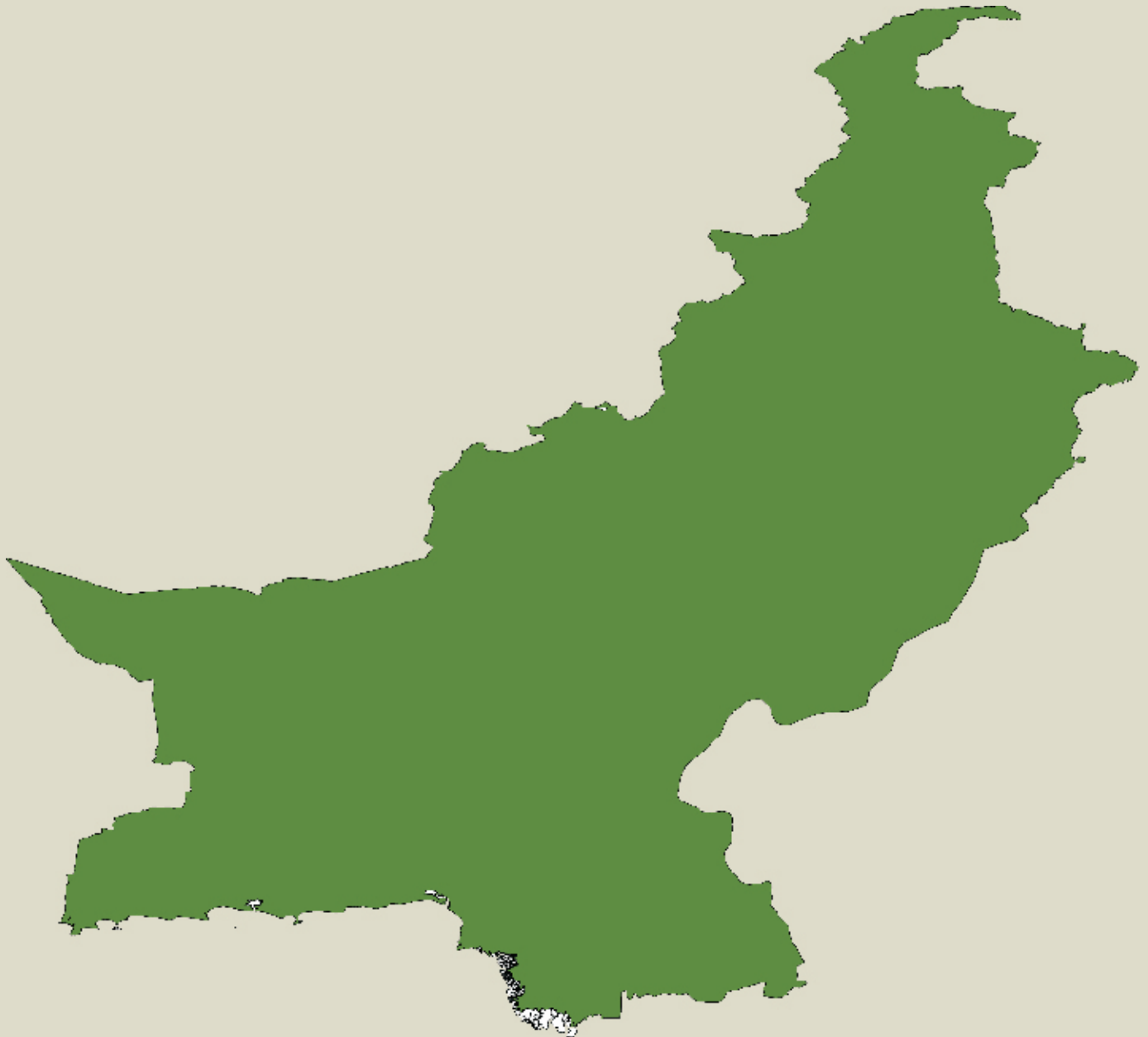


December 2013

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



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

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, JULY 2013

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ABBREVATIONS

BSA: Bilateral Security Agreement
BRP: Baloch Republican Party
CNNC: China National Nuclear Cooperation
DG: Director General
DGMOs: Directors General of Military Operations
DMG: District Management Group
ECP: Election Commission of Pakistan
EFF: Extended Fund Facility
ESCAP: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific
FIA: Federal Investigation Agency
GHQ: General Head Quarters
GSP: Generalized System Preferences
IMF: International Monetary Fund
ISAF: International Security Assistance Force
ISPR: Inter Services Public Relations
IWT: Indus Water Treaty
JI: Jamaat-i-Islami
KP: Khyber Pakhthunkhwa
MQM: Muttahida Qaumi Movement
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NAB: National Accountability Bureau
NADRA: National Database and Registration Authority
NSA: National Security Adviser
PAJCCI: Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industries
PBS: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PMO: Prime Minister's Office
PPP: Pakistan People's Party
PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
QWP: Quami Watan Party
SBA: Standby Agreement
SBP: State Bank of Pakistan
SC: Supreme Court
SDR: Special Drawing Rights
SMEDA: Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority
SRO: Statutory Regulatory Order
TTP: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Provincial Politics

Secrecy shrouds missing persons' appearance, *Dawn*, December⁸¹

On December 7, 2013, a day when the court usually does not hold proceedings, the defence ministry brought some of the missing persons before Justice Amir Hani Muslim to comply with the Supreme Court's directives, but with their faces covered in order to conceal their identity. But how many of the 14 ordered to be produced were brought to the court remained unknown. "Only six persons have been identified," Attorney General Muneer A. Malik told reporters after attending over four hours of in-camera proceedings.

Nawaz govt. using NAB for political retribution: Wattoo, *Dawn*, December⁹²

Pakistan Peoples Party's Central Punjab President Mian Manzoor Ahmed Wattoo said on December 9, 2013 that the federal government was using the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) for revenge purposes, adding that the country would only progress with the elimination of corruption.

Protest mode: The honeymoon is over, Imran tells government, *Express Tribune*, December¹⁵³

I and other Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf parliamentarians will appear in the Supreme Court on December 16, 2013 for a hearing regarding the verification of voters using thumb impressions in four constituencies," PTI chairman Imran Khan said on December 14. He was addressing a press conference at his residence.

He said the PTI was demanding a thorough investigation of rigging of the elections. On December 10, earlier he had threatened that if the government did not verify thumb impressions his party would be left with no option but to come on roads.

Provinces refuse to finance local bodies' elections, *Dawn*, December¹⁷⁴

Provinces have refused to meet the entire cost of local bodies' elections and declined to clear outstanding electricity bills of hundreds of billions of rupees without ascertaining their credibility. The two issues were discussed at the biannual (January-June 2013) meeting of the National Finance Commission presided over by Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar. The commission finalised half-yearly report for submission to parliament.

¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061224/secrecy-shrouds-missing-persons-appearance>

² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061484/nawaz-govt-using-nab-for-political-retribution-wattoo>

³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/645638/protest-mode-the-honeymoon-is-over-imran-tells-govt/>

⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074512/provinces-refuse-to-finance-local-bodies-elections>

Kalabagh Dam issue: PPP MNA warns of disintegration, *Express Tribune*, December 18⁵

The National Assembly was seen divided again on December 17, as the construction of the Kalabagh dam came under discussion in the lower house of parliament. Members from the ruling PML-N noted that Kalabagh dam was the only solution to the issues whereas the opposition pointed out that the controversial dam could 'disintegrate' the country. "If someone wants to disintegrate Pakistan, then the proposed dam should be built," said the Pakistan People's Party leader Mir Munawar Ali Talpur.

Rs250m budget for Sindh Festival, *Dawn*, December 20⁶

By taking 'seed money' from the Sindh government, Sindh Festival's total budget will be around Rs 250 million, said adviser to the chief minister of culture, Sharmila Faruqi, while unveiling the programmes that will be part of the project at a press conference on December 17.

JUI-F to stage dharna against K-P govt on Jan 26, *Express Tribune*, December 23⁷

JUI-F will stage a dharna against the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) government on January 26 outside the KP Assembly, *Express News* reported on December 23, 2013. "Several opposition parties will take part in the protest," said JUI-F deputy chief and former federal minister Maulana Attaur Rehman.

ANP for joint strategy to restore lasting peace, *Dawn*, December 23⁸

ANP has urged the leaders of Pakistan and Afghanistan to put their heads together to devise a joint strategy for restoring lasting peace in the militancy-stricken region. Addressing a ceremony held in connection with the first birth anniversary of Bashir Ahmad Bilour at Nishtar Hall in Peshawar on December 22, ANP leader Asfandyar Wali Khan advised the rulers of both the countries to stem the tide of terrorism through a comprehensive strategy.

Imran seeks transfer of electricity control to KP govt, *The News*, December 27⁹

PTI Chief Imran Khan asked the federal government again to hand over the control of electricity to the provincial KP government. Talking to media after inaugurating the Right To Information (RTI) office in Peshawar on December 26, Imran Khan said his provincial government would put an end to power theft after getting control of the power supply.

KP sets conditions for Pesco takeover, *Dawn*, December 31,¹⁰

In a quick response to the prime minister's decision to ask the KP government to take over control of the electricity distribution system in the province, the PTI-led provincial government came up on December 30 with proposals to take over the 'integrated power management system'.

⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/647083/kalabagh-dam-issue-ppp-mna-warns-of-disintegration/>

⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074703/rs250m-budget-for-sindh-festival>

⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/649446/jui-f-to-stage-dharna-against-k-p-govt-on-jan-26/>

⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075847/anp-for-joint-strategy-to-restore-lasting-peace>

⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-131885-Imran-seeks-transfer-of-electricity-control-to-KP-govt>

¹⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077462/kp-sets-conditions-for-pesco-takeover>

South Waziristan development funds go waste, *Dawn*, December 31¹¹

On paper South Waziristan Agency (SWA) has received Rs 4 billion development funds over the last five years, but on ground there is little to be seen where such a huge amount was spent in the tribal area. The Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (Safron) headed by retired Lt Gen Abdul Qadir Baloch has initiated an exercise to determine if the funds had been used for any developmental activity.

Peace building measure: Govt plans to disarm militias in Balochistan, *Express Tribune*, December 31¹²

Following a meeting in Islamabad, the government has resolved to disarm all armed groups in Balochistan, as part of a 'smart and effective security policy' outlined by Balochistan's Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik and Interior Minister Nisar Ali Khan. The policy was devised as a counter-measure to the previous government's move to allow groups to arm themselves as a form of protection against militants.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

US sees no long-term impact of current KP situation, *Dawn*, December 5¹³

The State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf said at the daily briefing on December 4 "We favor shipping cargo via Pakistan because of the cost. And hopefully I don't anticipate that there will be any long-term impact to our retrograde movement because of the current situation,".

Chuck Hagel departs after meeting Nawaz, army chief, *Dawn*, December 9¹⁴

Pentagon chief Chuck Hagel left Pakistan after a brief visit during which he held talks with Nawaz Sharif and the country's new army chief General Raheel Sharif on December 9. In the first visit by a US defence secretary in nearly four years, Hagel flew from Kabul to Islamabad as Washington sought to defuse tensions over controversial US drone strikes and Islamabad's role in Afghanistan.

General Raheel Sharif visits LoC, *Dawn*, December 10¹⁵

General Raheel Sharif visited the troops deployed in forward locations along the Line of Control (LoC) on December 10.

Sharif seeks better ties with Europe, *Dawn*, December 11¹⁶

Nawaz Sharif said on December 10 that Pakistan was looking forward to enhancing its cooperation with its European partners in important areas, including trade, investment, energy, infrastructure development, education and human resource development.

¹¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077457/south-waziristan-development-funds-go-to-waste>

¹² <http://tribune.com.pk/story/652497/peace-building-measure-govt-plans-to-disarm-militias-in-balochistan/>

¹³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060656/us-sees-no-long-term-impact-of-current-kp-situation>

¹⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061477/chuck-hagel-departs-after-meeting-nawaz-army-chief>

¹⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061699/general-raheel-sharif-visits-loc>

¹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061769/sharif-seeks-better-ties-with-europe>

Ex-servicemen seek Musharraf's military court trial, *Express Tribune*, December 16¹⁷

Some retired officers of the armed forces stepped into the Lahore High Court to rescue him from the upcoming trial for high treason. National Ex-Servicemen Society, a body of retired military men, filed a petition in this regard before the Lahore High Court. Major (r) Moeenuddin Qureshi, the Punjab president of the society and secretary general Major (r) Habibur Rehman Meo filed the petition. Both of them are practicing lawyers. The petitioners told the court that all the alleged unconstitutional acts of November 3, 2007 were taken by General (r) Pervez Musharraf while he was the chief of army staff. They said Musharraf should be tried by a military court under Section 31 and Section 59 of Pakistan Army Act for the crime of mutiny and insubordination of the Constitution.

National Assembly adopts resolution against Quader Mollah hanging, *The News*, December 17¹⁸

On December 16, Monday, the Pakistan National Assembly passed a resolution voicing concerns over the hanging of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami leader Abdul Quader Mollah. The resolution was tabled by MNA Sher Akbar Khan offering condolence with the family of Mollah. The lower house of the parliament passed the resolution with majority, demanding the Bangladeshi government to end cases against the Jamaat's leaders and refrain from resurrecting issues of 1971.

TTP dismisses talks, vows retaliation against 'planned operation', *Dawn*, December 18¹⁹

Dismissing the concept of peace talks immediately after Pakistan government's announcement of using force as a last resort, the Taliban said on December 17, they had information that plans were already under way for a military operation, adding the insurgents were ready for battle. "Like previous governments this one is a puppet of the United States. It's powerless and dollar-hungry," said Shahidullah Shahid, a TTP spokesman. "They should happily launch a military operation against us. We have seen their military operations in the past and would like them to start this long-awaited operation," he said defiantly.

Strategic dialogue with US to resume in Feb: Aziz, *Dawn*, December 19²⁰

The strategic dialogue between Pakistan and the US, suspended in 2010, will resume by February in the perspective of post-2014 situation in the region after the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan.

President honours army chief, JCSC head with Nishan-e-Imtiaz, *Express Tribune*, December 20²¹

On December 20, President Mamnoon Hussain honoured newly appointed army chief General Raheel Sharif and Chairperson Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Rashad Mehmood with the Nishan-e-Imtiaz (military) award. The ceremony took

¹⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/645993/ex-servicemen-seek-musharrafs-military-court-trial/>

¹⁸ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-130579-National-Assembly--adopts-resolution-against-Quader-Mollah-hanging->

¹⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074670/ttp-dismisses-talks-vows-retaliation-against-planned-operation>

²⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074975/strategic-dialogue-with-us-to-resume-in-feb-aziz>

²¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/648203/president-honours-army-chief-jcsc-head-with-nishan-e-imtiaz/>

place at the Aiwan-e Sadr in Islamabad and was attended by civil and military leaders including Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

PTI holds rally against price hike, *Dawn*, December 23²²

The PTI, Balochistan chapter, said that the provincial government over the past six months had failed to deliver, especially on the issues of education and health, and added that the ruling coalition had no programme for the welfare of people.

High level appointments made in Army, *Dawn*, December 23²³

Army Chief General Raheel Sharif made six high level command postings across Pakistan. Most of the positions were given to recently promote three star generals, Army's Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) announced.

Lt Gen Javed Iqbal has been appointed as Corps Commander Bahawalpur. The post went vacant after Lt Gen Zubair Hayat was appointed as strategic plans division head last week.

Lt Gen Zamirul Hasan— *Adjutant General at GHQ, Rawalpindi.*

Lt Gen Obaidullah Khan— *Commander Army Strategic Force.* He was recently promoted as a three star general. Prior to this he worked as Inspector General Frontier Corps Balochistan where he came under fire for alleged human rights violations and was subsequently changed.

Lt Gen Ikramul Haq— *Inspector General Training and Evaluation at the GHQ,* the position earlier held by General Raheel Sharif.

Lt Gen Zahid— *Commander Army Air Defence Command*

Lt Gen Tariq Jilani— *Chief of Logistics Staff at the (GHQ),* the position was vacant after resignation of Lt Gen Haroon Aslam.

China commits \$6.5 billion for nuclear project in Pakistan, *Express Tribune*, December 24²⁴

China reportedly committed \$6.5 billion to finance the construction of a major nuclear power project in Karachi as it sought to strengthen ties with Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif broke ground on the \$9.59 billion project last month but officials provided few details of how they planned to finance it. Financing documents seen by Reuters showed China National Nuclear Cooperation (CNNC) has promised to grant a loan of at least \$6.5 billion to finance the project which will have two reactors with a capacity of 1,100 megawatts each.

More to Pak-US ties than just drones, says FO, *Dawn*, December 27²⁵

Without specifically naming the United States, the Pakistan Foreign Office on December 26 said that the issue of drones would not overshadow the country's

²² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075826/pti-holds-rally-against-price-hike>

²³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075898/high-level-appointments-made-in-army>

²⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/649908/china-commits-6-5-billion-for-nuclear-project-in-pakistan/>

²⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1076627/more-to-pak-us-ties-than-just-drones-says-fo>

foreign relations despite a UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution which last week called for making drone attacks compliant with international law. ” Pakistan and United States have a relationship which is not just about Afghanistan or the US presence in Afghanistan. Our relationship will continue”, the spokesperson said.

Drone protests isolating Pakistan: Sharif, Dawn, December 28²⁶

Nawaz Sharif sounded on December 27 an implied warning to his political rivals engaged in anti-drone protests against pushing the country into isolation in the international arena and said his government desired peace and friendship with other countries.

"The whole army is with me," defiant Musharraf says, Dawn, December 29²⁷

Pakistan's former military ruler Pervez Musharraf on December 29 denounced treason charges against him as a “vendetta”, and said he had the backing of the country's powerful army.

PTI, PPP workers clash over Bilawal House barricades, Dawn, December 30²⁸

Workers and supporters of the PPP and PTI were engaged on December 29 in a rare fracas on the street outside the barricaded Bilawal House after a controversy over the razing of a longstanding walled security surrounding the former president's house after Bilawal in his Dec 27 speech in Garhi Khuda Bakhsh derided Imran Khan for siding with Taliban militants.

Nawaz asks Samiul Haq to help with peace talks, Express Tribune, December 31²⁹

In his attempt to revive the process of peace talks with the TTP and its affiliates, Nawaz Sharif asked Samiul Haq to help in bringing the militant groups to the negotiation table.

Editorials and Opinions

Sindhi Culture Day, Daily times, December 10³⁰

Sindh is a land that has its roots in the Indus Valley Civilisation and its rich heritage resonates with the verses of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, Lal Shahbaz Qalander and Sachal Sarmast. The Sindhi Culture Day, also called Ekta (Unity) Day, has been celebrated for the last five years on December 8. It had its origins in the Sindhi people's response to criticism of former president Asif Ali Zardari for wearing a Sindhi topi (cap) even on official occasions. Since then, it is a day marked to show solidarity between the Sindhi-speaking people the world over. People wear the colourful ajrak (shawl) and topi, the two symbols of Sindhi civilisation and culture. Countless rallies, song and dance programmes and various cultural events were

²⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1076875/drone-protests-isolating-pakistan-sharif>

²⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077140/the-whole-army-is-with-me-defiant-musharraf-says>

²⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077245/pti-ppp-workers-clash-over-bilawal-house-barricades>

²⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/652921/nawaz-asks-samiul-haq-to-help-with-peace-talks/>

³⁰ http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2013\12\10\story_10-12-2013_pg3_1

<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/10-Dec-2013/sindhi-celebrations>

organised on the day. Almost all political parties held programmes of commemoration. Even the MQM joined in the celebrations.

Pakistan should break out of surrogate foreign policy syndrome, Kaiser Bengali
Dawn, December 10³¹

The landmark agreement between the US and its allies and Iran on the nuclear issue is a regional and global game changer. These fundamental changes imply that Pakistan too may need to rethink its regional policy parameters. From the 1950s, Pakistan trapped itself in a 'surrogacy syndrome' and accepted US patronage, which reached its peak during the 1980s under Gen Zia, and continued under Gen Musharraf. The fact is that Pakistan's foreign policy has now lost all semblance of coherence or direction. *Its foreign policy has been completely India-centric and managed on parameters fixed in concrete.* It is like a boxer whose feet are glued to the ground and who, as a result, cannot make the moves to tackle the oncoming punches. Having abandoned, de facto, the demand for a plebiscite in Kashmir, *Pakistan no longer has any Kashmir policy other than to try to bleed India*; a policy that has failed to hurt India, but is bleeding Pakistan instead. Rather, its policy of patronising and using terrorist proxies as foreign policy tools has made it suspect in the eyes of almost every government (including that of most Muslim countries) and lost it respect. This includes Iran and, to an extent, even China. Pakistan may claim to have made sacrifices for Afghanistan, but Pakistanis are detested by almost every segment of the Afghan population. On account of their post-2001 betrayal, even the Afghan Taliban does not trust Pakistan anymore. *Pakistan stands friendless regionally and globally.*

Problematic ties: Chuck Hagel's warning, Editorial, Dawn, December 11³²

US Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel came to Islamabad (on December 9) and essentially warned that disruptions of the NATO supply route through Pakistan could ...imperil US assistance to Pakistan. Yesterday, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif claimed his government is working urgently to address the terrorism threat inside Pakistan. Also yesterday, parliament passed a unanimous resolution calling upon the government to end drone strikes inside Pakistan. Three small episodes in the span of 24 hours, but each linked to the broader problem in Pakistan-US ties. Much is said, sometimes about convergences, sometimes about disagreements, by both sides, but neither side is willing to do what is necessary to stabilise a problematic but crucial relationship.

Impunity must end: Missing persons, Dawn, December 12³³

The Supreme Court's judgement on December 10 stated that intelligence agencies could not detain people without sharing information about their whereabouts with

³¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061606/an-incoherent-foreign-policy>

³² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061827/problematic-ties-chuck-hagels-warning>,
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/643738/tough-talk/>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/10-Dec-2013/dazed-and-confused>

³³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1062047/impunity-must-end-missing-persons>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1073989/dangerous-proposals-draft-bill-on-missing-persons>

their relatives. [It] is the latest in a series of events that have lifted the lid off the state within a state that exists in Pakistan. As the bench pointed out, apart from laws in the federally and provincially administered tribal regions, no legal cover was present in the country that sanctioned the confinement of people without authority. The judgement also observed that the army had taken away 35 detainees from the Lakki Marwat internment centre, but only seven individuals had been produced before court. The apex court's remarks strengthen the view that the security establishment deals with elements it views as threats beyond the pale of the law. ..In a state that considers itself a democracy, this is unacceptable.

Census go-ahead, Dawn, December 17³⁴

Reports indicate that the prime minister has given the go-ahead for the much-delayed sixth census.....It is essential that Pakistan has a proper database of its population not only to ensure equitable distribution of the country's resources, but also to enable proper representation in the legislatures. The census is a constitutional requirement and has political implications.

Power grab, The News, December 17³⁵

Not satisfied with its sudden, possibly unlawful, removal of Nadra chairman Tariq Malik, the government has now decided to hand over administrative control of the agency to the Election Commission of Pakistan. The ECP and Nadra do have complementary duties, including collaboration on the upcoming local government elections, but that certainly does not mean that the two entities should be run by the same authority. This is a naked power grab by a government that was not happy that Nadra was trying to identify fingerprint ballots in constituencies where the PML-N is accused of being the beneficiary of rigging.

Vitriol on Bangladesh streets, Daily times, December 21³⁶

Strong anti-Pakistan protests have wracked Bangladesh for the past two days now in reaction to the response emanating from Pakistan after the execution of Abdul Quader Molla... on war crime charges dating back some 42 years. When the execution took place, the National Assembly in Pakistan passed a resolution condemning the hanging, with the PTI and JI here leading the chorus. The protests have become so venomous that effigies of PTI leader Imran Khan and the Pakistani flag were burned in the streets. *The political leaders in Pakistan need to get their house in order. Interfering in the decisions and policies made by another country, especially one that holds decades old grudge, will lead to just such a volatile reaction.* It is unfortunate that anyone holding the Islamist trump card, be they a preacher or a murderer, seem to

³⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1074542/census-go-ahead>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/647367/census-concerns/>
³⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-220619-Power-grab>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1075435/governments-indecisiveness>

³⁶ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/21-Dec-2013/vitriol-on-the-streets>

get the backing of our politicians. We are jeopardising our bilateral relationship with a fellow South Asian Association Regional Cooperation (SAARC) country. Some \$ 2 billion have been invested by Pakistan in Bangladesh and our businessmen are getting jittery. We are putting money, friendship and economic ties aside to offer our good grace to a man who has been charged with killing hundreds during the 1971 war.

Unapologetic Pakistan, Babar Sattar, *Dawn*, December 23³⁷

We have just proved that not only are we still unapologetic over the horrific crimes we perpetrated in 'East Pakistan' but are also smug about such bigotry. ..the treatment meted out to Bengalis by Pakistan Army, and the private militias it raised and sponsored (Al Badr, Al Shams and Razakars) to enforce the state's writ in East Pakistan in 1971, was heinous and barbaric. By asking who started the rape and murders and whether Mukti Bahini was more vicious or the Pakistani Army, we confirm that the bigoted mind-set that led 56 pc of Pakistanis to carve out Bangladesh to protect their rights is still thriving in Pakistan. This is alarming not just because the resolution passed by the National Assembly has sullied our relationship with Bangladesh and added fuel to fires already raging there, but because the same mind-set is responsible for keeping Balochistan ablaze and for Baloch youth going missing.

ECP's independence appreciable, *Express Tribune*, December 21³⁸

Even though the Sindh government tried all means to get the local government (LG) elections delayed, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) did not pay heed to its request. It upheld the Supreme Court's orders in the matter and insisted that the LG elections will be held across the province on January 18 next year. *This refusal to bend under the government's delaying tactics shows that the ECP is developing into a strong institution*, which is capable of imposing its decisions on the authorities. If allowed to maintain its strength and neutrality, we will see in the future, an institution that is capable of conducting polls that are free from all political influences and incidents of rigging.

LG polls and issues on the horizon, *Dawn*, December 22³⁹

After a prolonged period in which the country had no elected third tier of government, it appears that all four provinces will soon have representative governments in place at the grassroots level. Balochistan took the lead as polls were held in the province on Dec 7 and the official results have been announced. The dates for Sindh (Jan 18) and Punjab (Jan 30) have also been finalised by the Election Commission of Pakistan. In KP, however, the situation is unclear as the ANP has challenged the local government law in court. There are observations that the polls may be held by March. As the

³⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075770/bigoted-and-smug>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/648765/knowing-thyself/>

³⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/648353/lg-polls-in-sindh/>

³⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075674/lg-polls-on-the-horizon>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1076742/not-prepared-for-elections>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-223035-Local-bodies-polls>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/28-Dec-2013/ecp-s-conundrum>

situation in KP illustrates, the process is still not without controversy. In Sindh, the opposition, led by the MQM, has condemned the amendments to the LG law while the Muttahida said it will protest against the legislation. Objections have also been raised about the ‘controversial ink’ to be used in Punjab’s local polls.

Pakistanis Leaving the Sinking ship? , *Express Tribune*, December 26⁴⁰

It is clear that an increasingly large number of people in our country believe they would fare better if they left it for other shores. According to a report by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, 2.7 million Pakistanis have left the country over the past five years, including some 31,000 from Balochistan. Given the conditions prevailing in that province, notably in terms of law and order, but also human development, their choice does not seem especially surprising. Certainly, we know that talk of leaving the country is the subject of more and more conversations and discussions held everywhere. The impact on our country of this brain drain has been terrifying. According to a previous report by the same ministry, 5.8 million people have left the country since 1981, including over 41,000 professionals and technicians.

‘Change’ of heart, *The Nation*, December 27⁴¹

The PTI needs a reasonable showing in Lahore and Karachi in particular, as well as in the rest of Punjab and Sindh, in the upcoming elections, on January 30 and January 18 respectively. It was wiped out in the recent Balochistan election, as in that province in the general election, and needs to make a good showing in the Punjab and Sindh polls to keep the momentum going. It might not win the mayoralty of either city, but it needs now to attract the ‘electables’ who did not exactly swarm into the party for the election.

Living on Controversies, Amir Zia, *The News*, December 28⁴²

With friends like Chaudhry Nisar and Ishaq Dar, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan do not need any enemies. The bitter and angry duo has mastered the art of damaging Pakistan’s interest through their recklessness. Many of the controversies triggered by the two ministers can easily be avoided if saner minds and moderate personalities are holding such important portfolios.

⁴⁰ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/650437/sinking-ship/>

⁴¹ <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/27-Dec-2013/change-of-heart>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/26-Dec-2013/pakistan-s-political-cauldron>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/643744/who-is-minding-the-store-in-islamabad/>

⁴² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-223039-Living-on-controversies>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/650979/the-question-is-for-how-long/>

Enter Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, *Daily times*, December 29⁴³

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari kicked off what appears to be the opening shot of his active entry into the rough and tumble of Pakistani politics through his speech at Garhi Khuda Bukhsh on December 27, at the sixth death anniversary of his mother, Benazir Bhutto (BB). Addressing a huge charged crowd ... Bilawal made the bravest departure from the 'ordinary' politics that defines Pakistan today by throwing down the gauntlet to the terrorists. Calling them 'wild animals thirsty for human blood', Bilawal vowed his party would stand against the terrorists. ... *A united campaign by the PML-N and the PPP against terrorism could save the country from these monsters, Bilawal argued.*

The wall, *The News*, December 30⁴⁴

It may not have had the same resonance as Reagan's exhortation to Gorbachev to "tear down that wall", but the PTI's protest against the wall that guards Bilawal House in Karachi has clearly struck a nerve.....the wall in Bilawal House is not only illegal since it encroaches on public land, it is also a nuisance to everyone else in the area. Shopkeepers lost their livelihoods when their businesses happened to be too close to Bilawal House and residents found it near impossible to come in and out of their homes. There were also reports that many were browbeaten into selling their properties even if they were not inclined to do so. Yes, Asif Zardari and his family face a constant threat but that does not justify taking over the entire area and inconveniencing citizens who legally have as much right to use that land as the Zardari family.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

FISCAL ISSUES

Dollar will be brought down to Rs 98: Dar, *The News*, December 4⁴⁵

Federal Finance Minister, Ishaq Dar claimed on December 3 that the government would be able to bring the dollar down to a level where it was used to be available at Rs 98 across the country.

⁴³ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/29-Dec-2013/enter-bilawal-bhutto-zardari>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-223224-Same-old-Bilawal>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1077042/bilawals-politics-of-words>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/29-Dec-2013/enter-bilawal-bhutto-zardari>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/651916/bilawal-your-mother-would-be-proud/>

⁴⁴ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-223329-The-wall>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/30-Dec-2013/bilawal-house-clash>

⁴⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-128877-Dollar-will-be-brought-down-to-Rs98:-Dar>

Money supply rising to meet govt's borrowing needs, *Express Tribune*, December 8⁴⁶

The number of banknotes in circulation has increased 16% during the last five months, according to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on December 7. The number of notes in circulation amounted to Rs 2.2 trillion on November 29 in comparison to Rs1.9 trillion on June 30, amounting to an increase of Rs 310.4 billion between July and November, data revealed.

Reserves dip: Govt struggles to win \$500m oil financing, *Express Tribune*, December 8⁴⁷

With just \$3 billion in hand that can finance imports for only three weeks, Pakistan has been struggling to secure a \$500 million oil financing facility in an effort to keep cars running on roads, as reduced gas supplies for transport vehicles are likely to increase the demand for fuel imports. The government has launched two separate bids to arrange \$400 to \$500 million for oil imports for a short term of one year, one with a consortium of banks led by Standard Chartered Bank and the other with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, according to finance ministry sources.

Ministry of Finance releases details of IMF program, *The news*, December 9⁴⁸

The Ministry of Finance has released details of the 'extended fund facility' program with the IMF in September 2013. The text of the released report is as follows: Pakistan entered into an extended fund facility (EFF) program with IMF on September 4, 2013. It is a 36-month extended arrangement under the EFF for SDR 4.393 billion (US\$6.64 billion).

Pakistan's economy can be restored with EU's support: Nawaz, *Express Tribune*, December 11⁴⁹

Speaking at a luncheon for European Union's (EU) Ambassadors in Islamabad, Nawaz Sharif said that with the EU's collaboration and support, Pakistan's economy could be restored.

Dar expects reserves to rise by \$3 billion, *Express Tribune*, December 11⁵⁰

The government on December 10 tried to soothe top bankers and assured them that the thin foreign currency reserves of the country will increase by about \$3 billion. It again pinned its hopes on uncertain inflows including \$800 million from the United States despite Washington's fresh warning to halt disbursements in response to blockade of NATO supplies in Pakistan.

GDP growth has increased to 5.1pc, says Sharif, *Dawn*, December 14⁵¹

Nawaz Sharif has said that the country's economic growth had increased to 5.1 per cent from last year's 2.9 per cent. "We want to take the GDP growth rate to 7pc over

⁴⁶<http://tribune.com.pk/story/642218/budgetary-support-money-supply-rising-to-meet-govts-borrowing-needs/>

⁴⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/642212/reserves-dip-govt-struggles-to-win-500m-oil-financing/>

⁴⁸<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-129599-Ministry-of-Finance-releases-details-of-IMF-program>

⁴⁹<http://tribune.com.pk/story/643655/pakistans-economy-can-be-restored-with-eus-support-nawaz/>

⁵⁰ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/643847/dar-expects-reserves-to-rise-by-3-billion/>

⁵¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1073849/gdp-growth-has-increased-to-51pc-says-sharif>

the next four years,” he told a delegation of parliamentarians from Sahiwal and Multan divisions which had called on him on December 13.

Economy to grow 4.1pc in 2014, Dawn, December20⁵²

The year-end update of economic and social survey released on December 19, forecasts Pakistan’s economy to grow by 4.1 per cent in 2014 against current estimates of 3.6 per cent in 2013. The survey released by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) says that the consumer price inflation will be in double digit — 11 per cent in 2014 against the current estimates of 7.4 per cent in 2013. The inflation will be at the level of 2012 when it was 11 percent .

Weekly review: Defying the odds, KSE soars to all-time high, Express Tribune, December23⁵³

The country’s stock market continued to defy all odds and showed no signs of slowing down as the benchmark KSE-100 index posted another gain of 322 points (1. per cent) to close at an all-time high of 25,579 points during the week ended December 20.

Govt finalises SRO withdrawal plan, Dawn, December30⁵⁴

The government is likely to withdraw discretionary statutory regulatory orders (SRO) introduced in the taxation system since 1932 in a phased manner over next three years, as per its understanding with the IMF. It would announce a plan for fiscal adjustments including gas levy on all sectors except domestic consumers and a road map for withdrawal of tax exemptions starting in April 2014.

Government to start withdrawing tax exemptions from July 2014, Express Tribune, December31⁵⁵

The federal government has decided in principle to withdraw most of the Rs 470 billion tax exemptions over the next three years and leave untouched those concessions, which, if withdrawn, can create political upheaval in the country.

ENERGY

Pakistan among 10 countries facing severe energy crisis: UN report, Dawn, December 4⁵⁶

About 1.3 billion people in the world are living without electricity; two-thirds of them being in 10 countries and four of them, including Pakistan, in the Asia Pacific region, says a report of the United Nations. According to the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific-2013 released by a UN commission on December 3, an estimated 60 per cent of capacity-addition efforts in future will be focused on mini-grids and off-grid connections in which renewable energy sources will play a vital role.

⁵² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075162/economy-to-grow-41pc-in-2014>

⁵³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/648835/weekly-review-defying-the-odds-kse-soars-to-all-time-high/>

⁵⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1076790/govt-finalises-sro-withdrawal-plan>

⁵⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/652737/government-to-start-withdrawing-tax-exemptions-from-july-2014/>

⁵⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060369/pakistan-among-10-countries-facing-severe-energy-crisis-un-report>

Sui Northern suspends supplies for industrial, CNG sectors, *Dawn*, December 10⁵⁷

The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines (SNGPL) decided on December 9, to suspend, for an indefinite period, supplies to the industrial and compressed natural gas (CNG) sectors from 6 am. The reason given is that its deficit has risen to more than 50 per cent of the demand. By December 9, the gas requirement in the region covered by the company rose to 2.5 billion cubic feet with supply being 1.2 billion cubic feet, leaving a gap of 1.3 billion cubic feet.

ADB approves funds for Jamshoro plant, *Express Tribune*, December 10⁵⁸

Despite US opposition, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$900-million loan for converting the Jamshoro Power Plant to a coal-fired one, giving a boost to the government's efforts to improve the energy mix.

In absence of reforms, ADB to stop \$500m energy loan, *Express Tribune*, December 18⁵⁹

Despite sounding positive about the government's economic initiatives, the ADB top man in Islamabad on December 17 linked its \$500 million loan for power sector with meeting a set of conditions to ensure administrative autonomy and financial viability of the energy sector. "Budgetary support for power sector will be disbursed not on the basis of promises but on the basis of actual actions that Pakistan will have to take in the next six weeks," said Werner Liepach, the ADB's country director for Pakistan, at a press conference.

Power sector's 'circular debt' piles up again, *Dawn*, December 12⁶⁰

The unpaid bills of power companies have again piled up to a precarious level of Rs 216 billion in less than six months after the Nawaz Sharif government had settled the previous 'overdue' bills of both the public and private electricity producers and their fuel suppliers for the pre-March 2013 period.

Iran Pakistan Pipeline

Iran asked to allay fears of US sanctions over IP pipeline, *Express Tribune*, December 11⁶¹

Pakistan has asked Iran to resolve the issue of possible US sanctions that have delayed the multibillion dollar gas pipeline project and created hurdles in generating funds for it. A senior Foreign Office official said that a Pakistani delegation, in its visit to Tehran, expressed reservations over possible sanctions on the project due to tensions between Iran and the US.

Iran cancels \$500m loan to Pak, warns of cash fine over pipeline delay, *The News*, December 15⁶² Iran has said that it has cancelled a planned \$500 million loan to Pakistan to build part of a pipeline to bring natural gas from Iran. Deputy Oil Minister

⁵⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1061577/sui-northern-suspends-supplies-for-industrial-cng-sectors>

⁵⁸<http://tribune.com.pk/story/643373/power-through-adb-approves-funds-for-jamshoro-plant/>

⁵⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/646916/in-absence-of-reforms-adb-to-stop-500m-energy-loan/>

⁶⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1062035/power-sectors-circular-debt-piles-up-again>

⁶¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/643953/iran-asked-to-allay-fears-over-pipeline/>

⁶²[http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-130409-Iran-cancels-\\$500m-loan-to-Pak,-warns-of-cash-fine-over-pipeline-delay](http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-130409-Iran-cancels-$500m-loan-to-Pak,-warns-of-cash-fine-over-pipeline-delay)

Ali Majedi said Iran has no obligation to finance the Pakistani side of the project and also didn't have the money. Majedi's comments were posted on the oil ministry's website, shana.ir, December 14. *He dismissed pretexts by Pakistani officials that sanctions against Iran are hampering the construction of the Pakistani side of the project.* "Such remarks are unacceptable and Pakistan is expected to meet its obligations in this contract," said Majedi.

Gas pipeline: Iranian firm offers to finance Pakistan's side, *Express Tribune*, December 17⁶³

An Iranian firm has expressed interest in completely financing and constructing Pakistan's segment of a gas pipeline that will come from Iran, an offer that comes after cancellation of a \$500 million loan by Tehran earlier. According to sources, Pakistan has got the offer from Jahanpars Engineering and Construction, which could undertake entire engineering, procurement and construction work and provide \$1.8 billion for the Iran-Pakistan (IP) gas pipeline project.

IMF LOAN

Reforms on track: IMF clears release of second \$550m tranche, *Express Tribune*, December 20⁶⁴

After first quarter review meeting on Pakistan's loan programme will be held on December 19, the IMF approved the release of the second tranche of \$550 mn (out of a total of \$6.7 billion loan package) to Pakistan and said the country was broadly on track with reforms tied to the programme. *The lender, however, cautioned that Islamabad would have to act quickly to rebuild the country's dwindling foreign exchange reserves.*

Pakistan receives \$554 mn second tranche of IMF loan, *Dawn*, December 25⁶⁵

Pakistan has received 554 million dollars as a second tranche of its \$6.7 billion bailout loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), an official said December 24. The IMF approved the extended fund facility (EFF) in September 2013 to help Pakistan achieve economic reforms, particularly in its troubled energy sector.

26th instalment: Pakistan repays IMF \$109 mn, *Express Tribune*, December 31⁶⁶

Pakistan repaid IMF \$109 million on December 30 under the IMF Standby Agreement (SBA), according to a spokesperson for the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). With the 26th instalment, Pakistan has repaid the IMF \$6.3 billion since July 2011, of which \$5.5 billion was paid under the SBA facility.

⁶³<http://tribune.com.pk/story/646441/gas-pipeline-iranian-firm-offers-to-finance-pakistans-side/>

⁶⁴<http://tribune.com.pk/story/648075/reforms-on-track-imf-clears-release-of-second-550m-tranche/>

⁶⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1076133/pakistan-receives-554-mln-second-tranche-of-imf-loan>

⁶⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/652623/26th-instalment-pakistan-repays-imf-109m/>

REMITTANCES

Overseas Pakistanis send \$6.4bn in five months, *Express Tribune*, December 11⁶⁷

Overseas Pakistani workers sent home \$6.407 billion in the first five months (July-November) of the current fiscal year 2013-14, a growth of 7.10% compared with \$5.982 billion remitted in the same period of last year. According to data released by SBP on December 10, the inflow of remittances is given below.

| Country | Remittances in USD | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| | July-November 2013 | July-November 2012 |
| Saudi Arabia | 1.794 billion | 1.609 billion |
| UAE | 1.297 billion | 1.241 billion |
| USA | 1.026 billion | 993.57 million |
| UK | 962.76 million | 845.86 million |
| Other GCC countries (Baharin, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman etc.) | 732.64 million | 676.69 million |
| EU | 179.14 million | 161.16 million |

Overseas Pakistanis send \$14.9bn as global remittances grow, *Dawn*, December 23⁶⁸

In 2013, Pakistan received a total of \$14.9 billion from its nationals working abroad, says a report prepared by a US think-tank, Pew Research Centre.

Dar expects payment of CSF in four weeks, *Dawn*, December 12⁶⁹

Pakistan chastised the US on December 11 over its threats to hold up coalition support fund reimbursements, saying the amount belonged to Islamabad and its disbursements should be speeded up. "It is Pakistan's money and belongs to the people of Pakistan. It is not a charity or donation. We will recover every outstanding dollar," said Finance minister Ishaq Dar at a press conference on December 11. He said it was not Pakistan of the past and promised to get this money within two to four weeks.

TRADE

EU grants GSP plus status to Pakistan, *Dawn*, December 12⁷⁰

The European Union (EU) granted Generalised System Preferences (GSP) plus status to Pakistan with an impressive count of 406 votes, Dawn News reported Governor Punjab Chaudhry Sarwar as saying.

⁶⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/643849/overseas-pakistanis-send-6-4b-in-five-months/>

⁶⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075799/overseas-pakistanis-send-149bn-as-global-remittances-grow>

⁶⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1062034/dar-expects-payment-of-csf-in-four-weeks>

⁷⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1072051/eu-grants-gsp-plus-status-to-pakistan>

Foreign exchange reserves hit 12-year low, reveals SBP data, *Express Tribune*, December 13⁷¹

Foreign exchange reserves held by the SBP have declined to a 12-year low of \$2.9 billion, hitting its lowest level since November 2001, according to data released on December 12. SBP's foreign exchange reserves reduced \$83.5 million, or 2.7%, between November 29 and December 6. Total liquid foreign reserves held by Pakistan on December 6 amounted to a little over \$ 8 billion, SBP data revealed. Out of the total liquid reserves, net foreign reserves held by the banks other than the SBP amounted more than \$ 5 billion.

Pakistan business delegation visits Afghanistan, *Express Tribune*, December 26⁷²

A high-level 20-member trade delegation of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI) under the leadership of PAJCCI Co-President Mohammad Zubair Motiwala is visiting Afghanistan with an aim to explore trade and investment opportunities. The trip comes following an Afghan delegation's visit to Pakistan in September 2013 that participated in Expo Pakistan. The Afghan delegation also met the information minister of Sindh and participated in business-to-business match-making and networking events.

INVESTMENT

Foreign investment growing in Pakistan, claims Pervaiz Rasheed, *The News*, December 15⁷³

Information Minister Pervaiz Rasheed claimed that Pakistan's overall situation was improving. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on December 15, Pervaiz Rasheed said the government took several measures to overcome the challenges in six months after coming into power. He said it paid off Rs 500 billion circular debt. He added load-shedding, which was 20 hours before six month, has been decreased.

FDI increases during July-November, *Express Tribune*, December 18⁷⁴

Pakistan received FDI of \$330.7 million in the period July-November, which is 4.7% higher than \$315.8 million it attracted in the corresponding five-month period in the last fiscal year. However, FDI dropped 26% year-on-year to \$47.1 million in November, according to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan. In the fiscal year 2012-13, Pakistan had received FDI worth over \$1.4 billion.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Pakistan improves ranking in TI's 2013 graft index, *Dawn*, December 3⁷⁵

Afghanistan, North Korea and Somalia are seen as the world's most corrupt countries while Denmark and New Zealand are nearly squeaky-clean whereas Pakistan

⁷¹<http://tribune.com.pk/story/644805/foreign-exchange-reserves-hit-12-year-low-reveals-sbp-data/>

⁷²<http://tribune.com.pk/story/650586/cross-border-pakistan-business-delegation-visits-afghanistan/>

⁷³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-130419-Foreign-investment-growing-in-Pakistan,-claims-Pervaiz-Rasheed>

⁷⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/646936/money-inflow-fdi-increases-during-july-november/>

⁷⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060221/pakistan-improves-ranking-in-tis-2013-graft-index>

improved its ranking by 12 places since 2012, graft watchdog Transparency International said in a survey on Dec. 3.

\$10.7 billion reimbursed by US, Senate told, *Dawn*, December⁷⁶

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar informed the Senate on December 4 that the US government had reimbursed up to October this year a total of \$10.775 billion on account of war on terrorism. The minister told the house that Pakistan had received \$300 million in 2001-02, \$847m in 2002-03, \$753.2m in 2003-04, \$839.6m in 2004-05, \$1.07bn in 2005-06, \$1.24bn in 2006-07, \$655m in 2007-08, \$912.9m in 2008-09, \$1.294bn in 2009-10, \$743.3m in 2010-11, \$1.806bn in 2012-13 and \$322m till Oct 21, this year. No amount was received in 2011-12.

He said that under the Kerry-Lugar Bergman Legislation up to \$1.5bn per year could be allocated to Pakistan starting from October 2009. The actual amount obligated by the US Congress from October 2009 to June 30, 2013 was \$3.947bn. Against this, \$3.827bn was disbursed up to June 30, this year, he added.

Rs100 billion allocated to Youth Business Loans: Nawaz Sharif, *Express Tribune*, December⁷⁷

Nawaz Sharif stated that 100 billion rupees have been allocated for the Youth Business Loans scheme while addressing PML-N party members in Gilgit, *Express News* reported on December 5. "The youth of Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) between the ages of 21 and 45 can utilise this scheme," the prime minister said. "The maximum amount of money that will give out as a loan is two million." "Loans will be given to anyone who is committed to doing business. Literacy and experience does not matter with regards to the loans." Nawaz also said that "a special force will be established in G-B for the security of its people." "The force will be provided with modern weapons and excellent training, and will be appointed on merit," the premier said adding that "thousands of people should be appointed for this force to improve the law and order situation in the area."

Transit trade: Pakistan to open road, rail routes for regional states, *Express Tribune*, December 11⁷⁸

Federal Railways Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique has stated *Pakistan is ready to offer its road and rail routes to all regional countries including China, India, Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey and Bangladesh*. He was speaking to the media after addressing the "Regional Conference on Strengthening Transport Connectivity and Trade Facilitation in South and South-West Asia".

CNG price reduced on court order, *Dawn*, December⁷⁹

The CNG may not be available at all to motorists in Punjab and may remain in short supply in other provinces, but its prices have been reduced all over the country. According to a notification issued by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority on December 18, the reduction in prices became necessary after the Supreme Court declared a nine per cent additional general sales tax on compressed natural gas as

⁷⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060626/107-billion-reimbursed-by-us-senate-told>

⁷⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/642019/rs100-billion-allocated-to-youth-business-loans-nawaz-sharif/>

⁷⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/643792/transit-trade-pakistan-to-open-road-rail-routes-for-regional-states/>

⁷⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074756/cng-price-reduced-on-court-order>

illegal. Prices were reduced by Rs1.23 to Rs74.25 per kilogram for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Potohar and Balochistan and by 61 paisa to Rs66.14 per kg for Punjab and Sindh.

Tough love: Raise gas tariff, do away with cross-subsidy, asks WB, *Express Tribune*, December 18⁸⁰

The World Bank has asked the government of Pakistan to increase the tariff for gas consumers in order to recover the entire production cost and do away with cross-subsidy that shifts burden of a consumer to another one. The suggestion came from a World Bank mission, currently on a visit to Pakistan, during a meeting with government functionaries.

Govt finalising five-year plan, Vision 2025, *Dawn*, December 20⁸¹

The country was being run without any concrete plan, and the situation has worsened so much that banks refuse to offer even \$50,000 business loan without a viable five-year business plan, said Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms Senator Ahsan Iqbal on December 20.

Editorials and Opinions

Enterprising idea, *The News*, December 10⁸²

Prime Minister's Youth Programme, announced by Maryam Nawaz Sharif on December 9. Under the terms announced for the scheme, Rs100 billion are to be disbursed to 100,000 people between the ages of 21 and 45 years, permitting them to begin small businesses of their own. A sum of up to Rs 2,000,000 can in theory be obtained as a loan, returnable over an eight-year period. The interest rate has been kept low; 55 proposed businesses have been suggested for entrepreneurs – who can also come up with their own ideas – and feasibility plans have been prepared to guide them along. The Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA) has been assigned the role of running what looks on paper to be a promising programme.

Qatari and Iranian gas, *The Nation*, December 12⁸³

The provision by Qatar of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Pakistan must be seen as complementary to the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project, not as a substitute. Both projects, both vital to helping solve Pakistan's energy crisis, had run into difficulties

⁸⁰<http://tribune.com.pk/story/646914/tough-love-raise-gas-tariff-do-away-with-cross-subsidy-asks-wb/>

⁸¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075159/govt-finalising-five-year-plan-vision-2025>

⁸² <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-219288-Enterprising-idea>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/11-Dec-2013/santa-claus-schemes>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1072101/not-by-loan-alone-youth-scheme>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1075248/tough-loan-condition>

⁸³ <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/12-Dec-2013/qatari-and-iranian-gas>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/645860/unrealistic-solutions/>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/24-Dec-2013/ip-pipeline-a-pipedream>

which were overcome only when a delegation led by Petroleum and Natural Resources Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi visited the two countries. In Qatar, while the government had given the go-ahead for the LNG export, it was still necessary to negotiate with Conoco Philips Company, which wanted the government to guarantee its investment. Iran has asked Pakistan to sign a deal with Tadbir, an Iranian company, for the engineering, procurement and construction of the pipeline. [...]The Qatari gas will go towards generating 2500 MW, while the Iranian gas will generate 5000 MW.

Are we ready?: Grant of GSP-Plus status, Dawn, December 14⁸⁴

Immediate potential gains from the duty-free or preferential duty rate access granted to the country's 3,500 products, in particular textiles and clothing, are estimated at \$500m-\$1,000m in additional export revenues in one year and the creation of a million jobs. The optimal utilisation of the facility allowed by one of Pakistan's largest trading partners holds the promise of radically transforming the country's economy ...In short, the EU trade concessions should boost economic activities in Pakistan and push exports in a big way in the next few years, just as the scheme has done for Bangladesh in the last seven to eight years.

How not to manage the economy, Express Tribune, December 21⁸⁵

On the surface of it, all seems to be going well. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) declared on December 19 that reforms in Islamabad are continuing at a satisfactory pace, which led it to release the second tranche of the \$6.7 billion bailout package, amounting to \$550 million. But underneath, board members of the IMF are making it abundantly plain that the government has undertaken virtually none of the reforms necessary to fix the structural problems facing the economy.

SECURITY SITUATION

TERRORISM

Mullah Fazlullah in Pakistan's tribal areas: spokesman, Dawn, December 3⁸⁶

Mullah Fazlullah, the new head of banned TTP (TTP), has returned to Pakistan's tribal areas, a spokesman for the militants said December 3, after several years based in Afghanistan.

⁸⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1073727/are-we-ready-grant-of-gsp-plus-status>

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2013\12\14\story_14-12-2013_pg3_1

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-220027-Too-much-optimism>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/645540/building-on-policy-success/>

<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/20-Dec-2013/gsp-plus-a-whiff-of-fresh-air>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/647877/gsp-plus-status-challenges-opportunities/>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1073734/hard-won-status>

⁸⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/648352/how-not-to-manage-the-economy/>

⁸⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060224/mullah-fazlullah-in-pakistans-tribal-areas-spokesman>

Parts of Karachi tense after sectarian killings, *Dawn*, December⁴⁸⁷

A Shia leader, Allama Deedar Ali Jalbani, and his guard were killed while in the evening three members of the Tableeghi Jamaat, including two Moroccans, were shot dead. Among others who died during the day were four men who were travelling in a vehicle and came under attack by armed pillion riders and car-riders in North Nazimabad. One of the dead men, Mushtaq Mohmand, had contested the last general election on a provincial assembly seat in Manghopir and was involved in the water hydrant business, said SSP Central Amir Farooqi.

ASWJ's Maulana Shamsur Rehman killed in Lahore, *Express Tribune*, December⁶⁸⁸

Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ) leader Maulana Shamsur Rehman Muawiya has been killed in Lahore, *Express News* reported on December 6. Maulana Shamsur Rehman, who was ASWJ's president in Punjab, was going home after Friday prayers from Muhammadi Masjid when unidentified men opened fire at his car near Batti Chowk.

Blast targeting security forces' convoy kills two in Waziristan, *Dawn*, December¹²⁸⁹

At least two soldiers were killed and seven others wounded in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast in Spin Wam area of North Waziristan tribal region on December 12 *Dawn News* quoted Inter Services Public Relations sources as saying.

CID police arrest key Taliban commander in Karachi, *Dawn*, December¹⁵⁹⁰

The Crime Investigation Department claimed to have arrested a key Pakistani Taliban commander, Abu Hamza, during a raid in Karachi's West Wharf area on December 14. Chief of CID's investigation unit, Mazhar Mashwani claimed that Muhammad Adnan alias Abu Hamza had been operating for TTP and was placed at number 36 in the Red Book – the list of wanted suspects.

Three dead in suicide blast near Rawalpindi Imambargah, *Dawn*, December¹⁸⁹¹

A powerful blast outside an Imambargah situated in the heavily guarded Gracey Lines area killed three people, including two policemen and left 14 injured. According to DawnNews, policemen spotted a suspicious looking individual on a motorcycle in the parking lot of the Imambargah near the Nur Khan Air Base. The attacker blew himself up when the policemen tried to tackle him. About 700 people were attending a majlis at the time of the attack. As a result three people, including a SHO lost their lives.

Suicide attack kills five soldiers in North Waziristan, *Dawn*, December¹⁹⁹²

At least five soldiers were killed and 34 wounded when a suicide bomber rammed his explosive-laden car into a military checkpoint in Pakistan's troubled northwest on December 18, security officials said. The attack came in the Mir Ali area of

⁸⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060256/parts-of-karachi-tense-after-sectarian-killings>

⁸⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/642046/aswjs-maulana-shamsur-rehman-killed-in-lahore/>

⁸⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1072049/blast-targeting-security-forces-convoy-kills-two-in-waziristan>

⁹⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1073897/cid-police-arrest-key-taliban-commander-in-karachi>

⁹¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074674/three-dead-in-suicide-blast-near-rawalpindi-imambargah>

⁹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074861/suicide-attack-kills-five-soldiers-in-north-waziristan>

Miranshah, the main town in the North Waziristan tribal region, a hub for Taliban and al Qaeda linked militants on the Afghan border.

Pakistan's new army chief defies terrorist attacks, *Dawn*, December 22⁹³

Despite reiterating full support to the ongoing government-led peace process with the Taliban militants, Pakistan's new army chief General Raheel Sharif on December 21 vowed to not tolerate any more terrorist attacks. During his visit to the Corps Headquarters in Peshawar, he emphasised that terrorist attacks will not be tolerated and will be responded effectively, said a statement issued by the ISPR.

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA AND FATA

Innovative plans: K-P to be the first to have human rights directorate, *Express Tribune*, December 14⁹⁴

After a much-hailed Right to Information law, the provincial government aims to establish a human rights directorate, the first of its kind in the country, to help address citizens' complaints.

DI Khan by-polls: Women prevented from voting in Garhi Shamoza, *Express Tribune*, December 15⁹⁵

By-polls in Dera Ismail Khan PK-67 constituency of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) took place on December 15, *Express News* reported. There were over 10,800 registered voters in the district and 91 polling stations with 233 polling booths were arranged for them. A total of 36 polling stations were declared highly sensitive while 55 were declared sensitive. Women were stopped from casting their votes at the polling station in Garhi Shamoza. The seat was left vacant after Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) MPA Israrullah Gandapur was killed in a suicide attack on October 16.

At least 19 govt employees killed in Peshawar explosion, *Dawn*, December 16⁹⁶

At least 19 people were killed and 42 others injured when a bomb exploded on a bus carrying government employees on Peshawar's Charsadda Road, *Dawn News* reported. Peshawar SSP (operations) Najeem-ur-Rehman said the bomb planted in the rear portion of the bus went off when it reached Gulbela area, about 15km northwest of Peshawar.

Political administration not prepared to replace army in Fata, *Dawn*, December 16⁹⁷

Though the state writ has been largely restored to the militancy-stricken tribal areas through military operations, the question perturbing the major stakeholders is that how the void would be filled in case the army pulls out of the region. A senior officer looked pensive and breathed heavily after taking the question whether the political administration in the respective tribal agencies have the capacity and capability to

⁹³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075504/pakistans-new-army-chief-defies-terrorist-attacks>

⁹⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/645199/innovative-plans-k-p-to-be-the-first-to-have-human-rights-directorate/>

⁹⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/645827/di-khan-by-polls-women-prevented-from-voting-in-garhi-shamoza/>

⁹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1045806/at-least-19-govt-employees-killed-in-peshawar-explosion>

⁹⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074269/political-administration-not-prepared-to-replace-army-in-fata>

handle post-conflict situation if the security forces are sent back to peace time position. "Not at all, the government has no such plan," the officer replied in a compassionate mood. "The president, prime minister and other relevant quarters have been briefed on this subject, but nobody bothers about it."

Imran Khan assails 'those who attack polio workers', *Dawn*, December 19⁹⁸

Avoiding an open condemnation of Taliban militants yet again, Pakistani cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan on December 18 assailed "those who are attacking polio workers" and demanded an immediate end to the attacks. *Without naming Pakistani Taliban, Khan said those who are targeting polio workers, "are doing injustice to our province, our country and the whole of humanity."*

33 militants killed in NWA clashes, shelling, *The News*, December 20⁹⁹

Military authorities said on December 19, 33 militants were killed in two days of clashes between the security forces and militants in the militancy-plagued North Waziristan Agency. They said 23 militants were killed earlier on December 18 night during a clash after the militants attacked a roadside military checkpoint in the Khajori area of Mir Ali subdivision. According to military officials, the militants tried to ambush the security forces travelling for rescue of the victims of the suicide attack.

More deaths and clashes in North Waziristan, *Dawn*, December 21,¹⁰⁰

The violence in North Waziristan Agency triggered by a suicide attack against security forces continued on December 20, as another three people were killed after security forces opened fire on a vehicle during curfew hours near Khajori check post. The death toll in this week's clashes has reached 53 according to locals.

Curfew lifted after talks with Taliban, *Dawn*, December 24¹⁰¹

A curfew imposed after a suicide bomb attack on a mosque near a check post and subsequent clashes between militants and security forces in North Waziristan was lifted on December 23 following successful talks among the administration, representatives of local Taliban and members of a grand tribal Jirga in Miramshah. According to tribal elders of Mirali, the administration and members of the Taliban Shura announced in Miramshah and adjoining villages that a ceasefire had been declared in accordance with a peace agreement signed in 2006.

North Waziristan appears close to full-blown conflict, *Dawn*, December 26¹⁰²

Guns have fallen silent in Mirali - a bustling town 35 km to the east of North Waziristan's regional headquarters of Miramshah, but now with rows of burnt down and bombed shops and houses. The sudden flare-up and military's fierce response to a suicide bombing at one of its main camps in Khajori on Dec 18 have shown that the situation in North Waziristan remains volatile, dangerously close to a full-blown conflict.

⁹⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074866/imran-khan-assails-those-who-attack-polio-workers>

⁹⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-27409-33-militants-killed-in-NWA-clashes-shelling>

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075314/more-deaths-and-clashes-in-north-waziristan>

¹⁰¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1076016/curfew-lifted-after-talks-with-taliban>

¹⁰² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1076409/north-waziristan-appears-close-to-full-blown-conflict>

Army operation in North Waziristan faces debacle, says JI chief, Dawn, December 27¹⁰³

Jamaat-i-Islami chief Munawar Hassan on December 26, warned that the army would suffer a debacle if it continued with the military operation in North Waziristan Agency. "I want to make it clear to the government that North Waziristan is not like of South Waziristan, Buner and Swat and if it (government) doesn't stop military operation there, then the military is bound to suffer a disastrous failure and thus, harming national interest," Mr Hassan told participants of a condolence reference here.

Minor girl severely injured in attack on polio team in Quetta, Dawn, December 29¹⁰⁴

A polio team administering vaccination to children in Pashtoonabad on December 29, was attacked by militants, injuring four people including a minor girl. Police said militants hurled a hand-held bomb at the polio team, which left a five-year-old girl and a lady health worker injured, besides two others.

BALUCHISTAN

Four men killed in Khuzdar, Dawn, December 4¹⁰⁵

Four persons, including a schoolteacher, were killed on December 2 in two different incidents of firing in Balochistan's insurgency-hit Khuzdar district, a levies official said.

Separatists call strike to boycott Balochistan LG polls, Dawn, December 5¹⁰⁶

Baloch separatist parties have announced a wheel-jam and shutter-down strike on the eve of the local government elections in Balochistan, scheduled for Dec 7. In a joint statement, the Baloch Republican Party (BRP) and Baloch National Movement (BNM) announced the strike to be observed on December 6 and 7 throughout the province. "After thorough consultation, it was decided to observe strike," spokesmen for both parties said on December 4.

Militants kidnap 13 power plant workers in Naseerabad, Dawn, December 5¹⁰⁷

Militants abducted 13 workers of Uch Power Plant from Balochistan's Naseerabad district on December 4 a security official said. The official, who requested anonymity, told Dawn.com that armed militants picked up the workers from Mangoli area of Naseerabad district.

Four more unopposed LG winners abducted in Balochistan, Dawn, December 5¹⁰⁸

Armed militants have abducted four candidates elected unopposed from Balochistan's insurgency-hit Kech district, a levies official said on December 5.

¹⁰³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1076655/army-operation-in-north-waziristan-faces-debacle-says-ji-chief>

¹⁰⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1077141/minor-girl-severely-injured-in-attack-on-polio-team-in-quetta>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060254/four-men-killed-in-khuzdar>

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060472/separatists-call-strike-to-boycott-balochistan-lg-polls>

¹⁰⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1060448/militants-kidnap-13-power-plant-workers-in-naseerabad>

¹⁰⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1060695/four-more-unopposed-lg-winners-abducted-in-balochistan>

Balochistan LG polls: Independent candidates establish clear lead, *Express Tribune*, December 8¹⁰⁹

Balochistan took the pole position in holding local government (LG) elections on Saturday. Defying all threats and fears, people turned out in large numbers to exercise their right to vote in 3,500 of the total 4,168 constituencies. And according to unofficial results, independent candidates won the largest number of seats followed by component parties in the ruling coalition in the province.

Efforts under way for talks with insurgents: Dr Malik, *Dawn*, December 10¹¹⁰

Balochistan Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch has said that insurgency in the province can be ended through dialogue. Mr Malik said his government was trying to initiate talks with disgruntled Baloch leaders to find a solution to the Balochistan issue. The chief minister said the Balochistan government had appointed Senator Raza Rabbani as legal consultant to guide it in implementing the 18th Amendment.

Balochistan ruling party president warns of quitting govt over missing persons, *The News*, December 10¹¹¹

After holding largely peaceful local bodies election and receiving accolades from cross section of the society, Balochistan's ruling party now seems to pressure the federal government to rid the relatives of Baloch missing persons of their agony. National Party president Hasil Bizenjo on December 9 warned of quitting the provincial government if the missing persons and mutilated bodies phenomena continues to haunt Balochistan. "We have asked prime minister as well as military leadership to stop dumping mutilated bodies, we want results, we can quit government for results," the Senator warned.

Intimidation: Five NP councillors elected unopposed resign after abduction, *Express Tribune*, December 11¹¹²

The five National Party (NP) councillors, who were abducted by armed men a couple of days ago from the Kech district, have tendered their resignations as councillors on December 10. NP is the party of Balochistan Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch and part of the ruling coalition in the province.

Zafar Ghulam Haider, Abdul Rauf Taj Mohammed, Ghulam Hussain Balach, Munir Hassan and Abdul Wahid Ibrahim of NP were released by their captors two days ago. They remained in captivity for three days. "We want to resign as councillors," they told the reporters.

Army chief attends passing out parade of Baloch recruits, *Dawn*, December 12¹¹³

Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif arrived in Quetta to attend the passing out parade ceremony of 1,800 recruits from Balochistan and said on December 12 that 20,000 Baloch youths became part of armed forces during the past few years.

¹⁰⁹<http://tribune.com.pk/story/642759/balochistan-lg-polls-independent-candidates-establish-clear-lead/>

¹¹⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061576/efforts-under-way-for-talks-with-insurgents-dr-malik>

¹¹¹<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-129615-Balochistan-ruling-party-president-warns-of-quitting-govt-over-missing-persons->

¹¹²<http://tribune.com.pk/story/644020/intimidation-five-np-councillors-elected-unopposed-resign-after-abduction/>

¹¹³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1062090/army-chief-attends-passing-out-parade-of-baloch-recruits>

Dr Malik lays stress on trade with Iran, *Dawn*, December 13¹¹⁴

Balochistan Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik has said that Pakistan has cultural, economic and brotherly ties with Iran and promotion of trade will boost economic relations on both sides of the border. Talking to Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Alireza Haghighian here on December 12, the chief minister said people on both sides of the Pak-Iran border enjoyed great cultural, economic and blood relations and by providing immigration and trade facilities at Gwadar, Panjgur and Mand areas, the economy on both sides would flourish.

Accord for Balochistan solar power plant signed, *Dawn*, December 17¹¹⁵

The Balochistan government signed on Sunday an agreement with a Korean company to set up a 300 megawatt solar power plant at a cost of \$700 million. Work on the project will start next year and complete by 2017. Provincial Energy Secretary Fawad Hashim Rabbani and Chief Executive Officer of the Korean company Dr Choi Moon-Sok signed the agreement.

Baloch warns against Islamabad's interference in devolved depts., *Dawn*, December 19¹¹⁶

Chief Minister Balochistan Dr Abdul Malik Baloch has warned that his government would be the first to resist if Islamabad encroached into the departments devolved under 18th amendment to the provinces. Speaking at a function regarding the passage of historic 18th amendment, he alleged that the federal government was trying to snatch back the powers devolved to the provinces under the 18th amendment bill.

Vocational education: ADB stops loan for \$23m Balochistan project, *Express Tribune*, December 19¹¹⁷

A \$23 million project launched to revamp the technical and vocational education system in the most underdeveloped province, Balochistan, has failed to make a difference due to differences between the provincial government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) over a set of reforms. An independent evaluation report, prepared by ADB's Manila office, highlighted the reasons that are almost common in every project funded by international lenders.

Armed men kidnap eight coal miners from Balochistan, *Express Tribune*, December 25¹¹⁸

A group of armed men kidnapped eight coal miners from Shahrag area of Harnai district, about 167 kilometers from Quetta, in the early hours of December 25. According to Balochistan Tehsildar of Shahrag Sajjad Gul Kakar, the coal miners were sleeping in their makeshift camp near the coalfield when a group of armed men besieged their camp and kidnapped eight coal miners at gun point.

¹¹⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1072119/dr-malik-lays-stress-on-trade-with-iran>

¹¹⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074152/accord-for-balochistan-solar-power-plant-signed>

¹¹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074872/baloch-warns-against-islamabads-interference-in-devolved-depts>

¹¹⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/647441/vocational-education-adb-stops-loan-for-23m-balochistan-project/>

¹¹⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/650311/armed-men-kidnap-eight-coal-miners-from-quetta/>

Balochistan politicians to protest against unrest, kidnappings, Dawn, December 29¹¹⁹

Opposition and ruling political parties in Balochistan have put their heads together to bring an end to rise in incidents of kidnapping for ransom in Quetta and other troubled parts of the province. Representatives of all political, nationalist and religious parties announced to stage a joint sit-in outside the parliament on January 12 to protest against the kidnapping of Awami National Party (ANP) leader Arbab Abdul Zahir Kasi and others.

SINDH

I have no magic stick, restoration of peace to take time: Sindh CM, The News, December 9¹²⁰

Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Qaim Ali Shah on Monday said that he has no magic stick; the restoration of peace would take time and added that the Karachi operation would continue until the last criminal was arrested.

Sindh cabinet decides to hold LB polls in March, The News, December 10¹²¹

Sindh cabinet has decided to hold local bodies (LB) elections in the province in March, Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said.

Attack on police officer kills two, injures 15 in Karachi, Dawn, December 22¹²²

At least two people were killed and more than 15 others injured when a police officer's car and his residence were targeted with a powerful blast in Karachi's Old Sabzimandi area, Dawn News reported on December 20 night.

6 kidnapped, tortured, gunned down in Karachi, The News, December 27¹²³

The six bodies found from Pak Colony area on December 27 morning here have by now been identified as residents of the same colony, Geo News reported. Those identified include Gulzar, Dilawar, Shahzad, Sajid, Rizwan, and Amir residents of Pak Colony here, police said. Police said the deceased were kidnapped and then gunned down in a gang war fashion.

AFGHAN SECURITY SITUATION

US gets Afghan govt's assurances, Dawn, December 10¹²⁴

Dec 7: US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel on Saturday said he had received assurances during a visit to Kabul that a long-delayed deal allowing US troops to stay in Afghanistan after 2014 would be signed "in a timely manner".

¹¹⁹<http://www.dawn.com/news/1076944/balochistan-politicians-to-protest-against-unrest-kidnappings>

¹²⁰<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-129600-Has-no-magic-stick,-restoration-of-peace-to-take-time:-Sindh-CM>

¹²¹<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-129620-Sindh-cabinet-decides-to-hold-LB-polls-in-March>

¹²²<http://www.dawn.com/news/1075317/attack-on-police-officer-kills-two-injures-15-in-karachi>

¹²³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-131939-6-kidnapped,-tortured,-gunned-down-in-Karachi->

¹²⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061221/us-gets-afghan-govts-assurances>

Hagel to PM: Lift NATO blockade or risk billions in aid, *Express Tribune*, December10¹²⁵

US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel warned Pakistani leaders on December 9 that if they did not resolve protests stalling some military shipments across the border into Afghanistan, it could be difficult to maintain political support in Washington for an aid programme that has sent billions of dollars to Islamabad, defence officials said. In response, Hagel received assurances from Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that his administration would take 'immediate action' to resolve the shipment problem. He assured the visiting Pentagon chief that the situation would improve soon and Pakistan would ensure smooth exit of foreign forces from Afghanistan.

Nascent peace process: Afghan Taliban not willing to talk, says Aziz, *Tribune Express*, December15¹²⁶

Despite Pakistan's efforts to facilitate talks between the Afghan High Peace Council and the Afghan Taliban, the group is unwilling to enter into negotiation, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz said on December14. "The Afghan Taliban have a principled stance that they do not recognise the government in Kabul and the constitution," Aziz told *The Express Tribune* on the conclusion of the Pakistan-Afghanistan conference in the capital. "There is a need for increased informal contacts with them [Taliban] as most of their leaders are in Afghanistan and in Qatar, and the Afghan government can approach them," he added. "We do not have control over the Afghan Taliban. We have been urging them for a long time to talk to the High Peace Council but they do not accept our requests," Aziz said

Nato's Isaf Commander in Afghanistan arrives in Pakistan, *Dawn*, December16¹²⁷

NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) commander in Afghanistan General Joseph Dunford arrived in Pakistan from Kabul and met with Army Chief General Raheel Sharif during a visit of the army's General Headquarters (GHQ), according to the Inter Services Public Relations website.

He arrived on a routine coordination visit, the two discussed matters of mutual interest with particular focus on Pakistan-Afghanistan Border coordination mechanism.

Skirmishes across the fence: Torkham border crossing closed for five hours, *Express Tribune*, December19¹²⁸

Hundreds of people were stranded on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border as the Torkham crossing was shut down for five hours due to skirmishes between Taliban and Afghan security forces on December18. Mairaj Khan, an official of the Khyber Agency political administration, said heavy clashes erupted between militants and Afghan forces at 6:15am in Shiraz Qilla area of Afghanistan, around two kilometres from Torkham, after which the border crossing was closed by both Afghan and Pakistani authorities.

¹²⁵<http://tribune.com.pk/story/643533/blunt-exchange-hagel-to-pm-lift-nato-blockade-or-risk-billions-in-aid/>

¹²⁶<http://tribune.com.pk/story/645726/nascent-peace-process-afghan-taliban-not-willing-to-talk-says-aziz/>

¹²⁷<http://www.dawn.com/news/1074440/natos-isaf-commander-in-afghanistan-arrives-in-pakistan>

¹²⁸<http://tribune.com.pk/story/647434/skirmishes-across-the-fence-torkham-border-crossing-closed-for-five-hours/>

Taliban to grow in strength by 2017, says US report, *Dawn*, December 30¹²⁹

The Taliban and other militant groups will have the upper hand in Afghanistan by 2017 even if the United States maintains a small military presence in the country, says a new US intelligence report. Known as the National Intelligence Estimate, the report includes input from all 16 American intelligence agencies and is prepared for US policymakers and lawmakers.

Most Americans want troops back home, *Dawn*, December 31¹³⁰

As the year of withdrawal begins, a majority in America wants the US president to pull out his troops from Afghanistan even before the December 2014 deadline, shows a national survey released on December 30. And for the first time in 12 years, support for the US-led war dipped to below 20 per cent, vindicating President Barack Obama's stand that now is the time to quit Afghanistan.

DRONE ATTACKS

Anti-drone protests: Nawaz urges Imran to end 'counterproductive' protests, *Express Tribune*, December 6¹³¹

With PTI-led anti-drone protests reaching the federal capital on December 5, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif issued directions to the interior minister to end the anti-drone campaign that started from Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (K-P) after a drone targeted the Hangu district. Officials from the Prime Minister House on condition of anonymity said that Nawaz, in his instructions to Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, said, "PTI Chairman Imran Khan should be convinced that the protests and sit-ins are not yielding any results to his drone strategy. Instead, they are causing damage to national economy and provincial administration that PTI is taking care of."

Ji wants to end NATO blockade, *Dawn*, December 6¹³²

After the US announcement to suspend Nato shipments to and from Afghanistan via Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Jamaat-i-Islami's Peshawar district chapter on December 5 recommended to the party's provincial leadership to announce the winding up of the two weeks long sit-ins in the province.

NATO countries request reopening of routes, Imran refuses, *Express Tribune*, December 10¹³³

Representatives of NATO member countries requested PTI chairman Imran Khan to reopen supply routes to Afghanistan via Pakistan, *Express News* reported on Monday. The NATO countries said that the blockade was causing inconvenience to the NATO forces in Afghanistan.

¹²⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077278/taliban-to-grow-in-strength-by-2017-says-us-report>

¹³⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077402/most-americans-want-troops-back-home>

¹³¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/641861/anti-drone-protests-nawaz-urges-imran-to-end-counterproductive-protests/>

¹³² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060849/ji-wants-to-end-nato-blockade>

¹³³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/643208/nato-countries-request-reopening-of-supply-routes-imran-refuses/>

NATO blockade: Govt advises parties to water down emotions, *Express Tribune*, December 11¹³⁴

The government censured the partial blockade of supply routes by the PTI and said the party's reaction to the issue showed "lack of maturity". While the government expressed its solidarity with the opposition that the attacks were indeed a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty, it advised the political leadership to "not get emotional or overlook ground realities."

Nawaz, army chief discuss ways to end blockade protests, *Express Tribune*, December 14¹³⁵

The civil-military leadership, in a key meeting between the prime minister and the newly appointed Chief of Army Staff Raheel Sharif, decided to devise a strategy that would seek an early resumption of the suspended Nato supplies. "Issue of drone strikes needs to be resolved with the US as this is causing both internal and external problems for Pakistan," General Raheel told the premier.

Drone targets boat near Pak-Afghan border: reports, *Dawn*, December 14¹³⁶

A suspected US drone targeted a boat in the waters of the Kabul River on December 14 near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, sources told Dawn News. According to initial reports, missiles fired by the drone aircraft struck a boat in the Kabul River on the Afghan side of the porous border, close to Loe Shalman area in Landi Kotal subdivision of Pakistan's Khyber tribal agency.

Policy drift: PPP senator calls for legalisation of drones, *Express Tribune*, December 17¹³⁷

Alleging army of tacitly allowing drones strikes, Senator Farhatullah Babar said drone has been the only effective weapon against militants — though such attacks were counterproductive and a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senator while opening the debate on Pakistan's foreign policy urged the government to make the drone strikes "legal". The best possible way of doing so would be acquiring drone technology from United States, he suggested. "We must admit that drones took out the most-wanted terrorists who were the worst enemies of Pakistan," said Senator Babar. "The government should ask the US to transfer drone technology so that we can legally use it against militants," he added.

US drone kills four suspected militants in North Waziristan, *Dawn*, December 26¹³⁸

At least four suspected militants were killed when a US drone fired two missiles at a compound near Miramshah, the main town of North Waziristan tribal agency of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan, DawnNews reported late December 25 night. The attack took place around midnight in Qutab Khel village, five kilometres (three miles) south of Miramshah.

¹³⁴<http://tribune.com.pk/story/643959/nato-blockade-govt-advises-parties-to-water-down-emotions/>

¹³⁵<http://tribune.com.pk/story/645341/nato-blockade-nawaz-army-chief-discuss-ways-to-end-protests/>

¹³⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1073885/drone-targets-boat-near-pak-afghan-border-reports>

¹³⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/646644/policy-drift-ppp-senator-calls-for-legalisation-of-drones/>

¹³⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1076332/us-drone-kills-four-suspected-militants-in-north-waziristan>

NATO SUPPLY

US proposed law threatens to squeeze aid if NATO blockade continues, *Express Tribune*, December 20¹³⁹

A proposed new US law threatens to squeeze aid to Pakistan if NATO supply routes are blocked or interrupted, Dawn News reported on December 20. US National Defence Authorisation Bill of 2014 also requires a certification from US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel saying that Pakistan is taking appropriate actions against terrorists along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. The new US bill is already approved by the House of Representatives and it includes extending funding to Pakistan for supporting the war against terrorism but with certain changes. The funding has been reduced from \$1.65 billion in 2013 to \$1.5bn in 2014 as stated in a section of the bill titled "Limitation on amounts available".

Imran Khan bent on keeping NATO supply lines blocked, *Express Tribune*, December 27¹⁴⁰

A day after four suspected militants were killed in a US drone attack in North Waziristan, PTI chief Imran Khan made it clear NATO supply routes would remain suspended till the unmanned airstrikes are halted.

NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

Peace talks with TTP top priority, National Security Committee decides, *Express Tribune*, December 17¹⁴¹

Peace talks were declared as the top priority with regards to TTP at the first ever meeting of the National Security Committee in Islamabad on Tuesday, Express News reported. The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The discussions were focused on three key issues: formulation of National Security Strategy to safeguard the national interests; strategy on internal security and relations with Afghanistan.

¹³⁹<http://tribune.com.pk/story/648171/us-proposed-law-threatens-to-squeeze-aid-if-nato-blockade-continues/>

¹⁴⁰<http://tribune.com.pk/story/651000/standing-firm-imran-khan-bent-on-keeping-nato-supply-lines-blocked/>

¹⁴¹<http://tribune.com.pk/story/646651/peace-talks-with-ttp-top-priority-national-security-committee-decides/>

Editorials and Opinions

‘Permission’ for immunisation, *The Nation*, December 12¹⁴²

A simple Polio vaccine is made to appear as a scheme of the ‘enemies of Muslims’, completely ineffective for immunisation and the Polio workers carrying out these vaccinations are shot and killed. At least 25 medical workers and security personnel have lost their lives since June 2012 prohibition on inoculation, imposed by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), due to the fake CIA vaccination programme meant to help track Al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden.

Since religious extremism is the biggest hurdle in the campaign against Polio, the fatwa issued by Maulana Sami-ul-Haq in favour of Polio vaccinations is expected to improve the current situation. Being the head of the hardline Dar-ul-Uloom Haqqania seminary, Mr Sami-ul-Haq’s fatwa will be seen by the extremists as an edict issued by one of their own. India — which was recently declared polio-free — acted on Thursday on a recommendation first proposed in 2011 by the Independent Monitoring Board for Polio Eradication: after Jan 30, 2014, those travelling to India from Pakistan and other polio-endemic countries (Afghanistan and Nigeria) will be required to show proof of recent vaccination

Building bridges with Afghanistan, Talat Masood, *Express Tribune*, December 18¹⁴³

For Pakistan, improving relations with Afghanistan has become a matter of self-preservation and a strategic imperative. Similarly, for landlocked Afghanistan, having good relations with its most important neighbour, Pakistan, should be of even greater significance. But regrettably, the history of our relations, apart from a few brief interludes, has been marked by distrust and mutual antagonism. ...Notwithstanding the prime minister’s repeated overtures of goodwill and cooperation to President Karzai, there is a perception ...that the Pakistan Army is the one which formulates policy. ...If the Afghan Taliban and Afghan government do not succeed in finding a negotiated settlement, the fallout on Pakistan in the form of refugee influx and strengthening of militants could be destabilising. What the two governments cannot overlook is that Pashtuns are dying on both sides of the border and the crisis and

¹⁴² <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/12-Dec-2013/permission-for-immunisation>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1072102/polio-crisis-deepens-indias-travel-ban>
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1075247/pti-chiefs-laudable-step>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/647874/polio-campaign-well-done-imran/>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/20-Dec-2013/doing-the-right-thing>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-221482-Leading-from-the-front>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/23-Dec-2013/join-the-cause>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/24-Dec-2013/our-struggle-against-polio>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/644698/the-hammer-drops/>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/13-Dec-2013/well-deserved-ignominy>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-220505-Polio-barrier>

¹⁴³ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/646812/building-bridges-with-afghanistan/>
http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2013\12\17\story_17-12-2013_pg3_5
http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2013\12\17\story_17-12-2013_pg3_2
<http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/16-Dec-2013/war-machine-machinations>

instability generated over the years can only be brought under control through a cooperative approach.

A few clues but no more, *Dawn*, December 19¹⁴⁴

BIG decisions are unlikely to come from a single Cabinet Committee on National Security meeting. [...] The reiteration of the government's talks-first approach to dealing with the TTP was unsurprising. But there is a sense that — with the TTP routinely rejecting the possibility of dialogue and the government's talks strategy stuck in limbo — for the first time some attention was paid to the possibility that if the talks-first approach fails, the state would have to consider other steps to deal with the TTP threat.

General Raheel Sharif's truth, *Daily times*, December 23¹⁴⁵

In a morale boosting first visit to the Peshawar Corps Headquarters the other day in the wake of the Mirali battle, the new COAS General Raheel Sharifwhile supporting the government's first option of talks, made it amply clear that the military will no longer sit quietly like sitting ducks if attacked by the terrorists.The TTP now says that its past relationship with the Afghan Taliban, in which it acted as their hosts and supporters, has been reversed to the latter now financing and supporting the TTP. This 'confession' should give pause to the military in its long standing posture of covertly if not overtly backing the Afghan Taliban.

CCNS formation, a sound decision, Talat Masood, *The Express Tribune*, December 25¹⁴⁶

The formation of the Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS) was also a sound decision. As the Committee includes all relevant power centres, it can act as an effective forum for institutional decision-making. One expects that soon it will have a functioning secretariat, planning committee and an advisory board and affiliated think tanks to provide independent and valuable advice. This forum should be able to improve coordination between major institutions, assist in formulation of well thought out policies and bring the civilian and military leadership on the same page. There is however, criticism from certain quarters that the government should have set up a National Security Council or a more powerful higher defence organisation as opposed to the CCNS. In the light of the prime minister's previous experience with the top military brass, he was not prepared to accept these proposals. The prime minister seems to be more comfortable with the forum of the CCNS and truly, this is what matters most in restoring the civil-military balance.

¹⁴⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074928/a-few-clues-but-no-more>

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/23-Dec-2013/general-raheel-sharif-s-truth6>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/23-Dec-2013/repeating-history>

¹⁴⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/649998/revisiting-national-defence-security-policy/>

The gloves are off, Iftekhar A Khan, *The News*, December 27¹⁴⁷

Two prime organs of the state – the District Management Group and the Police Service Group – have been at loggerheads with each other recently. It all began when the Punjab government started pondering over the proposal to establish a super-efficient force to counter terrorism. The police feel that the proposal engineered by the DMG highbrows encroaches upon their proverbial domain.

What are Pakistan's strategic options in North Waziristan, Shahzad Chaudry, *Express Tribune*, December 28¹⁴⁸

According to a news report: “The foreigners residing in North Waziristan have multiplied the difficulties of their host tribesmen. People of Mir Ali are becoming bitter and inhospitable towards well-entrenched Uzbek fighters who were living in the neighbourhood(s) as paying guests.” Any notions of an offensive geopolitical design in Afghanistan became an irrelevant thought for a Pakistan that was consumed by its own complications. Other nations, such as India, the US and China found ‘strategic depth’ in Afghanistan instead. ..If, however, the state were to begin its operation in North Waziristan with the nexus between the two intact, the Afghan Taliban are certain to be sucked in the vortex.The Haqqanis popu-^{*}late four adjoining Afghan provinces on the Pakistan border. *A war that includes the Haqqanis has all the potential of keeping alive on Pakistan's western border even if the rest of Afghanistan and Pakistan have found peace.*

Balochistan's sorry existence, Sanaullah Baloch, *Express Tribune*, December 29¹⁴⁹

Despite tall claims by Nawaz Sharif, the humiliation, rights violations and systematic oppression of ethnic groups is in full swing. From Lahore, we receive glossy pictures of shows, ceremonies and concerts, including visits of high dignitaries of foreign countries; but Quetta, Peshawar and Karachi, the blood-capitals of oppressed provinces, represent a very grim story....On December 20, 2013, Pakistan's interior minister, in a written reply to the Senate, tried his best to conceal the facts when replying to Dr Karim Ahmed Khawaja's question concerning the number of missing persons in the country since 2001 with a province-wise break-up and mutilated bodies found during the said period. A vague reply was prepared by the interior ministry, with no substantive data given. Despite the tall promises made by this government of ending brutal practices, it is complicit in hiding shocking facts related to extra-judicial killings.

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-222769-The-gloves-are-off>

¹⁴⁸ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/651342/what-are-pakistans-strategic-options-in-north-waziristan/>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/26-Dec-2013/the-mirali-tragedy>

¹⁴⁹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/651926/balochistans-sorry-existence/>

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

Presence of Indian forces is harmful to Siachen Glacier: Sartaj Aziz, *Express Tribune*, December 4¹⁵⁰

Presence of Indian forces on Siachen Glacier is harmful to the environment according to Advisor to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Radio Pakistan reported on December 4. Pakistan is facing a water shortage and Indian forces are damaging one of the largest sources of water to Pakistan on a regular basis, Aziz said.

Kashmir issue can trigger war, says Sharif, *Dawn*, December 4¹⁵¹

Nawaz Sharif expressed his resolve on December 3, for an early settlement of the Kashmir issue in accordance with UN resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiris, warning that failure to resolve the dispute in a timely manner could lead to war. "Kashmir is a flashpoint and can trigger a fourth war between the two nuclear powers at any time," he said in his brief address to the budget session of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Council. The council, which is a product of AJK's Interim Constitution Act of 1974, has its secretariat in Islamabad. It was for the first time its session was held in Muzaffarabad, where its Rs14.98 billion budget for the current fiscal year was approved.

On return from India: PTI not against US, India but their policies, says Imran, *Express Tribune*, December 9¹⁵²

PTI chief Imran Khan on December 8, said his party was not against the United States or India but their policies. Talking to reporters at the Allama Iqbal International airport on his return from India, he said he was in favour of trade with India. He said *Pakistan and India should build a civil nuclear technology plant on the border, with equal workforce from each of the countries. "This move will create an air of confidence between the two neighbouring nations"*.

Indian HC discusses bilateral issues with PM Nawaz, *The News*, December 11¹⁵³

Indian High Commissioner, Dr. T. C. A. Raghavan called on Nawaz Sharif at the PM House on December 11. Sources said that the Indo-Pak bilateral ties and matters of mutual interests came under discussion during this meeting.

PM suggests new forum, *Dawn*, December 12¹⁵⁴

Suggesting a new forum for talks with India on counter-terrorism, Nawaz Sharif proposed regular meetings of National Security Advisers (NSAs) of the two countries for insulating bilateral relations from effects of terrorism.

¹⁵⁰<http://tribune.com.pk/story/640977/presence-of-indian-forces-is-harmful-to-siachen-glacier-sartaj-aziz/>

¹⁵¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060417/kashmir-issue-can-trigger-war-says-sharif>

¹⁵²<http://tribune.com.pk/story/643055/on-return-from-india-pti-not-against-us-india-but-their-policies-says-imran/>

¹⁵³<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-129859-Indian-HC-discusses-bilateral-issues-with-PM-Nawaz>

¹⁵⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1062043/pm-suggests-new-forum>

Sharif can improve ties with India and Afghanistan, says US, Dawn, December13¹⁵⁵

The United States and India believe that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif can succeed in improving relations with both New Delhi and Kabul, says a senior US official. And the US wants Mr Sharif to have “a fair chance of being able to do so”, said US Special Representative for Pakistan and Afghanistan, James Dobbins.

Indian PM accepts invitation to visit Pakistan, Dawn, December13¹⁵⁶

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on December 12 got a formal invite from his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif for visiting that country, which was accepted, *The Economic Times* said. The invite was handed over to Dr Singh by Mr Sharif’s Special Assistant Tariq Fatemi and Chief Minister of Punjab Shahbaz Sharif who met the Indian prime minister for about half an hour.

Burying differences: Pakistan hands over fresh peace dossier to India, Express Tribune, December14¹⁵⁷

Pakistan has handed over a new set of proposals to India with the aim of improving the two countries’ ties with each other and gradually addressing all longstanding disputes between them.

US asks India to include civilians in DGMO talks, Dawn, December17¹⁵⁸

The US asked India to accept Pakistan’s suggestion for including civilian diplomats in the proposed DGMOs’ dialogue, US and Indian media reported on December 16.

Pakistan, Afghanistan, India have only option to live like good friends, The News, December20¹⁵⁹

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said on December 19, that Pakistan, Afghanistan and India have no option other than to become good friends, adding that the Afghan President Hamid Karzai agreed not to let the lands of their countries be used against each other. In an interview to Turkish media, Sharif said that neighbours could not be changed.

Trade talks to resume between Pakistan and India, The News, December20¹⁶⁰

Ministry of Commerce officials said on December 20 that Pakistan and India had agreed to resume trade talks. Talks will resume with secretary level discussions in India which will be held in late January or February. Officials from the Ministry of Commerce added that talks will resume from where they had left off.

¹⁵⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1072109/sharif-can-improve-ties-with-india-and-afghanistan-says-us>

¹⁵⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1072075/indian-pm-accepts-invitation-to-visit-pakistan>

¹⁵⁷<http://tribune.com.pk/story/645331/burying-differences-pakistan-hands-over-fresh-peace-dossier-to-india/>

¹⁵⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074521/us-asks-india-to-include-civilians-in-dgmo-talks>

¹⁵⁹<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-131105-Pakistan,-Afghanistan,-India-have-only-option-to-live-like-good-friends>

¹⁶⁰<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-131129-Trade-talks-to-resume-between-Pakistan-and-India->

Energy trade: Pakistan moves closer to electricity import from India, *Express Tribune*, December 24¹⁶¹

At a time when the international court has allowed India to divert water from the Neelum Jhelum River for the Kishanganga Dam in Indian-controlled Kashmir, Pakistan is set to sign an initial deal for import of electricity from Delhi to overcome a crippling power crisis.

Accord to defuse LoC tensions, *Dawn*, December 25¹⁶²

DGMOs of Pakistan and India pledged on December 24 to uphold the 2003 Line of Control (LoC) ceasefire accord which had been left in tatters by repeated violations this year. The truce breaches had put the nascent bilateral peace dialogue on hold. The two countries agreed to a number of steps to keep the ceasefire accord intact.

Working boundary tensions to be reduced, *Dawn*, December 26¹⁶³

The bi-annual meeting between senior officials of Pakistan Rangers (Punjab) and India's Border Security Force continued for a second day at the Rangers Headquarters here on December 25. Sources told *Dawn* that both sides, which met after one and a half years, agreed to resolve the issues of unprovoked firing by the BSF on the working boundary, airspace violation by Indian helicopters and spy planes, prevention of inadvertent border-crossing and killing of innocent citizens.

Editorials and Opinions

Melting point, *Express Tribune*, December 11¹⁶⁴

The stubborn position taken by India over the Siachin Glacier has not helped lower temperatures at all. Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal told the 29th charter meeting of Saarc in Islamabad that *while Islamabad and New Delhi have reached an agreement over Siachen and Sir Creek, the Indian security establishment is refusing to allow signatures to be put on it.*

Many initiatives, no solutions, *The Nation*, December 17¹⁶⁵

Shahbaz Sharif's visit to India culminated with a reiteration of the governing party's commitment to improve ties with India. The Sharif brothers' infatuation with the neighbour is no secret, however they have neglected to mention just what is it about India that appeals them so much. Words of 'cooperation' and 'progress' have been bandied about with ceaseless repetition, but PML-N has still not elaborated on why they feel that our Eastern border holds the answer to all of the problems this country is riddled with.

¹⁶¹<http://tribune.com.pk/story/649700/energy-trade-pakistan-moves-closer-to-electricity-import-from-india/>

¹⁶² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1076126/accord-to-defuse-loc-tensions>

¹⁶³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1076411/working-boundary-tensions-to-be-reduced>

¹⁶⁴ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/643740/melting-point/>

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/17-Dec-2013/many-initiatives-no-solutions>

<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/15-Dec-2013/marginal-gdp-improvements>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1074544/cms-visit-to-indian-punjab>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-220621-The-Punjab-bridge>

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1073988/slow-progress-on-peace-shahbaz-sharifs-india-visit>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-220508-Invitation-diplomacy>

Trade with India, Dawn, December 24¹⁶⁶

The Nawaz Sharif government is believed to have decided to de-link the issue of trade relations with India from the progress on the slow-moving composite dialogue between the two countries. The decision, if implemented, should significantly boost bilateral trade that has increased from \$1.8bn to \$2.6bn since the resumption of commerce secretary-level talks in April 2011. A newspaper report has quoted anonymous sources as saying the state minister for commerce could announce certain actions Islamabad is deliberating in order to further liberalise trade with India during his visit to that country next month. ...*An important measure that Pakistan plans to take is to increase the number of items that can be traded through the Wagah-Attari land route from the present 137 to 500.* It represents a major move towards complete normalisation of bilateral trade.

A meeting to clear the air, Dawn, December 25¹⁶⁷

The getting together of the directors general military operations of Pakistan and India (Major General Aamer Riaz from Pakistan and Lieutenant General Vinod Bhatia from India) at Wagah on Tuesday is significant....Reportedly, Islamabad was keen on including diplomats in the meeting, a move which according to the Indian media enjoyed the support of the US. India, however, wanted to keep it limited to the two DGMOs and a few senior military officers who were there to aid them in their discussions. Maybe the scope of the meeting can be broadened in the future to create some space for diplomats *but as current signs go, Pakistan does appear to be making an effort to expand the dialogue wherever it deems it possible and trying to accelerate the forward movement on peace.*

Our neglected have-nots, I.A. Rehman, Dawn, December 26¹⁶⁸

The killing of an Indian fisherman Naranbhai Sosa reportedly by the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency on Oct 11 last has again *highlighted the enormous suffering caused to the subcontinent's have-nots by insensitive administrators on both sides of the borders.* Indian fisherfolk representatives met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to demand a meeting of the Indian Coast Guard and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency representatives and a proper inquiry into Sosa's killing. *It would be good if, without waiting for a move by New Delhi, Islamabad announced its readiness for an inquiry by a joint India-Pakistan team.* The Pakistani authorities should also inquire into the killing of an unarmed Indian fisherman, if such an investigation has not already been held.

¹⁶⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075920/trade-with-india>

¹⁶⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1076286/a-meeting-to-clear-the-air>
<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/26-Dec-2013/dgmos-meeting>
<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-222534-Initial-contact>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/25-Dec-2013/moving-towards-peace>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/650975/a-welcome-meeting/>

¹⁶⁸ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1076389/our-neglected-have-nots>

IWT an anachronism?, *The News*, December 27¹⁶⁹

No matter how hard we try to spin it, *the International Court of Arbitration verdict on the Kishanganga hydroelectric project is a massive blow to Pakistan*. We had asked the court to ensure that India maintain a minimum of 100 cubic metres per second of water in the Kishanganga-Neelum River but India has been allowed to maintain only nine cubic metres per second of water. ...Just how badly we botched our case is referred to in the report itself, saying “Pakistan has submitted no data on current or anticipated agricultural uses of water from the Kishanganga/Neelum.”... *The problem is that the Indus Water Treaty itself has become an anachronism in a world where the rivers’ flow has decreased and the water needs of Pakistan and India have multiplied. Only a new, more just treaty will solve this vexing issue.*

An uncomfortable truth about Indian agents, *Daily times*, December 27¹⁷⁰

Pakistan, in the 21st century, has emerged as an irresponsible nation infamous for hiding the world’s most wanted terrorists and providing them safe havens to plot their future assaults. Nonetheless, for us, the reason for our failure is not our internal ineptitude at all.Rather, we believe it is because of the foreign conspiracies and enemy agents in our ranks who are working against the national interest to benefit others. All of us carry blind faith in such presuppositions. ..In short, we have people from every aspect of life who can easily be labelled as Indian or enemy agents.....Their duplicity, in the eyes of most Pakistanis, is indeed mindboggling. While they will proclaim that talks with the Taliban are not going to work and a strong army operation is the only option, they will, in the same breath, also announce that there is no military solution with India and that war is not an option for Pakistan.

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

| Place | Date | Description | Killed | Injured |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|--------|---------|
| Balochistan | | | | |
| Khuzdar ¹⁷¹ | 2/12/2013 | Four persons, including a schoolteacher, were killed by unidentified gunmen | 4 | 1 |
| Naseerabad ¹⁷² | | | 6 | 1 |
| Turbat ¹⁷³ | | Six people killed in Balochistan clash. | | |
| | | Clash between militants and | 6 | 0 |

¹⁶⁹ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-8-222762-The-river-of-our-discontent>
<http://www.nation.com.pk/editorials/22-Dec-2013/kishanganga-decision>

¹⁷⁰ <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/27-Dec-2013/an-uncomfortable-truth-about-indian-agents>

¹⁷¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060254/four-men-killed-in-khuzdar>

¹⁷² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1060702/six-people-killed-in-balochistan-clash>

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------|--|---|----|
| | 24/12/2013 | security forces kills six in Turbat | | |
| Punjab | | | | |
| Lahore | 6/12/2013 | ASWJ's Maulana Shamsur Rehman killed in Lahore | 2 | 0 |
| Rawalpindi ¹⁷⁴ | 18/12/2013 | Three dead in suicide blast near Rawalpindi Imambargah. | 3 | 14 |
| Khyber Pakhtunkhwa | | | | |
| Peshawar ¹⁷⁵ | 8/12/2013 | Militants kill policeman in check post attack near Bannu | 1 | 1 |
| Swabi ¹⁷⁶ | 13/12/2013 | Two police officers, one polio worker shot dead in separate incidents | 3 | 0 |
| Peshawar ¹⁷⁷ | 16/12/2013 | Four bomb disposal unit personnel killed in Peshawar blast | 4 | 1 |
| Peshawar ¹⁷⁸ | 16/12/2013 | At least 19 govt employees killed in Peshawar explosion. | 1 | 42 |
| Peshawar ¹⁷⁹ | 17/12/2013 | Policeman injured in IED attack in Peshawar | 0 | 1 |
| Peshawar ¹⁸⁰ | 17/12/2013 | Under threat: Another healthcare professional gunned down in Peshawar. | 1 | 0 |
| Parachinar ¹⁸¹ | 17/12/2013 | Twin blasts in Parachinar kill two, injure four | 2 | 4 |
| Khyber Agency ¹⁸² | 21/12/2013 | Polio worker shot dead in Khyber Agency. | 1 | 0 |
| Peshawar ¹⁸³ | 28/12/2013 | Polio worker killed, two others injured in Peshawar firing. | 1 | 2 |
| Peshawar ¹⁸⁴ | 30/12/2013 | At least three killed in Charsadda blast | 3 | 0 |
| Sindh | | | | |

¹⁷³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1076125/clash-between-militants-and-security-forces-kills-six-in-turbat>

¹⁷⁴<http://www.dawn.com/news/1074674/three-dead-in-suicide-blast-near-rawalpindi-imambargah>

¹⁷⁵<http://www.dawn.com/news/1060663/militants-kill-policeman-in-checkpost-attack-near-bannu>

¹⁷⁶ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/644967/undefined-men-kill-two-police-officers-in-swabi/>

¹⁷⁷ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/646085/two-bds-officials-killed-in-peshawar-blast/>

¹⁷⁸<http://www.dawn.com/news/1045806/at-least-19-govt-employees-killed-in-peshawar-explosion>

¹⁷⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074633/policeman-injured-in-ied-attack-in-peshawar>

¹⁸⁰<http://tribune.com.pk/story/646289/under-threat-another-healthcare-professional-gunned-down-in-peshawar/>

¹⁸¹ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/646633/blast-in-parachinar-kills-two/>

¹⁸² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075487/polio-worker-shot-dead-in-khyber-agency>

¹⁸³<http://www.dawn.com/news/1076922/polio-worker-killed-two-others-injured-in-peshawar-firing>

¹⁸⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1077305/at-least-three-killed-in-charsadda-blast>

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|---------------------------------|------------|--|----|----|
| Karachi ¹⁸⁵ | 03/12/2013 | 12 people were killed in different areas of Karachi. | 12 | |
| Karachi ¹⁸⁶ | 4/12/2013 | 'TTP' leader among five killed in encounters | 5 | |
| Karachi ¹⁸⁷ | 8/12/2013 | Two brothers, cousin gunned down in Karachi | 3 | |
| Karachi ¹⁸⁸ | 10/12/2013 | Dozen more lives snuffed out in overnight Karachi violence | 12 | 0 |
| Karachi ¹⁸⁹ | 11/12/2013 | Karachi violence kills at least three. | 3 | 0 |
| Karachi ¹⁹⁰ | 12/12/13 | Seven Rangers personnel injured in Karachi explosion. | | 7 |
| Karachi ¹⁹¹ | 14/12/2013 | Karachi: Girl gunned down in Gulistan-e-Jauhar | 1 | 0 |
| Karachi ¹⁹² | 22/12/2013 | Attack on police officer kills two, injures 15 in Karachi. | 2 | 15 |
| FATA | | | | |
| North Waziristan ¹⁹³ | 12/12/2013 | Blast targeting security forces' convoy kills two in Waziristan. | 2 | 0 |
| North Waziristan ¹⁹⁴ | 19/12/2013 | Suicide attack kills five soldiers in North Waziristan. | 5 | 34 |
| Mir Ali ¹⁹⁵ | 21/12/2013 | More deaths and clashes in North Waziristan. | | |
| Mirali ¹⁹⁶ | 23/12/2013 | Two hurt as shell hits Mirali house | 53 | 0 |
| | | | 0 | 2 |

¹⁸⁵ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-27056-12-killed-in-renewed-violence-in-Karachi>

¹⁸⁶ http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2013\12\05\story_5-12-2013_pg12_3

¹⁸⁷ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061000/two-brothers-cousin-gunned-down-in-karachi>

¹⁸⁸ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-129679-Dozen-more-lives-snuffed-out-in-overnight-Karachi-violence>

¹⁸⁹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1061900/karachi-violence-kills-at-least-three-110-suspects-arrested>

¹⁹⁰ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1062081/seven-rangers-personnel-injured-in-karachi-explosion>

¹⁹¹ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1073883/one-killed-in-karachi-violence-19-suspects-arrested-in-raids>

¹⁹² <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075317/attack-on-police-officer-kills-two-injures-15-in-karachi>

¹⁹³ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1072049/blast-targeting-security-forces-convoy-kills-two-in-waziristan>

¹⁹⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1074861/suicide-attack-kills-five-soldiers-in-north-waziristan>

¹⁹⁵ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075314/more-deaths-and-clashes-in-north-waziristan>

¹⁹⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075781/two-hurt-as-shell-hits-mirali-house>