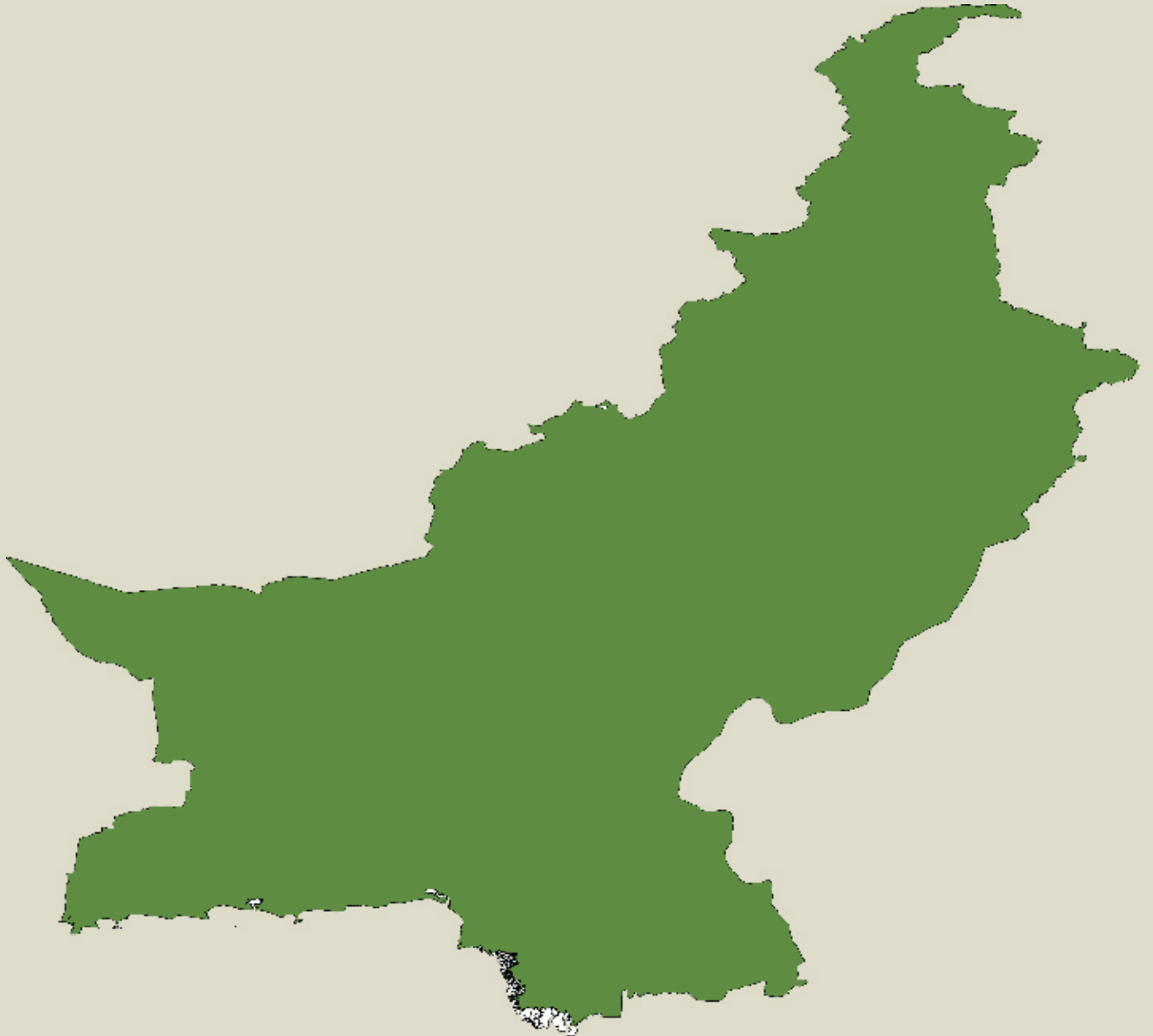


February 2017

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



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

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
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रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, FEBRUARY 2017

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB: Asian Development Bank
AIIB: Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ANP: Awami National Party
APC: All Parties Conference
ATC: Anti-Terrorism Court
CPEC: China- Pakistan Economic Corridor
CTD: Counter Terrorism Department
ECP: Election Commission of Pakistan
IED: Improvised Explosive Device
IHC: Islamabad High Court
IMF: International Monetary Fund
ISI: Inter-Services Intelligence
ISPR: Inter Services Public Relations
JI: Jamaat-i-Islaami
JuD: Jamat-ul- Dawa
JUI-F Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam (Fazal)
KP: Khyber Pakhthunkhwa
LHC: Lahore High Court
MQM: Muttahida Qaumi Movement
NAB: National Accountability Bureau
NADRA- National Database and Registration Authority
NAP: National Action Plan
PAT: Pakistan Awami Tehreek
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PPP: Pakistan People's Party
PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
QCG: Quadrilateral Coordination Group
QWP: Qaumi Watan Party
RRG: Rapid Response Group
TTP: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

NATIONAL POLITICS

Shujaat meets Musharraf, moots United PML, *The Dawn*, February 6¹

The Chaudhrys of Gujrat have renewed efforts to bring all factions of the Muslim League, except the N-League, on one platform in order to introduce a new political force before the 2018 general election. *Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid leaders Chaudhry Shujaat Husain and Moonis Elahi called on former president and APMML chief retired Gen Pervez Musharraf in Dubai on Sunday (February 5) and discussed with him matters relating to formation of a new party, to be known as 'United Muslim League'.* "Chaudhry Shujaat and Moonis Elahi have held an important meeting with Gen Musharraf for bringing all Muslim League factions (minus N) under one umbrella. The Chaudhrys have renewed efforts since they feel this is the right time to enter the political arena with a new party in the presence of the PML-N, PTI and PPP," a PML-Q leader privy to the development told Dawn.

Pakistan turning into a water-scarce country: Experts, *The Dawn*, February 6²
Leading experts on water resources are of the view that there is not sufficient awareness among the policy-makers of the impending water crisis in Pakistan, which is posing a threat to the country's security, stability and environmental sustainability. Former chairman of the Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) Shamsul Mulk highlighted water security issues discussed in a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report, 'Development Advocate Pakistan'. Pakistan's water policy does not exist and key policy-makers act like 'absentee landlords' of water in Pakistan, he said. "Because of this absentee landlordism, water has become the property of the landlords and the poor are deprived of their share". A draft report on water resources was framed at the expressed request of the ministry of water and power. Mr Mulk said it was unfortunate that the federal cabinet never allocated the time for its review and approval. "The worst example of landlordism is in Sindh. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Pushtoon society is a lot more egalitarian. In general, landlords don't want the poor to become economically self-sufficient to remain in power. So, this water issue is very political in nature," he said. Mr Mulk pointed out the extreme variability of river flows season-wise— 84 per cent of flows in summer and only 16pc in winter—as a major problem.

¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1313039/shujaat-meets-musharraf-moots-merger-of-pml-groups>

² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1313054/pakistan-turning-into-a-water-scarce-country-say-experts>

Agitation for release of Hafiz Saeed, *The Nation*, February 9³

Around 25 religious parties which comprise as the Milli Yakjehti Council and groups have formed an agitational movement in a unanimous decision to launch a widescale protest movement for release of Jamaatud Dawa chief Hafiz Saeed and protection of Islamic laws in the country. The decision was upheld in a meeting of the alliance's central executive council. It also decided to observe a week of protest, starting from Friday (February 10) during which country-wide rallies would be taken out for the both causes. For power-show, they announced a rally on Sunday (February 12), from Nasser Bagh to the Punjab Assembly. The council decided to convene a media conference on the issue and protection of blasphemy law. The council demanded that house arrest of Hafiz Saeed should be ceased without delay and the government must apologise for detaining him. It also demanded release of all JuD workers, besides withdrawing case against them. The council further warned against making any changes to blasphemy law and vowed to protect it in its present form at "every cost".

Senate deputy chairman denied US visa, *The Express Tribune*, February 12⁴

Authorities in Pakistan were left embarrassed and in deep shock on Saturday (February 11) after US authorities refused a visa to the Senate's deputy chairman, weeks after the new US President Donald Trump announced travel curbs on seven Muslim-majority countries. Abdul Ghafoor Haidri, the deputy chairman of the upper house, was scheduled to head a two-member delegation to a meeting of the Inter- Parliamentary Union (IPU) at the United Nations headquarters in New York. The meeting is being held on February 13 and 14. Senator Lt General (ret'd) Salahuddin Tirmizi – who was to accompany the deputy chairman – was granted a visa just two days before. However, the visa of Haidri was put on hold in what can be termed a technical refusal, sources said. [...]In its official statement earlier in the day, the Senate Secretariat claimed that there was a delay in issuance of visa to the deputy chairman and the Senate Chairman Raza Rabbani had taken notice of the issue. Rabbani in a prompt reaction issued directives to his secretariat not to entertain any US delegation or diplomat till the issue was resolved. "No delegation, member of Congress or diplomat of the US will be welcomed by the Senate of Pakistan, Senate Standing Committees and the senators in their official capacity till this issue is resolved," Rabbani said in a statement issued to media on Saturday morning (February 11). The statement said following the directives of the Senate chairman, the visit has been called off. It said Rabbani had ordered that

³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/09-Feb-2017/milli-yakjehti-council-launches-agitation-for-release-of-hafiz-saeed>

⁴ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1324262/us-visit-called-off-senate-deputy-chairman-denied-visa/>

no Senate delegation would visit the US until its diplomatic mission explained the delay in issuance of a visa to Haidri.

107 arrested for flying kites, *The Dawn*, February 13⁵

The capital city police on Sunday (February 12) claimed to have arrested 107 people for flying kites and seized kites and rolls of string from their possession. Police also registered 93 cases against those arrested under the Prohibition of Kite Flying (Amendment) Act 2009. Under the law, kite-flying is prohibited all over the province and it was also declared a cognisable offence. A spokesman said on the directions of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) operations Zahid Mehmood Gondal, a crackdown was launched on people selling, making and flying kites. He said police arrested 107 people from various areas of the city and seized 800 kites and 230 rolls of string from their possession.

PML-N, JUI-F rift widens over US visa, *The Express Tribune*, February 13⁶

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and its frontline ally Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl may be locked in renewed tensions due to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's apparent silence over the United States' 'technical refusal' to grant a visa to Senate Deputy Chairman Abdul Ghafoor Haidri, a senior leader of the religious party. *Sources aware of this development told The Express Tribune that JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman took up the issue with Premier Nawaz and urged him to intervene. The top PML-N leadership reportedly assured JUI-F of complete cooperation, but the prime minister has so far stayed silent on the matter. "A public statement to put weight behind the JUI-F would have done," a senior JUI-F member said. "We told them [PML-N leadership] that it's not about our party, it's about Senate's and parliamentarians' dignity,"* he added on condition of anonymity.

Counter-Terrorism to continue: Mamnoon, *The Nation*, February 14⁷

President Mamnoon Hussain says operation Zarb-e-Azb and other counter-terrorism activities will continue till the complete eradication of terrorism, reported Radio Pakistan. He was addressing prize distribution ceremony of the Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education in Islamabad today. The President said sacrifices of security forces personnel and civilians in war against terrorism will not go waste. Referring to yesterday's terrorism incident in Lahore, he said such cowardly incidents cannot deter our resolve to root out terrorism as the whole nation is united against this menace.

⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1314441/107-arrested-for-flying-kites>

⁶ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1324963/coalition-stress-pml-n-jui-f-rift-widens-visa-embarrassment/>

⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-Feb-2017/security-forces-personnel-civilians-sacrifices-not-to-be-wasted-says-president-mamnoon>

PM to take war against terror to its logical conclusion, *The News*, February 14⁸
Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday (February 14) chaired a high level meeting to review over all law and order situation after suicide attack outside Punjab Assembly the previous day. The higher security officials briefed the Prime Minister over security situation. In the meeting, the initial report of the suicide attack was presented before PM Nawaz. *Addressing the participants, PM Nawaz said, "War against terrorism will be taken to its logical conclusion." He said the enemy would be defeated with national determination, adding that security forces and law enforcement agencies have rendered exemplary sacrifices in fight against terrorism. "Eliminating terrorism in our national responsibility," he added.*

Parties say blast govt's failure, *The Nation*, February 14⁹
Mainstream political, religio-political and religious parties have condemned suicide attack on rally of chemists on The Mall yesterday. [...] *Leaders of opposition parties have expressed sympathies with victims and prayed for early recovery of the injured. Terming the incident failure of the government, they said that such incident would not happen if National Action Plan would have been implemented in letter and spirit.* Former president of Pakistan and President Pakistan People's Party-Parliamentarians Asif Ali Zardari strongly condemned blast in Lahore and instructed party leaders and office-bearers to reach hospitals and donate blood to help injured. He said that terrorism could only be eliminated by eradicating terror nurseries. [...] *Secretary Information PTI Syed Samsam Bokhari said that suicide attack was a question mark on the performance of Punjab government. He said that no arrangements were made to avoid the tragic incident despite terrorist threats. He said that the nation would fail the nefarious designs of terrorists.* Opposition Leader in Punjab Assembly and PTI leader Mian Mehmoodur Rasheed said that the unfortunate incident could have been avoided by implementing National Action Plan. He stressed the need of unity to fight against handful of terrorists. He urged indiscriminate action against terrorists and their facilitators.

Root causes of terrorism should be addressed, *Daily Times*, February 15¹⁰
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan condemned the Mohmand Agency blast which occurred on Wednesday morning (February 15) and said that terrorism would not be rooted out of the country unless its root

⁸ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/186260-PM-vows-to-take-war-against-terror-to-its-logical-conclusion>

⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-Feb-2017/parties-say-blast-govt-s-failure>

¹⁰ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/15-Feb-17/root-causes-of-terrorism-should-be-addressed-imran>

causes are addressed. He said that the need for coordination between the interior ministry, foreign ministry and national security policies has increased manifold. Reacting to the suicide attack, Imran said that he was grieved over the loss of lives and property in this attack. He said that national level efforts are necessary to weed out terrorism. Imran said that the concerned departments should act in a timely manner for developing national level consensus to stop this wave of terrorism.

THE PANAMA PAPERS

PTI failed to produce any counter-evidence, Daily Times, February 15¹¹

Information and Broadcasting Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said that the PTI has failed to produce any counter evidence relating to the documents submitted by the PML (N) in Panama case. While talking to media outside the Supreme Court on Wednesday (February 15), she asked the PTI chairman to shun negative politics and contribute towards progress of the country. She said the documents relating to the properties of Hassan Nawaz and Hussain Nawaz will soon be presented before the apex court. The prime minister is taking steps towards improving the security situation as well as taking the country forward on economic front, she added. Imran Khan should return to positive politics and contribute to the development of the country. She said the opposition should not do politics on security matters, she concluded

SC seeks evidence of London flats transfer, The News, February 15¹²

Questioning the court proceeding today, the counsel of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif sons, Salman Akram Raja said it's impossible now to present 45-years-old record before the court. Can the bench reach a decision without investigations into the matter, he asked. The apex court resumed the hearing on Wednesday after almost two weeks, when on January 31 (the last hearing), Justice Sheikh Azmat Saeed was hospitalized for chest pain and the case was put-off indefinitely. The counsel argued that it is proven that the properties in question were not owned by Sharif Family in 1999, Al-Thani Family purchased these flats between 1993 and 1996 and handed over the bearer certificates to Hussain Nawaz in January 2006. Minerva was given these certificates in July 2006. On this, Justice Azmat Saeed sought evidences of property transfer to Sharifs. Where are the proofs, he asked from the counsel. Responding to another query regarding an investigation by former interior minister Rehman Malik into financial matters Sharif Family, Salman Raja said the minister conducted inquiry in his personal capacity while was suspended from the

¹¹ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/15-Feb-17/panama-case-pti-unsuccessful-in-producing-any-counterevidence>

¹² <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/186480-Panama-Leaks-case-SC-seeks-evidence-of-London-flats-transfer>

office and leaked it to media, adding that the said report has no legal value as well.

Qatari letters not proving helpful: Siraj, Daily Times, February 15¹³

Ameer Jamaat e Islami SirajulHaq said that the government has completely bogged down in the mess of corruption as the letters of Qataris were not proving "the Ark of Noah for Sharif family. "The Government and ruling family have completely stuck into a whirlpool of corruption as they could not tell the exact name of real owner of their properties in foreign country in the apex court" JI Ameer said this while talking to media men outside the Supreme Court on Wednesday (February 15) during intermission in Panama case hearing. This provides evidence that the ruler's family purchased property outside the county with the money they plundered from Pakistan, he said adding that now they are trying to escape from accountability after they had been named in Panama leaks case. The letters of Qatari prince's are not proving to be Noah's Ark for the Sharif family and they are going to be mired in the troublesome Panama leaks, he held.

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

Punjab govt makes Quran education compulsory, The Nation, February 9¹⁴

The Punjab government has decided to impose quranic education along with Urdu translation for the Muslim student's from grade 1 to Grade 12. According to details, the education would be given in starting phase where Nazra Quran will be taught in the primary level; comprehensive details of Islamic incidents will be taught in the secondary level whereas Quranic verses with Urdu translations would be studied at higher secondary level. While chairing a session at Lahore's Children Library, provincial leader Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan ordered the authorities to amend the syllabus accordingly. He said that doing this would surely improve the behavior and attitude of the students according to the teachings of Islam.

Peshawar decides to arrest 500 parents, The Express Tribune, February 13¹⁵

To save children from being crippled by polio, the Peshawar city administration on Sunday (February 12) decided to arrest over 500 parents who refused to have their children vaccinated against the debilitating disease. The decision was taken in an official meeting attended by the Peshawar assistant commissioner (AC) and officials from other departments. Speaking to The

¹³ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/15-Feb-17/qatari-letters-not-proving-helpful-for-the-rulers-siraj>

¹⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/09-Feb-2017/punjab-govt-makes-quran-education-compulsory-for-muslims-till-higher-secondary-level>

¹⁵ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1324968/polio-drop-refusal-peshawar-decides-arrest-500-parents/>

Express Tribune, Peshawar AC Altaf Ahmad Sheikh said it was the city administration's last option to arrest parents who refused to immunise their children against polio under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) Law. The city administration is carrying out a seven-day polio immunisation campaign which will end today.

Sindh needs new law to set up neutral police force, *The Dawn*, February 13¹⁶
Inspector General of Police (IGP) A.D. Khowaja has said Sindh needs a new law to establish a 'neutral police force' in order to ensure efficient policing with the help of the public. The IGP said at the launch of a divisional women protection cell set up in the DIG's office on Sunday (February 12) that a draft law in this connection had already been submitted to the government for consideration. He reiterated the comments he had made earlier at the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry that when policemen were being killed in the 1990s, the members of civil society did not raise voice over it. As a result, assistance had to be sought from the Rangers to rein in the situation, he said. He said that efforts should be made to point out deficiencies and weaknesses in the police department and propose remedies. "Sindh can't enter the 21st century with the 1861 Police Act. Punjab police is working under the Police Order 2002 and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a new law in place," he said.

Imran for merging FATA into KP, *Daily Times*, February 15¹⁷
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Wednesday (February 15) called for the merger of federally-administered tribal areas (FATA) into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province in order to effectively combat terrorism in the restive region. Right now, there is a vacuum in FATA due to lack of developments and it can only be filled with its speedy merger into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," Imran said while addressing a news conference at Hayatabad Medical Complex. "I am afraid that if we don't speed up the process of FATA's merger into KP, the gains of Zarb-e-Azb operation will be reversed," he warned. He suggested that local government system should be brought to FATA to lay the foundation for the impoverished region's uplift. The PTI chief also condemned the suicide attack in Peshawar.

EDITORIALS AND OPINION

Hafiz Saeed's Arrest, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 1¹⁸
Hafiz Saeed's detention has come as a surprise. Not only because there was little foreshadowing of the move by the government but also because there

¹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1314405/sindh-needs-new-law-to-set-up-neutral-police-force-says-igp>

¹⁷ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/15-Feb-17/imran-for-merging-fata-into-kp>

¹⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/01-Feb-2017/hafiz-saeed-s-arrest>

existed no debates or circumstances which could have prompted such a step. However, the biggest surprise is the manner with which the government handled the issue. Where it had previously relied on relief given to the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief by local courts to justify its inaction against him – and to defend Pakistan from the international criticism for letting the JUD run free – now it has sent heavily armed contingents to arrest Hafiz Saeed and his associates from Qudsia Mosque in Lahore, removed the organisation's banner's from the city, and replaced the party flags in its Muridke headquarters with Pakistani flags instead. It is described by the government as a "crackdown" and it feels like one.

[...] *And as the sudden nature of this house arrest signifies, it is perhaps time to recognise that calls to "do more" have not motivated the state, as much as possible denial of entry into the US through a visa has. While there is no evidence that a ban was threatened, it can be safely assumed that the volatile situation surrounding the US immigration policies were a factor in the decision to make such a move.* [...] It remains to be seen whether this detention is temporary, and whether the state will buckle under pressure and let him go. Already the JUD has started mobilising its masses to protest and Hafiz Saeed has petitioned the courts for his release – which have come to his rescue in the past too. However, the crucial point here is that for the first time the state has acted to contain Hafiz Saeed, and denied him a pulpit. And that is a step in the right direction.

A secretive conversation, Cyril Almeida, *The Dawn*, February 5¹⁹

THE first, tentative steps towards the final frontier – dismantling the infrastructure of jihad in toto – or an all-too-familiar false start? The detention of Hafiz Saeed and co could be either. But it is also something else: a signal that the long, state-led conversation of what to do with the good jihadis has begun. Cloaked in secrecy, debated by vested interests and held, potentially, on terms of compromise rather than a bold reimagining of the Pakistani project, it could go horribly wrong. To understand why, we have to start with the war against the bad jihadis. Terrible as they were and long as the fight against them will be, the bad jihadis got it wrong on three counts: utility, survivability and strategy. The strategy was flawed because with a relatively small militant footprint the bad jihadis tried to overthrow the state. And while the state's response was muddled for years, the state had disproportionately larger resources in what was a prematurely imposed fight for survival. From there, with their small militant footprint and no real hook in society – no mosque-madrasah-social welfare network to sustain ideology and attract recruits – the mass, muscular survivability of the bad jihadis was a low

¹⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1312746/a-secretive-conversation>

probability outcome. And then there was the lack of utility — repurpose and redirect the bad jihadis to where?

FOREIGN POLICY

Pak-Afghan trade suspension enters 5th day, *The Nation*, February 10²⁰

The Pak-Afghan transit trade suspension has entered fifth day, owing to which a long queue of hundreds of containers is seen near Friendship Gate. A scuffle on weighting of goods in Balochistan border city of Chaman triggered suspension of trade between the two countries. According to sources, a moot will be held soon for a durable settlement of the matter. Chaman Chamber of Commerce and Clearing Agents Association have demanded immediate solution to the problem and threatened not only to stay all trade activities with Afghanistan but also block Quetta-Chaman Kozak Top for every sort of traffic if Kozak Top transit trade was not restored. The Chamber of Commerce and Clearing Agents Association feared edible foods, medicines, agriculture goods and other items in the containers would rot if trade suspension prolonged.

Iranian border forces fire mortar shells, *The Dawn*, February 10²¹

Iranian forces fired four mortar shells across the border into Balochistan's Panjgur district on Friday (February 10), a member of the local administration told Dawn News. Deputy Commissioner Panjgur Habibur Rehman claimed Iranian forces fired four mortar shells into Panjgur's Parom area 'without any justification and provocation'. "We have not received any report about any human loss", he added. Security was tightened in the province in the aftermath of the shelling. More security personnel have been sent into the area to guard the border, the deputy commissioner said.

US general calls for review of Pakistan ties, *The Nation*, February 10²²

The top US commander in Afghanistan has called for a "holistic review" of the relationship with Pakistan, while voicing concern over Islamabad's role in the war-torn neighbouring country. "Our complex relationship with Pakistan is best assessed through a holistic review," General John Nicholson, who leads US and international forces in Afghanistan, told the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday (February 9). [...] Testifying before the committee, the general also accused Russia of interfering in Afghanistan, and went on to express concern about the roles being played by Iran and Pakistan in that country. They, along with Russia, he said, "continue to legitimize and support the Taliban and undermine the Afghan government's efforts to create a stable

²⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/national/10-Feb-2017/pak-afghan-trade-suspension-enters-5th-day>

²¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1313973/iranian-border-forces-fire-mortar-shells-into-pakistani-territory>

²² <http://nation.com.pk/national/10-Feb-2017/us-general-calls-for-review-of-pakistan-ties>

Afghanistan.” He told the committee he believes the US-backed Afghan forces are “in a stalemate” in the 15 year-old war.

TTP provides core fighting group for IS: US general, *The Dawn*, February 13²³
The Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakis-tan provides the core fighting group for the militant Islamic State (IS) group as TTP militants in Orakzai tribal agency en masse joined the relatively new terrorist group, says a top US general. Gen John Nicholson Jr., the commander of US and international forces in Afghanistan, also agreed with a lawmaker that Pakistan’s strong relationship with China and its growing ties with Russia were a cause of concern for the United States. [...]The general said TTP militants in Orakzai tribal agency had, en masse, joined the IS-K and formed the initial group of fighters who then moved into Afghanistan’s Nangarhar province, spreading out to about 11 districts initially. “So, the majority of the fighters in the IS right now came from the TTP, the Pakistani Taliban, and joined the banner of the IS,” he added.

Pakistan warns against linking Islam with terrorism, *The News*, February 14²⁴
Pakistan has warned against linking Islam or any other faith with terrorism, while calling for fully analyzing and understanding the threat in all its complexities. “The global campaign against terrorism cannot be reduced to a slogan slandering Islam or any other religion or race,” Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi told the UN Security Council on Monday, as she reiterated Pakistan’s commitment to do its part in eliminating the scourge of terrorism.

EDITORIALS AND OPINION

Greater South Asia, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 2²⁵

After India’s decision to pull out of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit in September last year, it is now shamelessly attempting to block the appointment of a Pakistani diplomat as the next secretary general of the regional body on ‘procedural grounds’. SAARC has been fraught with internal rifts, and the future of the body remains uncertain in the face of blatant hostility displayed by India. Sadly, this is the first time in SAARC’s eventful history that it is moving towards a standoff over this issue.

AfPak again, Cyril Almeida, *The Dawn*, February 12²⁶

²³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1314507/ttp-provides-core-fighting-group-for-is-us-general>

²⁴ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/186252-Pakistan-warns-against-linking-Islam-with-terrorism>

²⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/02-Feb-2017/greater-south-asia>

²⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1314218/afpak-again>

*THE Americans are at it again. Troop surge in Afghanistan, policy review on Pakistan, alternating between threatening and bribing us to 'do more'. It's like it's 2009 again. The problem is that it's not. It's 2017 and the Americans may be about to screw it up for us — again, though perhaps in a new way. [...]*The Trump AfPak review is doubly damning because it's back to the future after years of White House disengagement. Obama may ultimately have reversed himself on withdrawing all US troops from Afghanistan, but it was long obvious that he had no real interest in the area. That drift allowed other outside powers to increase their interest in Afghanistan — some with the explicit support of the US (India), some with ambivalent American support (China) and some, arguably, by the US dropping the ball (Russia).

Here's the thing, though: the Obama years happened. By coming in and starting a military-led debate on Afghanistan that sounds so familiar, the Trump administration is confirming what most outside powers in Afghanistan already suspect: US policy in Afghanistan is somewhere on the spectrum between not-interested and stale. That creates an incentives problem. The only realistic peaceful solution in Afghanistan is a negotiated settlement between the Taliban and the Afghan government. [...]Raheel tried and failed to change our Afghan policy. In his early days, Bajwa could attempt the same: a policy review, if not a reversal. It makes sense to change some things on Afghanistan. But there are far too many hawks on Afghanistan here to navigate a policy review while also coming under pressure from the US to fit its stale and unworkable agenda. More of the same by a US administration towards Pakistan will only increase the odds of more of the same from Pakistan on Afghanistan.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

37 brigadiers made major generals, *The Nation*, February 10²⁷

In a major development, 37 Brigadiers of Pakistan Army including 9 from Army Medical Corps were promoted to the rank of Major General on Thursday (February 8). According to ISPR, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Qamar Javed Bajwa, chaired promotion board meeting and approved for promotion 37 Brigadiers including 9 from Army Medical Corps to the rank of Major General. It said those promoted include Brigadier Nauman Zakria, Brigadier Kanwar Adnan Ahmed Khan, Brigadier Syed Aamir Raza, Brigadier Tariq Zameer, Brigadier Tahir Gulzar Malik, Brigadier Shahid Mahmood, Brigadier Muhammad Asghar, Brigadier Khalid Saeed, Brigadier Ayman Bilal Safdar, Brigadier Sarfraz Muhammad, Brigadier Rafiq Ur Rehman, Brigadier Inam Haider Malik, Brigadier Salman Fayyaz Ghani, Brigadier Sarfraz Ali, Brigadier Muhammad Aniq Ur Rehman Malik, Brigadier Muhammad Asim Malik,

²⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/10-Feb-2017/37-brigadiers-made-major-generals>

Brigadier Fayyaz Hussain Shah, Brigadier Shahid Nazir, Brigadier Zia Ur Rehman, Brigadier Zahid Mahmood, Brigadier Azhar Iqbal Abbasi, Brigadier Tariq Mahmood, Brigadier Ahsan Gulrez, Brigadier Shahid Imtiaz, Brigadier Rizwan Afzal, Brigadier Usman Haq, Brigadier Syed Shahab Shahid and Brigadier Nauman Ahmed Hashmi. Those approved from Army Medical Corps include Brigadier Tahir Sardar, Brigadier Mrs Nigar Johar, Brigadier Irfan Ai Sheikh, Brigadier Liaquat Ali, Brigadier Iftikhar Ahmed, Brigadier Imran Fazal, Brigadier Tahir Iqbal, Brigadier Tariq Mahmood Satti and Brigadier Tahir Khadim.

Army to support mainstreaming of FATA, *The Express Tribune*, February 12²⁸
Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa has said Pakistan Army will continue its efforts to bring the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) into the mainstream as per tribal aspirations. According to the military's media wing, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Gen Bajwa visited South Waziristan and spent a day with the troops deployed at forward posts. Interacting with the troops, the COAS lauded their bravery and commitment, which enabled re-establishment of the state's writ in the tribal belt. He also acknowledged and appreciated resolve of tribal brethren and the local administration for supporting the army's effort, which he said will continue.

COAS lauds strategic forces, *The Nation*, February 14²⁹
While appreciating operational preparedness and training standards of the Strategic Forces, Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Monday (February 13) underlined the centrality of Pakistan's Strategic Programme against specific threat to the country's security. The Army Chief stated this during his visit to the Strategic Plans Division (SPD) here he was given a detailed briefing on various facets of Pakistan's Strategic Programme.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Military's Stance On JuD, Editorial, *The Dawn*, February 2³⁰

The government's strong crackdown against the Jamaatud Dawa (JuD) and its sister organisation the Falah-i-Insaniyat Foundation (FIF) was surprising as it is, but the military's explicit comments in support of this action are more surprising still. Military spokesman Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor said that the crackdown "was a policy decision taken by state institutions keeping in view the national interest," at his first press conference, while answering a question

²⁸ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1324624/army-support-mainstreaming-fata-per-local-aspirations-coas/>

²⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-Feb-2017/coas-lauds-strategic-forces>

³⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/02-Feb-2017/military-s-stance-on-jud>

about detention of Hafiz Saeed and four others a day earlier. *In a rare mention of the JuD and in no uncertain terms, the military has thrown its weight behind the move and shown that it and the civilian government are on the same page – this was a combined decision, taken for national interest.* Considering that the Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan had already announced the move to the general public and that the civilian law enforcement agencies had carried out the arrests, it would have been very easy for the military to do nothing and let the government shoulder the responsibility. However, they have acted swiftly to shore up the government and furthermore, the words they have used are strong ones. This raises hope that the action is a concrete one that will be followed through. [...] *This time as well, he has been detained under Section 11-E of the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 that allows the government to keep terrorism suspects in custody for 90 days. This means that if the government fails to seriously build a case against him, Hafiz Saeed would be back on the streets in 3 months. With the government and military on the same page, this now seems like an unlikely scenario.*

Naval Exercise For Peace, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 12³¹

The Pakistan Navy kicked off its multinational AMAN 2017 naval exercise on February 10, involving 37 countries with nine nations—Australia, China, Indonesia, Turkey, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan and Russia—participating with warships or aircraft. The United States has sent four ships, China has dispatched three warships and Russia has sent an anti-submarine ship to take part in the Pakistan Navy-led international exercise, a highly successful event that sees more countries joining in every other year. Turkey and Russia are participating for the first time in the exercise this year, indicating that both countries are seeking closer defense ties with Pakistan. Turkey and Pakistan have signed several key defence contracts in 2016; Turkish state-owned defense contractor was awarded a contract for the upgrade of three attack submarines currently in service with the Pakistan Navy. It also exported military training aircrafts to Turkey.

[...]The Indian navy, on the other hand is trying to downplay apprehensions over the international naval exercise, terming it as a “normal maritime activity” every nation was entitled to. Pre-empting the exercise, the Indian Navy started conducting a 30-day naval drill two weeks ago, terming it as the Navy’s largest military exercise ever, involving over 60 ships, five submarines, and 70 aircraft. Pakistan is only carrying out the exercise for the purpose of peace and cooperation, as the theme of the event indicates, and urges India to see it as such.

³¹ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/12-Feb-2017/naval-exercise-for-peace>

ECONOMIC ISSUES

Debt fears overblown, says Dar, *The Dawn*, February 1³²

In a long and detailed rejoinder to his critics, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar says that the country's debt profile is in fact improving, and "predictions of doomsday scenario for Pakistan" regarding public debt are overblown. To highlight the point, he provides a comparison in growth of debt between his government and that of his predecessor. "[T]he previous government contracted net debt of around Rs7,833 billion during its term (2008-13)," he says, which averages out to "an annual compounded growth rate of 19.0 per cent." By contrast, the same figure for the three years of his own government is 9.75pc, he says, providing detailed breakdowns of the figures for each of the periods. "The Net Debt-to-GDP ratio as at June 2008 was 53.1pc, which had increased to 60.2pc in June 2013 when the present government assumed office. During the period from July 2013 to June 2016, the Net Debt-to-GDP ratio has remained unchanged at 60.2pc, thus showing no further deterioration, which is a clear sign of improved debt sustainability," the statement goes on to add.

Pakistan's net public debt crosses Rs18 trillion mark, *The Dawn*, February 6³³

Pakistan's net public debt has crossed the Rs18.28 trillion mark, rising about 35pc during the tenure of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). This was reported by the ministry of finance, in response to a question from Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) MNA Shahida Rehmani in the National Assembly last week. "The volume of net public debt as on Sept 30, 2016 was Rs18,277.6 billion," the ministry's response said. Total public debt stood at Rs13.48tr at the end of fiscal year 2012-13 — almost three years ago. The major contribution to the increase in net public debt came from an almost 40pc rise in domestic debt, which rose from Rs8.686tr at the end of 2013 to Rs12.14tr at the end of the first quarter of the current fiscal year (FY 2016-17).

Chinese company agrees to lay railway tracks, *The Dawn*, February 6³⁴

A Chinese company has agreed to lay railway tracks in different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Official sources cited by Radio Pakistan said that the agreement includes railway lines between Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral, Dera Ismail Khan and Kohat, and also connect Mardan to Saidu Sharif. Trade and business activities are expected to flourish in the province upon completion of the railway track.

³² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1311926/debt-fears-overblown-says-dar>

³³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1313037/pakistans-net-public-debt-crosses-rs18-trillion-mark>

³⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1312897/chinese-company-agrees-to-lay-railway-tracks-in-parts-of-kp>

CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

Financing burden of CPEC, Ishrat Hussain, *The Dawn*, February 11³⁵

[...] *The total committed amount under CPEC of \$50 billion is divided into two broad categories: \$35bn is allocated for energy projects while \$15bn is for infrastructure, Gwadar development, industrial zones and mass transit schemes. The entire portfolio is to be completed by 2030.* Therefore, the implementation schedule would determine the payments stream. Energy projects are planned for completion by 2020, but given the usual bureaucratic delays, it won't be before 2023 that all projects are fully operational. Under the early harvest programme, 10,000 MW would be added to the national grid by 2018. Therefore, the disbursement schedule of energy projects is eight years (2015-2023). Infrastructure projects such as roads, highways, and port and airport development, amounting to \$10bn, can reasonably be expected to be concluded by 2025, while the remaining projects worth \$ 5bn would spill over into the 2025-30 period.

SECURITY SITUATION

TERRORISM

TTP publishes Vogue-style magazine, *The Express Tribune*, February 13³⁶

In an effort to promote its ideology and update supporters about its latest actions in the country, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has brought out a high gloss, Vogue-style magazine, The Express Tribune has learnt. The first issue of Mujjallah magazine was published in November 2016 and reportedly distributed in Pakistan sometime in December last year. The inaugural issue had 56 pages. The second issue printed a couple of weeks ago is slicker and thicker and has more pages than the first one. The paper quality of the magazine is at par with that of Vogue, besides having fine printing quality. The cover carries bulletins of the banned outfit's activities in Pakistan and also features reports on how to make bombs and other explosives.

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA AND FATA

IS pamphlets create panic, *The Nation*, February 10³⁷

Militant group Islamic State has threatened to target Shias living in certain northern areas of Pakistan. Hundreds of pamphlets containing threats have allegedly been distributed by IS in the Kurram Agency, threatening attacks in specific tribal areas, reported Voice of America (VOA) on Thursday (February

³⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1313992/financing-burden-of-cpec>

³⁶ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1324956/propaganda-tool-ttp-publishes-second-issue-vogue-style-magazine/>

³⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/national/10-Feb-2017/is-pamphlets-create-panic-in-kurram-agency>

8). *"We have achieved our goals in Afghanistan and are now ready to confront Shia renouncers in Pakistani's tribal areas," the IS pamphlet in Pashto said.* Although distributed in Sunni majority areas too, the pamphlet threatens to target Shias in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), as well as in Dera Ismail Khan and Hangu cities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The areas mentioned in the pamphlet are home to a considerable Shia population. VOA could not independently confirm the authenticity of the pamphlet. A local government official acknowledged, on the condition of anonymity, that pamphlets were distributed, but said the government is investigating whether these came from IS or others. He said the areas mentioned in the pamphlets are under government control. "We are on the front line of the war against militancy and, therefore, our security is tight," the official added.

5 terrorists held in Khyber, *The Nation*, February 10³⁸

Frontier Corps personnel conducted a search operation against terrorists, abductors, narcotic-smugglers, extortionists and criminal gangs in different areas of Shakas, Khyber Agency. *During the two-day search operation, five hardcore terrorists and 15 suspects were apprehended.* Weapons and ammunition have also been recovered during the operation. The aim of the operation is to improve the law and order situation in Khyber Agency, Peshawar and surrounding areas, stated in a press release issued on Thursday. It was also stated that curfew was imposed in Shakas and surrounding areas during the operation.

Two Swat children killed in hand grenade mishap, *The Dawn*, February 13³⁹
Two children were killed and another critically wounded in an accidental grenade explosion near Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Swat Valley on Sunday (February 12), officials said. The children of a shepherd family were playing in a mountainous village in Buner district when they found the hand grenade and accidentally set it off, local government official Zariful Maani told AFP. The two brothers, aged nine and 10, died, while their seven-year-old female cousin is in critical condition, Maani said.

Taliban bomb kills three FC soldiers, *The Nation*, February 14⁴⁰

Three personnel of Frontier Corps martyred in a blast of improvised explosive device in South Waziristan Agency. Official sources said the Frontier Corps (FC) men were on routine patrol on Sunday night (February 12) at Toikhula area of the agency, when an explosive device planted by Taliban militants exploded near their vehicle. Resultantly, three FC soldiers embraced Shahadat while the

³⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/10-Feb-2017/5-terrorists-held-in-khyber>

³⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1314340/two-swat-children-killed-in-hand-grenade-mishap>

⁴⁰ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-Feb-2017/taliban-bomb-kills-three-fc-soldiers-in-swa>

vehicle was also destroyed. The dead bodies were rushed to the nearby combined military hospital (CMH). Security forces cordoned off the area and started search operation in the area. "Three FC soldiers were martyred in a bomb blast during a patrol in South Waziristan," a senior security official told AFP, adding that the bomb had been detonated remotely.

Five killed in Mohmand Agency, *The News*, February 15⁴¹

A suicide attack on Wednesday (February 15) at the Mohmand Agency headquarters has killed five people including three levies personnel and injured several others. According to the ISPR, the public relations wing of the military, two suicide bombers riding a motor bike attacked the office of Political Agent, one of them blew himself at the entrance while the other was shot dead by the guards posted there.

BALUCHISTAN

Two FC men injured in attack, *The Express Tribune*, February 12⁴²

At least two Frontier Corps (FC) soldiers were injured when unidentified men opened indiscriminate fire on their vehicle in Turbat on Saturday (February 11). According to details, the two soldiers were headed in the direction of Herok area of Turbat, some 60 kilometres away from Turbat city when the assailants shot at them. The FC personnel on duty retaliated with gun fire but the assailants who were riding on a motorcycle managed to flee. The local administration rushed the injured to a hospital. The victims have been identified as Naeem and Muhammad Hashim.

PUNJAB

Terror returns to Lahore, *The Nation*, February 14⁴³

As many as 14 people including six police died and over 80 wounded yesterday when a suspected suicide bomber blew himself up at a protest in Lahore, shattering the growing sense of security of a teeming city of over 10 million. Hundreds of people - mainly chemists and pharmacists - had gathered at the Faisal Chowk on The Mall to stage a protest against Punjab government's plans to further regulate the medical sector. The 'Taliban' bomber apparently targeted some high police officials who were negotiating with the protesters to get the major city artery unblocked. Lahore's chief traffic officer (DIG) Syed Ahmed Mobeen and newly-appointed SSP (Operations) Zahid Akram Gondal died on the spot in the attack that came shortly after sunset. A traffic policeman, two officers of the elite police force and an officer of the Dolphin Squad also lost their lives in the terror attack.

⁴¹ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/186477-Six-killed-in-Mohmand-Agency-suicide-attack>

⁴² <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1324165/ambush-two-fc-men-injured-attack/>

⁴³ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-Feb-2017/terror-returns-to-lahore>

SINDH

Six 'militants' gunned down in Karachi, *The Nation*, February 9⁴⁴

Sindh Police on Thursday (February 8) claimed they had killed six militants, including one involved in the attack on Peshawar's Army Public School, reported Waqt News. Malir Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rao Anwar said the alleged militants were killed during a security operation in Gadap Town. He added that the men belonged to Al Qaeda and the Taliban militant organisations. The alleged militants were responsible for attacks on security personnel in different areas of Karachi. "They were killed in heavy exchange of firing," said Anwar.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Terror In Lahore, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 14⁴⁵

Pakistan had been enjoying a period of calm with a drop in terrorist attacks as well as optimistic outlooks for economic and social development. It was the turn of the worst yesterday when a bomb blast ripped right through the heart of Lahore, and hours later there was a blast in Quetta as well. [...] There was confusion as there always is, about the purpose of the attack. Was it to derail CPEC, payback for military operations against terrorists? Was it to scare the police, or was it to derail plans to host the PSL tournament final? The answer is the same as it always is, it was to create fear, and cause maximum pain to the Pakistani populace. The incident occurred as hundreds of chemists protested a new law near the Punjab Assembly building at a busy time in the day. A spokesperson for Jamaat ur Ahrar (JuA), a faction of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan claimed responsibility for the attack. [...] *The army and security forces must decimate these groups, without mercy, starting with the likes of JuA and the TTP, and ending with any one who threatens, by force or speech, the writ of the state and the life of a Pakistani citizen.*

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

Pakistan hopes to resume talks with India, *The Dawn*, February 6⁴⁶

Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal hopes that there will be a better environment to pursue peace talks with India after the state assembly elections in the neighbouring country. Talking to Voice of America, he said that by March these state elections would be over and there would be a better environment to pursue peace talks with India. In reply to a question, he said: "I think we should be mature enough to think beyond that; India and Pakistan

⁴⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/09-Feb-2017/six-militants-gunned-down-in-karachi>

⁴⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/14-Feb-2017/terror-in-lahore>

⁴⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1313043/pakistan-hopes-to-resume-talks-with-india-after-state-elections>

have to live together, we cannot change our geography, and we must think in terms of peace.” Mr Iqbal said Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif wanted peace in the region and Pakistan had actively pursued peace with Afghanistan and India because “our development depends on peace in the region”. Answering a question, he said: “In our elections India is no issue, nobody speaks about India, nobody does any India-bashing, but somehow we feel that the electoral dynamics in India are still quite sensitive to Pakistan-bashing. So whenever you have an electoral process in India, the government takes a certain hawkish position towards Pakistan.” Terming India’s reaction to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project ‘knee-jerk’, the minister said New Delhi needed to look at CPEC as an opportunity to enhance regional cooperation. “If you are doing trade through CPEC you can reach out to any destination in China from this area. So we are very hopeful and we continue to work to normalise our relations with India,” Mr Iqbal said.

Nation reaffirms solidarity with Kashmiris, *The Dawn*, February 6⁴⁷

The Kashmir Solidarity Day was observed across Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Sunday (February 5) with a pledge to seek a resolution of the issue in accordance with United Nations resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people. A minute of silence was observed at 10am across the country. In the federal capital, members of the Kashmir Committee of the National Assembly, led by MNA Ijazul Haq, visited the offices of the UN and handed over a memorandum to its resident representative. The memorandum addressed to the UN secretary general called on the world body to ensure that Kashmiris got their right to self-determination. Rallies, seminars, walks and meetings were held in Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Sargodha, Multan, Faisalabad, Sukkur, Larkana, Dera Ismail Khan, Sialkot, Chiniot, Vehari, Sadiqabad, Nawabshah and in various cities in AJK, Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Tariq Naqash in Muzaffarabad adds: Kashmiris and Pakistanis formed symbolic human chains at various points linking AJK with Pakistan to express solidarity with the people of India-held Kashmir. [...] In Muzaffarabad, the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) held a rally on Bank Road, with women and children among the participants. They also formed a symbolic chain to express solidarity with the Kashmiris across the Line of Control. Member of Legislative Assembly Abdul Rashid Turabi, the AJK JI chief, led funeral prayers in absentia of two men gunned down by Indian troops in Sopore on Saturday (February 4).

⁴⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1313058/nation-reaffirms-solidarity-with-kashmiris>

India has built a 'secret nuclear city', *The Nation*, February 9⁴⁸

Pakistan expressed serious concern, today, over building of a secret nuclear city and the accumulation of nuclear stockpiles through development of inter-continental ballistic missiles by India, which poses strategic imbalance in South Asia. Foreign Office spokesperson, Nafees Zakaria, said India has been conducting tests on inter-continental Indian measures would disturb strategic balance in the region. He said India is involved in acts of terrorism in Pakistan and Islamabad has provided evidence to the UN about Indian interference. There is a fear that the Indian reactors not mandated by the safeguards might be used clandestinely for plutonium production and the existing stockpiles might be diverted to a military programme at a subsequent stage, DG Disarmament at the Foreign Office Kamran Akhtar said. Pakistan earlier this week said it wants India to bring its entire civilian nuclear programme under the safeguards laid out by the International Atomic Energy Commission.

US may take 'fresh look' at its India F-16 plan, *The Nation*, February 10⁴⁹

US defence firm Lockheed Martin wants to push ahead with plans to move production of its F-16 combat jets to India, but understands President Donald Trump's administration may want to take a "fresh look" at the proposal. With no more orders for the F-16s from the Pentagon, Lockheed plans to use its Fort Worth, Texas plant instead to produce the fifth generation F-35 Joint Strike Fighter that the United States Air Force is transitioning to. Lockheed would switch F-16s production to India, as long as the Indian government agrees to order hundreds of the planes that its air force desperately needs. Trump has criticised US companies that have moved manufacturing overseas and which then sell their products back to the US. In his first few weeks in office, he has pushed companies, from automakers to pharmaceutical firms, to produce more in the United States.

Militarisation of Indian Ocean, *The Express Tribune*, February 12⁵⁰

Maritime security challenges in the Indian Ocean have grown and are affected by 'key variables' such as militarisation, involvement of major and extra-regional powers, and non-traditional security threats due to the presence of several conflict zones in the region, the prime minister's top foreign policy aide said on Saturday (February 11). *"The militarisation of the Indian Ocean region, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, increased missile capabilities and power projections by foreign militaries are a threat to peace in the Indian Ocean region. And this trend is likely to intensify in the coming years,"* said

⁴⁸ <http://nation.com.pk/national/09-Feb-2017/india-has-built-a-secret-nuclear-city-and-repeatedly-violated-ceasefire-agreements-foreign-office>

⁴⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/10-Feb-2017/us-may-take-fresh-look-at-its-india-f-16-plan>

⁵⁰ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1324266/militarisation-indian-ocean-threat-peace/>

Sartaj Aziz. “And to add to this complex scenario, today, the Indian Ocean faces many non-traditional security challenges and threats, including piracy, illegal fishing, human trafficking, drug smuggling, trafficking of weapons, maritime pollution and climate change.” [...]Pakistan formally kicked off the fourth Aman-17 exercise at the Pakistan Navy Dockyard on Friday. Thirty-six countries are participating in the exercise – nine of them are participating with their assets, including ships, aircraft, and special operating forces with Russia participating for the first time.

3 soldiers killed in Indian firing, *The Nation*, February 14⁵¹

Three Pakistani soldiers were martyred on Monday (February 13) in unprovoked firing by the Indian forces at Thooob Sector near Bhimber on the Line of Control (LoC), said ISPR. The soldiers who embraced Shahadat are Naik Ghulam Rasool, Naik Imran Zafar and Sepoy Imam Bukhsh. According to the ISPR, Indian forces violated ceasefire in Thooob Sector near Bhimber. However, it said, they were responded effectively and there are reports of Indian casualties as a result.

Kulkarni’s 3-point formula, *The Nation*, February 14⁵²

Sudheendra Kulkarni, head of a leading Indian think tank, has presented a three-point formula to re-start the stalled peace dialogue between India and Pakistan. [...]Kulkarni viewed that since Kashmir was the stumbling block in the way of peace process between the two countries, India should have no hesitation in accepting it a core dispute which could only be resolved by addressing the concerns of both India and Pakistan and as per aspirations of the Kashmiri people. India must stop oppression in its part of the Kashmir which had brought a bad name to it. He questioned how could Kashmir be its “Atoot aung” when it was in pain and agony. He said the dialogue should be unconditional and must continue even if there is some interruption due to any reason or incident. Selective dialogue will not work, he said. [...]He suggested that both countries should assure each other that they are not a threat to each other: India does not pose a threat to Pakistan’s unity and stability and vice versa. The dialogue should be held while recognising that unity and stability of both countries is inviolable. India must accept that Balochistan is integral part of Pakistan. Likewise, India should not use Indus Water Treaty to create fear in Pakistan. [...]Kulkarni believed there was a promising development on the face of South Asia in the form of CPEC. India, Pakistan and China should establish a trilateral mechanism to benefit from this trade route. The Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar (BCIM) corridor linking southern

⁵¹ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-Feb-2017/3-soldiers-killed-in-indian-firing-across-loc>

⁵² <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-Feb-2017/kulkarni-s-3-point-formula-for-pak-india-talks-revival>

China with these countries should be connected with the CPEC which is an opportunity to think big. Pakistan is the next power house in South Asia and India will regret if it did not grab this opportunity. Pakistan is a new area of hope and growth in the global context when US is not hopeful and Europe is declining.

Pakistan summons Indian envoy, *The News*, February 14⁵³

Pakistan Foreign Office on Tuesday (February 14) summoned Indian Deputy High Commissioner to lodge strong protest against ceasefire violations at the Line of Control by Indian security forces. Director General South Asia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Faisal conveyed Pakistan's anguish to Indian India diplomat J.P. Singh, and also handed him over a protest dossier against ceasefire violations. The dossier stated that Indian had been breaching ceasefire agreement since 2003. Indian troops also resorted to unprovoked firing in Bhimbar sector on Monday as a result three Pakistani soldiers were martyred. "The deliberate targeting of civilians and soldiers is indeed condemnable and contrary to human dignity and international human rights and humanitarian laws," it added.

India detains entire Hurriyet leadership, *Daily Times*, February 15⁵⁴

The 'puppet authorities', in a fresh crackdown, arrested - or put under house detention - almost all resistance leaders to prevent them from leading a march towards south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Wednesday (February 15). Call for the march was given by the joint resistance leadership, comprising Syed Ali Gilani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Muhammad Yasin Malik, to express solidarity with the families of the youth who were martyred by Indian forces on Sunday. Muhammad Yasin Malik was arrested by a police, who raided his Maisuma residence in Srinagar, this morning. The occupation authorities put Syed Ali Gilani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Shabbir Ahmad Shah, Agha Syed Hassan Al-Moosvi Al-Safvi, Muhammad Ashraf Sehrai, Qazi Yasir, Mukhtar Ahmad Waza, Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori, Omar Aadil, Firdous Ahmad Shah and other Hurriyet leaders under house arrest or in custody. The authorities imposed curfew and other restrictions across the Kashmir Valley to foil the march towards Kulgam district. All roads leading to Kulgam had been closed and nobody was allowed to move.

⁵³ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/186256-Pakistan-summons-Indian-envoy-protests-against-ceasefire-violations>

⁵⁴ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/15-Feb-17/indian-police-detains-entire-hurriyet-leadership-in-kashmir>

India-Pak owe Kashmiris a lasting solution, *Daily Times*, February 15⁵⁵
Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) Working President Omar Abdullah said that both India and Pakistan owe Kashmiris a credible peace process that would result in a sustainable solution of the Kashmir Issue. While addressing a seminar, Abdullah said, "India and Pakistan should stop trying to beat each other at diplomatic fora and claim victory. Kashmiris have suffered a lot due to the fact that India and Pakistan have failed to initiate a comprehensive and sustained peace process that would simultaneously facilitate dialogue at both external and internal fronts." He added that Kashmiris deserve the uninterrupted and undivided attention of both India and Pakistan with a demonstrated intention and political will to resolve the political issue. He added that diplomatic engagement between New Delhi and Islamabad had been defined by inconsistency and ambiguity. He said, "While successive governments in India and Pakistan have engaged with each other on Kashmir, we have achieved little as glimmers of hope have turned into despair as all such initiatives were derailed."

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Hari Singh's legacy, A. G. Noorani, *The Dawn*, February 4⁵⁶

[...] *A widespread belief, certainly not without basis, was that the killing was in pursuance of an organised plan of genocide under which Hindu officials high and low freely distributed arms and ammunition to communalist groups like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).* In Jammu, thousands of besieged Muslims were made to march to their deaths, under the escort of state forces who themselves actively participated in the bloodshed — an event that took place only a few miles from the Maharaja's 'palace'. Jammu was then a Muslim majority province. It ceased to be one. Singh was complicit with the RSS. In December 1947, prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru complained to Patel that "I have received very disturbing news ... about the way the arms that we have sent for him have been kept and distributed to RSS people. I am inclined to think that Mahajan sympathises with these activities and perhaps helps them." The reason for the diversion then was to facilitate ethnic cleansing. Interestingly, it was not Sheikh Abdullah but Hari Singh who first threatened secession. "Sometimes I feel that I should withdraw the accession that I have made to the Indian Union. The Union only provisionally accepted the accession," he reminded Patel in January 1948.

Hari Singh was banished from Kashmir on Sheikh Abdullah's demand. On June 20, 1949, he signed a proclamation in New Delhi devolving all his powers to

⁵⁵ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/15-Feb-17/india-and-pakistan-owe-kashmiris-a-lasting-solution-omar-abdullah>

⁵⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1312540/hari-singhs-legacy>

his son, Karan Singh, and then left for Bombay. His subsequent complaints were silenced by a withering letter from Nehru in 1952. He wrote, "At the time of that crisis you left Srinagar at the dead of night for Jammu. Many of your officers followed your example and [Kashmir] was left without leadership or means of defence, insofar as official authority was concerned ... You refer repeatedly to what you consider your rights and the rights of your dynasty. There is little mention in this letter of the rights of the people ... Even that formal place that you occupy will be endangered. That place would ultimately be made secure only if you had the confidence and the affection of your people. Since you have lost this confidence and affection, the right also goes ... I have seen no evidence of any great sympathy on your part for these people, no desire to help in their distress."

The Neighbour's Challenge, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 4⁵⁷

With Jamaat-ud-Dawa Chief Hafiz Saeed's arrest already being a controversial topic, India could not miss the opportunity to say that Pakistan does not have the will to try and convict him. However, any action taken by the Pakistani state is and must be for the protection of Pakistan, rather than to stop the wagging tongues of neighbours. [...]After a long history of India created conflict and Indian aggression, the matter of Kashmir has become even more emotionally charged for Pakistanis. Pakistan does not need a Hafiz Saeed to be reminded of Kashmir. The love for Kashmir has nothing to do with Hafiz Saeed or the JuD but is a sentiment held by the masses. Why does a smaller state, with fewer resources, more internal conflict as well as a questionable reputation internationally, get under India's skin? The answer is Kashmir. If India was the land of well-being that it professes to be, there would be no need for Kashmiri's to fight for liberation. Pakistan is the only country that has pointed out that, behind the façade of Bollywood and Modi's social media strategy, lies a state that marginalises its minorities, and violently represses dissent.

Kashmir solution, Editorial, *The Dawn*, February 5⁵⁸

ON this Kashmir Solidarity Day, with the people of India-held Kashmir continuing to suffer from the latest bout of violence and repression by the Indian state, some long-standing realities need to be reiterated. *First, India will never be able to bury the Kashmir dispute — not inside IHK and not in its relationship with Pakistan. To the proud, defiant and infinitely courageous people of IHK, a message of solidarity is important: whatever the rulers and policymakers in the region choose to do or not do, oppressed people everywhere share a common bond — the quest for dignity, basic rights and self-*

⁵⁷ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/04-Feb-2017/the-neighbour-s-challenge>

⁵⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1312744/kashmir-solution>

determination are fundamental to human existence. The state of India has long been in denial of core human values in IHK, but its denial cannot go on forever – the rightful and intrinsically just demands of the people of IHK will ultimately prevail. Second, India's stubborn refusal to engage with Pakistan on the Kashmir dispute under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a policy doomed to failure. For parochial, domestic reasons, Mr Modi may be in denial of the centrality of the Kashmir dispute to the normalisation of ties between the two countries, but that cannot undo the legal and moral basis of Pakistan's demand for a fair and just solution to the Kashmir dispute. The framework of an eventual settlement is readily available and the initiation of publicly acknowledged or backchannel talks can build on the last pragmatic and sensible approach to conflict resolution: the four-point agenda of the Pervez Musharraf era. While the specifics can change, the four-point agenda was based on the right principles: a phased, progressive, mutually acceptable military de-escalation in the disputed region with a simultaneous, coordinated ramping up of a people-centric governance structure.

[...]Domestically, the reliance on the religious right and extremist networks to keep the Kashmir dispute front and centre of the national consciousness has been a historical mistake. Mainstream politics based on a mainstream acceptance of human rights and self-determination and rooted in mainstream sections of society is the only sensible approach. The more the Kashmir dispute is allowed to become the exclusive remit of right-wing and violent groups, the more the inherent justness of the Kashmir cause will be obscured. The external benefits will be clear too if Pakistan can present to the world a rational and peaceful case and if the powerful human dimension of the suffering in IHK is made central to the message of why the Kashmir dispute needs the outside world's attention.

Cosmetic Change, Editorial, *The Nation*, February 6⁵⁹

It looks like Jamaat-ud-Dawa is an organisation out of ideas. *Hafiz Saeed's preventive detention was punctuated by the usual protests, albeit with numbers much thinner than initially expected. And when that failed, the organisation resorted to another tried and tested tactic, renaming both Jamaat-ud-Dawa and its humanitarian wing, the Falah-i-Insaniyat foundation to Tehreek-e-Azadi-e-Jammu and Kashmir (TAJK). To assume that merely changing the name would make the government forget, is beyond preposterous, and if it does, then all the criticism of the government not following through on its promise to provide security to Pakistan is true and warranted.* Sadly, the artist previously known at JuD has already worked once before to pull wool over the eyes of the state. JuD was once Lashkar-e-Taiba

⁵⁹ <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/06-Feb-2017/cosmetic-change>

(LeT) and Hafiz Saeed was its founder. [...]By identifying Hafiz Saeed and the JuD as proponents of mischief, it is highlighting Pakistan's policy on the Kashmir issue, extending moral and diplomatic support for the Kashmiri right to self-determination. JuD, LeT, TAJK or whatever else the organisation chooses to call itself, the government should continue on its path to place Pakistan above censure in the international community. The brave people who made and implemented this policy towards JuD must ensure that they are not taken in by a simple rebranding.

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

India should act on Yashwant Sinha report,

Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, February 3⁶⁰

...It is crystal clear from the Indian thinking and the statements of the Indian leaders that all its war related preparations are directed against Pakistan. The Indian political leadership has started implementing the "Cold-Start doctrine". It has stationed new weapons along the LoC and the working-boundary. The increase in the India's defence budget has increased chances of a nuclear war. ...

India has never accepted the creation of Pakistan. *It wants to annex Pakistan and fulfill its dream of "Akhand Bharat". The bone of contention between the two countries is Kashmir. Kashmir has been a victim of India's arrogance. ...* Pakistan's stand has been clear. Former Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha has some suggestions for India. In his report on Kashmir *Sinha has asked the Modi Sarkar that for resolving the issue it should talk to Kashmiris. The report has mentioned that the Kashmiris have been facing difficulties for a long time. They think that India has cheated them. India should not take them for granted. The youth of Kashmir has become rebellious and does not fear death. Modi should pay attention to Sinha's suggestions and listen to Kashmiris. He should talk to Pakistan for resolving the issue. ...*

India cannot afford a total war with Pakistan

Adeeb Jawadani, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, February 8⁶¹

There are chances of India waging war against Pakistan, for diverting attention from its increasing internal tensions and with the encouragement of US and Israel. ... India has violated the 2003 ceasefire agreement 945 times. 45 Pakistani soldiers and 64 civilians were killed by Indian firing along the LoC. Indian

⁶⁰<http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2017-02-03/page-14/detail-7>

⁶¹<http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2017-02-08/page-15/detail-7>

troops do not even spare school children. India claimed to have carried out “surgical strikes” in ‘Azad Jammu and Kashmir’ but could not prove it. Still, the Home Minister of India has warned of more “surgical strikes”. This threat should not be ignored and we need to be prepared for all contingencies.

... It is tragic for the people of India that a person like Narendra Modi, an enemy of peace and humanity, is their Prime Minister. He has killed thousands of Muslims. This enemy of Pakistan and humanity can throw the two countries into total war. According to BBC, Modi government and his advisors are emphasising on war with Pakistan. They think that the current international environment favours them.

... According to a US think tank, Pakistan is not indifferent to these developments. It retains nuclear superiority over India. Pakistan, which has 120 nuclear warheads at the moment. It will soon become the third largest nuclear weapons carrying country in the world. India has stopped producing its nuclear war heads. ... Given the fact that France, Britain and China are unlikely to increase their nuclear warheads, Pakistan will become third largest nuclear country of the world, after the US and Russia. India cannot afford to fight a war with the third largest nuclear country of the world.

Indian Ulema declared Tarek Fatah *wajib-ul qatil*

Report by Nazrul Islam Chowdhury, *Ummat*, February 8⁶²

Indian religious *Ulema* have issued a fatwa against Tarek Fateh. He has been declared *wajib-ul-qatal*, i.e., fit to be killed. The *ulema* said that the Narendra Modi government has specifically invited Pakistan-born Canadian Tarek Fateh for anti-Islam propaganda, which is being aired by Zee News.....Talking to journalist Shoaib Daniyal, Tarek said that there was no divinely ordained Shriah. It was made by people and then labeled as Islamic.

Tarek Fateh is supported by the Rajasthan government since 2016. RSS, BJP, India Foundation, and similar other organisations have been raising funds for him. It's not surprising, therefore, that these forces have supported the 'gharwapsi' and other anti-Muslim policies. ETV has revealed that Tarek Fateh is being used by BJP against Muslims, for making Hindus happy, and abolishing the Muslim Personal Law Board. The statement of the Indian law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad that India will impose uniform civil code after the ongoing assembly elections need to be seen against this background. Tarek Fateh did a programme in support of disappeared Salman Haider and his companions in which he desecrated Islam and the Muslim heroes.

⁶²<http://ummat.net/2017/02/08/news.php?p=story2.gif>

Indian Conspiracy against CPEC and China,

Mohammad Aslam Khan, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, February 10⁶³

Conspiracies against China in Pakistan are in full swing at the moment. ...*Raheel Sharif's departure, at this juncture, has resulted in an apparent change in the military's behavior, which has emboldened pro-India-forces in Pakistan, who are now saying that Hafiz Saeed was arrested at China's behest,* and now China will declare Masood Azhar a terrorist. ... The reality is that Hafiz Saeed is in contact with the Chinese embassy. He has supported the CPEC and China's growing relationship with Pakistan. *One expert on China told this columnist that China had no issues with Jamaat-ud-Dawa and its activities. In Pakistan, however, there are people and groups who are hell bent to get Pakistan declared a terrorist state.* It is tragic that many such people have got patronage and support of the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The secretary of *Jamaat-ud-Dawa*, Yahya Mujahid, has said that some people have openly started building pressure on China to stop it from supporting Pakistan at the United Nations Security Council. The real target remains the CPEC. India has been trying hard to sabotage it. ... Efforts are being made to reduce Pakistan to the status of Nepal or Bhutan in the region.....

Corps Commanders' Conference: Indian Aggression Threat to regional peace, Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, February 10⁶⁴

The timing for the 199th Corps Commanders' conference was crucial. India has been persistently firing and shelling along the LoC and the working boundary. ... *India has been flexing its muscle for the last 8 to 9 months. This is meant to divert attention away from the crisis in Kashmir, which is hurting India....* We need to expose India's crimes in Kashmir and show its real face to the world. Till the time India's real face is exposed, it will keep endangering regional peace, supported by Israel and the US. India needs to be told emphatically to stop violating the ceasefire. It should be told that Pakistan will not tolerate such aggression anymore. ...

SECRET NUCLEAR CITY IN INDIA

Indian secret nuclear city 1200kms away from Karachi,

Report Najamul Hasan Arif, *Ummat*, February 11⁶⁵

The Indian is building a secret nuclear-city in Karnataka. This city in the town of Challakere, spread over 9 thousand acres, is 1200 kilometers away from Karachi. India has been planning to nuclearise its submarines and this nuclear-

⁶³<http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2017-02-10/page-6/detail-9>

⁶⁴<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newsrc=issues/2017-02-10/6346/p1001.gif>

⁶⁵<http://ummat.net/2017/02/11/news.php?p=story1.gif>

city is dedicated to such effort. In future, this city may be used to make hydrogen bomb. The construction for the nuclear-city began in 2010. It is about to be operationalised. The Pakistan's missile, whose range is between 1,500 to 2,500 kilometers, will not be able to destroy this Indian secret nuclear facility.

... Challakere will be India's first nuclear city. India has constructed nuclear facilities in more than two dozen places. On the coastal areas, six to seven nuclear facilities have been constructed in the states of Gujarat, Mysore, Bengal and Karnataka.....

Indian Secret atomic city exposed; regional peace at stake

Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, February 11⁶⁶

India never accepted the creation of Pakistan. It was the first to go nuclear. *Pakistan's six nuclear tests were in response to the Indian nuclear tests. This had shaken New Delhi and Tel Aviv. Pakistan's nuclear programme is one of the safest in the world, as accepted by all the great powers including the US.* Pakistan has no bad intentions against any country, including India. In contrast, India has become a highly unsafe nuclear power in the world. It is building a secret nuclear city in the state of Karnataka. ...

Indian secret nuclear-city and hydrogen bomb

Ishtiaq Baig, *Jang*, February 15⁶⁷

India wants to double its reserve of about 100 nuclear warheads. It also wants to make a hydrogen bomb. *According to nuclear physicist Dr. Abdul Qadir, Pakistan has enough nuclear weapons to destroy all major cities of India five times over. Speaking to this writer, Dr. Qadir said: "I have been kept out of the nuclear programme and defence system of the country for the last sixteen years. I have no idea what Pakistan's nuclear policy is at the moment! If India is making hydrogen bomb, Pakistan should have one as well. I am ready to offer my services for that".* Zulfikar Ail Bhutto had said that "We will eat grass but will become bomb". Same attitude is required for making a hydrogen bomb.

ON KASHMIR

Kashmir Committee united on banning Indian Movies,

Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, February 7⁶⁸

Kashmir Committee has finalised its recommendations: One of the recommendations is a well-thought-out move to ban the Indian cultural attack and screening of the Indian movies. *It also made it clear that all issues with*

⁶⁶<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newsrc=issues/2017-02-11/6423/p1001.gif>

⁶⁷<http://e.jang.com.pk/02-15-2017/karachi/pic.asp?picname=267715>

⁶⁸<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newsrc=issues/2017-02-07/6106/p1001.gif>

India need to be linked with Kashmir. ... The jihad in Kashmir is not for caste or creed: it's ideological and a war for the survival of Pakistan. If India thinks that it can retain Kashmir for a long time by force, it is mistaken. ... India has violated human rights and endangered peace in Kashmir by using force on innocent Kashmiris. ... The advisor to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs has said rightly that when referendum could be held in Scotland and England, why not in Kashmir! ...

Message from a daughter of Kashmir to our rulers,

Editorial, *Ummat*, February 7⁶⁹

..The statement of the daughter of Kashmir and the head of the *Dukhtaran-e-Millat* Asiya Andrabi should open the eyes of our rulers. *Andrabi has said that on the one hand Pakistan was observing "Kashmir Solidarity Day" and on the other it was arresting people who had been supporting Kashmir cause (read Hafiz Saeed)...* Andrabi asked the Pakistani rulers that how much more blood Kashmiris need to shed to show that they want to live with Pakistan? ... *Expressing her disappointment over the arrest of Hafiz Saeed, the brave daughter of Kashmir has said that Pakistani rulers should raise the Kashmir issue at the international level with full strength.* Pakistan should leave no stone unturned to resolve Kashmir according the UN Resolutions.

When Nawaz Sharif drives Doval's car...

Naveed Masood Hashmi, *Daily Ausaf*, February 15⁷⁰

Former prime minister of 'Azad Jammu and Kashmir' *Sardar Attique Khan criticised prime minister Nawaz Sharif and said that when the prime minister of the country "will be driving the car carrying an enemy like Ajit Doval, the matter cannot be taken lightly"*. Sardar Attique praised Maulana Fazul-ur-Rehamn and said that we should learn from his leadership. ... *It was interesting to notice during the conference that there was no sign of unhappiness regarding the work of Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman. All the controversies regarding him heading the Kashmir Committee vanished. It appeared as if it was propaganda against him by some people. ...*

The amir of Ansar-ul-Ummah Jammu and Kashmir Moulana Mohammad Farooq Kashmiri said that Kashmir could not be resolved without Jihad.....

Is freedom movement in Kashmir fasaad?

Naveed Masood Hashmi, *Daily Ausaf*, February 28⁷¹

Let's accept that Nawaz Sharif loves India: He does not criticise it. *Whatever India does against Pakistan or in Kashmir, there is no lessening in his love for*

⁶⁹<http://ummat.net/2017/02/07/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

⁷⁰<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2017-02-15/6737/p1005.gif>

⁷¹<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2017-02-28/7740/p1005.gif>

India. But Nawaz Sharif should not humiliate the voters by saying that "he had won the votes on the promise of establishing relations with India". People pose a basic question: when the "Sharifs" have not forgotten the treatment that they were subjected to by General Pervez Musharraf, how come they forgot the lives of over one lakh Kashmiris so easily! They forgot the hundreds of Pakistanis killed by the Indian RAW agents. We shall tender an apology to Allah for voting Nawaz Sharif to power!..

Who can stop Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and the people of Pakistan from supporting freedom movement in the occupied Kashmir? Kashmir is jugular vein of Pakistan. *The people of Kashmir have demonstrated their love for Pakistan by waving Pakistani-flags in the protests time and again. Pakistan will not allow these pseudo-intellectuals to conspire against these innocent people.*

ON FOREIGN POLICY

For peace in Afghanistan, Hizb-i-Islam reaches out to Taliban,

Report Mohammad Qasim, *Ummat*, February 6⁷²

Hizb-i-Islami has started talking to Taliban for bringing peace to Afghanistan. The Haqqani Network is being contacted. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has been preparing for holding meeting with former *mujahideen*. *Hizb-i-Islami* Chief, Hekmatyar said that if they succeeded in this, withdrawal of American troops from the country would be easier. The leaders of *Hizb-i-Islami* also agreed that the former *mujahideen* should be contacted in this regard. **Significantly, they agreed that for the stability of the country, the northern alliance should also be brought into the loop.** They also agreed that Pakistan, where the members of *Hizb-i-Islami* stayed for over forty years, and Iran, which hosted Afghan refugees for decades, should be asked to help in this endeavour.

Meanwhile, Maulvi Haibatullah Akhundzada has set up a political wing of Taliban that will look into the political affairs alone. It was for this purpose that Haibatullah had transferred the "shadow governors" of 14 districts and deputy governors of 32 districts recently. The decision was taken in the Afghan Taliban *Shura* four weeks ago. It was decided that Taliban in Afghanistan would work on two fronts. Thus, political, organizational, media and social welfare groups were separated from the military section. Former Taliban ambassador to Pakistan *Mullah Zaeef was offered the job of heading the commission, which he refused. Now, Wakeel Ahmed Muttawakil's name is being considered for the job. According to Ummat's source, Mullah Umar's brother Mullah Abdul Manan can also be appointed as the head and Tayyab Agha as deputy of the commission.* After the success of re-establishing relations with Russia and Iran,

⁷²<http://ummat.net/2017/02/06/news.php?p=story2.gif>

Maulvi Haibatullah decided to form a political commission which will further improve the relations with the outside world.

Saudi Arabia expels 39 thousand Pakistanis,

Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, February 9⁷³

Saudi Arabia has been maltreating Pakistanis and arresting them on petty and inconsequential issues. Even before (this decision to expel 39 thousand), lakhs of Pakistanis have been expelled from Saudi Arabia. The role of skillful and hardworking Pakistanis in the development of Saudi Arabia cannot be overlooked. ...

Ever since Saudi-India relations improved, Saudis have been expelling Pakistanis and replacing them with Indians. The Saudi leadership should know that Jews and Christians cannot be friends of Muslims. In the past, Saudi Government has supported Pakistan when needed and Pakistan has never disappointed the Saudis. In case there is a threat to the holy places, Pakistanis will rise to the occasion and guard them. ... If some Pakistanis are involved in unlawful activities, why are all Pakistanis punished for that? Dozens of Pakistanis are languishing in Saudi jails on terrorism charges even today. While the fact is that Indians, Sudanese, Egyptians, Yemenis and the citizens of other countries are more involved in such activities, which is overlooked. We hope that Saudi will address Pakistan's grievances.

US tries to foil Russian peace efforts in Afghanistan,

Report Mohammad Qasim, *Ummat*, February 11⁷⁴

America has started sabotaging Russian peace process in Afghanistan. Opposing the six-nation talks to be held in Moscow, the US administration has said that Russia and Iran are diplomatically supporting the Afghan Taliban. ... *According to a source, the Afghan Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani visited Russia recently and asked the Russia foreign minister for including India, Iran and Afghanistan in the earlier tri-partite group of Russia, China and Pakistan for bringing peace to Afghanistan. After consulting China and Pakistan, Russia agreed to the proposal and announced that talks will start in the middle of February. Later, Taliban also will be asked to join.*

Visa ban for Pakistanis travelling to the US...?

Tahir Jameel Norani, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, February 13⁷⁵

This is just the beginning; much more is coming. ... The policies of the US President Donald Trump are being criticised by many leaders across the world. The ban on the seven Muslim countries has generated a severe reaction as well.

⁷³<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2017-02-09/6271/p1001.gif>

⁷⁴<http://ummat.net/2017/02/11/news.php?p=story4.gif>

⁷⁵<http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2017-02-13/page-15/detail-5>

... *The American administration may not accept it, but the fact is that Islam is considered a threat in the US.* ... Given that the judge Mr. James Robert has temporarily cancelled the executive order, it has removed the threat looming over Pakistan for some time. However, our leaders should not be complacent. *In the past, Pakistan has had good relations with the US, for which, we have paid a heavy price in Afghanistan.* ... Today we have not only strained relations but also the tone of conversations has changed. Donald Trump will use some excuse for banning Pakistanis from traveling to the US. *If this happens, is the Pakistani government ready to raise the issue with the US administration? Pakistanis based in the US should be prepared for extra scrutiny in the coming days.*

A new alliance against Islam, Modi wants to be Netanyahu of South Asia

Dr. Zahoor Ahmed Azhar, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, February 23⁷⁶

The Zionist forces have identified Donald Trump as a malleable character and are finding him easy for using against the Muslim world. *Perhaps they have convinced Trump to make use of the Indian mule and Israeli donkey (shayad Trump ko Baharati khacher aur Israeli ghadhe per sawar hone ki laliah de chuke hain).* ... *The reality is that the Zionists are using Donald Trump and the US military for launching a war against the Muslim world which may be the last crusade. For this, they are riding on the Israeli and Indian shoulders. At the moment, there is also a friendly relationship between Narendra Modi and Benjamin Netanyahu.* The Muslims of West Asia are being labeled as terrorists. *Narendra Modi wants to become Benjamin Netanyahu of South Asia.* So that he can expel Kashmiris from their land, like Israel is doing with the Palestinians. ...

However, Narendra Modi's dream will never become true. *Pakistan has not only got nuclear weapons, numbering more than India, but it also has hydrogen bomb.* Our air, navy and land forces are determined to defend our country and they will teach Modi a lesson. As far as Trump is concerned, he has already been busted.

Afghanistan assures proper behavior: Will not fall into Indian trap

Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, February 23⁷⁷

... Pakistan and Afghanistan are at the receiving end of terrorism. Unfortunately, both the neighbouring Muslim countries blame each other for using terrorism against each other. If the facts, however, are analysed, *it becomes clear that Afghanistan is being used against Pakistan. Former US defence minister Cheuk Hagel accepted that RAW was making use of Afghan-territory for the purpose of destabilising Pakistan. Narendra Modi and Ajit*

⁷⁶<http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2017-02-23/page-14/detail-0>

⁷⁷<http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2017-02-23/page-14/detail-8>

Doval have accepted their role in creating disturbances in Pakistan. It is puzzling that the Afghan-rulers have always supported India. ...

Of late, however, Afghanistan is trying to act wisely. The Afghan and US senior officials have assured Pakistan that Afghanistan would not be allowed to be used against Pakistani interests. All those groups which are acting against Pakistan will face a "tough operation based on intelligence reports".
...Afghanistan will not fall into the Indian trap any more.

To end terror, keep a safe distance from America,

Editorial, *Jasarat*, February 20⁷⁸

For peace in their respective countries and in the region, both Pakistan and Afghanistan need to think seriously about pushing out the foreign troops. ...

As far as the recent terror attacks in Pakistan are concerned, few things are worth our notice. First, *whenever there is talk of negotiation with Taliban for peace in Afghanistan, either some Pakistan-based group carries out attacks in Afghanistan or some Afghan-group carries out attacks in Pakistan. In some cases, the US comes into picture through its attack on the leader of one group or the other. Predictably, the talks get derailed. Second, by coincidence, there is an increase in bomb blasts and terrorism activities, closer to the date of expiry of the dates for military courts and stationing of rangers in Sindh.*

ON TERRORISM

New wave of terrorism in Pakistan

Editorial, *Jasarat*, February 17⁷⁹

India is active in Afghanistan and is using the Afghan-territory for its own interests. Pakistani embassy in Afghanistan was attacked under the very nose of the Afghan security forces. Whenever there is any attack in Afghanistan, President Ghani blames Pakistan and ISI. Jamaat-ul-Ahrar was formed in Pakistan. But now it is entirely based in Afghanistan. May be, it is patronised by India; its earlier name was Ahrar-ul-Hind. ...

India promoting new wave of terrorism,

Editorial, *Jang*, February 17⁸⁰

The terror attacks in Peshawar, Mohmand Agency and Charsadda were quite predictable given the fact that India had been issuing statements that it would sabotage the CPEC project at every cost. For the purpose of diverting attention from its atrocities in Kashmir, India could even go farther than this.It is on record that apart from promoting terrorism in Pakistan, the neighboring

⁷⁸<http://epaper.jasarat.org/2017/02/20/karachi/co-401>

⁷⁹<http://epaper.jasarat.org/2017/02/17/karachi/co-401>

⁸⁰<http://e.jang.com.pk/02-17-2017/karachi/pic.asp?picname=268963>

country (India) lobbied hard for stopping cricket world cup being played in Pakistan in 2011. Now when the Indian army Chief has conceded that the problem in Kashmir is internal, we should be prepared for more terror attacks in Pakistan..... The patrons of the groups like TTP and Jamaat-ul-Ahrar are active for a long time and are supplying money and weapons to these groups. Sometimes, they are sending flocks of terrorists to Pakistan. The weapons confiscated in Karachi indicated that these were meant for big attacks. ... For meeting the security challenges, sceptics in our midst should shed their reservations about the National Action Plan, emergency courts, and death penalty.

New wave of terrorism ... what is the issue?

Saleem Safi, *Jang*, February 18⁸¹

No one seems to raise important and relevant questions: *Is Afghanistan responsible for the failure of NACTA? Is RAW responsible for not allowing merger of FATA with KP? Is America responsible for not reforming the religious schools in Pakistan? Is Donald Trump responsible for diverting CPEC to Punjab, away from its western route? Is India responsible for appointing a governor for KP who has bequeathed his authority to his sons? It is true that TTP, Jamaat-ul-Ahrar and Daesh are based in Afghanistan. But wherefrom do they get their ideas and mode of thinking-- that of suicide bombing-- from Afghanistan or Pakistan?*

.....New terrorism in Afghanistan may have linguistic and regional angles to it. Anti-Pakistan forces are trying to unite these elements and direct them against the state of Pakistan. ... Will the prime minister and General Bajwa prepare the environment for evolving a cohesive security policy for the country? If they can not, Pakistan will continue to be afflicted by terrorism.

OPERATION "RADD-UL-FASAAD"

Radd-ul-Fasaad need of the hour,

Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, February 24⁸²

Our arch-rival India chose a time to strike when our security forces started operation "Radd-ul-Fasaad" to clear the country from "residual" terrorists. In Punjab, the rangers have started their activities. It had given a sigh of relief to the countrymen that terrorism would be eliminated entirely from Pakistan. ... However, India could not bear the fact that normalcy was returning to Pakistan and economic development was quite noticeable. It conspired to carry out the Defence Z-Block blast to sabotage the Pakistan Super League final that was to be played in Lahore. Now the challenge for us is to hold the

⁸¹<http://e.jang.com.pk/02-18-2017/karachi/pic.asp?picname=269550>

⁸²<http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2017-02-24/page-14/detail-7>

final game of the PSL in Lahore. ... Operation "Radd-ul-Fasaad" has signaled to the terrorists that they will not be spared.

Radd-ul-Fasaad: Comprehensive, conclusive and extensive operation

Editorial, *Jang*, February 24⁸³

... *Operation Raad-ul-Fasaad has two new elements in it: One is to act against terrorism in Punjab and the other is to clean the whole country from terrorism. ...It needs to be kept in mind that whenever there has been action carried out against terrorists in Pakistan, some activities have been set off at the border with Afghanistan, along the LoC and at the Pakistan-India working boundary to divert our attention. Now, when Pakistan has decided to act tough against the terrorists in the country and Afghanistan was asked to cooperate in this venture, the Indian prime minister has sent a message for President Ashraf Ghani. It was sent to sabotage Pakistan-Afghanistan cooperation and to start a war between them. ...There are chances that India may increase attacks along the LoC and working boundary.*

INTERNAL POLITICS

Census and the reservations of the Baloch Nationalists,

Shabir Ahmed Lehri, *Daily Ausaf*, February 6⁸⁴

... The Baloch nationalists have expressed their reservations regarding the census, likely to begin in March 2017. Their demand is that before the census, the Afghan refugees should return to their country. *The number of Afghan refugees in Balochistan is expected to be 4 million. Out of this number, about 5.5 million have been able to get identity cards and other official documents by paying bribe or using some political influence. They are trying to be part of local population, which is not approved by the Baloch nationalists.* They fear that if census is carried out in the presence of Afghan refugees, the Baloch will become a minority. Therefore, they have been protesting against it.

The protests are led by former chief minister and head of the Baloch National Party Sardar Akhtar Mengal. ... The demands of Baloch nationalists are genuine. *Afghan refugees continue to pour into Balochistan. They have been doing business, engaged in other agricultural and commercial jobs. They are also involved in smuggling. Afghan-refugees are already in majority in the border areas of Chaman, Qila Abdullah, and other places have their strong presence as well. The economy of Quetta is controlled by Afghan refugees. There can be no denial that the loss of peace, killings and extremism in Balochistan are because of the refugees.* ... The local population is worried

⁸³<http://e.jang.com.pk/02-24-2017/karachi/pic.asp?picname=272799>

⁸⁴<http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newsrc=issues/2017-02-06/6043/1508.gif>

about losing their identity. They are further disappointed by the indifferent approach of the government.

FATA Merger: Now or Never

Saleem Safi, *Jang*, February 7⁸⁵

If FATA is not made constitutionally, politically, socially and administratively part of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province now, then it is not going happen ever.... It is first time that a committee set up by the government has propounded the idea of integrating FATA with KP. The opposition parties have given their support to it.

... The people opposing the move and demand FATA to be a separate province have vested interests in opposing it. They think that by forming a separate province, one of them will become the CM of the province. They need to know that if FATA would have been able to make progress as a separate entity, it would not be facing the problems that it is facing today. Talibanisation had swept Swat valley as well. However, just because it was part of KP, the situation could be restored within months.

Military leadership supports FATA merger in KP

Editorial, *Daily Ausaf*, February 14⁸⁶

(Similar editorials in *Ummat*⁸⁷ and *Jang*⁸⁸)

... Decisions regarding the people of FATA were taken by a government agent, which could not have been opposed. ... Now for the decision that FATA will be merged in KP, the opinion of the locals needs to be taken into consideration - whether they want this merger to take place slowly over 5 year or they want to retain their separate status. The government should act according to the constitution and avoid imposing any decision on the people of FATA that will make them angry. ... *It should be kept in mind that the tribes have been almost acting like an army and defending the country for seventy years without being paid for it. They have paid a high price for eliminating terrorism in the country, which cannot be ignored.*

TTP-Jamaat-ul-Ahrar alliance may lead to increase in terror attacks

Ummat Report, February 15⁸⁹

The alliance between *Tahreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (F)* and *Jamaat-ul-Ahrar* of Umar Khalid Khorasani has increased the threat of increased terror attacks in Pakistan. *According to one source, RAW and NDS are exploiting these groups,*

⁸⁵<http://e.jang.com.pk/02-07-2017/karachi/pic.asp?picname=263346>

⁸⁶http://epaper.dailyausaf.com/popup.php?newsrc=issues/2017-02-14/6660/p14_01.gif

⁸⁷<http://ummat.net/2017/02/14/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

⁸⁸<http://e.jang.com.pk/02-14-2017/karachi/pic.asp?picname=267223>

⁸⁹<http://ummat.net/2017/02/15/news.php?p=story2a.gif>

which are based in Afghanistan. India wants to increase the intensity of its proxy war against Pakistan by using these groups. Jamaat-ul-Ahrar released a video in which it has claimed to launch what it calls "operation Ghazi" to avenge the death of Ghazi Abdul Rashid in the Red Mosque operation. ...Jamat-ul-Ahrar was facilitated by India two years back in Afghanistan. ... According to one source, India wants to sabotage international cricket in Pakistan. For that the RAW has created a separate desk. Many innocent people were targeted in the Mall Road blast to sabotage the final of PSL in the country. Similar attacks have been carried out by RAW earlier, like last years' attack in Gulshan Park which was meant to scare away the West Indian cricket team which was due to visit Pakistan. ...

Targeting Hafiz Saeed is targeting Pakistan

Mohammad Aslam Khan, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, February 22⁹⁰

Whose language is Khawaja Asif speaking? *The Defence Minister is repeating the allegations of Narendra Modi against Hafiz Saeed. He is targeting Saeed for the latter's love and loyalty towards Pakistan. These are the allegations prepared by the US and India.* The allegation that Hafiz Saeed can be a threat to the society of Pakistan is baseless. ... Had I been present at the Munich Security Conference, I would have told the audience that Hafiz Saeed has no links with terrorism or extremism. He has spent his entire life teaching Islam and helping the poor. ... *Mr. Asif should not have said that Hafiz Saeed's arrest was in national interest. ... Hafiz Saeed's arrest is a punishment for his support to the Kashmiris. Hafiz Saeed was not a threat to Pakistan, but to India.* A man who loves Islam and Pakistan and was standing like a wall against the enemies is now being targeted under external pressure. ...

It is surprising that Nawaz Sharif has forgotten everything! *Mr. Sharif, Hafiz Saeed was a close friend of your father. He praised Hafiz till his last breath.* And today, the minister of defence calls him not only an enemy of the society, but a terrorist, following the Indian propaganda. ... Khawaja Asif said that we have committed mistakes in past. The mistakes were to reject the India's allegations which are now being accepted by you. But remember, this will embolden India to file a charge-sheet against you that will cost you a heavy price. ... *The spokesperson of JuD Yaha Mujahid said that the threat to Pakistan is not Hafiz Saeed but some people in the government.*

⁹⁰<http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/Lahore/2017-02-22/page-14/detail-9>

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Balochistan				
Turbat ⁹¹	12/2/2017	Two FC men injured	0	2
KP & FATA				
Swat ⁹²	13/2/2017	Two children killed	2	0
Mohmand ⁹³	15/2/2017	Five killed	5	*
Punjab				
Lahore ⁹⁴	14/2/2017	Terror returns Lahore	14	80
Sindh				
Karachi ⁹⁵	8/2/2016	Six militants gunned down	6	0

*Several Injured

⁹¹ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1324165/ambush-two-fc-men-injured-attack/>

⁹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1314340/two-swat-children-killed-in-hand-grenade-mishap>

⁹³ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/186477-Six-killed-in-Mohmand-Agency-suicide-attack>

⁹⁴ <http://nation.com.pk/national/14-Feb-2017/terror-returns-to-lahore>

⁹⁵ <http://nation.com.pk/national/09-Feb-2017/six-militants-gunned-down-in-karachi>