delhi on January 15. The meeting is likely to agree on fresh timelines for implementing the road map for removing bottlenecks in trade liberalization.

Trade issues discussed with India, *Dawn*, January 16¹⁵⁵

Indian and Pakistani commerce secretaries met here on January 15 to iron out trade-related issues ahead of a meeting of their commerce ministers. The secretary-level talks, between Commerce Secretary S.R. Rao and his Pakistani counterpart Qasim M. Niaz, came after more than a year. The last talks were held in September 2012. Local reports spoke of hindrance in trade liberalisation and a delay by Pakistan in granting the most favoured nation (MFN) status to India, which figured in the talks.

Pakistan, India agree over greater trade through land route, *Dawn*, January 18¹⁵⁶

In a bid to strengthen bilateral relations, Pakistan and India on January 18 decided to allow greater trade through land route, signalling a thaw in relations after a year's standoff over military tensions on the border. They agreed to allow round-the-clock movement of trucks and containers through Wagah-Attari border, the main border crossing between the two South Asian neighbours.

Pakistan, India may allow bank branches, *Dawn*, January 20¹⁵⁷

India and Pakistan are working on allowing three banks to set up branches on each other's soil to help improve trade relations, Press Trust of India (PTI) said on January 16, quoting Pakistan's Commerce Minister Khurram Dastagir Khan.

MFN status for India on the cards, *Dawn*, January 26¹⁵⁸

The PML-N government sprung a surprise at the recent trade talks with India by offering New Delhi the MFN status from next month — with a condition. Pakistan sought access for 250-300 of its items at lowered duties.

MFN status to be given on reciprocal basis: Khurram, *Dawn*, January 29¹⁵⁹

Federal Minister for Commerce Khurram Dastagir Khan on January 29 said that the status of MFN to any country would be given on a reciprocal basis. Responding to a question, Khurram said no additional facility would be awarded to any country, including India, as far as the MFN status was concerned. He added that Pakistan has been a member of the WTO since 1995, and all member states of the organisation had granted the MFN status to each other by virtue of their WTO status.

¹⁵⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-134112-Pakistan,-India-resume-trade-talks>

¹⁵⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080655/trade-issues-discussed-with-india>

¹⁵⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081131/pakistan-india-agree-over-greater-trade-through-land-route>

¹⁵⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080818/pakistan-india-may-allow-bank-branches>

¹⁵⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082756/mfn-status-for-india-on-the-cards>

¹⁵⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083536/mfn-status-to-be-given-on-reciprocal-basis-khurram>

Friendly neighbour: Indian officials cast light on new visa regime, *Express Tribune*, January 31¹⁶⁰

In what appears to be another step towards improvement in bilateral trade relations, Pakistani business professionals got a first-hand opportunity on Thursday to get their queries about getting a business visa to India answered directly by officials of the Indian High Commission. The High Commission of India in Pakistan hosted business professionals from around the country at a workshop on “*Business visa facilitation for bilateral trade promotion*” here.

“*This is the first outreach activity by the Indian High Commission to provide information about getting business visas under the new visa regime,*” Gopal Baglay, India’s Deputy High Commissioner to Pakistan, told *The Express Tribune*.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Legal case for dams, Ahmer Bilal Soofi, *Dawn*, January 13¹⁶¹

THE recently issued Kishanganga arbitration award has again proved [...] that by invoking the dispute resolution mechanism of the IWT, Pakistan cannot halt India from undertaking various upstream hydroelectric projects and it needs to bilaterally take up this matter. In this regard, certain observations in the award are actually quite helpful and Pakistan must make use of them. [...] Under international law, a positive obligation to not inflict unreasonable harm on the lower riparian state restricts the sovereignty of the upper riparian state. However, while the upper riparian is almost like a trustee for the lower riparian and must therefore adopt suitable measures to preserve the catchment areas, its failure to do so does not absolve the lower riparian from its independent obligation to manage water flowing through its territories so as to ensure both equitable and reasonable utilisation of shared water resources.

Working for peace, *The Express Tribune*, January 19¹⁶²

Given the bitter wars of words we have had over the past few months between senior Indian and Pakistani military officials over skirmishes on the border dividing the two nations, and along the LoC between the two segments of Kashmir, the brigadier-level meeting that took place January 17 on the Rawlakot-Poonch sector of the LoC comes as very good news. An Inter-Services Public Relations press release says that both sides agreed during it to do more to build peace, taking forward the process begun in December last year, when the DGMO’s of both countries met.

Pakistan-India trade agreement, *Daily Times*, January 20¹⁶³

On the sidelines of a SAARC business conclave in New Delhi, the Commerce Ministers of Pakistan and India, Khurram Dastgir Khan and Anand Sharma respectively, arrived at an agreement to allow round-the-clock movement of trucks

¹⁶⁰<http://tribune.com.pk/story/665608/friendly-neighbour-indian-officials-cast-light-on-new-visa-regime/>

¹⁶¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080162/legal-case-for-dams>

¹⁶² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/660405/working-for-peace/>

¹⁶³ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/20-Jan-2014/pakistan-india-trade-agreement>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/661129/baby-steps-towards-free-trade/>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1081271/progress-on-trade-ties>

and containers through the Wagah-Attari border crossing, with trucks allowed to offload their cargo in Amritsar and Lahore rather than at the border. [...] The agreement recognizes the need to implement a more liberal visa regime for businessmen if trade is to be enhanced. In financial year 2012-13, that trade was barely \$ 2.5 billion, against the estimated potential of \$ 10 billion. Islamabad missed the December 31, 2012 deadline for abolition of the negative list, comprising 1,209 items that cannot be imported from India. Nor has it so far reciprocated India's extension of Most Favoured Nation status to its neighbour. Instead, Pakistan has decided to offer India non-discriminatory access to its market, provided this is reciprocated by the other side. In addition, both countries have agreed to push forward on granting three banks of either side permission to open branches in the other country. They have further agreed to convene meetings of technical working groups of customs, railways, banking, standards organisations and energy.

Peace in our time, Saad Hafiz, *Daily Times*, January 23¹⁶⁴

Pakistan, while regressing each day, needs and feeds off the Indo-Pakistan conflict. Pakistan is at war with itself; this condition flows from the negative anti-Indian nationalism and near fatal preoccupation with Kashmir. Between phases of strident nationalism and armed conflict, India-Pakistan relations have mostly remained in deep freeze from which there still appears to be no hope of recovery. Historically, bilateral ties have been dominated by shrill jingoism, xenophobia and a quest for absolute justice at the expense of national interest and political realism. National leaders, instead of propagating peace, have generally found it easier to propagate hawkish positions, unwilling to risk charges of appeasement, defeatism and selling out.

Challenges facing India-Pakistan relations, Talat Masood, *The Express Tribune*, January 29

In Pakistan today, there is practically a cross-party consensus for having better relations with India. More significantly, PM Nawaz Sharif has invested considerable political capital in promoting this agenda. The military leadership that traditionally has been opposed to rapprochement is now supportive of this policy in light of the changed threat scenario and emerging geopolitical and strategic imperatives. In contrast, the response from New Delhi has been lukewarm, with one exception — to promote trade and commerce with Pakistan. Although at a personal level, PM Manmohan Singh favours broad normalisation of relations, he is politically constrained and too preoccupied with domestic challenges to give relations with Pakistan any priority. [...] many are unaware of is that India-Pakistan trade is still below the 1947 and 1965 levels. This should serve as a reminder to the leaders of both countries that unless there is progress on a broad front of issues, it may be difficult to sustain progress in trade and commerce.

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/23-Jan-2014/peace-in-our-time>

VERNICULAR MEDIA

The Sectarian Powers are again rising, Editorial , *Daily Express*, 06/1/2014¹⁶⁵

The sectarian terrorism has again engulfed the whole country. [...] Punjab as compared to other provinces is relatively peaceful. inspite of having presence of various sects, Punjab has shown a great deal of brotherhood and love and have the people who are forefront against the terrorism. The spokesperson of Rangers in Karachi has stated that there are many criminals who are affiliated and shielded by many political parties. If Rangers have collected all the important evidence against any organization involved in terrorism in Karachi, the culprits should be booked soon. Karachi and KP is facing a sectarian problem since a long. Terrorists are targeting the security institutions and are challenging the writ of the state. These terrorists are openly stating that they are not accepting constitution of Pakistan and will continue targeting the people. Even some religious political parties take part in democratic elections of the country but are also supporting these extremists. There should be a similarity between political and ideological thinking and characteristics. Those who are taking part in elections under democratic setup should not support those who are against this system. Unfortunately at the state level extremism is being supported, the consequence of which has been disastrous. Today extremists and terrorists have gone out of control. [...] State should invite all the religious scholars under one platform because they can play an important role in controlling the sectarian tendencies among the population. On the other hand people should keep patience in order to stop sectarianism and also do not play any part in fomenting sectarianism otherwise we have to pay it in terms of peace.

Musharraf's Treason Case and the Clearance from Saudi's Foreign Minister, Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, 9/1/2014¹⁶⁶

The Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia has said that he delivered the message of Shah Abdullah to President Mamnoon Hussain, treason case is Pakistani's internal matter and I did not come here to strike an another deal on Musharraf's case.

The Saudi Foreign Minister's clearance of his recent visit has made it clear that he has not come here for any deal about Musharraf. There is no doubt that Pakistan-Saudi relations are very deep. The Saudi's planning of investing in Pakistan's energy will further boost the relationship and more importantly our energy will become better.

The Plan of Buying 2000MW from India, Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 10-1-2014¹⁶⁷

Pakistan is planning 2000 instead of 500MW electricity from India. For this matter India has been already informed. So soon the officials from both the countries are going to sign a deal. In this matter one Indian news paper also came with the news that the Indian official of water and electricity has also confirmed it. Pakistan is going through a worse energy crises and the minster for petroleum and energy has ordered of not supplying CNG to Abbotabad along with whole Punjab for three months. The state seems to be very desperate to overcome this. The projects state has initiated will take three to four years. So the government has decided to purchase 2000MW rather

¹⁶⁵www.express.com.pk/epaper/PoPupwindow.aspx?newsID=1102062363&iSSUE=NP_LHE&Date=20140106

¹⁶⁶ www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014-01-09/p14_01.jpg.

¹⁶⁷ www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/edetorial/10-Jan-2014/272162

than 500. However, this deal would not be productive due the nature of the relationship between India and Pakistan. But Nawaz Sharif has succeeded to make the deal with India on electricity. Thus, Kashmir issue should also be resolved in the same way. Right now resolution of Kashmir is more important than electricity because Kashmir issue is the main hurdle in the good relationship between India and Pakistan, without resolving this issue, the deals on trade and electricity can anytime break. The financial committee has given the nod of buying the machines from India for cement manufacturing. It is a matter of sham that Pakistan has to buy the machines from India so that it can export cement to India. The dependence on enemy about these matters is a suicide. Rulers should first resolve Kashmir issue before giving to any thought on striking deals on electricity and trade.

An Effective Mechanism Should be Created Against Terrorism, Editorial, *Daily Express*, 10/1/2014¹⁶⁸

Terrorist incidents are occurring abruptly throughout the country. The tough actions taken by law enforcement institutions haven't yet yielded the result. The CID Chief Chawadry Aslam was killed by a suicide attack. TTP has taken the responsibility of the attack. The important point here to note is that just 12 hours before of his killing, Chawadry Aslam took the responsibility of killing TTP terrorists in Karachi. On the same place earlier he was also attacked during the month of Ramadan, and his house was also attacked by the terrorists. [...] it is not like that government is doing nothing against terrorism but there seems to be an absence of an effective mechanism on the part of the government. The deadliest terrorists can be only taken out once a strong mechanism is there and also be followed in true spirit. A grand strategy against terrorism was pressed since very early. But one feels that government is not giving any heed to this policy. That's the reason that people come to know about little facts and incidents but are devoid of any information about the government's strategy against terrorism. The growing incidents of terrorism in the country have not only impacted economy but also the daily life of the people has greatly impacted. [...]

Indian Foreign Minister's Severity on Kashmir Issue, Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 11/1/2014¹⁶⁹

The Foreign Minister of India Salman Khurshid has said that India is ready to talk on every issue except Kashmir. On the other side leader of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has stated that if his assassination resolves the Kashmir issue, he is ready for that. The statement from Indian foreign minister about Kashmir will not be helpful in improving Pak-India relations. His statement signifies that it is a gambit of descending the whole region into chaos. It was India who took Kashmir issue to the UN; it is also India now who rejects the UN resolutions regarding Kashmir. Kashmir is not an integral part of India but jugular vein if Pakistan. People within India are now raising voices in favour of the self-determination of Kashmiri's. Aam Aadmi Party member Prashant Bhushan's statement in which he talked about the Kashmir's right to self determination irked the Hindu extremists who attacked the office of AAP.[...] Now our leaders should also show the courage and raise the issues in various forums that AAP leaders mentioned about Kashmir. If Kashmir issue is

¹⁶⁸www.express.com.pk/epaper/PoPupwindow.aspx?newsID=1102066014&Issue=NP_LHE&Date=20140110

¹⁶⁹ www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/editorial/11-Jan-2014/272406

resolved other issues between Pakistan and India will automatically follow suit. Thus, the UN, EU and other world powers should play their role in resolving Kashmir issue so that peace can come in this region.

Refrain from Insulting Pakistan Army, Mirza Ahmad Noor, *Daily Ausaf*, 10/01/2014¹⁷⁰

If anybody says that the Himalaya has moved one place to another can be accepted but if anybody says that a nature of a man can change can't be accepted. Man can change many things like dress, social setup, political opinions, character and residence, country and friends but cannot change his nature. [...] There are many strong cases against Pakistan's former commando and President Gen. Pervaiz Musharff. First, in 1999 he thrown the elected prime minister from power in coup and second he ordered military operation on Lal Masjid. Third, he killed Nawab Akbar Bughti and fourthly, in 2007 he implemented emergency and imprisoned the judges. When Pervaiz Musharraf was returning back from Sri Lanka, even before his landing, Nawaz Sharif's government was thrown out from power. Musharraf's aircraft was not even allowed to land in Lahore. After a while it came into out that Muharraf has become a chief executive. It is a totally different point that Nawaz Sherif has not touched this in case of Musharaff's treason case. But everyone knew that the judiciary legalized the Mushraaf's coup and allowed him to amend the constitution. As far Nawab Akbar Bughti is concerned he served once the governor of Baluchistan and was also the Member of Parliament. When military went to apprehend him in the cave in which he was hiding, his group blow up the cave in which he along with his other members died. In that case too he has been acquitted. [...] has Musharraf done wrong by saying that he has left his case on military? Pakistani military is also an institution. Today Judiciary has its own league, transporters have also their union and nowadays politicians themselves are calling for marshal law. Who were the impediments in the restoration of the judges? Who were those politicians who used to have secret meetings during the nights? And who were after the American ambassador? Pakistani military is the seventh biggest force in the world. It is the same military which is defending the nation in Baluchistan and Waziristan. Military is sacrificing their lives whenever there is an earth quake and flood. Imagine the Siachin, staying in snow and sacrificing everything. Military is our first and last defence line so that is why we should refrain from insulting our military.

The Attack on Security Forces in Banu and Policy of Talks with Taliban, Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 20/1/2014¹⁷¹

The blast on military convey in Banu killed 22 and 30 others were injured. The explosive materials were implanted in a rent car taken by the Frontier Corps. Meanwhile, TTP has taken the responsibility of the attack. While commenting on the attack, the Interior Minister, Chowadry Nisar stated that if Taliban do not agree to talk then in that case we don't have any key for the dialogue. Taliban is fighting against Pakistan since last 13 years but government never tried ever to talk them before. Now when government wanted to talk with Taliban, the drone attack sabotaged the process. [...] if talks with Taliban are not taking off then at least the safety of security institutions should be prioritized and should be provided every facility and other ways

¹⁷⁰ www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014-01-10/p14_05.jpg.

¹⁷¹ www.nawaiwaqt.com.ph/editorials/20-Jan-2014/274250

should be found to bring peace in the country. [...] Taliban has again expressed their desire to talk. This time it should be taken seriously and make it clear that there is no ensnare from Taliban side.

Pak-India Trade a Good Omen for Region, Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, 20-1-2014¹⁷²

Both Pakistan and India has agreed to give access to each other's markets. The commerce ministers of both countries have again pledged to boost the trade and stated that those factors, on which both countries agreed, will be given final shape at the end of the month of February. [...] Both Pakistan and India got freedom at the same time but unfortunately right from the beginning the conflicts emerged between the two. The repercussions of which both the countries suffered in terms of both personal and as well as material. [...] The fact right now is that the propaganda against Pakistan in India never gets down. India never misses any opportunity to spread anti-Pakistan flavor. This propaganda against Pakistan reaches to its height whenever Pakistan tries to reach out to India for strong friendship. Pakistan is trying its best to strengthen its relationship with India. [...] India and Pakistan are neighbours. But unfortunately there is one intellectual community in India which does not allow moving the relationship between India and Pakistan further. Even they do not approve the talks between the two. India wants to become the regional and hegemonic power in the region. If India respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbours so many issues can be resolved. Kashmir conflict is there since the very inception, if India now wants to use the Kabul in the same way it would be most unfortunate for the region and the relationship between the two will never be smoothened. What India must do is to resolve the main issues with Pakistan through dialogues and refrain from including other issues. India's positive gesture will take both the countries relations to excellence.

Impact of war against Terrorism on Pakistan, Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, 20-1-2014¹⁷³

The Interior Minister Chowdrey Nisar Ali Khan has said that war against terrorism after 9/11 has made world safer but Pakistan has become more unsafe. Whatever Interior Minister Chowdry Nisar said is absolutely true that Pakistan played an important role in the war against terrorism but has suffered more that no other country can even imagine it. Thousands of civilians and army personnel were martyred and billions of dollars were destroyed. The economic situation is worsening day by day. Still Pakistani government has not decided whether to talk or to fight with the terrorists? Whereas every day terrorist attacks against mosques, madrasah's, police and security forces are going endlessly. The huge personnel and economic loss has already been suffered so government should now take the decisive decision whether to talk with Taliban or wage war against them. Unless we do not make a clear policy the nation will continuously suffer and Pakistan enemies will take the benefit out of it. There is a need that government should work on those basics which were adopted during the All Parties Conference where every political party gave their nod to conduct talks with Taliban. Government should give it the final shape and start talking to Taliban so that peace and normalcy can return among the people.

¹⁷² www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014-01-20/p14_01.jpg

¹⁷³ www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014-01-20/p14_01.jpg

Military Action or Dialogue? And the World Community? Azeem M. Mian,
*Daily Jang, 22/1/2014*¹⁷⁴

Not since a long when the leaders from America, Britain, and the big leaders of the West were echoing that Pakistan is necessary in order to keep the world safe. Now the same Pakistan who is fighting with the terrorism since last ten years has itself become an unsafe. The world has almost become safe from the terrorism but now the world hardly bothers about Pakistan. It was others war but the wrong decisions by our rulers have made it our own and now it has become the war of our own interests. In which the old allies are demanding and again are now using sanctions and pressurizing Pakistan. US are demanding the release of Dr Shakil Afridi and have suspended the one part of military aid for his release. Instead of cooperation in war against terrorism, the allies are so demanding. The record of the past Pak-US relationship is also like SEATO, CENTO agreements, Secret American base, Afghan Jihad, and other dangerous treaties only to use Pakistan and then dumped and sanctioned us. In the presence of the former president Gen. Pervaiz Musharraf when I asked question to the American president George Bush that history tells us that US has always used Pakistan for its interests and once these interests are met US has always punished Pakistan with sanctions.[...] The recent terrorist attack forces Prime Minister to cancel his trip to the Davis. The Interior Minister is in favour of Taliban talks yet the terrorist incidents are increasing day by day and claiming the responsibility of these attacks by Taliban is also increasing. [...] There is a huge voice who favour talks with Taliban. There are so many groups in Taliban and which group state would talk? More importantly what to talk, and how to talk? What would be the agenda of the talk? In this matter there is no clear policy either from Interior minister or from those who are in favour of talks. Those who are saying that talks are the only solution to end this war did not come with any frame work and their policies are only confined to talks. [...] Delay in taking decision will only create confusion. Both military and talks can go hand to hand. The only condition is that enemy should be made to realize that the military action against them is proving very effective. Whatever decision Nawaz Sharif and his cabinet is going to take must be accepted but the world community should be contacted especially the US and diplomatic channels should be made effective to generate financial resources about the war because it is the America that started this war.

Baluchistan: Rich in Natural Resources and Foreign Interference, Editorial,
*Daily Ausaf, 28-1-2014*¹⁷⁵

The Chief Minister of Baluchistan has said that since he got the power, the things in the province have improved very much. Before that the corruption was everywhere, there was no law and order. We have started work on national highway and other development plans. On the question of Indian and Afghan interference, the Chief Minister commented that once we make our house in order, no one will dare to interfere. To some extent foreign interference is also responsible in worsening the overall situation in Baluchistan. But in order to stop this interference we need to improve an internal condition in Baluchistan so that no one can interfere in it. This is a wrong perception that Bloch's are against Punjabis or people from the other provinces yes it is true if anybody tries to stop their due, the resentment against them

¹⁷⁴ jang.com.pk/jang/jan2014-daily/22-01-2014/col9.htm

¹⁷⁵ www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2013-1-28/p14_01.jpg

is genuine. Fact is that Baluchistan is that area of South Asia which in one side borders Iran, other side Afghanistan and on the third side has 800 km length of sea coast. [...] soon Baluchistan's deep water port Gwadar will soon get the status of an International city. Roads are created to boost the trade between Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and other Russian states. [...] the construction of deep sea Gwadar will improve Pakistan's economy and will put Pakistan in a great position both in West Asia and in Asian markets, which India and the US can't digest. America perceives Chinese presence in Gwadar as a threat. The foreign interference further exacerbates the precarious situation in Baluchistan. The terrorism in Baluchistan has a foreign blessings also. American's know that the Chinese engineers are working in the construction of Gwadar so that China can get the access to the warm waters. Further, America has an eye on rich resources and minerals in Baluchistan. American never wants that Pakistan get benefit from these resources. Christians, Jews and Hindus want to create greater Baluchistan so that they can exploit its rich natural resources. So there is a need of an hour to work together and end this internal conflict so that foreign interference can be tackled. For that we need to give hope and remove an alienation of the Bloch's.

A Positive Initiative, Editorial, *Daily Express*, 31-1-2014¹⁷⁶

Government's decision to end the violence by talking to Taliban is a positive initiative. The confusion which was there earlier whether government would talk or conduct operation against Taliban has now ended. [...] government earlier had also shown a great interest in talks with Taliban but that came into end with the killing of Hakeemullah Mehsud. Now again government has shown a great prudence by resolving conflict through dialogue with Taliban. In between many unwanted incidents happened and the government was pressurized from many quarters to shun the path of dialogue and start operation against Taliban and bring peace and normalcy in the country. But the government did not give up patience and hold its stand firmly. Government is fully aware that if operation is started against Taliban, it will create more problems and issues. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has clearly stated in his speech that peace talks should be given another chance. For any purposeful peace talks it needs honesty. Whenever government says that they want to talk, Taliban responds that government should first show sincerity and honesty. [...] The path of talks that government has adopted should be seriously taken and also should be a successful one. Both the sides should try their best to make talks successful so that peace and prosperity can come in the region. It has also been seen that when in first round of the talks do not succeed, the second and third rounds are held. Thus, if talks between government and Taliban in first round are not reached to its conclusion, the talks should not be stopped but rather the processes should be keep going, so that the issue can be resolved. It is good news that the opposition parties have also shown their support in government's offer of talks. The committee that government has selected for the talks constitutes very intelligent and experienced people. TTP has also shown their trust on these members. We hope that both the parties will try their best to make talks succeed.

¹⁷⁶www.express.com.pk/epaper/PoPupwindow.aspx?newsID=1102084558&Issue=NP_LHE&Date20140131

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
Quetta ¹⁷⁷	1/1/2014	Suicide bomber in Quetta kills three after targeting pilgrims bus.	3	30
Nasirabad ¹⁷⁸	4/1/2014	MPA injured in Quetta explosion; two killed in Naseerabad blast.	2	1
Quetta ¹⁷⁹	6/1/2014	Policeman injured in grenade attack on Quetta police station.	0	1
Quetta ¹⁸⁰	12/1/2014	Three people killed in Balochistan violence.	3	0
Khuzdar ¹⁸¹	15/1/2014	Four militants killed during operation in Balochistan's Khuzdar.	4	0
Dera Ismail Khan ¹⁸²	20/1/2014	Two killed in Dera Ismail Khan explosion.	2	0
Quetta ¹⁸³	22/1/2014	Seven Levies men killed, Spaniard wounded in Mastung clash.	7	1
Quetta ¹⁸⁴	22/1/2014	Bus bombing kills 24 Shia pilgrims.	24	40
Quetta ¹⁸⁵	25/1/2014	Three killed in security forces action in Panjgur.	3	0
Quetta ¹⁸⁶	30/1/2014	Bomb kills one in Nasirabad.	1	0
Awaran ¹⁸⁷	31/1/2014	Bomb kills three security personnel in Awaran:	3	0

¹⁷⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1077718/suicide-bomber-in-quetta-kills-three-after-targeting-pilgrims-bus>

¹⁷⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1078353/mpa-injured-in-quetta-explosion-two-killed-in-naseerabad-blast>

¹⁷⁹

¹⁸⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080049/three-people-killed-in-balochistan-violence>

¹⁸¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1080513/four-militants-killed-during-operation-in-balochistans-khuzdar>

¹⁸² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081514/two-killed-in-dera-ismail-khan-explosion>

¹⁸³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1081943/seven-levies-men-killed-spaniard-wounded-in-mastung-clash>

¹⁸⁴ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/national/22-Jan-2014/bus-bombing-kills-24-shia-pilgrims>

¹⁸⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082599/three-killed-in-security-forces-action-in-panjgur>

¹⁸⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083774/bomb-kills-one-in-nasirabad>

¹⁸⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1083988/bomb-kills-three-security-personnel-in-awaran-officials>

FATA				
Kurram ¹⁸⁸	7/1/2014	Three injured in Kurram explosion.	3	0
Kurran Agency ¹⁸⁹	28/1/2014	Woman killed, two injured in Kurram landmine explosions.	1	2
Orakzai Agency ¹⁹⁰	29/2/2014	Two Killed, Four injured in Orakzai Coalmine blast.	2	4
Punjab				
Islamabad ¹⁹¹	3/1/2014	ASWJ's Islamabad general secretary shot dead in capital	2	0
Rawalpindi ¹⁹²	8/1/2014	Professor shot dead in Rawalpindi.	1	0
Lahore ¹⁹³	11/1/2014	PTI leader among five gunned down near Kasur toll plaza.	5	0
Lahore ¹⁹⁴	15/1/2014	Man killed, 7 injured as two armed groups clash in Lahore.	1	7
Rawalpindi ¹⁹⁵	18/1/2014	Five people gunned down in Rawalpindi.	5	2
Rawalpindi ¹⁹⁶	20/1/2014	Suicide blast in Rawalpindi kills 13, injures at least 15	13	15
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa				
Peshawar ¹⁹⁷	1/1/2014	Blast in Peshawar leaves three dead, six wounded	3	6
Tank ¹⁹⁸	2/1/2014	Policeman killed in explosion in Tank	1	0
Hangu ¹⁹⁹	6/1/2014	Suicide blast at school kills student in Hangu.	3	3
Khyber ²⁰⁰	6/1/2014	Blast in Khyber kills nine, including three children.	9	0

¹⁸⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078946/three-injured-in-kurram-explosion>

¹⁸⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083292/woman-killed-two-injured-in-kurram-landmine-explosions>

¹⁹⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083524/two-killed-four-injured-in-orakzai-coalmine-blast>

¹⁹¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078147/aswjs-islamabad-general-secretary-shot-dead-in-capital>

¹⁹² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/656367/professor-shot-dead-in-rawalpindi/>

¹⁹³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079832/pti-leader-among-five-gunned-down-near-kasur-toll-plaza>

¹⁹⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-134171-Man-killed,-7-injured-as-two-armed-groups-clash-in-Lahore>

¹⁹⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080924/five-people-gunned-down-in-rawalpindi>

¹⁹⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/660956/blast-in-rawalpindi-kills-4-injures-12/>

¹⁹⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077538/blast-in-peshawar-leaves-three-dead-six-wounded>

¹⁹⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077901/policeman-killed-in-explosion-in-tank>

¹⁹⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078731/suicide-blast-at-school-kills-student-in-hangu>

²⁰⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078742/blast-in-khyber-kills-nine-including-three-children>

Peshawar ²⁰¹	9/1/2014	Three soldiers martyred, 10 militants killed in SWA clash.	13	0
Peshawar ²⁰²	10/1/2014	Gunmen kill two workers at Sufi shrine in Peshawar.	2	0
Peshawar ²⁰³	12/1/2014	ANP office-bearer among three gunned down in Peshawar.	3	0
Peshawar ²⁰⁴	14/1/2014	Policeman killed in Peshawar blast.	1	0
Dera Ismail Khan ²⁰⁵	14/1/2014	SHO among seven policemen injured in D.I Khan explosion.	0	7
Khyber ²⁰⁶	15/1/2014	Two Amn Committee volunteers killed in Khyber explosion.	2	0
Peshawar ²⁰⁷	16/1/2014	Blast at Peshawar Tablighi centre kills ten, injures more than 60.	10	60
Bannu ²⁰⁸	19/1/2014	Explosion kills 22 in Bannu; TTP claims attack.	22	38
Peshawar ²⁰⁹	22/1/2014	Polio security team attacked in Charsadda; seven dead.	7	9
Peshawar ²¹⁰	23/1/2014	Blast in Peshawar kills six.	6	9
Khyber Agency ²¹¹	24/1/2014	Three including 2 FC troops injured in Khyber Agency blast.	0	3
Tank ²¹²	27/1/2014	IED attack kills policeman in Tank; injures four others.	1	4
Khyber ²¹³	30/1/2014	Toy bomb kills two children in Khyber.	2	0

²⁰¹<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-133481-Three-soldiers-martyred,-10-militants-killed-in-South-Waziristan-clash>

²⁰² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079605/gunmen-kill-two-workers-at-sufi-shrine-in-peshawar>

²⁰³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-133907-ANP-office-bearer-among-three-gunned-down-in-Peshawar->

²⁰⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-134127-Policeman-killed-in-Peshawar-blast->

²⁰⁵<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-134113-D.I-Khan:-SHO-Kolachi-among-seven-injured-in-explosion>

²⁰⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1080506/two-amn-committee-volunteers-killed-in-khyber-explosion>

²⁰⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1080731/blast-at-peshawar-tablighi-centre-kills-ten-injures-more-than-60>

²⁰⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081329/explosion-kills-22-in-bannu-ttp-claims-attack>

²⁰⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1081941/polio-security-team-attacked-in-charsadda-seven-dead>

²¹⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-135206-Six-killed-in-Peshawar-blast->

²¹¹<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-135285-Three-including-2-FC-troops-injured-in-Khyber-blast>

²¹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083062/ied-attack-kills-policeman-in-tank-injures-four-others>

²¹³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1083751/toy-bomb-kills-two-children-in-khyber>

Sindh				
Karachi ²¹⁴	2/1/2014	Karachi violence claims five lives.	5	0
Karachi ²¹⁵	4/1/2014	Two policemen among at least 13 killed in Karachi violence.	13	0
Karachi ²¹⁶	6/1/2014	Four more Local Bodies candidates killed in Karachi.	4	0
Karachi ²¹⁷	7/1/2014	Six bodies found in Karachi; one alleged target killer arrested.	6	0
Karachi ²¹⁸	9/1/2014	Taliban bombing kills senior police officer Chaudhry Aslam,	1	0
Karachi ²¹⁹	10/1/2014	Karachi: three TTP terrorists killed in Musharraf colony.	3	0
Karachi ²²⁰	16/1/2014	Karachi violence: Two policemen shot dead, two injured.	2	2
Karachi ²²¹	18/1/2014	3 staffers killed in attack on Express	3	0
Karachi ²²²	18/1/2014	Two dead, six injured in Karachi violence.	2	6
Karachi ²²³	20/1/2014	Four killed, three injured in Karachi violence.	4	3
Karachi ²²⁴	21/1/2014	Three dead in attack on polio team in Karachi's Qayyumabad.	3	1
Karachi ²²⁵	22/1/2014	Prayer leader killed in Karachi.	1	0
Karachi ²²⁶	23/1/2014	Local PPP leader killed, two injured in Karachi violence.	1	2
Karachi ²²⁷	26/1/2014	Attacks near MQM-H chief's	6	0

²¹⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077897/karachi-violence-claims-five-lives>

²¹⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078333/two-policemen-among-at-least-13-killed-in-karachi-violence>

²¹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078595/four-more-local-bodies-candidates-killed-in-karachi>

²¹⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1078958/six-bodies-found-in-karachi-one-alleged-target-killer-arrested>

²¹⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1079405/taliban-bombing-kills-senior-police-officer-chaudhry-aslam>

²¹⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-133666-Karachi:-three-TTP-terrorists-killed-in-Musharraf-colony->

²²⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1080705/karachi-violence-two-policemen-shot-dead-two-injured>

²²¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/660249/3-staffers-killed-in-attack-on-express/>

²²² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081129/two-dead-six-injured-in-karachi-violence>

²²³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081502/four-killed-three-injured-in-karachi-violence>

²²⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1081723/three-dead-in-attack-on-polio-team-in-karachis-qayyumabad>

²²⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/661896/prayer-leader-killed-in-karachi/>

²²⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082393/local-ppp-leader-killed-two-injured-in-karachi-violence>

²²⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1082641/attacks-near-mqm-h-chiefs-house-kill-six-policemen-in-karachi>

Karachi ²²⁸	29/1/2014	house kill six policemen in Karachi. Attacks on law enforcers kill two, wound six in Karachi.	4	6
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²²⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1083516/attacks-on-law-enforcers-kill-two-wound-six-in-karachi>