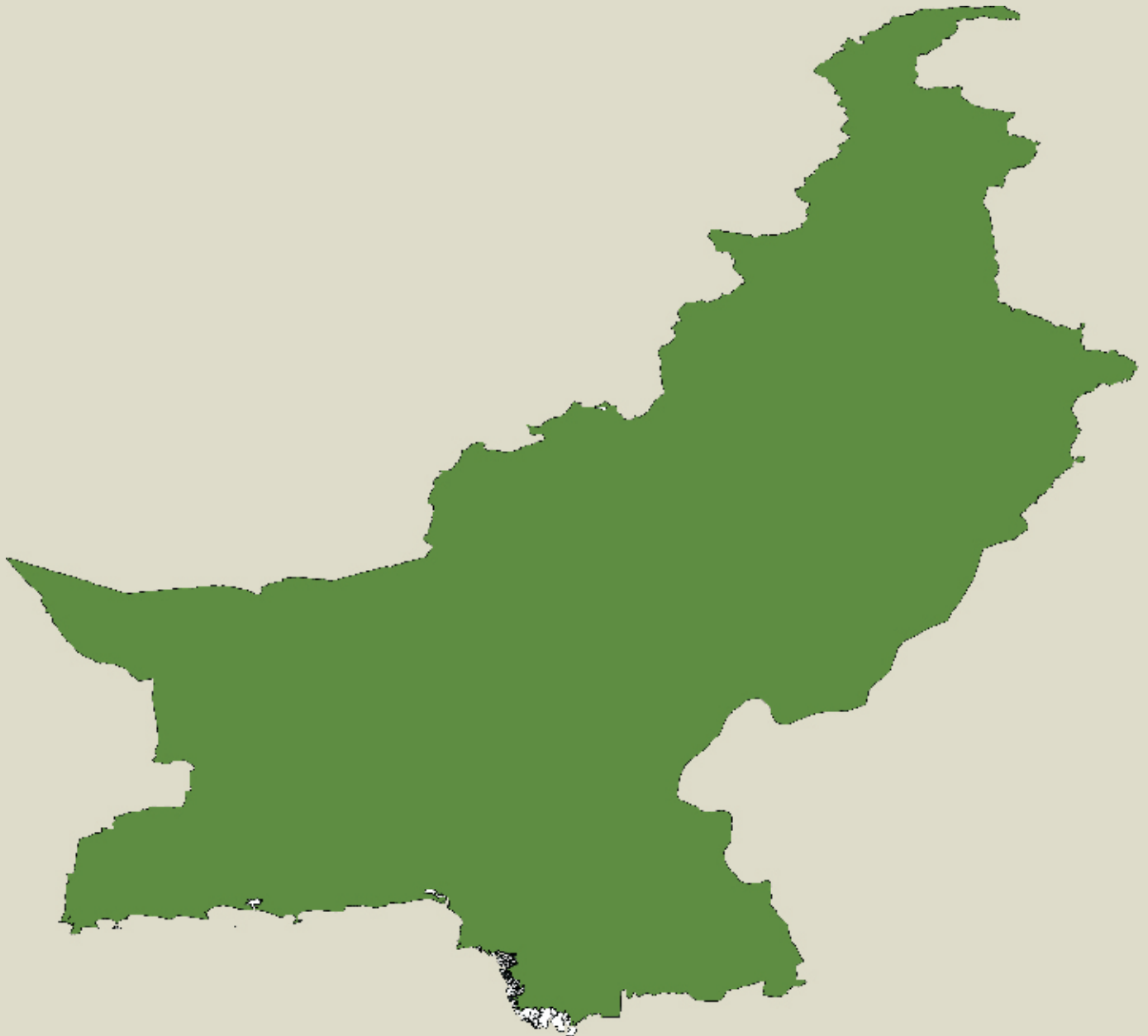


May 2014

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



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

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, MAY, 2014

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB: Asian Development Bank
BIT: Bilateral Investment Treaty
BJP: Bharatiya Janata Party
BNP: Baluchistan National Party
CFAs: Credit Facility Agreement
CPS: Country Partnership Strategy
EAD: Economic Affairs Division
EFF: Extended Fund Facility
FBR: Federal Board of Revenue
FRDLA: Fiscal Responsibility and Debt Limitation Act
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
IMF: International Monetary Fund
IPPs: Independent Power Producers
ISI: Inter Services Intelligence
ISPR: Inter Services Public Relations
JI: Jamaat-i-Islami
JSMM: Jiye Sindh Muttahida Mahaz
JuD: Jamat-us- Dawa
KP: Khyber Pakhthunkhwa
LEA's: Low Enforcement Agencies
MBT: Main Battle Tank
MQM: Muttahida Qaumi Movement
MTDS- Medium-Term Debt Management Strategy
NADRA- National Database and Registration Authority
NEPRA: National Electric Power Regulatory Authority
NESCOM- National Engineering and Scientific Commission
NFC- National finance Commission
NICOP- National Identity Cards for Overseas Pakistani's
NTDCL: National Transmission and Dispatch Company Limited
PAF: Pakistan Air Force
PAT: Pakistan Awami Tehareek
PEMRA- Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PML-Q: Pakistan Muslim League Quaid
PPIB: Private Power Infrastructure Board
PPP: Pakistan People's Party

PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
RO's: Returning Officers
SNGPL: Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited
SSGPL: Sui Southern Gas Pipelines Limited
SWA: South Waziristan Agency
TTP: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

Karachi shuts down as MQM calls to mourn killed workers, *Dawn*, May²

The country's financial capital was shut down due to a call for observing a 'day of mourning' by the MQM against extrajudicial killings of its party members. The party has called for a day of mourning in protest against the 'extrajudicial killing' of four MQM workers shot dead on May 1. On MQM's appeal to observe a day of mourning, traders closed down their businesses, commercial centers and shops in Karachi.

Sindh Rangers tasks special unit to probe MQM allegations, *Dawn*, May²

Taking the allegations leveled by the MQM into account, the Sindh Rangers has tasked a special unit to probe the party's claims that personnel from the paramilitary force were involved in the "extrajudicial killing" of four MQM workers. A spokesman for the Sindh Rangers said in a statement that the unit would investigate the claims of the party and legal action would be taken against those found responsible of using the force's uniforms for the purpose.

MQM stages walkout from NA over killing of workers, *The News*, May⁶

MQM on May 5 staged a walkout from the National Assembly as protest against the killing of its workers in Karachi. MQM members walked out after their colleague Abdul Rashid Godal completed his speech on the law and order situation in the country. Godal said that four MQM workers were subjected to severe torture and shot dead by personnel of a law enforcing agency who were clad in plain clothes. "The MQM workers were not criminals, they were students," he said. He said the ongoing operation in Karachi was targeted against the people of the city and the

¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103696/karachi-shuts-down-as-mqm-calls-to-mourn-killed-workers>

²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103923/sindh-rangers-tasks-special-unit-to-probe-mqm-allegations>

³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-248436-MQM-stages-walkout-from-NA-over-killing-of-workers>

MQM. Speaker Ayaz Sadiq asked federal minister Riaz Hussain Pirzada to go the members' lobby and urge the MQM parliamentarians to return to the House. After talking to the MQM members, Riaz Pirzada told the Speaker that they wanted to meet him in his chamber.

Many Peshawarites quit PTI, block GT Road over sackings, Dawn, May 6⁴

PTI office-bearers in 10 union councils of the provincial capital on May 5 announced resignation from their offices to protest the recent sacking of Yaseen Khalil as adviser to the chief minister. Also in the day, some PTI activists took out a rally and blocked GT Road near the Lahore Bus Terminal against the removal of Shaukat Yousufzai as provincial minister. Former Nazim Gul Bashir Khalil told reporters at the Peshawar Press Club that the PTI workers had set the May 4 deadline for the reinstatement of Yaseen Khalil as adviser to the chief minister but neither the PTI leadership nor the provincial government heeded it forcing them to come onto the streets.

PPP says no to PTI's call of May 11 protests, Dawn, May 7⁵

Terming the PTI's protest call an attempt to spread anarchy, PPP has categorically said no to politics of agitation which they say may be seen as leading to destabilizing the democratic structure of the country. "The party has very serious reservations about the general elections 2013 and believes that invisible hands were at play to ensure pre-determined results, but it will not join any agitation or movement to upset the democratic structure," PPP spokesman Senator Farhatullah Babar quoted party's co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari as saying.

Hashmi says will stand by Nawaz for sake of democracy, The News, May 7⁶

PTI leader Javed Hashmi has said that he would fight against those who hatch conspiracies against democracy. Talking part in the discussion on the law and order situation in the National Assembly here Wednesday, Javed Hashmi said if there was need to stand by PM Nawaz Sharif for the sake of democracy he would do so.

Imran Khan warns government not to create hurdles for May 11 protest rally, The Nation, May 7⁷

Imran Khan today warned the government to sever circumstances if it tried to stop PTI's peaceful protest against rigging on May 11. Addressing to press conference, PTI chief said there was no other way left for them but to come on the streets as they have been knocking every door against the rigging in last general elections since a year, but no one was giving them justice. Khan said, he had gone to courts, tribunals,

⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104497/many-peshawarites-quit-pti-block-gt-road-over-sackings>

⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104785/ppp-says-no-to-ptis-call-of-may-11-protests>

⁶<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-146965-Hashmi-says-will-stand-by-Nawaz-for-sake-of-democracy>

⁷<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/07-May-2014/imran-khan-warns-government-not-to-create-hurdles-for-may-11-protest-rally>

Parliament against the alleged rigging, but no institute is ready to listen to him adding that Speaker National Assembly had taken stay order against his plea. He said after disappointment from all institutes his party has decided to stage protest which is their legal right.

Protesters should visit PM House to inform of rigging: PM Nawaz, *The News*, May 9⁸

PM Nawaz Sharif said on May 9 that those protesting should come to the PM House and inform of rigging during the general elections 2013. The PM who was speaking at the Shamshi Park for the launching ceremony of the first solar power plant made this statement in an apparent reference to the May 11 protests planned by the PTI and PAT. PM Nawaz Sharif asked what the protest was against. *"Can someone who is at a rally tell me what are they protesting about? Are they against the development of Pakistan?"*

Imran Khan demands reconstitution of ECP, *The News*, May 12⁹

Chairman PTI Imran Khan Sunday said the entire country had lost trust in the ECP and demanded its reconstitution as an 'independent and strong' ECP. Addressing a large gathering of PTI workers and supporters at D-Chowk here, Imran Khan said: *"We want an independent and strong Election Commission."* He said the ROs should function under the ECP, adding that the existing ECP did not have ROs under it. *"We want scrutiny of results in four constituencies."*

MQM warns of Karachi lockdown if Altaf not issued NICOP, passport, *Dawn*, May 13¹⁰

The MQM warned on May 12 to lockdown the port city if the NICOP and passport were not issued to party Chief Altaf Hussain. MQM's Rabita (coordination) Committee, in an official statement issued here, condemned the Nadra for using delay tactics in the issuance of NICOP to Altaf Hussain. The statement said the party and its workers would stage a countrywide protest if the NICOP was not issued to the MQM chief, who is living in a self-imposed exile in London for over 20 years.

Military, political leadership to supervise Karachi operation: PM, *Dawn*, May 14¹¹

Pakistan's top military and civilian leadership huddled together on May 14 to review the law and order situation in Karachi at a meeting at the Governor House chaired by PM Nawaz Sharif. The premier said that the military and political leadership

⁸<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147164-Protesters-should-visit-PM-House-to-inform-of-rigging:-PM-Nawaz->

⁹<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147391-Imran-Khan-demands-reconstitution-of-ECP>

¹⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105887/mqm-warns-of-karachi-lockdown-if-altaf-not-issued-nicop-passport>

¹¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106255/military-political-leadership-to-supervise-karachi-operation-pm>

would together supervise the targeted Karachi operation, and that no political pressure would be tolerated. The meeting was briefed by Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif, the heads of Pakistan's intelligence agencies, the Corps Commander Karachi, the Director-General Rangers and the Inspector-General of Sindh Police. "Restoration of peace in Karachi is the first priority of government," said the premier. Sharif further said that the city is the economic hub of the country and restoring peace here is necessary for the country's development.

PTI, PML-Q join hands for 'electoral reforms', *Dawn*, May 14¹²

During a meeting between the PTI delegation and members of the PML-Q on May 14, the two sides agreed on a joint course of action for electoral reforms. The meeting was held at the residence of PML-Q leader Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain. The PTI delegation comprised of Vice President Shah Mahmood Qureshi, President Javed Hashmi and General Secretary Jehangir Tareen. Whereas Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, Mushahid Hussain and Kamil Ali Agha represented the PML-Q.

MQM walks out of NA, demands NICOP for Altaf Hussain, *The Nation*, May 15¹³

MQM staged walk out from the NA on May 15 to protest against non-issuance of NICOP and Passport to party chief Altaf Hussain. Speaking in the House, MQM's Asif Hasnain alleged that the government which enjoyed two third majority was adopting undemocratic attitude by resorting to unfair tactics. He said State Minister claimed Altaf Hussain's data had been lost, while in fact, NADRA team had visited Altaf Hussain's residence and collected data. Rashid Godil asked if Maryam Nawaz was issued passport, why not Altaf Hussain?

LG polls to be held by Oct-Nov: Pervez Khattak, *The News*, May 18¹⁴

Chief Minister KP, Pervez Khattak on May 18 announced that local bodies' elections in KP will be organized by the month of October-November. Addressing a programme in Lahore, he said other provinces told lies in connection with holding the local bodies' polls. Pervez Khattak described the center as a hurdle in creation of employment opportunities in KP. He said the PTI Chief Imran Khan does not interfere in the provincial matters and that being a chief minister he would neither allow any such meddling. Khattak said corruption could not be eliminated if the party leader or chief minister himself is corrupt.

High tech surveillance system to be launched in Islamabad, *Dawn*, May 24¹⁵

The Interior minister said *1,950 CCTV cameras will be installed in the Islamabad as a part of the 'Safe City Project' within the next eight months.* Through the security cameras, the

¹²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106260/pti-pml-q-join-hands-for-electoral-reforms>

¹³<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/16-May-2014/mqm-walks-out-of-na-demands-nicop-for-altaf-hussain>

¹⁴<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-148096-LG-polls-to-be-held-by-Oct-Nov:-Khattak>

¹⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108315/high-tech-surveillance-system-to-be-launched-in-islamabad>

movements of citizens will be monitored to counter terrorism and criminal activities. He has set the deadline of eight months for the completion of the safe city project, which is being launched with the financial assistance of China. The Rs6 billion safe city project was initially conceived in 2008 but could not be launched due to the unavailability of funds.

Qadri will be 'back in July', Dawn, May 26¹⁶

PAT leader Dr Tahirul Qadri has announced returning to Pakistan from Canada in July this year. The announcement was made during Dr Qadri's address through video link from Canada to 25th foundation day ceremony of the party here on 25. He also announced forming a Council of Democrats that would work for 'bringing a revolution' in the country. He promised 'change' in the country within a month of that 'revolution'. He rejected the present democratic system calling it "*the rule of corruption and rigging*".

MQM criticises UK for freezing Altaf's accounts, Dawn, May 26¹⁷

A senior leader of the MQM disclosed that bank accounts of the party's chief Altaf Hussain in London were being frozen and asked MQM's workers and supporters at a large meeting in Karachi to continue their 'peaceful struggle' against the British government.

PTI defeats PML-N in PP-107 by-poll, The News, May 30¹⁸

The PTI won the PP-107 by-poll held on 29 as its candidate defeated her main rival who represented the PML-N. Punjab CM Shehabaz Sharif took notice of open exhibition of firearms on the polling day and sought a detailed report from the Hafizabad district police chief. He directed him to take strict action against those to displayed arms without any discrimination.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Asif says he signed application against Geo, The News, May 1¹⁹

Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif said on April 30 that the application moved against Geo in PEMRA was signed by him. He said that as a defence minister it was his responsibility to send the application. Speaking to media after attending Youm-e-Shuda ceremony at the General Headquarters, the minister said that talk of tension between the government and the military was baseless. Replying a question he said that his meeting with Opposition Leader Syed Khursha Shah was aimed at discussing electricity issues.

¹⁶<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzqqeGRkMi0>

¹⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108618/mqm-criticises-uk-for-freezing-altafs-accounts>

¹⁸<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-253091-PTI-defeats-PML-N-in-PP-107-by-poll>

¹⁹<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-146280-Asif-says-he-signed-application-against-Geo>

Pakistan summons Middle East envoys to discuss Syria, Dawn, May 3²⁰

Pakistan has summoned its envoys from key Middle Eastern countries to meet in Islamabad on May 5 for urgent consultations over situation in Syria in particular and Middle East in general. "Yes envoys from Middle East would meet in Islamabad on May 5 to discuss situation in the Middle East and current issues concerning the region and Pakistan," Foreign Office spokeswoman Tasneem Aslam told on May 3. She said issues related to Pakistanis living in Middle East would also come under discussion.

Pakistan will continue to help in Bahrain's security, says Nawaz, Dawn, May 7²¹

PM Nawaz Sharif on May 7 said *Pakistan and Bahrain enjoy similarity of views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest and vowed to continue contributing in Bahrain's prosperity, security and stability.* He was speaking to Khalifa Bin Ahmed Al-Dhahrani, Chairman of the Council of Representative of Kingdom of Bahrain, who called on him here. Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, MNA and Convener Pakistan-Bahrain Parliamentary Friendship Group Pir Shafqat Hussain Jillani, Secretary Foreign Affairs Aizaz Chaudhry and senior officers attended the meeting. Bahrain's ambassador to Pakistan, Mohammad Ebrahim Mohammad Abdul Qadir was also present.

Fazl gets status of federal minister, The Nation, May 7²²

PM Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has conferred the status of federal minister upon Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, Chairman Special Committee of the National Assembly on Kashmir. A notification in this regard has been issued by the Cabinet Division. The notification stated "*In exercise of the powers conferred by rule 15(1)(g) read with serial No. 1A of Schedule-V-A of the Rules of Business, 1973, the PM has been pleased to confer, with immediate effect, the status of Federal Minister on Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, MNA.*"

Nisar gives conditional nod to PTI's May 11 rally, Dawn, May 8²³

The federal government has decided to conditionally allow the May 11 rally announced by PTI to protest against alleged rigging in the 2013 general elections, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan announced on a live televised press conference on May 8. The PTI administration will receive the official approval later this evening, he said. "We will, however, allocate a separate space in Islamabad for future protest rallies," he added. "Amere 100, 200 people can create havoc for the state by protesting at sensitive locations like the federal capital's Red Zone."

²⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103947/pakistan-summons-middle-east-envoys-to-discuss-syria>

²¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104782/pakistan-will-continue-to-help-in-bahrains-security-says-nawaz>

²²<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/07-May-2014/fazl-gets-status-of-federal-minister>

²³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105041/nisar-gives-conditional-nod-to-ptis-may-11-rally>

Adjournment motion in Senate over Rashid Rehman's assassination, *The Nation*, May 9²⁴

Opposition parties in the Senate on Friday submitted an adjournment motion to discuss the the assassination of human rights activist and Advocate Supreme Court Rashid Rehman in Multan on May 7. Signed by Awami National Party's ANP Afrasiab Khattak and PPP Senator Farhatullah Babar, the motion said that within the month before the gruesome assassination, Rehman had alerted authorities about the threats to his life from certain individuals, whose names he had also identified. The motion added that the assassination had raised issues of grave and urgent public importance.

It's not time for politics of protests: PM, *The Nation*, May 11²⁵

PM Nawaz Sharif has said that the country cannot afford the politics of protests at this stage when the government is solving serious national problems and its efforts are bearing fruits. The PM, who held a meeting with Punjab CM Shahbaz Sharif at Jati Umra, said if any political party has grievance of any sort, the forum of parliament is available to get the remedy. Referring to the PTI protest, Nawaz Sharif said that instead of protesting on the road, the opposition party should come to the parliament if it has any complaint against anything. He said that masses are well aware of the government efforts to steer the country out of the problems galore and put it on the development track. The time is not far off when the people would have all problems including load shedding resolved, he said.

Jl declares war on 'political, economic terrorists', *Dawn*, May 12²⁶

The Jamaat-i-Islami has announced a war against "political and economic terrorists" and has sought support of the masses for the cause. "I've decided to wage a war against the ruling feudal lords and capitalists doing political and economic terrorism and to bring them to task. The nation should support me in this struggle," party emir Sirajul Haq told a reception hosted in his honour on May 11. "The time is approaching for a Day of Judgment, either to be set in Islamabad or on the lawns of Minar-i-Pakistan in Lahore, for holding accountable the ruling elite for its corruption and plunder of the public wealth." Secretary-general Liaquat Baloch and Punjab chief Dr Syed Waseem Akhtar also spoke.

Government's time up on 'violation of constitution': Qadri, *The News*, May 12²⁷

Leader of PAT and head of Tehreek-e-Minhajul Quran, Dr Tahirul Qadri Sunday said the government's days are numbered in the wake of what he termed breaching

²⁴<http://tribune.com.pk/story/706307/opposition-files-adjournment-motion-in-senate-over-rashid-rehmans-assassination/>

²⁵<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/11-May-2014/it-s-not-time-for-politics-of-protests-pm>

²⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105717/ji-declares-war-on-political-economic-terrorists>

²⁷<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147396-Governments-time-up-on-violation-of-constitution:-Qadri>

of various provisions of the Constitution. Addressing a number of rallies in several cities of Pakistan via video link from Canada, Dr. Qadri described as wrong 'the accusation of derailing the democracy'. "*Here haram is being consumed, unemployment has peaked, mothers are committing suicides along with children,*" he snapped, saying amendments in the constitutions are made with a view to protect themselves.

Govt. offers to set up all-party electoral reforms committee, Dawn, May 13²⁸

A day after a big protest in Islamabad by the opposition PTI over alleged rigging in last year's general elections, the government offered an all-party committee in the National Assembly on May 12 to propose electoral reforms. The offer came at the fag-end of the day's sitting when the PTI hardly expected it after an earlier clash with the ruling PML-N and gave no immediate response when the Minister for Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal, cited political stability and continuity as an essential requirement for economic progress.

FIR can be lodged against army men, AG says, Dawn, May 15²⁹

Attorney General Aslam Butt informed the Supreme Court on May 14 that a First Information Report could be filed against a currently serving army official according to Pakistan Army regulations. He said this in the hearing of the Malakand missing person's case, which concerns the disappearance of 35 people from an internment center in the region. Butt submitted his reply in the apex court regarding FIRs against serving armed forces personnel.

China willing to upgrade security cooperation: Xi, The Nation, May 15³⁰

China sincerely hopes that Pakistan will achieve stability and development, President Xi Jinping said on May 14 as he met with Pakistan's Senate Chairman Syed Nayyar Hussain Bukhari in Beijing. "*China and Pakistan are all-weather and all-round strategic partners,*" Xi said during their meeting, highlighting the two countries high degree of trust and close communication on many major issues. Xi said that the Chinese side attaches great importance to cementing traditional friendship and boosting practical cooperation with Pakistan.

Anti-Army agenda to be opposed sternly: Pervaiz Elahi, The Nation, May 18³¹

PML senior central leader and former Deputy PM Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has said that successful rallies of PML had proved the people were with the Armed Forces of Pakistan. Armed forces are not only defending the frontiers but also ideologically protecting the nation. "*We would not allow any harm to come to their honor and prestige. We would fully and actively support and stand with them,*" he stated while talking to

²⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105921/govt-offers-to-set-up-all-party-electoral-reforms-committee>

²⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106470/fir-can-be-lodged-against-armymen-ag-says>

³⁰<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/15-May-2014/china-willing-to-upgrade-security-cooperation-xi>

³¹<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2014/anti-army-agenda-to-be-opposed-sternly-pervaiz-elahi>

journalists on the occasion of his party's enthusiastic and grand rallies taken out in many cities to express solidarity with the Armed Forces on May 18.

JUI-F blames 'ISI within ISI' for kidnappings, killings, Dawn, May 21³²

The JUI-F on May 20 alleged that there is an "ISI within the ISI" which is involved in kidnapping and killings of innocent people across Pakistan. Commenting on a motion in the Senate regarding ongoing political situation in the country, JUI-F Senator Hafiz Hamdullah said the ISI was behind the incidents of missing persons and mass graves in Balochistan. "It was not decide since the independence (of Pakistan) that who will rule the country ... either it will be the Parliament or those institutions whose employees get pays from the taxes of the nation," he said.

There should be no ban on any media house: Raza Rabbani, The Nation, May 22³³

Senator Raza Rabbani, a senior leader of Pakistan People's Party, said on Geo News programme, 'Aaj Kamran Khan Kay Sath', on May 20 that he opposes any ban on any media house, adding that if there is any such controversial decision, we condemn it. Senator Raza Rabbani said that it is ironic that the private members of Pemra who made the decision of suspending Geo's licence were appointed during the PPP government, but they do not reflect PPP policy, and this is not the PPP policy. He said that the Pakistan People's Party believes in the freedom of the press, and it does not support banning of any media house. He said if the matters have come to such a pass it is simply an inefficiency of the government.

Punjab CM calls on army chief, Dawn, May 24³⁴

Punjab CM Shahbaz Sharif called on Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif at the army guest-house to discuss with him matters of mutual interest. [...] A TV channel reported Information Minister Pervaiz Rashid as saying that political leadership, foreign affairs experts and security establishment were being consulted for making a final decision about Indian premier-designate Narendra Modi's invitation to PM Nawaz Sharif.

More than 200 Sikhs booked, Dawn, May 25³⁵

Over 200 Sikhs were booked for attacking, assaulting and rioting at the Parliament House. The case was registered in response to a complaint lodged by the SHO of the secretariat police station, stating that over 225 Sikhs staged a protest and put up resistance at Radio Pakistan Chowk, when the police tried to intercept them. Later,

³²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107531/jui-f-blames-isi-within-isi-for-kidnappings-killings>

³³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-251522-There-should-be-no-ban-on-any-media-house-Raza-Rabbani>

³⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108287/punjab-cm-calls-on-army-chief>

³⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108440/more-than-200-sikhs-booked>

they entered the Parliament House after breaking its gates. Fifteen Sikhs were nominated in the FIR, along with 225 unknown protesters.

Fazlur Rehman 'endeavours' to forge alliance, Dawn, May 28³⁶

To cobble together religious parties in an alliance, JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on 27 visited JUP President Pirljaz Hashmi and other leaders here. The Maulana had called on Jamaat-i-Islami emir Sirajul Haq on Monday. He said, *His desire to set up a platform of Islamist parties to counter the 'conspiracies being hatched to secularise the country'*. Terming Imran Khan and Tahirul Qadri the representatives of 'western secular ideology', he said to block them was the utmost responsibility of religious parties of the country. He said *religious parties had been cornered and were under pressure for being blamed for extremism in the country. A joint strategy was need of the hour to cope with the situation*, he added. Fazlur Rehman said *peace negotiations with the Taliban had come to an end as a fierce military operation had been launched in North Waziristan in which scores of innocent people, including women and children, had been killed, while the ir houses, crops and cattle destroyed.*

Shah warns PML-N against revenge politics, Dawn, May 30³⁷

Leader of the Opposition in the NA Syed Khurshid Shah on 29 said that the PPP was being targeted and the politics of revenge was at play. He added that *if the government continued on this path, the opposition would have to seriously reconsider its stance in supporting the democratic set-up existing in its current form*. He was upset over the issuance of non-bailable warrants against party leaders Makhdoom Amin Faheem and Yousaf Raza Gilani.

PML-N MPA kidnapped, Dawn, May 31³⁸

PML-N MPA Rana Jamil Hasan was abducted on 31 from an area in the country's central Punjab province. Police said Hasan was kidnapped from an area near Pindi Bhattian in Punjab. Police has launched an investigation into the abduction of Hasan who was elected to the Punjab Assembly from PP-174. The MPA was on his way to Islamabad along with members of his family when the kidnapping took place. The kidnappers have demanded five crore rupees as ransom for Hasan's recovery.

Shujaat and Qadri agree to work together, Dawn, May 31³⁹

The Chaudhrys of Gujrat and Dr Tahirul Qadri have affirmed the PML-N government is "*illegitimate and unconstitutional*" because it had come to power "*through rigging*". PAT chief Dr Qadri and PML-Q leaders Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, Pervaiz Elahi and Moonis Elahi agreed to join hands to launch a struggle for "*devolution of power*" after a meeting in London on 30. "*The leadership of the two parties has decided to*

³⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109030/fazlur-rehman-endeavours-to-forge-alliance>

³⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109537/shah-warns-pml-n-against-revenge-politics>

³⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109735/pml-n-mpa-kidnapped>

³⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109656/shujaat-and-qadri-agree-to-work-together>

contact other parties to force the government to introduce electoral reforms and provide relief to the masses," Moonis Elahi told after the meeting.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

Army believes in stability of democracy, supremacy of Constitution: COAS, The News, May 1⁴⁰

COAS General Raheel Sharif on April 30 said that Pakistan army believes in the stability of democracy and supremacy of the law and Constitution. Addressing an impressive ceremony to pay tribute to the martyrs (Shuhda) of armed forces and their families on Yaum-e-Shuhada here at GHQ, the Army Chief said all the institutions should work together towards success of the system. He said Pakistan army has been keeping an eye on both internal and external challenges and it has the capability to deal with the dangers. Pakistan army will frustrate the motives of the enemies of the country, he added.

Corps commanders' meeting underway at GHQ, Dawn, May 2⁴¹

The army top brass was meeting on May 2 under the leadership of Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif at General Headquarter Rawalpindi. The meeting was discussing the country's security situation as well as the armed forces' occupational affairs. During the meeting, the corps commanders expressed satisfaction relating to the army's operational preparedness. According to sources privy to the meeting, important decisions relating to national security issues were also expected to be taken today.

Centcom chief, Raheel discuss regional security, Dawn, May 2⁴²

Commander US Cent Com Gen Lloyd Austin met Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif on May 1 for discussions on Afghanistan and bilateral military-to-military cooperation. The Inter-Services Public Relations said the two discussed matters of mutual interest with special emphasis on regional security. Gen Austin's visit to Islamabad comes in the backdrop of reports that Taliban in Afghanistan had signaled their willingness for a deal with the US on the release of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, who has been in Taliban's captivity for almost five years. Sgt. Bergdahl is believed to be held by the Haqqani network on the Afghan side of the Pak-Afghan border.

Pakistan test fires Ballistic Missile Hatf III, The Nation, May 8⁴³

Pakistan today conducted a successful training launch of short range surface to surface Ballistic Missile Hatf III (Ghaznavi), capable of delivering nuclear and

⁴⁰<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-146262-Army-believes-in-stability-of-democracy,-supremacy-of-Constitution:-COAS>

⁴¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103697/corps-commanders-meeting-underway-at-ghq>

⁴²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103625/centcom-chief-raheel-discuss-regional-security>

⁴³<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/08-May-2014/pakistan-test-fires-ballistic-missile-hatf-iii>

conventional warheads within a range of 290 kilometers. The launch was witnessed by the COAS, General Raheel Sharif, Director General Strategic Plans Division, Lieutenant General Zubair Mahmood Hayat, Commander 5 Corps, Lieutenant General Sajjad Ghani, Commander Army Strategic Forces Command, Lieutenant General Obaid Ullah Khan, Chairman NESCOM, Mr. Muhammad Irfan Burney and other senior officials.

Bajaur Agency cleared of militants: General Rabbani, *The Nation*, May 8⁴⁴

Corps Commander of Peshawar Lt. Gen. Khalid Rabbani says, the security forces with the help of tribesmen have successfully eliminated militants from Bajaur Agency. He was addressing a gathering of soldiers and tribal elders at Sewai area of Tehsil Mamoon on May 8. He said the writ of the government has been restored by the sacrifices of the security forces and the valuable support of the tribesmen. The Corps Commander was briefed about law and order situation and steps taken for security of the Agency's border areas. Later, the Corps Commander visited security posts in various areas of the Agency and met with jawans.

Destroy N Waziristan terror sanctuaries, Burns tells COAS, *Dawn*, May 9⁴⁵

US Deputy Secretary of State William J. Burns during his visit to Pakistan held meetings with Advisor to PM on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, special assistant to the PM Tariq Fatemi and Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif. Sources close to the meetings said that Burns conveyed the message of the United States to top Pakistani civil and military officials during the meetings, asking for the destruction of terrorist sanctuaries located in North Waziristan. On behalf of the US, he requested that this operation should be completed before the installation of the new political administration in Kabul.

US chief of naval operations arrives in Pakistan, meets COAS, CNS, *Dawn*, May 13⁴⁶

Admiral Jonathan Greenert, US chief of naval operations, arrived in the federal capital city on May 13 on an important visit aimed at enhancing professional cooperation between the navies of the two countries. Admiral Jonathan also held a meeting with Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif at the army's GHQ in Rawalpindi, according to an Inter Services Public Relations spokesperson. Admiral Jonathan held a meeting with Chief of Naval staff Admiral Asif Sandila at Naval Headquarters in Islamabad, a spokesman for Pakistan Navy told Dawn. During the meetings both sides agreed to enhance professional cooperation between two navies.

⁴⁴<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/08-May-2014/bajaur-agency-cleared-of-militants-general-rabbani>

⁴⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105243/destroy-n-waziristan-terror-sanctuaries-burns-tells-coas>

⁴⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106026/us-chief-of-naval-operations-arrives-in-pakistan-meets-coas-cns>

Gen Raheel assures political parties of army support, *The News*, May 14⁴⁷

COAS General Raheel Sharif has assured the country's political leadership that armed forces will support all the provincial governments with full sincerity. He was speaking at a meeting chaired by PM Nawaz Sharif and attended by former president Asif Ali Zardari and other senior leaders of political parties. Director General ISI, DG Rangers, Police IG and other officials also attended the meeting. General Sharif said that the army will continue to extend its full cooperation to the federal and provincial governments. "We should move forward, there will be no obstacle between the political parties and democratic system," he was quoted as saying.

COAS discusses security in Kabul, *The Tribune*, May 19⁴⁸

The Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Raheel Sharif during his visit to Kabul on May 19, reviewed the security situation in Afghanistan along with the transfer of security responsibility to Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The COAS was also part of a tripartite meeting with the Afghan Chief of General Staff General Sher Muhammad Karimi and ISAF Commander General Joseph Dunford.

They reviewed the prevailing security situation in Afghanistan. The transfer of security responsibility to Afghan National Security Forces in the wake of US, ISAF drawdown, enhanced bilateralism between Pakistan and Afghanistan with particular emphasis on coordination arrangements along Pakistan – Afghanistan Border was also deliberated upon during the meeting.

Gen Sharif attends trilateral meeting in Kabul, *Dawn*, May 19⁴⁹

A four-star level trilateral meeting on Afghan security situation was held in Kabul on May 19, which was attended by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Raheel Sharif, Afghan Chief of General Staff General Sher Muhammad Karimi and Commander of ISAF General Joseph Dunford.

"Participants reviewed the current security situation in Afghanistan. Besides the transfer of security responsibility to Afghan National Security Forces in the wake of US/ISAF drawdown, enhanced bilateralism between Pakistan and Afghanistan with particular emphasis on coordination arrangements along Pakistan-Afghanistan border was also deliberated upon during the meeting," an ISPR spokesman said in a statement issued at the end of the meeting.

⁴⁷<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147682-Gen-Raheel-assures-political-parties-of-army-support->

⁴⁸<http://tribune.com.pk/story/710440/kabul-trip-coas-discussed-security-situation-in-afghanistan-with-ansf-chief/>

⁴⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1107311>

'Pakistan's defence spending lowest in region', Dawn, May 20⁵⁰

The Senate defence committee was informed by the ministry of defence that Pakistan's defence budget is the lowest in the region despite its location in the red zone in terms of growing threats to its security. *"Pakistan's defence allocation (US\$5.7 billion approximately) is the lowest as compared to rising defence budget of India US\$37.256 billion, China \$115 billion, and Turkey \$19.1 billion,"* Additional Secretary Ministry of defence Air Vice Marshal Arshad Quddus told the committee meeting, which was specially called for the defence budget briefing. According to the United Nations, Pakistan had a gross domestic product of US \$215 billion in the year 2012. In comparison, GDP for Turkey was recorded at \$788 billion, India at \$1,875bn, and China at \$8,358bn. *"Pakistan Army gets 48 per cent of the whole defence budget while 20pc goes to Pakistan Air force and Navy gets only 10pc,"* the senior Air force officer said.

COAS vows strong defence, The Nation, May 22⁵¹

Army Chief General Raheel Sharif said on May 21 that the country was fully prepared for any possible foreign aggression. He said this during the induction ceremony of a batch of F-16 fighter jets into the PAF Squadron Number 19 in Sargodha. He was the chief guest. The PAF has re-equipped fourth Squadron with state-of-the art F-16s. The army chief congratulated the PAF on the induction of new F-16 jet fighters. He said that PAF has always fulfilled people's expectations. *"This day will be remembered as landmark even in history... This indictment will further strengthen the historic terms of Pakistan and Jordan."* He said the fighter jets will help Pakistan's armed forces effectively fight the war against terrorism and safeguard territorial integrity of the country.

Rear Admiral Zafar assumes Pakistan fleet command, Dawn, May 31⁵²

Rear Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi assumed the command of Pakistan fleet (Compak) on 30.

He took over the assignment from Vice Admiral Khan Hasham Bin Siddique, who had been holding Compak Command since January 2013. Vice Adm Siddique has moved to the headquarters as deputy chief of naval staff – projects. Admiral Zafar was previously posted as commander of logistics command. In 2010, he commanded the 25-nation naval coalition CTF-150 that dealt with maritime security and counter-terrorism. At Comlog, Rear Adm Abbasi has been replaced by Rear Admiral Syed Imdad Hussain Jafri. *"Rear Admiral Syed Imdad Hussain Jafri has taken over Pakistan Navy Logistic Command,"* the navy statement said. Rear Adm Jafri was earlier serving at the headquarters as deputy chief of naval staff – material. Commander Logistic,

⁵⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107312/pakistans-defence-spending-lowest-in-region>

⁵¹<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/22-May-2014/coas-vows-strong-defence>

⁵²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109636/rear-admiral-zafar-assumes-pakistan-fleet-command>

Rear Admiral Imdad Hussain Jafri would be in-charge of logistic support to all PN units, ships and establishments.

EDITORIAS AND OPINIONS

Civil-military 'twisters', Shamshad Ahmad, *The News*, May 1⁵³

If anything, the recent civil-military fracas riding on wild media hype once again showed the fragility of our political structure. This is not the first time we found ourselves divided as a nation without even trying to understand what is wrong with us. We are in the habit of running after symptoms paying no attention to the actual disease in our ailing body that with every change of weather keeps erupting into convulsive seizures. We were born with this congenital disease. Our failures in governance, economy, institutional integrity, social justice and law and order are all its symptoms. [...] Instead of looking at the military as an adversarial threat, the civilian leadership should be savvy enough to consider an institutional asset for itself and for the country's strength. Without security, the concept of welfare state is a mere dream. Unfortunately, in the past, if there were instances of military intervention, it was only because the civilian setups were invariably devoid of requisite strategic vision or talent in their political cadres. We have gone through periods of military rule but admittedly also remained without genuine democracy even when we had few democratic openings under 'elected' leaders. Our politicians know this embarrassing reality; yet they never made any effort to practice genuine democracy. In fact, we saw quite a few of them being 'cycled' through military cradles. This weakness invariably became their bête noire and kept haunting them in their political careers.

At Downing Street, *Express Tribune*, May 2⁵⁴

[...] Islamabad's relations with London, which could take on a more ominous tone in their future. On the eve of PM Sharif's visit, a group of British MPs making up the International Development Committee released a rather damaging report asking if British aid was really helping fight extremism in Pakistan. This, of course, is the purpose why aid goes over from the UK to Pakistan, with Islamabad being the biggest recipient of assistance from that country in the world. The MPs asked if the 446 million pounds allocated for Pakistan this year would really come to any good at all. A debate on this is really not something Pakistan needs at a time when it is desperately short of funds and requires all the help it can get from any quarter.

⁵³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-247423-Civil-military-twisters>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-248380-This-is-now-getting-to-be-a-farce>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104660/shift-in-the-balance-of-power>

⁵⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/702832/at-downing-street/>

General Sharif's welcome speech, Express Tribune, May 2⁵⁵

[...] General Sharif was pretty unequivocal in stating that this was not the case when he said "*the Pakistan Army supports any endeavour for the elimination of terrorism and the establishment of peace*". Needless to say, there could be, and perhaps even should be, differences of opinion in how to deal with the menace of terrorism. Indeed, every war cabinet has such differences in advice and strategy, but this does not necessarily translate into acrimony, as is being speculated. And it should also be stressed that, ultimately, it is the civilian government's decision on which path to take. They are the ones with the national mandate and that mandate should be respected regardless of whether institutions agree with the strategy or not. That the army chief has effectively accepted this is extremely welcome that too in front of the top civilian and military leadership, and indeed the people of Pakistan. That said, if this path hits roadblocks, then there needs to be a 'Plan B,' which brings us to what the army chief said immediately after his support for "any endeavour for peace." He said that while "*it is the army's desire that all elements working against the state unconditionally accept the Constitution and the law in their entirety and come back into the national mainstream... there should be no room for doubt about dealing with traitors of the state. Pakistan's public and armed forces possess the ability to send such elements to their logical end*".

Lateef's Protest, The Nation, May 5⁵⁶

Balochistan Student Organization-Azaad is an ethno-centric student organization fighting for the separation and freedom of Balochistan. Over 100 members of the organization have been reported missing, and the organization is still considered popular amongst Baloch students. On the 18th of March, Zahid Baloch, the chairperson of BSO-Azaad was abducted and is now reported missing, like thousands of other Baloch. However, there was a unique turn to this abduction. Lateef Johar, a BSO-Azad member, has been on hunger strike since April 22 outside the Karachi Press Club, and his condition is fast deteriorating.

Compatriots not patriots, Afiya Shehrbano, The News, May 8⁵⁷

Why does Imran Khan cringe from being purely provincial and continue to greedily harbour ambitions for centralised power and federal leverage? In many ways, Imran Khan is the epitome of Pakhtuns unresolved identity crisis which prevents us from imbibing the democratic understanding that governance at local, devolved levels is the most effective way to bring national change. Everything else is hype, grandeur and lust for power, not desire to govern or realise citizenry. Counter to those critics who observe from outside of the province and insist that KP is 'a mess' today, visits and discussions with a variety of official and non-governmental actors have yielded different sociological findings. Whether one agrees with their policies or not, the PTI

⁵⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/703323/general-sharifs-welcome-speech/>

⁵⁶ <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/05-May-2014/lateef-s-protest>

⁵⁷ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-248835-Compatriots-not-patriots>

government is perhaps today, the most active and energetic in its commitment to execute policy in the province. Just three departments in KP (education, health and local government) are fairly successful examples of that elusive partnership that we traditionally moan about – between the bureaucrat and the political representative. The benefit of appointing competent and efficient officials for these critical offices in KP seems to be trickling down to district levels. This, despite a spanner called Fazalur Rehman.

Foreign policy resolutions, *Dawn*, May 8⁵⁸

The PM views on foreign policy as spelled out on 6 at a conference of Pakistani diplomats in the Middle East and the Gulf deserve to be noted because of what seems to be a welcome change of emphasis in Islamabad's foreign policy priorities. His belief in "economic diplomacy", said Nawaz Sharif, stemmed from the fact that "foreign policy has virtually become economic policy". For that reason, he said, his government's foreign policy was driven by economic considerations and focused on opportunities available to Pakistan. He thus wanted the country to cash in on its relations with the Middle East and the Gulf, because of the region's "booming energy sector, developing infrastructure, thriving services sector and ... connectivity". Speaking ahead of his visit to Iran, Mr Sharif touched upon two issues which have aroused considerable misgivings in opposition circles. One, Pakistan's 'special relationship' with Saudi Arabia and Bahrain would not be at the expense of its ties with Iran; two, there was no change in Pakistan's Syria policy, because Islamabad believed in non-interference in other countries' internal affairs. There is no reason why the principles Mr Sharif outlined should remain confined to the Middle East and Gulf region, especially when he talks of "rebalancing" foreign policy with a view to greater integration with the world.

Qadri's dreams and our nightmares, Zaigham Khan, *The News*, May 10⁵⁹

Sheikhul Islam Allama Tahirul Qadri is not an ordinary mortal; he is a mystic, scholar of international renown and leading politician of the country, all combined in one mercurial person, hard to grasp and impossible to define. If you go by his word, you are bound to revere him as a living saint who was taught for 15 years by Imam Abu Hanifa, founder of the Sunni Hanafi school of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) who lived in the 8th century, in the world of spirits. Through his dreams, he remains constantly in touch with the parallel spiritual world that exists side by side with the material universe. Like his worldly existence, Sheikhul Islam holds a prestigious position in the world behind the curtain of four elements. Sheikhul Islam listens to his dreams, believes in them and acts upon them, for which he is both admired and ridiculed. He has recounted many of his dreams to his

⁵⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1104962/foreign-policy-resolutions>

⁵⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-249236-Qadri%E2%80%99s-dreams-and-our-nightmares>

followers that speak of the love he enjoys from the holiest persons of Muslim faith. According to his own statement, he founded his institution, Minhajul Quran, on the most sacred orders a Muslim could receive from the other world, even though he hates the Sharif family that provided the material resources to translate the holy command into reality.

Imran Khan, Tahirul Qadri & a dharna, Raza Rumi, Express Tribune, May 11⁶⁰

[...] Two protests come in the wake of recent tensions between the civilians and the military. Given Pakistan's history, the PTI's protest and the return of Dr Qadri from the safe environs of Canada are termed being 'sponsored'. It is difficult to ascertain the veracity of this perception. However, the timing of these protests against the credibility of a parliament — of which the PTI and its leader, Imran Khan, are part of — is somewhat problematic. This time the responsibility of rigging is being termed a collusive project of the ruling PML-N, the judiciary and the largest television network, ie, *Geo Tv*. [...] Making matters more complicated, there is little or no interest by the PTI, as the second largest political party, to scrutinise the performance of the PML-N's one year in office. Imran Khan and his party are also not offering any idea of how well they have performed in K-P compared to, say, the PML-N or the PPP. [...] Hypothetically, the success of Dr Qadri's mission would be the end of the current system of parliamentary democracy. Is that what Imran Khan wants? Definitely not. So this may be a calculated risk to augment pressure on the Nawaz government and in the process, endear the segments within the establishment that are annoyed with the government. As a short-term strategy it may work, but it is ultimately going to interrupt or even reverse the democratic transition that commenced in February 2008. Unlike Dr Qadri who has no real systemic stakes, the PTI must chart its course with caution.

A craven approach, Asif Ezdi, *The News*, May 12⁶¹

The army chief's speech on Martyrs Day about two weeks ago was addressed not only to the soldiers but indirectly also to the civilian government. It has been widely commented upon in the context of recent tensions in civil-military relations arising from the government's handling of Musharraf's treason trial. What our commentators have largely missed, however, is that the speech also indicates differences, if not strains, between the Nawaz government and the military leadership over Kashmir, and in particular over the Nawaz government's deviation from the country's long-standing policy on this issue. In his speech, Raheel restated that policy. To emphasise the central importance of Kashmir in Pakistan's national priorities, he used Quaid-e-Azam's words ("jugular vein") to describe Kashmir, as an indirect way of signalling to the government that it must remain the core issue in any dialogue with India.

⁶⁰ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/706769/imran-khan-tahirul-qadri-a-dharna/>

⁶¹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-249589-A-craven-approach>

Nawaz Sharif's visit to Iran, Javid Hussain, *The Nation*, May 13⁶²

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's recent visit to Tehran has played an important role in building up bridges of trust and understanding between Pakistan and Iran. What is required now is active follow-up action to raise an edifice of close cooperation at bilateral and regional levels on the foundation laid down by the visit.

For a new democracy, Dr Atta-ur-Rahman, *The News*, May 17⁶³

During the last 60 years we have seen successive democracies inter-mingled with military rules. It is a painful reality that the worst military rule in Pakistan was far better than the best democracy. A comparison shows that the GDP growth rates were invariably higher during military regimes. Take for instance the recent past. The period between 2001 and 2008 saw an average GDP growth of between 6-8 percent under former president Musharraf. In the subsequent six-period it has hovered around three percent and the present government is struggling to have it reach even the lowly figure of four percent. Why has democracy consistently failed to deliver here, although it has worked reasonably well in India and Bangladesh?

The changing ME political landscape and Pakistan, Atif Hussain, *Daily Times*, May 18⁶⁴

[...] it makes perfect sense for Pakistan to safeguard its own interests by balancing its relations with Saudi Arabia and Iran. Improving its historically not-so-cordial relations with Iran in the post-revolution era is important for Pakistan for a multitude of other reasons too. The energy-starved country needs gas and would have to complete the pipeline from Iran to get it. Moreover, with hostile governments likely in New Dehli and Kabul, it cannot afford to have a third inimical neighbour. However, Pakistan will have to take extreme care not to cross the red line in its relations with Iran whereby it may earn the wrath of its long time benefactor, Saudi Arabia. Hence, the best option available for Pakistan is to play a role in defusing tension between the two archrivals and to help them reach a compromise. This is not only in the interests of Pakistan but also of Iran, Saudi Arabia and the region as a whole.

A lesson learnt, Syed Kamran Hashmi, *Daily Times*, May 23⁶⁵

Never in his life would Mir Shakeelur Rehman have imagined what he is going through nowadays: severe public indignation, harsh resentment from a political party, bitterness from the smaller media outlets, widespread irritation of civil

⁶² <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/13-May-2014/nawaz-sharif-s-visit-to-iran>

⁶³ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-250572-For-a-new-democracy>

⁶⁴ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/18-May-2014/the-changing-me-political-landscape-and-pakistan>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/19-May-2014/emerging-contours-of-gulf-politics>

⁶⁵ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/23-May-2014/a-lesson-learnt>

society, growing wrath of the military and, on top of all that, blasphemy charges. How else can one define trouble in Pakistan? Once considered the most powerful person in the country, a man who could ostensibly challenge the authority of the prime minister, the patriotism of the military and legality of the superior judiciary all at once, has not been able to find a way out since the crisis began, as if he has fallen into a ditch, the bottom of which has turned into a quagmire from where no matter how he wants to pull himself up either through attack ads, back door diplomacy or public apology he is pushed further down into the dark. Trying to understand the gravity of the condition, we can at least say that for Mr Rehman, the situation is precarious and it continues to get worse. For his television channels, it is a battle for survival but the real tragedy is with the employees who, except for some renowned editors and anchorpersons, are facing both challenges at the same time, i.e. losing their livelihood and/or their lives. Nonetheless, the only person to be blamed for their predicament, in my opinion, is no other than Mr Rehman himself.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

FISCAL ISSUES

Growth rate to remain over 4pc this year: Dar, *The Nation*, May 5⁶⁶

FM Mohammad Ishaq Dar on May 4 expressed the hope the national economy would grow by over 4 per cent during the current fiscal year (2013-14). Inflation would remain in a single digit spurred by growth in both agricultural and industrial sectors, Dar said while addressing the First Business Session at 47th annual meeting of ADB Board of Governors in Astana, Kazakstan. Dar said the fiscal deficit had been restrained to around 6 per cent through an increase in revenues and reduction in expenditures along with positive growth in exports and remittances.

Govt earns 2.3pc instead of 17pc from Sales Tax, *The News*, May 6⁶⁷

Major portion of the revenue collected from Sales Tax is pocketed by the corrupt mafia instead of going to national exchequer because of massive corruption in the FBR and complex collection system. A report compiled by the Sales Tax wing of the FBR disclosed that total domestic and export value recorded of all products amounted to Rs20 billion. However after the release of refund and input and output the total earning of the government was 3.2 percent instead of 16 or 17%. It means that tax collection was less than half contrary to burden of 16%. It may be recalled that the rate of Sales Tax last year was 16%.

⁶⁶<http://www.nation.com.pk/business/05-May-2014/growth-rate-to-remain-over-4pc-this-year-dar>

⁶⁷<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-248438-Govt-earns-23pc-instead-of-17pc-from-Sales-Tax>

Govt breaches limit, adds \$15.3bn to external debt, Dawn, May 11⁶⁸

The government on Friday confirmed to have added about \$15.3 billion to the country's external debt, violating prudent borrowing limits under the FRDLA and promised to reduce public debt significantly by 2015-16. This is part of MTDS 2013-14 to 2017-18 released here on 9 after conclusion of third review of the IMF programme in Dubai. "The public debt to GDP ratio is projected to be brought down to 55.2pc by 2015-16," said the ministry of finance. It said the debt ratio was expected to be around 52pc by end 2017-18 which would be well below the threshold of 60pc as mentioned in the FRDLA.

Govt eyes 7.2pc growth rate by 2016-17, Dawn, May 16⁶⁹

After missing the economic growth target in its first year because of a poor show by agriculture and services sectors, the PML-N government has set an ambitious target to expand the economy at a rate of 7.2 per cent by the financial year of 2016-17. A meeting of the cabinet, presided over by PM Nawaz Sharif on May 15, cleared the "Budget Strategy Paper 2014-17", envisaging fiscal deficit at 4.8pc for the next financial year, rate of inflation at 7.5pc, federal development programme at Rs525 billion and tax revenue at Rs2.810 trillion. The meeting was informed that the federal budget was being planned for presentation in the National Assembly on June 3.

Foreign exchange reserves to cross \$15bn in July, NA told, Dawn, May 19⁷⁰

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar told the National Assembly on May 14 that Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves will cross \$15 billion in July, while GDP growth rate is expected to touch 4 per cent during the current fiscal year. Commenting about the latest economic indicators, Dar said that the GDP growth rate currently stands at 3.4 per cent while reserves are at \$13 bn. The finance minister said that inflation rate is at 8.6 per cent, which has been brought down to single-digit during the PML-N government. "The international community and financial institutions are also recognising that the country's growth is witnessing an upward trend while inflation is on the decline as yet," he said.

New taxes of Rs255bn in FY14-15 budget likely, Dawn, May 19⁷¹

The Pakistan Muslim League-N government is all set to introduce a number of revenue-generation measures in the budget for financial year 2014-15, including new taxes that are expected to yield an estimated Rs255 billion. Sources in the finance ministry say these measures are likely to hit the middle class the hardest. The new proposals, guided by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, aim to bring down the budget deficit to 4.8 per cent next year from this year's 5.7pc. The burden of this decrease

⁶⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105310/govt-breaches-limit-adds-153bn-to-external-debt>

⁶⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106608/govt-eyes-72pc-growth-rate-by-2016-17>

⁷⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106482/foreign-exchange-reserves-to-cross-15bn-in-july-na-told>

⁷¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107195/new-taxes-of-rs255bn-in-fy14-15-budget-likely>

will largely be shouldered by the middle class and non-industrialists as the cost of living is expected to increase as a result of the new indirect taxes.

Rs 3,973b annual budget on June 3, *The Nation*, May 21⁷²

FM Senator Ishaq Dar on Tuesday said that government would announce the annual budget 2014-15 on June 3 in National Assembly with total outlay of Rs 3,973 billion and budget deficit of 4.8 percent of the GDP for next fiscal year. He briefed the joint session of the National Assembly and Senate Standing Committees on Finance Revenue and Economic on the upcoming budget 2014-15. The committee proceedings were declared in-camera on the request of Finance Minister. Sources informed *The Nation* that Ishaq Dar has spent most of the time on giving briefing on current economic situation of the country instead of budget proposal. He recalled the economic achievement of the government during first year of its tenure including elimination of circular debt, IMF programme, auction of 3G/4G, auction of Eurobonds and others.

Fiscal woes: 'K-P faces Rs22b hole in budget', *Express Tribune*, May 22⁷³

K-P is facing a shortage of Rs22 billion in its current budget because of the disbursements of less-than-promised funds by the centre, said K-P Minister for Finance SirajulHaq on May 21. Addressing a news conference at the Civil Secretariat after attending the biannual meeting of the NFC award in Islamabad on Tuesday, Haq said under the 7th NFC award, K-P's share of the total federal divisible pool was 8.97%. Sold short? "*For the fiscal year 2013-2014, the Ministry of Finance calculated the total volume of the divisible pool as Rs 2,475 billion initially. K-P was to get around Rs222 billion of this and provincial budget estimates were also based on this figure,*" said Haq.

Build-up in foreign debt, *Dawn*, May 26⁷⁴

[...] The external debt servicing totalled \$5.388 billion in nine months of this fiscal year. Sources in the ministry of finance say by the end of the year in June, total external debt servicing may reach \$7 billion, of which nearly \$6 billion would fall in the government's account. The government is borrowing to repay external debts. An increase of 4.2pc and 11.4pc respectively in exports and remittances in 10 months of FY14 has somewhat improved the situation.

External account trends, *Dawn*, May 26⁷⁵

April's current account deficit number clocked in at \$55m, versus \$90m in March, and continued to remain close to breakeven. The current account deficit numbers for the first 10 months of FY14 now stand at \$2.16bn, against \$1.57bn in the same period

⁷²<http://www.nation.com.pk/business/21-May-2014/rs3-973b-annual-budget-on-june-3>

⁷³<http://tribune.com.pk/story/711383/fiscal-woes-k-p-faces-rs22b-hole-in-budget/>

⁷⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108670/build-up-in-foreign-debt>

⁷⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108669/external-account-trends>

of the last fiscal, mainly due to lower Coalition Support Fund receipts. The capital account dipped by 96pc in April due to the absence of the grant received from Saudi Arabia (\$750m each) in February and March. The key highlight in April's external numbers was the launch of the Eurobonds, which fetched \$2bn. While the key head of petroleum imports dipped by 10pc MoM, other heads such as food and transport imports rose by double digits to keep the overall imports largely flat. The services deficit also dipped by 19pc due to the rise in export services. Remittances receded by 2pc during April, and are expected to remain flat in May. Thus, April's current account deficit remained similar in quantum compared to the previous month.

ENERGY

Govt one of the biggest electricity defaulters, says Khawaja Asif, Dawn, May 2⁷⁶

Federal Minister for Water and Power Khwaja Muhammad Asif on May 2 declared the federal government as one of the biggest defaulters of electricity bills and warned consumers of having to tolerate frequent and prolonged load shedding in the hot summer days to come. Addressing media persons in the federal capital city Asif presented stats and figures related to a decrease in the production of electricity. He added that non-payment of bills and electricity theft was rampant in the country.

10-hour load shedding for next two months, The Nation, May 3⁷⁷

Minister for Water and Power Khawaja Asif has said that the masses will have to bear 10 hours of load shedding a day during the next two months. Addressing a joint press conference with Information Minister Pervaiz Rashid and Minister of State for Water and Power Abid Sher Ali in Islamabad, Khawaja Asif said majority of the people who were protesting against blackouts were power thieves and defaulters. He said electricity shortfall has increased to 3,200 megawatt this week due to use of air-conditioners and government will discontinue electricity supply to feeders incurring massive losses. The minister urged power consumers to clear their dues on time; otherwise, his ministry will take action indiscriminately. He said *free of cost electricity could not be provided and "the merchandise will be sold to only those who pay for it"*.

No World Bank funds for Bhasha dam project yet, The Nation, May 5⁷⁸

Pakistan has faced a serious setback as the World Bank refused to finance much-needed 4,500 MW Diamer Bhasha Dam, at least in next five years, 2015-2019, which might put the project on the back burner. The World Bank's Board of Directors on May 2 approved two different packages of assistance for Pakistan, including US\$

⁷⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103707/govt-one-of-the-biggest-electricity-defaulters-says-khawaja-asif>

⁷⁷<http://www.nation.com.pk/editors-picks/03-May-2014/10-hour-loadshedding-for-next-two-months>

⁷⁸<http://www.nation.com.pk/editors-picks/03-May-2014/no-world-bank-funds-for-bhasha-dam-project>

one billion for support economic reforms and five-year CPS worth US\$ 11 billion for next five years (2015-2019).

PM to inaugurate 2 660MW coal power plants tomorrow, *The Nation*, May⁷⁹

PM Nawaz Sharif will inaugurate two 660-megawatt coal-based power plants at Port Qasim on May 6 According to officials of ministry of water and power, the MoU of this project was signed among M/s Qinvest Company, Doha, Qatar, M/s Power Construction Corporation of China (Power China), M/s SEPCO-III Electric Power Construction Corporation, government of Punjab, and PPIB on 29th August 2013. According to the MoU, the companies will also build eight 660MW plants in phase-II at Gadani, Balochistan.

Gas theft valuing Rs 6.36b detected in nine months, *The Nation*, May⁸⁰

A total of 7,231 cases of gas theft worth Rs 6,357.31 million had been detected from commercial and industry consumers of SNGPL, SSGPL in first nine months of the year 2013. According to official sources in Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, 11,010 mmcf was stolen from the areas of both companies in nine months of last year. Besides a sum of Rs 1,029.96 million had been recovered by both companies from the gas thieves during the aforementioned period. According to detail SSGPL had detected 792 cases worth Rs 210.31 million both from commercial and Industry consumers in the same period.

PM launches solar power plant in Bahawalpur, *Dawn*, May⁸¹

PM Nawaz Sharif on May 9 laid the foundation stone of the country's first solar power project in Bahawalpur. During the ceremony, the premier said that Sino-Pak friendship was exemplary, adding that the views of the Chinese ambassador on the two countries' cooperation were welcome. He further said that the joint ventures between Pakistan and China would benefit both countries.

19 power projects underway: Shahbaz Sharif, *The Nation*, May⁸²

Punjab CM Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif said work on nineteen projects to generate twenty-four thousand eight hundred seventy megawatt electricity is underway. He was talking to a delegation of national and provincial assembly members in Lahore. The Chief Minister said that work was being carried out for resolving energy crisis in the country. 1700 megawatt electricity has been added in a short period while 19 projects capable of generating 24870 megawatt of electricity have been initiated, he added.

⁷⁹<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/05-May-2014/pm-to-inaugurate-2-660mw-coal-power-plants-tomorrow>

⁸⁰<http://www.nation.com.pk/business/05-May-2014/gas-theft-valuing-rs-6-36b-detected-in-nine-months>

⁸¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105237/pm-launches-solar-power-plant-in-bahawalpur>

⁸²<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/11-May-2014/19-power-projects-underway-shahbaz-sharif>

Electricity tariff higher in Pakistan, minister admits, Dawn, May 16⁸³

In a rare admission on the floor of the house, the government said on May 15 that electricity charges in the country were higher than what consumers paid in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. In a written reply to a question raised by Nafeesa Khan Khattak of the PTI, Water and Power Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif informed the National Assembly about the reasons for higher electricity tariff and said: "In Pakistan, the tariff charged to consumers is based on generation mix, structure and transmission cost and distribution losses suffered by each utility."

Austria keen to finance \$400m for 1,300MW Tarbella 5, The Nation, May 16⁸⁴

Austrian Ambassador, Axel Wech on May 15 expressed interest of his country in hydropower generation in Pakistan with particular reference to financing 1300MW additional power project on Tarbella 5 with a cost of \$400 million. The Austrian Ambassador, Axel Wech said this while talking to Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar. He added that the project could be completed by the end of 2017. The Finance Minister appreciated the contribution; Austrian companies are making in hydrocarbon exploration and electricity generation and assured his complete support for the endeavors.

Nawaz okays two more coal-fired power plants, The News, May 25⁸⁵

PM Nawaz Sharif approved two additional coal-fired power plants to be constructed by the government in Gadani on the mode of the Independent Power Producer (IPP). The approval to this effect was granted by the PM in a meeting held here under his chair to review the pace of work on the Gadani power project. He said on the occasion that *the nation would be provided relief as far as load shedding was concerned as efforts were afoot to generate more power to bridge the demand-supply gap.*

PM inaugurates two coal power plants in Sahiwal, Express Tribune, May 30⁸⁶

PM Nawaz Sharif inaugurated coal-based power plant projects in Sahiwal. Work on the collaborative project between the Punjab government and Chinese companies to set up two coal-based power plants of 660 megawatts each in Sahiwal will begin this month. "The coal project will generate 1,320MW of electricity and will be completed in 30 months with China's assistance," said Nawaz as he addressed Chinese delegates during the inauguration ceremony.

⁸³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106647/electricity-tariff-higher-in-pakistan-minister-admits>

⁸⁴<http://www.nation.com.pk/business/16-May-2014/austria-keen-to-finance-400m-for-1-300mw-tarbella-5>

⁸⁵<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-30539-Nawaz-okays-two-more-coal-fired-power-plants>

⁸⁶<http://tribune.com.pk/story/715297/pm-inaugurates-two-coal-power-plants-in-sahiwal/>

PM inaugurates Nandipur power project, Dawn, May 31⁸⁷

PM Nawaz Sharif on 31 inaugurated the first phase of the Rs 58 billion Nandipur power project and called upon certain opposition parties to shun their protesting agenda for the sake of national interests and lend support to the federal government's efforts aimed at attaining fast track progress and prosperity. The first turbine of the 425 megawatt power project has started producing 95 megawatts of power in the initial stage. The four-unit project would be completed by the end of this year in cooperation with Dongfang Electric Corporation China.

China releases \$49 million more for N-J project, Dawn, May 31⁸⁸

The Chinese government on 30 released \$49 million through Exim Bank of China for Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project in a bid to help Pakistan accelerate the pace of work on the mega hydel scheme. The Exim Bank of China is among five major funding agencies besides Saudi Fund, Islamic Development Bank, Opec Fund for International Development, Kuwait Funds contributing millions of dollars to the \$2.74 billion project, according to a revised PC-1. "The Exim Bank alone has committed to contribute about \$450 million to the project under a soft loan. The bank had earlier released over \$17 million to our government," a senior official said.

Nawaz breaks ground for coal power project, Dawn, May 31⁸⁹

PM Nawaz Sharif on 30 laid the foundation of a landmark coal-based power generation project in the district. The plant will generate 1,320 megawatts of electricity and bring \$1.6 billion dollar foreign investment from two Chinese companies -- China Huaneng and Shandong Ruyi Group. The project is expected to complete in two years.

IMF LOAN

IMF to release \$550m by June 1, Dawn, May 11⁹⁰

Pakistan and the IMF concluded negotiations on Saturday for grant of the fourth tranche of \$550 million under the EFF. Speaking at a press briefing at his ministry, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said the major part of the negotiations was held in Dubai, but the final leg was conducted in Islamabad. After approval of the IMF Board, Pakistan would receive the amount by June 1, he added. The IMF staff mission, led by Jeffrey Franks, was also present along with the finance minister, as were senior officials, including Finance Secretary Dr Waqar Masood, State Bank Governor Ashraf Wathra and Federal Board of Revenue Chairman Tariq Bajwa.

⁸⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109742/pm-inaugurates-nandipur-power-project>

⁸⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109712/china-releases-49-million-more-for-n-j-project>

⁸⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109713/nawaz-breaks-ground-for-coal-power-project>

⁹⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105510/imf-to-release-550m-by-june-1>

Drastic cut in subsidies planned, Dawn, May 24⁹¹

The government has decided to drastically reduce subsidies in the new budget and squeeze out higher amounts of surplus from the provinces to meet fiscal deficit limits set under international commitments. Pakistan and the IMF agreed this month on a fiscal deficit target of 4.8 per cent of the GDP (Rs1.63 trillion) for next year against 5.7pc estimated for the current year. The government has decided to reduce overall subsidies to Rs229 billion from Rs338bn this year a reduction of over 32pc.

REMITTANCES

Workers' remittances rise 11.45%, Express Tribune, May 13⁹²

Overseas Pakistani workers remitted an amount of \$12,894.61 million in the first ten months (July–April) of the current fiscal year 2013-14 (FY14), showing a growth of 11.45% when compared with \$11,569.82 million received during the same period of last fiscal year (July-April FY13). The inflow of remittances in July-April FY14 from Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, UK, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman), and EU countries amounted to \$3,806.36 million, \$2,522.89 million, \$2,027.06 million, \$1,798.28 million, \$1,527.40 million and \$355.31 million respectively as compared with the inflow of \$3,371.59 million, \$2,312.01 million, \$1,819.85 million, \$1,611.11 million, \$1,331.67 million and \$297.69 million respectively in July-April FY13.

INVESTMENT

Pak-US deal signed to complete Chaman-Kalat road, The Nation, May 13⁹³

Pakistan and the US on May 12 signed a project implementation agreement to complete the N-25 highway connecting Chaman to Kalat through Quetta, Balochistan. The agreement, signed by US Ambassador to Pakistan Richard Olson and Pakistan's Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, provides \$64 million to the Government of Pakistan for this crucial infrastructure project, with an additional \$26 million to be allocated at a future date. The rehabilitation of the highway will restore a major trade route between Afghanistan and the Central Asian states. The highway will also establish a vital link between Balochistan and the rest of Pakistan, reaching all the way to Karachi. It will help revitalize cities and communities along the highway, expand communication and transportation services, and improve access to basic health, education, and other social services.

⁹¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108291/drastic-cut-in-subsidies-planned>

⁹²<http://tribune.com.pk/story/707571/10mfy14-workers-remittances-rise-11-45/>

⁹³<http://www.nation.com.pk/business/13-May-2014/pak-us-deal-signed-to-complete-chaman-kalat-road>

Pakistan, China sign Lahore metro train agreement, Express Tribune, May 22⁹⁴

The governments of Pakistan and China on May 22 signed an agreement to start a metro train project in Lahore. The agreement was signed in Shanghai during a meeting on the sidelines of the fourth summit of "Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia". The 27.1 kilometres long track – named Orange Line – will be built at the cost of \$1.27 billion. While speaking to the media after the signing ceremony, Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif said it was a big day for the people of Pakistan. "The metro train will revolutionise the way people travel as it will make the commute trouble-free," he said.

Partnership strategy with ADB to be ready next year, Dawn, May 31⁹⁵

The government and the ADB on Friday started consultative process for the new CPS 2015-19. The launch of consultative process was attended among others by ADB Country Director Werner Liepach and EAD Secretary Nargis Sethi. According to EAD spokesman the *consultative process with all stakeholders would be completed by September and would be presented to the executive board of ADB for formal approval in February next year.* The objective of the CPS is to support the government's objective of high, sustained and inclusive growth. It envisages partnership in energy, transport, water resources management and irrigation, urban development, finance and public sector management. She appreciated the ADB's role in assisting the country in multidimensional sectors including the most crucial sector of energy.

TRADE

Work on second FTA with China initiated, The Nation, May 1⁹⁶

Federal Minister for Commerce Engineer Khurram Dastagir Khan has said value-addition is needed in entire chain of textile sector. "The government has initiated work on the second free trade agreement (FTA-II) with China," he said and added that the FTA-I was signed in haste by the past government. He said that in 2016 the country will witness a big positive change especially in energy sector and will be moving on the track of prosperity. The work on Diamer and Bhasha dams will start this year. One hundred megawatts will come next year from solar sector in public sector. Nandipur power project will start generating 100MW in next two weeks.

Pakistan still pays 9pc duty on leather export to China under FTA regime, The Nation, May 13⁹⁷

Pakistan is not benefiting from Free Trade Agreement with China, as the leather industry is still paying around 9 per cent import duty on its export goods to China

⁹⁴<http://tribune.com.pk/story/711614/pakistan-china-sign-lahore-metro-train-agreement/>

⁹⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109592/partnership-strategy-with-adb-to-be-ready-next-year>

⁹⁶<http://www.nation.com.pk/editors-picks/01-May-2014/work-on-second-fta-with-china-initiated>

⁹⁷<http://www.nation.com.pk/business/12-May-2014/pakistan-still-pays-9pc-duty-on-leather-export-to-china-under-fta-regime>

owing to non-implementation of zero-duty under FTA regime. *"With a view to enhance bilateral trade, Pakistan and China, around 7 years back, had signed an FTA under which both the countries decided to facilitate each other's exporters, exempting duty on their export.* This was stated by the Pakistan Tanners Association central chairman Sheikh Saqib Masood while talking to Commercial Counselor of China, Mr. Yan Jianming who along with Mr. Xu Runtao, visited PTA's Central Office, Karachi.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Pakistan's budget being prepared by IMF in Dubai: Ayesha Gulalai, *The Nation*, May 7⁹⁸

PTI Information Secretary KPK and MNA Ayesha Gulalai, has expressed concern over the preparation of coming budget and said it is very unfortunate that Pakistan's budget is being prepared by the IMF in Dubai. The Federal Government is giving an undertaking that Rs230 billion would be raised by increasing electricity and gas tariff.

Nawaz, Rouhani agree to give impetus to gas pipeline project, *Dawn*, May 11⁹⁹

PM Nawaz Sharif and President of Iran Hassan Rouhani on Sunday agreed to continue with the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project as it was beneficial for the peoples of both countries. During his two-day visit Sharif, who is accompanied by senior advisors, is also expected to meet supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's ultimate authority. During his meeting with President Rouhani, PM Sharif informed the Iranian president that his government was determined to resolve all the matters which were creating hindrance in the gas pipeline project. Both leaders reiterated their commitment to enhance the bilateral trade between the two countries during the meeting, held at Saadabad Palace.

Punjab aims for 8 per cent growth in 2014-15, *Express Tribune*, May 13¹⁰⁰

Youth skill development, value addition to livestock and dairy sectors, development projects in less developed areas and a focus on transparency and growth are the hallmark of the Annual Development Programme 2014-15, as discussed in a review meeting chaired by Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif on May 12. The chief minister set a target for 8 per cent growth in the province over the next four years. *"Besides improving the standard of living through expeditious development and comprehensive reforms, we will also focus on the development of less developed areas,"* he said.

⁹⁸<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/07-May-2014/pakistan-s-budget-being-prepared-by-imf-in-dubai-ayesha-gulalai>

⁹⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105620/nawaz-rouhani-agree-to-give-impetus-to-gas-pipeline-project>

¹⁰⁰<http://tribune.com.pk/story/707601/annual-development-plan-punjab-aims-for-8-per-cent-growth-in-2014-15/>

Dar seeks UK help over Swiss billions, *The Nation*, May 15¹⁰¹

Though the PML-N government has expressed its intention to bring back around \$200 billion of the country that were are illegally deposited in Swiss banks, the lengthy process will not complete in the incumbent government's tenure by 2018. The government in order to speed up the process is also seeking the UK government's guideline to perform the lengthy process, as the London had undergone the process to bring back assets from Swiss banks. The developed countries like USA, UK and Germany have reportedly completed this process for bringing back their money in around five to seven years. Therefore, Pakistan would also require a long time to fulfil its dream.

PDWP approves Rs5.9bn development projects, *Dawn*, May 15¹⁰²

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has approved 21 development projects with an estimated cost of Rs5.93 billion in the province, with a major chunk of Rs2 billion to be spent on construction of water supply schemes. The approval was given in a meeting of the Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) chaired by Additional Chief Secretary Khalid Pervez here on Wednesday. The meeting was attended by the administrative secretaries and senior staff of different government departments.

Rs414bn injected into banks, *Dawn*, May 24¹⁰³

The State Bank on 23rd May injected Rs414 billion into the banking system to save the banks from liquidity crunch. The banks had been investing in long-term government papers and were short of cash as indicated by the liquidity gap which was over Rs400bn. Last year the gap was over Rs500bn. [...] The banking industry is reaping high profits due to investment in long-term papers. The lowest rate on three-year PIBs was more than 12.09 per cent. The holdings of PIBs till April 2014 were Rs2.77 trillion.

Govt to get \$10 billion in loans, grants in 2014-15, *The News*, May 24¹⁰⁴

The Nawaz Sharif government will receive the highest-ever foreign inflows in the shape of loans and grants of over \$10 billion during 2014-15. Bank loans, as well as increased foreign loans and grants from bilateral creditors, the government is expecting foreign inflows of up to \$10 billion against the estimates of \$5.76 billion in the budget 2013-14. "The net lending will stand at over Rs650 billion in the next budget as foreign inflows will cross the Rs1,000 billion mark and can touch Rs1,050 billion while repayment of loans in the shape of amortization will consume almost Rs400 billion,". [...] A

¹⁰¹<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/15-May-2014/dar-seeks-uk-help-over-swiss-billions>

¹⁰²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106407/pdwp-approves-rs59bn-development-projects>

¹⁰³www.dawn.com/news/1108191/rs414bn-injected-into-banks

¹⁰⁴[http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-30512-Govt-to-get-\\$10-billion-in-loans-grants-in-2014-15](http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-30512-Govt-to-get-$10-billion-in-loans-grants-in-2014-15)

senior official of the Finance Division confirmed that Pakistan would become eligible for concessionary loan of \$3 billion under the IDA-17 from July 1, 2014 and can get this amount within three year period. This funding, coupled with the ADB and IDB loans in the pipeline, will enable Islamabad to jack up its foreign assistance up to Rs1,000 billion against the envisaged estimates of Rs576 billion in the outgoing fiscal year.

Denmark provides \$50m for uplift projects, Dawn, May 31¹⁰⁵

The government of Denmark on Friday announced a \$50 million socio-economic development programme for Pakistan. "We have designed a \$50 million programme, which will focus on socio-economic development and improvement of educational facilities in the militancy-ravaged Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Balochistan from 2014 to 2016," Ambassador of Denmark Jesper Moller Sorensen told reporters during a Peshawar Press Club function here.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Lights out, Express Tribune, May 1¹⁰⁶

Non-payment is a key reason behind the phenomenon of circular debt, which needs no explaining here. Ironically, among these defaulters are the highest of state offices, both civilian and military, which provides a precedent for others to follow suit. By starting with itself, and cutting off installations such as the Parliament House and the Prime Minister's Secretariat, the government is essentially trying to send a signal to the public both the common man and elite: no one will be spared from paying its dues. Anti-default drives are inherently an exercise in public display and require a lot of noise and publicity for them to be successful. It is not without coincidence that one of the most brash parliamentarians of the ruling PML-N is spearheading this drive.

World Bank Delivers, The Nation, May 4¹⁰⁷

The government is congratulating itself for securing a \$1billion loan from the World Bank, which will be given to Pakistan in the next week or so, in addition to another \$11 billion to be handed over the course of the next five years for developmental projects. Experts are calling this 'cheap money' considering the repayment of this money will be spread out over 25 years starting in 2019, with a very nominal interest rate of 2.5%. Ishaq Dar was quick to point out potential advantages of this loan, such as the rise in the country's foreign exchange or using it to reduce the country's domestic debt which stands at Rs 100 billion at an interest of 12.5% per annum.

¹⁰⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109725/denmark-provides-50m-for-uplift-projects>

¹⁰⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/702358/lights-out-5/>

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/04-May-2014/world-bank-delivers>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104306/world-bank-loan>

Bond market delusions, Sakib Sherani, *Dawn*, May¹⁰⁸

[...] Mindset of celebrating each new round of international borrowing is not new, of course. It goes back to Pakistan's early days, and was last on full display at the height of Gen Musharraf's failed economic policies. That it is alive and kicking almost 10 years later — and that too under those who roundly criticised the Musharraf-Shaukat Aziz economic 'model' — shows how deep-rooted and durable our misconceptions and delusions are. The country's recent foray into the international sovereign bond market is instructive. Pakistan raised \$2bn via two Eurobonds of five and 10 years' maturity. The bond issue was oversubscribed 14 times, leading the finance minister to issue a series of self-congratulatory statements. While doing so, unfortunately, he had no qualms about using a narrative he had rightly described, while in opposition a few short years ago, as false as well as misleading.

The GEO- ISI showdown, Farooq Hameed Khan, *The Nation*, May 2¹⁰⁹

[...] GEO erred by projecting the views and allegations of Hamid Mir's family with respect to the ISI, as the official viewpoint of the media group. To make matters worse, some stalwarts called for the DG ISI's resignation. The question to ask is: who benefitted from the assassination attempt on Hamid Mir? Surely not the army or the ISI, but that 'third force' comprising hostile external agencies and in-country rogue political/ media elements constantly looking for opportunities to target and weaken Pakistan's elite security institutions. They are aware that Pakistan's army and ISI stand firmly as the country's centre of gravity and are the guardians of its strategic weapons program. Luckily, Hamid Mir survived, but this third force succeeded in its design to make the ISI look controversial. Hence it was not surprising that within minutes of the onslaught against the ISI, the Indian media jubilantly launched its venomous anti army/ISI propaganda with full force. Western media, too, used the opportunity to bash Pakistan's premier intelligence agency. The army and ISI have remained prime targets of a well-orchestrated campaign since the return of democracy in 2008. This can be linked to a few controversial clauses in the Kerry Lugar Bill that aimed indirectly at curtailing the powers of the army/ ISI, the failed October 2008 notification by the last PPP government to place the ISI under the Interior Ministry, the PPP's draft bill to defang the ISI that backfired, and former Ambassador Hussain Haqqani's unsuccessful memorandum conspiracy against the army/ ISI.

¹⁰⁸ www.dawn.com/news/1103555/bond-market-delusions

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/02-May-2014/the-geo-isi-showdown>

The third review, Dr Ashfaque H Khan, *The News*, May 13¹¹⁰

The IMF mission and the Pakistani authorities have successfully completed the third review of the ongoing IMF programme without any major hiccups. The programme was found to be broadly on track. However, some concerns and disappointments were expressed from both sides on the rising inflation and the performance of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) in terms of revenue collection. [...] What is interesting to note here is that it took almost eleven months for the IMF and the government to realise that the revenue target for the FBR was grossly unrealistic. When I could predict that the FBR would not collect more than Rs2250 billion in January this year, why did it take IMF experts to revise downward the revenue target to Rs2270 billion at the fag end of the fiscal year? The government is not in a position now to take any additional measures to achieve the revised target of Rs2345 billion. Is this what we call professionalism in the IMF?

The economy, Dr Farrukh Saleem, *The News*, May 25¹¹¹

Ishaq Dar's efforts to stabilise the economy are beginning to bear fruit. Our liquid foreign exchange reserves have gone up from \$7.9 billion in January to \$13.3 billion as of May 2014. Business sentiments within our private sector has been gaining momentum and private sector debt, as a consequence, has gone up from Rs141 billion last year to Rs320 billion (first 10-month comparison). The rate of inflation, at a four-month high, remains stubborn but seems capped in the single digit. There is some really good news on the budgetary front where Ishaq Dar seems all set to cut the deficit by a wholesome 25 percent or a cut of around Rs400 billion in just one year. The conclusion being that the current economic trajectory is likely to take us into a phase of macroeconomic stability.

SECURITY SITUATION

TERRORISM

Seminaries playing courier for TTP in 'fund-raising drive', *Dawn*, May 1¹¹²

Seminaries operating inside the capital are reportedly assisting TTP with the collection of extortion and ransom money by arranging deals between militants and their victims, sources in civil and military intelligence agencies said. In addition, the seminaries are also providing courier services to the TTP by arranging for the money to be transported to pre-determined locations easily accessible for TTP personnel, sources said. Intelligence officials said that an analysis of the calls made in cases of

¹¹⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-249796-The-third-review>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106286/mixed-messages>

¹¹¹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-252131-The-economy>

¹¹²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103435/seminaries-playing-courier-for-ttp-in-fund-raising-drive>

extortion and ransom demands revealed that most of them came from Miranshah in North Waziristan.

Militants planning to use Indus River for movement between provinces, Dawn, May 2¹¹³

Security agencies have started surveillance of the Indus River on the basis of an intelligence report that outlawed militant groups were planning to use the waterway for transporting arms and ammunition and kidnapped persons between KP and the provinces of Punjab and Sindh. Officials in intelligence agencies, interior ministry and the capital police said that the outlawed Al Qaeda and TTP had chosen the waterway in order to skip security checking on motorways, national highways and other land routes. There are only three points where militants can be intercepted on the River Indus - Sukkur Barrage, Gudu Barrage and Kotri Barrage in Sindh, the officials said. Apart from that, there are no security pickets on the river right from KP to the Sukkur Barrage. Even at the three barrages, the security measures are aimed at protecting the water reservoirs - not countering the movement of militants.

TTP' extortionists threaten another businessman, Dawn, May 5¹¹⁴

Another businessman in the city has received threatening calls from extortionists asking him to pay Rs40 million, police said on May 3. Rashid Wasim, a resident of Mohanpura, who owns a factory in the industrial area of Islamabad, complained to the Ganjmandi police that since March 19 his family had received three calls by an alleged member of the outlawed TTP.

Importers flood country with illegal arms, Dawn, May 5¹¹⁵

Non-implementation of the changes approved by the PPP government in the arms and ammunitions import policy a year ago has flooded the country with contraband arms. A senior security official said the law enforcement agencies were worried that importers had been bringing in and marketing small as well as sophisticated weapons by manipulating the existing policy introduced in 2006-07

Doctor held for suspected links with militants, Dawn, May 18¹¹⁶

LEAs claim to have arrested some more people including a doctor on the suspicion of having links with the recently captured militants belonging to a network of the outlawed outfits. Sources told that the LEAs had picked up a doctor who practices at his private clinic along Bhimbher Road near Qadir Colony on the basis of clues given by the arrested suspects.

¹¹³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103673/militants-planning-to-use-indus-river-for-movement-between-provinces>

¹¹⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104295/ttp-extortionists-threaten-another-businessman>

¹¹⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104296/importers-flood-country-with-illegal-arms>

¹¹⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106466/doctor-held-for-suspected-links-with-militants>

The government's 'martial' security plan, Dawn, May 23¹¹⁷

Fearing a backlash from the outlawed TTP in the government seat of Islamabad, an apprehensive PML-N government has decided to use both the security forces and the police on high alert to maintain peace in the capital as well as other parts of the country. It appears as if the government has decided to put the option of talks on hold and focus on a military operation in the militant-infested NW. Operation of sorts had been started with air strikes on the militant hideouts on 21.

North Waziristan offensive "not full-scale operation", Dawn, May 24¹¹⁸

The Interior Ministry said *Pakistan has not decided to launch a full-scale military operation in North Waziristan, adding that recent airstrikes and limited military action in the tribal region are in continuation of existing policy.* "No decision has been taken for a full scale military operation in North Waziristan and there was no decision to call off the dialogue process, nor has any such demand been made from either side,".

Army tells Nawaz no more talks with Taliban, The News, May 24¹¹⁹

The Pakistan Army chief General Raheel has told PM Nawaz Sharif that the time for talks with Taliban was over. "We will avenge the blood of every last soldier. Talks or no talks, the army will retaliate,". [...] The report said: "At Pakistani PM Nawaz Sharif's palatial offices in Islamabad this week, the army chief sat down to deliver the head of government a message he did not want to hear: The time for talks with the troublesome Pakistani Taliban was over."

Nisar debunks Reuters report on NWA as 'nonsense', The News, May 25¹²⁰

Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan has termed as "nonsensical and farcical" the contents of a Reuters report about the proceedings and content of the recently held security meeting between PM Nawaz Sharif and Army chief General Raheel Sharif. Clarifying the situation, the minister said the meeting was held in a highly congenial and positive atmosphere in which wide ranging issues pertaining to national security, including the situation on our borders, was discussed. *No decision for a full-scale military operation in North Waziristan was taken. There was no decision to call off the dialogue process, nor was any such demand made from either side as reported by the news agency, he added.*

¹¹⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108138/the-governments-martial-security-plan>

¹¹⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108359/north-waziristan-offensive-not-full-scale-operation>

¹¹⁹<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-30511-Army-tells-Nawaz-no-more-talks-with-Taliban-takes-matter-in-its-own-hands>

¹²⁰<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-30533-Nisar-debunks-Reuters-report-on-NWA-as-nonsense>

Air strikes affecting peace process; says Sami, Dawn, May 26¹²¹

Chief of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam Maulana Samiul Haq said that *operation was no solution to the prevailing situation in the FATA*. He said that law and order situation had worsened following air strikes in parts of North Waziristan Agency. He said that though the *government had claimed that it did not launch a full-scale operation in North Waziristan, the air strikes continuing from the last few days had affected the peace process and led to a tense situation*. He said that *they were part of the peace process with the basic aim to play their role for restoration of complete peace, it was a great breakthrough on their part that Taliban had agreed to take part in the peace process*.

Anti-terror court acquits Malik Ishaq of hate speech, Express Tribune, May 29¹²²

An anti-terror court acquitted the leader of banned militant group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Malik Ishaq, of inciting violence in three speeches. Ishaq, who was named a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist" by the US State Department earlier this year, heads Lashkar-e-Jhangvi that has carried out a number of attacks is against Shias inside Pakistan in recent years. [...] Ishaq was arrested in February 2013 after a deadly attack on the Hazara minority in Quetta that killed around 90 people.

Mulla Omar gets a rude shock as TTP breaks up, The News, May 30¹²³

The Mehsud tribe's decision to discard the TTP umbrella and renounce Mullah Fazlullah as their leader has come as a rude shock for the ameer of the Afghan Taliban Mullah Mohammad Omar. [...] Mullah Omar had stepped in and appealed to the militants in a pamphlet released on April 14 to sink their differences and end their internal strife. [...] Subsequently, on April 15, the central shura of the TTP had referred the issue of internal strife to Mullah Omar, requesting him to send a delegation and resolve the ongoing crisis between the two major factions of the Mehsud militants.

The TTP shura pleaded that the Pakistani Taliban recognise Mullah Mohammad Omar as their supreme leader and they would obey his orders. [...] The ameer of the Afghan Taliban was of the view that instead of wasting their energies in battling with the Pakistan Army, the Taliban on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border must focus on a decisive battle in Afghanistan after the US withdrawal for the revival of the lost Taliban Emirates of Afghanistan.

Pakistan protests against cross-border fire on military post, Dawn, May 31¹²⁴

Pakistan lodged strong protest with the Afghan chargé d'affaires against a cross-border attack from Afghanistan and the matter had also been taken up with the

¹²¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108612/air-strikes-affecting-peace-process-says-sami>

¹²²<http://tribune.com.pk/story/714880/anti-terror-court-acquits-malik-ishaq-of-hate-speech/>

¹²³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-253070-Mulla-Omar-gets-a-rude-shock-as-TTP-breaks-up>

¹²⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109798/pakistan-protests-against-cross-border-fire-on-military-post>

Afghan Foreign Ministry by Pakistan's Ambassador in Kabul. Foreign Office spokesperson in a statement said that a *Pakistan military post at Nao Top (Bajaur Agency) came under fire raid and physical attack early this morning by over 200 terrorists crossing from the Afghan side.* During the attack, one Pakistani soldier was killed while two were seriously injured. The spokesperson said that in a bid to repulse the terrorist attack, Pakistani troops responded with artillery and aviation support. Any allegations about shelling on Afghan civilians inside Afghanistan are incorrect and the Pakistan aviation only fired on attacking terrorists, said the spokesperson. Afghan government officials had alleged that four of its civilians were killed in what it described as a "Pakistani army helicopter strike" in Dangam district along the border with Pakistan.

Strategy chalked out to tackle anti-talks Taliban, *The News*, May 31¹²⁵

The Pakistan government has prepared a strategy to tackle the Taliban who are not willing to take part in the peace talks. PM Nawaz Sharif chaired a high-level meeting of the civil and military leadership here on Friday to review the security situation in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) and Balochistan. The meeting was attended by Minister for Interior Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, COAS General Raheel Sharif, Director General ISI Lt General Zahirul Islam, Chief of the General Staff Lt General Ashfaq Nadeem, Secretary to PM Javid Aslam and Additional Secretary to PM Fawad Hasan Fawad. The meeting prepared a strategy to deal with the Taliban unwilling to hold the peace talks with the government. The meeting also discussed the recent military action in North Waziristan, split within the Taliban leadership and prime minister's visits to India and Afghanistan.

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA AND FATA

Militants blow up 500 kv transmission line in Badbher, *Dawn*, May 5¹²⁶

Unknown suspected militants on Monday blew up a 500kv Tarbela Sheikh Mohammadi transmission line in the Badbher area situated on the outskirts of Peshawar. In charge Inqalab checkpoint, Fazle Sher Khan told that the suspected militants had planted explosives on the tower and blew it up late night, however, no loss of life was reported. NTDCL said that five towers were destroyed in the area, including three towers of Sheikh Muhammdi transmission line which created a short fall of 150 megawatts to the national grid.

¹²⁵<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-30651-Strategy-chalked-out-to-tackle-anti-talks-Taliban>

¹²⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104336/militants-blow-up-500-kv-transmission-line-in-badbher>

Tirah Valley declared free of terrorists, *The Nation*, May 5¹²⁷

Once violence-inflicted Tirah Valley, an area of Khyber Agency, has now been cleared of terrorists, local media quoting officials reported Sunday. According to security sources, the internally displaced persons of Tirah Valley will now start returning to their native place from May 7. The migration will take place in four different phases. The affectees will return home after the gap of three years, sources said. The entire process of Tirah IDPs return will complete by June 5. Security sources informed that the affected people will also be provided six months of ration, free-of-charge.

Five top militants died in N. Waziristan air assault, *Dawn*, May 25¹²⁸

Security officials claimed that five top militant leaders, one of them an Uzbek national, were killed in an air assault on suspected positions in North Waziristan Agency. Sources said the 'commanders' were eliminated in an air strike on 21. The Uzbek national was identified as Abu Ahmad and the others as Qanooni, Sabir, Gilam and Jihad Yaar. Sabir was said to be a trainer of suicide bombers.

Border post in Bajaur attacked, *Dawn*, May 26

[...] TTP spokesman Shahidullah Shahid told journalists on phone that Taliban militants had taken control of almost all the military bunkers and posts in the Manozangal area. He said *suicide attacks would be carried out on the last post held by the security forces in the area to take complete control of the region.*

Key Pakistani Taliban faction breaks away, *Dawn*, May 28¹²⁹

A key faction of the TTP announced on 28 that it was splitting from the militant outfit following bloody clashes with a rival group. The break-away faction belongs to the Mehsud tribe. Azam Tariq, a spokesman for the group, said the breakaway faction would be lead by Khalid Mehsud, famously known by the name of Khan Said alias Sajna. "We announce our defection from the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, we have chosen Khalid Mehsud as the new leader for South Waziristan," announced Tariq. Khalid Mehsud was a key ally of former Mehsud Taliban chief and former TTP number two Waliur Rehman Mehsud, who was killed in a US drone strike in May last year.

N. Waziristan Taliban revoke peace accord; tell locals to leave, *Dawn*, May 30¹³⁰

The NW Taliban led by Hafiz Gul Bahadarhas formally revoked the peace accord with the Pakistani government, a pamphlet distributed by the group in the tribal region said. Bahadur's spokesman Ahmadullah Ahmadi said, *is now preparing to fight against what it said was the security forces' planned operation, giving locals until June 10 to*

¹²⁷<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/05-May-2014/tirah-valley-declared-free-of-terrorists>

¹²⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108379/five-top-militants-died-in-n-waziristan-air-assault>

¹²⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109089/key-pakistani-taliban-faction-breaks-away>

¹³⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109540>

leave the area and move to safety. The pamphlet distributed read that the government had broken the peace accord with the North Waziristan Taliban by launching air strikes with a full-fledged operation being planned for the tribal region. "The shura mujahideen has decided not to tolerate this aggression anymore and has opted to fight and defend Waziristan," The group also warned locals to refrain from seeking refuge in government-established camps. Instead, it directed them to move to areas close to the Afghan border whereby they could easily travel to Afghanistan.

BALUCHISTAN

Taliban kidnap Chinese cyclist, *The Nation*, May 21¹³¹

The Pakistani Taliban have kidnapped a Chinese tourist on a cycling tour of the country, police and Taliban sources said today, the latest in a series of abductions aimed at raising money for rival Taliban factions. The man was kidnapped yesterday in Daraban, near the western city of Dera Ismail Khan. "*We kidnapped the Chinese tourist. He is now in our hands,*" a senior Taliban commander said. "*We will demand the release of our fighters who are in government custody.*"

Extremists force schools to shut in Balochistan, *The Nation*, May 22¹³²

Thousands of women, children and activists marched in Pakistan's volatile province of Balochistan on May 21 in a protest against a "*campaign by an extremist group of forcefully shutting down schools across the region*". Allegedly, Tanzeemul Islamul Furqan (Organisation of Islam for the Quran), a little-known group that has been setting schools on fire and distributing threatening leaflets against girls and Western-style education in Balochistan. "*At least 35 private schools and 30 language centres have been shut down in the districts of Panjgur and Turbat for well over a week, but government schools are open,*" Muhammad Ayub, a local education official, told Reuters. "*Apparently they have been allowed to function because their enrolment of female students is very small.*"

SINDH

'Militant wings of political parties present in Karachi', *The News*, May 9¹³³

Karachi Police Chief Shahid Hayyat has said that militant wings of political parties are present in Karachi. Shahid Hayyat said Supreme Court had also mentioned involvement of political parties in terrorism. Additional IG further said political expediency will not undermine ongoing targeted operation in Karachi.

¹³¹<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/20-May-2014/taliban-kidnap-chinese-cyclist>

¹³²<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/22-May-2014/extremists-force-schools-to-shut-in-balochistan>

¹³³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147186-Militant-wings-of-political-parties-present-in-Karachi:-Shahid-Hayyat>

Nawaz orders probe into desecration of religious sites, Dawn, May 28¹³⁴

PM Nawaz Sharif on 28 expressed serious concerns over acts of vandalism at religious sites belonging to different faiths in Sindh and directed concerned authorities to hold inquiry into the matter. He said that the *federal government would undertake rehabilitation of religious sites that were damaged*. The notice was taken after dozens of protesters from the Sikh community pushed past the front gate and entered the grounds of the Parliament building in Islamabad last week, protesting attacks on their houses of worship. Earlier this week, the Pakistan Sikh Council had warned the government that the community will launch a countrywide protest movement if all the culprits who had desecrated their holy book, Guru Granth Sahib, are not arrested by May 31.

SECURITY SITUATION

Gen. Raheel, Nawaz discuss Taliban talks, The News, May 8¹³⁵

COAS General Raheel Sharif on May 8 called of PM Nawaz Sharif and discussed Taliban talks. Sources said Gen. Raheel and PM Nawaz exchanged views on national security and professional matters of Pak Army. They also deliberated on peace dialogues with TTP.

Security situation reviewed, The Nation, May 21¹³⁶

A high-level meeting under the chair of PM Nawaz reviewed the overall security situation in the country and also discussed the post-elections scenario in neighbouring India and Afghanistan and its expected fallout in the region. Sources aware of the deliberations of the meeting informed The Nation that Chief of Army Staff Gen Raheel Sharif briefed the participants on his recent visit to Kabul and the issues taken up in the trilateral meeting held with Afghan military top-brass and ISAF commanders. He also briefed the meeting on the assistance and support sought by Afghan officials in the run-off Afghan presidential elections due next month.

US to prepare strategy with Pakistan's help, Dawn, May 26¹³⁷

The United States wants Pakistan's cooperation in formulating its future counter-terrorism strategy for Afghanistan and the rest of South Asia, the White House said on 25. DNSA for Strategic Communications Ben Rhodes said the US had not yet decided how many troops to keep in Afghanistan after 2014 but all US allies in the region would be consulted before making any major decision. "*We've been looking broadly at counter-terrorism and how do you have a counter-terrorism strategy in*

¹³⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109133/nawaz-orders-probe-into-desecration-of-religious-sites>

¹³⁵<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147075-COAS-Gen.-Raheel,-PM-Nawaz-discuss-Taliban-talks>

¹³⁶<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/21-May-2014/security-situation-reviewed>

¹³⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108633/us-to-prepare-strategy-with-pakistans-help>

Afghanistan, in South Asia, in cooperation with Pakistan that keeps Al Qaeda core on its heels," said Mr Rhodes.

Pakistan group behind India consulate attack: Karzai, *The Nation*, May 27¹³⁸

Afghan President Hamid Karzai on 26 accused a Pakistan-based militant group of being behind last week's attack by gunmen on an Indian diplomatic mission in Herat. [...] Karzai blamed LeT for Friday's attack on the consulate in Herat. "According to the information that we have available to us -- one given to us by a Western intelligence agency -- the perpetrators were of Lashkar-e-Taiba," Karzai said.

TALIBAN TALKS

Taliban will accept Pakistan Constitution: Taliban negotiating team, *Dawn*, May 1¹³⁹

Member of the Taliban negotiating committee Professor Ibrahim said on Thursday that the Pakistan Army and the Taliban were the real parties to the peace talks. Ibrahim during an address to a tribal jirga in the provincial capital said that the persisting conflict could not be solved by any army operation or militant attacks - it could only be solved through peaceful negotiations. JUI-S Chief Maulana Samiul Haq also addressed the jirga, claiming it was easier to contact and communicate with "those sitting in caves" than those sitting in Islamabad. Both Ibrahim and Sami gave assurances that the Taliban would accept the constitution of Pakistan

Govt has no authority, says TTP, *The Nation*, May 2¹⁴⁰

The Taliban on May 1 alleged the government of pursuing a dual policy, saying on one side it was harping on the beat of peace talks while on the other it was issuing threats to militants. TTP spokesman Shahidullah Shahid in a media statement also alleged that the army has been conducting operation in Babar and Shaktoi areas of South Waziristan Agency for last two days, warning that talks and war cannot go together. Shahid said that operations were being intensified against the TTP across the country. He went on to say that Taliban are willing to talk in the interest of Islam and the Muslims of Pakistan, but would not accept the dialogue to be used a political tool and to pursue war tactics. "Taliban are fighting for the supremacy of sharia and our Mujahideen have the capability to face any difficult situation and they know how to give a befitting response to the enemy," the spokesman said. Taliban are ready to face any situation, he added.

¹³⁸<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/27-May-2014/pakistan-group-behind-india-consulate-attack-karzai>

¹³⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103514/taliban-will-accept-pakistan-constitution-taliban-negotiating-team>

¹⁴⁰<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/02-May-2014/govt-has-no-authority-says-ttp>

Sajna planning to overthrow Fazlullah, *The Nation*, May 3¹⁴¹

Against the backdrop of infighting among the outlawed TTP ranks, some of its militant leaders are planning to kill Maulvi Fazlullah – the disputed chief of Pakistani Taliban who is hiding in Afghanistan, *The Nation* has learnt. Tribesmen close to TTP commander Khan Said Mehsud alias Sajna talking to this correspondent from an undisclosed location in a tribal area informed on 2 that Sajna is making bids to unite all the anti-Fazalullah militants in TTP under his command, apparently to dethrone the disputed Fazlullah. Sajna was tipped as the strongest contender for assuming Taliban leadership after Hakimullah Mehsud's killing in a US drone strike, claiming himself as being the most suitable candidate to run the militant organisation comprising as many as 43 different militant outfits. About the possibility of Sajna's forming a new militant outfit, the tribesmen remarked, Khan Said alias Sajna has the potential to form a new amalgam of militant groups, however to establish his command he has either to get oath of allegiance from majority of TTP commanders or eliminate them, while Fazalullah will be his prime target. Sajna, who is believed to be the strong supporter of peace with the government during the time of Hakimullah Mehsud, is fighting a fierce battle with Shehryar Mehsud in South Waziristan. Shehryar was close to Hakimullah, who believed that war was the only way to fulfil Pakistani Taliban's agenda.

Ceasefire top priority: Prof. Ibrahim, *The Nation*, May 5¹⁴²

Professor Ibrahim, member of Taliban negotiation committee, has said Taliban should not become impediment on the way to permanent peace in Pakistan. *"If the government demands for permanent peace in the country during direct talks with Taliban, I will side with government. I will persuade the Taliban Shoora to enter into a treaty on permanent peace with government,"* he said this while talking to a private TV channel. He went on to say that no venue for holding second round of direct talks between the government and Taliban Shoora could be decided. *'I am continuing consultations with government committee and Taliban Shoora in this respect,'* he added. It is hoped that they would soon agree on the venue for peace talks and the members of both the committees will head towards the set venue within three to four days, he said. He was of the view that interior minister meeting with the PM Nawaz Sharif is their internal matter. *"We will continue to strive for making the negotiations a success. Ceasefire between the both sides is our top priority,"* he said.

Some elements unhappy with govt-TTP ceasefire: Nawaz, *The News*, May 6¹⁴³

PM Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on May 5 said some elements, unhappy with the Taliban ceasefire were 'neither our, nor the TTP's friends'. Talking to BBC, Nawaz

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¹⁴²<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/05-May-2014/ceasefire-top-priority-prof-ibrahim>

¹⁴³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-146783-Some-elements-unhappy-with-govt-TTP-ceasefire:-Nawaz>

said these elements, who were enemies of peace, wanted to deteriorate the affairs. "These elements carried out attacks at the Islamabad fruit and vegetable market and other places and we are trying to hunt them down."

Infighting between rival TTP factions leaves 13 dead, Dawn, May 7¹⁴⁴

Thirteen militants have been killed on May 6 as infighting between rival Taliban groups restarted in Shawal Tehsil of North Waziristan Agency. The latest violence comes a few days after a ceasefire which the militants claimed to have reached through mediation by top commanders. Official and tribal sources confirmed that the clashes had started early Tuesday morning between SheryarMehsud and Khan Said alias Sajna.

Pakistan Taliban chief makes last-ditch bid to assert authority, The Nation, May 11¹⁴⁵

The head of the Pakistani Taliban is making a last-ditch bid to stamp his authority on the increasingly divided insurgency by ordering a top commander sacked, Taliban sources said. Taliban head Maulana Fazlullah moved against Khan "Sajna" Said on May 9 after weeks of bloody infighting in the powerful Mehsud tribe that supplies the bulk of the Pakistani Taliban fighters, they said. Scores of men have been killed. The risk for Fazlullah is that Said might ignore him and battle on. Said is trying to wrest control of the Mehsud tribe - with its many weapons and lucrative smuggling routes and extortion business - from rival ShehryarMehsud. "It's a test case for Maulana Fazlullah and his shura," a Taliban commander said, referring to the movement's leadership council. "It will determine their future. If Sajna is convinced and he stops fighting, it conveys a good message to rest of the Taliban factions," he said. "Otherwise it will be a setback for Fazlullah if Sajna refuses to obey his command."

Khalid appointed emir of SWA Taliban, Dawn, May 13¹⁴⁶

The infighting between two factions of the outlawed TTP has prompted intervention by the TTP shura which is reported to have appointed Sheikh Khalid Haqqani as acting emir of the TTP's Mehsud circle of SWA. The report, however, has been dismissed by another influential Taliban leader. According to the report, the shura announced a two-month ceasefire between the warring factions.

Taliban appoints new military commander, The Nation, May 14¹⁴⁷

Taliban leader, close to Taliban's supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar, has been appointed the new military commander of the Taliban group. According to reports, the new military commander Ibrahim Sadar, was in Pakistani jail and was

¹⁴⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104571/infighting-between-rival-ttp-factions-leaves-13-dead#>

¹⁴⁵<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/11-May-2014/pakistan-taliban-chief-makes-last-ditch-bid-to-assert-authority>

¹⁴⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105937/khalid-acting-emir-of-swa-taliban>

¹⁴⁷<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/14-May-2014/taliban-appoints-new-military-commander>

released from the custody this year at the request of the Afghan government. Sadar is believed to be a close ally of Mullah Mansoor, a senior figure close to Taliban's supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar. He succeeds Mullah Abdul Qayum Zakir who was reportedly sidelined after failing to disrupt the elections earlier last month.

TTP Chief asks Government and Armed forces to accept Allah's writ, *The Nation*, May 18¹⁴⁸

Chief of outlawed TTP, Mullah Fazlullah on May 18 called upon the Government, the Armed forces and the Intelligence agents to akin to the Taliban will have to accept writ of Allah Almighty. In a video message released by the TTP Chapter of Darra Adam Khel, the TTP chief did not comment over the peace talks with the government. He had however been opposed to the talks in the past. His statement came out at a time when there is a deadlock of peace talks between the government and the Taliban. Talking to BBC, spokesperson of the Taliban in Darra Adam Khel also claimed the seven minutes video message is a fresh statement of TTP Chief. In the video, Mullah Fazlullah was welcomed by armed militants when he came down from a mountainous area and he recorded his message.

North Waziristan blitz kills 50 suspected militants, *Dawn*, May 21¹⁴⁹

Shelling by the Pakistan Army's gunship helicopters and fighter jets in the early hours on May 20 killed at least 50 suspected militants and injured another 80, some critically, in several parts of North Waziristan tribal region. The sources said that militants bases in Mosaki, Zara Mela and Esorti villages in Mir Ali tehsil were targeted, which had left scores dead and injured while the targeted operation was also carried on parts of Agency Headquarters Miramshah.

North Waziristan airstrikes continue for second day, *Dawn*, May 22¹⁵⁰

Air strikes targeting suspected militant hideouts continued in parts of the North Waziristan tribal region for a second day on May 22, security sources said. They claimed that the fresh offensive had destroyed a number of insurgent bases and had killed several insurgents. Moreover, official sources claimed that following the airstrikes in different parts of the tribal region, ground troops had entered North Waziristan on Thursday in the Machis Factory area on the outskirts of Miramshah.

Hafiz Gul Bahadur group reviews peace treaty with govt, *Dawn*, May 22¹⁵¹

Following massive airstrikes by Pakistani jet fighters in North Waziristan last night, Taliban militants met at an undisclosed location on May 21 to reconsider a non-aggression treaty with the government. A spokesman for Taliban commander Hafiz

¹⁴⁸<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2014/ttp-chief-asks-government-and-armed-forces-to-accept-allah-s-writ>

¹⁴⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107704/n-waziristan-blitz-kills-50-suspected-militants>

¹⁵⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107909/north-waziristan-airstrikes-continue-for-second-day>

¹⁵¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107736/hafiz-gul-bahadur-group-reviews-peace-treaty-with-govt>

Gul Bahadur, who leads hundreds of fighters in the area, condemned the airstrikes that, according to Pakistani military officials, killed at least 60 militants and injured 30 others last night. Ahmadullah Ahmadi said the group *"cannot remain silent over bombardment on people,"* calling it a clear atrocity on the civilians. He said that the *Shura (council) has convened this important meeting to assess the situation and hinted that the peace accord with the government might get revoked.* The spokesman warned that the government would be responsible for any destruction in case it did not stop the military offensive.

Waziristan situation result of flawed strategy: Fazl, Dawn, May 23¹⁵²

Chief of his own faction of the JUI-F Maulana Fazlur Rehman has termed the present situation in North Waziristan a result of the government's *"flawed strategy"*. *"The unfortunate situation in Waziristan is the outcome of the government's flawed talk's strategy and the government will have to acknowledge that its mechanism was a failure,"* the JUI-F chief said in a statement issued here on May 22. *"The people of Pakistan are in the dark whether or not a new operation has been launched and are wondering if the talks are already dead,"* the Maulana said while commenting on the air strikes in North Waziristan on May 21 in which more than 60 militants had reportedly been killed.

North Waziristan assault intensifies; death toll crosses 80, Dawn, May 23¹⁵³

Four suspected militants were killed and scores of others were injured as targeted action in the North Waziristan tribal region intensified on May 23 with security forces entering the Machis Camp area on the outskirts of agency headquarters Miramshah which is considered a stronghold of foreign militants, most of them Uzbeks. The four were killed in Machis Camp whereas five suspected militants were also arrested during the targeted action.

Imran asks army to review its operation decision, Dawn, May 28¹⁵⁴

PTI Chairman Imran Khan asked the military leadership on Tuesday to review its decision about the action in NW which, he claimed, was resulting in killing of innocent people, including women and children. Further he said: *"With the use of naked force we are creating in tribal areas an East-Pakistan like situation, where people eventually opted for a separate country. I have been told that internally displace persons, instead of shifting to settled areas of the country, are going to Afghanistan which is a dangerous development."* *"Since PM Nawaz Sharif is busy in foreign visits and has no time for domestic issues,"* he said, *"I request Army Chief General Raheel Sharif to go back to peace process because that is the only way forward to have sustainable peace in the country."*

¹⁵²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108026/waziristan-situation-result-of-flawed-strategy-fazl>

¹⁵³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108147/north-waziristan-assault-intensifies-death-toll-crosses-80>

¹⁵⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109071/imran-asks-army-to-review-its-operation-decision>

NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

Resolution passed in NA to extend PPO for 120 days, Dawn, May 14¹⁵⁵

The government on May 14 passed a resolution in the National Assembly to extend the Pak PPO for further 120 days whereas opposition party members and members of the JUI-F protested against the government's move and staged a walk-out from the Lower House of Parliament. Zahid Hamid, who was tasked by PM Nawaz Sharif to start a consultation process to finalise the changes needed to make the draft bill palatable, tried to calm the opposition by contending the PPO was necessary for protection of the country and told them that necessary amendments were made in it. "We will even incorporate more amendments of the opposition for its passage as bill unanimously" Zahid offered.

OPINIONS AND EDITORIALS

Indian arms for Kabul, Dawn, May 2¹⁵⁶

[...] In this unfriendly regional setting, the reported arms agreement between India and Russia is being viewed with misgivings. Initially, reports said, New Delhi would 'source' Russia for the supply of smaller weapons such as light artillery, but eventually this flow of arms paid for by India would include heavy artillery, tanks and helicopters. From India's point of view, such a deal would consolidate the influence New Delhi has already built up in post-Taliban Afghanistan. But in regional terms, it will not help the cause of peace especially with Islamabad looking upon it as a ploy to weaken its own influence over Kabul. While Islamabad's differences with Kabul remain, the fact that Pakistan is key to the reconciliation process cannot be wished away, and other countries would do well to realise this point. Hence it would be disastrous if regional states and outside powers were to adopt policies that could once again make Afghanistan an arena for proxy wars.

The sectarian divide, Muhammad Amir Rana, Dawn, May 4¹⁵⁷

[...] An important factor contributing to growing sectarian divide and violence is the rise and empowerment of sectarian groups. These groups are not only changing socio-cultural patterns but have also transformed the traditionally nationalistic, anti-Indian discourse into a sectarian one. Sectarian discrimination in daily life is increasing and sectarian-based ghettos are growing in Pakistan. Different sects and sectarian groups are encouraging the establishment of separate housing societies and localities. Sectarian violence has manifested itself in three major forms in Pakistan: sectarian-related terrorism; community and tribal sectarian violence; and irregular or instant sectarian violence. Sectarian-related terrorism is a form of organised and

¹⁵⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106261/resolution-passed-in-na-to-extend-ppo-for-120-days>

¹⁵⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1103565/indian-arms-for-kabul>

¹⁵⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1104075/the-sectarian-divide>

structured violence in Pakistan; the other two strands represent a non-structured pattern of sectarian violence mainly arising from hate speech, growing sectarian intolerance and efforts to secure sectarian interests at the community, tribal or group level. All three forms complement each other, and if one type is triggered by an incident, the other two may be activated. If triggered, the second pattern of sectarian violence has a long-term impact and can activate the other two forms of violence. For instance, tribal sectarian tensions in Kurram Agency took four years to come down. The third form is a new phenomenon. When an incident of a sectarian nature occurs, it can trigger attacks on mosques, shrines and religious symbols of rival sects. This happened in Rawalpindi last year when sectarian clashes in the city during a Muharram procession triggered sectarian tensions and violence across the country.

War and peace, *Express Tribune*, May 9¹⁵⁸

Since March this year, when government negotiators and the Taliban shura met, the talks have gone nowhere. While Taliban prisoners have been released, it is unclear if any concessions at all have been extracted from the Taliban. Certainly there have been no visible ones, with abducted persons, including the sons of Salman Taseer and ex-prime minister Yousaf Raza Gilani, still held by militants and attacks continuing on troops. General Sharif has made it clear this will not be tolerated and that there will be retaliation. This is expected to come in the form of massive air strikes and possible action on the ground in North Waziristan. Whether this will scupper peace talks once and for all is yet to be seen, but it seems likely this may happen. With Mian Nawaz Sharif accepting the army stance, it is important his government consider how to proceed next. The army and the government need to work together. Perhaps the focus on defeating militants should combine armed action with development activity carried out by civilian authorities, as a means to push back militancy and give people in conflict zones something else to look towards, so that a bigger front against the militant threat can be built. This eventually may be the only way to demolish it and save people from the calamity they currently face.

Exploring extremism, Muhammad Amir Rana, *Dawn*, May 18¹⁵⁹

[...] Thinking patterns in Pakistan are transforming due to the influence of changing socio-cultural, religious-ideological and politico-economic dynamics here and around the world. But in recent years, Pakistani expats in the West have emerged as one of the important factors shaping the outlook of the upper classes in the country. Western societies are concerned about the religiosity of the Muslim Diasporas, which is perceived to be rising. There are also identity-related issues. Though the pattern of social transformation is not the same across the West, the latter's political and intellectual establishments see the potential rise of parallel societies. The Western

¹⁵⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/706334/war-and-peace-2/>

¹⁵⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1107081/exploring-extremism>

security establishment feels the ultimate outcome will be violent extremism in their lands. In response, Muslim Diasporas are struggling to make their social, religious and cultural values compatible with Western living. The biggest challenge is to find a rational basis for their religious norms and values. The Salafi movement and clergy are out there to help them.

Afghan transition, Khadim Hussain, *Dawn*, May 27¹⁶⁰

Political transitions both to the east and west of Pakistan are important politically, strategically and economically. While India now has a new government led by the BJP, Afghanistan should have a new president by the end of June. Though Pakistan needs to understand developments in both its eastern and western neighbours, it has to give special attention to Afghanistan keeping in view the emerging conditions there. Afghanistan is passing through a tremendous transition in the political, strategic and economic spheres. It seems the country will see the first-ever peaceful transition from one elected president to another in its history. This transition and the drawdown of Isaf forces will have two major implications for Pakistan and Afghanistan. The first pertains to the internal security of both countries. A stable and sovereign Afghanistan would mean that safe havens would be denied to foreign militants inside that country. [...]The second and most important implication of the transition in Afghanistan pertains to the economy. A Joint Economic Commission session was held between Pakistan and Afghanistan in February this year. The JEC had pledged to “double their bilateral trade volume from \$2.5 billion to \$5bn and initiate economic projects of mutual interest”, Daily Outlook Afghanistan had reported.

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

Deal between India and Russia likely to upset Pakistan, *The Nation*, May, 1¹⁶¹

India has signed an agreement under which it will pay Russia to supply arms and equipment to the Afghan military as foreign combat troops prepare to leave the country, in a move that risks infuriating Pakistan. Under the deal, smaller arms such as light artillery and mortars will be sourced from Russia and moved to Afghanistan. But it could eventually involve the transfer of heavy artillery, tanks and even combat helicopters that the Afghans have been asking India for since last year. India has already been training military officers from Afghanistan, hosted a 60-member Special Forces group last year in the deserts of Rajasthan and supplied equipment such as combat vehicles and field medical support facilities.

¹⁶⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1108845/afghan-transition>

¹⁶¹ <http://www.nation.com.pk/national/30-Apr-2014/deal-between-india-and-russia-likely-to-upset-pakistan>

Pakistan ready to work with Narendra Modi: Sartaj Aziz, *The Nation*, May 3¹⁶²

Pakistan is ready to talk to any government elected by the Indian voters, including one headed by Narendra Modi, Advisor to the PM on security and foreign affairs Sartaj Aziz said. "We are ready to do business with any leader, including Modi," Aziz said in a telephone interview from London with Hindustan Times. When asked about Pakistan Army Chief's comments on Kashmir issue, Sartaj Aziz said that was our standing position. "Kashmir is an issue that both India and Pakistan need to negotiate and remains on the dialogue table but if statements are made during the course of your elections about Kashmir being an atootang (integral part) of India, there will be reactions and responses," Aziz said.

Pakistan's embassy in New Delhi receives threat letter, *The Nation*, May 7¹⁶³

Pakistan has asked India to increase the security at its embassy in New Delhi, after receiving a letter with threats to Pakistan's High Commissioner to India, Abdul Basit, and other staff members of the High Commission, according to a Times of India report. The report has quoted Indian government sources as confirming that the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi had received a letter containing serious threats to the staff members of the High Commission a few days earlier

Pakistan protests Indian violation of LoC ceasefire, *The News*, May 12¹⁶⁴

The Indian Army resorted to unprovoked firing during the night between May 10 and 11 in Bhattal Sector on the Line of Control. Senior military officials said small arms and mortars used by the Indian forces, but their guns were silenced by the swift response from the Pakistan Army. No loss of life or damage to property was reported until on May 11 night. Pakistan lodged a protest with Indian authorities. It is the third violation of LoC by the Indian Army during the last 20 days. Pakistan and India routinely accuse each other of launching deadly attacks on the other side and violating the 2003 ceasefire on the LoC.

Minister denies army opposing grant of MFN status to India, *Dawn*, May 15¹⁶⁵

Giving India status of the MFN is not necessary, says Commerce Minister Khurram Dastgir Khan, dismissing speculation that Pakistan is ready to make the offer after a new government is installed in New Delhi. The minister also tried to dispel the impression that the PML-N government was ready to make the offer but the military was opposing the proposal. "Giving (India) the MFN status is not necessary. We are offering non-discriminatory trade access on a reciprocal basis," said Mr Khan when asked at a news briefing if Islamabad would offer the status to India now as the elections

¹⁶²<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/03-May-2014/pakistan-ready-to-work-with-narendra-modi-sartaj-aziz>

¹⁶³<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/07-May-2014/pakistan-s-embassy-in-new-delhi-receives-threat-letter>

¹⁶⁴<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147439-Indian-troops-resort-to-unprovoked-firing-on-LoC>

¹⁶⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106380/minister-denies-army-opposing-grant-of-mfn-status-to-india>

were over and a new government might soon take charge. *"We have received no formal communication from the army,"* said Mr Khan when he was asked if the military was opposing the suggested move.

Pakistan hopeful of thaw in ties after Modi victory, Dawn, May 19¹⁶⁶

The election of Hindu nationalist Narendra Modi has sent shivers through many among India's 150-million strong Muslim communities, but neighbouring Pakistan is cautiously hopeful for a thaw in long-fraught ties. Pakistan's PM Nawaz Sharif, who is himself a centre-right leader, has hailed Modi's "impressive victory" which saw the hardliner gain an outright majority in India's parliament for the first time in 30 years. Sharif has cited his working relationship with Atal Bihari Vajpayee, India's last PM with the right-wing BJP as a reason for optimism, according to diplomatic sources.

Govt advised to wait and see on India policy, The Nation, May 19¹⁶⁷

In their public statements the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz do not deviate from country's declared stance on Kashmir and would seem to want that matter should be resolved as per the United Nations resolutions. But, when it comes to practicality of the things trade with India takes precedence over rest of contentious issues, and even the government seems to be inclined to take up different bilateral disputes – like Sir Creek and Siachen – separately from the 'core issue' of Kashmir.

Ready for NDMA talks with India, says Dastgir, The Nation, May 22¹⁶⁸

Pakistan is waiting for the new Indian government's response for holding talks for much criticised MFN/NDMA status for the neighbouring country, as Islamabad has completed its homework. *"We are ready and waiting for Indian government's indication for holding talks for Non-Discriminatory Market Access issue"*, said Commerce Minister Engineer Khurram Dastgir Khan while addressing a press. *"The new Indian government has yet to assume charge and we will have to see who will be their commerce and textile minister"*, he said in reply to a question. The minister said there is no bar from Pakistani side on granting NDMA status to India, as we have completed our homework.

Pakistan-India engagement positive: US, Dawn, May 23¹⁶⁹

Increased engagement between India and Pakistan is a positive step, says the US State Department while welcoming India's PM-elect Narendra Modi's invitation to the Pakistani premier to attend his inauguration. *"Broadly speaking, we welcome increased engagement between India and Pakistan and their leaders ... and India's*

¹⁶⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107291/pakistan-hopeful-of-thaw-in-ties-after-modi-victory>

¹⁶⁷<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/19-May-2014/govt-advised-to-wait-and-see-on-india-policy>

¹⁶⁸<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/22-May-2014/ready-for-ndma-talks-with-india-says-dastgir>

¹⁶⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108061/pakistan-india-engagement-positive-us>

engagement with its neighbours leading up to the inauguration," said State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki when asked to comment on Mr Modi's gesture.

PM orders release of 151 Indian prisoners before Delhi visit, Dawn, May 25¹⁷⁰

PM Nawaz Sharif instructed the release of 151 Indian prisoners currently detained in Pakistani jails and handing over of 57 fishing boats in Pakistan's custody, ahead of his historic visit to New Delhi to attend Narendra Modi's swearing-in as premier. [...] Pakistan is releasing all those fishermen whose status as Indian nationals has been confirmed by the Indian authorities. Handing over of the boats is also being coordinated with the Indian government. Islamabad's move to free the prisoners, mostly fishermen accused of violating Pakistan's territorial waters, was welcomed by India as a diplomatic gesture ahead of the inauguration.

Nawaz for resumption of composite dialogue, The Nation, May 27¹⁷¹

PM Nawaz Sharif said the inauguration of Narendra Modi as his Indian counterpart on 26 was a "great opportunity" for the two nuclear neighbours to open a new chapter in relations. "It is a great moment and a great opportunity," "This is a chance to reach out to each other. Both governments have a strong mandate," he added. "This could help in turning a new page in our relations." [...] Further he said "No two nations have ever possessed so much of cultural and traditional similarities as India and Pakistan. Why not turn the similarities into our strength?" [...] Nawaz Sharif promised to pick up the threads of a failed peace process which went on during his second term in office which coincided with the last BJP government in India.

PM offers high return to Indian investors, The Nation, May 27¹⁷²

PM Nawaz Sharif said he would be happy to have Indians invest in Pakistan and offered them high returns on their investment. "We have an acute shortage of energy. If Indians come, they will find Pakistani markets very attractive, with returns as high as 30 per cent" [...] Further he said, "I am regarded as a friend of businessmen and we are regarded as a business-friendly government. Modi too is perceived as a business-friendly person."

Pakistan, India agree to resume talks, The News, May 28¹⁷³

Pakistan and India agreed to restore peace talks and enhance trade contacts in a meeting between the PMs of the two countries on 27. India's PM Narendra Modi called on his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif to crack down on militant groups while stressing his desire for closer economic ties, the Indian foreign ministry said. Modi "underlined our concerns related to terrorism" to Nawaz Sharif. "We want peaceful and friendly relations with Pakistan. However, for such relations to proceed it is important

¹⁷⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108514/pm-orders-release-of-151-indian-prisoners-before-delhi-visit>

¹⁷¹<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/27-May-2014/nawaz-for-resumption-of-composite-dialogue>

¹⁷²<http://www.nation.com.pk/islamabad/27-May-2014/pm-offers-high-return-to-indian-investors>

¹⁷³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-30586-Pakistan-India-agree-to-resume-talks>

that terror and violence is brought to an end," Sujata Singh told reporters after the meeting.

OPINIONS AND EDITORIALS

Modi victory a wakeup call for Pakistan, Ayaz Amir, *The News*, May 20¹⁷⁴

For the first thing this victory will do is to draw an unfortunate contrast between India and Pakistan. We may not like Narendra Modi the instigator or abettor of the anti-Muslim riots in Godhra. But it is hard to deny that coming from where he does he will make a strong prime minister. His campaign was sharply focused and as prime minister, as all the signs suggest, he is likely to be clear about his goals and where he wants to take his country. He will be master in his own house. Compare this with conditions in Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif fancies himself a strongman but as the nation has had plenty of opportunity to observe, he is anything but that: confusion and lack of aim the hallmarks of his stewardship – qualities springing to the fore in the last one month in his dealings with the army and his government's handling of the aftermath of the Geo affair.

Modi sarkar, Yaqoob Khan Bangash, *Express Tribune*, May 19¹⁷⁵

[...] Modi's win is not a validation of the Two-Nation Theory, just as the Congress governments in the past were not a negation of it. The coming to power of a party known for Hindu nationalism does not mean that Muslims and other minorities will be summarily slaughtered. [...]The Muslims and other minorities who voted for the BJP did not vote for self-destruction, but made intelligent political decisions. [...]Modi's win was primarily a vote for development. [...] Modi's win might serve as a wake-up call for Indian Muslims. While there remains discrimination against Muslims in India, there are critical issues within the community such as resistance to broader social interaction, inward looking lives, etc, which stymie their progress.

Engaging Modi, Munir Akram, *Dawn*, May 25¹⁷⁶

The invitation to Nawaz Sharif and other Saarc leaders from Prime Minister-elect Narendra Modi to attend his inauguration was even more surprising than his landslide electoral victory. To put it mildly, Modi has not always been so engaging. [...]Modi's invitation is an astute diplomatic move and a mixed blessing for the Pakistan prime minister. Its rejection could have been construed as an unfriendly gesture and justification for future Indian belligerence. However, its acceptance, despite past and recent insults hurled at Pakistan, could cast this country in the role

¹⁷⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-251147-Modi-victory-a-wakeup-call-for-Pakistan>

¹⁷⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/710462/modi-sarkar/>

¹⁷⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1108471/engaging-modi>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108470/a-softening-veto>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/25-May-2014/modi-sharif-and-the-need-for-peace>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/25-May-2014/modi-s-rise-a-test-for-pakistan-s-leadership>

of an Indian satrap, more so if other South Asian leaders attend. The occasion could be utilised by Modi to set the bilateral and regional agenda. In any case, peace is not about to break out between Pakistan and India. While Modi and the BJP have made tactical adjustments to their ideology, their Hindu hard line remains clearly visible. BJP's electoral manifesto repeats known objectives — such as building the Ram temple on the site of the destroyed Babri mosque and abrogating Article 370 of the constitution — and some unknown ones — such as “reviewing and updating” India's nuclear doctrine.

Never was a visit more timely, more needed, Rustam Shah Mohmand, *Express Tribune*, May 27¹⁷⁷

There was no reason to decline an invitation to attend the oath-taking ceremony of Mr Narendra Modi. Firstly, all Saarc leaders were invited to attend the inauguration of the new Indian prime minister. By opting out, Pakistan would have singled itself out as a country that is not sincerely endeavouring to seek peace and pursue détente with the biggest South Asian country. Secondly, a refusal to participate in the inauguration would have led to more pronounced tensions and would have promoted more hostility, more suspicions. It would have been preposterous to help lay the foundations of a more belligerent policy towards Pakistan's most important neighbour.

India's Defence budget, Dr Farrukh Saleem, *The News*, May 18¹⁷⁸

In 1988, India's defence budget stood at Rs168 billion. Last year's allocation stands at a colossal Rs2.03 trillion – an increase of nearly 14 times. In dollar terms, the defence budget has gone up from \$16.7 billion to \$47.7 billion (in constant 2010). [...] The Indian army's tank inventory stands at 3,978 – Arjun MBT, T-90s and T-72s. Last year, India placed an order of 235 T-90s for a billion dollars. India wants to buy Rafale fighter jets worth \$20 billion. India has bought \$39 billion worth of killing machines from Russia. India is buying American C-130Js for \$5 billion, Apache attack helicopter for \$1.4 billion, ultra-light howitzers for \$885 million and Chinook heavy-lift helicopters for \$1 billion. Why is India accumulating tanks? [...] The Indian army's Arjun main battle tanks are not for Bangladesh. The T-72, 2nd generation, 41.5 tons, main battle tanks are neither for China nor for Nepal. The T-90, 3rd generation, 47.5 ton, main battle tanks are neither for Bhutan nor for Burma. The on-the-ground reality is that most Indian arms are positioned to target Pakistan. On the ground, Bharatiya Sthalsena has a total of 13 corps of which 6 are strike corps. Of the 13 corps at least 7 have their guns pointed at Pakistan (Sundarji Doctrine). The 3rd Armored Division, 2nd Armored Brigade, 4 RAPID, Jaisalmer AFS, Utarlai AFS and

¹⁷⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/713388/never-was-a-visit-more-timely-more-needed/>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-252474-The-audacity-of-hope>

¹⁷⁸ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-250816-Defence-budget>

Bhuj AFS are all positioned to split Pakistan into two (by capturing the Kashmore/Guddu Barrage-Reti-Rahimyar Khan triangle). Since 2004, India has been spending billions on its Pakistan-specific, cold-start, offensive military doctrine-speed, overwhelming firepower and mobilisation time of 48 hours.

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

| Place | Date | Description | Killed | Injured |
|---------------------------------|-----------|--|--------|---------|
| Balochistan | | | | |
| Quetta ¹⁷⁹ | 3/5/2014 | Blast targets FC vehicle in Bolan; one killed. | 1 | 0 |
| Balochistan ¹⁸⁰ | 5/5/2014 | At least 10 suspected militants killed in Balochistan. | 10 | 0 |
| Quetta ¹⁸¹ | 8/5/2014 | 2 killed, 16 injured in Quetta blast. | 2 | 16 |
| Khuzdar ¹⁸² | 12/5/2014 | Blast wounds at least 19 in Khuzdar. | 0 | 19 |
| Khuzdar ¹⁸³ | 15/5/2015 | Two shot dead in Khuzdar. | 2 | 3 |
| Quetta ¹⁸⁴ | 20/5/2014 | Balochistan violence claims four lives. | 5 | 2 |
| Baluchistan ¹⁸⁵ | 22/5/2014 | FC camp attacked in Balochistan: 1 person killed. | 1 | 0 |
| Khuzdar ¹⁸⁶ | 25/5/2014 | Gunmen open fired at a checkpoint near Wadh tehsil on the Quetta-Karachi Highway | 8 | 1 |
| FATA | | | | |
| North Waziristan ¹⁸⁷ | 6/5/2014 | North Waziristan blast claims two lives. | 2 | 1 |

¹⁷⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103936/blast-targets-fc-vehicle-in-bolan-one-killed>

¹⁸⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104344/at-least-10-suspected-militants-killed-in-balochistan>

¹⁸¹<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147072-Two-killed,-16-injured-in-Quetta-blast>

¹⁸²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105629/blast-wounds-at-least-19-in-khuzdar>

¹⁸³<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/15-May-2014/two-shot-dead-in-khuzdar>

¹⁸⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107504/balochistan-violence-claims-four-lives>

¹⁸⁵<http://tribune.com.pk/story/711180/fc-camp-attacked-in-balochistan-1-person-killed/>

¹⁸⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108512/eight-levies-personnel-shot-dead-near-wadh>

¹⁸⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104543/north-waziristan-blast-claims-two-lives>

| | | | | |
|--|-----------|---|----|---|
| North Waziristan ¹⁸⁸ | 8/5/2014 | IED blast kills 12 security personnel in N. Waziristan. | 12 | 0 |
| Bajaur Agency ¹⁸⁹ | 11/5/2014 | Roadside bomb kills soldier in Bajaur Agency. | 1 | 0 |
| Hangu ¹⁹⁰ | 13/5/2014 | Firing in Hangu leaves 2 teachers dead. | 2 | 0 |
| Mohmand Agency ¹⁹¹ | 18/5/2014 | IED blast in Mohmand tribal region kills one, injures five others. | 1 | 5 |
| Mohmand, Khyber and Bajaur Agencies ¹⁹² | 24/5/2014 | Eight security personnel, nine militants and a peace committee volunteer were killed in roadside blasts and clashes | 18 | 0 |
| Bajaur ¹⁹³ | 25/5/2014 | Five assailants were killed and five security personnel injured when suspected militants crossed the Afghan border and attacked a military post in Mamond tehsil of Bajaur Agency | 5 | 5 |
| Miramshah ¹⁹⁴ | 27/5/2014 | Six militants were killed and seven others got injured in fresh clashes between two rival factions of the outlawed TTP in Shawalarea. | 6 | 7 |
| North Waziristan, | 29/5/2014 | In separate incidents of explosions in the Fata six soldiers were killed while four others were injured | 6 | 4 |

¹⁸⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104997/ied-blast-kills-12-security-personnel-in-nwaziristan>

¹⁸⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105619/roadside-bomb-kills-soldier-in-bajaur-agency>

¹⁹⁰<http://tribune.com.pk/story/707796/firing-in-hangu-leaves-2-teachers-dead/>

¹⁹¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107097/ied-blast-in-mohmand-tribal-region-kills-one-injures-five-others>

¹⁹²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108380/eight-troops-among-18-killed-in-blasts-clashes>

¹⁹³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108631/border-post-in-bajaur-attacked>

¹⁹⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109065/six-killed-in-taliban-infighting>

| Punjab | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|----|----|
| Lahore ¹⁹⁵ | 7/7/2013 | Bomb with ball bearings in ground floor of building, in old Anarkali area which is popular on weekends | 3 | 37 |
| Khyber Pakhtunkhwa | | | | |
| Jamrud ¹⁹⁶ | 5/5/2014 | Nato container attacked in Jamrud. | 2 | 0 |
| Peshawar ¹⁹⁷ | 11/5/2014 | Blast in Peshawar kills five, wounds 14. | 5 | 14 |
| Peshawar ¹⁹⁸ | 15/5/2014 | Blast in Bannu injures seven. | 0 | 7 |
| Peshawar ¹⁹⁹ | 24/5/2014 | six security officials were killed and one injured when an IED targeted a security forces' convoy in Mohmand Agency. | 6 | 1 |
| Bannu ²⁰⁰ | 28/5/2014 | Three soldiers were killed and two others, including an army captain, sustained injuries in an explosion in Janikhel area in the Frontier Region | 3 | 2 |
| Bajaur ²⁰¹ | 31/5/2014 | 16 militants and one soldier were killed as security forces backed by gunship helicopters thwarted a cross border militant attack on a checkpoint near the Pak-Afghan border in the Bajaur tribal region. | 17 | 0 |
| Sindh | | | | |
| Karachi ²⁰² | 3/5/2014 | Lawyer, his driver killed in Karachi firing. | 2 | 0 |
| Karachi ²⁰³ | 11/5/2014 | 4 killed in Karachi firing. | 4 | 3 |

¹⁹⁵<http://tribune.com.pk/story/573379/seven-people-injured-in-lahore-explosion/>

¹⁹⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1104332/nato-container-attacked-in-jamrud>

¹⁹⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105613/blast-in-peshawar-kills-five-wounds-14>

¹⁹⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106713/blast-in-bannu-injures-seven>

¹⁹⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108345/mohmand-agency-blast-kills-six-security-officials-injures-one>

²⁰⁰<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-253087-Three-soldiers-killed-in-FR-Bannu-IED-blast>

²⁰¹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109736/bajaur-clash-kills-one-soldier-16-militants>

²⁰²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1103934/lawyer-his-driver-killed-in-karachi-firing>

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|--|---|----|
| Karachi ²⁰⁴ | 12/5/2014 | Gunmen kill Pakistan Navy official in Karachi. | 1 | 0 |
| Karachi ²⁰⁵ | 21/5/2014 | Blast near Rangers headquarters in Karachi; five injured. | 0 | 5 |
| Karachi ²⁰⁶ | 24/5/2014 | Two suspects were shot dead in a targeted action jointly carried out by police and Rangers in the jurisdiction of Kalri police station in Lyari. | 2 | 0 |
| Orangi Town ²⁰⁷ | 25/5/2014 | Two explosions near an Imambargah near Qasbachowk in Orangi town area killed one child and wounded nine persons | 1 | 9 |
| Karachi ²⁰⁸ | 26/5/2014 | Three bodies were recovered from Karachi's Sarjani Northern Bypass | 3 | 0 |
| Karachi ²⁰⁹ | 31/5/2014 | Four people were injured in an explosion early Saturday in Karachi's Baldia Town | 0 | 4 |
| Punjab | | | | |
| Rawalpindi ²¹⁰ | 15/5/2014 | Bombing outside restaurant in Rawalpindi wounds fifteen. | 0 | 14 |
| Chiniot ²¹¹ | 19/5/2014 | 8 die in gun & grenade attack in Chiniot. | 8 | 5 |
| Islamabad ²¹² | 24/5/2014 | Two bomb explosions in Islamabad killed one security guard and wounding another | 1 | 1 |
| Lahore ²¹³ | 26/5/2014 | Gunmen shot dead a doctor from the minority Ahmadi community in Chenab Nagar town in Punjab province | 1 | 0 |

²⁰³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-147351-4-killed-in-Karachi-firing>

²⁰⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1105811/gunmen-kill-pakistan-navy-man-in-karachi>

²⁰⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1107705/blast-near-rangers-headquarters-in-karachi-five-injured>

²⁰⁶<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108328/two-suspects-killed-in-lyari>

²⁰⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108517/blasts-near-imambargah-in-karachi-kill-child>

²⁰⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108682/karachi-violence-claims-four-lives>

²⁰⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1109734/blast-in-karachis-baldia-town-injures-four>

²¹⁰<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106588/bombing-outside-restaurant-in-rawalpindi-wounds-fifteen>

²¹¹<http://www.nation.com.pk/national/19-May-2014/8-die-in-gun-grenade-attack-in-chiniot>

²¹²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108344/one-dead-in-twin-bomb-attack-on-pakistan-capital>

²¹³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1108691/us-based-ahmadi-doctor-shot-dead-in-punjab>

