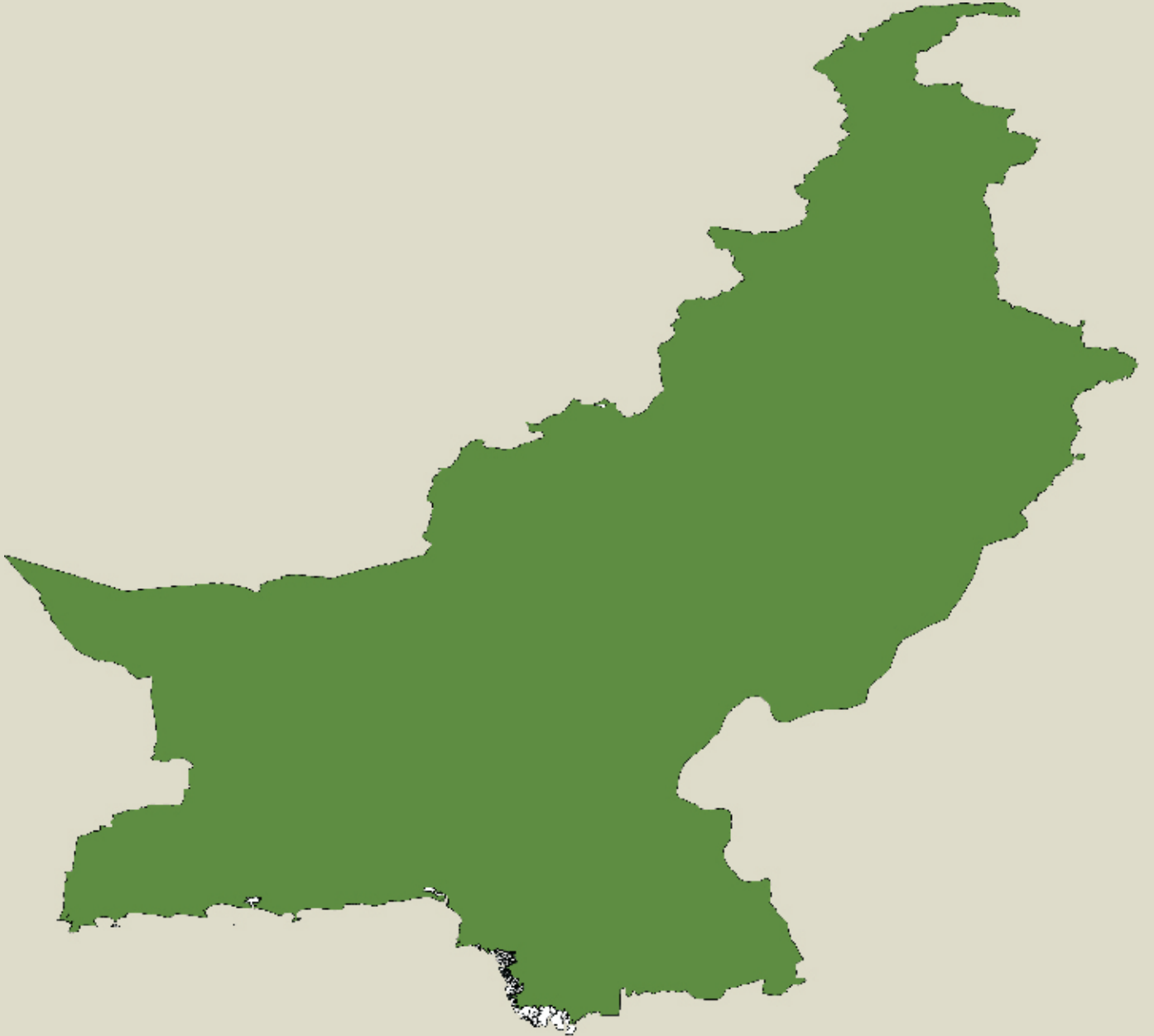


JUNE 2019

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

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



Prepared by
Dr. Zainab Akhter
Dr. Nazir Ahmad Mir
Dr. Mohammad Eisa
Dr. Ashok Behuria

idsa
INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES
रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, June 2019

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	03
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS	08
ECONOMIC ISSUES	11
SECURITY SITUATION	13
URDU & ELECTRONIC MEDIA	
Urdu.....	20
Electronic.....	23
STATISTICS	
BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES.....	26

Editorial

The *internal politics* of Pakistan went into further crisis with the government targeting the eminent leaders of the opposition, arresting them under the provision of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) for corruption. Among the high profile arrests were Hamza Shehbaz leader of the opposition in the Punjab Assembly and son of Shehbaz Sharif, Asif Ali Zardari of the PPP and an offshore arrest of Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) leader Altaf Hussain in London. This promoted the opposition to come together and thus began a series of meetings between Bilawal Bhutto and Kulsum Nawaz. It culminated in an Opposition Parties Joint Conference towards the end of the month which was represented by all major opposition parties. The opposition termed the Budget as *IMF friendly* and not people friendly and underlined that the arrests were made so as to mull the voice of opposition in the Parliament so that the PTI government can pass the Budget without any opposition.

On the *economic* front the visit of Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani to the cash strapped nation and an expectation of an announcement of investments worth \$22 billion during his visit brought some relieve to the Imran Khan government. Imran Khan held one-on-one talk with the Emir which was followed by delegation-level talks. The two sides signed three memorandums of understanding (MoU) on establishment of Pakistan and Qatar Joint Working Group on Trade Investment, on cooperation in the fields of tourism and financial intelligence. It has to be noted that this comes as a second major investment by a Middle Eastern country after Saudi Arab pledged to invest \$21 billion in Pakistan earlier this year.

The visit of Afghan President Asharaf Ghani came at an interesting point when the peace talks with Taliban is on and Kabul's accusation that Pakistan of interfering in its internal politics. It has to be noted that this visit came less than a week after Pakistan hosted opposition leaders of Afghanistan in a conference at Lahore to discuss the prospects of ending the war in Afghanistan. The two day visit was aimed at reconnecting with Pakistan after a year of breakdown in relationship between the two countries. However, amid debate over what to expect from Pakistan, two key questions surface about the country's perceived interests and its past engagement with Afghan governments. Firstly will there be a constructive role of Pakistan in Afghanistan and second does Pakistan has a level of influence over Taliban which it claims.

Zainab Akhter

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

All is not well in Pakistan, Yasser Latif Hamdani, Daily Times, 03 June¹

There is something very wrong in the way dissent and criticism has been handled over the last one year. Take the example of Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement. The more you make them into bogeymen the more you add to the numbers supporting them. No one had heard of them a year ago but now everyone knows them. By jailing them and constantly building them up as an enemy, you are merely adding to the myth of PTM. Reasonable people are now beginning to question the heavy handed tactics employed against them. *By using force against them in any manner you are losing the war of public opinion, both nationally and internationally. You have, because of your thoughtless actions, made pygmies into leaders of international renown. This is a crisis entirely of your own making.* My appeal therefore is not to PTI because it is an incompetent and fascist organisation and the government it is running is bound to fail miserably sooner or later. My appeal is to the powers that be behind the scenes as someone who loves this country and is troubled by the direction it is taken. It is important to place the national interest above institutional interest and ego. This is the time for it. Please do not let Pakistan down at this critical juncture by enabling the fascist tendencies of an incompetent party that is completely out of its depth.

OIC politicking, Editorial, Dawn, 03 June²

The OIC and other multilateral Arab and Islamic forums are often seen as being used by Saudi Arabia to forward its geopolitical aims. Moreover, the ongoing Saudi-Iranian spat has an unseemly sectarian flavour to it, reflected in the fact that Iraq — an Arab country — refused to denounce Iran, considering its own Shia population. In the shadow of such internal bickering, other issues — some would say the ‘real’ issues plaguing the Muslim world — were also raised, including by this country’s prime minister during the OIC summit. *The proverbial burning issues of Palestine, Kashmir, and the shocking plight of the Rohingya as well as the hateful march of Islamophobia all were highlighted.* The OIC — with the combined petrochemical wealth and manpower of its members — has huge potential to address the ills of the Muslim world and the global community in general. But how can these energies be harnessed when the forum is used to forward petty agendas and promote division?

¹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/405920/all-is-not-well-in-pakistan/>

² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1486256/oic-politicking>

PTI restructuring, Editorial, Dawn, 05 June³

There has been a recent decision to attempt a restructuring drive within the PTI. The idea is to have a stronger PTI by 2021, especially with the next general election scheduled for 2023. **There have been signs about the level of importance Mr Khan attaches to organisation at the local level.** The party has a new constitution, a gift to mark its 23 years — and its first birthday at the helm. Thus, as news about the PTI's desire to turn itself into a formidable organisation with deep roots among the people does the rounds, *it is not impossible to notice a parallel effort to reinforce the image of Mr Khan as a true leader of the people.* It is unfortunate for the anti-dynasty and anti-dictatorial elements though that quite often personalities have beaten their own parties in the race. *Given these trends, Mr Khan's party will have to do something exceptional to come out of his spell and act as a modern and efficient machine.*

Islamic unity in tatters, Talat Masood, The Express Tribune, 06 June⁴

Only few Muslim countries can claim to be democratic or semi-democratic. Apart from Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan, most are monarchies or dictatorships. Even the ones that profess to be democratic like us have fragile democratic structures with power residing elsewhere. *The most disturbing aspect is the current Iran-Saudi conflict that has far-reaching adverse consequences for the Muslim Ummah. It has several dimensions — sectarian rivalry, power projection to assert dominance in the region and an arena of world powers rivalry.* For the Arab countries, the immediate and foremost challenge is to counter the influence of Iran for which they are prepared to set aside their decades-long hostility toward Israel to target a common adversary. *This has allowed Israel to blatantly suppress the Palestinian cause and commit flagrant violations of human rights.* It has further emboldened the US to put pressure on Iran by squeezing its economy and building a ring around it of hostile countries. *The Iran-Arab rivalry provides the US and other major arms-producing countries an opportunity to sell their arms and promote their defence industries.*

³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1486643/pti-restructuring>

⁴ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1986932/6-islamic-unity-tatters/>

Zardari nabbed after rejection of bail plea, Malik Asad, Amir Wasim, Dawn, 11 June⁵

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Monday arrested former president Asif Zardari after cancellation of his pre-arrest bail by the Islamabad High Court in the fake bank accounts case, prompting a strong reaction from the opposition and sporadic protests by Pakistan People's Party (PPP) workers in various parts of the country, mostly in the party-ruled Sindh province. Terming his father's arrest an act of "political victimization" by the PTI government, PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari while addressing a presser declared it a negation of Article 10-A of the Constitution that guaranteed the right of fair trial. *The main opposition PML-N questioned the timing of arrest, alleging that it had been done to divert public attention from the "IMF-prepared anti-people budget" that the government would present on Tuesday (today).*

Can Imran Khan prevent the chaos? Kamran Yousaf, The Express Tribune, 17 June⁶

Despite being in the government for over 10 months, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is still struggling to put its act together to deal with multiple challenges. *PTI supporters and voters would certainly not like it but fact remains that the current government has no direction.* Many, when they first heard about the PM's recent address to the nation, thought that Imran Khan would take the nation into confidence about the tough economic decisions his government had to take during the budget. *But instead his speech offered nothing new except his decision to form an Inquiry Commission to look into the loans obtained by the PPP and the PML-N governments from 2008 to 2018.* According to him, since the economy has been 'stabilised', he would now focus on the PTI's main agenda to pursue the accountability of those who plundered the national wealth during the last 10 years. *The PTI government or its economic managers know exactly where the rupee would end up against the dollar by the end of this year. But they are not telling the truth.*

⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1487433/zardari-nabbed-after-rejection-of-bail-plea>

⁶ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1993989/6-can-imran-khan-prevent-chaos/>

The new leadership, Editorial, Dawn, 18 June⁷

The meeting between Maryam Nawaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari is important in the context of long-term Pakistani politics, especially as the opposition parties try and build up momentum for a drive against the government. Many who desired a resurrection of the PPP had been hoping that Benazir Bhutto's son would be allowed to try and breathe new life into the PPP. He has got a chance to prove his mettle as the head of a party that thrives on protest — and at a time when the PPP is in turmoil. Mr Bhutto-Zardari and Ms. Nawaz who came together to sign the document they called the Charter of Democracy. Even if we disregard the official taunts that the endeavours of the two next-generation politicians result in, it is obvious that at one level theirs is indeed a campaign to rescue their respective fathers. They have talked quite loftily of the need to develop further the famous Charter of Democracy, but that agreement belonged to a different era altogether. *It was relevant to a period in which the PPP and the PML-N took turns to govern and play the role of opposition. It was believed that this arrangement would continue forever. But that pattern has since been disrupted.*

Yet another council, Editorial, Dawn, 21 June⁸

The formation of another council for high-level decision-making raises some important questions. *First among these is, why is there a need for such a council? The notification creating the National Development Council gives four functions to be focused on, while adding the caveat that others can be included later on.* These functions are to “set policies and strategies for development” as well as “accelerated economic growth”, and “approve long-term planning for national and regional connectivity and provide guidelines for regional cooperation *It is difficult to escape the impression that the council is being brought in as some sort of national decision-making body to preside over all aspects of the government's operations from CPEC to taxation matters, trade and diplomacy. It is difficult to see why the need to notify such a council arose in the first place.* The fact that the army chief will be part of it, and perhaps more uniformed individuals in the days to come, shows that the decisions to be taken there will require broad, horizontal input. *The presence of the military on the council has elevated its importance, and thereby given rise to speculation as to its purpose.*

⁷ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1488870/the-new-leadership>

⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1489492/yet-another-council>

Fissures in our political parties, Daily Times, Editorial, 23 June⁹

*While both Bilawal Bhutto and Maryam Nawaz have toughened up their stance against the government, particularly the prime minister, in recent days the elder politicians in their parties – Asif Zardari and Shahbaz Sharif – have strangely struck a more reconciliatory note. Both the senior leaders have held out an olive branch to the beleaguered government in their parliamentary speeches and suggested that the economic managers sit down with the opposition to discuss economic problems faced by the country. Not content with waiting for a response from the government side, PML-N vice-president Maryam Nawaz has categorically rejected the Charter of Economy proposal. She says her ailing father Nawaz Sharif, too, does not approve of offering cooperation to the government. Going further, she has urged other opposition parties to let the government deal with its problems on its own. She is thus closely following the line taken by Bilawal Bhutto, who in a public rally in Nawabshah, warned the prime minister against anti-opposition measures. **Opposition parties need to first get their own house in order and bring their rank and file on the same page. Both the PPP and the PML-N apparently need internal debate on the factors that are causing fissures within their parties.***

US-Iran rift and implications for Pakistan, Taimur Shamil, The Express Tribune, 25 June¹⁰

Pakistan has been actively pursuing its strategic options and goals in the region. In recent times, Islamabad has been working out for strategic support from within the region. Iran has been vital in this case. As the Afghan conundrum takes another turn, Pakistan and Iran collaborate to work for common regional threats and challenges to peace and stability. The visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan and senior Pakistani officials to Tehran was the continuity of Islamabad's regional security approach. *There are several challenges that are common to both Pakistan and Iran. The IS threat from the Afghan soil is on the top of the list. While the Taliban and the US talk about settlement, it is vital for Pakistan and the regional countries to chalk out a mechanism which can ensure security of Pakistan and other countries in the region.*

⁹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/417287/fissures-in-our-political-parties/>

¹⁰ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1999395/6-us-iran-rift-implications-pakistan/>

The struggle for being a 'Normal State', Talat Masood, *The Express Tribune*, 26 June¹¹

It is still not clear after seventy-two years of country's existence if the political parties and institutions are fully committed to democracy. In Pakistan, we are generally disregarding the norms of extensive debates through appropriate forums. *As a consequence of this vacuum, the military and other state institutions have to play a larger role than is expected in normal democracies.* In fact there is a greater requirement to energise parliament and strengthen institutions. One thing is clear our existing model of power configuration and policymaking is proving very costly. *Every major area of national activity is facing a serious crisis whether it is the economy, national politics or external relations. This needs no elaboration, as we are living and experiencing it all the time.* The political pattern in our country is taking on a depressing shape. There has to be a realization among political parties that confrontational politics is pushing the country in a blind alley. *Of great concern are the consequences that could result with unfulfilled expectations and the euphoria created after projection of Naya Pakistan.*

ECONOMIC ISSUES

Why does Pakistan have to face this situation? Syed Zeeshan Haider, *Daily Times*, 04 June¹²

The last three decades were wasted due to collusion between the government, the ruling class, and the industrialists. The industrialists spent their profits on their own lavish needs, on the purchasing of properties abroad, and on the shifting of their businesses while, at the same time, Pakistan became weaker and weaker. According to the industrialists, they could foresee the future circumstances that awaited them due to ineffective planning by the government and had to shift their business abroad. After that, the decade of the '90s was characterized by sectarianism and violence against minorities. Those with investments and any type of skill-be it medical or engineering-were left with no option but to leave the country. This is how Pakistan lost both its investors and its skilled labour. *In addition to this, it is unfortunate to note that India-Pakistan trade has nearly come to a halt. As a result, Pakistani consumers have to buy low-quality products from China at higher*

¹¹ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2000093/6-struggle-normal-state/>

¹² <https://dailytimes.com.pk/406587/why-does-pakistan-have-to-face-this-situation/>

rates since the only remaining competitors are those products produced in Europe and other countries, which lie out of the reach of the Pakistani consumer due to their cost and the long-distance land routes. If we were to carry out trade with India, investors from India and China would have to compete with each other for the Pakistani market. This would give the Pakistani consumer access to cheaper and higher quality products. But this will not happen due to our foreign policy.

Faltering economy, Editorial, Dawn, 12 June¹³

According to the latest Economic Survey of Pakistan that the country's economy is now in the throes of a sharp slowdown which is expected to persist all through the next year as well. The Survey makes it abundantly clear that a large economic adjustment has to be undertaken. Revenues have posted zero growth while expenditures have grown by almost 8pc. *Even the shrinking of the current account deficit by 27pc from last year is not as encouraging a story when one sees that much of it owes to the shrinking furnace oil imports, along with a handful of other items.* Exports have posted zero growth as well, while foreign investment has fallen by almost 50pc. It now remains to be seen what strategy the government intends to follow to help mitigate the impact of this awful situation on the poor.

Flawed budget process, Ahmed Bilal Mehboob, Dawn, 17 June¹⁴

In Pakistan, there are four serious flaws in the process of preparing, passing and implementing the annual budget in the assemblies, both at the federal and provincial level. First and foremost is the absence of a public finance management law which governs the budget process. The second and probably the most serious flaw in our budget process is the constitutional provision which gives almost unlimited power to the executive to alter the budget even after it is passed by the National Assembly. Third, although the National Assembly has to bear the burden of passing the annual budget with recommendations received from the Senate, the process of debating and passing the budget gives the impression of non-seriousness. *And last, unlike other legislations that normally have to be referred to the concerned parliamentary committees for detailed scrutiny, the finance bill is not referred to any committee.*

Charter of economy, Editorial, Dawn, 25 June¹⁵

¹³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1487731/faltering-economy>

¹⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1488659/flawed-budget-process>

¹⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1490306/charter-of-economy>

It might sound incongruous in these times of polarization, but there is a growing need for the political parties to agree on a 'charter of economy' if Pakistan is to have any hope of breaking its cycle of eternal return to the IMF. The issue has come back to the surface of late, especially since Maryam Nawaz obliquely announced her opposition to making any 'deal' with the government, while Shahbaz Sharif and Asif Zardari have both supported the idea. The logic of refusing to deal with one's opponents because they have come to power 'through the back door' is fine for political purposes, but the need and demand for a charter of economy is different, and predates the present. It is worth remembering that the idea had been floated in the past by the PML-N itself.

Support from Qatar, Editorial, *The Express Tribune*, 25 June¹⁶

*As part of the attempts to replenish the depleted coffers, the government has managed to woo Qatar into providing it with an immediate cash injection of \$3 billion, with a partnership which could rise to \$9 billion. Specific to Qatar, the government has moved to sign three memorandums of understanding on setting up a joint working group on trade and investment, tourism and financial intelligence with regard to money laundering. Moreover, the government will move to extend its visa-free regime to tourists from Qatar. Doha, on the other hand, has agreed to lift a ban on importing rice from Pakistan – a major export. *The only hitch in extending ties with Qatar remains the close ties Islamabad has worked hard to develop with Riyadh and Abu Dhabi over the past year.**

Debts and deficits, Dr Pervez Tahir, *The Express Tribune*, 28 June¹⁷

*Every time the dollar price increases, the external debt servicing in rupee terms increases in equal proportion. The system is already stuck in the so-called debt trap – borrowing more to service past debt rather than for new projects and programmes. However, exporters are more worried about losing the zero-rated privilege in the sales tax regime than about improving competitiveness. The government has been barred from borrowing from the SBP. It has now to depend on commercial banks and other sources. Even here, the cost of borrowing has gone through the roof, given the galloping policy rate that is another condition precedent of the IMF programme. *If the**

¹⁶ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1999382/6-support-from-qatar/>

¹⁷ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2001630/6-debts-and-deficits/>

purpose of the IMF programme is to deter the government from borrowing by raising its cost, the idea seems self-defeating.

SECURITY SITUATION

Terrorism strikes again, Editorial, *Daily Times*, 09 June¹⁸

Back-to-back IED blasts in the Datta Khel area of North Waziristan during Eid holidays have claimed six lives. *These incidents show that militants are once again challenging the writ of the state after only a brief lull. This is not to deny that there has been a marked decrease in the acts of terrorism over the last couple of years.* The terrorists have been bottled up in North Waziristan and parts of Balochistan. The two areas represent a challenge to the armed forces on account of their hostile, inhospitable and rugged terrain. Hopefully, we will see the situation improve in the coming days. *Datta Khel should have been under the vigilant watch of the armed forces given its history as a militant hot spot since the creation of the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan in 2007.* In Balochistan Shia Hazaras are the obvious target for certain sectarian outfits. Security personnel are the ultimate target of TTP-inspired militants and some ethnic groups. Both North Waziristan and Balochistan need attention of the armed forces as well civilian actors. The fight has to go on until the last of terrorists has been put down.

Internet monitoring, Editorial, *Dawn*, 10 June¹⁹

Among the most alarming aspects of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority's recent moves *to implement a Web Monitoring System is the haste in which the latter was conceived and the PTA's directions to the telecom industry to implement it.* In effect, telcos are expected to pay exorbitant costs in order to — and “for the purposes of national security” — monitor, measure, record and filter internet traffic on a massive scale in Pakistan. The cost of blocking more and more websites in Pakistan will have to be borne by the telcos and in turn passed on to consumers — *making fixed broadband and cellular data more expensive and thus increasingly inaccessible to many citizens.* There will be a cascading effect of economic losses for commercial and individual consumers as a result of slower internet speeds. Another

¹⁸ <https://daillytimes.com.pk/409073/terrorism-strikes-again/>

¹⁹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1487243/internet-monitoring>

potential consequence of WMS is that services that offer internet voice communications, such as WhatsApp, Messenger and FaceTime, may be blocked in the country, since the encryption they offer would interfere with the ability to surveil communications. *Practical and capacity issues notwithstanding, on paper, there is little to prevent ordinary citizens being subjected to the same level of scrutiny as criminals.*

After high-profile arrests, Editorial, Daily Times, 12 June ²⁰

A day after the Zardari arrest, the NAB also arrested Hamza Shahbaz, the leader of the opposition in the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab, in cases alleging money laundering and possession of assets beyond known means. These back-to-back high profile arrests could bring the two main opposition parties closer to wage a joint anti-government struggle at a time when the government is going to present a budget likely to introduce several harsh measures. *The arrests of Asif Zaradri and Hamza Shahbaz were followed shortly afterwards by workers of their parties taking to the streets in protest.* The government appears hell bent to push the mainstream opposition into agitation mode. It is clearly not taking any chances on the filing of references against superior court judges being enough. With some justification, it is being accused of having a policy of suppressing dissenting voices in politics, judiciary, media and civil society.

URDU & ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Urdu

Makkah meeting- Pakistan's shaky position, Editorial, Ummat, 02 June ²¹

The meeting of the 57-countries based Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) took place in Makkah. *The joint statement of the meeting condemned the US' decision to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and accepting Israel's claim on the Golan Heights.* The declaration read that the OIC will continue to support Palestine. The OIC asked its member countries that they should act against the countries who decided to shift their embassies to Jerusalem. ... Despite being an organization of the countries that comprises of 1.50 billion people, OIC has not been able resolve single issue related to the Muslims. *Prime Minister Imran Khan raised Kashmir issue along with*

²⁰ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/410271/after-high-profile-arrests/>

²¹ <http://ummat.net/2019/06/02/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

Palestine in his speech but the declaration did not mention it. Muslims across the world support Palestine cause. But it is unfortunate that they do not remember the Muslims of Kashmir who are 'subjected to violence by India.' More tragic is that even in the prayers offered at the holy places of Makkah and Medina no voice is raised or prayers offered for the Kashmiris. *Main reason for that is the good relations of Saudi Arabia with India and Pakistan's horrible diplomacy.* Many experts say that the purpose of the meeting was to target Iran. In that case, Pakistan needs to take every step carefully.

Anti-state elements killed two more in Waziristan, Editorial, Daily Khabrain, 02 June²²

Pakistan army sacrificed many lives of its soldiers to clear South and North Waziristan from terrorists and restored peace in the areas. *However, today because of the anti-Pakistan agenda of foreign countries the innocent and simple people are pushed towards terrorism.* Let's assume that with the enemy's support people like Ali Wazir and Mohsin Dawar become members of the national assembly. But it is moment of reckoning that how come the NDS chief becomes supporter of Mohsin Dawar? *On that the message that comes out from the national assembly is that the leaders of the both main opposition parties Maryam Nawaz and Bilawal Bhutto while supporting Ali Wazir and Mohsin Dawar, are trying to build pressure on the government so that Asif Ali Zardari and the Sharif brothers may get some relief.* Is the support to Dawar going to continue until Imran Khan's government loses its power or till Asif Zardari or the Sharif brothers are released? ... It is be decided whether Mohsin is the representative of the Pashtuns or the members of national assembly are. Whole nation is praising army for restoring peace in Waziristan but Mohsin is going against peace. Many questions have been raised about Mohsin. First one is why did he attack the Pakistan army? ... *Mohsin is getting exposed. Before the attack, he killed an on-leave soldier near Khorom. When the involved people were arrested, it is then Mohsin tried to get them released. The people who attacked the army and against the country should be strongly pushed.* ... In whole world rule is that one who acts against country is not welcome. In Pakistan the opposition is asking protection for the people who attacked the army.

Officers martyred in Waziristan; supporters of Dawar need to answer, Editorial, Daily Khabrain, 09 June²³

²² <http://epaper.dailykhabrain.com.pk/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2019-06-02/87445/01.jpg>

²³ <http://epaper.dailykhabrain.com.pk/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2019-06-09/87909/01.jpg>

Security forces arrested few facilitators in the killing of an army personnel in North Waziristan two months back. *Just few days after the arrest protestors attack Kharqamar Check post in which one jawan is martyred and five are injured. It came out from the investigation that the protestors were invoked by Ali Wazir and Mohsin Dawar. They were trying to get the arrested people released. Pakistan army is aware about the fact that which party is funded by India and the same party attacked the check post.* The news about India's funding came same day when the Dg ISPR said that we know who had attacked us and who funds them. But Mohsin Dawar was not even arrested that Maryam Nawaz and Bilawal Bhutto protested in the parliament saying that how could he attack Pakistan army. It is happening first time in Pakistan history that the forces that restored peace in North and South Waziristan were targeted and people like Bilawal Bhutto who have no idea what is the agenda of these anti-state elements rejected Pakistan army's statement. *Security forces know more about enemies of the country than civil and political parties. ...* Thousands of soldiers have laid their lives while fighting terrorists in Waziristan. They had no other incentives but to secure their country. If these sacrifices do not deserve respect then God save the other institutions. *Political leadership knows well that the protests in support of Mohsin Dawar and company by Maryam and Bilawal are meant to divert attention from corruption cases against their leaders. ...* Many rulers have come and gone. But preferring personal interests over the country's interests is not a sign of strong nation.

Zardari arrested, law prevails, Editorial, Daily Ausaf, 11 June²⁴

Islamabad High Court (IHC) rejected pre-arrest bail application of former President Asif Ali Zardari and his sister Faryal Talpur. *The two judge bench of Justice Amir Farooq and Justice Mohsin Kiyani accepted National Accountability Bureau's (NAB) request that the latter should be allowed to arrest Zardari and Talpur.* Zardari had got already 5 extensions in his pre-arrest bails. He and Talpur were on bail for more than two months. Both Zardari and Talpur were not present at the court when the decision was announced. The case has its roots in when FIA had identified 29 fake accounts through which 35 billion rupees were transferred. Many people including Zardari and Talpur were found involved in these illegal transactions. The accounts were on names of some poor people who did not even know about them. *The arrests of Zardari and Talpur is a positive development. It gives out message that no one, no matter how powerful or influential, will be*

²⁴ https://www.dailyausaf.com/epaper/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2019-06-11/83871/p10_01.gif

spared when it comes to law taking its course. This is the need of the time and philosophy of the law.

Why the meeting at Jati Umrah only after Hamza's arrest? Editorial, Daily Khabrain, 18 June²⁵

Maryam Nawaz and Bilawal Bhutto met at Jati Umarah. *Both the leaders decided that they would keep aside all their differences and would give Imran Khan led government a tough time: Even if it falls.* There was no sign of these leaders/parties coming together. But as soon as Asif Zardari was arrested, they were compelled to join hands. Same thing was felt on the PML-N side after the arrest of Hamza Sharif. It seems that the 'accidental' alliance will continue. Whether it will be effective or not is not conformed. But it will act as united opposition. *From his side, by laying hands on the top leadership Imran Khan has proved that he will not be bullied by the opposition.* He made in clear in the Senate. Maryam's taking decision to join hands with Bilawal has put question mark on factionism in PML-N. There is some truth in the rumours about factions in the party. *After Nawaz Sharif's arrest, Hamza Sharif's politics was seen revolving around a particular group.* When he was arrested Maryam Nawaz took the reins of the party. It is possible though the alliance may not be effective because Maryam's grip on the party will be weak. ... Imran has taken bold decision by acting against strong leaders. However, unless and until names of the corrupt are made public, people will not know about the corruption and the corrupt. *Inquiry commission are meant for the purpose to hold guilty responsible. It will look into all financial irregularities in all departments.* The government is behaving aggressively against the opposition. It seems that Imran will not let the corrupt people get off scot free.

Breaking of protocols by Imran Khan, Nusrat Mirza, Ummat, 21 June²⁶

Prime Minister Imran Khan was given special protocol by the by the Kirgizstan government when he was received by the Prime Minister of the county himself at the airport. While his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi was received by the deputy Prime Minister. When Imran Khan entered into the SCO meeting every leader present there stood up according to the protocol. *However when the Russian premier entered into the hall, all stood but Imran Khan who briefly showed his respect and then sat down again.* Thus it appeared that Imran broke the protocol. Prior to that he did

²⁵ <http://epaper.dailykhabrain.com.pk/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2019-06-18/88654/01.jpg>

²⁶ <http://ummat.net/2019/06/21/news.php?p=idr3.gif>

same thing with Mohammad bin Salman. Also he did not answer a call from the French President when he was busy. Britain was happy about it because it thought it hurt the French pride. *Despite all this Russian President Putin reached out to Imran Khan and tried to become friends. In fact he broke the protocol during the photo session by asking Imran Khan to stand by him and threw Narendra Modi at the corner. This gave two important messages. One, this hurt Modi. He had to think that Imran is not an ordinary person and he can do things which no Indian could imagine. Second, though Imran's way is criticized but this is how powerful make their presence felt.* Imran's attitude has scared Narendra Modi. Therefore, sometime this way is necessary which reflects resolve, attitude and stubbornness of a leader. I think whatever happened it was not planned and it just happened. ... Imran Khan's breaking of the protocols is a strong message to the US also: This man can do anything and better be cautious while talking to him.

Moment of warning, Editorial, Ummat, 23 June²⁷

Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz has called the Charter of Economy, idea flagged by Shehbaz Sharif, a joke. She said that Shehbaz Sharif can have his view and I mine. Maryam said that any final decision in the party is taken by Nawaz Sharif. *On the commission regarding to probe into country's debt pile-up in the last 10 years, Maryam said no opposition party should join it. She said how we can expect charter on economy from people who are in power on a stolen mandate.* While being satirical, Maryam said there is only one name that is associated with U-turn: Imran Khan. However, it is reality that all major parties have failed to people of Pakistan. They all have been making U-turns and somersaults. *What happened to PPP's 53-year old slogan of 'rooti, kapdda aur makkan'? The party has ruled Sindh for years but still children die there on daily bases. PML-N ruled Punjab and the country for four decades. It could not build a hospital that could have treated its own leaders.* When Maryam says that her father cannot be treated in Pakistan it shows failure of the PML-N's rule. Democracy within the party is non-existent. Shehbaz Sharif proposed the charter on economy which was rejected by Maryam Nawaz. She said that Shehbaz, despite being the president, is supposed to abide by the discipline. Maryam has appealed opposition parties to unite. She can be asked: Who do these rulers consider people? Are the 10 or so many families who have ruled the country for over six decades only people for them? *On the other hand, Imran seems to agree on the charter of economy which if accepted will make the three parties partners in new loot. It is to be seen when is the current*

²⁷ <http://ummat.net/2019/06/23/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

government held accountable which has already accepted its defeat by asking other parties to come together to address the economy crisis. If the government is unable to save the country and its economy, then why is not it resigning?

New aspects of Pak-Qatar relations, Muhammad Aslam Khan, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 24 June²⁸

Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani is strengthening friendship with Pakistan while on his visit to Pakistan. *There are reports of about \$22 billion investment by Qatar in Pakistan which is a happy news in these circumstances.* Earlier it used to happen that the princes would buy flats for rulers of Pakistan in London. Now that has changed into real investment in the country. Pakistan should benefit from high thinking of the Emir of Qatar. He is called as 'Tamim-ul-Majid' - blessing of glory- because the way he was able to bring out his country from the sanctions imposed on it by the GCC last year. Al Tahni was welcomed with JF-17 jet fighters, like Chinese President Xi Jinping was. ... *The Emir has interest in games and likes Imran Khan because of his athletic background. During their discussion, they raised the issues of agriculture, trade, food, and agreed for collective measures. They also greed on cooperation in search of LNG, LPG, oil and gas. They signed MoUs on money-laundering, terrorism among others.* Qatar had promised every-kind of help to Imran Khan when he became the Prime Minister of Pakistan. This was when Qatar was under sanctions from the GCC. This columnist was told by Qatari ambassador in Islamabad then that Qatar was surprised by the behavior of the Arab countries. He said we want economic unity with Saudi Arabia but it impose siege on Qatar. This is not issue of Qatar only but of whole West Asia. It has been burning. Muhammad bin Abdur-Rehman Al Thani says that the issues of Qatar cannot be seen independent of the issues of the region. They all need a common solution. ... *Pakistan and Qatar can be partners in each other's issues. They need each other.* By standing with each other, they can play an important role in the Muslim World.

Shehbaz will talk to Nawaz, Editorial, *Daily Khabrain*, 25 June²⁹

The statement by Maryam Nawaz in a press conference that she does not agree with the charter of economy that was proposed by Shehbaz Sharif could have been a message from Nawaz Sharif from his jail cell. *Nawaz might not have talked to Shehbaz about it when the latter met the former.* Maryam has

²⁸<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2019-06-24/page-10/detail-9>

²⁹ <http://epaper.dailykhabrain.com.pk/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2019-06-25/89137/01.jpg>

decided to pursue different policies from Shehbaz Sharif. *It is said that Shehbaz is going to talk to Nawaz Sharif about the whole matter. He will also raise the issue of the damage that Maryam's statement has caused to the party.* The party has been divided. Shehbaz said that Maryam did not consult him or any other senior party leader before the press conference. She did not talk about mine or Hamza's arrest but only about her father and the budget. *... Maryam's statement on the idea about charter of economy has made existing fissures in the PML-N obvious. These differences are likely to increase with time.* In the All Party Conference, the concern that Maryam is likely to have is why she was kept uninformed about the heart attack of her father. It is possible to say that beyond politics, the party could have been united on family matters. In such circumstances the future of the APC looks bleak. Even Zardari has refused to comment on the charter of economy or any other issue.

Change of ISI chief, Ali Sukhanver, Daily Khabrain, 26 June³⁰

Whether to call it Pakistan's popularity or increasing number of its ill-wishers, debates and discussions about Pakistan are everywhere. It is interesting that why would the people take interest in Pakistan who have nothing to do with it. *One of the most discussed and debated topics about Pakistan at international level is Pakistan's army and ISI, they find no other topic. Why these so-called experts are hell bent to prove that Pakistan's army is not among the top 5 in the world or the ISI is not at number one or two.* Who cares? What matters is job and that both these institutions are doing quite well. After failing in their other attempts, enemies now try to create differences with the army. At the same time, they want to invoke emotions of common people. *Till now no one has been able understand why are these paid so-called experts expecting that Pakistan army should informed them first that what changes there are going to be. Or it should be discussed on TV. Is it happening with CIA, Mossad or RAW? Changing of the ISI chief is prerogative of the army and it is their internal matter.* Whether Asim Muneer or Faiz Hameed, they are Pakistanis. Lt. Gen. Faiz Hameed is a competent person. He has served on many places and has been associated with intelligence. Let's hope that the bad times that the country is facing will go away. There will be better situation.

³⁰ <http://epaper.dailykhabrain.com.pk/popup.php?newsrc=issues/2019-06-26/89222/06.jpg>

Opposition decides to launch anti-government movement, Report, Ummat, 27 June³¹

Opposition has decided to run an organized campaign against the government. Though it appeared that the PML-N and PPP did not want a direct attack but it was said that they want to shape the movement after the budget is presented. Though some analysts are calling the joint-statement weak, sources from the APC say that the APC was done after the framing of the joint-statement. The source said that the JUI-F, JI, and ANP were in favour of soon and strong opposition movement against the government. However, PPP and PML-N proposed that it should be delayed for some time which was agreed upon. *A committee will be framed to decide the nature of the movement. JUI-F, ANP, were asking for a strong movement and Fazal-ur Rehman even asked for resigning from the National Assembly.* However the leaders from the PML-N and PPP suggested that it is better to wait for few months so that the government is fully exposed. Then the movement can be more effective. Bilawal Bhutto said that making the government to fall will weaken the democratic system in the country. Any move taken against the government will be democratic. According to the source, though Maryam Nawaz was seen ageing with JUI-F and ANP's proposal, but she was not paid much attention because of the presence of Shehbaz Sharif. Maryam was of the view that if PML-N from Punjab, PPP from Sindh, JUI-F and ANP from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and PkMAP come to Islamabad and stage a *dharna* and block the city, the government will fall. *But Bilawal seemed adamant to oppose any such action. The APC also decided to remove Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani. It was proposed by Fazal-ur Rehman and seconded by others. However many PML-N and PPP senators are against removing Sadiq.*

President Ghani's visit to Pakistan will improve relations, Editorial, Daily Khabrain, 28 June³²

There has never a single moment in Pakistan-Afghanistan history when it should have been said that the Afghans had stood by Pakistan. *Even after 70 years, Afghan rulers always speak language of India. Afghanistan supported India in spreading terrorism along the Chaman Border.* These terrorists were trained in Afghanistan. Rulers of Pakistan were never given welcome in Afghanistan. Now Afghan-President Ashraf Ghani is on a visit to Pakistan. After the June 11 meeting there is a sign of improvement in the relations. This will help in improving friendly relations and reduce mistrust. *After America could not defeat the Taliban, it decided to withdraw and asked Pakistan to arbitrate talks with the Taliban. The role played by Imran Khan has brought*

³¹ <http://ummat.net/2019/06/27/news.php?p=story1.gif>

³² <http://epaper.dailykhabrain.com.pk/popup.php?newssrc=issues/2019-06-28/89362/02.jpg>

Afghanistan and Pakistan closer. President Ghani decided to improve relations with Pakistan is because of this development of the Taliban-US talks. Kabul was worried that if the US withdraws, the Taliban will come back to power.

Economic terrorism of the government, Editorial, Ummat, 28 June³³

Before the 2018 National Assembly elections Imran Khan and one anchor were busy in criticizing 'economic terrorism'. They were not ready accept the fact that looted foreign money was not being brought back. *Now Imran Khan himself is involved in 'economic terrorism.* Because dollar is the currency for business and gold is considered economic strength of a country, countries that can control their prices are called as successful ones. Imran did not fulfill any of his promises; nothing is expected in future. Whenever there was crisis earlier, people used to go to the Court and the army for help. They always rescued the country. *Again people are looking toward these institutions. If these do not help, there will be crisis and also geographical borders of the country will be unsafe. Additionally the people will think that these institutions have also joined the looters.* Whole world knows that Pakistan has three top enemies: India, the US and Israel. It is unfortunate despite all the rebuttals and no positive response, leaders of Pakistan have been offering olive leaf to India. Imran has been doing it now. *Imran Khan even supported India's membership for UNSC. This position is against Pakistan's position on Kashmir and amounts to damaging 'freedom movement in Kashmir'. This shows that that U-turns Imran has been taking and policy pursuing, they are some external force's anti-Pakistan agenda.* India Today ran a news saying that 55 member countries of the Asia Pacific supported India's candidature. The value of a dollar has reached 165 Pakistani rupee and 10 grams of gold is above 81,000 rupees. Then IMF is guiding the policies of the current government. There is falling in oil and gas prices across the word but the value of dollar in Pakistan is increasing. It is meant to weaken the country. This 'economic terrorism' of the current government. It wants to weaken Pakistan so that it becomes weak and powerless.

Electronic

Jirga with Salim Safi, Geo News, 02 June³⁴

In this episode Salim Safi invites Mishaal Malik wife of Pro freedom Hurriyat Leader Yassin Malik and opens a discussion on the issue of Kashmir

³³ <http://ummat.net/2019/06/28/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

³⁴ <https://www.geo.tv/shows/jirga/239146-jirga-02-june-2019>

and arrest of Yassin Malik. Interestingly Mishaal informs that her mother is from Kashmir and has been a part of the peace processes between India and Pakistan, and in 2005 when Yassin Malik visited Pakistan with a peace delegate from Kashmir she was introduced to him by her mother. He adds, that from childhood she wanted a solution of Kashmir and hearing Malik that day she was impressed with his commitment towards the Kashmir cause. But unfortunately she informs that since 2014, when they married till now she has spent only sixty days with him and the rest of the time he is under arrest or in jail. Earlier before 2014, when she visited India, she informs that they were exempted from police check, now under Modi regime if they get a chance to visit India he feels there is danger to the safety and security of her family. Yassin Malik was arrested by the NIA under terror funding case, which she says is an old case before he gave up arms. *He is recently in tihar jail in a death cell with open toilet he adds and his health condition is really bad, she adds. Mishaal further adds that Yassin Malik was the reason the joint resistance group of Hurriyat was formed and they united and this is the reason according to her that the Indian government started an active campaign to arrest Yassin Malik.*

Capital Talk with Hamid Mir, Geo News, 17 June³⁵

Amid the political upheaval and the PTI governments witch hunting of the opposition leader under the guise of National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Hamid Mir invites ex-prime Minister and stalwart leader of PML-N Shahid Khaqan Abbasi to discuss various issues. Talking about the opposition's strategy to resist the ruling government's policy Mr Abbasi informs that they are in the process of forming a joint opposition strategy which will be a natural continuation of the Iftiyar party talks organised by the opposition parties. When the anchor asks about the budget session and why it was not passed in the first round, Mr Abbasi answers that the PTI government is itself involved in disturbing the sessions in the parliament, in fact it encourages the speaker to keep the house in chaos in order to avoid questions by the opposition. *He adds that there was no discussion on the budget and he argues that the budget is IMF friendly and not people friendly,* he adds that when the government pass the budget towards the end of June they will organize protests in the street, if needed. When asked about the government's plan of arresting him in the future for corruption, he says that he is not scared of anything and want to challenge them to go ahead and arrest him. He adds that he will not even take bail. He argues that *the real work of NAB is not*

³⁵ <https://www.geo.tv/shows/capital-talk/240631-capital-talk-17-june-2019>

cleaning the corruption in Pakistan but its motive is to defame politicians and then keep them under their pressure.

Capital Talk with Hamid Mir, Geo News, 24 June³⁶

Hamid Mir invited guests to discuss 'the asset declaration scheme' and people's view about it. President Pakistan Tax Bar Association Abdul Qadir Memon said that no one has been troubled in previous such amnesty schemes. He said that there should be no amnesty for people who transferred money to foreign countries. Minister of State for Revenue Hammad Azhar said that though the form for tax returns is complicated but the government is trying to make it simple. *Chairman Federal Board of Revenue Shabbar Zaidi said that if it was making manual but that would affected the secrecy element. On a question how the current government can return 17 per cent GST, financial advisor to the Prime Minister Abdul Hafeez Shaikh said that sales tax will be imposed on domestic sales, not on exports.* He said that the budget is aiming to increase exports and revenue. In his talk Imran Khan said that his government is taking some measures which no previous government had taken. He said that it will not be possible to bring the country out of the current economic crisis without facing some difficult times for some years. He said we have to take some tough decisions. *Institutions like FBR will be radically reformed. Many decisions have been taken to reduce expenses. Imran said that previous rulers had accumulated personal wealth.* Pakistan has resources but they have not been properly used. Imran said that last date for amnesty scheme will not be extended as that would set unwanted precedent. *People can complete other formalities later but at least they should register till 30 June. He also tried to assure people that people who will register in the scheme will not be harassed or subjected to unwanted troubles.* Imran said that Pakistan will be able expand the tax-net and good times will come.

³⁶<https://www.geo.tv/shows/capital-talk/241311-special-transmission-pakistan-kay-liay-kar-dalo-part-02-24-june-2019>

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa				
North Waziristan ³⁷	01/06/2019	Soldier killed in terrorist attack on army vehicle in NW Pakistan	01	00
Nowshera ³⁸	26/06/2019	2 policemen killed in Pakistan shooting	02	04
Balochistan				
Islamabad ³⁹	06/06/2019	Gunmen kill two Pakistani security personnel in Balochistan: army	02	00
Khost ⁴⁰	07/06/2019	Two FC soldiers killed in IED explosion in Balochistan	02	00

³⁷ http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/asiapacific/2019-06/01/c_138109107.htm

³⁸ http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/asiapacific/2019-06/26/c_138174514.htm

³⁹ http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/asiapacific/2019-06/06/c_138122561.htm

⁴⁰ <https://www.satp.org/terrorism-update/two-fc-soldiers-killed-in-ied-explosion-in-balochistan>

Harnai ⁴¹	06/06/2019	2 soldiers martyred in Balochistan while on Eid patrol duty: ISPR	02	00
Ziarat ⁴²	08/06/2019	Two Shia Hazara tourists from Quetta killed in blast in Balochistan	02	00
Quetta ⁴³	26/06/2019	One killed as militants attack Pakistan police housing complex	01	05
Punjab				
Lahore ⁴⁴	08/05/2019	5 dead, 24 injured in explosion near Data Darbar in Lahore	10	24

⁴¹<https://www.dawn.com/news/1486710/2-soldiers-martyred-in-balochistan-while-on-eid-patrol-duty-ispr>

⁴²<https://www.satp.org/terrorism-update/two-shia-hazara-tourists-from-quetta-killed-in-blast-in-balochistan>

⁴³ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-attack/one-killed-as-militants-attack-pakistan-police-housing-complex-idUSKCN1TR0ML>

⁴⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1481009>

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