



PAKISTAN
GOVERNANCE
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GOVERNANCE WATCH**Government Working****Cabinet Gives Go-Ahead on MFN Status to India**

The federal cabinet directed the trade ministry to immediately implement the government's decision to grant the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status to India and decided to phase out the negative trade list by end-February to normalize the trade relations between Pakistan and India.

The News – January 04, 2013

Azad Jammu Kashmir Prime Minister Represents Resolution to UN Observers Missions

The government and the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir settled all over the world observed "Resistance Day" across the state against unprovoked firing and violation of Line of Control by Indian Army in Haji Pir, Batal and Tata Pani sector and killing of Pakistani soldiers and civilians. Protest rallies were held in AJK, Indian Occupied Kashmiris and their political leadership. AJK Prime Minister Ch Abdul Majeed presented a resolution to the United Nations Observers and presented a memorandum against violation of LoC by Indian Army. The memorandum stated that:

"The Indian Army has violated the International Law, UN charter, UNCIP resolutions and ceasefire agreement between Pakistan and India as well as it was an effort to sabotage the ongoing peace process between the two countries. Pakistanis and Kashmiris are peace loving people particularly Pakistan Army is sacrificing for the peace and security of the region. The memorandum asked UN Military Observers Group and Pakistan (UNNOGIP) to take notice of such acts and take serious actions forming a commission under the auspices of UN to investigate recent crossing of "Ceasefire Line" by Indian Army. It severely condemned such acts and demanded that UNCIP resolutions should be honor and respected. UN may form a commission to investigate the recent cross border firing by Indian Army across Line of Control. It also demanded the peaceful settlement of long disputed issue and stop India to push the situation against the wall. It was hoped that the matter would be given proper and timely attention to further aggravation of the situation on LOC".

The News – January 15, 2013

Punjab Bans New Jobs before Elections: Punjab

The chief minister Punjab, just ahead of general election, has imposed a ban on all sorts of recruitments in the public sector except those being done by the Punjab Public Service Commission, the Punjab government spokesman said. Shahbaz has imposed ban on recruitments in Punjab except those being done by the Punjab Public Service Commission. Punjab has imposed a ban on recruitments at a time when the federal government has adopted 'job for vote policy'. The government has launched a hiring process for more than 21,000 positions at the federal level just a few months before the general elections. Not only new jobs are being offered in thousands in different departments, those appointed on a temporary basis by the government are being regularized in huge numbers.

The News – January 17, 2013

Services of over 0.1 m Lady Health Worker's Regularizes by PM

Prime Minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf approved the regularization of the services of 105, 086 including their supporting staff presenting serving in the provinces, Federally Administered Areas, Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan with respective effect from 1st July 2012.

The News – January 21, 2013

National Assembly

National Assembly Body Decide To Recommend Ban on Asbestos

The National Assembly's Standing Committee on Human Resource Development decided to recommend complete ban on the import and use of dangerous chemical 'asbestos' in 22 industries of the country to safeguard the health of workers. The members and chair were of the view that a complete ban on import and use of asbestos be imposed. It was also decided that a calling attention notice would also be submitted in the NA for this purpose and decision of the committee meeting would be forwarded to the Ministry of Commerce and Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for banning the import of asbestos. The committee also recommended the Ministry of Human Resource Development to write letters to all relevant departments of four provinces, Commerce Ministry and FBR to have adequate arrangements for safeguarding the health of the industrial workers in the country.

Asbestos is carcinogenic to human and can cause serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation. There is general consensus among the scientific community that all types of asbestos are carcinogenic according to Royal Society of Canada, 1996 as cited by European Commission, 1997 and can cause asbestoses, lung cancer and mesothelioma when inhaled for a long period.

Daily Times – January 01, 2013

National Assembly Body Cancels Contracts of Foreign Consultants

The government has cancelled contracts of foreign consultants, who were selected for preparing a roadmap and monitoring auction of 3G spectrum licenses. The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) said the decision was taken following objections raised by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) over the award of contracts. The contracts were cancelled on December 21. This is likely to further delay the auction of 3G licenses, expected to fetch around a billion dollars. PTA Chairman Farooq Ahmed Awan had referred to Sections 3(8) and 10(2) (c) of the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) Act 1996 and Regulation 115 of the PTA Employees Service Regulation 2008, which, according to him, said "the chairman is empowered enough to hire consultants."

We have pointed out several times that PTA is violating rules in appointment of foreign consultants for the 3G auction and it has been proved, said Committee Chairman Ch. M. Barjees Tahir. Ch. M. Barjees Tahir held the PTA chairman responsible for the loss to the national exchequer as foreign consultants were hired at a cost of Rs50 million and Rs10 million had already been paid to them. Members of the committee stressed that any payments made to the consultants should be recovered from the PTA chairman. The committee members were also annoyed with PTA over its inaction against grey traffic, which is causing a loss of \$1 billion per annum. Ch. M. Barjees Tahir was of the view that PTA was reluctant to take action against influential people. The IT secretary also admitted that PTA's initiatives to control grey traffic were not sufficient as the authority could only monitor 13% of the traffic. The committee also expressed its dissatisfaction over the performance of Universal Services Fund (USF) as billions of rupees could not be recovered from defaulting companies. It told the IT ministry that it may

blacklist all the defaulting companies and take stern action against them in order to recover the unpaid amount.

The Express Tribune – January 01, 2013

Treasury Blocks Key Legislation in National Assembly: Representation of FATA Women in Parliament

The government resisted a constitutional amendment seeking allocation of reserved seats for women in tribal areas, in the lower house. Yasmeen Rehman, the mover of the bill, which seeks the representation of women from Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) in Parliament, was singled out after her party's (the Pakistan Peoples Party's) chief whip Khursheed Ahmed Shah put the bill on hold for further discussion. The bill was never referred to the relevant standing committee, which is standard procedure.

Daily Times – January 23, 2013

National Assembly Passes Bill To Regulate Private Schools, Colleges in Capital

The National Assembly passed a bill to keep Islamabad's private educational institutions (PEIs) in check. The Islamabad Capital Territory Private Educational Institutions (Registration and Regulation) Act 2012, which now awaits an approval from the senate and an OK from President Asif Ali Zardari, will require all law enforcement agencies to assist PEIRA in the "exercise of its powers and performance of its functions." PEIRA was established as a result of a September 2006 presidential ordinance. The ordinance formed the basis of the new bill, after the Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat deliberated on it for over two years. PEIRA was tasked to register and regulate the PEIs operating in Islamabad. In the six years since its formation, the authority has registered 722 institutions, but its mandate has also been flouted quite often by the PEIs.

In the bill, PEIRA has been given the power to register and regulate PEIs. The bill requires PEIRA to come up with a policy to determine "rate of fee being charged by the institutions, qualifications of teaching staff, their terms and conditions of service including salaries and mode of payment of their salaries." PEIRA must also ensure that the services, quality of education and salary paid to teachers at these institutions matches the fees charged from the students. Existing institutions will have 90 days from the commencement of the bill to get registered with the authority. The registration will be mandatory for any PEI to get affiliated with the Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education. Owners of PEIs can be fined up to Rs 5,000 or imprisoned for one year, if they run their schools in contravention of the act's provisions. The bill will help PEIRA bring uniformity to the education standards of the myriad private schools. They will form a committee with relevant stakeholders, after the bill gets total approval, to set the criteria for the policy measures. The federal government will allocate an annual grant to PEIRA, in addition to its own finances generated from the registration and other fees, according to the bill's draft. The bill, which initially faced some resistance from influential politicians and businessmen, running private schools requires branches of franchise schools to register separately. The bill has also added tuition centers - providing education at the pre-primary level, including day-care centers, and from pre-primary to secondary level education — to the definition of a school.

The Express Tribune – January 24, 2013

National Assembly Approves HEC Amendment Bill

The National Assembly standing committee on education and professional training approved the draft of Higher Education Commission (Amendment) Bill 2012. After the passage of the bill from the National Assembly and the Senate, the chairman of the HEC will not be enjoying the status of a federal minister. Yasmeen Rehman of the PPP, who had originally submitted the legislation in October, through a call attention notice informed the house that the commission had recently paid its chairman's private membership fee of Islamabad Club. She informed the committee that in Pakistan the HEC was simultaneously responsible for the funding, accreditation and ranking of universities, whereas in other countries different organizations addressed each of these tasks. In addition, the chairperson and members of the HEC, as well as the vice chancellors of universities, should have the tenure of three years instead of four, she argued. She was of the view that the HEC should be placed within a ministry and that its chairman should not have the status of a federal minister "because there cannot be two ministers in one ministry." Most of the committee members supported the amendment but the HEC attempted to resist the move by the politicians. The HEC chairman, Dr Javaid Leghari, said because the commission was an autonomous body directly under the prime minister, there can be no question of two ministers. Engineer Syed Imtiaz Hussain Gilani, the acting executive director of the HEC, while addressing the politicians said: "None of you send your children to government schools running under the ministries because of the poor quality of education they provide. Yet all of you want to admit your children to public sector universities regulated by the HEC." If the bill is passed, he added, "You should take care that the 77 public universities are not treated like the schools."

Dawn – January 24, 2013

National Assembly and Senate Bodies Pass Trade Organization Bill 2012

A joint meeting of the National Assembly and Senate's standing committees on commerce finally unanimously passed the Trade Organization Bill 2012, which would allow establishing small chambers for small traders and women chambers at divisional level for their active participation. The joint meeting was co-chaired by NA Standing Committee on Commerce Chairman MNA Engineer Khurram Dastgir Khan and Senate Standing Committee on Commerce Chairman Senator Haji Ghulam Ali at the Parliament House.

Daily Times – January 24, 2013

Senate

Senate to Move Resolutions for Nobel Peace Prize For Bilour

All parliamentary groups in the Upper House of Parliament will move a resolution to recommend the name of former KP senior minister Bashir Ahmad Bilour for Nobel Peace Prize Award. Bashir Bilour, assassinated in a terrorist attack, was believed to be hard voice against terrorism and extremism in the country. The all parties' resolution to recommend the name of Bashir Bilour for the Nobel Peace Prize is expected to sail through the House and will be later forwarded to relevant quarters for moving it to Nobel Prize committee. The parliamentary groups supporting this resolution include Awami National Party (ANP), Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), PML-Q, Balochistan National Party (Awami), National Party and members from FATA.

The News – January 21, 2013

Senate Approves Pakistan Academy of Letters Bill

A bill for making the Pakistan Academy of Letters an autonomous body was unanimously passed by the Senate. Law minister Farooq H Naik moved a motion to debate the bill which has already been passed by the National Assembly. Naik said the cabinet had discussed the bill to make the academy an autonomous body, keeping in view the welfare of writers and intellectuals. The PAL and National Language Authority had been disarray after the devolution of education ministry. The academy was in financial straits resulting in delay of payments of honorariums to writers and poets and salaries of the organization's employees.

The Express Tribune – January 24, 2013

Provincial Assemblies

Forced Marriage to Entail Up To 7 Years Jail, Rs0.5m Fine: KPK Assembly

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly passed legislation against forced marriage of women under which the violators would face up to seven years imprisonment and Rs 500, 000 fine or both. The bill aimed at the elimination of the tradition of 'Ghag' was moved by the Provincial Minister for Social Welfare and Women Development, Sitara Ayaz. Under the law the convicted persons under the Ghag Act would face punishment from three to seven years and cash fine of Rs.0.5 million or both. Such cases will be tried by the session's court and crime will be non-bailable.

The News – January 09, 2013

Balochistan Assembly Adopts Resolution against Governor's Rule: Balochistan Assembly

The Balochistan Assembly (BA) adopted the resolution against the recently-imposed governor's rule in the province. Mir Shahnawaz Marri, Aainullah Shams and Syed Ahsan Shah moved the resolution against imposition of governor's rule. They demanded the federal government withdraw the notification and allow the provincial government to work. The speaker put the resolution for voting in the House that passed it unanimously.

Pakistan Today – January 16, 2013

KPK Provincial Assembly Condemns Bara Killings, Torture on Protesters: KPK Assembly

The legislators in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly unanimously condemned the killings of innocent people in the Bara tehsil in the Khyber Agency and baton-charge and teargas on the peaceful protestors outside the Governor's House. The lawmakers recalled the government had accepted the demands of protestors in Quetta, who were demonstrating by placing the bodies of their near and dear ones and signed an agreement with the participants of the long march in Islamabad, but why such attitude was not adopted with the aggrieved people here in this province. The legislator said government officials should have consoled the aggrieved protestors but that was not done. He said the entire government went to Dr Tahirul Qadri and signed an agreement with him but here the people were disgraced. He asked the government to hold investigation through a judge of the Peshawar High Court.

The News – January 19, 2013

Balochistan Assembly Criticizes Nab For Holding Media Trial: Balochistan Assembly

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) came under criticism in the Balochistan Assembly as lawmakers said that NAB was holding their media trial on the pretext of corruption allegations. In a scathing attack, Molvi Sarwar Musakhel of JUI-F said: "Governor Balochistan himself was

involved in corruption. His trial was carried out by the National Accountability Bureau and he remained in jail for embezzling government funds.” He said NAB Balochistan was trying to harass Nawabs and tribal chieftains in the province and NAB officials were behind the media trial of the members of the cabinet of former chief minister Nawab Aslam Raisani. He said soon after imposition of governor’s rule on the orders of the chief secretary offices of all ministers in the civil secretariat were closed. Syed Ehsan Shah of the Balochistan National Party-Awami said extortionists had set a garments factory in Karachi on fire that killed hundreds of workers but the federal government had withdrawn the FIR against the factory owners. He said Minister of State Salim Mandviwala was playing the role of middleman for extortionists. He said Balochistan’s total annual income was Rs5 billion, including Rs600 million collected from excise duty on sale of alcohol. He said that on the one hand the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) had furnished recommendations for implementation of Shariat, on the other government employees were being paid salaries from funds tainted by excise duty on sale of wine. Asad Baloch of the BNP-A said media was involved in “character assassination” of lawmakers of Balochistan.

Dawn – January 25, 2013

New Province

Governor Mahmud Assures Restoration of Bahawalpur Province

Punjab Governor Ahmad Mahmud said Bahawalpur province will be restored to eradicate a sense of deprivation, eliminate poverty and provide rights to the people of South Punjab while chairing a meeting of the core committee for restoration of Bahawalpur province. Members discussed the recommendations on restoration of Bahawalpur as a province presented during the meeting. The committee expressed satisfaction over the federal government’s role and said the National Assembly was working positively with regards to the matter. It was also decided in the meeting that new province would include Bahawalpur, Multan and Dera Ghazi Khan Divisions.

Pakistan Today – January 20, 2013

Punjab Assembly Rejects PPP’s One Province in South Proposal

The government members in the Punjab Assembly (PA) rejected a Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) proposal for the formation of a single southern Punjab province rather than two separate ones. Meanwhile the opposition in the assembly endorsed the federal government’s proposed bill for the formation of a Bahawalpur province in the region that would include Dera Ghazi Khan and Multan, and demanded that PA Speaker Rana Iqbal Khan nominate two members from the house for representation on the commission for the formation of new provinces.

Pakistan Today – January 22, 2013

Governor’s Proposal on Bahawalpur Opposed: Bahawalpur National Party

Bahawalpur National Awami Party (BNAP) chief Nawab Salahuddin Abbasi has rejected Governor Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood’s proposal to include Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan and Muzaffargarh districts in the Bahawalpur Division in case of its revival as a province. BNAP president and former federal minister, Abbasi said his party had one-point agenda of restoration of Bahawalpur province. He expressed his surprise at the “change of stance by the governor”, adding that it was the “old scheme of former Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani for a Seraiki province” and his party would not accept it. Abbasi said it was a “political drama” and the people of Bahawalpur would not become part of it. He said Benazir Bhutto had promised with him in 2007 that she would revive the Bahawalpur province after becoming prime minister. He said any decision against people’s wishes would be resisted and he would not accept any office after restoration of the province. He said he hoped that Sharifs would honor

their commitment about restoration of Bahawalpur province and added that the Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz had moved a resolution in the Punjab Assembly for this purpose. He said he was offered Punjab governor's slot twice.

Dawn – January 23, 2013

PML-N, Q Slams Plans to Create New Provinces in Punjab

On the issue of new provinces, PML-Q Chief Whip Riaz Hussain Pirzada noted that the issue of creating new provinces in Punjab was a Pandora's Box, which once opened could not be closed. Pirzada said Bahawalpur was the first state that opted for Pakistan after its creation. The PML-Q lawmaker was of the view that there was no capacity for creation of new provinces and any such move would be against the constitution. Pirzada ruled out the possibility of amending Article 1 of the constitution. The PML-N members also slammed the role of the government over the issue of creation of new provinces, adding that the government was creating a mess that could not be cleaned easily.

Pakistan Today – January 24, 2013

Bahawalpur Proposed As Capital of New Province in Punjab: Parliamentary Commission

A member of the controversial parliamentary commission on new provinces disclosed that a consensus had been evolved on the creation of a new province in Punjab. There is almost consensus among members of the commission that one province with the name of Janoobi Punjab comprising Multan, Bahawalpur and D.G. Khan divisions should be carved out from Punjab with Bahawalpur as its capital, PML-Q Senator Kamil Ali Agha. He, however, said that a final decision about the name of the proposed province and its capital would be taken of the commission to which all lawmakers belonging to the south Punjab areas had been invited. Mr. Agha said PML-Q would ask the commission to include in the new province Mianwali and Bhakkar districts and the areas where Seraiki-speaking people were in a majority. The PML-N has been boycotting the commission's proceedings and has already declared that it will not accept recommendations of the commission. It accused the PPP of bulldozing the parliamentary process required for the creation of new provinces only to gain political advantage in the next elections.

Dawn – January 24, 2013

Imran Rejected the Proposal by Parliamentary Commission on New Province

Imran Khan rejected the proposal by parliamentary commission on new provinces in Punjab for inclusion of Mianwali district in the proposed Bahawalpur Junoobi Punjab province. He said the proposals were election stunts by President Asif Ali Zardari and the people of Mianwali would themselves decide their fate. "No one sitting in the Presidency can decide the fate of Mianwali".

Pakistan Today – January 28, 2013

PPP Not Serious In Creating Provinces: Opposition Leader National Assembly

Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Nisar Ali Khan said the Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) government was not sincere in the formulation of South Punjab and Bahawalpur provinces and was only doing politics ahead of the upcoming general elections Nisar said the opposition had serious reservations over the Parliamentary Commission on Creation of New Province as it had members from the ANP and the MQM with no representation from Punjab. "Not even one of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders, who are members of the

commission, belong to Punjab that is being divided,” the opposition leader said, adding that it was the party’s right to choose a member on its own. “The chairman of the commission is President Asif Zardari’s staff officer. There is no MNA, MPA or senator from Punjab”. He said the formulation of a new province was not a matter of grave concern as there were other major issues in the country, adding that if South Punjab province was formed, Punjab Governor Makhdoom Ahmed Mahmood would become its chief minister and Yousaf Raza Gilani would become the governor. “The problems of the poor people will remain as they are”. Nisar said the PML-N would table its own amendment bill for the creation of Bahawalpur and South Punjab provinces in line with the resolutions passed by the Punjab Assembly.

Pakistan Today – January 28, 2013

Prime Minister Disqualification

SC Rejects Former Prime Minister Gilani’s Review Petition against His Disqualification

The Supreme Court rejected a review petition by former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani against his disqualification from being a member of parliament. The SC raised objections over the petition, saying the petition was incomplete as it had not been filed within specific time and the security challan was also not attached with the petition. The SC stated that the petition had been filed personally and sent through the post, however, the review petition could only be filed through the counsel, in this case Aitzaz Ahsan. On June 19, 2012, the Supreme Court declared Yousaf Raza Gilani disqualified from holding a seat in parliament from the date of his conviction on April 26, 2012 by a seven-member bench for contempt of court. The Election Commission of Pakistan had duly issued a notification of Gilani’s disqualification and declared him ineligible to be a member of parliament.

Pakistan Today – January 03, 2013

Spanner in the Works

The Supreme Court ordered the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to start criminal proceedings against 16 accused people, including incumbent Prime Minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, to implement its orders in the Rental Power Projects (RPPs) case. The judges warned that the NAB chairman would be personally held responsible if any of the accused fled the country, directing NAB to submit a report about the submission of challans against the accused until January 17. On March 30 last year, the court had directed NAB to proceed against those who had served as ministers for water and power from 2006 and as a result, NAB issued arrest warrants for 33 persons on April 20, including the incumbent Prime Minister Ashraf. PM Ashraf served as the water and power minister from 2008 to 2011.

Pakistan Today – January 16, 2013

Two in Row for Ashraf

The Supreme Court ordered the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to register a second criminal case against Prime Minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf. The apex court had ordered the arrest of Prime Minister Ashraf in connection with a corruption investigation that dates back to energy projects commissioned when he was water and power minister. The second case relates to the former head of the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority, Tauqir Sadiq, who fled abroad after being accused of embezzling Rs 83 billion in kickbacks and commissions. A two-member bench comprising Justice Jawwad S Khawaja and Justice Khilji Arif Hussain was informed by NAB officials that the prime minister had appointed Sadiq as OGRA chairman while Interior Minister

Rehman Malik and PPP Secretary General Jahangir Badr, Leader of the House in Senate and Sadiq's brother-in-law, allegedly helped him escape the country. The bench also directed the officials concerned that reference against those government functionaries who were included in the selection committee, including the prime minister, should be filed before January 31. It also directed for filing of another reference under Section 31 of the National Accountability Ordinance against all those persons identified in the NAB report for facilitating the absconder and asked for their trial under the said section.

Pakistan Today – January 25, 2013

Judiciary

Supreme Court Declares Void Reko Diq Mining Lease

Announcing its reserved judgment in the Reko Diq mining lease case, the Supreme Court has declared Chaghai Hills Exploration Joint Venture Agreement (CHEJVA) illegal while observing that its execution was contrary to provisions of various laws of the land. The court declared “not valid” the initial 1993 exploration agreement between the Balochistan government and Australian mining group BHP, since BHP Billiton. It said the agreement ran counter to Pakistan's mineral development act and mining concession rules, and therefore to transfer it to the Canadian-Chilean consortium is also “illegal, void and non est”.

Announcing the short order, the CJP ruled, “The CHEJVA dated 23.07.1993 is held to have been executed contrary to the provisions of the Mineral Development Act, 1948, the Mining Concession Rules, 1970 framed there under, the Contract Act, 1872, the Transfer of Property Act, 1882, etc, and is even otherwise not valid, therefore, the same is declared to be illegal, void and non est.” The order maintained that the ‘Novation Agreement’ for the Reko Diq mining lease was purportedly made for the purpose of substituting CHEJVA, adding that the government of Balochistan was also made a party to the joint venture. The order said that it was not permissible under the Balochistan Mining Rules (BMR) 2002 as well as the Rules of Business of the government of Balochistan (GOB), particularly Rule 7 and other rules. “The GoB, in purported exercise of the powers vested in it under the BMR 2002, granted relaxations in violation of Rule 98 ibid as no reason was assigned for the relaxation of the relevant rules”, the order said. Declaring all the amendments in the CHEJVA illegal, the order read, “The Addendum No. 1 dated 04.03.2000, Option Agreement dated 28.04.2000, Alliance Agreement dated 03.04.2002 and Novation Agreement dated 01.04.2006, which are based upon, and emanate from, CHEJVA are also held to be illegal and void.” It was further noted that all the agreements in result of the addendum in the instant matter do not confer any right on BHP, MINCOR, TCC, TCCP, Antofagasta or Barrick Gold. The order further said, “EL-5 is tantamount to exploration contrary to rules and regulations as the claim of TCCP is based on CHEJVA, which document itself has been held to be non -est. Therefore, before exploration it was incumbent upon it to have sought rectification of its legal status”. Experts say mining in Balochistan is dominated by small companies focused primarily on marble and granite, which waste up to 80 percent of mined minerals because of poor blasting techniques.

Daily Times – January 08, 2013

No Love Lost, My Lord: MQM, Supreme Court

Accepting an unconditional apology submitted by Muttahida Qaumi Movement's (MQM) Altaf Hussain for his remarks against the superior judiciary, the Supreme Court discarded its contempt of court notice against the self-exiled leader for putting himself at the mercy of the court. Altaf had passed objectionable remarks against the apex court while addressing his party workers in a telephonic address following an SC verdict on the Karachi law and order. Following

his remarks, the Supreme Court on December 14 issued contempt of court notice to the MQM chief for his address and threatening and ridiculing the judges of the Supreme Court. Through his lawyer, Altaf pleaded that he believed in the dignity and respect of the superior judiciary. The MQM chief requested the court to accept his unconditional apology from the core of his heart, requesting it to discharge the contempt of court notice as well. He said he would be careful about the dignity of the superior judiciary in the future as well. The court accepted the unconditional apology and discharged the contempt of court notice. "Since Altaf Hussain has not contested the contempt notice and thrown himself at the mercy of the court by seeking an unconditional apology, we accept his apology and discharge the contempt notice," the court said in its order.

Pakistan Today – January 08, 2013

Election Commission of Pakistan Must Enforce All Election Laws: Supreme Court

The Supreme Court (SC) sought a comprehensive report till January 15 from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) after the implementation of its earlier judgment of June 8, 2012 on the election campaign expenses regulation case. The decision was authored by the chief justice on June 8 after conducting a number of hearings into a constitutional petition. The CJ, in his decision, had directed that all election laws be strictly implemented by the ECP in the discharge of its constitutional mandate under Article 218(3) of the Constitution, Representation of the People Act and other laws/rules. "The Election Commission is empowered to check not just illegal actions relating to the election (violating the limits set for campaign finance, etc.) or corrupt practices (bribery, etc.), but is also empowered to review all election activities, including Jalsas, Julooos, use of loudspeakers, etc. for their effects on the standards of 'fairness, justness and honesty' that elections are expected to meet," it said. The decision held that the ECP was also empowered to take preemptive measures to ensure that the spirit of 'fairness, justness and honesty' of elections was fully observed. A candidate must account for all the expenses immediately after the election was over, the CJ held in his verdict. The ECP was asked to facilitate the voters, with increase in the number of polling stations throughout the country so that the polling stations were not at a distance of more than two kilometers from the place of residence of voters. The decision also banned establishing of camps near the polling stations while the ECP was asked to dispatch extracts from the voters' list in the name of one or more persons living in a house at least seven days before the polling day by post, or to save the postage by annexing such extracts with any of the utility bill. "The Election Commission is obliged to ensure that all elections witness a substantial participation of the electorate, therefore, all necessary steps must be taken to make voting compulsory in Pakistan as early as possible," the CJ had held. The verdict said that the ECP was empowered to frame rules to ensure that the elections were conducted justly, fairly, honestly and in accordance with law and that corrupt practices were guarded against.

The News – January 09, 2013

IHC Dismisses Plea against Qadri's Long March

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) dismissed a plea seeking a restraining order against the long march announced by Tehrik-e-Minhajul Quran Chief Tahir ul Qadiri. IHC Chief Justice Hameedur Rehman dismissed the plea, observing that staging protests was a fundamental right and could not be termed as an attempt to establish a parallel democratic system.

Pakistan Today – January 10, 2013

Supreme Court Forms Commission for Media Accountability

The Supreme Court (SC) constituted a two-member Media Accountability Commission headed by Justice (ret'd) Nasir Aslam Zahid and comprising Javed Jabbar. The worthy members of the commission have consented to act as a commission. This commission has been formulated on the request of petitioners Hamid Mir, Absar Alam and Asad Kharal as well as other petitioners. The commission's ToRs cover both media accountability, including corruption charges, and media independence and its impediments. The ToRs of the commission are to consider the role of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and other government agencies in ensuring the freedom of print and electronic media and whether or not there was information and material brought before the commission to justify the continued functioning of the ministry, consistent with Article 19 of the Constitution. The commission will analyze whether and to what extent Pemra has been able to fulfill its developmental mandate and regulatory functions independently under the Pemra Ordinance. It will determine if it is consistent with the fundamental right under Article 19 to allow the government or its instrumentalities to be major players in the media through state television and radio broadcasters.

The court further held that the commission is responsible to ascertain if PTV, PBC and APP, the recipients of public funding of billions of rupees, have independent in-house management and transparent policies in place which advance the objectives of fairness and even-handedness expected of publicly-funded entities and to determine if there are adequate checks against lopsided or biased dissemination of information by these publicly funded entities. It also aims to consider the feasibility of letting the media adopt a self-regulatory code of conduct instead of content regulation, in the light of international standards and best practices. It will enquire into allegations of media-related corruption and suggest steps to ensure impartial and independent media for the upcoming elections. It will inquire whether, when giving money to different media houses directly or on the pretext of advertisement, were the government or its functionaries pursuing a transparent, duly approved, bonafide government advertisement allocation policy or were the decisions to buy advertisement space with public money made arbitrarily or without objective criteria or to favor particular channels, journalists or media houses.

The commission further looks to propose a single, transparent, objective, non-discriminatory policy for allocation of government advertisements between the electronic and print media. Whether the federal and provincial governments, autonomous and semi autonomous bodies, government corporations or agencies adhere to the PPRA rules or other transparent processes while granting advertisement contracts to advertising agencies or media houses and, if not, then to suggest processes which are fair and transparent and which ensure the greatest value and fairest dissemination of information.

The court further directed that for the purpose of its work and to facilitate it, the commission shall have all the powers set out in Order XXXII of the Supreme Court Rules, 1980 together with such powers as may be considered necessary or appropriate by it to make its report on the ToRs; the Registrar of this Court shall arrange office facilities for the commission as and when required; the office is directed to provide two sets of the complete record of this case to the commission; the expenses on staff, logistics, travel within the country, stay outside Karachi, public notices for information or for soliciting public inputs, etc. shall initially be borne by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting subject to subsequent apportionment, and reimbursement by other parties based on the report of the commission; the commission may seek such further orders or clarifications from the court as it may consider necessary; the Sindh High Court may, if so requested by the commission, depute a Judicial Officer to act as the secretary of the commission. The court further directed that the report of the commission may be submitted in court on or before March 31, 2013 or on such other date as may be fixed by the court if requested by the commission.

The court had assigned this task to Gardezi to convene the meeting of stakeholders and ordered to submit the Terms of Reference regarding the formation of commission in the light of the earlier court orders issued on December 21, 2012 in this regard.

The News – January 16, 2013

Supreme Court Takes Notice of 450 Illegal Jobs in Two Hospitals

The Chief Justice of Pakistan has taken notice of the 450 illegal political appointments being made in haste by two hospitals of the federal capital, just ahead of the elections to accommodate PPP loyalists. The secretary Capital Administration and Development Division has been directed to submit his reply. The Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) has already declared these appointments illegal. On the other hand, Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), after receiving the notice from the Supreme Court, has started issuing back-dated call letters to the applicants. Details reveal that both the hospitals of the federal capital have advertised over 450 posts from BS-1 to BS-20 without informing the Establishment Division and Finance Division as mandatory approval is required. Even the FPSC has not been taken on board for hiring in grades 17 and above. An application was also sent to the Human Rights Cell of Supreme Court, saying that PIMS and Federal Government Services Hospital advertised the posts on contract basis without getting permission from the Finance Division and Establishment Division which is a basic requirement for recruitment of posts. The posts of grade-17 to grade-20 in the federal government should be advertised through FPSC. It is a big corruption before the coming election process to oblige the jiyalas by illegal recruitments, the application said.

The News – January 20, 2013

Boycotts Mears JCP's Meeting

The Judicial Commission of Pakistan's (JCP) proceedings regarding the appointment of superior courts judges have been postponed due to the boycott of attorney general of Pakistan, law minister and bar council representatives. The JCP's have demanded the commission amend its rules for ensuring transparency in the appointment of judges. Deadlock between the JCP and the apex body of lawyers still continues as all the bars, including provincial bar councils, have refused to send their representatives to the commission's meeting until their reservations regarding the appointment of superior courts judges are addressed. The government's representatives in the commission are also backing the bar's unanimous demand regarding the amendment of JCP's rules.

Daily Times – January 20, 2013

Chief Justice of Pakistan Orders Supreme Court to Probe Death of Kamran Faisal

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry ordered the Supreme Court (SC) to investigate the death of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) officer Kamran Faisal who was part of the team investigating the Rental Power Plants (RPPs) corruption scandal. The court also converted a note of the SC registrar's office regarding the matter into a petition, and said another bench would hear the matter separately from RPPs judgment implementation. The report indicated that the "murder/death/suicide of the investigator, engaged in the RPPs high-profile case, has left "sad commentary on the image of public institutions. It said that this "shocking incident of his murder/death/suicide is a sad commentary on the image of a public institution, which is supposed to be functioning in a free, fair and independent manner without being influenced or coursed by anyone". "Prima facie, it seems that besides the colleagues of Kamran Faisal (deceased), his family members as well as the public at large have shown annoyance and raised grievance.

Daily Times – January 24, 2013

Status & Up-Date of Dual Nationalities/Fake Degrees of MPs

Former MNA Blows Whistle on Dual National MPs

In an open letter to the chief justice of Pakistan, former National Assembly member (MNA) Begum Shehnaz Sheikh submitted a list of lawmakers with dual nationalities, alleging that all dual national lawmakers were not equally treated. Belonging to the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q), Sheikh's assembly membership was suspended by the Supreme Court in October 2012 for holding Australian nationality in addition to Pakistani citizenship. In her letter, Sheikh requested the court to put the procedure – aimed at reimbursing benefits enjoyed by dual national MNAs – on hold until the final verdict on the case. The letter listed the names of 20 dual national lawmakers, adding that some of those continued to remain at their posts. The former PML-Q lawmaker alleged that she had not been justly dealt with despite her resignation. She further claimed that all dual national lawmakers had not been equally treated, adding that all dual national lawmakers were not asked to return all the monetary benefits drawn during the period of occupying the public office, including monthly remunerations, TA/DA and facilities of accommodation, along with other perks. The suspended lawmaker requested the court to stop all proceedings of reimbursement of monetary benefits until a decision was given on the review petition filed against the court's judgment of disqualifying 11 members of parliament and provincial assemblies for holding dual nationality.

Pakistan Today – January 22, 2013

PPP MNA Disqualified For Fake Degree

A Lahore High Court division bench disqualified PPP MNA Malik Nawab Sher Waseer for having been dismissed from service and possessing a bogus BA degree. Waseer had won the 2008 general election from NA-76, Faisalabad, Jaranwala. Munir. The petitioners alleged that the respondent MNA had obtained his BA degree through impersonation. They said the respondent at the time of filing of nomination papers concealed all these facts and had not disclosed his assets. They prayed to the court to invoke articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution and disqualify the MNA. The bench comprising Justice Khalid Mahmood Khan and Justice Shujaat Ali Khan accepted the appeals and declared the respondent disqualified.

Dawn – January 16, 2013

Analysis

The Democrats Duty: Analysis by I.A. Rehman

WHILE the decision by quite a few parties to take a common stand against those who are obviously out to scuttle the boat of democracy is something to be welcomed, it is time the advocates of the electoral system also put their own houses in order. Nobody can dispute the fact that the cause of democracy in Pakistan has been harmed as much by its practitioners (if not more) as by its enemies. The establishment of democratic institutions in a society riven by numerous forms of inequality and class disparities, and mired in ignorance and dogma, was a daunting task the founding fathers faced at Independence. What made the situation worse was the fact that power was transferred to a community whose experience of running democratic institutions was extremely meager. Above all, the party that inherited power from the colonial masters not only did not have a tradition of democratic decision-making, its own structure was not democratic, except for a small degree of respect for formalities. The human resources lacked

the capacity for direct investment in the construction of a democratic polity. The result was that from day one whenever the rulers faced difficulties in laying the foundations of a new state they sought the easy way out by compromising on democratic norms. The small political capital these rulers had was exhausted within the first few years of freedom. From 1952 onwards the proto-democratic system was at the sufferance of ambitious individuals and their cliques. At regular intervals, the people were called upon to rise up against despots and reinstall in power their elected representatives. But no elected government has come up to public expectations.

A debilitating cycle of dictators replacing democrats and they in turn throwing out authoritarian rulers has become the people's lot. Throughout the long period of the seesaw battle between democrats and dictators the people's faith in democracy has been progressively undermined. The authoritarian forces have targeted democracy for being incompatible with the people's genius or belief and the democrats have devalued their system by their ineptness, corruption and lack of commitment to public weal. Those who have supported the democratic process from outside, that is, without seeking elective office or joining active politics, have tended to criticize the political parties less than those in priestly robes. But as we move towards a most critical moment, when mistakes by politicians could endanger not only the system but also the integrity of the people as a nation, the political parties should learn to speak less and listen to the people more. They have to do a lot before they can win the people over to the system of representative government.

The first responsibility of the pro-democracy parties today is to engage the people in debate on ways out of the present crisis, because their rivals have already started distributing talismans. They have to tell the citizens how they will fight poverty, unemployment, disease and ignorance; how they'll cure the tillers of the soil of their land hunger or guarantee women and minorities equal status as citizens; how they'll respect every child's right to education and self-realization; and, above all, how they will guarantee every citizen freedom of belief, other basic freedoms and security of life and liberty. With only a few months to go before the people are invited to cast their votes, the political parties must capture the debating fora with their manifestos. And for once they may present achievable targets and make pledges that can be redeemed over a short period. Otherwise they could risk losing to the growing breed of pied pipers who are raising slogans of revolution without understanding what the term means or what it must entail. Besides, while repairing their separate platforms for electoral competition among themselves the pro-democracy parties are required to develop joint strategies for securing public endorsement of the electoral process and its results. For instance, they should collectively move towards ensuring simultaneous polls for the national and provincial legislatures.

The problem caused by different dates on which the terms of the provincial assemblies expire is not insoluble. If the political parties in power in the different provinces recognize the adverse effects of a staggered poll, seen in 1977 and 1988, they can have an agreement on simultaneous dissolution of the provincial assemblies and a single date for fresh elections to them along with polls for the National Assembly. These parties also need to act in concert to adopt legislation that will increase the Election Commission of Pakistan's authority to guarantee a fair poll. The ECP must have the power to cancel postings, transfers and economic inducements offered to groups/individuals for securing vote-bags. The question of providing transport for voters on polling day has become quite a thorny issue. The ECP simply cannot do this. The political parties would do well to work out an alternative in consultation with the ECP.

An issue high on the political parties' agenda should be the removal of women's grievances in electoral affairs. They may have had valid reason to reject the proposal to countermand election in a constituency where less than 10 per cent of women voters cast their votes but women's free and full participation in the polling is a non-negotiable requisite of fair elections. Political parties should not only ensure that their candidates and workers do not prevent women from casting their ballots, they must put up at least a few women candidates on general seats by way of affirmative action. The political parties will be able to arrest the people's alienation from

democracy by making their lists of candidates reflective of a pluralist society that is, choosing their nominees from among the working people, teachers and social activists, et al. The minority communities have been asking for some concessions that can easily be granted. The Christians want the political parties to select their representatives for the reserved seats from different geographical areas. The Hindu community is seeking space for its more numerous 'low caste' members. The Ahmedis have lost any hope of relief and are not even clamoring for it. Now that the minorities' quota of seats is being increased their women's claim to be nominated has become stronger. The challenge before the democrats, in a sentence, is to give the democratic edifice the sound foundations of pluralism, to make the system all-inclusive, in contrast to the dangerous designs of the exclusivists. Will they take up the gauntlet?

Dawn - January 10, 2013

Crowds and Revolts That Toppled Government: Analysis by Sabir Shah

Mobs and resultant riots, often dubbed revolts, uprisings or revolutions throughout the world, have always had the potential to oust even the most powerful of sitting regimes and have succeeded in triggering eventful political changes in societies since the start of the 20th century, though a few of such occasions have been clearly sponsored by foreign hands having vested interests in a particular country. Research shows that since 1900, there have been major riots, mass demonstrations, public unrest, ensuing violence, killings and other events that have brought a lot of attention to the most serious issues of the time and have led to unprecedented alterations in the political landscapes of many countries on the world map today. Hardly a few of these successful revolts, named after different colors, climatic seasons and flowers etc, have been bloodless otherwise they have generally been sorrowful tales of human sacrifices. The reasons behind these mass uprisings have predominantly been economy-related, as protestors had found themselves literally buried under surging inflation, arbitrary taxation, state brutality and unequal distribution of wealth with suppressive regimes paying a deaf ear to the genuine public grievances while being busy looting their national coffers and filling their own wallets to the brim.

A few uprisings have also failed during the period under review. For example, after the 2009 Iranian Presidential elections, a public unrest called the "Green Movement" had demanded the resignation of the still incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. A lot has already been written on popular revolts that have toppled governments in Tunisia and Egypt. The Tunisian riots had started in December 2010 after a fruit vendor Mohamed Bouazizi had set himself on fire and died. He was physically assaulted by the police. The resultant protests in Tunisia against police corruption and political authoritarianism had brought down president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. In what soon came to be known as the Arab Spring, a tsunami of political uprisings that swept across North Africa and the Middle East from Morocco to Oman, Tunisia's government was the first to fall. Egypt's was the second. By midnight of January 25, 2011, over 100,000 people were seen in and around Cairo's Tahrir Square. In the wee hours of 26th January, the police had opened fire with rubber bullets, tear gas and concussion grenades. Over the next two weeks, more than 800 Egyptians died in clashes between protestors and police, and thousands more were injured. The fighting finally subsided on February 11, 2011 when Egyptian president Hosni Mubarek had to step down and the constitution was suspended. By December 2011, the governments of Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya had been toppled.

Chronicles of last 100-year history reveal that the 1910 to 1920 Mexican Revolution had resulted in the ouster of ruler Porfirio Diaz and the consequent seizure of power by the country's Institutional Revolutionary Party. The 1911, the Xinhai Revolution had overthrown the ruling Qing Dynasty in China. The 1914 revolt launched by the Albanian farmers had shown the door to the regime of Prince William. In 1917, a revolution in Russia had overthrown Tsar (Emperor) Nicholas II, leading to the establishment of the Soviet Union and sparking the

Russian Civil War. In 1918, the German Revolution had overthrown the country's Kaiser (Emperor). In 1944, the Guatemalan Revolution had sent dictator Federico Vaides packing. 1947 is the year that marks the creation of Pakistan and India. Following untiring struggle by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi for their respective communities, the ruling British were forced to go back home and hand over power to the locals. In 1949, Chairman Mao Zedong had expelled the ruling Nationalist Party in China, and had established the People's Republic of China. Mao had led the 1934-36 long march with his followers. So, in this case, the long march had laid the foundation of a massive change, but had not yielded the desired results immediately.

The 1953 Iranian coup d'état signifies the ouster of country's democratically elected Premier Mohammad Mosaddegh on August 19, 1953. This coup, as leaked US government classified documents later revealed, was orchestrated by the intelligence agencies of the United Kingdom. Some 50,000 US dollars were reportedly invested to gather unruly mobs against PM Mossadegh. The Churchill and the Eisenhower administrations in UK and US, as it was reported by historian Mary Ann Heiss in her book "Mohammad Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran" and the June 5, 2010 "New York Times" article "How a plot convulsed Iran in '53 (and in '79)," had resorted to bribing street thugs, clergy, politicians and Iranian army officers to take part in a propaganda campaign against Mosaddegh and his government. This coup had seen the transition of Iranian King Reza Shah Pahlavi from a constitutional monarch to an authoritarian ruler till he was sent out of his country by the Imam Khomeini-led revolution in 1979. It basically was a successful bid of the US and UK to get hold of Iranian oil.

On August 19, 1953, a pro-Shah mob (paid by the CIA) had marched on Mosaddegh's residence. Between 30 and 800 people were eventually killed in the conflict. PM Mosaddegh was arrested, tried and convicted of treason by the Shah's military court. A CIA spokesman was quoted by the "New York Times" as saying that the agency had retained about 1,000 pages of documents related to the coup, besides the history and an internal account written later. In 1958, the Iraqi Revolution, led by nationalist soldiers, had abolished the British-backed monarchy. In 1964, a revolution in Sudan—driven by a general strike and rioting, had forced President Ibrahim Abboud to resign. In 1969, a mass movement of workers, students, political entities and peasants in Pakistan had forced the resignation of President Mohammad Ayub Khan. In 1971, the Bangladesh Liberation War led by the India-backed "Mukti Bahini" had led to the establishment of the independent People's Republic of Bangladesh, which was formerly called East Pakistan. In 1973, worker-student demonstrations in Thailand had forced dictator Thanom Kittikachorn and two close associates of his to flee the country.

In 1977, a nine-party Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) had agreed to run as a single bloc to overthrow the rule of Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the first elected leader of that country. In 1978, the Saur Revolution led by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan had deposed and killed President Mohammad Daud Khan. In 1979, the violent New Jewel Movement had dethroned ruler Eric Gairy in Grenada. It was in 1979 again that the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua was seen succumbing to the progressive/Marxist Nicaraguan Revolution. The 1979 Iranian Revolution had sent the Shah of Iran to exile, helping Imam Khomeini and his disciples to form the Islamic Republic of Iran. In 1986, the People Power Revolution in the Philippines had ousted Ferdinand Marcos to end his two-decade long rule. The 1988-91, the Pan American National Movement had helped Armenia get free from the Soviet rule. In 1989, the Singing Revolution had ended the Communist rule in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, while the Velvet Revolution had marked an end to the Communist rule in Czechoslovakia. It was in 1989 again that the Romanian Revolution had killed President Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife.

The Indonesian Revolution of 1998 had resulted in the resignation of President Suharto after a three-decade rule. In 2000, the bloodless Bulldozer Revolution in Yugoslavia had overthrown Slobodan Milosevic. The 2001 EDSA Revolution in the Philippines had dethroned President Joseph Estrada. In 2001, following mass riots, civil unrest and popular protests, had compelled

President Fernando de la Rúa to relinquish charge. The financial crisis and the wave of capital flight had led the ousted ruler to impose a limited account freeze on cash withdrawals, and within hours, the IMF and World Bank etc to announce the cancellation of loan tranches of over US \$5 billion. The 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia had made President Eduard Shevardnadze leave office. The 2005 Tulip Revolution or the Pink/Yellow Revolution in Kyrgyzstan had deposed President Askar Akayev. According to March 25, 2005 edition of the "Washington Post," demonstrators had pushed past riot police and seized the presidential headquarters in this Central Asian country, toppling the government in the third successful popular revolt in a former Soviet republic in 16 months.

President Askar Akayev dropped from sight and Russian news agencies reported that he had flown to neighboring Kazakhstan. It is worth recalling that after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, Kyrgyzstan had become an important staging area for US forces supporting operations in Afghanistan. About 1,000 US military personnel were stationed at an air base outside the capital Bishkek and the country had received \$50.8 million in American aid during 2004. Quite recently in February 2012, Romanian Prime Minister Emil Boc and his entire cabinet had to resign after demonstrations had begun against them more than two weeks ago on January 12 last year. About 60 Romanian cities had reported anti-austerity protests. Police had to break up demonstrations with water cannons and tear gas. More than 100 were arrested. It goes without saying that during the past few years, jobless, desperate and hopeless youth have also rioted in France, Greece, Belgium, United States, United Kingdom, Sweden and Denmark etc.

The News – January 15, 2013

Parliament to review siege and backlog: Analysis by Raja Asghar

Both houses of parliament to begin sessions that will likely review a virtual siege of the capital last week in the name of a conjured up 'revolution' and take up some of the legislative backlog to be disposed of before coming elections. The government will have to do some hard explaining how Allama Tahirul Qadri, head of Minhajul Quran non-governmental organization, was allowed to bring tens of thousands of people threatening to topple it so close to its centre, before taking credit for a peaceful end to a dreadful spectacle that could have spilled blood. There will also be a lot of talk in both houses about what many perceive as invisible support for the 'long march' and about all opposition parties coming out so strongly against any unconstitutional act to derail the democratic process, which began with the February 2008 elections and which is going to see an elected civilian government complete its five-year term by mid-March. A week ago, many lawmakers may not have expected to return to parliament in their present positions, given the confidence with which the cleric-turned-politician went about declaring them dismissed, or "ex", at the start of the 'dharna', or sit-in, on Jan 14 after the so-called 'long march' from Lahore, and some subsequent developments including some hasty, and apparently faulty, interpretations of a Supreme Court order involving Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf, which the demagogue portrayed as "half work done" and which caused the Karachi Stock Exchange to crash.

But little will have changed, at least physically, when the National Assembly and the Senate both meet separately at 4pm, thanks to the imagined 'revolution' producing only the so-called "Islamabad Long March Declaration" that kept everybody in their places after the 'divine help' the Allama had asked for did not arrive and but gave him a symbolic role of opinion in the choice of a caretaker prime minister who will oversee the next elections. The National Assembly's earlier plans to meet from Jan 14 to 23 was disrupted by the 'long march' arriving in Islamabad the same day, and the present session is scheduled for Jan 21-30, while the Senate session was advanced only by a day from Jan 22 to last until Jan 31. Besides their expected discussions on the implications of the 'long march', the two houses have some important legislative business to

handle, including a long-pending bill to create an independent National Accountability Commission, which will replace the Musharraf-era National Accountability Bureau, to prosecute corruption by holders of public office. The bill, already approved by the National Assembly's standing committee on law and justice, has been held up by objections by the main opposition party, Pakistan Muslim League-N.

The National Assembly is also expected to pass a key tax amnesty law, known as Tax Laws (Amendment) Bill, which was introduced in the house in its last session last month and which stipulates payment of a nominal tax on undeclared domestic and foreign assets and income to make them 'white'. The Senate, in a brief session early this month, made its recommendations about the bill, which will not be binding for the National Assembly to accept because the legislation is a money bill, like the budget, requiring passage by only the lower house. The Senate will take up another important legislation known as the Fair Trial Bill, which was passed by the National Assembly last month to allow the use of modern techniques like wire-tapping and monitoring of emails and SMS text messages to be used as valid evidence in a court against terrorism suspects. While Allama Qadri had dropped his demands for the dissolution of assemblies and dismissal of the federal and provincial governments, his accord with the government before ordering his followers to go home, scheduled a meeting by his side with Law and Justice Minister Farooq H. Naek on Jan 27 to further consider constitutional obstacles to fulfil his demand for a reconstitution of the Election Commission. But it seemed to be just a face-saving for the Allama because such a course requires an amendment of the constitution for which no political party in parliament is ready.

Dawn – January 21, 2013

Punjab, Sindh Assail Move to Reverse Devolution Process: Analysis by Khaleeq Kiani

Provincial governments, particularly of Punjab and Sindh, have complained against moves at the federal level to reverse the process of devolution by taking back responsibilities assigned to them under the 18th Amendment. Suspicions about rolling back of the devolution process emerged in the wake of the federal government's decision to 'rename' the federal ministry of professional and technical training as "Ministry of Education and Technical" and resultant change in the Rules of Business, 1973. The government of Sindh moved a summary to the Council of Common Interests (CCI) and referred to the Implementation of 18th Constitution Amendment under which education had been devolved to the provinces and consequently the ministry of education was abolished. It said the change of rules of business to rename the ministry "has created apprehensions and reservations that the subjects devolved to the provinces were once again being taken under the control of the federal government in violation of the constitutional provisions".

Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah said: "It is a reversal of the 18th Amendment and usurpation of the provincial jurisdiction" and that a promise made by the prime minister for rectification had not been honoured. He said the constitutional provisions did not support the renaming of the ministry as education which had in fact "frustrated the provincial demand". Defence Minister Syed Naveed Qamar has informed the CCI that being a member of the constitutional committee and implementation commission he had endorsed Sindh's view that the subject of education had been devolved and all institutions belonging to the centre were retained with the federal government. As such, the constitutional provisions contained in the federal legislative list related to federal agencies and institutions, even those related to research and professional and technical training and special studies. Mr Qamar said the federal government was responsible for the affairs of students studying abroad and as such renaming of the ministry as "professional and technical training" was in accordance with the Constitution.

He clarified that "three entries - 15, 16 and 17 - in the FLL part-I and entry 12 in the FLL-II were clear and did not support the renaming of the ministry of education and training at the federal

level. The entries included libraries, museums, federal agencies for research and professional training, special studies, students abroad and standards in institutions for higher education, scientific and technical research. At the heart of the problem are tens of thousands of employees of the National Education Foundation and the National Commission for Human Development - dealing with non-formal education and adult literacy - which do not fall in any category and the provinces refuse to take their liability. The federal minister for education said the Supreme Court in its recent judgment had referred to Article 25-A read with Article 7 of the Constitution and held the state responsible for providing free and compulsory education up to the age of 16 years.

He said the state included provincial and federal governments and, therefore, the federal government could not be absolved of its responsibility of providing education. The Sindh chief minister pointed out that the court order did not provide for "re-establishment of a ministry with the name of education". The law secretary said there was "no binding on the federal government in naming a ministry after the name of education and the renaming had no affect on the Constitution". Naveed Qamar differed with the views of the law and education ministries. He said the renaming had created ambiguities and was being construed as rolling back of the devolution process and could not be supported through constitutional provisions. The federal education secretary said the educational and training institutions had been assigned to the education ministry and it had "no intention of usurping the provincial authority with respect to education". He said the renaming had restored the confidence of NGOs and lenders.

Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif said the major problem was "the apprehension that the federal government is trying to roll back the devolved subjects". He said despite a commitment made by the cabinet division secretary the rectification had not been made. He supported the Sindh chief minister and said the provinces would have no objections if the entries in FLL-I at 12 and 15, 16 and 17 at the FLL-II were kept at the federal level under the ministry of professional and technical training. The federal government agreed to consider the issue of renaming the ministry to redress the provincial concerns, but made it clear that the ministry would continue to function with the subjects already assigned to it. A decision is expected to be made by the Council of Common Interests in its next meeting.

Dawn - January 21, 2013

BALUCHISTAN WATCH**Governance Watch****Balochistan Elects First Woman Deputy Speaker**

The Balochistan Assembly elected Dr Fouzia Marri as its deputy speaker, the first woman to be elected to the position. The leader of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (Fazl) Syed Matiullah Agha was elected as speaker. It is for the first time in the parliamentary history of the Balochistan Assembly that a female legislator has been elected unopposed as deputy speaker in the provincial legislature.

Daily Times – January 01, 2013

Governor's Rule Clamped on Balochistan

The government conceded to the demands of Quetta bombing victims and protesters across the country and announced to impose governor's rule in Balochistan. Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf announced in principal to invoke Article 234 of the constitution and impose governor's rule in the province, as demanded by the bereaved families and political and social circles. The PM hoped that as an executive of the province, the governor would have the culprits involved in the bomb attacks arrested. The FC had been given all powers of police in the province. The prime minister asked the protesters to inform the governor and the FC commander about their problems, adding that action would be taken immediately. He said that false cases registered against members of the Shia community would also be withdrawn.

Daily Times – January 14, 2013

Sacking Unfair Believes Balochistan ex-Chief Minister Raisani

Disgraced former Balochistan chief minister Nawab Aslam Raisani has termed the imposition of Governor's Rule in the province and dismissal of his government an "assault in darkness". A defiant Raisani, however, said he had been expecting such an action for the past three years. He said what had happened to him was unfair. Raisani said terrorism was everywhere in the world but none of the governments got dismissed under that pretext. He questioned why similar action had not been taken in other provinces, as the law and order was not satisfactory over there as well. The former CM said it was a failure on part of the Frontier Corps and police to maintain law and order in the province, adding that he had given a free hand to both law enforcement agencies to maintain peace. Raisani said he had been under tremendous pressure due to his stance on the Reko Diq issue.

Pakistan Today – January 15, 2013

Governor Magsi Over as Chief Executive

Balochistan Governor Zulfiqar Ali Magsi took over as chief executive after a proclamation for imposition of governor's rule in the province was issued by the Cabinet Division in Islamabad. As chief executive, Mr Magsi will use all administrative and constitutional powers of the government. The provincial government has decided to launch a targeted operation against elements involved in sectarian terrorism, target killings and kidnapping for ransom. A meeting presided over by Chief Secretary Babar Yaqoob Fateh Mohammad and attended by the home secretary, IG Police, CCPO, DIG FC, commissioner of Quetta and the deputy commissioner, took decisions to restore confidence of people in law-enforcement agencies by conducting result-

oriented actions against terrorists and anti-social elements. The police and FC would be involved in a joint strategy for action against elements involved in terrorism, sectarian attacks, target killings and other heinous crimes. The meeting also decided that police and Frontier Corps would now adopt an offensive strategy against criminals. Police and FC officials have been directed to take action against criminals regardless of their influence and status. A campaign against tinted glass and illegal vehicles will continue in light of the orders of the Supreme Court and strict action will be taken against officials of the Excise and Taxation Department who are involved in illegal registration of non-custom paid vehicles.

Dawn – January 15, 2013

Allied Parties Set Deadline for Lifting Governor’s Rule

Key allies in the now deposed Balochistan government have given the president until January 20 to lift governor’s rule or else they will “jam the airport and railway system” in a large-scale protest. “President Asif Ali Zardari should immediately take back his decree and restore the provincial government under Article 236 of the Constitution,” Maulana Muhammad Khan Sherani, the provincial chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazlur Rehman). The JUI-F and BNP-A have nine and seven seats, respectively, in the 65-member Balochistan Assembly. And if PPP’s Deputy Parliamentary Leader Ali Madad Jattak is to be believed all but two PPP lawmakers – Sadiq Umrani and Jan Ali Changezai – support the call for lifting governor’s rule in Balochistan.

The Express Tribune – January 19, 2013

Coalition Parties Protest against Governor’s Rule

Coalition parties in Balochistan took out rallies in different towns of the province, including Quetta, to protest imposition of Governor’s Rule. Leaders of the protesting parties were of the view that imposition of Governor’s Rule is “unconstitutional, unjustifiable and tantamount to disrespecting the public mandate and it should, therefore, be withdrawn”. Dozens of activists of Jamiat Uelma-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) and Balochistan National Party (Awami) took out a rally in Quetta and after marching through different roads of the city, the rally culminated into a public gathering at Bacha Khan Chowk. The protesters, carrying their party flags and banners inscribed with different demands, also shouted slogans against imposition of Governor’s Rule.

Daily Times – January 21, 2013

NAB Balochistan Probing Five Ministers

NAB Balochistan, which is probing corruption in various ministries of the provincial government, has extended its investigation to five more ministries. Inquiries into the corruption and irregularities of eleven ministries have been completed and the report was sent to the NAB chairman for further action, while the investigation into five more ministries has now been taken up after the seizure of their records. Ministries of education, health, social welfare and others are included among those being probed and their ministers might be arrested after clearance from the higher authorities. All homework has been completed and after completion of investigation of the record of the five ministers, formal record will be handed over to NAB chairman. As soon as NAB gives formal permission, action will be taken against the five ministers. There has been massive corruption in all sorts of funds in Balochistan and ministers plundered national resources and did nothing for the poor masses. After the imposition of governor’s rule, it has become easy for the accountability agency to get all the record, decipher it and reach to the corrupt elements.

Daily Times – January 21, 2013

ELECTION WATCH

Political Stakeholders & Elections

Chief Election Commission Wants Army at Polling Stations, Defense Secretary Unwilling

To conduct free, fair and transparent elections, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) directed the authorities concerned to ban issuing of licenses of prohibited and non-prohibited bore weapons with immediate effect and send back all Frontier Constabulary (FC) personnel, mostly engaged with VIPs in Islamabad, to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) for controlling the law and order there. The CEC suggested that army personnel should be deployed at all polling stations until the announcement of election results. However, Defense Secretary Lt Gen (r) Asif Yasin Malik said the army was unable to perform security duty at every polling station as the troops were engaged at the borders but troops would be deployed at sensitive polling stations. The ECP decided to form a district election security committee that would identify sensitive polling stations where army personnel would be deployed. It was also decided that the provincial governments would install close circuit cameras at all sensitive polling stations.

Pakistan Today - January 02, 2013

ECP Shuffles Three Provincial Chiefs

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) shuffled the election commissioners of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Election Commissioner SM Tariq Qadri has been replaced by Sonu Khan Baloch, while Qadri has been transferred to Punjab. The sources further said that Mehboob Anwar has been posted Sindh election commissioner.

Daily Times - January 05, 2013

ECP Slaps Ban on Government Ads at Public Costs

The Election Commission of Pakistan imposed a ban on using public money for advertisements given by the federal and provincial governments to promote their parties. The ban would apply to advertisements appearing in the print or electronic media bearing party logo, party name, and images of party leaders and directly or indirectly promoting any party or candidate. The ECP asked the federal and provincial governments to ensure its implementation in letter and spirit.

Dawn - January 05, 2013

ECP Finalizes Consultations with Political Parties on Code of Conduct

Senior officials of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) completed the process of consultation with political parties on the code of conduct for the coming general election. In September last year, the ECP had unveiled the draft code of conduct, which for the first time barred the president and provincial governors from taking part in the election campaign after the announcement of poll schedule and sought suggestions from political parties within 15 days. Several political parties had decided to give their proposals from the forum of the Senate's special committee, which for all practical purposes has turned into a parliamentary committee.

Dawn - January 08, 2013

Increase: Election Commission of Pakistan

Rs6m is the amount proposed as the limit for election expenses for a National Assembly candidate up from Rs1.5million.

The Express Tribune - January 09, 2013

Political Parties United On Fata Electoral Reforms: Election Commission of Pakistan

In a significant move, 10 major political parties have jointly submitted their proposals to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) suggesting steps needed to ensure holding of fair, transparent and accessible party-based general election in the tribal areas for the first time in the country's history. A letter containing five recommendations has been sent to Chief Election Commissioner Justice (retd) Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim and ECP Secretary Ishtiaq Ahmed Khan by the hitherto unknown Political Parties Joint Committee on Fata Reforms or Fata Committee. It comprises members from both government and opposition parties. The letter, delivered to the ECP, carries signatures of representatives of the PPP, PML-N, PML-Q, MQM, ANP, JUI-F, JI, National Party, Pakhtunkhawa Milli Awami Party and Qaumi Watan Party. The committee recommended that "a targeted campaign should be launched immediately to provide Fata citizens with computerized national identity cards (CNICs) and to register them as voters with the ECP". The campaign, it says, should place special emphasis on women throughout Fata and on internally displaced persons (IDPs) live in camps in Fata and in adjacent districts.

The ECP and Nadra have been asked to communicate schedules of deployment of additional registration efforts directly to the leadership of political parties and work together closely and as quickly as possible to ensure that all those receiving new CNICs are also registered to vote. The committee fears that over 150,000 IDPs are facing disenfranchisement in the coming general election if they are not allowed to cast votes through special measures. "International law is clear about the voting rights of IDPs and to ensure equal access to democratic participation, all IDPs from Fata should be provided with the opportunity to vote. Specifically, all citizens residing in camps should be permitted to cast their vote for the candidate of their choice in their home constituency in Fata," it says. "Due to the security situation, many IDPs are prohibited from returning home and these voters should be provided with an alternative mechanism for voting in home constituency elections even while living currently in an IDP camp elsewhere. "At a minimum, absentee voting should be facilitated for Fata IDPs living outside their normal constituencies in the camps and host communities at Togh Serai camp, New Durrani camp, Jalozei camp, D.I. Khan, Hangu, Kohat, Kurram, Peshawar and Tank."

The letter recalls that Pakistan is a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights. These charters obligate the state to give the internally displaced the right and opportunity to cast their vote whether they are living in camps or elsewhere. The committee has urged the government to ensure that judicial officers from neighboring settled districts should be appointed as returning officers and district returning officers as per a decision taken by the National Judicial Policy Making Committee in November. "To ensure equitable election administration throughout Pakistan, this decision should also apply to Fata. As there are no judicial officers in Fata, officers from adjacent districts (Lower Dir, Malakand, Charsadda, Peshawar, Nowshera, Kohat, Karak, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Tank, and D.I. Khan) should be sent to Fata to serve as election officials," recommends the committee. The committee has requested the ECP to ensure that polling stations are established within two kilometers of voters' homes in line with a decision of the Supreme Court of June 8 last year. The committee asked the ECP to maintain close coordination with political leaders at the Fata agency level as "it will allow the identification and mitigation of other local election problems as they arise".

Dawn - January 09, 2013

By-Polls Announced or Vacant Seats: Sindh, Punjab

The provincial election commissions formally announced that by-polls will be held on February 18 for six provincial assembly seats in Sindh and one in Punjab. The seats in Sindh are currently vacant because of the dual nationality issue while the seat in Punjab is vacant after the death of Sardar Muhammad Khan Khichi. According to a schedule issued by Karachi commission, January 21 has been fixed last date to submit nomination papers. These will be the last by-polls to take place before the general elections. Six MPAs, including four ministers, resigned on December 1:

- Murad Ali Shah (PPP)
- Sadiq Memon (PPP)
- Raza Haroon (MQM)
- Mohammad Ali Shah (MQM)
- Askari Taqvi (MQM)
- Abdul Moiz Siddiqui (MQM)

The Express Tribune - January 12, 2013

ECP Issue Code of Conduct for By-Elections: ECP

Election Commission of Pakistan issued Code of Conduct for holding by-election in seven constituencies of provincial assemblies of Punjab and Sindh to ensure transparency and guard against the corrupt practices. The directive issued for holding the by-election in free, fair and transparent manner will apply to all constituencies of by- elections including Punjab Assembly constituency PP-239 Vehari-VIII; and the constituencies of Sindh Provincial Assembly PS-73 Jamshoro- cum- Dadu; PS-84 Thatta-I; PS-101 Karachi-XIII; PS-103 Karachi-XV; PS-113 Karachi-XXV; and PS-115 Karachi-XXVII.

- The Commission has stated in its directive that none of the contesting candidates shall exceed the limit of election expenses of Rs 1.5 million for National Assembly Constituency and Rs. one million for Provincial Assembly constituency, in terms of sub-section (2) of Section 49 of the Representation of the People Act 1976. Each contesting candidate shall open an account with a scheduled bank on or before January 26, 2013 and deposit therein the amount not exceeding Rs. 1,500,000 for National Assembly constituency and Rs. 1,000,000 for Provincial Assembly constituency, to meet the election expenses. All election expenditures shall be made out of the amount deposited in these accounts and no transaction towards the election expenses shall be made through an account other than the account opened for the purpose while all transactions relating to the election expenses shall be entered with GST registered firms. The Commission has further directed that each contesting candidate shall file a declaration about the expenditures on or before January 26, 2013 after issuance of this directive with the Returning Officer. Every contesting candidate shall maintain his account of election expenditure on day-to-day basis and each contesting candidate shall submit to the District Returning Officer on every Thursday of the campaign period, a statement of election expenses made by him during the preceding week in terms of Section 50 of the said Act.
- The Commission has stated in its directive that car rallies will not be allowed to travel long distances except if they have pre-arranged corner meetings at specific designated places. These meetings shall be notified to the ordinary public by the local administration and the local administration must also ensure that all candidates are accommodated indiscriminately

- No person or a political party shall affix posters, hoardings or banners larger than the prescribed sizes that include the posters of (2-feet x 3-feet) size, hoardings of (3-feet x 5-feet), banners of (3-feet x 9-feet) and leaflets and handbills of (9-inches x 6 inches) size. It has further been directed that no person or a political party shall hoist or fix party flags on any public property or at any public place, except with the permission in writing from, and on payment of such fee or charges as may be chargeable by the concerned local government or authorities. Wall chalking as part of an election campaign shall be prohibited in all forms; loudspeakers shall not be used for election campaign except at the election meetings; the political parties and candidates shall convey their schedule of meeting at least one week in advance to the local administration who shall be responsible for making appropriate security arrangements and regulating such meetings in such a manner that equal opportunities are provided to the contesting candidates interested in holding rallies and meetings.
- The contesting candidates shall follow the Code of Conduct for the political parties and contesting candidates issued for General Elections, 2008 except in so far as it is inconsistent with this Directive and the judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. The Election Commission shall review all election activities including jalsas, jaloos and use of loudspeakers etc. to ensure the fairness, justness and the honesty of the election process.
- About setting up camps near the polling stations, the Commission has stated that establishment of camps near the polling stations on the polling day in respective constituencies by the political parties; the contesting candidates or their supporters have been banned in terms of Section 84 of the Act and the judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Moreover, canvassing for votes, soliciting of votes, persuading any elector not to vote at the election or for a particular candidate, or exhibiting any notice, sign, banner or flag designed to encourage the electors to vote or discourage the electors from voting for any contesting candidate is prohibited within a radius of 400 yards of the polling station. No political party or a contesting candidate or their supporters will be allowed to distribute Perchis containing voters' details i.e. name, parentage, gharana number, serial number etc or any Perchis containing symbol of a political party or contesting candidate near or within the radius of 400 yards of the polling station. The Commission has also directed that no political party or a contesting candidate or an election agent or their supporters shall use any vehicle to convey to or from the polling station any elector except himself and members of his immediate family in terms of Section 78 (5) of the Representation of the People Act, 1976. It has clarified that any violation of this directive shall be a corrupt practice under Section 78 of the said Act and punishable with imprisonment for a term that may extend to three years or with fine that may extend to Rs. 5000 or with both within the meaning of Section 82 of the said Act.
- About monitoring of the elections, the Commission stated that three members' teams, one of whom shall be a professional cameraman with a video camera, shall monitor the election process including campaign expenditure and observance of Code of Conduct by contesting candidates and political parties. The teams shall report to the Provincial Election Commissioner concerned on daily basis.
- The local administration shall provide necessary security to each team during the duration of their monitoring in the constituency. District Returning Officer shall hold meetings with the candidates and apprise them of the relevant laws, rules and the judgment of the Supreme Court pertaining to the code of conduct and election campaign expenses etc. The Commission has directed that all concerned were required to follow the 'Directive' in letter and spirit and any violation shall be dealt with in accordance

with the relevant provisions of the Constitution, the law and the judgment of the Supreme Court.

Daily Times - January 19, 2013

ECP Bans Recruitments, Diversion of Funds

Taking notice of the massive induction of people in government departments and diversion of public funds to the Prime Minister's discretionary fund for development schemes in his constituency ahead of the general elections, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) banned forthwith all such moves. The Election Commission considered the growing concern of the people as expressed and voiced in the media that the money allocated to various important development projects was being diverted to the discretionary fund of the prime minister for its utilization in the development of his own constituency was yet another facet of pre-poll-rigging. The electoral body noted that if not checked and brought to an immediate end, it was likely to influence the electoral process adversely and thus send an extremely wrong message to the public at large, making the election tainted and falling short of the constitutional provisions contained in Article 218 (3) of the Constitution. Through a directive, signed by Chief Election Commissioner Justice (ret'd) Fakhruddin G Ebrahim and the four members of the Election Commission, the EC banned all kinds of recruitments in any ministry, division, department or institution of the federal government or any department or institution of any provincial and local governments forthwith except recruitments by the Federal or a Provincial Public Service Commission. Similarly, the Election Commission also banned diversion of funds already allocated for various development schemes and spending of funds so diverted would stand frozen forthwith.

The EC issued this directive under the powers conferred upon it under Articles 218 (3) and 220 of the Constitution, Article 6 of the Election Commission Order-2002, Section 103 (c) and 104 of the Representation of the People Act, 1976. The commission noted that it was charged with the constitutional duty to organize and conduct elections in terms of Article 218 of the Constitution and to make such arrangements as were necessary to ensure that the election was conducted honestly, justly, fairly and in accordance with the law and that corrupt practices were guarded against. It was pointed out there was widespread concern that some government departments were in the process of inducting thousands of people on various positions that amounted to pre-poll rigging as political bribe. The electoral body noted that for tangible reasons, the Election Commission was of the considered view that such mass recruitments at this point of time when the general elections of the National Assembly and provincial assemblies were going to take place shortly would substantially influence the results of elections, therefore, it was imperative that all kinds of recruitments, except those made by the Federal and Provincial Public Service Commission, be banned forthwith. The commission reiterated that it had become imperative that the electoral body took all necessary steps under the law to prevent any action on the part of the federal, provincial and local governments that amounted to influencing the results of upcoming general elections by depriving candidates from having a level playing field.

Daily Times - January 22, 2013

Karachi Delimitation Not Possible: Chief Election Commissioner

Chief Election Commissioner Justice (ret'd) Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim categorically stated that delimitation of constituencies in Karachi before general elections was not possible and pointed out that the absence of fresh census might make it impossible to implement the Supreme Court order in this regard. He said that the issue would not lead to a delay in elections which, would be the 'most crucial polls in Pakistan's history and would set the future course of democracy'. He reiterated that the elections would be fair, free and transparent. He also said that I request the

Corps Commander that I needed 17,000 troops across Karachi and he said that was not possible. But he offered us enough personnel, which have met our requirement.

Dawn - January 23, 2013

45 File Papers for By-Polls on Six Provincial Assembly Seats: Karachi

Forty-five candidates have filed their nomination papers for by-elections on six vacant seats of the Sindh Assembly scheduled to be held on Feb 18. The six provincial assembly seats - four in Karachi (PS-101, 103, 113 and 115) and two in the interior of Sindh (PS-73 Jamshoro; PS-84 Thatta) - fell vacant after as many lawmakers - four belonging to the Muttahida Qaumi Movement and two from the Pakistan People's Party - resigned instead of submitting affidavits to the election commission about dual nationality. According to the list:

- 16 candidates filed papers for PS-73. They are Sikandar Ali (independent), Ghulam Ali (MQM), Ghulam Nabi Channa (MQM), Advocate Ashique Hussain Solangi (independent), Eng. Khalid Hussain (independent), Roshan Ali (Sindh United Party), Dodo Khan (Independent), Murad Ali Shah (PPPP), Asif Ali Shah (independent), Habibullah Rind (PML-N), Pir Jan Muhammad (independent), Syed Muhammad Ali Shah (independent), Atta Muhammad Rind (independent), Ghulam Shabir Sahito (independent), Muhammad Rafique Khan (independent) and Raza Muhammad Gaincho (independent)
- Fourteen candidates have applied for PS-84. Their names are Muhammad Hassan Jakhro (independent), Neelam Yasmeen Abassi (independent), Ghulam Abass Attai (independent), Manzoor Ahmed Khushik (independent), Ahmed Ali (independent), Sadiq Ali Memon (PPPP), Shamus-ul Nisa (PPPP), Imtiaz Ahmed Qureshi (PPPP), Akber Jokhio (independent), Abdul Hameed Shaikh (MQM), Jamaluddin Qureshi (MQM), Mehar Ali Shah (MQM), Abdul Wahid Brohi (independent) and Ghulam Akber Jatoi (PML-N)
- For Karachi's PS-101, three candidates -Jamal Ahmed, Javed Shaukat and Syed Absar-ul-Hassan - filed nomination papers and they all belong to the MQM
- Four candidates - Sohail Ahmed Jamil, Nadeem Hidayat Hashmi, Muhammad Sajid Qureshi and Shahbaz Ahmed Ghori - filed their papers for PS-103, Karachi, and they all are affiliated with the MQM
- Five candidates applied for contesting by-election on PS-113. Three MQM candidates are Muhammad Ali Rashid, Jamal Kazim and Aamir Rashid, while two others - Saleem Zia and Muhammad Anwer Khan Niazi - belong to the PML-N
- Three candidates filed their nomination papers for contesting by-polls on PS-115 and they all belong to the MQM. Their names are Talha Asif Taufiq, Arshad Abdullah and Aftab Qamar

Dawn - January 23, 2013

Election Commission of Pakistan Decides On 30-Day Scrutiny Period

In a major initiative toward electoral reforms in the country, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has approved a 30-day scrutiny period for nomination papers of candidates to ensure that frauds, fake degree holders, tax and utility bill defaulters and other cheats are barred from contesting the next polls by cross checking their credentials from the concerned authorities. Under the draft bill:

- The winners in elections must bag 50 percent of the total votes cast
- The fee for filing nomination papers for contesting a National Assembly seat has been increased from Rs 4,000 to Rs 50,000 while an aspirant for the provincial assembly seat

will now have to pay Rs 25,000 for the submission of nomination papers instead of Rs 2,000

- The fines for violation of the code of conduct have been increased manifold. For instance, Rs 100,000 fines will be imposed on a voter casting a bogus vote. Those committing election forgeries will also have to pay a fine of Rs 100,000 and up to five years imprisonment, according to the draft
- A fine Rs 100,000 will also be imposed for illegally occupying polling station and exceeding the amount allowed for election expenses by the contesting candidates
- The Constitution bars a person from contesting polls if he or she has obtained a loan of Rs2 million or more from any bank etc in his own name or in the name of his spouse or any of his dependents which remains unpaid for more than one year from the due date, or has got such loan written off; and if he or his spouse or any of his dependents has defaulted in payment of government dues and utility expenses, including telephone, electricity, gas and water charges in excess of ten thousand rupees, for over six months, at the time of filing his nomination paper
- The Constitution also set the conditions of parliamentarians to be of good character; should not be commonly known as one who violates Islamic injunctions; should be sagacious, righteous, non-profligate, and honest and amen; should have adequate knowledge of Islamic teachings and practices obligatory duties prescribed by Islam as well as abstain from major sins

The News - January 24, 2013

ECP Nearly Triple Poll Expenditure

Only time will tell if the upcoming polls will be the most transparent in the country's history. But one thing is for sure, the looming elections are to become the most expensive polls ever. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) sought a supplementary grant worth Rs5.1 billion - out of which Rs0.5 billion has been allocated to the army - from the government to conduct the upcoming elections for national and provincial assemblies, according to a statement submitted by Law Minister Farooq H Naek in the upper house. The ECP said there will be around 75,000 polling stations in the country during the upcoming polls, adding that a major chunk of the supplementary grant, Rs1.259 billion, would be spent on polling staff expenditures.

- Rs1 billion would be spent on printing ballot papers, forms, envelopes, posters and placards
- Rs0.5 billion for the army to deploy soldiers at sensitive polling stations
- Rs450 million for publicity
- Rs87.5 million for establishing improvised polling stations
- Rs148 million on procurement of election material
- Rs215 million on procurement and transportation of ballot boxes and voting screens

The government spent Rs1.85 billion for the polls held in 2008, while the army was given Rs195 million for providing assistance. Furthermore;

- Rs21 million has been allocated for casual telephones of District Returning Officers (DROs) and Returning Officers (ROs)
- Rs16.6 million for office stationery
- Rs450 million for publicity charges
- Rs90 million for honoraria to ECP employees
- Rs76.88 million for indelible ink
- Rs750 million for allocation to the ECP and PECs
- Rs5 million for the training of DROs and Returning Officers

The Express Tribune - January 24, 2013

Poll Winners Won't Need To Bag 50% of Polled Votes: ECP

The Election Commission of Pakistan said that winners of general elections would not be required to obtain 50% of the total polled votes. The election commission clarifies that no such proposal was approved in the proposed Electoral Reforms Bill as it relates to runner up electoral system.

Daily Times - January 25, 2013

ECP Advises Government to Dissolve Assemblies by February 15

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has suggested the government to dissolve the assemblies by February 15. The CEC demanded the government to establish a caretaker setup by mid-February, adding that Punjab should be taken on board so that all national and provincial assemblies are simultaneously dissolved. Ebrahim said the ECP wanted to hold the general elections for national and provincial assemblies on a single day, as it would help dispel the impression of rigging.

Pakistan Today - January 15, 2013

Political Parties

Pakistan People's Party (PPP)

Electoral Reforms Should Be Demanded Constitutionally: Federal Information Minister Kaira

Information Minister Qamar Zaman Kaira has said that no unconstitutional method should be adopted for bringing electoral reforms in the country. He said the constitution should be followed in letter and spirit. The PPP, he added, was the 'role model' for those trying to make a Tehrir Square in Pakistan, therefore, they must shun the urge since the country's media, judiciary and election commission were enjoying full freedom. He said Dr Tahirul Qadri should present his proposed reforms to the Election Commission which was the competent authority to introduce such reforms.

Pakistan Today - January 01, 2013

President Zardari Reviews Relations with Coalition Partners

President Asif Ali Zardari summoned Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf and other senior PPP leaders to review relations with the government's coalition partners. The emergency meeting comes in the face of the decision by the government's main coalition partners - MQM and the PML-Q - to support the long march.

Daily Times - January 02, 2013

Prime Minister's Brother Appointed PPP Rawalpindi Division President

President Asif Ali Zardari, who is also the co-chairman of the Pakistan People's Party, has appointed Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf's brother Raja Imran Ashraf as PPP's Rawalpindi division's president. PPP co-chairman's Political Secretary and MNA Rukhsana Bangash has issued a notification which says that the notification will take effect immediately. Copies of the notification have also been sent to PPP Vice Chairman and former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani, PPP Vice Chairman and Federal Minister Makhdoom Amin Faheem, PPP Secretary General Senator Jahangir Badar and PPP Punjab President Mian Manzoor Ahmad Wattoo. Raja

Iman Ashraf is the younger brother of Prime Minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf and is an active worker of the party. His name was also in the circles for the party ticket from NA 48, Islamabad; however no final decision has so far been taken at the leadership level. It has been learnt that Raja Imran Ashraf has been given this responsibility after consultations with various party leaders and in view of his active political profile and popularity among the party workers. He has been charged with assisting the senior party leadership in Punjab to help organize the party in Rawalpindi Division on war footings and to mobilize party vote bank in the area to compete with tough rival PML-N.

Daily Times - January 02, 2013

Democracy Only Solutions to All Problems: Prime Minister

The prime minister said, Democracy is the only solution to all problems of the people and it is the only way to ensure peace, progress and prosperity of the country through constitutional way. The prime minister said no one can claim to be a true representative of the masses as election is the only process to determine the real representatives of the people of Pakistan. Everyone has the right to participate in the election process and it is the power of the masses who will determine who will be their real representative. The prime minister said the democratic process is only controlled by the constitution and the elected parliament is custodian of this process.

Daily Times - January 03, 2013

Former Punjab Governor Salman Taseer Remembered On 2nd Anniversary

A number of people from all walks of life attended a prayer ceremony to mark the second death anniversary of former Punjab governor Salmaan Taseer at his residence in Cavalry Ground. Taseer was fatally shot by his bodyguard on January 4, 2011, in Islamabad as he was returning to his car after lunch with a friend. Taseer had been fighting for a Christian woman, Aasia Bibi, who was sentenced to death for blasphemy.

Daily Times - January 05, 2013

Leaders Join Hands To Save Democracy

The top political leadership of the country threw its weight behind the democratic system by resolving to block any attempt to derail the democratic process in the country. Prime Minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf phoned PML-N President Nawaz Sharif and ANP's President Asfandiyar Wali Khan and also held a meeting with Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PMAP) President Mahmood Khan Achakzai. In his conversation with Nawaz Sharif, the prime minister discussed the political situation in the country, and both the leaders agreed that democracy was the way forward and the people of Pakistan would not allow any attempt to derail the democratic process in the country. The prime minister discussed the recent political developments in his telephonic conversation with Asfandiyar Wali Khan. The ANP chief said that their goal was to establish sustainable democracy in the country. Reiterating his support for the coalition government, he said that any attempt to create hurdles in the democratic process was unacceptable. The PMAP chief said that the people of Pakistan had struggled long and hard to establish democracy in the country and warned those trying to derail democratic process that they should not treat democracy as a hoax and if any attempt was made to harm it, all political forces would join hands to resist it and turn the entire country into Tahrir Square.

Daily Times - January 05, 2013

Democracy Is the Future of the Country: Prime Minister

Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf said completion of five-year tenure by the coalition government against various odds is a testimony of the fact that politics in Pakistan has matured and no one can harm it. He said democracy is the future of the country and no one could snatch it. The PM assured that elections would be held on time and there would be no delay. He said elections were a trust of the people and these would be returned to the people and whoever voted to power would serve the people.

Pakistan Today - January 06, 2013

Every Plot to Postpone Polls Will Be Foiled: President Zardari

President Asif Ali Zardari said that no one would be allowed to derail the democratic system and conspiracies to postpone elections would be foiled. The PPP leader made it clear that elections will be held on time. The formation of a caretaker set-up and PPP's relations with its coalition partners were also reviewed in detail. He said that the forthcoming elections would be held on time, refuted all reports of a delay in elections and reiterated that the caretaker set-up would be formed within the domain of the Constitution. The PPP leadership decided that the government would leave no stone unturned to improve the law and order situation.

The News - January 10, 2013

Elections Will Be Held By May 6, Says Minister for Religious Affairs

In an apparent move to defuse the political tension prevailing in the country, a federal minister announced that the polls would be held by May 6 at the latest. The general election can be held on May 4, 5 or 6 and I can assure you that we will not go beyond this date, Minister for Religious Affairs and chief whip of the ruling Pakistan People's Party in the National Assembly Syed Khurshid Shah, in which they urged the government to immediately announce the election date.

Dawn - January 17, 2013

Two PML-N MNAs from Jhelum join PPP

In a sign of things to come with general elections approaching, two MNAs of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) from Jhelum joined the ruling PPP. Former MNA and Senator Raja Muhammad Afzal Khan along with his sons, Raja Muhammad Asad Khan, MNA, and Raja Muhammad Safdar Khan, MNA of the PML-N, called on President and PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here at the Bilawal House and announced their decision to join the PPP. Raja Afzal, who is from Jhelum, said that he was a born Muslim Leaguer and had been contesting elections since 1985 and had been elected on seven occasions, the last time being in 2002. His sons Raja Safdar and Raja Asad contested on PML-N tickets from Jhelum on NA-62 and NA-63 and won both seats. Raja Afzal said they had been associated with the PML but had decided to join the PPP.

The News - January 20, 2013

Punjab Governor's Three Sons Join PPP

Three sons of Punjab Governor Makhdoom Ahmad Mahmood, including MPA Syed Murtaza Mahmood, MNA Syed Mustafa Mahmood and Syed Ali Mahmood, joined the Pakistan People's Party in his presence. Mustafa and Murtaza were elected from the platform of the Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F). The announcement was made by former Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani.

The News - January 21, 2013

Ex-MPA Passes Away

The Pakistan People's Party leader and former member provincial assembly (MPA) Sargand Khan passed away. The deceased was laid to rest in his ancestral grave yard in MaliKhel Kotkai.

The News - January 21, 2013

PPP Expects To Win Up To 35 Seats in KP

The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) is expecting to win 30 to 35 seats of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly if it enters into an electoral alliance with the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) and the Qaumi Watan Party (QWP). The provincial leaders of the JUI-F and PPP have already held three meetings to discuss an election alliance and both the parties express bright hopes for it though no final decision has been taken so far. Similarly, the representatives of the PPP and QWP have also discussed a future alliance, expecting better results and quoted the central leadership, including Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Aftab Sherpao, who they said were taking interest in such a possibility.

The News - January 21, 2013

Prime Minister Raja Asked To Begin Talks on Caretaker Government

The core committee of the ruling PPP asked Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf to begin consultations with all political parties for the selection of a caretaker set-up and finalization of election dates at the national and provincial levels. The meeting unanimously asked Prime Minister Ashraf to start contacting all political forces for holding trouble-free elections both at the federal and provincial levels. It resolved that free and fair elections would be held in accordance with the Constitution and within the time limit stipulated in it and would not be delayed even for a day.

Dawn - January 23, 2013

PML-N's Saif Khosa Joins PPP

The PML-N faced another blow as Saifuddin Khosa, the son of senior adviser to Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Zulfiqar Ali Khosa, joined the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). "I have joined the PPP with sincerity as I have serious reservations about the policies of PML-N," the MNA said while announcing to join the PPP with PPP women Wing President Faryal Talpur, Secretary General PPP Jehangir Badr, PPP President South Punjab and Textile Minister Makhdoom Shahabuddin and Information Minister Qamar Zaman Kaira here at the Zardari House. Saifuddin Khosa said the PML-N was not serious in making South Punjab a province. "I joined the PPP for its sincerity and efforts for the creation of the new province". He claimed that in the coming days, more prominent personalities from South Punjab would join the PPP.

The News - January 24, 2013

PPP Forms Board to Award Tickets

The Pakistan People's Party has formed a four-member parliamentary board for awarding party tickets in the next up-coming elections. The Provincial presidents of the PPP would also assist the parliamentary Board in selecting the party candidates for awarding the party tickets for the up-coming elections. Parliamentary board of the PPP comprises:

- Former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani
- Makhdoom Amin Fahim
- Syed Khursheed Shah
- Faryal Talpur

The News - January 24, 2013

Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML - N)

PML-N Boycotts Governor Ahmad Mehmood's Meeting

Resentment among the PML-N cadres towards the appointment of Makhdoom Ahmad Mehmood as Punjab governor surfaced after the ruling party MPAs boycotted the meeting convened by him as a goodwill gesture. Punjab Assembly Speaker Rana Iqbal was the only representative of the Punjab government who came to attend the joint parliamentary meeting of MPAs from all parties of the Punjab at the Governor's House whereas all other MPAs of the PML-N, and its allies like the unification bloc and MMA didn't turn up at the first-ever joint parliamentary meeting of the PA members convened since the PPP came into power in 2008.

The News - January 04, 2013

Democracy a Must for Progress, Says Nawaz

The Pakistan Muslim League, Nawaz Sharif, said that the country could not move on path of development and progress without democracy. He said that "remote-controlled people" were befooling the masses by talking of electoral reforms and bringing change in the country, adding that their nefarious agenda would be foiled. The PML-N chief said that democracy would be protected at any cost and general elections would be held on time. He said that undemocratic forces brought the country to the brink of destruction which gave rise to terrorism, inflation and unemployment, adding that only democracy could safeguard the integrity of the country.

Pakistan Today - January 06, 2013

PPP MNA Zafar Ali Shah Decides To Join PML-N

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) MNA Syed Zafar Ali Shah announced switching over his allegiance to Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N). Last year in December, Zafar accused the ruling party of rigging after his nephew lost the by-elections in Naushero Feroze. Zafar's accusations were brushed aside by PPP officials, who insisted they were present at polling stations to support their candidates and not to rig the votes. On November 5, the PPP had lodged a complaint with the election commission against Zafar for accusing the party of helping their candidate in his election campaign. Federal minister Maula Bux Chandio had even asked Zafar to resign.

The Express Tribune - January 09, 2013

PML-N for Poll Schedule before Caretaker Set-Up

The Pakistan Muslim League-N has called upon the government to announce election schedule before the formation of a caretaker set-up, and termed it a constitutional requirement. The announcement of the date of general election must precede that about caretaker set-up as required by the Constitution, PML-N Senator Pervaiz Rashid. The government should nominate a caretaker prime minister after consultation between the leader of opposition and the leader of the house in the National Assembly.

Dawn - January 15, 2013

Nawaz, Shahbaz's Brother Passes Away

Mian Abbas Sharif, the brother of PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif and Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif, passed away at the age of 58. Abbas was admitted to Sharif Medical Complex after he felt pain in his chest but he could not survive. His funeral prayers were offered in Raiwind, attended

by a large number of people, including politicians and government officials. Leaders of various political parties, including President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf, expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of Abbas.

Daily Times - January 12, 2013

Opposition Leader Nisar Refuses to Hold Talks with Government Panel

The opposition leader in National Assembly, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, refused to hold talks with the four-member committee formed by President Asif Ali Zardari regarding dissolution of assemblies and forthcoming elections. Refusing to hold consultations with the committee, Chaudhry Nisar has told his decision to PML-N leadership. The members of the committee included Khursheed Shah, Mian Raza Rabbani, Farooq H Naek and Nazar Muhhamd Gondal. The Chaudhry Nisar is on the view that as an opposition leader in National Assembly he could not hold dialogue with the committee constituted to discuss formation of caretaker government and forthcoming elections. It said that Nisar was also on the view that under the 20th constitutional amendment, the opposition leader can only hold talks with the prime minister for the appointment of caretaker prime minister. PML-N has given a task to Senator Ishaq Dar to have consultations with the committee. However, sources added that the final talks would take place between Chaudhry Nisar and PM Raja Pervez Ashraf for the appointment of caretaker PM.

The News - January 13, 2013

Government, Not Democracy, Failed: Nawaz

PML-N President Mian Nawaz Sharif said that the malfunctioning of the government could not be declared as the failure of democracy. Nawaz Sharif said that only eight weeks are remaining in the current government's term.

Pakistan Today - January 18, 2013

PML-N joins hands with PML-F, NPP in Sindh

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F) and National People's Party (NPP) have decided to contest the upcoming general elections in Sindh under an alliance. The heads of the three parties agreed to constitute a committee to formulate the terms of reference of the alliance and explore the possibility of expanding the alliance to other parties in Sindh. Participants of the meeting said it will look into seats the alliance has the potential to win, in addition to discussing which other parties can join the alliance. It will also decide whether the three parties will contest the elections in Sindh under a single symbol.

The Express Tribune - January 19, 2013

Nawaz Urges People To Put Country On Right Track Through Vote

Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, the leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, has said that a judicious use of ballot would put the country on the right track and voters must use their right of franchise in the coming elections. He said politics should not be used to divide the people, adding that politics that served the masses was needed to change their destiny. He said if the people elected him to power, he would work round the clock to overcome the daunting problems faced by the country. He said the PML-N loathed politics of division and hatred. "See Sindh with one eye and there shouldn't be different local government laws in one province (Sindh)". He added that since Pakistanis were one nation, they should have the same system in the whole country. "There shouldn't be different systems for those who live in the south or in the north."

The News - January 20, 2013

PML-N Set To Protest Karachi Killings

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz has decided to hold a protest demonstration outside the Governor's House against the killing of its leaders in Karachi recently. They said funeral prayers in absentia for Sindh chapter's joint secretary Mian Taimoor and his father Mian Arbab would be offered on The Mall after the demonstration. Party chief Nawaz Sharif has condemned the killings and demanded early arrest of the culprits. PML-N Secretary-General Iqbal Zafar Jhagra also condemned the killing and demanded the government take immediate action against the killers. He asked what sort of democracy was being practiced in Karachi where people were being killed because of their political affiliations. He said this was not the first time the PML-N leadership had been targeted in Karachi and recalled that Tariq Khan, vice-president of the Sindh chapter, had also been gunned down in a similar attack in 2008. Jhagra lamented inaction of the Sindh government against politically-motivated target killings and asked how democracy could flourish if people with different political affiliations continued to be killed. He called on the Election Commission to take notice of this dangerous trend of political killings aimed at intimidating political opponents.

Dawn - January 24, 2013

PML-N Suggests Six Names for Caretaker Prime Minister

The PML-N has suggested 6 names for nomination of caretaker prime minister. The names of candidates include:

- Ataullah Mengal
- Asma Jahangir
- Mahmood Khan Azhazai
- Justice (retired) Ajmal Mian
- Justice Shakirullah Jan
- Justice (retired) Nasir Aslam Zahid

Pakistan Today - January 25, 2013

Opposition Leader of National Assembly Nisar Demands Removal of Governors

Opposition leader in National Assembly Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan expressing distrust over all four governors of the provinces demanded their removal prior to the forthcoming general elections. Chaudhry Nisar said that PML-N doesn't trust the governors of all provinces appointed on 'political bases, adding that all of them should tender their resignations before the elections. He said that the governors of Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa belonged to MQM, PML-Q and PPP respectively while the Punjab governor is of 'all political parties'.

Pakistan Today - January 25, 2013

Pakistan Tehreek - e - Insaf (PTI)

Imran Flays Election Commission of Pakistan Statement on Dissolution of Assemblies

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman, Imran Khan, expressed apprehensions over the statement of secretary Election Commission of Pakistan about dissolution of National and Provincial Assemblies on different dates. He said this would be tantamount to provide ample opportunities to the provincial governments to rig the elections even before the Election Day. He said such a decision would provide an ample opportunity to the provincial governments to influence the results of the general elections, which was a violation of fundamental rights of the people and also was against provision of equal opportunities to all parties contesting the polls. He said that how the caretaker set up in centre would be announced around 25 days ahead of the dissolution of provincial governments.

Daily Times - January 01, 2013

Imran Calls for Neutral Interim Setup

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan said that all parties need to be consulted in the creation of a caretaker government. Imran threatened to protest if a neutral interim government was not formed. He said, the only solution to the current crisis is to hold free and fair general elections in the country but that could only be made possible with a neutral caretaker government. He added that the Election Commission of Pakistan could only work independently under an impartial interim government.

The Express Tribune - January 09, 2013

PTI, JI Clash over Election Symbol to End with ECP Decisions

Two right-wing political parties clashed over the allotment of 'scale' as the election symbol. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and the Jamaat-e-Islami demanded the Election Commission of Pakistan to allot "scale" as their election symbol permanently. The PTI requested the ECP to

grant “scale” as permanent election symbol to his party. The PTI had used scale as its election symbol during the recent Gilgit-Baltistan elections. On the other hand, JI also pleaded the ECP to allot their party “scale” as permanent election symbol. JI said that scale had been already allotted to Jamaat-e-Islami in 1971 elections; therefore, his party had the right to obtain this election symbol.

Pakistan Today - January 12, 2013

Zardari Should Quit; Announce Elections: Imran

Announcing his seven-point agenda, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan demanded President Asif Ali Zardari’s immediate resignation and setting up of “neutral” caretaker government. The PTI chief presented his seven demands and gave eight days’ deadline for their acceptance by the government. He warned that if his demands were not met within eight days, he would have to stand by the people who are raising their voices for rule of law and supremacy of the constitution in its true spirit. “Free and fair elections are not possible as long as Asif Ali Zardari is sitting in the Presidency,” said Imran. He asked the government to announce the date of elections as soon as possible, because it had lost credibility during its five-year performance.

Daily Times - January 16, 2013

PTI Intra-Party Polls Delayed Again

Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI) has announced the schedule for intra-party election in the federal capital on November 18. As many as 62,973 party members will elect 500 representatives out of a total 884. Senior Vice-President PTI Hamid Khan told that the central election commission of the party had finalized all arrangements to hold the polls. He said Islamabad had been divided into 40 union councils and there would be nine general and four women seats in each UC. Members/voters will cast their votes through cell phones and each call would cost Rs5 to Rs10. It is just nothing as compared to expenses on casting of votes in polling stations. He added: “70 per cent members have their own mobile phone and CNIC numbers which have been stored in our system. For the 30 remaining per cent members, who do not own cell phones, election camps will be established in every union council. Telephone facility will be available in the camps and after verification of members, they will be allowed to cast their votes,” he said. He said for members who have cell phones, polling hours will start at midnight and continue for 24 hours. However, for those who do not have cell phones the timing would be from 8am to 6pm. Mr Khan said till the middle of December, the PTI would complete the elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and then in Punjab at the end of the year. Referring to the delay in the election in Islamabad, he said it was due to the late procurement of the electronic voting system. The PTI leader said after the first phase, countrywide elections would be held in different phases. After the completion of the process, PTI will become the biggest Democratic Party in the country. Rashid Khan told that the electronic system had been fixed in Karachi and members would have to call at phone number (021) 111-786-725. We have reserved 1,000 PTCL phone lines for the elections which means at a time 1,000 persons can cast their votes and duration of each call will be around three minutes.

Dawn - January 22, 2013

PTI Offers, Then Revokes, Support to PML-N’s Sit-In

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf announced to join, but then withdrew its support to the planned sit-in by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz outside the Parliament House to demand more efficient and transparent verification of voters’ lists in Karachi and a more power Election Commission. PTI chief Imran Khan had said that the party would join the PML-N protest. However, the PTI called an emergency strategic committee later, following which Imran

announced the change of plans. PTI leader Imran Ismail said, "It was decided that under the present circumstances, an alliance with the PML-N was not possible, which is why the PTI will not be taking part in the sit-in". In his earlier talk, the PTI chief had said his party was ready to stand by any party for sake of reforms in the Election Commission for free and fair election. He had said transparent elections were crucial for the country's destiny, as without fair polls, the rule of power would again be transferred to corrupt politicians.

Pakistan Today - January 28, 2013

Jamaat-e-Islami (JI)

Qazi Laid To Rest in Ziarat Kaka Sahib Ancestral Graveyard

Veteran politician and former Jamaat-e-Islami chief Qazi Hussain Ahmad was laid to rest in his ancestral graveyard at Ziarat Kaka Sahib, District Nowshera. Ahmed was a cardiac and asthma patient and was admitted to a private hospital in Islamabad for the last three days. JI chief Syed Munawar Hassan led the funeral prayers and was attended by thousands of JI workers, supporters, sympathizers and various religious and political figures. Ahmed, 74, completed his early education at home and later took admission in Islamia College, Peshawar and did his master's in geography from Peshawar University. He was born in Nowshera on 1938. Ahmed played a key role in the national politics and served JI from 1987 to 2009. He became member of Jamaat-e-Islami in 1970 and was elected to the office of President of its Peshawar branch. Later, he served Jamaat-e-Islami as Secretary and then chief of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. Later, Ahmed was elevated to the office of secretary general, Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan in 1978 and thereafter elected chief of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan in 1987 and continued to serve in that capacity, getting re-elected for four more times (1992, 1994, 1999, 2003). In 2008, he had the distinction for being elected on more than one national assembly seats. He contested elections from NA-5 Nowshera I and was elected on several occasions. He always tried and wanted to unite various religious factions and groups and played an imported role in making the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) in 2002. He served as president of the MMA. He also played an active role in making of the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI), an alliance of right-wing political parties.

The News - January 04, 2013

PML-N, JI Discuss Caretaker Set-Up

With elections only a few weeks away, political parties have stepped up their contacts to discuss the formation of a caretaker set-up and possibilities of electoral alliances. A delegation of the Pakistan Muslim League-N met leaders of the Jamaat-i-Islami to discuss the caretaker set-up. Leader of Opposition in National Assembly, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, and JI chief Munawar Hassan told that the two parties had agreed to complete consultation on caretaker governments for the centre and the provinces within 10 days and all decisions would be made with consensus.

Dawn - January 24, 2013

Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP)

Nawaz, Achakzai in Joint Push for On-Time Election

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) have agreed to ensure that the upcoming parliamentary elections are held on time. In particular, the two leaders discussed Minhaj-ul-Quran International chief Tahirul Qadri's long march scheduled for January 14. Both leaders conveyed the message to "concerned quarters" that elections must not be delayed, come what may.

The Express Tribune - January 02, 2013

Jamiat Ulema - e - Islam Fazalur Rehman (JUI - F)

Fazl Asks ECP to Keep Book Closed

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has allotted an open book as election symbol to the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) but a dissatisfied Fazlur Rehman has requested the commission for a closed book. The ECP has swapped the closed book with open one with some alphabets and digits like 1+1 on its pages. This move has perturbed Fazl, who filed a plea in the ECP requesting for a closed book as his party's election symbol. The commission had received complaints against the JUI-F chief and his candidates for befooling uneducated people across the country, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in the name of book during the last elections. They also said that people were given impression that the symbol was a gateway to heaven.

Pakistan Today - January 04, 2013

Move to Delay Polls Will Achieve Nothing: Fazl

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, while terming Tahirul Qadri a self-proclaimed "Sheikhul Islam", said any move to delay polls will achieve nothing. Fazl said that some people were violently in favor of delaying the polls but they would achieve nothing as all the political parties and media are on the same page in this regard. He claimed that the masses have deep trust in the army, and the election commission should look into matters that may delay elections.

Daily Times - January 06, 2013

Army, Judiciary May Be Consulted On Interim Government: Fazl

Chief of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-F (JUI-F) Maulana Fazlur Rehman said there was no harm if military and judiciary were taken on board in discussions on formation of an interim government. Although it is not mandatory under the Constitution, there seems to be no problem in taking the judiciary and military on board on the matter.

Dawn - January 18, 2013

Pakistan Muslim League - Functional (PML-F)

PML-F Sets Up Body to Contact Parties

Pakistan Muslim League-Functional chief Pir Sibghatullah Shah Rashidi set up a 'coordination committee' comprising his close aides to negotiate prospective 'alliances and seat adjustments' with other parties for the next general election. The committee included Jam Madad Ali, Imtiaz Ahmed Sheikh, Khuda Bux Rajer and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid member of the Sindh Assembly Muhammad Shaharyar Khan Mahar.

Dawn - January 04, 2013

Ex - Cm's Close Friend Tessori Joins PML-F

Renowned businessman and former Sindh Chief Minister Dr Arbab Ghulam Rahim's close friend, Kamran Tessori, has joined Pir Pagaro-led Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F). He made this announcement in presence of the party's General Secretary Imtiaz Shaikh, PML-F Businessmen Forum chief Gulzar Feroze, Mir Mohammad Khokhar, Dr Taj and other leaders of the party during a press conference held at his residence.

Daily Times - January 12, 2013

Muthida Qaumi Movement (MQM)

The Options MQM Has For Its Political Drone Attack

As intense speculation has gripped the political scene after the dramatic announcement by MQM chief Altaf Hussain that he would make a political drone strike in 72 hours, analysts have started looking at the options that he has to create a situation or make a decision that could be a game changer. Many MQM leaders in Pakistan have suddenly stopped responding to media queries about the bombshell announcement of their leader and the head of the MQM legal team which will appear in the Supreme Court. Three options have already been aired in the media, which include:

- The sudden return of Mr Hussain to Pakistan
- Pulling the MQM out of the PPP-led coalition and the assemblies
- A surprise appearance in the Supreme Court, which has summoned him in a contempt of court case

The News - January 04, 2013

MQM Support To PPP, Government Will Continue

President Asif Ali Zardari called London-based MQM Chief Altaf Hussain and exchanged views with him on political developments in the country. President's spokesperson Senator Farhatullah Babar said that Mr Altaf Hussain had assured the President that MQM would continue to support the PPP and the government. The MQM also issued a press release from London in which it said the two leaders had cordially exchanged views on the overall political situation and matters of mutual interest. They agreed that the survival of democratic system and its continuity was essential for stability of the country and was the need of the hour. They also called for resolving all issues with harmony for strengthening democracy.

Dawn - January 04, 2013

Altaf's Political Drone Hits Quaid-e-Azam

Targeting the Pakistani politics with a political drone attack, Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) chief Altaf Hussain claimed that the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, was also loyal to the United Kingdom. The MQM chief said that the Quaid-e-Azam had confessed and vowed to remain loyal to the monarch of England while taking oath as the first governor general of Pakistan. Altaf said that following Muhammad Ali Jinnah, second and third governor generals of Pakistan also took the same oath. He said that he could prove the fact that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah also had a British passport and being a governor general of Pakistan, he was a representative of the British king. Altaf said the Quaid-e-Azam took the oath as a legal compulsion as it was the only available legal way to take oath. He raised the point that under the same legal compulsion, a Pakistani citizen adopts dual nationality in another country while seeking asylum. The MQM chief said that if legal compulsion never cast doubts on the patriotism or loyalty of Jinnah to Pakistan, how the loyalty of those could be doubted who adopted dual nationality and took oaths for citizenship while seeking asylum. He also raised the point that several PPP leaders "suffered" exile. He also said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's Sharif brothers had also spent several years in exile. "PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif also stayed in Saudi Arabia for eight years when his government was toppled by then dictator [former president Gen (r) Pervez] Musharraf," he said. He claimed that Pakistan itself was not completely independent after the partition and remained under the rule of British monarch

until 1956. "It was running under the Kingdom of King Gorge until 1952 and later under Queen Elizabeth until 1956. Monarch's rule was ended in Pakistan on March 23, 1956".

Daily Times - January 11, 2013

MQM to Field Candidates across Punjab

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) has announced that it will field candidates in all constituencies in Punjab in the forthcoming general election. MQM leader Raza Haroon made this announcement, saying that zonal leaders of Punjab had been directed to provide lists of suitable candidates to the party high command for scrutiny. He said the working class would be offered party tickets without seeking party funds from the candidates and their election campaigns would be financed by the MQM. He said the party was ready to strike an electoral alliance with the PML-N if the latter extends it an offer.

Dawn - January 24, 2013

Pakistan Christian Congress (PCC)

Christians Demand Right to Cast Dual Vote

The Pakistan Christian Congress (PCC), a political party fighting for the electoral rights of minorities in the country, has demanded the government and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) give them the right to cast dual vote in the next general elections in line with the constitution. The PCC is a political party registered with the ECP and representing the Christian community since its foundation in 1985. It has constituted around 100 councils in different cities of the country. Representatives of different city councils demanded that the ECP implement Article 226 of the constitution to give equal democratic rights to the Christians.

Daily Times - January 11, 2013

Awami National Party (ANP)

ANP Actively Inviting Political Parties on APC against Terrorism

Leaders of the Awami National Party (ANP) have started meetings with other political parties in connection with the forthcoming All Parties Conference (APC) on the issue of terrorism. The ANP leadership recently decided to convene an APC to gain political consensus against terrorism and militancy. The idea was floated in a high-level party meeting while discussing the security situation emerging after the assassination of Bashir Ahmad Bilour. ANP Central Committee member Bushra Gohar, who is also a member of National Assembly (MNA), said that the party had so far held informal contacts with various political leaders such as President Asif Ali Zardari, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) chief Nawaz Sharif, and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Fazlur Rehman. She said the party was now starting formal contacts and meetings with the leaders of various political parties. So far, the ANP team headed by Senator Afrasiab Khattak has held meetings with Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) leaders and Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) chief Mahmood Khan Achakzai, she said, adding that both the parties had agreed to attend the scheduled APC. Gohar said the ANP team was now in contact with other parties, and was extending formal invitations. She said the APC would be held in Islamabad on the question "terrorism or peace". She said the participants would be requested to suggest ways and means for handling the issue of terrorism, which was claiming the lives of innocent people and causing destruction of both public and private infrastructure. The violence has badly affected the economy of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the adjacent Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), she said, adding that millions of people from the region had been displaced and left homeless as a result of terrorism and violence.

Pakistan Today - January 20, 2013

All Pakistan Muslim League - APML**I'm not Responsible for NRO, Zardari as President: Musharraf**

Former president Gen (R) Pervez Musharraf has said that he is wrongly blamed for paving the way for President Asif Ali Zardari through National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) and the responsibility lies with the elected representatives of Pakistani people in the two houses of the parliament who voted for him to become the president of the country. Musharraf vowed that he will return to Pakistan before the general election, expected to be held in May this year, and will stand in all provinces but didn't commit a date yet again.

The News - January 21, 2013

Can't Confirm Date for Arrival in Pakistan: Musharraf

All Pakistan Muslim League (APML) leader and former President Pervez Musharraf has said that he would go back to Pakistan before the general elections but cannot confirm exact date. General (Retd) Pervez Musharraf said that the change was necessary in Pakistan in upcoming elections, adding that the problems will remain continue if the change did not come. He said that PTI Chairman Imran Khan and Minhajul Quran International founder Tahirul Qadri had tried to fulfill the desires of the masses. Criticizing the current ruling set up, the former President said that law and order situation in Karachi, Quetta and other cities was not good and the country facing economic problems. "The current government has not worked on single mega project," he said. He said that there was no tension on Line of Control (LoC).

Pakistan Today - January 28, 2013

Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP)**Talal Bugti, Hafiz Saeed Call for All Parties Conference**

The Jamaatud Dawa (JuD) and the Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP) called for an All Parties Conference (APC), to discuss two issues - target killings in Balochistan and terrorism. Both leaders also agreed that it was not enough to say there was an "Indian hand" involved in creating trouble in the province, but added that all such elements should be "booked immediately". They added that the operation by armed forces in the area should be stopped. Saeed also said that JuD will soon launch a relief movement for its "Baloch brothers". He supported Talal Bugti's claim that the Supreme Court should make all pending petitions regarding Balochistan their priority. Talal added that the province's inhabitants would not accept "fake leadership", and that all parties that consider themselves patriotic should constitute a grand jirga, call an APC and review the Balochistan crisis.

The Express Tribune - January 09, 2013

Voters List**New Delimitation in Karachi**

The Supreme Court admitted Muttahida Qaumi Movement's (MQM) review petition for regular hearing against its orders about delimitations in Karachi, and directed the registrar office to fix the case hearing. MQM, the only political party opposing the delimitation, had filed the review petition in December against the Supreme Court's verdict on the issue. The petition pleads that the court's rulings of November 26 and 28 were "in violation" of the constitution. On November

26, a five-member bench of the apex court had observed that constituencies in Karachi should be delimited in a manner that they comprise "mixed population" to avoid political polarization.

The News - January 10, 2013

Big Difference in Number of Voters in Rolls of 08 And 13

A yawning gap between the number of voters in most constituencies for National Assembly in the voters' lists for the 2008 polls and those listed for 2013 elections has raised questions about the accuracy of electoral rolls. Both the increase and decrease in the number of voters in the rolls prepared for 2013 elections over that in the list for earlier elections exceed 100,000 in around two dozen constituencies. The decrease in a constituency in Balochistan is as high as about 250,000 and the maximum increase of 192,000 is in a constituency in Punjab. The decrease indicates bogus votes, including multiple and duplicate entries, and the increase shows that eligible voters were missed out in the door-to-door verification exercise in 2007. The number of voters in 112 of the 272 constituencies has come down in five years and increased in the remaining 160 constituencies. The constituencies of Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf, leader of the opposition in National Assembly Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, federal ministers Qamar Zaman Kaira, Chaudhry Ahmad Mukhtar, Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan, Nazar Muhammad Gondal, Hina Rabbani Khar and Makhdoom Shahabuddin, former minister Hamid Saeed Kazmi and PML-N leaders Ahsan Iqbal, Khawaja Asif and Zahid Hamid are amongst the ones in Punjab where the number of voters has gone up by over 50,000.

- The most significant decrease of 253,000 votes has been registered in NA-266 (Nasirabad-cum-Jaffarabad) in Balochistan. The number of registered voters in the constituency was 651,000 in 2008 but has now plunged to 398,000. Former chief minister of Balochistan, Taj Muhammad Jamali, had won the seat in 2008
- Unusual decrease of 213,000 has taken place in NA-262 (Qilla Abdullah) in Balochistan where the number of voters has come down from 392,000 in 2008 to 179,000. Haji Rozuddin of JUI-F had defeated Malik Usman Achakzai of ANP by a narrow margin of 162 votes in the last polls for the seat
- In NA-23 (Kohistan) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the number of voters has come down to less than half of what it was in 2008 - from 317,000 to just 126,000. The seat was won by independent candidate Mehboobullah Jan in the last elections
- Another significant decline is in the NA-209 (Kandhkot-Kashmore) constituency where the number of voters has come down to 136,000 from 283,000 in 2008. The seat was won by sitting federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani with a large majority
- The number of voters in the constituency of Deputy Prime Minister Chaudhry Pervez Elahi - (NA-58) Attock - has declined from 315,000 in 2008 to 190,000

Other constituencies where voters' number has dropped by over 100,000 include:

- NA-263, NA-259 and NA-267 (Balochistan)
- NA-216, NA-231, NA-233 and NA-237 (Sindh)
- NA-114 and NA-125 (Punjab)

The most significant increase of 193,000 voters has been witnessed in NA-128 (Punjab) where the number of voters has climbed to 468,000 from 275,000 million in 2008. The constituencies where the number of voters has increased by over 100,000 include:

- NA-3, NA 29 and NA-34 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)
- NA-57, NA-59 and NA-125 (Punjab)
- NA-244 (Sindh)

Out of the 148 constituencies in Punjab, there is a surge in 94 and a decline in 54. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the number of voters has increased in five of the 35 constituencies. The

constituencies where the increase has been of over 50,000 include those of ANP chief Asfandiyar Wali Khan, JUI-F leader Maulana Fazlur Rahman and Qaumi Watan Party chief Aftab Ahmad Sherpao. A few constituencies where a decline has been recorded include that of Railways Minister Ghulam Ahmad Bilour (NA-1). In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, the number of voters has risen in eight and fallen in four constituencies. The number of voters has increased in both the constituencies of the federal capital. In Sindh's 61 constituencies, the number of voters has fallen in 36 and increased in 25. In Balochistan the number has dropped in 13 of the 14 constituencies.

Dawn - January 10, 2013

Voters Deprived Of CNIC by Bogus ECP Officials: ECP: Karachi, Sindh

The Election Commission of Pakistan has received a few complaints from Karachi against some unknown people posing themselves as ECP officials and taking away original computerized national identity cards (CNICs) of voters in the name of verification. Telephonic complaints had been received from some voters in Karachi that they had been deprived of their CNICs by people introducing themselves as staff of the commission. The ECP swung into action and issued a statement warning voters against handing over their original CNICs to verification officials in any case, but urged them to cooperate with officials who would go house-to-house during the verification campaign. The ECP advised the people to show their CNICs to officials to prove their identity and for verification of their particulars in the voters' list. It, however, made it clear that no verifying official was authorized to collect the CNIC of any person. The official said the statement was meant to alert the people against any attempt to subvert the verification exercise.

Dawn - January 12, 2013

Political Parties to Stage 3-Day Sit In Outside Election Office

Political and religious parties have announced to stage a 3-day sit-in outside the office of the Sindh Election Commission from Jan 26 against the absence of army personnel during the process of voters' verification. The announcement was made by the leaders of different political and religious parties while addressing the participants at the protest camp set up outside the PEC office. The leaders informed that a 3-day sit-in would start from Jan 26 at 3pm and would continue till evening. They were on their views that chief election commissioner (CEC) should take decision in the favor of citizens of the city without being pressurized by any party. Leaders among:

- JI Karachi chief Muhammad Hussain Mahenti
- General Secretary of JI Karachi Naseem Siddiqui
- Saleem Zia of PML-N
- Nadir Akmal Leghari of PTI
- Umer Sadiq of JUI-F
- Mehfooz Yar Khan of AML
- Mazhar Rahoja of Awami Tehreek
- Mustaqeem Noorani of JUP
- Matloob Awan of ST
- Irfanullah Marwat of PML-N

Daily Times - January 24, 2013

Analysis/Reports

2012 - The Year of Political Defections

It is not wrong to say that 2012 was the year of political defections, as crossover from one party to another remained on the rise throughout the year. The year saw that many politicians, who change loyalties within days and weeks for power, switched over their party affiliations, which is representative of the game going on at the moment in the country. A large number of other political opportunists are waiting to use their options when the caretaker set-up comes in force. The politicians who changed party affiliations included former ministers, members of the National and provincial assemblies, senators, nazims and councilors. The first quarter of the year witnessed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) thriving and a number of politicians belonging to other parties joined its ranks. This was in continuation of the last quarter of the year 2011. After a successful political show at Minar-e-Pakistan on September 30, 2011, the PTI won applause from all sides and succeeded in establishing itself as the third strongest political force in the country. As a result, many politicians from across the country, mostly belonging to the PML-N, PML-Q and PPP, were attracted towards the PTI. During the second quarter of 2012, many of the politicians' romance with the PTI started to diminish as internal bickering and frustration within the party increased. The traditional politicians began openly expressing their differences and complaining of being ignored by the party leadership in decision-making. During the third quarter of 2012, other political parties, especially the PML-N and PML-Q geared up their campaigns to win back their defectors and woo others. Many politicians on the promise of getting party positions and tickets for the upcoming elections joined these parties during the last two quarters of the year. Political heavyweights, who switched over their loyalties and joined the PTI in 2012, included PML-N leaders:

- Inamullah Khan Niazi from Mianwali
- Raja Nadir Pervaiz from Faisalabad
- PML-Q leaders Aleem Khan from Lahore
- Ehsanul Haq Piracha, Anwarul Haq Piracha and Inam Piracha from Sargodha
- Rai Hassan Nawaz from Sahiwal
- Rana Zahid Tauseef from Faisalabad
- PPP leaders Muhammad Afzal Sindhu from Bahawalnagar
- Khalid Kharral and Mehr Khaliq Yar Lak from Sargodha
- Nationalist leader and former Awami National Party stalwart Hashim Babar

The PML-N also played its political cards to counter Imran Khan's tsunami and woo politicians belonging to other parties. Prominent among those who joined the PML-N this year PML-Q leaders were:

- Tariq Azeem
- Ameer Muqam
- Marvi Memon
- Sumaira Malik
- Makhdoom Ahmad Alam Anwar
- Afzal Sahi
- Ghulam Rasool

PTI leaders were:

- Khawaja Muhammad Khan Hoti
- Shahid Akram Bhindar and his son Waleed Akram Bhindar

PPP leaders were:

- Enver Baig

- Chaudhry Ahmad Saeed
- Nawabzada Mazhar Ali Khan
- Nawabzada Muzaffar Ali Khan

Sindh National Front chief Mumtaz Bhutto had announced to merge his party with the PML-N, and Pakistan Muslim League-Zia Chief Ijazul Haq had also decided to join the PML-N. The PML-N also reached an agreement with the PML-Likeminded on seat adjustment in the upcoming elections. The PML-Q remained active during the year and made certain moves to overcome the political damage done by the PTI and get more share in Punjab by weakening the PML-N. Important political figures that joined the PML-Q's ranks included:

- PTI leaders Chaudhry Riaz Ahmad and Ahmad Nawaz from Bahawalpur
- Mian Ahmad Raza Maneka from Pakpattan
- PML-N leaders Nisar Qasim, Salman Mohal from Bahawalnagar
- Dr Azeemuddin Zahid Lakhvi from Kasur
- Aslam Farooqi from Nankana and Nasir Ramzan Gujjar

To strengthen its position, the PML-Q made an election alliance with the Sunni Ittehad Council and agreed on seat adjustment with it. The PPP also geared up to make gains in the next general elections. Important political personalities who joined the PPP in 2012 included:

- PML-N leaders Syed Salman Gardezi, Syed Irfan Ahmed Gardezi and Sajid Hussain Bukhari from Bahawalpur
- Shazia Aurangzeb from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- PTI leaders Makhdoom Mureed Hussain Qureshi, Iftikhar Jhagra, Syed Iftikhar Shah
- PML-Q leader Nighat Orakzai and former minister Iftikhar Khan Mohmand

Some sitting MNAs have decided to switch over party affiliation but they are waiting for the right time to make announcements. PML-Q MNA Riaz Hussain Pirzada from Bahawalpur met with Nawaz Sharif and expressed confidence in his leadership. He has decided to join the PML-N and contest the forthcoming general elections from its platform, but he will not make a formal announcement in this regard because he does not want to quit his seat. MNA Raza Hayat belonging to the PML-Q, PPP leader Sahibzada Ghazanfar Gul, former NA speaker Fakhur Imam and PML-Q's former district nazim Lodhran Abdul Rehman Kanju are in contact with the PML-N and are expected to join the party. There are a number of other politicians, who are waiting for the right time, possibly the caretaker set-up, to use their options. They include more than 40 members of the Unification Bloc in the Punjab Assembly. Unification Bloc members from southern Punjab are in contact with PML-Q leaders and would prefer to go back to the PML-Q folds to retain their seats. While most of the Unification Bloc members from central Punjab could join the PML-N.

Daily Times - January 02, 2013

Do's and Don'ts for Legislators in Other Countries: Analysis by Sabir Shah

A glance through the codified American, British, Canadian, Australian, Saudi Arabian and Indian constitutions reveals that sterling character is the basic qualification for anyone to become a parliamentarian in these countries. A study of the unwritten British constitution also shows that those aspiring to be members of the country's legislative houses (House of Commons and House of Lords) should neither be involved in any crime, nor should they be having a proven conviction history. A few of these constitutions have also mentioned clearly that lunatics should not qualify as legislators. You talk of any constitution in the world and it naturally requires the aspiring lawmakers to have crime-free life histories before qualifying as members of their respective country's legislative houses and even after getting elected as legislators and entrusted with the task of framing laws. Interestingly, constitutions of the countries named above have not used many adjectives to describe the qualities needed to be a parliamentarian,

contrary to the clauses D, E and F of Article 62 of the 1973 Pakistan Constitution that states that a person can only qualify to be a legislator if he bears good character, is righteous, non-profligate and honest. Article 62 of Pakistan Constitution also states that in order to qualify to this status, an aspiring assembly member should not be commonly known as the one who violates Islamic injunctions, have an adequate knowledge of Islamic teachings and practices obligatory duties prescribed by Islam, besides being the one who abstains from committing major sins. This correspondent had reported sometime back that despite constitutional provisions, at least 16 federal ministers in the current cabinet were either facing or had faced charges ranging from tax evasion, moral and financial corruption at some stages of their respective political careers. Coming back to the subject, emphasis on Islamic injunctions has specifically been laid down in the constitutions of nations constituting the Muslim and the Arab World for natural reasons, because the Islamic code of Law (Sharia) happens to be the foundation stone of the legal systems prevalent there. In the monarchy of Saudi Arabia, for instance, the Holy Quran is considered as the Constitution of the country. The United States Constitution of 1787, which derives its roots from European innovations such as the Magna Carta (1215) and UK Bill of Rights (1689), states in its 14th Amendment that if a representative takes the requisite oath to support the constitution, but later engages in rebellion or aids the enemies of the country, he automatically stands disqualified. This post-Civil War provision was intended to prevent those legislators from getting elected, who had sided with the rebellious US states. The American Civil war (1861-65) had triggered after a dozen of states had parted ways with the Confederacy over a problem that had started with the collection of taxes, but other issues had also pooled in later to add fuel to the fire. A member of the US Congress or the Upper House of Parliament can also be expelled by a two-third vote, if he or she is found culpable in crimes ranging from treason and rebellious acts to moral and financial corruption. Not fewer than 15 Senators were expelled in the US history between 1797 and 1862 for acting against their country's interests. Although no US Senator has been given the pink slip and ousted since 1862; many like Bob Packwood had opted to relinquish charge in 1995, when faced with expulsion proceedings. The US Senate also has a practice of condemning Senators. The censure or condemnation requires only a simple majority, though it does not remove a Senator from office. But some Senators like Robert Torricelli had opted to withdraw from their re-election races in 2002, before facing such censures.

In England, a person may not sit in the House of Commons if he or she is the subject of a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order (applicable in England and Wales only), or if he is adjudged bankrupt (in Northern Ireland), or if his estate is confiscated (in Scotland). Also, lunatics are ineligible to sit in the House of Commons. There also exists a law precedent from the 18th Century that the "deaf and dumb" are ineligible to sit in the Lower House. This precedent, however, has not been tested in recent years, although MP Jack Ashley continued to serve for 25 years after becoming profoundly deaf. While anyone found guilty of high treason in UK is not allowed to sit in the Parliament, a person serving a prison sentence of one year or more is ineligible too. Then, there is a 10-year disqualification for those found guilty of certain election-related offences. In Canada, whenever a member of the House of Commons or Senate is convicted of a crime, questions invariably arise regarding his eligibility. The laying of a criminal charge against a member of the House of Commons or Senate has no effect in terms of his eligibility to remain in office. Even if convicted, a parliamentarian will automatically lose his seat only if sentenced to imprisonment of two years or more, pursuant to section 750 of the Criminal Code. The Canadian law also disqualifies those imprisoned in correctional institutions. Members can be expelled from the Canadian Parliament according to Section 31 of the Constitution Act, 1867, under which a Senator loses his seat if he is declared bankrupt, absence from two consecutive sessions of parliament or if he is being convicted of treason, felony or any other infamous crime. A legislator can also lose his seat if he is convicted of an indictable offence, for which he is sentenced to imprisonment for two years or more. A parliamentarian convicted of a summary criminal offence carrying a sentence of less than two years, can also be expelled from the House or Senate, but expulsion would require a resolution of the chamber,

rather than being automatic. The Constitution of India, which is the longest written Constitution of any country in the world with 117,369 English words covering 448 Articles and 94 Amendments, states that if anybody is convicted for some offence and is sentenced to imprisonment for two years, he cannot contest any ballot exercise. Even if he is on bail or disposal of his appeal is pending, he will still not be eligible to contest polls. In Australia, a parliamentarian can be challenged if he is convicted of treason or for an offence punishable by imprisonment for one year or longer under a State or Commonwealth law.

The News - January 17, 2013

Powers of Election Commissions in Other Countries: Analysis by The News

Having been cheated irreversibly and profoundly by their elected representatives, following numerous flawed and rigged electoral stunts being “staged” for decades, over 180 million Pakistanis would certainly be wishing this time around to witness an extremely transparent and timely ballot exercise. So, Messrs Tahirul Qadri and Imran Khan Etc are not the only ones who wish to see the country heading smoothly towards what might just be the most fair ballot exercise of its eventful political history. The appointment of nearly 85-year old Justice (R) Fakhruddin G Ebrahim as the Chief Election Commissioner of Pakistan a few months ago is undoubtedly being seen as a ray of hope, as most of his compatriots believe that a man of his integrity would leave no stone unturned in ensuring free and fair polls. However, Dr Tahirul Qadri has objected to his old age and depleting energy levels, he hasn't cast any doubt on the veteran jurist's character. It goes without saying that Qadri wants the Election Commission to be dissolved and not much different is the current stance of another “out-of-assembly” politician Imran Khan. Now that the Pakistan Army has consented to assist the Election Commission in maintaining law and order on the polling stations and has agreed to play its role in guaranteeing a fair ballot exercise, chances are ripe that if any unforeseen contingency or adverse security situation does not pave the way for the postponement of the 2013 elections, the nation might elect its true representatives in just a few months time. But again, although a good number of powers enjoyed by the Pakistan Election Commission on paper make it look like a body with some mandate, its past performance shows that it has been literally toothless. Justice (R) Fakhruddin is thus heading an election commission that has mostly been witnessed issuing disqualification notifications to the national legislators, only after Supreme Court had delivered verdicts against dual nationals, fake degree holders and the ones found guilty of immorality or corruption etc.

Unlike the Election Commission of Pakistan, its counterparts in India, United Kingdom, United States and Egypt etc have been quite effective in ensuring relatively more transparent ballot exercises by purging their nations of corrupt politicians. In countries like the US and England, the in-House accountability is extremely strong and lawmakers found guilty of any crime are being regularly sentenced, fined, jailed and expelled since ages, speaking volumes for the independence and prowess of their respective election commissions. In neighboring India, the Election Commission takes care of over 668 million voters in 800,000 polling stations, many of which are even located in the snow-clad Himalayan Mountains, the deserts of the Rajasthan and in the sparsely populated islands in the Indian Ocean. It thus manages the largest event in the world. The website of the Indian Election Commission and archives of some key newspapers reveal that enjoying services of over 50 million staffers, this body constitutionally enjoys advisory jurisdiction in matters related to the post-election disqualification of sitting members of parliament and state legislatures. If the cases of persons found guilty of corrupt practices during elections are brought before the country's Supreme Court and high courts, they are referred back to the Election Commission for its opinion. The Commission then gives its opinion if such persons really deserved a disqualification, and if they did, for what period! The opinion of the Commission in all such matters is binding even on the president or any state governor, to whom such opinion is tendered by law. The Indian Commission has the powers to disqualify a

candidate who has failed to lodge an account of his election expenses within the stipulated time and in the manner prescribed by law. It also possesses the powers to remove or reduce the time period of such disqualification. However, the decisions of the Commission can be challenged in the relevant high court and the Supreme Court of the India through petitions. By long standing convention and several judicial pronouncements, once the process of elections has started, the judiciary does not intervene in the conduct of the polls. And once the polls are completed and the results are declared, the Commission cannot review any petition pertaining to the ballot outcome. Moreover, besides controlling the polling to the parliament and legislature of every state, the Indian Election Commission also supervises the elections to the offices of the country's president and vice-president. The Supreme Court of India has already held that where the enacted laws are silent to deal with a given situation in the conduct of elections, the Election Commission has the residuary powers under the Constitution to act in an appropriate manner. The powers of the Indian Chief Election Commissioner, who is usually a member of the Indian Civil Service and mostly from the Indian Administrative Service, are unlimited. He draws a salary equivalent to that of a sitting Supreme Court judge.

As far as laws are concerned, the Pakistan Election Commission doesn't lag behind its Indian counterparts, but what has surely been missing for ages is the will and the implementation capability, when it comes to ridding the electoral process of corrupt politicians. The Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (Pildat) had also mentioned something similar to its February 2008 report titled "How independent is the Election Commission in Pakistan?" It goes without saying that the Indian Chief Election Commission is helped by its country's courts, something which Pakistan might also be witnessing this time around--to the sheer delight of its inhabitants! However, contrary to what has recently happened in Pakistan, the Indian Chief Election Commissioner is appointed for a term of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever comes earlier. An in-depth research further shows that in India, the country's election commission had disqualified Ms Umlesh Yadav, a sitting Uttar Pradesh legislator in October 2011 for a period of three years for failing to provide a "true and correct account" of her election expenses. An esteemed Indian newspaper "The Hindu" had reported: "She had failed to include in her official poll accounts, the amount she had spent on advertisements (dressed up as news) in two Hindi dailies, "Dainik Jagran" and "Amar Ujala" during her 2007 election campaign. The case arose out of adjudication by the Press Council of India on the complaint of a losing candidate against the two dailies for publishing paid news." After holding the two newspapers "guilty of ethical violations" and issuing a caution to them, the Council had sent its adjudication to the Election Commission of India for action. Ms Yadav, wife of a liquor baron, was thus shown the door in a scandal that had hurt the credibility of the Indian news media. In another case, the Delhi High Court had dismissed former Maharashtra Chief Minister Ashok Chavan's petition that had challenged the Election Commission's jurisdiction in probing his 2009 poll expenses. Contesting candidates in India get at least two weeks for political campaign before the actual polling date. On account of the vast magnitude of operations, polling is held at least for three days for the national elections. A separate date for counting is fixed and the results declared for each constituency by the concerned returning officer. Coming back to Pakistan briefly, although the new-look Election Commission has decided that the candidates violating the polling regulations would be disqualified, one wonders how it would succeed in sending such law-makers packing, especially after it has categorically stated that it would not act against the politicians accused of having received funds from the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) prior to the 1990 general election. The Election Commission of Pakistan has already made it clear that it possesses no constitutional room to disqualify them, making one believe that both Tahirul Qadri and Imran Khan might just be right in a few ways.

In the United Kingdom, as a list derived from the History of Parliament series, the Journals of the House of Commons and the Dictionary of National Biography reveals, many House of Commons MPs have been fined and imprisoned since 1667. Many were even expelled. It is noteworthy that The House of Commons' power to expel its members is used very rarely. Some MPs were

expelled from the House on serious charges like accepting bribes, breach of privilege, falsifying, forgery and miscarriage of justice etc. Some nine law-makers were expelled during the 19th century, 31 during 18th century and 17 during the 17th century. During the 20th century, just a few were thrown out of the House though. These included Messrs Horatio William Bottomley (1922), Garry Allighan (1947) and Peter Arthur David Baker (1954). However, a Labor Party politician Fiona Jones was accused of fraudulently failing to declare the full amount of her election costs and convicted of election fraud in March 1999 and had the Labor whip withdrawn. She was the first British MP to be disqualified from membership of the House of Commons for that offence since it was introduced by the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act 1883.

According to B Jones' book "Politics UK-6th Edition" and J Kingdom's "Government and Politics in Britain: An Introduction," the Court of Appeal had overturned Fiona's conviction within weeks: the disqualification was revoked and she had succeeded in resuming her place in the House of Commons. Having lost in 2001 polls, she later lost a civil case brought against the police for malicious prosecution and ultimately succumbed to alcoholism. In UK, the Electoral Commission's role is to ensure the integrity and transparency of party and election finance. The Commission provides guidance for political parties to assist them in meeting their legal obligations to follow the funding rules. Political parties must submit annual statements of accounts, detailing income and expenditure, to the Electoral Commission. The Commission publishes these on its website. Political parties must submit annual statements of accounts, detailing income and expenditure, to the Commission which publishes these on its website. At general elections to the UK Parliament, EU Parliament, Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and Northern Ireland Assembly, all political parties are required to submit campaign spending returns to the Electoral Commission. The Commission may impose financial civil penalties on political parties and their accounting units if they fail to submit donation and loans returns, campaign spending return or statements of account. The UK Electoral Commission also has the power to seek forfeiture of impermissible donations accepted by political parties. The Commission is responsible for recommending which regions are allocated how many of the 72 seats that the United Kingdom holds at the European Parliament. But despite having tight electoral laws in place, the British Electoral Commission had faced widespread criticism for handling the country's 2010 polls. It was blamed for not checking frauds in postal voting, non-availability of polling stations in certain areas, the use of police to control a small number of voters who were protesting at the poor administration of a polling centre and insufficient printing of ballot papers etc.

In the United States of America, the Federal Election Commission is an independent agency regulating the campaign finance legislation. Although the Commission's name implies broad authority over the US elections, its role is limited to the administration of federal campaign finance laws. It limits/prohibits contributions and expenditures during elections, besides investigating and prosecuting any violations. It also acts on complaints coming from other candidates, political parties, NGOs and the general public. However, the strong accountability system within the US legislative houses has till date seen scores of lawmakers fined and sentenced for wrongdoings. They were task on charges of bribery, tax evasion, conspiracy, immorality, fraud money laundering, falsifying and for accepting illegal contributions etc. Many of these lawmakers were consequently expelled from the law-making bodies and some had to resign in order to minimize embarrassment. The American Congressmen and Senators convicted and fined till date include the likes of Jack Abramoff, Tom DeLay (resigned from the House in 2006), Michael Scanlon, Tony Rudy, James Ellis, Bob Ney, John Doolittle, Randy Cunningham, Tan Nguyen, Cynthia McKinney, William Jefferson, Bill Janklow, Robert Torricelli, Bill Janklow, Jim Traficant, Barbara-Rose Collins, Wes Cooley, Austin Murphy, Newt Gingrich, Walter Tucker III, Nicholas Mavroules, Lawrence J. Smith, Buzz Lukens, Carroll Hubbard, Carl Perkins, Mary Rose Oakar, Dan Rostenkowski, Joe Kolter, Jay Kim, Albert Bustamante, Lawrence Smith, David Durenberger, Jesse Helms, Barney Frank, Anthony Lee Coelho, Jim Wright, Keating

Five, Alan Cranston, Dennis De Concini, John McCain, John Glenn, Harrison Williams, John Jenrette, Richard Kelly, Michael Myers, Frank Thompson, John Murphy, Mario Biaggi, Pat Swindall, George Hansen, James Traficant, Frederick Richmond, Dan Flood and Joshua Eilberg etc.

In Egypt, according to an "Al-Jazeera TV" report and the April 15, 2012 edition of a top British newspaper "The Guardian," not fewer than 10 candidates were barred from taking part in the last presidential elections, after they were disqualified by the country's election commission. These candidates included ousted dictator Hosni Mubarak's spy chief, Omar Suleiman, who was disqualified for not presenting the proper number of signatures. In order to be eligible to run, candidates must get at least 30,000 signatures from people in various governorates that must be officially notarized at a public notary office. Former Egyptian Premier Ahmed Shafiq was also disqualified from his country's presidential poll by the electoral commission under an amended law that prevented senior officials from the Hosni Mubarak era from contesting. Another Egyptian politician, Abu Ismail, was out of the race because his mother held another nationality, violating election rules which stated that all candidates, their parents and their wives must have only Egyptian citizenship.

The News - January 17, 2013

Convicts, Deranged Persons and Government Servants Can Contest Presidential Election: Analysis by Iftikhar A.Khan

Believe it or not, convicts, mentally deranged persons and government servants can still contest election to the office of the president without fear of being disqualified. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) amended the rule governing the presidential election on Sept 10, 2007, to take away the provision for disqualification of presidential candidates - less than a month before the polls comfortably won by the then military ruler, Gen Pervez Musharraf. Key opposition leaders Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif were in exile in the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia respectively. The amendment in the presidential election rules, which is still in force, was kept a guarded secret by the ECP until it was disclosed by the then minister for parliamentary affairs, Dr Sher Afgan.

Under the defunct section 5(3)(a) of the presidential election rules, the returning officer was empowered to conduct a summary inquiry and reject any nomination paper on satisfaction that the candidate concerned was disqualified under the Constitution to be elected as president. The section was simply struck off. The justification for the abrupt amendment was that it was meant to bring the rule in conformity with two judgments of the Supreme Court passed in 2002 and 2005. Interestingly, incumbent Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry was a member of both the benches. The justification, however, did not satisfy many who believed that if the change in the rules in light of the judgments was at all required why the ECP kept sleeping over it for years and came out with it weeks before the election to explicitly favour Gen Musharraf. Chief Election Commissioner Justice (ret'd) Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim said he could not offer any comment because he would have to go through the record to see as to what had been done in 2007. "This seems to be something very important, but I do not know the exact position at the moment," he remarked. An eight-member bench of the Supreme Court, headed by then Chief Justice Sheikh Riaz Ahmad, and comprising Justice Munir A. Sheikh, Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry, Justice Qazi Mohammad Farooq, Justice Mohammad Ajmal, Justice Deedar Hussain Shah, Justice Hamid Ali Mirza, Justice Abdul Hameed Dogar and Justice Mohammad Nawaz Abbasi on a petition filed by Qazi Hussain Ahmad, the former chief of Jamaat-i-Islami, challenging the referendum order of April 27, 2002, that disqualification clauses listed under Article 63 of the Constitution were not applicable to the president's election.

"The disqualifications listed in Article 63 cannot be read into Article 41(2) in view of the judgments of this court in Aftab Shabaan Mirani v president of Pakistan (1988 SCMR 1863) which upheld the judgment of the Lahore High Court in the case reported as Mohammad Rafiq

Tarar v Justice Mukhtar Ahmad Junejo (PLD 1998 Lahore 414). The same view was also expressed in Mohammad Shahbaz Sharif v Muhammad Altaf Hussain (PLD 1995 Lahore 541," the judgment reads. On a petition filed by the Pakistan Lawyers Forum, a five-member bench of the Supreme Court headed by the then Chief Justice Nazim Hussain Siddiqui and comprising Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry, Justice Javed Iqbal, Justice Abdul Hameed Dogar and Justice Faqir Mohammad Khokhar rejected as untenable the argument that Chief of the Army Staff could not have assumed the office of the president because of the definition of the "services of Pakistan" in Article 260 of the Constitution and the disqualifications in respect of such persons contained in Article 63, holding that these had no application to the president. "The provisions of Article 63 (1) (d) have been made applicable to the continuation in office of the President after Dec 31, 2004, by virtue of the proviso to clause (7) of Article 41, which was inserted by 17th Amendment. Any other clause or paragraph of Article 63 of course does not apply to the president since it is a settled law that the president is only required to be qualified to be a member of parliament (as provided by Article 62) and is consequently not hit by the disqualifications contained in Article 63 of the Constitution. The argument of the petitioners that the president is subject to all the disqualifications contained in Article 63 of the Constitution ignores the settled law on this point as discussed and upheld most recently in Qazi Hussain Ahmad's case," the court observed.

Dawn - January 20, 2013

Gallup Poll Shows That One Person Opposes Election Reforms: A Report by Gillani Research Foundation, Pakistan

A vast majority of people in Pakistan, 88 percent, want electoral reforms in the country to get a clean political leadership. Fifty-six percent believe that elections should take place on time along with changes in the electoral system whereas 32 percent want polls only after the electoral reforms were introduced. According to a Gilani Research Foundation Survey carried out by Gallup Pakistan, there has not been even a single voice amongst the people surveyed opposing the electoral reforms as the remaining 12 percent did not give their view. When the people were asked about their opinion, 32 percent said the electoral system should be changed first and then elections should take place while 56 percent believe that elections should be held on time along with changes in electoral system. However, 12 percent did not give their view. According to Gallup Pakistan, the survey was carried out among a sample of 2,642 men and women in rural and urban areas of all the four provinces of the country, during January 06 to January 11, 2013. Although, the leading political parties have yet to commit that they would welcome a detailed scrutiny whereby corrupt could be barred from taking part in elections, the accord signed between Qadri and government envisages giving the ECP one month time for scrutiny of nomination papers for the purpose of pre-clearance of candidates under articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution. The Constitution bars a person from contesting polls if he or she has obtained a loan of two million rupees or more from any bank, etc, in his own name or in the name of his spouse or any of his dependents which remains unpaid for more than one year from the due date, or has got such a loan written off; including telephone, electricity, gas and water charges in excess of 10,000 rupees, for over six months, at the time of filing his nomination paper. In addition to this, the Constitution has also set conditions for parliamentarians to be of good character; should not be commonly known as one who violates the Islamic injunctions; should be sagacious, righteous, non-profligate, and honest and ameen; should have adequate knowledge of Islamic teachings and practices obligatory duties prescribed by Islam as well as abstains from major sins.

The News - January 23, 2013

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Government & Human Rights

HRCP Demands Justice for Bara Victims: HRCP

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has strongly condemned the killing of around 20 civilians in Khyber Agency and demanded that the claims made by the families that the deceased were killed by security forces personnel must be probed independently and to the families' satisfaction. In a statement issued, the commission said, "The HRCP condemns unreservedly the brutal killing of around 20 people in Bara tehsil of Khyber Agency. The families of the deceased had brought their bodies to Peshawar, where they protested outside the Governor's House and later the Peshawar Press Club, demanding action against the murderers of their dear ones, many of who they claimed were in military custody before their bodies were found. This is about the most serious charge that can be brought against any security force and needs to be investigated independently and in a manner that inspires confidence of the families. In fact, one would expect both the government and the security forces to be much keener than even the aggrieved families, to promptly and independently investigate the circumstances of the killings."

"The HRCP takes a lot of heart from the fact that the wronged in Pakistan have increasingly decided to come out to draw attention to violations of rights in a peaceful manner and to seek redress of excesses. It is difficult to imagine the desperation of those who believe that their only shot at getting justice is to not bury a dear one wrongfully robbed of life until they are publicly promised justice by someone in a position of sufficient authority. Those at the helm of affairs should try and imagine what possesses people to do that and how terribly things have gone awry if more and more people feel compelled to follow that path. Rather than using tear gas and batons to deal with the people, their demands should be heard with compassion, and the truth of the matter established in a manner that enjoys the confidence of the aggrieved. HRCP welcomes the fact that a judicial probe has been ordered into the killings and hopes that unlike similar probes in the past, the findings of this one will see the light of day."

Pakistan Today - January 18, 2013

Missing Persons: Status & Up-Date

Proposal Unveiled To Tackle Missing Persons Cases: The Parliamentary Committee on National Security

The Parliamentary Committee on National Security (PCNS) provided 15 recommendations pertaining to cases of missing persons in the country.

- This includes that intelligence and security agencies work under a supervisory committee of parliament
- Any officer of a law **enforcement**, security or intelligence agency is found guilty of detaining any person in contravention of the law or the constitution,
- The committee recommended that the institution or authority under which he operates proceed against him in a summary manner in accordance with the law
- The committee recommended the constitution of special benches for the quick disposal of cases of enforced disappearances
- The chief justices of the Supreme Court and high courts should form these special benches in their respective courts to hear the cases

- The arrest and detention of any citizen should be in strict accordance with Article 10 of the Constitution, which addresses fundamental rights, including safeguards pertaining to arrests and detention
- It was also recommended that fundamental rights, as envisaged by the Constitution be enforced
- The parliament and judiciary should play a proactive role in this regard
- The government formulate and implement appropriate policies and programmes for the rehabilitation of released missing persons and their dependant family members
- In order to bring an end to the mystery involved in a person's arrest and subsequent "missing" status, the committee asked the government to maintain a record of all detainees
- The all arrests and detentions are registered within 24 hours. It says that a person arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) shall be informed of the case(s) registered or pending against him within 24 hours of his arrest.
- If he is released on bail or otherwise, he should be treated strictly in accordance with the law, and not be re-arrested except on the commission of another offence or fresh grounds
- The committee also recommended that all training institutions for the armed forces, intelligence agencies and police include the Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in their respective training modules
- It was also recommended that the government announce prison reforms, as recommended by the Senate Functional Committee on Human Rights
- Train police personnel through special workshops in order to educate them on human rights

The Express Tribune – January 09, 2013

1, 142 missing persons recovered through court's efforts, says PHC CJ

Peshawar High Court Chief Justice Dost Mohammad Khan said 2012 was the year of missing persons as around 1,142 detainees were freed by the law-enforcement and security agencies, while 1,114 were shifted to the government's internment centers. The CJ told that after completion of internment period, 1,114 internees would face trial at anti-terrorism courts. Justice Dost Mohammad said last year, the rate of disposal of cases by the high court and the subordinate judiciary in the province was impressive despite shortage of judges. He said in 2012, 20,636 cases were instituted in the high court, whereas the cases disposed of totaled 15,847, which was around 76 per cent of the total cases. According to the chief justice, in district courts across the province, 229,068 cases were instituted and 220,787 were disposed of; 1,270 cases were referred to anti-terrorism courts and 1,161 were decided; 7,401 cases were instituted before the labor courts and 6491 were decided; 82 references were sent for trial before the accountability court and 79 were decided. Also, 92 cases were sent to the special anti-narcotics courts and 64 were decided; 32 cases referred to the special customs and anti-smuggling courts and 31 were decided; and 430 cases were instituted in special anti-corruption courts and 419 were decided. Justice Dost Mohammad said currently, 13 judges had been working at the high court against the sanctioned strength of 20.

The News – January 09, 2013

Frontier Corps Cracks Police Kidnapping Racket

At least 13 police personnel, including three senior officers – a superintendent and two DSPs of the Crime Investigation Department (CID) – were arrested for their alleged involvement in kidnapping for ransom cases by the Frontier Corps (FC). During the raid, FC officials recovered a person named Abdul Qudoos who was kidnapped from Dalbandin, and the police officers who

were involved in his kidnapping. The accused police officers contacted the family of the abducted person and demanded a ransom of Rs5 million. In a retaliatory move, the police registered a counter case against a senior FC official accusing him of ransacking the CID office during the raid. As the FC arrested the CID DSP Kutub Khan for the kidnapping, he confessed to his crime and informed FC that officials named Tariq Manzoor and Bilal were also involved in the racket. FC raided the office of CID in Kojak Road, arrested the police personnel and recovered the ransom money along with the abducted person.

The Express Tribune – January 21, 2013

Up To 700 Held Over Terror Links: Attorney General Pakistan

The Supreme Court expressed dissatisfaction over the report submitted by the Secretary Fata during a hearing of the Adiyala ‘missing persons’ case. Attorney General Irfan Qadir revealed that security agencies are holding at least 700 people indefinitely without trial in connection with the “war on terror”. He said none of the suspects could be freed until the end of operations in the tribal belt, and declined to say how long they had been in custody. He also said that the detainees would be tried under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). The Chief Justice asked the attorney general as to how the case would be tried under the FCR and questioned him over the basis upon which the prisoners were detained. The attorney general replied that the prisoners were held from areas under the state of war and hence they would be tried under the FCR. The CJ, giving his remarks, said that the prisoners should be released on their own as there would be implications in case the court issued orders which prompted the attorney general to request time to find a way out for the prisoners. The 11 prisoners in the said case went missing from the gate of Rawalpindi’s Adiyala Jail on May 29, 2010 after they had been acquitted of terrorism charges pertaining to their alleged involvement in the October 2009 attacks on the Army General Headquarters and the Inter-Services Intelligence’s (ISI) Hamza Camp in the garrison town. Later, four of the 11 died in mysterious circumstances. The Supreme Court forced the ISI and military intelligence to produce the remaining seven men in court on February 13 — an unprecedented move. The men, all in deteriorating health, were sent to the Lady Reading Hospital in Peshawar on court orders. After five of them recovered, they were shifted to an internment centre in Parachinar.

The Express Tribune – January 25, 2013

Terrorism & Human Rights

HRCF Concerned At Rise in Violence Incidents

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCF) expressed concern over the rise in violent incidents across the country. In a statement, the Commission said:

“HRCF notes with great alarm the rise in grisly incidents of violence all over Pakistan. Beginning with the abduction in Peshawar and cold-blooded murder of 21 Levies personnel, the killing of seven aid workers in Swabi, the murder of polio vaccinators in Karachi and Peshawar, the FC operation in Awaran, and now young doctors beating their seniors in Gujranwala, hardly a week goes by when violence of ever more disturbing nature does not make the headlines.” HRCF stressed the need for “soul searching” over the incidents and said that compassionate human beings were the basis of every developed society. HRCF further said that the state was increasingly relying on the use of force and militant elements had also justified bloodshed in the name of religion. The statement further said, “In a deeply brutalised society, violence today has become the standard response to every challenge, or perceived affront. What we see unfold everyday across Pakistan is violence begetting violence, plain and simple.”

Dawn – January 05, 2013

Child Rights

2, 317 Children Reported Missing In 2012: A Report by Roshni Helpline

The outgoing year 2012 recorded as many as 2317 children reportedly missing from the jurisdiction of 106 police stations in 20 towns of Karachi, says the data collected by the Roshni Helpline, a civil society group working to uphold the rights of women and children. At an average, two children each police station reported missing every month over the last 10 months. Both boys and girls were included in the tally. If a child (under 18) goes out of contact of family or guardians, he or she is considered as missing child. Roshni Helpline handled 476 cases of missing children during the outgoing year. It is noticeable that only 61 out of 476 cases were registered in police stations as non-cognizable offences with lodging of formal FIRs. The actual number of missing children is much higher than the reported ones with the police stations and quoted in the report. Roshni also collected data from 16 mosques in each town. The mosques made announcements regarding 2 to 3 children reportedly missing from the area connected to each mosque per month. These mosques announced thousands of children as missing from their vicinities. The data says out of the total missing children, 68.12% were boys and 32.88% girls. Majority of the children missing were between the ages of 2 to 8 years. The recovery ratio of missing children was only 16% during last year.

The recovery ratio has been increased due to the awareness campaign and sensitization of the people on the issue of missing children by Roshni. Roshni helps families in lodging FIR of their missed/kidnapped children. In many cases, families/parents reported the cases of missing children to Helpline. Roshni Helpline then guided the families and helped to lodge their cases at the police stations. It is also observed that in most of the cases, police treats missing/kidnapping case as non-cognizable offense, which results in no action rather causes more difficulties for the families of missing/kidnapped children. A majority of the cases reported to police are lodged in Roznamcha – the daily diary referred as Kachi FIR. No investigation officer is appointed and no action is taken unless and until FIR of case is registered under cognizable offence, referred as Pakki FIR. The police lodge the case in the daily diary and send off the parents advising them to keep searching their children as if it is not the duty of police. The families of missing children instead of instance reporting to the police try at their level to search the children in their own localities, relatives and friends and thus cause critical delay in recovery time. Police adds to this loss of recovery time by not acting timely even if cases are reported to them, as they do not consider such cases worth action. One of the reasons behind less recovery or delayed recovery is that parents and families do not follow the path that is reporting of the cases timely to police”.

It is necessary to lodge FIR of missed/kidnapped child. Families’ waste time in going to fake religious saints (peers) for ‘AAMIL’ (a sort of recovery measure). These practices further consume much of the recovery time and goes to the benefit of the kidnappers and not to the victim. In many cases a considerable amount of time is lost, and there is fear that the child if he/she had been kidnapped might have been trafficked from the area of residence. Then there is a less chance and hope of tracing him/her immediately. Roshni Helpline has made a presentation to the National Assembly’s Standing Committee on Human Rights and urged them to improve the reporting mechanism of the missing children at the police stations. The Committee has ordered the police chiefs in provinces to take cognizance of this important issue. Roshni has also filed a petition in the Sindh High Court to get the police reporting of the missing children improved so that timely and prompt action is taken once a child is reported missing. The magnitude of problems that the cities like Karachi face makes the whole city a high alert area for children. However, there are areas where more cases of missing of children are reported than other areas. According to the data collected, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Liaquatabad, City and Jamshaid Towns were high alert areas for children in 2012. It is RH’s assessment and observation that Area of Mahmoodabad, South District and area of Mobina Town, East district were high alert areas. Children were raped and murdered from these areas. Majority of the

children, which were kidnapped from these areas were belonged from the age group of 4-12 years.

Daily Times – January 02, 2013

1, 113 Children Murdered Last Year: Human Rights Attorney Zia Ahmed Awan

Growing lawlessness in the country and weak role of police and law enforcers have resulted in spike in the cases violence against children in Pakistan, as 1,113 children were murdered and 1,374 injured alone in the year 2012, said human rights attorney Zia Ahmed Awan. The government agencies have failed to provide security to people and the lack of the rule of law has further aggravated the human rights situation in the country, he said, adding children being the most vulnerable section of society were paying a high price, as all types of crimes and violence against them were on sharp rise. According to the data:

January to December 2012	Cases
Cases Reported in Balochistan	606
Cases Reported in KPK	1, 073
Cases Reported in Punjab	2, 947
Cases Reported in Sindh	1,818
Children were attempted Suicide	355
Children were forced of Karo-kari	188
Children were forced of Vani	195
Children were Injured	1, 374
Children were Kidnapped	582
Children were Murdered	1, 113
Children were Raped	330
Children were Sexually Assaulted	455
Children were Sodomized	246
Children were Trafficked	235
Forced Marriages of children	476
Torture	582
Victim of Child Abuse	2, 762
Violence Against Boys	3, 682
Violence Against Children	6, 4444

Daily Times – January 13, 2013

Missing Girl Found Dead: Rawalpindi, Punjab

A two-year-old girl, who went missing, while playing outside her house, in Ratta Amral, was found dead, lying on the bank of a drain. The girl's body was found stuffed in a plastic bag, lying on the bank of a drain, in Waheed colony Ratta Amral, at around 5pm. The police said that the child was reported missing by her father, Khalid Mehmood, a poor balloon vendor, after he failed to find her. The father suspected the nephew but he denied any wrong doing: "I asked my nephew to speak the truth but he denied that he was involved in any wrongdoing." Residents of the locality staged a protest demonstration against the tragic death and condemned the poor working of the civic agencies. Protestors burnt tyres on the road and also shouted slogans against area representatives in the Provincial Assembly for failing to check the rise in crime.

Dawn – January 18, 2013

GENDER WATCH**Violence against Women****Woman Gunned Down In Quetta: Balochistan**

Unidentified armed men gunned down a woman in Musa Khel district. Unidentified gunman entered a house in Kangri and fired a woman, killing her on the spot and fled from the scene after committing the act.

Daily Times – January 01, 2013

9-year old in critical condition after gang rape: Punjab

A nine-year-old girl was taken to hospital after she was raped by three men. Doctors treating her said that she was in a critical condition. The medico-legal report confirmed rape. Airport police have registered a case against seven people for kidnap and rape; five of them have been named by the child's mother. The girl had gone missing from in front of her house, and was later abandoned back there in a nearly unconscious state. According to the FIR, the girl, a student of class two, was abducted from in front of her house in Manzoorabad in Rahim Yar Khan by three women and a man. She was taken to a dera, where she was raped by three men, one of them identified in the FIR. She was also beaten up before she was abandoned in front of her home.

The Express Tribune – January 04, 2013

Woman Dies in Attack: Islamabad

A woman was murdered, during an attack at a house, which she and her husband were sharing with the landlord. The attackers, armed with hammers, were targeting the landlord, a milkman, in a bid to recover an unpaid loan but the woman started shouting for help and as a result was targeted. A case has been registered against the assailants, said police officials.

Dawn – January 08, 2013

Man Kills Two Nieces to Preserve Honor: Punjab

A man killed his two nieces allegedly to protect his honor in Pir Aadil police precincts. The girls, daughters of Nawaz, had left their house on Dec 1 to protest their forced marriages with their cousins scheduled for Dec 2. The would-be grooms, Ansar and Arshad, both sons of Ejaz Husain, also disapproved of their forced marriage and they had attempted committing suicide. Soon after leaving the house, the girls were kidnapped by a gang which dealt in prostitution. The gangsters sold these girls to a brothel in Fathepur. However, both the sisters were caught by the police in a raid and were sent to the jail. By the time Nawaz got his daughters freed on bail, family elders had decided to eliminate these rebellious girls. The girls were initially reluctant to accompany their parents fearing that they would be killed for honor. However, their father and maternal uncle assured them that they would not be killed. On Dec 12, Khursheed and Nadra were going back to their home when their uncle, Mumtaz, alias Taja, killed them in an ambush. Their mother also received bullet injuries in the incident.

Dawn – January 11, 2013

Woman Kidnapped By Ex-Husband: Punjab

A woman was allegedly kidnapped by her former husband and his accomplices when she was returning home from a local market. Kalsoom, who got married to Ijaz Hussain in 2008, got

divorced through court in 2011 over domestic reasons. Layyah City police have registered a case against Hussain and his alleged accomplices on the application of Kalsoom's father.

Dawn – January 11, 2013

Man Kills Wife in Newshehra: KPK

A man shot dead his wife due to a petty domestic issue in the Choki Drab area of Pabbi tehsil. The sources said that Ismail exchanged harsh words with his wife and allegedly opened fire on her in rage, killing her on the spot. The accused managed to escape. Faridullah, father of the deceased woman, got a first information report registered against his son-in-law.

The News – January 12, 2013

Spiritual Leader Booked For Trying To Rape Woman: Islamabad

The city police has been trying to nab a 'spiritual healer', who tried to rape a woman calling it an essential part of her 'healing' process. Sonia told the police that she had gone to a spiritual healer, Aamil Sajjad Baba, for an amulet (taweez) at his 'dera' in Ali Pur, a suburb of the capital. She said that when she shared her disease with the Baba, he demanded one black goat and Rs 70,000 against the remedy of her illness. Sonia said that she had followed the Baba's orders and gave the sum and goat to him. After a few days, when she felt no change in her condition, she approached the Baba. According to Sonia, the Baba called her to his private room, where she found him nude. The fraudster tried to grab her and said the intercourse was part of her healing process. Sonia said she had managed to flee the room and later approached the Shehzad Town Police to register an FIR against that 'holy' man. The police registered an FIR under section 354/320 and began investigation, but the Baba hasn't been apprehended yet.

Pakistan Today – January 12, 2013

Acid Throwing Posted 89% Increase in 2012: A Report by Aurat Foundation

Cases of Violence against Women (VAW) may still number in the thousands in Pakistan, but the figures reported in 2012 dropped by 12% from the previous year, according to an annual report released by the Aurat Foundation. The report, however, highlighted that certain forms of violence, such as acid-throwing, have in fact increased since 2011.

Types of Cases Reported	# of Victims
No. of Cases Reported in 2009	7, 751
No. of Cases Reported in 2010	8, 548
No. of Cases Reported in 2011	8, 539
No. of Cases Reported in 2012	7, 516
No. of Cases Reported in Abduction and Kidnapping	1, 607
No. of Cases Reported in Acid Throwing	83
No. of Cases Reported in Balochistan 2012	159
No. of Cases Reported in Domestic Violence	989
No. of Cases Reported in Honor Killings	432
No. of Cases Reported in Islamabad 2012	281
No. of Cases Reported in KPK 2012	674
No. of Cases Reported in Murder	1, 747
No. of Cases Reported in Punjab 2012	4, 753
No. of Cases Reported in Rape and Gang Rape	820
No. of Cases Reported in Sexual Assault	63
No. of Cases Reported in Sindh 2012	1, 674

Types of Cases Reported	# of Victims
No. of Cases Reported in Suicides	574

The miscellaneous category – which includes attempted suicide, torture, injury, attempt to murder, attempted rape, threat to life, harassment, attempt to kidnap, illegal custody, trafficking, vanni, forced marriage, child marriage, incest, attempt at karo kari and watta satta—added up to a total of 1,201 cases. Although the total number of reported cases of VAW has decreased by 12%, analysis shows that several forms of violence have in fact increased. One form which shows a significant increase in reported cases is acid throwing, with a staggering 89% increase, followed by domestic violence reaching 62%, burning at 33% and murder at 11%. The crimes that decreased in 2012 compared to 2011 were sexual assault crimes (43% decrease), honors killings (39% decreases), suicide (24% decrease) and abduction or kidnapping (23% decrease). From Punjab and Islamabad, abduction was frequently reported, whereas from Sindh, Balochistan and K-P, murder was the most frequent crime.

The Express Tribune – January 24, 2013

Women in Politics & Government

AJK's First Woman Deputy Commissioner Takes Charge: Azad Jammu Kashmir

The first woman deputy commissioner in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) assumes the charge of her challenging assignment in a difficult area. Tehzeebun Nisa, a BPS-18 officer of AJK's, appointed on area with an estimated population of around 300,000 people; the Haveli district was carved out of district Bagh in late 2009. Ms Nisa is so far the only woman who has succeeded in competitive examinations under the AJK Public Service Commission for the post of assistant commissioner. In 2007, she was appointed as the first woman assistant commissioner of Hattian Bala (now also a district). In that capacity, she was the 'designated authority' from AJK side for the trans-LoC travel and trade through Chakothi-Urri crossing point. In February 2009, she was posted somewhere else. Her last posting was in-charge additional commissioner Muzaffarabad division.

Dawn – January 08, 2013

SECTARIAN CRISES & CONFLICT WATCH

Conflict & Sectarian Crisis in Sindh

Incidents of Attacks in Sindh in the Month of January

Date	Place	Incident	Killed	Injured
January 01, 2013	Gora Qabristan Area, Karachi	An activist of MQM and another person were shot dead.	2	-
	Chowrangi Area, Karachi	An activist of MQM was shot dead.	1	-
	Orangi Town Area, Karachi	A shia man was killed within the vicinity of market.	1	-
	Ch.Khaliq Zaman Road Area, Karachi	A man was killed and another sustained injuries.	1	1
	Golimar Area, Karachi	The body of a young man was found who kidnapped before some days.	1	-
January 02, 2013	Ayesha Manzi Area, Karachi	Four people were killed and more than 50 peoples were injured when an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) planted in a parked motor cycle. The remotely-exploded bomb hit a joint public gathering of the MQM and PAT.	4	50
January 05, 2013	Sir Shah Suleman Road Area, Karachi	At least two transporters and their drivers were gunned down by armed pillion riders.	4	-
	Sher Shah Police Station Area, Karachi	A tortured dead body of a person was found.	1	-
	Jetty Bridge Area, Karachi	A dead body was found.	1	-
January 06, 2013	New Karachi Area, Karachi	Two persons affiliated with Sunni Tehreek were killed by un-identified armed pillion riders.	2	-
	Nagan Traffic Intersection Area, Karachi	Two persons affiliated with MQM were attacked by un-identified armed persons. One of them was killed and other sustained injuries.	1	1
January 07, 2013	Aisha Manzil Area, Karachi	A man and a daughter was shot dead by un-identified armed persons/	2	-
	Shah Faisal Colony Area, Karachi	A tortured body of a person was found.	1	-
	Lyari Area, Karachi	A tortured body of a person was found.	1	-
January 08, 2013	Ayesha Manzil Area, Karachi	A father and his daughter were killed, and his wife and other daughter sustained injuries.	2	2
	Gushan-e-Iqbal Area, Karachi	A man was going on his motorbike with his friend when h was killed by unidentified armed persons.	1	-
	Soldier Bazaar	A man was shot dead by armed persons.	1	-

Date	Place	Incident	Killed	Injured
	Area, Karachi			
	Northern Bypass Area, Karachi	A truck driver was shot dead.	1	-
	Chanasir Goth Area, Karachi	The bullet riddled body of a man was found.	1	-
	Toori Bangash Colony Area, Karachi	A tortured body of a young man was discovered from bushes.	1	-
	New Karachi Area, Karachi	A prayer leader belonged to Deobandi community was shot dead by armed persons.	1	-
January 09, 2013	Orangi Town Area, Karachi	Two people were killed at house.	2	-
	Soldier Bazaar Area, Karachi	A man was shot dead.	1	-
	Nomish Chowrangi Area, Karachi	A man was shot dead.	1	-
	Golimar Area, Karachi	Unidentified armed persons opened fire and injured two pedestrian.		2
	Sachal Police Station Area, Karachi	A police discovered an unidentified body of a woman.	1	-
	Rabia City Apartment Area, Karachi	Two armed groups clashed, leaving one injured.	-	1
January 11, 2013	Gabol Market Area, Karachi	At least four persons were killed when armed persons barged in to the house.	4	-
	Lucky Star Area, Karachi	Armed persons gunned down a supporter of MQM.	1	-
	Andra Morr Near New Karachi Area, Karachi	Two political workers affiliated with PPP gunned down by armed persons when they barged into PPP office.	2	-
	Chowrangi Town Area, Karachi	A person was gunned down by unidentified armed person.	1	-
	Maripur Truck Stand Area, Karachi	A man was gunned down by armed person.	1	-
January 13, 2013	Gulistan-e-Jauhar Area, Karachi	A State Bank official was killed by unidentified armed persons.	1	-
	North Karachi Area, Karachi	A shop keeper was killed affiliated with Dawat-e-Islami.	1	-
	Ranchore Line Area, Karachi	A dead body of a man was found.	1	-
	Old City Area, Karachi	Two bodies packed in a gunny bag were found.	2	-
	Rizvia Area, Karachi	A 14-year old boy was killed in a targeted attack.	1	-
	SITE Area, Karachi	A man was killed.	1	-

Date	Place	Incident	Killed	Injured
	Mangopir Area, Karachi	A man was killed by armed pillion riders.	1	-
January 14, 2013	Khاردar Area, Karachi	A man was killed near the shop.	1	-
	Old Golimar Area, Karachi	A child was killed by hitting a stray bullet in his head.	1	-
	Janjal Goth Area, Karachi	An alleged bandit was killed during an alleged encounter with police.	1	-
	Nazimabad Area, Karachi	An elderly man was stabbed to death.	1	-
January 15, 2013	Khayaban-e-Ittehad Area, Karachi	At least four persons were injured in blast in a shop at petrol pump.	-	4
	Orangi Town Area, Karachi	An activist of Sunni Tehreek was killed by armed persons.	1	-
	Korangi Town Area, Karachi	A former worker of the banned People's Aman committee was killed.	1	-
January 17, 2013	Surjani Town Area, Karachi	A person belongs to Shia community was shot dead.	1	-
	Soldier Bazaar Area, Karachi	A rickshaw driver driver was shot dead.	1	-
January 18, 2013	Nishan-e-Hyder Chowk Area, Karachi	A member of the Sindh Provincial Assembly affiliated with MQM was killed along with his three guards. In a reaction the markets closed in Karachi and interior Sindh. Four men were killed and several other were injured and four vehicles were set on fire.	8	∞
January 19, 2013	Lasbela Area, Karachi	Two former activists of Sipah-e-Sahaba were killed.	2	-
	MA Jinnah Road Area, Karachi	Two men were gunned down. Both worked for Aalmi Khatam-e-Nabuwat Conference.	2	-
	Aram Bagh Area, Karachi	Two persons were shot dead.	2	-
	Defense Area, Karachi	A boy allegedly killed himself after shooting her girl friend that he was in love with in the upscale.	2	-
January 20, 2013	Korangi Area, Karachi	A prayer leader was shot dead.	1	-
	Dai Danu Check Post Area, Jamshoro District	Two police head constables were shot dead when they were on duty at the check post.	2	-
January 21, 2013	Ittehad Town Area, Karachi	A leader of ANP Din Shah Afridi was narrow escaped while four other persons were injured in a remote control bomb blast (IED) which was planted on a motorbike.	-	4
January 22, 2013	North Karachi Area, Karachi	Two activists of MQM were gunned down.	2	-
	Lyari Area, Karachi	Three men were found shot dead.	3	-

Date	Place	Incident	Killed	Injured
	Kashti Chowk Area, Karachi	The body of un-identified man was found in a gunny bag.	1	-
	Crown Cinema Area, Karachi	The dead body of a young man was found.	1	-
January 23, 2013	Defense Area, Karachi	A PML-N leader was shot dead along with his father in the Defense when a gunman on a motorcycle sprayed bullets on their car.	2	-
	New Karachi Area, Karachi	The MS Doctor of the Sindh Government Hospital and the CID inspector were targeted by un-identified armed pillion riders.	2	-
	Baldia Town Area, Karachi	An un-identified young man was shot dead.	1	-
	Gulshan-e-Iqbal Area, Karachi	A man nominated in the murder case of a grandson of the late Nawab Akbar Bugti was killed.	1	-
	Lyari Area, Karachi	A shop keeper was shot dead.	1	-
	Gulbahar Area, Karachi	A young man was shot dead.	1	-
	Orangi Town Area, Karachi	A middle-aged man was shot dead.	1	-
	Malir Area, Karachi	A man was shot dead.	1	-
	Hawkesbay Road Area, Karachi	A man was shot dead.	1	-
	Baldia Town Area, Karachi	Bullet riddled bodies of three un-identified young men were found.	3	-
	Chadio Goth Area, Hyderabad	A political worker affiliated with ASWJ was shot dead by un-identified armed persons.	1	-
	January 24, 2013	Old City Area, Karachi	An activist of MQM was shot dead by un-identified armed pillion rider.	1
Landhi Area, Karachi		A man was shot dead by un-identified armed persons.	1	-
Ayesha Siddiqa Masjid, Mianwali Road Area, Karachi		A local leader o ASWJ was killed in an armed attacked by un-identified pillion riders.	1	-
January 25, 2013	Rehri Road Area, Karachi	At least four people, including a deputy superintendent of police and a sub-inspector were killed and 13 other injured in twin blasts.	4	13
	Mangopir Area, Karachi	One person died and two others were injured when some men threw hand grenade inside a house.	1	2
January 28, 2013	Tirah Valley Area, Khyber Agency	At least 61 persons have been killed and scores injured in three days fierce fighting between militants groups Ansarul Islam and Tehreek-e-Taliban.	61	∞

Conflict & Sectarian Crisis in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Incidents of Attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the Month of January

Date	Place	Incident	Killed	Injured
January 01, 2013	Pir Kalley village Area, North Waziristan Agency	Nine Taliban fighters found dead.	9	-
	Tirah Valley Area, Khyber Agency	At least eight militants were killed by security personnel as clash erupted following an attack by security forces on militant hideouts.	8	-
January 02, 2013	Swabi District, Peshawar	Seven persons, including six women, working for a nongovernment organization named "Support With Working Solutions" (SWWS) were killed when un-identified armed pillion riders attacked on them and fled from the scene. Five of the women were teachers; the sixth was a health worker and the man worked as a health technician.	7	-
January 03, 2013	Miranshah Area, North Waziristan Agency	At least two suspected militants were killed and six others were injured in an overnight operation by security forces.	2	6
January 04, 2013	Dargai Area, Khyber Agency	Six persons, including a woman were killed and injured four others people when unidentified armed persons ambushed a vehicle.	6	4
	Sara Kanda Area, Wana	A Taliban warlord Maulvi Nazir including other seven militants was killed when a US drone missile hit on a double-cabin pick up vehicle.	7	-
	Sheikh Killay Area, Mathra Village	A police constable was shot dead by unidentified armed persons.	1	-
January 05, 2013	Tirrah Valley Area, Landikotal	At least 20 militants were Killed and other more than a dozen were injured in air jet strike by security forces. The militants belong to TTP.	20	∞
	Badh Bhar Area, Peshawar	At least two passers-by were killed in a bomb last planted by electricity tower.	2	-
	Miryan Police Station Area, Bannu	Three persons were sustained injuries in a blast.	-	3
	Maneri Bala Area, Swabi	A militant who was allegedly involved in killing of seven NGO workers was killed by security forces.	1	-
	Palas Area, Mansehra	Three brothers of a man who were broken the news about alleged murder of the women have been killed by members of the women's tribe.	3	-
	Gula Khan Bagh Area, Khyber Agency	Two suspected militants were killed when they were planting a heavy bomb.	2	-

Date	Place	Incident	Killed	Injured
January 06, 2013	Utmanzai Area, Charsadda	Two Polio aid workers were killed by unidentified armed persons.	2	-
	Bagun Area, Lower Kurram Agency	One person was killed and other four persons sustained injuries in a road side bomb explosion.	1	4
January 07, 2013	Babar Area, South Waziristan Agency	A cousin of suspected banned TTP chief Hakimullah Mehsud among nine suspected militants were killed when a US drone missile hit on their hide outs.	9	-
	Chapari Area, Jamrud Tehsil	Unidentified armed persons attacked on a passenger van and killed at least six people.	6	-
January 08, 2013	Mir Ali Area, North Waziristan Agency	Five peoples were killed and other four were injured when US operated armed drones fired missiles on a house and a car.	5	4
	Albo security check post Area, Tehsil Khwezai, Mohmand Agency	At least two security personnel were killed when a bomb exploded.	2	-
January 09, 2013	Haider Khel Village Area, North Waziristan Agency	At least eight militants were killed and injured one when a US drone missile hit on a compound.	8	1
	Haso Khel Village Area, North Waziristan Agency	At least four suspected militants were killed and injured one when a US done missile hit on a compound.	4	1
	Swabi Bazaar Area, Peshawar	Three police officials were injured when unidentified armed persons threw hand grenade on them.	-	3
	Swabi Link Road Area, Peshawar	Several people, including two police personnel sustained injuries.	-	∞
	Bukaar Area, Landi kotal Tehsil	A volunteer of pro-government Zakhakhel Tribal Lashkar was killed and his accomplice injured in a roadside blast.	1	-
January 10, 2013	Kacha Pakha Area, Hangu	One person was killed and other injured when unidentified armed person opened fire on them.	1	1
	Dabgari Gardens Area, Peshawar.	PPP President for Kurram Agency Dr. Riaz shot dead.	1	-
January 11, 2013	Mir Ali subdivision Area, North Waziristan Agency	Four militants were killed in a US drone missile attack hit on a compound and other two militants on the bike.	6	-
January 12, 2013	Takht band Area, Swat	At least 22 people were killed and over 70 injured in a blast at a Tableghi centre.	22	7
January 13, 2013	Hakimabad Area, Nowshera	Un-identified armed persons gunned down a staff nurse working at the DHQ.	1	-
	Chota Lahor Police Station Area, Swabi	An un-identified armed person was killed and a station house officer (SHO) was injured in a firing.	1	1
	Shaheed Killay Area, Charsadda	Fifteen people including former provincial minister Bashir Khan Umzazai sustained	15	-

Date	Place	Incident	Killed	Injured
		injuries in a roadside bomb blast.		
January 14, 2013	Miranshah Area, North Waziristan Agency	A roadside planted bomb killed as many as 14 soldiers and other injured 21 soldiers.	14	21
	Khuwarkille Area, Lower Kurram Agency	A tribesman was killed and eight others injured in a bomb blast.	1	8
January 15, 2013	Harjalin Aday Area, Bara	Ten personnel of security forces and two militants were injured in exchange of heavy fire.	-	12
	Dro Adda Area, Bara	Two militants were killed and three members of anti-militants peace committee were killed in an attack by militants on the centre of peace committee.	5	-
	Akhakhel Area, Bara	A woman was killed and four others were injured when mortar shells hit three houses.	1	4
January 16, 2013	Bara Tehsil Area, Khyber Agency	At least six security personnel were killed and 16 others were injured when scores of militants were attacked on security forces check post.	6	16
	Alam Godhar Area of Bara, Khyber Agency	Local founds 18 dead bodies.	18	-
January 18, 2013	Mirali Area, North Waziristan Agency	Five people, two women and two children among them, were killed and nine others were injured when helicopter gunships shelled targets.	4	9
January 19, 2013	Tarnab Area, Peshawar	Two u-identified dead bodies were recovered.	2	-
	Dabgari Area, Peshawar	A woman was found dead in house.	1	-
	Mashokhel Area, Peshawar	A person allegedly killed his brother-in-law while her wife sustained injuries..	1	1
	Mashokhel Area, Peshawar	A man was killed by un-identified armed persons.	1	-
	Hazarkhawani Area, Peshawar	A man was killed by un-identified armed persons.	1	-
January 20, 2013	Hayatabad Area, Peshawar	An additional district and sessions judge was shot and injured.	-	1
	Shalobar Area of Bara Tehsil in Khyber Agency	The bullet riddled body of a laborer was found.	1	-
	Kot Azam Village Area, Tank	Unidentified gunmen shot dead two persons and dumped their bodies on roadside.	2	-
January 21, 2013	Dabori Area, Orakzai Agency	The body of un-identified person was found.	1	-
	Shalobar Area, Khyber Agency	At least five volunteers of Aman Lashkar sustained injuries in a road side bomb blast.	-	5
January 22,	Dozai Area, Mohmand Agency	At least two personnel of Pakistan Army were martyred and nine others were injured	2	9

Date	Place	Incident	Killed	Injured
2013		when their vehicle hit a landmine.		
	Zakhakhel Market Area, Landi Kotal	Unknown persons opened a fire on a Frontier Constabulary in which personnel was killed.	1	-
	Bazaar-Zakhakhel Area, Landi Kotal	A security man was killed and other sustained injuries by militants when a group of security forces gone for fetching a water from natural spring.	1	1
January 23, 2013	Cantonment Area, Peshawar	A doctor was shot dead by un-identified persons.	1	-
	Karhi Haider Area, Tank	Two members of the pro-government peace committee were killed and another was injured when un-identified armed persons opened fire on them.	2	1
January 24, 2013	Jandary Killay Area, Orakzai Agency	Seven militants were killed and four others were injured in a house side blast.	7	4
	KataKani Area, Hangu	Unidentified gunmen shot dead two afghan nationals and one prayer leader at the Afghan refugee's camp.	3	-
	Badaber Area, Peshawar	Unidentified armed persons killed four tribesmen.	4	-
January 25, 2013	Hayatabad Area, Peshawar	Three mortars fell in house which injured two children.	-	2
	Nothia Area, Peshawar	Thirteen children were injured when a fire broke out in a local private school.	-	13

Conflict & Sectarian Crisis in Balochistan

Incidents of Attacks in Balochistan in the Month of January

Date	Place	Incident	Killed	Injured
January 02, 2013	Dasht Area, Mastung.	A truck driver was injured in an attack when unidentified armed pillion riders opened fire on them.	-	1
	Pasni District Area, Quetta.	At least eight fishers man were killed while another was wounded by unidentified armed person when unidentified armed persons opened indiscriminate fire on them and fled from the scene.	3	1
January 05, 2013	Sariab Road Area, Quetta	Two brothers, one of them was shot dead and other one injured in an attack by un-identified armed persons.	1	1
January 06, 2013	Garmkan Area, Panjgaur	A man and his son were killed and a teenager girl injured when un-identified armed persons opened indiscriminate firing on them.	2	1
	Mach Area, Bolan District	Three passengers and a Frontier Corps (FC) were killed in attack by armed militants.	4	∞

January 08, 2013	Sariab Road Area, Quetta	A man was killed and injured scores of other in an improvised bomb blast planted in a rickshaw.	1	∞
	Spini Road Area, Quetta	Two peoples were killed and another three were injured when unidentified armed persons opened fire on them.	2	3
January 09, 2013	Sheikh Wasil Area, Quetta.	Two tankers carrying liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) were ambushed by alleged guerillas. In a result, three crew members were killed and other was injured.	3	1
	Raisani Road Area, Quetta	A man wounded in a bomb blast fixed by unidentified persons on a road.	-	1
January 11, 2013	Alam Dar Road Area, Quetta	At least 94 persons were killed and injured more than 180 in a twin bombing blast.	94	180
	Bacha Khan Chowk Area, Quetta	At least 10 persons were injured in a bomb blast.	-	10
January 12, 2013	Sariab Road Area, Quetta	Un-identified armed persons killed two laborers.	2	-
January 13, 2013	Brewery Road Area, Quetta	A person was killed and a man was injured in an explosion near an Internet café.	1	1
January 15, 2013	Dera Murad Jamali Area, Quetta	Two persons were killed by un-identified armed persons.	2	-
January 16, 2013	Bonistan Area, Pangaur District	A DSP was among five police officials Killed in a remote controlled bomb blast.	5	-
January 19, 2013	Mastung Area, Quetta	The Frontier Corps (FC) killed BLA commander Rashid and his companion shahjahan during a targeted operation against militants.	2	-
	Kharan Area, Quetta	Four persons including a child were also shot dead.	4	-
January 22, 2013	Pir Koh Area, Dera Bugti	Security forces personnel recovered two bullet riddled bodies of un-identified persons.	2	-
January 24, 2013	Kakar Colony Area, Quetta	A prayer leader was shot dead y un-identified armed persons after offering the prayer.	1	-

Reports

3, 879 lost their lives during war on terror in 2012: A Report by Islamabad-based Conflict Monitoring Center's

More than 3,879 people have lost their lives in the ongoing war on terrorism in Pakistan during 2012. According to Islamabad-based Conflict Monitoring Center's annual report, one third of those killed in anti-state violence were civilians while the security forces lost 589 personnel during the year. The report says that security situation in Islamabad improved but deteriorated along the Pak-Afghan border where Pakistan has faced hostilities from Afghan National Army and NATO forces. Two third of the militant attacks took place in FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Incidents in 2012	Attacks in 2012	Kidnapped/ Apprehended in 2012	Operations in 2012	Injured in 2012	Killed in 2012
The militants carried out attacks during 2012 (TTP, Al-Qaeda and Balcoh Rebels)	1,485	-	-	-	-
No. of operations conducted by security forces against militants in FATA and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.	-	-	570 (44 Major, 285 Minor)	-	-
No. of civilians were killed during militants attacks.	-	-	-	-	1,114
No. of civilians were injured during militants attacks.	-	-	-	2,313	-
No. of civilians lost their lives during militants attacks.	-	-	-	-	197
No. of civilians were wounded during actions initiated by security forces.	-	-	-	340	-
No. of militants apprehended by security forces.	-	1,138	-	-	-
No. of people kidnapped by militants.	-	185 (Balochistan 72, Fata 61 and KPK 51)	-	-	-
No. of Pakistani military personnel lost their lives in FATA and KPK.	-	-	-	-	350
No. of Pakistani military personnel wounded in FATA and KPK.	-	-	-	1,165	-
No. of Pro-government peace lashkars lost their lives.	-	-	-	-	148

Incidents in 2012	Attacks in 2012	Kidnapped/ Apprehended in 2012	Operations in 2012	Injured in 2012	Killed in 2012
No. of attacks conducted by militants in FATA and KPK in these two areas.	67 percent	-	-	-	-

Pakistan Today – January 01, 2012

Outgoing Year Saw 2, 000 Killed In Karachi: Sindh Police, HRC of Pakistan

The city went through one of its worst 12 months in recent years as in 2012 more than 2,000 people lost their lives to violent incidents, including targeted attacks on political, ethnic and sectarian grounds, with a staggering increase in militancy that spewed an unprecedented rise in grenade and cracker attacks, also targeting Karachi's Bohri community. Though the police data kept the number of victims killed on ethnic, political and sectarian grounds at 423 of the total 2,303 people murdered in 2012, critics, security experts and human rights activists said the number was much higher. "A total of 423 people were killed in targeted attacks," said Sindh police. "More than 1,600 people were murdered due to personal enmity. Similarly, more than 100 policemen lost their lives in Karachi while performing duties." Violence returned to the city mainly in the second quarter of 2012 with frequent killings and targeted attacks just months after Karachi started limping back to normality in August last year after the Supreme Court took suo motu notice of killings but this year mostly on sectarian grounds. The random and scattered hand-grenade attacks, which were often seen as extortion threats, also kept the south and west city districts on edge with a number of improvised explosive device explosions across Karachi. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, which counted 54 people killed on sectarian grounds only till October 2012 with 692 and 313 people killed due to their political association and other targeted attacks, respectively, during the first 10 months of the year. With threats ranging from militancy to targeted killings and street crime to kidnapping for ransom, the city was seen battling against organized criminal gangs for its more than 18 million inhabitants with mere 30,000 policemen, half of whom either protected influential individuals or were deployed at several foreign missions, or were engaged with administrative job within the department or serving its specialized units.

Dawn – January 01, 2013

40 Drone Hits Claim 255 Lives in NWA in 2012: Deputy Medical Superintendent of the Agency

At least 255 lives were lost in 40 strikes by the CIA-operated drones while 54 people sustained injuries in various parts of North Waziristan in 2012. The US drones carried out at least 40 strikes in North Waziristan and fired 123 missiles at various targets. Along with some known foreign and local militants, innocent tribal people including women and children were also killed in these attacks. Another 54 persons, mostly women and children up to 15 years of age, were injured in the drone attacks. Most of the injured were maimed for life. Health experts said chemicals of hazardous nature were used in the missile strikes that caused outbreak of various viral diseases in North Waziristan. They said there had been an increase in incidence of cancer, hepatitis B&C, depression, scabies and throat diseases in the area. Deputy Medical Superintendent of the Agency Headquarters Hospital, Miranshah, Dr Ali Muhammad said the spread of viral diseases among the children could probably be the consequence of the drone strikes in North Waziristan.

The News – January 04, 2013

Fingerprint of Data of 44, 878 Criminals Compiled: Sindh Police

The Forensic Division of the Sindh Police has compiled the data of the fingerprints of 44,878 accused in the province in year 2012. An official of the Sindh Police said that the task had been performed under the Pakistan Automated Fingerprint Identification System. Of these the number of accused from Karachi was 35,629 and 1,836 were from Hyderabad while the remaining ones were from the other parts of the province.

Daily Times - January 06, 2013

519 Gangs Arrested During 2012: Punjab Police

Police busted 519 gangs and arrested 1, 483 alleged criminals besides recovering stolen items worth Rs 103 million during 2012.

Names#	Number#
No. of Traced and Arrested gangsters	1, 717
No. of Proclaimed Offenders	8, 177
No. of Court Absconders	1, 914
No. of Registered Cases	8, 982
No. of Alleged Criminals	4, 994
No. of Kalashnikovs having alleged criminals	33
No. of Rifles having alleged criminals	162
No. of Guns having alleged criminals	283
No. of Carbine having alleged criminals	4, 269
No. of Daggers having alleged criminals	89
No. of Rounds of Ammunition having alleged criminals	27, 750
No. of cases were registered against Drug Dealers	6, 389
No. of drug dealers were arrested	6, 556
Amount of Heroin recovered in Kilograms	209
Amount of Hashish in Kilograms	1, 560
Amount of Opium in kilograms	29
No. of bottles of liquor were recovered	83, 755
No. of cases were registered against Gamblers	1681
No. of Gamblers were arrested	6144
Amount recovered from Gamblers	8.8million

Daily Times - January 07, 2013

2012 Deadliest Year in Karachi for Two Decades: HRCP

Pakistan's financial hub Karachi saw its deadliest year in two decades in 2012, with around 2,000 people killed in violence linked to ethnic and political tensions, raising fears for elections due this year. Karachi, a business centre with a population of 18 million, is the beating heart of the nuclear-armed country of 180 million. It accounts for 20 percent of GDP, 57 percent of tax revenue and elects 33 lawmakers to the federal parliament. Yet enormous waves of migration have tightened resources and exacerbated a fight for identity and control that has only become deadlier in the five years since the main ruling Pakistan People's Party (PPP) took office in Islamabad. Trapped in the middle are ordinary people who one day leaves home, never to return alive -- victims of faceless gangs condemned by political parties yet linked to ethnic and political factions, and who escape with impunity. According to the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee, 2,124 people were killed in Karachi in 2012, the worst year since records began nearly 20 years ago. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) says 1,800 people died in targeted killings in the first nine months of 2012. In 2011, it put the number at 1,000, which

was then the deadliest in 16 years. Karachi has all the ingredients of an explosive cocktail -- gang warfare, land grabbing's, drugs, Islamist extremism, political rivalries, ethnic tensions, extreme poverty and a mushrooming population owing to migration. Police insist killings related to ethnic and sectarian disputes accounted for only 20 percent of the murders, but rights activists say a shortage of law enforcement officers is part of the problem. "Karachi is becoming a city where controlling violence is becoming increasingly difficult because of an insufficient police force, which is less than 30,000 for around 18 million people," says Zohra Yusuf, HRCP chairwoman.

Pakistan is scheduled to hold elections by the end of May, which will mark the first democratically elected transition of power ever in the country, dominated for decades by military rulers. No date has yet been set for the polls, but parties are disputing the boundaries of constituencies and accuse each other of distorting their respective voter list to inflate their chances of success. "I am very fearful about the coming elections, said Fateh Muhammad Burfat, a criminologist at Karachi University. The different groups "will try to show their power and there is only one way to show power here -- it is violence." When British colonial rule ended in 1947, and Pakistan was created out of the poorly developed western sliver of India, Karachi became a capital overnight and the destination of tens of thousands of Indian Muslims, known as Mohajirs. The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) controls most of the city -- apart from Lyari, a bastion of support for the PPP, and areas home to new migrants, ethnic Pashtuns from the northwest. For the past three or four years, Lyari has seen clashes blamed on two rival groups: one historically close to the PPP but now fed up with the party leadership, and the second accused of being an MQM auxiliary. In the spring, a police operation tried but failed to dislodge his men from Lyari. "Sometimes they call us drug mafia, sometimes they call us land mafia, sometimes gangsters, they give different allegations because we are their main obstacle to the project to control Lyari," he told AFP. Outside Lyari, ethnic tensions between Mohajirs and Pashtuns who have migrated to escape military operations, Taliban insurgency and mass unemployment, are blamed for much of the violence. The MQM vents about alleged Talibanisation, pointing to suicide and bomb attacks linked to the Taliban-led insurgency dominated by ethnic Pashtuns. "The major criminals, these suicide bombers, these Taliban extremists, whoever they are, are here and have access to local criminals," complains Khawaja Izhar ul-Hasan, a provincial cabinet minister from MQM. "Now they are like one mafia, from mobile phone snatching on the street to bank robbery, everybody is connected." The Awami National Party (ANP), the main Pashtun party, accuses the MQM of power politics and stigmatizing an entire ethnic group.

Daily Times – January 08, 2013

US Drone Strikes in Pakistan on Rise for 2013: Report

The CIA has opened the year with a flurry of drone strikes in Pakistan, pounding Taliban targets along the country's tribal belt at a time when the Obama administration is preparing to disclose its plans for pulling most U.S. forces out of neighboring Afghanistan. A strike in North Waziristan was the seventh in 10 days, marking a major escalation in the pace of attacks. Drone attacks had slipped in frequency to fewer than one per week last year. Current and former U.S. intelligence officials attributed the increased tempo to a sense of urgency surrounding expectations that President Obama will soon order a drawdown that could leave Afghanistan with fewer than 6,000 U.S. troops after 2014. The strikes are seen as a way to weaken adversaries of the Afghan government before the withdrawal and serve notice that the United States will still be able to launch attacks. The rapid series of CIA strikes "may be a signal to groups that include not just al-Qaeda that the U.S. will still present a threat" after most American forces have gone, said Seth Jones, a counterterrorism expert at the Rand Corp. "With the drawdown in U.S. forces, the drone may be, over time, the most important weapon against militant groups." U.S. officials also tied the increase to recent intelligence gains on groups blamed for lethal attacks on U.S. and coalition

forces in Afghanistan. Among those killed in the drone strikes, according to U.S. officials, was Maulvi Nazir, a Taliban commander accused of planning cross-border raids and providing protection for al-Qaeda fighters. The CIA may see a diminishing window for using drones with such devastating effectiveness as the military begins sharp reductions in the 66,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, current and former officials said. A former U.S. intelligence official with extensive experience in Afghanistan said the CIA has begun discussing plans to pare back its network of bases across the country to five from 15 or more because of the difficulty of providing security for its outposts after most U.S. forces have left.

“As the military pulls back, the agency has to pull back,” the former U.S. intelligence official said on the condition of anonymity, particularly from high-risk outposts along the country’s eastern border that have served as bases for running informant networks and gathering intelligence on al-Qaeda and Taliban strongholds in Pakistan. Such a retrenchment could slow the process of identifying fresh targets for drone strikes, although the agency is expected to continue operating the remotely piloted planes from fortified bases, such as a landing strip in Jalalabad. “Essentially we will become Fort Apache in Kabul and the major cities,” the former U.S. intelligence official said, describing a pared back CIA presence. Even if the drones continue to take off and land, the diminished presence in Khost and other locations could hamper “our ability to gather intelligence on where Zawahiri is and what al-Qaeda is doing in the North-West Frontier Province” of Pakistan, he said, referring to al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri and the region now known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The CIA’s base plans are among a wide range of issues that the U.S. government has been negotiating with Afghan President Hamid Karzai, who is visiting top officials in Washington this week. A CIA spokesman declined to say whether agency officials had met with Karzai. The Pakistani government has not publicly protested the stepped-up drone strikes, but reports suggest that they have caused higher-than-usual civilian casualties. Bill Roggio, who tracks drone activity in Pakistan for the Long War Journal Web site, said preliminary information indicates that as many as 11 civilians, along with 30 militants, have been killed so far this year. If true, that civilian count would exceed the total for all of 2012, Roggio said. U.S. officials disputed that count but declined to provide an alternative figure. U.S. officials have frequently touted the accuracy of the program and claimed that reports exaggerate civilian casualties. Assessing the civilian toll has been notoriously difficult, partly because the strikes take place in areas almost inaccessible to journalists and independent monitors. The New America Foundation has estimated that the civilian casualty rate was 10 percent in 2012, down from 60 percent in 2006.

Pakistan Today – January 12, 2013

52 Militants Killed, 459 Held in 2012: KPK Police

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police busted 12 networks of terrorists and rounded up 459 militants and killed 52 others during 2012. It said that during the last 12 months 21 cases of suicide bombings were registered in different parts of the province. At least 21 policemen were killed and 45 others sustained injuries in these attacks. Similarly, the statement said 386 cases of explosive recovery, missile attacks and blasts at CD and barber shops were registered in which 54 policemen lost lives and 147 were injured, the communiqué said. “One suicide bomber was held, five suicide jackets, 33,036 hand-grenades/dynamites, 6,576 kilogram explosives, 31,416 metre prima chord, 497 rocket shells and 988 metre safety fuses were recovered,” it added. During 2012, a total of 171 police encounters took place in which 11 cops were killed and 14 more injured, the communiqué said, adding, some 48 dacoits were killed and 21 injured in these clashes. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police recovered 4,715 rifles and light machine guns, 8,702 shotguns, 36,420 pistols, 4,923 Kalashnikov rifles, 2,356 Kalakov, 327 hand-grenades, 51 Stengun and machinegun, 33 bombs and 2019,594 cartridges were recovered. Also, during this period 24,131 proclaimed offenders were arrested and 164 were killed. The police seized

5,412kg hashish, 349kg opium, 334kg heroin and 61,243 bottles of alcohol and 6,700 litres liquor during raids in the province.

The News – January 24, 2013

17 Outlaws Held, 4 Cars & Weapons Recovered: Islamabad

Islamabad Police arrested 17 outlaws, recovered four stolen cars, illegal weapons and stolen items from their possession. Islamabad Police initiated action against the unlawful activities and arrested 17 miscreants.

- Women Police Station ASI Muhammad Ameen Khan arrested three accused, Saifullah, Irfanullah and Sabira Begum, involved in theft activities
- Police Station Shahzad Town ASI Sabbir Hussan arrested an accused Amjid Hussan and recovered 30 bore pistol and 10 rounds from his possession
- Police Station Ramna ASI Faiz Ahmed, on information of Rescue 15 raided a Flat No 2, Block 42 and arrested drunks Muhammad Rafiq, Ahmed Zaib, Muhammad Salman, Kaleem-mr-Rehman and recovered one bottle of wine
- Tarnol ASI Ali Asgher during a search operation arrested another accused Sajjid Khan and recovered 30 bore pistol
- Industrial Police Station ASI Muhammad Sharif recovered a Honda car worth one million rupees from accused Ibrahim
- ASI Bara Kaho Rafiullah arrested accused Muhammad Ramzan, Shahnawaz and Sajid Rehman and recovered three vehicles including Mehran, Khyber and Corolla worth Rs 1.35 million
- Lohai Bhair ASI Ghulam Rasool arrested eight accused involved in immoral activities. The accused were identified as Raja Nisar, Ch Imran, Saqib Raza, Irman Khan, Saba Ikram, Bendia and Naila

Cases have been registered against the accused. Inspector General Islamabad Police Bani Amin Khan and SSP Yasin Farooq lauded the efficient performance of police personnel. The SSP directed the SHOs to tighten security at entrance and exit points and keep vigilance and ensure the arrest of the outlaws

Pakistan Today – January 24, 2013

ECONOMIC WATCH

Facts & Figures

Workers' Remittances Up 12.51% to \$7.11bn in First Half of FY13

Overseas Pakistani workers remitted an amount of \$7,116.70 million in the first half (July-December) of the current fiscal year 2012-13, showing a growth of 12.51 percent or \$791.36 million when compared with \$6.325 billion received during the same period of last fiscal year (July- December 2011). The remittances received through banks amounted to \$6,421 million (90%), through exchange companies \$640 million (9%) and through Pakistan Post \$56 million (1%). The inflow of remittances in July-December 2012 from Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, UK, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman), and EU countries amounted to \$1,960.62 million, \$1,460.90 million, \$1,155.54 million, \$1,005.01 million, \$811.18 million and \$188.77 million respectively as compared with the inflow of \$1,661.89 million, \$1,412.92 million, \$1,150.24 million, \$726.35 million, \$721.19 million and \$189.14 million respectively in July- December 2011. Remittances received from Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan and other countries during the first half of current fiscal year (July- December FY13) amounted to \$ 534.68 million as against \$463.61 million received in the first half of last fiscal year (July-December FY11).

The monthly average remittances for July-December 2012 period comes out to \$1,186.12 million as compared to \$1,054.22 million during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year. Overseas Pakistanis remitted an amount of \$1,134.66 million in December 2012 as against \$ 1,085.35 million in the same month of the last fiscal year December 2011 depicting a growth of 4.54 percent. In December 2012, the inflow of remittances from Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, UK, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman), and EU countries amounted to \$351.17 million, \$220.28 million, \$161.97 million, \$159.15 million, \$134.49 million and \$27.61 million respectively as compared with the inflow of \$297.53 million, \$ 245.67 million, \$175.12 million, \$132.05 million, \$121.15 million and \$28.88 million respectively in December, 2011. Remittances received from Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan and other countries during the sixth month of current fiscal year (December FY13) amounted to \$79.99 million as against \$84.95 million received in the sixth month of last fiscal year (December 2011).

The continued growth in workers' remittances is the result of the efforts made by Pakistan Remittance Initiative (PRI) in collaboration with other stakeholders to facilitate both overseas Pakistanis and their families back home. Since its inception PRI has taken a number of steps to enhance the flow of remittances through formal channels which include preparation of national strategies on remittances, taking all necessary steps to implement the overall strategy, playing the advisory role for financial sector in terms of preparing a business case, relationship building with overseas correspondents, creating separate efficient remittance payment highways and becoming a national focal point for overseas Pakistanis through round the clock call centre (021-111-222-774) with toll free lines, separate web site etc. Country-wise break up:

Countries	July-December 2012	July-December 2011
Saudi Arabia	\$1,960.62m	\$1,661.89m
UAE	\$1,460.90m	\$1,412.92m
USA	\$1,155.54m	\$1,150.24m
UK	\$1,005.01m	\$726.35m
GCC countries	\$811.18m	\$721.19m
EU countries	\$188.77m	\$189.14m

Daily Times – January 11, 2013

Government Faces Rs102bn Revenue Shortfall

The government is facing a total revenue shortfall of more than Rs102 billion in first five months of the current fiscal year owing to major slippages on both tax and non-tax revenue estimates. The non-tax revenue in first five months (July-November 2012) amounted to Rs267 billion against an annual target of Rs730.33 billion. By this time, the non-tax revenue should have earned Rs304 billion. The average monthly yields from non-tax revenue in first six months stood at Rs53.4 billion instead of Rs61 billion per month estimates set in the federal budget. It was unrealistic to take monthly averages in non-tax revenue as slippages because revenue inflows could be erratic depending on their recovery schedules but conceded that a big ticket item of Rs80 billion in the form of profits from Pakistan Telecom Authority (proceeds from auction of third generation) were unlikely to materialize during the current fiscal year. Likewise, the tax revenue collection in first six months amounted to about Rs915 billion, about Rs60 billion short of half yearly target. With this pace of revenue collection, the government was likely to face a tax shortfall of over Rs200 billion against its target of Rs2.381 billion unless its tax amnesty scheme was successful as claimed by the tax authorities. Giving breakup of the non-tax revenue, the official said a major inflow of Rs109 billion (\$1.2 billion) came from the United States against defense services provided to coalition forces in Afghanistan. This did not include Rs67 billion (\$688 million) from CSF flows transferred to Pakistan in the first week of January 2013.

Another major contribution of Rs50 billion came from the State Bank of Pakistan as government's profit, followed by Rs23 billion each from royalties on gas and dividends from public sector enterprises. The gas surcharge and cess earned another Rs17 billion, followed by Rs8 billion as windfall levy on petroleum products and Rs6 billion as discount on locally produced crude oil. Rs5 billion were earned as passport fee while provincial governments paid Rs6 billion as interest on federal loans and advances. The government had set a target of Rs730 billion for non-tax revenue for the current fiscal year. Besides Rs80 billion profit from PTA, the government had estimated to earn Rs200 billion as central bank profit, Rs150 billion from defense services (mostly CSF payments), Rs65 billion proceeds from dividends earned from government shares in public sector entities. The target for non-tax revenue from passport fee was set at Rs15 billion in the budget, besides Rs31 billion from GDS, Rs22.5 billion each on discount retained on crude oil and royalty on crude oil. Royalty on natural gas and gas development infrastructure cess proceeds were estimated at Rs36 billion and Rs30 billion respectively. Officials said that owing to slippages both on tax and non-tax revenue were partly offset by higher than projected inflows from the United States under CSF but even then the five month fiscal deficit had been estimated at about 2.7 per cent. The government was working closely with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to have breathing space during the upcoming political transition. IMF delegation was being given a clear picture of the macroeconomic indicators to work out an acceptable program to sail through the political transition. Three governments were going to change hands in a short period of time i.e. the current government, the interim government and the next democratic government and the IMF and the United States appreciate that some kind of cooperation was a must to avoid a bumpy transition.

Dawn – January 12, 2013

Rupee Depreciates 58percent in Five Years: State Bank of Pakistan

As government is about to complete its five-year tenure; amazing economic figures appeared on official documents, showing failures of economic managers. The State Bank of Pakistan's January Statistical Bulletin reported that overseas Pakistanis sent \$48 billion during four-and-a-half years, but this could neither control free fall of local currency against major currencies, nor it helped improve foreign exchange reserves. It also failed to improve poor external accounts

position. The rupee-dollar parity four years back was 62. The dollar was changing hands at Rs98. The report reveals that during this period, local currency depreciated by 58 per cent against the dollar which changed the economy based on highly vulnerable exchange regime. Massive interest-free remittances even failed to change the pale face of the currency and overall economy. Remittances continued to rise.

- In 2008-09, these stood at \$7.81 billion
- In 2009-10, the figure increased to \$8.9 billion
- \$11.2 billion in 2010-11
- \$13.2 billion in 2011-12

During the first half of the current year, remittances rose to \$7 billion. In case of rupee-dollar parity, the depreciation of local currency was huge which made the cost of imports much higher only to push up inflation. The 58 per cent deprecation of rupee during this period kept pressure on economy while business community lost faith in local currency. There is a general understanding that the business community calculates profit and loss in terms of dollars despite trading in the local currency. Most of them, including some common people, prefer keeping their deposits in dollars. It is not a surprise that dollars held by private banks have been rising compared to the central bank. Since July 2011, reserves of the central bank fell from \$14.775 billion to \$8.769 billion on Jan 4 this year. However, reserves of commercial banks rose to \$4.789 billion in January this year as against \$3.519 billion in July 2011. The economics managers failed to even manage the current account with the help of huge inflow of \$48 billion and another help of over \$8 billion from the IMF during this period. Last year the current account deficit was \$4.6 billion, and there seems no chance of improvement this year as five months data shows that the current account was in deficit this year. Amid all these inefficiencies, the external debt of the country is also rising which has touched the peak of \$66 billion. Five years back it was about \$44 billion. It has become extremely difficult for the country to service its external debt that was around \$4 billion per year and is rising with the increasing debt. A currency expert said the huge inflow of remittances could be used to bring a growth in economy that could help the country to improve its external accounts position.

Dawn – January 13, 2013

Budget Deficit At 2.4% of GDP in 6 Months of FY 2012-13

The country's budget deficit for the first half (July to December) period of the ongoing fiscal year 2012-13 has been estimated provisionally on the lower side at 2.4 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), mainly because of Coalition Support Fund (CSF) arrears released by the United States otherwise it would have been at 3.0 or 3.1 percent of the GDP. The revenue shortfall owing to political uncertainties, power subsidies over and above budgetary allocation and gas and power shortages in the country with increased election-related expenditure are likely to take the budget deficit to around 6.3 percent of the GDP by the end of the ongoing fiscal year, in case the Public Sector Development Program was not slashed to adjust the extra expenditures, experts believe. However, uncertainties on federal tax collection and power subsidies are the main areas of concern for the economic managers of the country as the federal tax collection is witnessing a shortfall and annual budgetary allocation for power subsidies have been consumed in just six months of ongoing fiscal year.

The authorities have estimated that budget deficit for the entire fiscal year would increase by 0.6 percent of the GDP in case the federal tax collection falls short of the annual tax collection target. Similarly, the budgetary allocation of power subsidies which was Rs 170 billion have already been consumed in just six months and subsidies to be required to finance the tariff differential of the second half (January to June) period of the ongoing fiscal year 2013 would increase the budget deficit by around 1.0 percent of the GDP, economic experts in the private sector believe. The Ministry of Finance has paid Rs 117 billion to Water and Power

Development Authority (WAPDA) and Rs 22 billion to Karachi Electric Supply Company (KESC) to subsidize their tariffs for the consumers during July to November period and Rs 23 billion has also been paid to power sector as subsidy during the month of December. This subsidy is mainly financing the gap between generation cost and power tariff charged by the power companies from the consumers. At present the difference between power tariffs is determined by the regulator and power tariff charged by the power companies.

According to the estimates, tax collection of the federal government, which has been set at Rs 2.381 trillion, is also going to be missed and collection to end up at around Rs 2.1 trillion, as per the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates under the prevailing political, geo-strategic and energy crisis situation. However, the sources informed that Ministry of Finance has its own view on tax collection and it strongly feels that tax collection would be around Rs 2.231 trillion against the annual tax collection projection of Rs 2.381 trillion, and expected shortfall of Rs 150 billion in this fiscal. The sources further informed that efforts are there to take tax collection near to its budgetary target with enforcement of tax amnesty scheme for whitening undisclosed and undeclared assets and money. The official at Ministry of Finance informed that the ministry has not slashed its annual tax collection target downwards as this would relax the tax authorities in putting up of their maximum efforts for increasing tax collection.

The ministry has no authority to slash the annual tax collection target downwards as it is approved the federal cabinet and is only authorized to do so. The ministry has sent no summary to the cabinet for revision in tax collection target so far. Despite shortfall in federal tax collection and risks ahead, the non-tax revenues of the federal government have remained higher than their targets as the CSF arrears worth Rs 109 billion helped to project the required growth in non-tax revenues. Total non-tax revenues target was set at Rs 700 billion for the ongoing fiscal year and collection during first five months July to November period amounted to Rs 257 billion. The non-tax revenues were Rs 109 billion from CSF, royalty on oil and gas Rs 23 billion, discount retained on crude oil Rs 6 million, dividend from Public Sector Enterprises Rs 23 million, Gas Infrastructure Development Cess Rs 17 billion, levy on windfall gains of refineries Rs 8 billion, passport fee Rs 5 billion and interest on loans paid by the provinces Rs 6 billion. The Ministry of Finance has included Rs 50 billion as State Bank of Pakistan's profits in non-tax revenues for the first time in the first half of the ongoing fiscal year 2012-13.

Daily Times – January 13, 2013

Federal Board of Revenue May Miss Fy13 Revenue Target

A major shortfall in revenue collection of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is imminent, against the annual target of Rs2381 billion, as the collection of taxes and duty on import stage recorded decline during the first half of the current fiscal year. The total collection of duty and taxes by two collect-orates of Pakistan Customs stood at Rs151.44 billion during July-December 2012 as against Rs152.15 billion in the corresponding period of last year, depicting 0.47 percent fall. The stagnant revenue collection growth of customs is alarming for the federal revenue body, which has been assigned to collect Rs2381 billion in the ongoing fiscal year, with the growth rate of 26.4 percent comparing with the last fiscal year's revenue collection of Rs1883 billion. The details of revenue collected by Model Customs Collect-orate (MCC) of Appraisalment and MCC PaCCS, which account for about 70 percent of total revenue collection by the Pakistan customs, showed that federal excise duty registered sharp decline, while collection from sales tax also fell. However, collection of customs duty and income tax posted increase. The combined customs duty collection of both the collect-orates rose 10.55 percent to Rs56.22 billion in July-Dec as against Rs50.85 billion in the comparable period. Similarly, the collection of income tax at import stage managed to grow by 3.2 percent to Rs24.56 billion comparing previous collection of Rs23.51 billion.

The sales tax collection went down by 8.16 percent to Rs70.24 billion against Rs76.45 billion and collection of federal excise duty plunged by 45.6 percent to Rs706 million. Customs officials

attributed the flat growth to fall in overall imports of the country, reduction in sales tax rate in the last budget besides elimination of federal excise duty on several items. Pakistan's total imports fell by \$21.92 billion during July–Dec 2012, showing 3.33 percent decline when compared with \$22.67 during July–Dec 2011. In the budget 2012/13, the government announced relief in customs including maximum general tariff slabs reduced from 35 to 30 percent. The customs duty on raw materials and components for printing and stationary sector were also slashed. Besides, duty on 88 pharmaceutical raw materials and other input goods were further cut to 5 percent from 10. Most recently, the government also reduced the age limit of imported used cars to three years from five. Likewise, in the last budget the sales tax rate was brought down to 16 percent from 17. The customs officials said that due to these reasons the shortfall in revenue collection by customs will widen in coming months. Regarding increase in customs duty during first six months of the current fiscal year, the officials said that effective monitoring on assessment of imported goods and ensuring arrears recovery enabled the customs to collect such amount despite fall in volume of dutiable goods. The officials also attributed this to the performance of research and development wing of MCC PaCCS. They said that considering ongoing trend of collection the FBR would request the government to revise the revenue target downward.

The News – January 15, 2013

Pakistan May Miss Growth Target for Fifth Year in a Row: A Report by World Bank

Pakistan will miss growth target set for the current financial year, the fifth consecutive year, and the sluggish pace of economy will continue for at least two more years, according to a World Bank report, indicating a rise in unemployment. The Global Economic Prospects Report 2013 says Pakistan's economy is expected to grow at a rate of 3.8%, half percentage point below the target of 4.3% set for fiscal year 2012-13 ending June 30. The report comes at a time when Pakistan is readjusting its macroeconomic framework during ongoing talks with the International Monetary Fund to pave the way for a fresh bailout program. Both sides have already wrapped up technical-level talks and are gearing up for policy dialogue. The World Bank says growth in Pakistan, the second largest economy in South Asia, remained broadly stable if compared with last year's growth of 3.7%. However, the country is clubbed with Nepal that is projected to grow 3.8%. Even Sri Lanka at 6.1% and Bangladesh at 5.8% are projected to hit growth rates far higher than that in Pakistan. Various studies, both independent and official, suggest that Pakistan requires 7 to 8% annual growth to create jobs for the bulk of youth. In the last five years, the country has posted sluggish growth, leaving hundreds of thousands jobless every year. The World Bank also projects sluggish growth for the next two years. According to the report, there will be lacklustre growth in financial years 2013-14 and 2014-15 at 4% and 4.2% respectively. The bank says though industrial activity has started picking up, inadequate supply of electricity and gas for firms with captive power plants continues to hobble the industrial sector. It fears that the pick-up in exports in the first five months of this fiscal year on the back of increase in exports of garments and processed cotton products may not continue in the remaining part of the year.

Electricity shortages during the second half of December have already adversely affected textile production and may dampen export growth in subsequent months, it says. On the fiscal front, the bank again paints a dismal picture. Against the government's target of 4.7%, the budget deficit is expected to be over 6%, a projection which is in line with the IMF forecast. For the last five years, economic managers have been understating expenditures and overstating revenues to show the budget deficit below actual levels, experts say. According to a finance ministry official, the government has now presented a revised budget deficit figure of 5.6% to the IMF, largely because of a shortfall in revenues. Compared to the annual revenue target of Rs2.381 trillion, the government now expects to collect Rs2.231 trillion, a shortfall of Rs150 billion or roughly 0.7% of gross domestic product. The official believes that the government is still betting

on Rs75 billion on account of auction of 3G telecom spectrum – a transaction that is unlikely to take place in the current politico-economic conditions of the country. The World Bank also warns that currencies of several net oil importing countries with low or eroded reserve buffers, such as Egypt, Pakistan and India remain vulnerable. As foreign currency reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan are coming down gradually, the rupee is under pressure against the US dollar. The rupee is touching 100 a dollar following increasing tensions on the political front. Dr Ashfaq Hasan Khan, Dean of Business School of National University of Science and Technology, said if ongoing round of Pakistan-IMF talks did not yield desired results; the rupee will touch new historical lows with an outflow of capital.

The Express Tribune – January 17, 2013

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

IMF Links Bailout Package with Reforms Agenda

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is linking its next bailout package of approximately \$5 billion for Pakistan's ailing economy with the cooperation of major political parties in implementing a reform agenda beyond the upcoming elections. This agenda will entail the removal of tax exemptions, the broadening of the tax base, the reduction of losses borne by public sector enterprises and the raising of energy prices. After making heavy repayments to the tune of five billion dollars in the remaining few months of the current fiscal and in the coming financial year, there is no solution but to seek a fresh IMF program after June 2013, said former finance minister and renowned economist Dr Hafeez A Pasha. However, a lot depends on timing – when Islamabad chooses to place a formal request with the IMF." Significantly, Finance Division officials were not available for comment. Meanwhile, despite the inflow of \$688 million under the Coalition Support Fund head last month, the depletion of foreign exchange reserves continues unabated. And with the deposits of individuals having increased by \$1 billion in the last one year, the pace of dollarization looks poised to increase. Insiders privy to the ongoing talks between Pakistan and the IMF team say the next bailout package will be extended under an extended Stand-by Arrangement Program provided the above-mentioned conditions are met. "With the full backing of the US, the IMF may agree to extend the new bailout package in the next few months," said official sources.

"However, we will have to demonstrate the willingness of major political parties to implement measures after the general elections and ensure the immediate removal of tax exemptions." The sources said that the pressure on the exchange rate has led to a slowdown in remittances as well as the influx of export proceeds besides accelerated pressure for imports clearance. "Within a month, a full blown crisis could erupt," they said. Meanwhile, the IMF is also demanding that the FBR raise the tax-to-GDP ratio by 1.5 percent of GDP – from nine percent to 10.5 percent of GDP – in one go through policy action. This increase is expected to net the government some Rs 360 billion. However, FBR authorities are trouncing this demand as unrealistic and have been telling the IMF that they can only increase revenue by a maximum of 0.7 percent of GDP, even if the Parliament approves the tax amnesty scheme. In the event that the bill gets delayed, FBR officials have been arguing, the only other way to increase revenue would be for political parties to support the revenue body in its task to exert pressure on tax evaders. Significantly, the FBR is also said to have told the IMF that RGST and Value Added Tax (VAT) cannot be introduced on an immediate basis. However, the revenue body claims to be working on coming up with Statutory Regulatory Orders to remove tax exemptions.

The News – January 12, 2013

IMF Paints a Gloomy Picture of Pakistan's Economy

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) may sign a loan program with the caretaker government if all major political parties agree on a broader set of action plans. However, before that is possible, Pakistan will have to take some tough prior actions, says the Fund's representative for the region. Jeffrey Franks, adviser to the IMF for the Middle East and Central Asia, spoke at length on the grave economic situation the country is faced with. The IMF's prescription to Pakistan includes a healthy measure of – not surprisingly – increasing taxes, cutting expenditures, withdrawing electricity subsidies and increasing interest rates to check inflation, which is expected to rebound soon and devalue the currency further. "We have agreed with the government that the deficit eventually needs to come down to 3-3.5% of the GDP in three years, from the current level of over 7%," revealed Franks. "According to our one-month assessment, Pakistan's currency is overvalued by 5-10%. Modest depreciation might yield positive results for the economy," he added. "The monetary policy also needs to be calibrated to bring down inflation to between 5-7%." He underscored the need for having "broadest and deepest possible political support for any new program". Franks also sought support at the highest levels, besides taking provinces on board, before the government enters into a formal arrangement with the Fund. He said that if political parties agree on a broader reforms agenda, the IMF can be flexible on how Pakistan goes about achieving it. "The decision whether or not we will enter into a program with the interim government will be made by the IMF management: however, if there is very strong and broad political support, going beyond the interim government, it might be possible," Franks said, while responding to a question asking about the timing of the program.

The IMF observed that Pakistan's problems require long-term solutions, and that any new program will not last less than three years. Franks disclosed that, according to the IMF assessment, this year's budget deficit will remain around 7-7.5% of the GDP. In absolute terms, the IMF projects an Rs1.624 trillion deficit – a whopping Rs516 billion or 2.3% higher than government estimates. Besides the significant shortfall in revenues, Pakistan also may not be able to complete the auction of the 3G telecom spectrum, causing another shortfall of around Rs75 billion. To add icing to that unsavory cake, the economy will grow just 3.5% this year according to the IMF's estimates, as against official projections of 4.3%. "The number one bottleneck to growth is the energy sector. The number two bottleneck is the energy sector, and the number three bottleneck is also probably the energy sector," said Franks. "Private sector credit growth is very weak; large scale manufacturing is positive, but very low; and we don't see robust export growth," observed Franks. He further said that while declining inflation is a good indicator, it is also worrisome because domestic demand continues to remain weak. He also criticized the government's tax collection efforts, which he said are indicative of weaknesses in the economy. Even though the IMF has projected a current account deficit of a low 0.7% of GDP, Franks warned that even this low level is dangerous due to drying foreign inflows. As a final blow, he also ruled out any restructuring of IMF loans. He agreed that tough actions may cause a temporary drop in growth, but insisted that they were necessary for achieving macroeconomic stability. Franks also hinted that the central bank should be made an independent part of plans for the new program.

The Express Tribune – January 19, 2013

IMF Advises Pakistan to Finalize Tax Reforms by March

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has advised Pakistani economic managers to finalize tax reforms framework by March 2013 for possible presentation in the IMF Executive Board's meeting. In case the authorities failed this plan could be placed before IMF Executive Board after the announcement of federal budget, possibly in July 2013, a step paving way for any future loan program for the country. In this regard, IMF has identified five sectors retail, real estate, products, services and agriculture as most potential areas for broadening tax base and

increasing tax-to-gross domestic product (GDP) ratio in the country and decided to continue consultation with political parties and other stakeholders so that a national consensus is developed for the purpose. Although the authorities in Pakistan and IMF mission have categorically said that Pakistan's economic managers have not sought any fresh loan program for IMF, however, growing foreign exchange needs that run into billions of rupees, according to the IMF, would require future governments to consider such option. More simplified tax system with broader coverage of economic sectors presently under taxed or enjoying tax exemptions and removal of distortion would help increase the tax-to-GDP ratio as many developing countries have improved their ranking from bottom to mid level in the country by reforming their tax systems; IMF mission was of the view.

The IMF has identified many distortions in Pakistan's taxation system and said that a large portion of economy is out of the coverage of tax net, mainly due to the legal lacunas - legal exceptions like taxing agriculture income by provincial governments, zero rating of five export-oriented sectors, negligible taxation of exporters under presumptive tax regime and SRO allowing discriminatory tax benefits to certain lobbies. Exemptions available in all taxes, exemptions available under certain agreements make the tax coverage limited to only a few documented sectors and sectors like retail, property, products, services and agriculture are the potential areas where tax potential exists and economic managers should explore the possibilities for expansion of tax net to these sectors, the IMF team informed the authorities. The official sources further informed that IMF has asked the economic managers that if the present form of Reformed General Sales Tax (RGST) are acceptable or not to the political parties represented in the parliament. The economic managers should prepare a revised scheme of GST, which is acceptable to all the stakeholders and if it is agreed by all the stakeholders, IMF would have no hesitation in supporting it, as any step towards broadening of tax coverage and tax base would be a step towards the right direction.

Administrative measures could be a source of increasing tax revenues for one time only and reforms are needed to search for new revenue streams for meeting not only national development goals but for meeting local and foreign debt servicing obligation of the country, IMF mission was of the opinion, the sources informed. Increase in revenues and containing the losses in power sector would be the best solution of Pakistan existing difficulties as the country has spent Rs 1.5 trillion in power subsidies and reforms in this area would help contain the financial bleeding. The sources informed that tax managers of the country have informed that a gigantic exercise is already underway to remove distortions in the tax system especially distortions created by SROs and discriminatory treatment through other legal instruments would be eliminated. These amendments in tax laws would be presented in the parliament through Finance Bill 2013 at the time of the announcement of the budget 2013-14.

Daily Times - January 20, 2013

DEVELOPMENT WATCH

Government's Role in Development Programmes

Punjab Government Okays Rs 150bn Development Funds: Punjab

The Punjab government approved funds of Rs 150.15 billion for various development sectors of the economy during July to December 2012 against the total volume of development programme of Rs 210 billion. According to half yearly report by the Punjab Planning and Development Department, the net size of the Annual Development Programme (ADP) 2012-13 is Rs 210 billion out of which a sum of Rs 151,526.777 million has been approved against the total 134 development schemes of the 21 Development Sectors of the economy during the total 25. Provincial Development forum has approved funds amounting of Rs 92.367 million for one scheme of mines and minerals sector. These are;

- A sum of Rs 2,645.805 million for four schemes of the agriculture sector
- A sum of Rs 10,065.694 million for six schemes of education sector
- A sum of Rs 3,035.207 million for two schemes of literacy sector
- A sum of Rs 19,500.612 million for eleven Schemes of health sector
- A sum of Rs 620.845 million for four schemes of archeology sector
- A sum of Rs 1,513.544 million for one scheme of youth affairs sector
- A sum of Rs 290.500 million for one scheme of information and culture sector
- A sum of Rs 1,693.183 million for three schemes of special infrastructure sector
- A sum of Rs 42,135.244 for 49 schemes of roads sector
- A sum of Rs 12,532.077 million for 11 schemes of irrigation sector
- A sum of Rs 2,896.544 million for two schemes of energy sector
- A sum of Rs 6,524.459 million for eight schemes of public buildings sector
- A sum of Rs 1,539.099 million for six schemes of urban development sector
- A sum of Rs 460.529 million for one scheme of district programme worth Rs 1,594.986 million for three schemes of regional planning sector
- A sum of Rs 42,730.719 million for 14 schemes of transport sector
- A sum of Rs 567.483 million for three schemes of P&D sector
- A sum of Rs 1,084.349 million for two schemes of Auqaf sector
- One scheme of DERA sector a sum of Rs 2.331 million
- One scheme relating to consultancy sector worth Rs 1.200 million

Daily Times – January 01, 2013

Thinking Ahead: KPK

RS229billion has been spent on livestock and dairy development projects by the provincial government of K-P in the last four and a half years, according to Minister for Livestock Haji Hidayatullah Khan.

The Express Tribune – January 04, 2013

In Case-Of Load Shedding: Metro Bus Project, Punjab

54 generators will power the escalators fitted at some stations of the Metro Bus Service project. Their estimated cost is Rs230million.

The Express Tribune – January 04, 2013

Prime Minister Inaugurates Al-Tuwairqi's 1st Steel Manufacturing Complex

Tuwairqi Steel Mills Limited (TSML) Pakistan's first private sector integrated environment-friendly steel manufacturing complex of Al-Tuwairqi Holding (ATH)/ISPC of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia inaugurated by Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf at Port Qasim Karachi. The plant in its first phase has the capacity to produce up to 1.28 million tons of high quality Direct Reduced Iron (DRI), which is evidently steel's most versatile metallic and a preferred raw material for quality steel making worldwide. The first phase has been completed with an investment of over \$350 million. The plant spreads over an area of 220 acres at Bin Qasim Karachi and employs the world's most advanced DRI technology of the MIDREX process owned by Kobe Steel of Japan. ATH/ISPC and POSCO have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the government of Pakistan for the backward and forward integration with an estimated investment 3 times higher than of the DRI plant. Forward integration would be a further value addition through a Melt Shop, producing world standard steel grades, while backward integration would be to the extent of exploring iron ore locally in Balochistan, its beneficiation and pelletisation as well. Joon Yang Chung Chairman and CEO POSCO of South Korea congratulated the entire team of TSML. He said it was heartening to learn that TSML has increased the production capacity of Pakistan by 1.28 million tons per annum, which would help meet the ever growing demands of steel in Pakistan. Zaigham Adil Rizvi Director (Projects) TSML said TSML has massive expansion and modernization plans not only to enhance production capacity at an exponential rate but also to improve productivity and efficiency, matching the highest global standards. Pakistan's current per capita steel consumption is only 40 kilogramme, which is exuberantly low, when compared with the global average of 215 kilogramme. This establishes a dire need increased emphasis on achieving international benchmarks to become a modern and an efficient economy.

Daily Times – January 13, 2013

Over Rs10bn Projects Approved: Azad Jammu Kashmir

The Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) Cabinet Development Committee approved development schemes worth Rs10.88 billion. The schemes included:

- Computerization of AJK's land record at an estimated cost of Rs157.313 million
- Construction of district courts in Athmuqam (Rs219.622 million)
- Reconditioning of 17-km-long Patikka-Bhedi road to the north of Muzaffarabad (Rs139.370 million)
- Purchase of hand tractors for hilly areas and water provision to agricultural lands (Rs110.325 million and Rs286.274 million)
- Revised scheme of Poonch Medical College Rawalakot (Rs176.546 million)

Dawn – January 17, 2013

Punjab to Release Rs46.18 Million: Rawalpindi, Punjab

Following months of complaints regarding the neglect and poor security at local graveyards, the Punjab government is set to release Rs46.18 million to the City District Government Rawalpindi (CDGR) for upgrades and improvements there. The provincial government directed CDGR to conduct a survey of all the graveyards in the city, and to furnish the report in two days so that funds can be released by January 30. The provincial government has sent written directives to the CDGR for survey of graveyards and to construct boundary walls in those graveyards where 40 per cent land is still vacant. Upgrade orders include installation of street lights, construction of prayer sites and tube-wells. It must be mentioned that the space at more than 40 graveyards has shrunk considerably due to encroachments. The city's main graveyards, including Ratta Amral, Pirwadhai, Eidgah, Shan Diyan Talian, Kuri Road, Dhoke Khaba, Dhoke Illahi Buksh,

Dhoke Kashmirian, Chah Sultan and Malikan Da Kabristan, are all filled to capacity. The worst affected out of them is Dhoke Ratta, where the graveyard management committee filled the banks of a nullah to make burial space but when the monsoon season came the floodwaters washed away the graves. Similarly, the Pirwadhai graveyard is accommodating new arrivals by extending its limits to the banks of a nearby nullah. The CDGR is also accused of failing to manage 1,000 kanals of land in Rakh Dhamial, about 20 kilometres outside the city, which was allocated for burials during the second tenure of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in 1996. In the last four years, the CDGR and PML-N local MNAs had tried to construct Jinnah Abadis and Ashiana Housing Schemes at the graveyard land but had to defer their plans after receiving resentment from locals.

Dawn - January 24, 2013

Punjab Government Approves Rs 12, 007m for PISP

The Punjab government approved a scheme of irrigation sector with an estimated cost of Rs 12,007.240 million for Punjab Irrigation System Improvement Project (PISIP) PK-P59 (second revised). Eight other development schemes of various sectors of the economy were also approved worth Rs 3,551.129 million in the Provincial Development Working Party of current financial year 2012-13 presided over by the Punjab Planning and Development Board Chairman Javaid Aslam. The approved development schemes include:

- Construction of Sewerage Scheme Renala City, District Okara at the cost of Rs 314.972 million, Punjab Water and Sanitation Academy, Lahore (revised) at the cost of Rs 421.885 million
- Geophysical Survey for Exploration of Metallic Minerals in the Pre-Cambrian Shield Rocks in Punjab (PC-II) at the cost of Rs 65.850 million
- Completion of Balance work of Package-A Part-A (Rehabilitating Lower Chenab Canal System) (Main Line Upper RD 0+000 to 69+000)
- District Gujranwala at the cost of Rs 74.957 million
- Construction of the Punjab Judicial Academy at Lahore at the cost of Rs 743.758 million
- Installation of Weigh Bridge at Lahore Ring Road, Lahore at the cost of Rs 264.872 million
- Widening/Improvement of Road from Link Chiniot Jhang Road (Adda Chamra More) to Pull Chimbranwali, length 27.50 kms, District Jhang at the cost of Rs 238.880 million
- Widening/Improvement of Bahawalnagar-Haroonabad Road length 53.00 kms District Bahawalnagar (second revised) at the cost of Rs 1425.955 million

Daily Times - January 25, 2013

Health Projects

Rs3.5m for Measles Control in Sukkur: Sindh

The district administration of Sukkur released a special fund of Rs3.5 million for providing meals and medicines to about 200 children who contracted measles. The children are under treatment at the Civil Hospital Sukkur, Red Crescent Hospital Sukkur and Sukkur Hospital. The deputy commissioner of Sukkur district, Bilal Ahmed Memon, said that a 12-member team from the National Institute of Health (NIH), Islamabad, reached Sukkur. He said that the team would meet doctors to collect complete information regarding the measles outbreak. They would also meet the parents of ailing children and perform a technical investigation after examining the children. He said that security arrangements had been made by the district administration and

the police for the NIH team which would visit far-off rural areas including Salehpat, Kandhra, Sangrar, Ali Wahan, Arrore and Panu Aqil. The team would submit its report within four days.

Dawn – January 04, 2013

Health Reports/ Controls

400, 000 TB Patients Nationwide Every Year: Dr Ijaz Qadeer

National TB Control Programme Head Dr Ijaz Qadeer revealed that around 400,000 citizens suffer from tuberculosis (TB) every year and the majority of them are poor people who are provided free check-ups, medicines and other treatment facilities. Dr Ijaz said around 1.5 million TB patients had been registered and treated during the last three years. This was the result of an awareness campaign and the provision of treatment facilities including Basic Health Units, Rural Health Centre and tehsil and district headquarters hospitals. Dr Ijaz said people were aware that TB is a curable disease and do not hesitate to seek treatment for it. He said 75 percent of TB patients were between the ages of 15 and 45 years, and 21 percent patients were over 50 years old.

Pakistan Today – January 01, 2012

Measles Claims Lives of More Than 300 Children: World Health Organization

More than 300 children died of measles last year as a result of three consecutive years of flooding. The United Nations' World Health Organization (WHO) stated 306 children died of the highly infectious disease last year, 210 of them in Sindh, where the worst floods occurred in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Most of the affected children died due to post-measles complications such as pneumonia, post-measles encephalitis and diarrhea. The WHO added that most of the cases occurred between October and December in Sindh. Most of the children who have died because of suspected measles are reported from the districts affected by the floods for the last three years. The WHO investigations had shown that malnourishment was a major reason for such a high number of deaths. Floods, displacements and food shortages have played a major role in these deaths.

Daily Times – January 02, 2013

29.7percent Children Underweight In Country: National Nutrition Survey

The National Nutrition Survey (NNS) 2011 reported that 29.7 percent children in the country are underweight, with only a minor difference between urban and rural populations. The rural-urban difference analysis in NNS highlights that severely underweight children in rural areas are 12.8 percent, while 8.4 percent children in urban areas are underweight. The survey pointed out that robust intervention and strategies are required to counter the problem of malnutrition. High rates of child mortality, with malnutrition and preventable diseases being key contributing factors, can be addressed through policy measures and action in the areas of health, nutrition, water and sanitation. The report said key challenges included lack of an integrated management system for childhood illness, lack of availability and access to health facilities, affordability and a low level of awareness regarding health services. The most common causes of death, hemorrhage and sepsis are closely related to poor hygienic conditions, and are easily preventable through improved conditions at the time of birth. Diarrhoea is related to nutrition absorption, weight gain and healthy eating. Repeated incidents of diarrhoea affect hydration which is a common cause of death among children. FATA, Balochistan and Sindh have high rates of severe stunted growth among young children, the report mentioned.

Pakistan Today – January 04, 2013

2.9m Children Vaccinated Against Measles: WHO, Sindh

The World Health Organization (WHO) has started a large measles vaccination campaign targeting 2.9 million children in eight districts of Sindh as an emergency response to the outbreak in the province. The WHO representative in Pakistan, Dr. Guido Sabatinelli said that during this campaign, children from the age of nine months to 10 years will be vaccinated. Measles campaign has been planned between 31st December 2012 and 9th Jan, 2013 for eight districts in Sindh; Sukkur, Khairpur, Larkana, Qamber-Shadadkot, Shikarpur, Jacobabad, Ghotki and Kashmore. A total of 1,300,000 vaccine doses have been dispatched by the national authorities to the 8 districts stated Dr. Sabatinelli. About the immunization in Pakistan, he said Pakistan's routine immunization coverage is close to 65 per cent with only some important cities recording a better performance. The statement further adds that WHO is recommending adequate steps both on emergency and long-term basis to the provincial governments to ensure that routine immunization coverage is made accessible to each and every child. At an average, one single EPI vaccination center in a union council caters for a population of 20,000 to 30,000. He stated that the government of Pakistan's Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI), which is technically supported by WHO and UNICEF aims at protecting children aged 0-1 months by immunizing them against childhood tuberculosis, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, hepatitis B, meningitis, haemophilus influenza and measles. The program also protects newborn against neonatal tetanus by giving TT vaccine to all pregnant mothers.

Daily Times – January 12, 2013

Infants Mortality: Pakistan

420, 000 children under the age of five die in the country every year due to multiple factors including:

- Birth Asphyxia (22%),
- Sepsis (14%),
- Pneumonia (13%),
- Diarrhea (11%)
- Premature Birth (9%).

The Express Tribune – January 21, 2013

1300 Cases, Three Deaths from Measles Reported In Punjab: Director Health Services Punjab

Around 13, 00 cases of measles have been reported in different parts of Punjab, mostly in Lahore, during the current surveillance drive. Director Health Services for EPI Punjab Dr Tanveer Ahmad said that “only” three deaths were reported due to measles – one in Gujranwala and two in Rajanpur. On investigation, it was found that the deceased boy in Gujranwala had been vaccinated “but due to some reasons, his immunity could not be developed”, Ahmad said. The cases of measles have been found in Lahore but they actually originated from Narowal, Sheikhpura and Kasur districts. Ahmad said the Health Department has been holding meetings with EDOs of the districts concerned to review the strategy of combating measles. It has been decided that the vaccination and surveillance drive should be stepped up for early control of the disease. It is also part of the strategy to first vaccinate those areas where most cases of measles have been reported.

Daily Times – January 21, 2013

Health: Minister for National Regulations and Services

16, 000 pharmacists are currently working in the country and about 3, 000 graduate annually, said Minister for National Regulations and Services.

The Express Tribune – January 23, 2013

Training

132, 487 people have been provided vocational and technical training by the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission during current financial year.

The Express Tribune – January 24, 2013

WHO Reports 94 Measles Outbreaks across Pakistan: A Report by WHO

The year 2013 bodes ill for Pakistan as far as measles is concerned as the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported 94 measles outbreaks throughout the country in the first three weeks of January alone. The WHO reports 25 measles outbreaks in Punjab over the last three weeks, exposing the provincial government, which has trumpeted much about the 'normal situation' in the province. Punjab health officials have denied measles outbreak in any part of the province so far. According to the WHO, Punjab has the second highest number of measles outbreaks after Balochistan, where 33 outbreaks were reported in the first three weeks of 2013. The WHO report says that measles claimed lives of 103 children throughout the country from Jan 1 to Jan 19. Of them, 66 children died in Sindh, 33 in Balochistan and seven in Punjab. The WHO and the Punjab Health Department have consensus that seven deaths took place in the province during the last three weeks, but the district where they reported these death are different.

Special Assistant to Chief Minister on Health Khwaja Salman Rafique says in Punjab one child died in the Gujranwala district, one in the Kasur district and five in the Rajanpur district, while the WHO reports one death each in Lahore, Dera Ghazi Khan and Rahim Yar Khan and two each in Bhakkar and Rawalpindi. If the data of both health department and WHO is correct, the death toll in Punjab has reached 14. The WHO report says that transmission of measles virus to healthy children increased manifold in January 2013 compared to the same month last year. According to the report, 2,447 measles cases were reported during last three weeks, while only 447 cases were reported in January 2012. The report warns of spread of the disease if stakeholders do not take it seriously.

In the first three weeks of January, 1211 measles cases were reported in Sindh, 290 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 483 in Balochistan. "The highest number of measles cases and deaths was reported in the Naseerabad district (220 cases and 20 deaths), followed by Jaffarabad (73 cases and five deaths), Killa Saifullah (39 cases and four deaths) and Jhal Magsi (23 cases and one death)." According to the WHO, the monthly trend of measles cases in 2012 shows that the number of cases started increasing in April 2012 and reached the peak in May-June 2012. The second upward trend started in October 2012. The report carries month-wise comparative study of measles outbreaks in Pakistan with clear indication of a huge impact of the disease, which spread beyond anticipation in the start of the new year compared to the last year.

Dawn – January 24, 2013

HRCP on Measles Deaths: Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan slammed the rising death toll in the measles epidemic that has claimed the lives of nearly 500 children across the country. In a statement, the commission said: "HRCP notes with great alarm that hundreds of children have died of measles in Sindh and deaths have also been reported from all the other provinces and FATA as well." It

stated there was no mystery as to why measles has had such a steep toll in the past month. The deaths occurred simply because the state-run immunization programme either missed the children or the vaccine administered to them did not work. "It is unheard of, utterly unacceptable, and quite frankly criminal that in this day and age our children are losing their lives to a disease, which can be prevented through a straightforward immunization programme". "One now hears many the ories that the epidemic might have broken out after UN agencies fell short in providing the vaccines in adequate quantities or the vaccine cold-chain maintenance might have been compromised. If that were the case why was alarm not raised earlier? The loss of any child's life is an incalculable horror and yet over a month after the first deaths were reported the disease continues to claim children's lives." The commission said this was a damning verdict on the state immunization machinery. It demanded the government immediately start crash immunization programmes and subsequent booster to ensure every child was covered. Simultaneously, it said, community education should also be focused on to explain and promote the benefits and importance of measles immunization and other vaccinations for children. "The government is under an obligation to explain to the people why measles suddenly became deadly in Pakistan, why the disease claimed children's lives for weeks and what is being done to avert such a tragedy in the future".

Dawn - January 24, 2013

Economic Projects

3200 MW of Wind Energy through 45 Projects by 2020: Federal Minister for Water and Power

Federal Minister for Water and Power, Ch Ahmed Mukhtar said that 45 Wind Power Projects with a combined capacity of 3200 MW would commence feeding power into the national grid during the current fiscal year. The minister said that in the preliminary phase, 106 MW of electricity would be fed into the national grid by February, adding that another 150 MW of wind energy would also be fed into the grid by the end of 2013. Mukhtar said that another ten wind power projects worth 2 billion dollars would be added into the country's power pool by 2014. He lauded FFC for undertaking commercial operations for exploiting the wind potential of GharoKeti Bandar Wind Corridor, an area that possesses an annual power generation potential of 50,000MW. The minister said that by 2014, projects titled "Waste to Energy", "Small Hydro", and "Sugar Co-generation" would also be made operational. He said that he was pleased to learn that Fauji Fertilizer would add a 10 MW Solar PV to a 50 MW wind generating plant, mutating the plant into a Hybrid installment. The minister concluded that I have asked NEPRA to announce the Feed-in-Tariff for the solar plants early.

Pakistan Today - January 03, 2013

Foreign Aided Development Projects

Election Commission to Give 42m Euros in Aid to Pakistan: Election Commission of Pakistan, European Commission

Pakistan will receive 42 million euros in humanitarian aid from the European Commission this year. The aid announced in Brussels is part of 661m euros assistance the EC has allocated for 2013. For 2013, the Commission has identified several population groups in nine countries:

- Algeria
- Bangladesh
- Central African Republic
- Colombia

- India
- Myanmar
- Pakistan
- Sri Lanka
- Yemen

Dawn – January 11, 2013

South Korea to Build Physiotherapy Hospital in Peshawar: University of Peshawar, South Korean Hospital

A South Korean hospital will build a physiotherapy centre in Peshawar for rehabilitation of people affected in natural and manmade disasters, said Pohang SM Hospital director Dr Kim Jin Eui in a meeting with vice-chancellor of the University of Peshawar, Prof. Qibla Ayaz. The hospital will also donate sports therapy machine and laboratory equipment needed for experiments to the university's biotechnology, pharmacy and chemistry departments. Dr Kim said that South Korea would provide the equipment in compliance with the MoU signed recently between the two institutes. The sports therapy machine would take care of injuries of the university's athletes, which in turn would lead to their enhanced performance. The Pohang hospital would also provide free treatment to the university students and faculty members subject to its availability in the hospital and on the UoP recommendation. The hospital is planning to establish a physiotherapy centre with the consent of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government.

The News – January 15, 2013

New Partnership Project between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, United States Varsities Inaugurated: KPK, USA

The Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ameer Haider Khan Hoti and USA Consul General Robert Reed launched a mega project to enhance partnership between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and American universities. The three year agreements support faculty exchanges and joint research between Southern Methodist University and KP's Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University and between the university of Kentucky and the KP university consortium, consisting of Abdul Wali Khan university in Mardan, Kohat University of Science and Technology, university of Peshawar, University of Science and Technology Bannu and the Institute of Management Sciences in Peshawar. The United States is investing dollar 8.6 million over the next three years in eight university partnerships. Each partnership includes a faculty exchange and research component and focuses on a range of liberal arts subjects, including American Studies, Business Administration and Management Sciences, Mass Communications and Media Studies, Psychology, Social Anthropology and Women's and Gender Studies. These partnerships are part of a broad effort to connect Pakistani and American universities, which includes the centers for Advanced Studies on the critical areas of energy, water, and agriculture planned at leading universities in Pakistan. Each center supports graduate programmes, provides opportunities for joint Pakistan-US research and promotes the development of expertise in each focus area. The university partnership programme is one of the many US funded initiatives helping millions of Pakistani students unlock their full potential. The United States is also launching new degree programmes in education at 90 teacher colleges and universities and more than 10,600 low income students attend college in Pakistan with US funded scholarships. Another 1,000 Pakistani students attend US colleges and universities annually on US sponsored exchange programs.

The News – January 23, 2013

WFP Gives Medical Equipment worth Rs16.2m: WFP, Balochistan

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) handed over medical equipment worth Rs16.2 million to the health department in Balochistan. Dr Masood Qadir Noshervani, Director General Health Services received the equipment from Jean-Luc Siblot, the WFP representative in Pakistan. Siblot said, "During 2013, we are investing in the nutrition department to overcome food security situation and malnutrition problem." He said that WFP has also trained over 1,400 staff of the health department and NGO partners in managing supplementary feeding and in commodity management. The current donation of equipment includes blood pressure apparatus, delivery tables, oxygen cylinders, infant scales, and furniture for patients and staff.

The Express Tribune – January 24, 2013

CCI Approves 600MW Coal-Based Power Project: Asian Development Bank

The Council of Common Interests (CCI) approved a new 600MW power project at Jamshoro. The plant will use a mix of imported and Thar coal and will be set up with a \$900 million loan from the Asian Development Bank. The CCI decided to start the 600MW power plant with 80 per cent imported coal and 20 per cent Thar coal and gradually increase the content of Thar coal when it was able to enhance supplies. The ADB, which is providing \$900 million for increasing coal based-power generation, had expressed reservations on a government decision to utilize its loan for development of Thar coal and subsequent power generation. The bank observed that setting up the Jamshoro plant based on domestic coal was economically not viable as it had approved the financing of power plants to be run on imported coal. It was, therefore, decided to start the project with larger imported coal content and gradually increase supplies from Thar. Prime Minister Ashraf also directed the ministry of finance to immediately process the Sindh government's request to provide sovereign guarantees to a Chinese firm interested in mining Thar coal and setting up a power plant. The finance ministry told the meeting that the issue of sovereign guarantee would be taken up for approval at the next meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee of the cabinet.

Dawn – January 24, 2013

USAID to Help Build Hospital in Jacobabad: US, Sindh

The United States and Sindh governments signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to build a new hospital in Jacobabad which will provide high-quality healthcare to the residents of Northern Sindh and Balochistan. According to the memorandum, the United States Agency for International Development will provide \$ 10million for construction of the 133-bed Jacobabad Institute of Medical Sciences. Construction will be completed within 2 years. The USAID will provide medical equipment as well as a solar energy system and standby generators to secure a continuous energy supply for this state-of-the-art medical facility. The Sindh government will set up an independent hospital management board, comprising government officials, noted health practitioners, and civil society representatives to oversee the workings of the hospital.

The Express Tribune – January 25, 2013

Work on Gomal Zam's Waran Begins: WAPDA, USAID

The Water and Power Development Authority has initiated construction of the Waran Canal System as an integral component of Gomal Zam Dam Project, located in Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. The WAPDA chairman said USAID was providing \$12 million for the canal system in addition to \$80 million to help complete the main dam, powerhouse and irrigation system. Dilating upon the additional benefits of the Waran Canal System, he said crop sowing in the area would increase from 26 per cent to 87 per cent and harvesting intensity from 9 per cent to 80 per cent, besides boosting the livestock and making

drinking water available to the local populace. The WAPDA chairman informed that installation of electro-mechanical equipments in Gomal Zam Power House for generating 17.4MW was completed and power generating units would soon be put on mechanical run, leading to electricity generation. The Gomal Zam Dam is a multi-purpose project with the objectives to ensure availability of water for irrigated agriculture, control floods and provide low-cost hydel electricity. The dam and hydropower component is 99 per cent complete while irrigation and flood protection component is also nearing completion. The dam will store 1.14 million acre feet of water to irrigate 163,000 acres of land and generate 17.4MW to contribute 91 million units of electricity to the system.

Dawn - January 25, 2013

ENERGY CRISIS

Government's Role in Oil and Gas

OGRA Wishes Its Consumers Happy New Year

The federal government increased the natural gas tariff by 6.14 percent across the board.

According to OGRA's notification,

- The gas price for domestic consumers using 100 cubic meters per month has been increased by Rs 6.14 per MMBTU (unit) to Rs 106.14 per unit from existing rate of Rs 100
- The rate for first 300 cubic meters per month consumption has been increased by Rs 12.28 from Rs 200 to Rs 212.28 per unit
- The price of domestic consumers using more than 300 cubic meters per month has been increased by Rs 30.69 per unit to Rs 530.69 per MMBTU

The domestic rates along with consumption slabs that were earlier also applicable to government and semi-government offices, hospitals, armed forces messes and educational institutions have been abolished and would now be charged at a flat rate of Rs 530.69 per MMBTU.

Daily Times – January 01, 2013

OGRA Increases CNG Prices

The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) increased CNG prices by up to Rs12.80 per kilogramme in line with the new policy guidelines approved by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC). According to the notification issued by the regulatory body, the price of CNG in Region-1 has been hiked by Rs12.80 per kg from Rs61.64 to Rs74.44 and by Rs11.62 in Region-2 from Rs54.16 to Rs 65.78 per kg. Region-1 comprises Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P), Balochistan and the Potohar Region (Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Gujar Khan) and Region-2 comprises Sindh and Punjab (excluding the Potohar Region). The ECC approved the policy guidelines following recommendations of a sub-body headed by the law minister. ECC's sub-committee discusses the modalities of the new CNG pricing mechanism with stakeholders including the All Pakistan CNG Association (APCNGA).

The Express Tribune – January 02, 2013

45% of Generated Power Either Stolen or Goes To Waste: National Assembly Special Committee on Energy Crises

The National Assembly's Special Committee on Energy Crises was informed that around 45 percent of the generated power is either stolen or gone to waste due to technical, transmission and distribution losses or non-payment of bills in the country. MNA Abbasi, Ministry of Water and Power Additional Secretary Arshad Mirza admitted before the committee that it's a fact that some 40 percent to 45 percent of the generated power is lost and its bills payments are not received. He further informed that power sector, after allowance of power losses' limit by NEPRA, adjusted power subsidies to the tune of Rs 225 billion, which was approved in the budget, but apart from the subsidies the circular debt has accumulated to some Rs 254 billion. He explained to the committee that Rs 84 billion are the power losses, Rs 95 billion due to cash shortfall, and after adjusting pending fuel adjustment impact which can't be passed on to the consumers, the circular debt works out at a total of Rs 254 billion by end of June 2012. He

warned that if the government did not pay this amount the entire power sector would collapse and the economy would be further damaged.

Daily Times – January 08, 2013

OGRA Decides To Move CNG Stations Out Of Cities: OGRA

The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has decided to shift all Compressed Natural Gas stations from densely populated areas of the country.

Pakistan Today – January 12, 2013

Punjab CNG Stations Closed Till Jan31: Sui Northern Gas Company

The Sui Northern Gas Company (SNGC) has announced that CNG stations will remain closed in Punjab till January 31. According to SNGC officials, the shortage had exceeded 1,250 million MMCFD and the measure was taken to ensure uninterrupted gas supply to residential consumers. CNG stations which open during this time will have their connections disconnected for one month.

Pakistan Today – January 15, 2013

CNG Body Rejects LPG-Air Mixing: APCNG, ECC

The All Pakistan CNG Association rejected a decision by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) to mix air in the liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and pump it in the gas pipelines to reduce gas shortages. The move is against national interests which is a conspiracy to benefit a few influential's which would deprive the masses of Rs60 billion annually, said CNG body's supreme council chairman Ghiyas Abdullah Paracha. He said the implementation of the controversial decision would increase the cost of doing business and leave their products uncompetitive in the international markets which would put additional strain on forex reserves and amplify trade deficit. The decision would result in the closure of thousands of businesses, unemployment and the law and order issues. Mr Paracha said the decision despite the resistance of Ogra would increase cost of gas by 10 per cent which would jack up price of roti as well as cost of living driving millions more below the poverty line. He said the LPG-air mix decision was either the result of lack of understanding of the decision makers or they were simply interested in promoting the interests of few which merited a probe. Mr Paracha said the direct use of liquefied petroleum gas would be more economical while mixing it in the pipeline would increase its cost more than the furnace oil. No country except for Argentina was using air-mix plants as it is the costliest solution of gas shortages in the presence of the cost-effective ways out.

Dawn – January 18, 2013

Petrol Price Hiked By Rs 1.65 per Liter

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources has granted approval to a summary for the revision of prices of petroleum products. According to the notification issued. The price of petrol has been raised by Rs 1.65 and that of diesel decreased by 00.92 paisa's per liter. Besides price of kerosene oil has been jacked up by Rs 1.09 per liter, while that of light-diesel has been decreased by 0.01 paisa's.

Pakistan Today – January 22, 2013

Power Riots

Students Face Transport Problem Due To Non-Availability of CNG

Students of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are finding it difficult to reach their educational institutions on time due to the non-availability of CNG and the shortage of petrol. The non-availability of CNG for over a week and the long queues of vehicles at petrol pumps had caused a shortage of public transport in the twin cities. Moreover, the available private transport vehicles were charging way more than the usual.

Pakistan Today – January 04, 2013

Up To 12 Hours of Power Cuts Annoy Citizens: Punjab

Up to 12 hours of power load shedding in several areas of the city has made life of people miserable while gas cuts have added to their woes in the cold weather. Electricity consumers have criticized the Lahore Electricity Supply Company (LESCO) for carrying out “unscheduled, massive load shedding” in all parts of the city. Citizens also condemned the Energy Management Cell (EMC) and Ministry of Water and Power for discriminating against Punjab and reducing electricity supply quota of LESCO to only 1,300 megawatts despite it being the largest revenue generating power Distribution Company of the country.

Daily Times – January 06, 2013

Citizens Protest Unavailability, Low Pressure of Gas: Punjab

Unavailability or low pressure of gas is causing problems for the domestic consumers of Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited (SNGPL) during the ongoing spell of cold weather in the city. Residents of Tariq Building on Sanda Road held a protest demonstration and criticized the SNGPL authorities for paying no heed to their problem despite their making repeated complaints and requests to the gas company. Residents of Allama Iqbal Town, Gulberg, Kot Lakhpat, New Jail Road, Ghazi Road, Chungi Ammar Sadhu, Garhi Shahu, Nishtar Colony, Awan Town, Madina Colony, Walton, and Rajgarh, Chauburgi, have also expressed their grievances regarding unavailability or limited supply of gas in their areas. They said that despite claims of “zero load shedding of natural gas for domestic consumers” by SNGPL authorities, gas load shedding and its low pressure irk them. Although the supply of gas to industries and the CNG sector has been suspended, the SNGPL is still unable to meet requirements of its domestic consumers.

Daily Times – January 07, 2013

Gas Suspensions Woes Lead CNG to Streets: Punjab, KPK

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) station owners protested in Rawalpindi and Swat over their inability to run their businesses due to limited supply of natural gas.

In Rawalpindi, the owners of CNG stations from across northern Punjab held a protest demonstration on against the closure of gas supply and blocked the Islamabad Highway for over one hour. Hundreds of CNG station owners from the Potohar region assembled at Faizabad Chowk and marched on the highway against the continuing closure of gas supply to CNG stations, which they said has caused them losses of billions of rupees. Protesters carrying banners and placards inscribed with slogans against the government held the PM’s adviser on Petroleum and Natural Resources Dr Asim Hussain responsible for their plight. The protest was organized by the CNG stations owners on the call of the All Pakistan Compressed Natural Gas Association (APCNGA). The Swat CNG Association unanimously demanded the removal of Dr Asim Hussain over low gas pressure in the area. The protest started from the Bypass Road and

ended in front of the Swat Press Club. They held placards and were shouting slogans against the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) and the government. The CNG Association also demanded the government to remove Dr Asim Hussain from his position. APCNGA President Ghiyas Paracha demanded that the government resolve the crisis, claiming that it has left over 400,000 people without work.

The Express Tribune – January 09, 2013

Trade Warns Of Power Riots

The government will not be able to control the situation likely to be triggered in Punjab by demonstrations and strikes called by angry industrial workers against their retrenchments as a result of continuous gas suspension and power outages. The consensus was reached at a meeting of office-bearers of trade and industrial associations with officials of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI). The LCCI president warned the government of more industrial closures in Punjab if it failed to stop power outages and restore supply of gas to the industry. Industrial production has already gone down by 50 per cent in Punjab only because of gas and electricity suspension and the remaining is paying a very high cost for keeping the industry's wheel on the run. The situation has reached the point that international donors have started showing their reluctance in rescheduling Pakistan loans. The industry needed continuous supply of electricity to complete the export orders well within the given timeframe but only because of the shortage of electricity the exports have not been up to the mark. Pakistan had already lost a number of international markets while the condition of both local and foreign investment had also been precarious. Cheaper and uninterrupted power supply is only way to achieve economic targets set for the year 2013 but neither the government is sharing its future plans nor paying any heed to the difficulties being faced by the trade and industry in Punjab. It is astonishing that on one hand the government circles are talking of economic stability in 2013 while on the other they are not sharing any kind of roadmap to achieve this goal, said the LCCI president. The law and order situation is bound to aggravate in coming days as repeated power outages in industrial estates is jacking up the graph of unemployment and is particularly hitting hard the daily wagers. Most of industrial units have reduced their working to single six-hour shift from the previous three shifts system. This has led to increased level of raw-material wastage leaving production process non-profitable. Now the leading industrial units are experiencing losses despite being managed professionally. The crisis in industrial sector is causing flight of capital and relocation of industrial units to the countries like Bangladesh and Malaysia while urging the president and the prime minister to take note of the grave situation and act promptly to save industrial and social fabric of the country.

Dawn – January 20, 2013

REGIONAL WATCH**Pakistan & United States****President Obama Recognizes Pakistan's Key Role in Afghan Peace**

Recognizing the importance of Pakistan's support for peace and stability in Afghanistan, US President Barack Obama saw greater awareness in Islamabad on addressing extremism in the region. Obama said curbing extremism in Pakistan-Afghanistan border region would require political and diplomatic cooperation between the two neighbors and not just military action. President Obama said the US and Afghanistan recommitted themselves to political reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Taliban. "Today we agreed that this process should be advanced by opening of a Taliban office to facilitate talks," he said after the talks, which also covered the scope of the US-Afghanistan cooperation beyond 2014, when the US-led Afghan war officially ends. Obama said if some US forces stayed in Afghanistan beyond 2014, their mission and role would be to train the Afghan forces and carry out targeted actions against al Qaeda and its affiliates. The US president specifically noted that Afghan reconciliation would require constructive support from Islamabad and welcomed the recent steps towards that end. "Reconciliation also requires constructive support from across the region including Pakistan. We welcome recent steps that have been taken in that regard. We look for more tangible steps because a stable and secure Afghanistan is in the interests of not only of the Afghan people and the United States but entire region." The United States and Pakistan all have an interest in reducing the threat of extremism in some of the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan". "That is going to require more than simply taking military actions. That is really going to require political and diplomatic work between Afghanistan and Pakistan." Obama added the US obviously would have an interest in facilitating cooperation between the two sovereign neighboring countries.

Pakistan Today – January 12, 2013

CIA To Go Ahead With Drone Strikes in Pakistan

The administration of President Barack Obama is completing a counterterrorism manual that will establish clear rules for targeted-killing operations, but it contains a major exemption for the CIA's campaign of drone strikes in Pakistan. The exemption will allow the CIA to continue striking Al-Qaeda and Taliban targets in Pakistan for a year or more before the agency is forced to comply with more stringent rules spelled out in the document. According to the London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism, between 2,627 and 3,457 people have been reportedly killed in US drone strikes in Pakistan since 2004, between 475 and nearly 900 being civilians. The covert strikes are publicly criticized by the Pakistani government as a violation of sovereignty but American officials believe they are a vital weapon in the war against terrorists. Few of the victims are publicly identified. The manual is expected to be submitted to Obama for final approval within weeks.

The News – January 21, 2013

Pakistan to Be Given Equipment to Check Terrorism: US Ambassador

US Ambassador to Pakistan Richard Olson said the US would extend all the necessary assistance and equipment to help Pakistani law enforcement agencies to check incidents of suicide attacks and bomb blasts. He said the United States highly values its relations with Pakistan, adding that they acknowledge the sacrifices made by Pakistan during war on terrorism.

The News – January 21, 2013

Pakistan Seeks Us Explanation on Drone Manual

Pakistan has asked the United States to halt its highly controversial drone campaign following reports that US President Barack Obama's administration was planning to give the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) a "free hand" to continue its remotely-controlled war in tribal regions. Foreign Minister Khar voiced her concern over reports that the CIA would step up its drone campaign in the tribal areas along the border with Afghanistan. She also urged Ambassador Olson to explain his government's position on the new "playbook" for targeted killings, which would not apply to Pakistan. According to the statistics of the London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism, between 2,627 and 3,457 people – including between 475 and 900 civilians – have been reportedly killed by US drones in Pakistan since 2004.

The Express Tribune – January 23, 2013

US, Pakistan Are Moving Out Of Tense Phase

The United States and Pakistan are moving away from the tense phase that marred their relations last year, according to a senior US commander in Afghanistan. Deputy Commander of the US Forces in Afghanistan Lt Gen. James Terry said that after 2014 the United States would focus on providing 'right resources' to the Afghans so that they could hold territory from insurgents. From a military perspective, we are moving away from the tense phase with Pakistan," said Gen Terry. The general, however, conceded that a trilateral mechanism, which aims to improve cooperation among the Pakistani, Afghan and US militaries will 'take time to get in shape'. But the US commander also noted that Pakistan and Afghanistan were now talking directly to each other on border issues, which was a good sign. He noted that Afghanistan and Pakistan were also talking to each other on political levels, which had a 'potential' to improving their ties. He said the cooperation centers the United States helped establish at Pak-Afghan border were also a mechanism to address these issues. The process of flag meeting of Nato, Afghan and Pakistani military officials had also started. Gen Terry said 20, 000 insurgents were still operating along the Pak-Afghan border.

Dawn – January 24, 2013

Stop Using Drones on US, President Tells US

President Asif Ali Zardari has said drone attacks were not only violation of Pakistan's sovereignty but were counter-productive and their legality was questionable. Zardari conveyed to the US ambassador concerns over drone attacks and said such attacks had complicated the anti-terror drive. He said the attacks fuelled anti-US sentiments and were killing civilians. The president was of the view that new US guidelines over drone attacks in Pakistan needed to be reviewed. Stressing on enhanced intelligence sharing to combat militancy in the Tribal Areas, he said the country's forces were well equipped and competent enough to handle terrorists, adding that the forces had already broken the back of terrorists.

Pakistan Today – January 25, 2013

Pakistan & India

Pakistan Lodges Protest against Indian Attack

Pakistan lodged a formal protest with India over what it said was an unprovoked attack on a border post that killed one Pakistani soldier and wounded another. Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged fire along the disputed border in Hajipir sector of divided Kashmir, with each side blaming the other for the flare-up. Pakistan said Indian troops crossed the Line of Control and stormed the Sawan Patra military post, an accusation denied by the Indian army. Pakistan's foreign ministry said it had handed the Indian deputy high commissioner a "protest note on the

unprovoked Indian attack". "The Indian government was strongly urged to take appropriate measures to avoid recurrence of such incidents in future," it said in a statement. Indian army spokesman Col Jagadish Dahiya had claimed that Indian troops had not crossed the LoC. "However, there was a ceasefire violation by Pakistan. Our troops retaliated by firing," he alleged. An Indian army spokesman in Indian-held Srinagar, Col Brijesh Pandey, accused the Pakistani military of firing mortar bombs into a village in the Uri district, which faces Haji Pir. India suspended peace talks with Pakistan after gunmen killed 166 people in Mumbai in November 2008 – attacks blamed by New Delhi and Washington on Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Pakistan Today – January 08, 2013

Indian HC Gets Dressing Down Over LoC Killings

Pakistan has officially contacted the United Nations Military Observers Group for India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) over the continued ceasefire violations by India along the Line of Control (LoC), as the Foreign Office called in Indian High Commissioner Sharat Sabharwal to lodge a formal protest over repeated, unacceptable and unprovoked attacks by India. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Secretary Jalil Abbas Jilani said Islamabad had taken onboard the United Nations Military Observers Group for India and Pakistan over the continued ceasefire violations by India on the LoC. The secretary said the ministry also gave a detailed briefing to ambassadors of 18 countries at the Foreign Office, giving them detailed account of Indian aggression on the LoC. Pakistan reiterates its commitment to a peaceful resolution of all outstanding issues through a sustained and result-oriented dialogue with India. Jilani said he also reminded the government of India of its commitment to fully implement the ceasefire along the LoC and strongly urged it to abide and respect the ceasefire, which he said was an important confidence-building measure that had worked well since 2003.

Pakistan Today – January 12, 2013

What Peace Lovers Propose, War Lobby Sabotage: Analysis by Babar Ayaz

For three days during the eighth South Asia Free Media Association (SAFMA) conference held in Amritsar and Lahore early this month, over 250 journalists heard the leading policy makers from India and Pakistan ensuring their commitment to peace between the two countries. In Amritsar, we heard Indian External Minister Salman Khurshid thanking the journalists for their contribution to break the ice between the two countries and said that we would soon drink the cold water of peace. Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal, who is a graduate from the FC College of Lahore, said that both the Indian and Pakistani Punjab could not develop and prosper without opening up free trade and free flow of people. In Pakistan, the opposition leader Mian Nawaz Sharif reiterated his consistent position that relations with India have to be normalized. He has been supporting peace initiatives ever since he invited Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1999 at the cost of annoying the military establishment. Prime Minister of Pakistan Raja Pervez Ashraf hosted a dinner for the SAFMA delegates and stressed that peace between India and Pakistan was the key to take SAARC's objectives forward. Many leading journalists and intellectuals of the region expressed the same feelings. Although the conference was regional in nature, the Pakistan-India relations theme dominated SAFMA's Amritsar-Lahore conferences. All this has been already reported, but I have recapped it to emphasize that there is a strong lobby of 'Journalists for Peace'. In addition, there is a surging urge between the leaders and peoples of both countries to fast-forward the peace process. Indeed, there are also chest-thumping ultra-nationalists on both sides of the border. They may not be many, but they have violent tools to derail the peace process. Therefore, the recent clashes at the LOC were not unexpected.

Not long ago the Pakistani military establishment was the biggest impediment in the process of peace moving ahead with India. Around them are their co-evolutionists who have been benefited by the war economy. But both on the basis of my analysis and information I have from people who have access to the establishment, it is safe to say that the Pakistani military establishment is now keen to defuse tensions with India. The recent statement from the army quarters that there is a paradigm shift, as the biggest existentialist threat to Pakistan is from within, i.e. from the growing terrorism in the country, says it all. Sensible analysts in Pakistan have been saying that for the last many years. Therefore, the promoters of peace were happy that finally reality had dawned on our establishment. I had indicated to the shifting national security paradigm in 2011 in my article 'Money Matters' for a national daily, but for my friends my analysis was too good to be believed. Many Pakistani and Indian journalists at the conference were found asking if this good news was indeed true. While all indicators are that the statement should be believed, it has to be understood that jihadi organizations and their handlers in the establishment cannot be easily convinced to accept this paradigm shift regarding India. They are resisting all such moves and have now started cooperation with each other to attack the armed forces personnel and installments. The Indian government and media need to understand this phenomenon. Listening to some of the Indian armed forces' retired officials on TV last week after the gory killings of the soldiers of both India and Pakistan, it was clear once again that India has also many 'Hameed Guls' of their own. Although it is a well-known fact that Indian political leaders have more say on matters of national security, it is also true that the military and its co-evolutionists are trying to push the weak Congress-led coalition government to take a hawkish stand on the issue of alleged ceasefire violations and the beheading of an Indian soldier.

However, the good news is that both the Indian and Pakistani governments are not listening to the hawkish politicians, retired army generals and journalists, and they are responsibly showing restraint. But the stoppage of trade and the bus service across the LOC is a bad move, as it would hurt the progress made so far on making life easier for the Kashmiris we ostensibly love. Its continuation would manifest Pakistan's earnest desire for peace. A discussion at the conference was particularly devoted to the journalists' role in times of conflict. My friend, Kumar Ketkar, who is the editor of a Marathi newspaper, defined it rightly. He said, "We should be humanists first, journalists second and citizens third." Unfortunately, not many journalists around the world subscribe to this golden rule and the order in which it has been laid down by some objective journalists. The real test of objectivity and commitment to humanism comes in the moment of conflict and strife. Otherwise, it is all very easy and enlightened to talk about it over a cup of coffee or an evening drink. The stand taken by some journalists that they report facts as they are has to be taken with a spoonful of salt. It is not that simple. The journalists in this day and age are opinion-makers and many a time their personal biases are reflected in their reports, articles and comments on TV channels. Take the recent ceasefire violation incidents. Most of the TV programmes telecast on both sides of the border were competing with each other to be more hawkish - all in the name of national interest. In this bid, they inadvertently or consciously forget that pushing the conflict further is not in the interest of over one billion human beings living in the two countries.

Worst, it would lead to more killings of soldiers on both sides; those soldiers are human beings first with families shattered with grief. On an NDTV primetime programme, where I was one of the guests, the anchor Ravish Kumar quoted a leading Pakistani anchor's sweeping statement that most Pakistanis hate India. Now this is nonsense. No country has monolithic views on such issues. By making such irresponsible statements, journalists are actually building a negative opinion. Both Indian and Pakistani societies are multi-ethnic and multi-class. The opinion of a section of ultra-nationalists cannot be dubbed as the opinion of the people. Take the case of Pakistan: the Baloch, Sindhi and Urdu speaking Sindhis, Seraiki, businessmen of Punjab and progressive politicians of Pakhtunkhwa are not anti-Indian. The political parties they elected were clear on the need to build peace bridges with India. Elections are the biggest quantitative

survey. Similarly, most people I talked to in Delhi were upset about the LoC incident but still wanted peace. People in front of a camera are usually different. One, they want to show off their nationalism to the public; two, it is also important how the question by a reporter is framed and posed, and three, which interviews are selected by the TRP-conscious producers. Journalists' exuberance for peace after the conference was short-lived, as the ceasefire on the LoC was broken and three human beings were killed. But the resolve that both the countries should not let the hawkish lobbies hold peace hostage was evident in my interaction with many Indian journalists recently.

Daily Times – January 22, 2013

MFN Status Likely To Be Granted To India Next Month

Pakistan is likely to grant Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to India next month, Minister of State for Commerce Abbas Khan Afridi told. Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) Senator Najma Hameed, Afridi informed the lawmakers that the government is committed to implementing its decision by next month.

The Express Tribune – January 25, 2013

Pakistan & Afghanistan

Pakistan Releases Four More Afghan Taliban

Pakistan released another four Afghan Taliban prisoners, including former justice Minister Mullah Nooruddin Turabi and ex-governor of Helmand province, Abdul Bari as part of a process designed to kick start peace efforts. At follow-up talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan, Islamabad agreed to release more Taliban prisoners to facilitate efforts to end the 11-year conflict between the Taliban and the Afghan government. Afghan officials have said senior Taliban leaders held in Pakistan could help bring militants to the negotiating table, if released from jail, to end the war as US-led Nato troops prepare to withdraw in 2014. Support from Pakistan, which backed the 1996-2001 Taliban regimes in Kabul, is seen as crucial to peace in Afghanistan after Nato's departure. The Taliban, who have been fighting an insurgency since the 2001 US-led invasion, refuse to negotiate directly with Kabul, calling the government of President Hamid Karzai a US puppet. Preliminary contacts between the US and the Taliban in Doha were broken off in March when the militants failed to secure the release of five of their comrades held at the Guantanamo Bay prison on the US base in Cuba.

Daily Times – January 01, 2013

Pakistan Helped Break the Impasses

In yet another step suggesting Pakistan's eagerness to facilitate a peace deal in Afghanistan, Islamabad last month facilitated direct talks between the Taliban and Afghan government officials. When senior Taliban figures – including Shahabuddin Dilawar and Naeem Wardak – met with other Afghan factions representing both the government and opposition in Paris last month, it was Pakistan that played a key role in breaking the impasse between the two sides. Though organized by a French think-tank with the backing of the French government, the first-ever direct talks became possible after Pakistan agreed to set a number of Taliban cadres free. During the visit of top Afghan peace negotiator Salauddin Rabbani to Islamabad in November last year, he informed Pakistani officials that the Taliban have shown their willingness to enter into negotiations provided certain preconditions were met. One of their pre-conditions was that Pakistan released certain Taliban members, who might play a crucial role in peacemaking. At Rabbani's request, the Pakistani government agreed to release 13 mid-ranking Taliban cadres as a confidence building measure to persuade the insurgents to come to the negotiating table. This decision was welcomed by Taliban and that eventually led to their participation in the Paris

talks. Pakistan is considered crucial for any peace deal in Afghanistan. The country's powerful security establishment, which always formulates policies on such sensitive issues, is said to be backing the reconciliation process and seeking to finalize a deal before the US-led foreign forces leave the region by the end of 2014.

The Express Tribune – January 07, 2013

Pakistan Set To Release All Taliban Detainees

Pakistan plans to release all Afghan Taliban prisoners still in its detention, including the group's former second-in-command, in the clearest signal yet that it backs reconciliation efforts. Regional power Pakistan is seen as critical to the success of US and Afghan efforts to bring stability to Afghanistan, a task gaining urgency as the end of the US combat mission in 2014 draws closer. Afghanistan has been pressing Pakistan to free Taliban members who could help promote its tentative reconciliation efforts.

Daily Times – January 19, 2013

Pakistan & Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Pak, Saudi Naval Forces Start Joint Exercises

During Joint Exercise NASEEM AL BAHR between Pakistan Navy and Royal Saudi Naval Forces, ongoing in North Arabian Sea, an impressive demonstration of Live Weapons Firing by ships and aircraft was conducted. The overall exercise included a wide range of operational maneuvers encompassing major facets of maritime warfare particularly operations related to counter terrorism, convoy protection, anti-air, anti-submarine, mine countermeasure and intelligence based operations conducted in multi-threat environment. The current exercise which is 10th in the series, involved participation of four Royal Saudi Navy ships, aircrafts, Special Operating Forces and Marines besides participation of Pakistan Navy Destroyers/Frigates, Missile boats, Fleet Tanker, Submarine, Mine Hunters and Naval Aviation units. Special Operating Force and Marines in addition to Fighter Aircraft from Pakistan Air force also participated in the exercise.

Daily Times – January 13, 2013

Regional Governance

SAFMA's Peace Caravan Arrives in Lahore from Amritsar: SAFMA

The South Asian Free Media Association's (SAFMA) "peace caravan" comprising participants from all the South Asian countries arrived from Amritsar with a loud message of "opening minds and borders". Over 200 delegates from Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives entered Lahore through the Wagah border to participate in the remaining sessions of SAFMA's 8th regional conference, themed "A South Asian Vision and Union". "We want peace and harmony in the region. Please remove barriers in the way of people-to-people contact and promoting trade. Open minds and relax borders," the delegates appealed unanimously to the governments of SAARC countries.

Daily Times – January 08, 2013

Elections Hold Key to Stability in South Asia: Analysis by Ahmed Rashid

Two upcoming elections will be critical for the future stability of south and central Asia and for the continuing success in the struggle to defeat Islamic extremism. The first are the parliamentary elections in Pakistan scheduled for next spring to elect a new government. In the

next few weeks President Asif Ali Zardari and the opposition have to agree to a neutral caretaker government that would be in place for three months and would be responsible for holding the elections. However, the country faces widespread violence and mounting casualties every day – an Islamic terrorist movement to overthrow the state in the northwest by the Pakistani Taliban, a separatist insurgency in Baluchistan province and mounting ethnic and mafia violence in the commercial capital Karachi. Some fear that as the violence escalates and the state loses control of large areas, the elections may not be held or held piecemeal. These elections are also vital for the economy which faces a balance of payments crisis, high inflation, unemployment and massive corruption scandals but Mr. Zardari has proved unwilling to tackle major economic reforms as demanded by the International Monetary Fund and the international community. Such reforms would now be left to the next government. The elections – which have to be held at the latest by May 2013 – are unlikely to produce a clear winner and the next government is also likely to be a coalition of political parties. The significance of the elections is that it will be the first time in the country's history that one elected government which has seen out a full term will transfer power to another elected government. At the same time, despite the series of crises in the country there is no threat of a military intervention that could disrupt the democratic process.

Afghanistan will face a presidential election in early 2014 but much of the spade work for that election has to be carried out this year, especially as 2014 is also the year when the US and Nato will complete their troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. It will be up to President Hamid Karzai in early 2013 to finalize the composition of the election commission and the rules for the elections. He is also likely to announce a candidate or raft of several candidates whom he would support to become the country's next president. Mr. Karzai is illegible to stand again having served two presidential terms already. It will be important that he stabilizes the fraught political situation in the country by next spring and take steps that ensure a free and fair election – a key demand from 17 opposition parties and groups who have all demanded that he soon announce an electoral timetable and does not support his favored candidate with government machinery or money. It is vital for the west which is presently preoccupied with the military transition taking place by 2014, to focus more effectively on the political transition that will also take place that year and for which preparations must start as soon as possible. At the same time there has been a renewed boost to the possibility of peace talks between the Americans, the Afghan government and the Taliban with the recent change in Pakistan's policy towards the Taliban, which it is now encouraging to seek a political settlement with Kabul. This makes the preparations for the elections in 2013 that could include long and complicated talks with the Taliban and the holding of them in 2014 even more important. Afghanistan needs a safe and secure political transition from Mr. Karzai to the next man and from dependency on the west to greater self-reliance.

Daily Times – January 08, 2013

South Asia Peace, Prosperity Linked To Resolution of Political Disputes: Former Prime Minister Pakistan Nawaz Sharif

Former prime minister and PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif has said that the goals of peace and prosperity cannot be achieved in South Asia unless political differences among the member states are resolved. Nawaz said that political differences and deteriorating security situation had always come in the way of increasing cooperation among the SAARC states. "The fate of millions of people in South Asia is inter-connected. There can be no peace in one country without peace in the other," he said. The PML-N chief said that a step forward towards peace was inevitable for the people of Pakistan and India, adding that economic development could not be achieved until political ambience was not conducive. Informal trade between Pakistan and India will get a boost if the neighboring country is declared the Most Favored Nation (MFN), he said. Nawaz vowed to bring back the relations between the two countries to normalcy if he

became the prime minister of Pakistan again. He said that Pakistan and India would have to make effort for the resolution of bilateral disputes to end poverty and economic miseries in the region. He said that developing good relations with India was the motto of his party. He called upon all the South Asian countries to increase cooperation in the energy sector, which is vital to economic development in the region.

Daily Times – January 09, 2013
