



PAKISTAN
GOVERNANCE
FORUM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

GOVERNANCE WATCH	4
Government Working	4
FIA to Be Given More Powers against Corrupt Officers: Nisar	4
Sindh CM Can Refuse To Accept Federal Government Postings	4
Justice on the Wheels in KP	5
National Assembly & Senate	5
NA, Senate Sessions Summoned	5
NA, Senate Session for Presidential Poll	6
Judiciary	6
Abbottabad Commission Report: Laws Meant To Oversee NGOs Must Be Reviewed	6
Raja Violated Oath by Doling Out Funds to Favorites, SC Told	7
BALUCHISTAN WATCH	9
Governance Watch	9
BNP-M to Hold Protests	9
Call for New Province in Balochistan	9
BNP Announces Strike Tomorrow	9
Protesting BNP-M Activists Block Highways	10
Protest against Balochistan Violence	10
3 Security Men among 7 Killed In Balochistan	10
Bugti Murder: BHC Reserves Verdict on Musharraf's Bail Plea	11
ELECTION WATCH	12
Political Stakeholders & Elections	12
Three Ms Least Corrupt In Pakistan: Transparency	12
Final Report: EU Observers Satisfied With May 11 Elections	13
SHC Allows ECP More Time for Sealing, Presenting Delimitation Record	13
Political Parties	14
Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML - N)	14
PML-N, PPP Making Deals, Says PTI Leader	14
PML-N Government Favors Talks With Taliban	14
Opposition Leader, PM to Meet on NAB Chief	16
Pakistan Tehreek - e - Insaf (PTI)	16
Fauzia Kasuri Rejoins PTI	16
PTI Demands Removal of Shahbaz as Punjab CM	17
PTI's Ayla Malik Disqualified	17
Pakistan People's Party (PPP)	17
PPP Calls for Resignation of Chief Election Commissioner	17
All Pakistan Muslim League - APML	18
Musharraf To Be Shifted To Jail If Not Produced On 30th	18

Other Political Parties	19
TTP Sacks Spokesman in Sign of Growing Divisions	19
PML-F Complains CEC about Violations in By-Elections	19
By-Poll Elections 2013	20
KP Coalition Partners Fail to Name Joint Candidates for By-Polls	20
ANP, JUI -F Agree On Seat Adjustments for KP By-Polls	20
JUI-F, ANP to Field Joint Candidate for NA-262 By-Polls	21
By-Polls: PPP Withdraws From NA-1	21
Presidential Elections	21
ECP Moved For Postponement of Presidential Polls	21
PML-N Starts Consultations on Presidential Candidates	22
Politicking Takes Pace As ECP Refuses To Reschedule Presidential Poll	22
'ECP Must Implement Legal Requirements in Presidential Poll'	23
Article 63 Will Be Implemented In Presidential Election, ECP Tells LHC	24
PPP Lobbies Parties for Presidential Election Boycott	24
ECP Accepts 3 Nomination Papers	25
MQM Announces Support for PML-N's Candidate	26
'PTI to Contest Election despite Reservations'	26
ECP Issues Final List of Presidential Candidates	27
PPP, PTI Castigate ECP, SC Over Presidential Poll	27
HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH	28
Human Rights Related Issues	28
World Population Day - Pakistan Faces Complicated Issues	28
HRCP Report: 45% Increase In Violence Related Deaths	29
Enforced Disappearances: UN Wants Pakistan to Take Action	30
GENDER WATCH	32
Violence against Women	32
SC Directs Government to Act against Illegal Jirgas	32
Female Jirga Set Up In Swat to Get Justice for Women	32
Women Empowerment	33
AIOU, Iranian Varsities to Launch Programmes for Women Education	33
Civil Society Urges Female Participation in Decision-Making	33
Gender Equality, Still a Farfetched Dream for Women	34
SECTARIAN CRISES & CONFLICT WATCH	36
Conflict & Sectarian Crisis Incidents	36
Security Briefs for the Month of July	36
Analyses, Reports & News	39
Blasphemy' girl moves to Canada	39
Lasting Terror from TTP Makes Government Rethink Dialogue Plan	40
Musharraf Not Produced In Court	40
Former Law Minister Arrested	40
Pakistan to Discuss Drone Strikes With Kerry This Month	41
New TTP Group Emerges To Avenge Drone Attacks	41
Why Can Pakistan Not Stop Drone Attacks? An Analysis by Farman Kakar	42
Taliban Storm DI Khan Prison	43
ECONOMIC WATCH	45
Facts & Figures	45
IMF Loan to Settle Only Past Debts: Pervaiz Rashid	45

Pakistan Receives \$13.92 Billion Workers' Remittances in FY13	46
DEVELOPMENT WATCH	47
Health Projects	47
Polio Drive in Bajaur	47
Measles: 175 New Victims in a Day.....	47
Health Reports/ Controls	47
15 Million People Infected With Hepatitis in Pakistan	47
WHO Urges Action against Hepatitis Viruses	48
Development Projects.....	49
'One UN' Programme Launched In Sindh.....	49
International Funding Institutions (IFIs)	49
USAID Project to Rebuild Flood-Hit Schools.....	49
USAID Assists Discos in Improving Working Conditions for Women	50
USAID, KWSB Improving Water Supply for Karachiites	50
ENERGY CRISIS	52
Government's Role in Oil and Gas & Energy Crisis	52
Nawaz Hopes To End Power Crisis In His Tenure	52
Power Cuts Increased Despite Payment to IPPs: Khosa	52
Government Plans to End Load Shedding In 3 Years: PM	53
Power Crisis & Electricity Loadshedding Problems	54
Energy Crisis an 'Additional Issue' or Basic One? An Analysis	54
REGIONAL WATCH.....	55
Pakistan & United States	55
US Want Pakistan to Have Good Ties with India, Afghanistan	55
Ties with Pakistan Important: US.....	55
US Consent To Civil Nuclear Energy Talks?	56
US Expert Urges Drone Deal That Addresses Pak Sovereignty Concerns	56
Al Qaeda Can't Be Defeated Without Pak Help: US General.....	58
US Drone Surveillance Expanding To Hot Spots beyond Declared Combat Zones	58
Pakistan-US Strategy Dialogue on Kerry's Visit	59
Pakistan & India	60
India Wants To Engage Pakistan, Improve Bilateral Relations.....	60
Backdoor Diplomacy with India Revived: PM	60
Pakistan & Afghanistan	61
Pakistan Backs Afghan-Led Peace Process.....	61
Pakistan & Russia	62
Need Stressed To Enhance Pak-Russia Ties	62
Pakistan & China.....	62
Nawaz Warmly Received In Beijing	62
MoUs Signed With China	62

GOVERNANCE WATCH**Government Working****FIA to Be Given More Powers against Corrupt Officers: Nisar**

The minister chaired separate meetings to review the performance and functioning of the FIA and NADRA. In one of the meetings, Nisar issued directives to the FIA for establishing anti-money laundering units in all parts of the country to check money laundering and hundi. He said the government wanted to revamp the FIA by removing all controversial officials and bringing in those with integrity and clean track record. He said an effective system of reward and punishment would be put in place to boost the morale of law enforcement personnel. The FIA informed the minister that the agency had 52 police stations across the country but due to shortage of staff only 36 of the stations were functional. The minister said that a procedure should be adopted to ensure merit-based selection and induction procedure to ensure better functioning of the FIA. A committee would soon be constituted for this purpose. He said that in the matters of transfers and postings within the Ministry of Interior and its attached departments, no political interference would be tolerated. Regarding the hiring of special public prosecutors, the minister observed that their services should be hired in a completely transparent manner and payments made to them should commensurate with their qualification.

The FIA DG briefed the minister on the performance of the agency and informed him that the authority had five zones within the country – four in provinces and one in the federal capital. He said that FIA had 52 police stations all over the country, but due to shortage of staff, only 36 were functioning. The minister stressed the need for making FIA a body in which people had trust and confidence, and said that all complainants should be treated with respect by FIA officials. Separately, NADRA Chairman Tariq Malik briefed the minister on the working of his organisation. He informed the minister that NADRA had completed biometric registration of 96 percent of adult men and 86 percent of women in Pakistan. The minister asked the chairman to take steps to prepare a system of electronic voting by the next general election. The NADRA chairman informed the minister that the authority was also helping various other departments, like Zakat and Baitul Maal. He said that work on geographical information system had recently been started in Islamabad, and data was being collected at a rapid pace. He said that on the directives of the minister, work had also been started on introducing e-tag system at the five selected entry and exit points of Islamabad. The minister directed the official to speed up the installation of the system. He was informed that NADRA had started the registration of domestic servants in Islamabad, and so far 5,000 people had been registered during a weeklong door-to-door campaign.

[Daily Times - 7th July, 2013]

Sindh CM Can Refuse To Accept Federal Government Postings

Senior leader of the PPP, Raza Rabbani has said indirectly that the PPP's provincial government can refuse to accept postings of high officials in Sindh, especially Chief Secretary and Inspector General Police, if it wants to. Responding to a question during his press conference held here he said that appointment of top administrative officers, the Chief Secretary and IG Police, in the province by the Federal government was not a Constitutional binding. It has remained tradition only, he added. However, he said, there are examples that Punjab Government (CM Punjab) had

been refusing to accept appointment of officers in the province by Federal government. He cited the experience during last parliamentary tenure when PPP was in power at the Centre, and PML-N enjoyed power in Punjab. Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah had made a complaint few days earlier that the Federal government appoints Chief Secretary and IG Police in Sindh. He went ahead to add that even Sindh Rangers Director General was not under his control. He stated while explaining his inability to control law and order situation in Karachi, while speaking at the last Sindh Assembly session. The CM, however, had not informed the elected lawmakers why the Federal government appoints the chief secretary and IG Police in Sindh, and why the provincial government was bound to accept these appointments?

[Daily Times – 14th July 2013]

Justice on the Wheels in KP

In a bid to provide door-to-door and efficient justice to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar High Court (PHC) Chief Justice (CJ) Dost Muhammad Khan inaugurated the first-ever mobile court in a special ceremony held on the premises of PHC. Speaking on the occasion Justice Dost Muhammad Khan said initially, nine judges and 18 lawyers had been trained to run the mobile courts. People from different walks of life, judges and lawyers community attended this event. The mobile court has been established in a special bus, completed with the financial assistance of foreign donors, at a cost of Rs 15 million. The idea to have mobile courts in the province is of PHC CJ Dost Mohammad Khan. Soon after his appointment in November 2011, he had said that setting up of mobile courts was on his priority list, as it would provide inexpensive justice to the common man. For launching the first-ever mobile court of the country, the PHC CJ issued two notifications under sections 9, 14 and 17 of Civil Court Ordinance, which confer powers on the CJ to direct any judge or magistrate to hold camp courts at any place within the district and decide cases reported to them.

One notification was issued for mobile courts dealing with the criminal nature cases and the second for the hearing of civil cases. It is worth mentioning here that during the launch of the mobile courts, seven cases have been fixed for hearing that would be decided by these courts on the PHC premises and would be witnessed by all the participants of the function. Such courts will hold sittings in towns, union councils, police stations or other places specified by the high court on rotation basis as may be directed by the district judge. Legal experts believe that these courts would be helpful especially in such areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where regular courts are situated in the district and tehsil headquarters. KPK government has planned 11 mobile courts in the province including four in Peshawar, three in Malakand Division, two in Hazara Division and two in other districts.

[Daily Times - 28th July, 2013]

National Assembly & Senate

NA, Senate Sessions Summoned

On the advice of the prime minister, acting President Nayyar Hussain Bokhari has summoned separate sessions of the National Assembly and Senate on July 29 for the presidential election to be held the following day. The Election Commission of Pakistan has announced that the scrutiny of nomination papers would be carried out by Chief Election Commissioner Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim. According to the commission, two dozen candidates have filed 33 nominations papers,

with some of them having filed more than one paper. PPP candidate Raza Rabbani has submitted seven nomination papers. Senior ECP officials said the papers of most of the candidates, except those of Mamnoon Hussain of the PML-N and his cover candidate Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, Raza Rabbani and retired Justice Wajihuddin Ahmed of the PTI, might be rejected for various reasons. According to Article 41(3) of the constitution, the president will be chosen for five years by the electoral college of 706 lawmakers, including 104 senators and 342 members of the National Assembly and 260 of the provincial assemblies. By-elections for about 50 seats of national and provincial assemblies are scheduled for August 22.

[Daily Times - 26th July, 2013]

NA, Senate Session for Presidential Poll

Acting President Nayyar Hussain Bokhari has summoned the sessions of National Assembly (NA) and Senate on 29th July, 2013 for the presidential election. The acting president has summoned the separate sessions of the two houses at 4:00 pm in Parliament House. The NA meeting would entail a resolution to convert parliament into a polling booth for the presidential election. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) issued a final list of the presidential candidates. According to the final list, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Mamnoon Hussain and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) candidate Justice (r) Wajihuddin are in the run for the coveted slot. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has boycotted the presidential election, to be held on July 30. The Awami National Party (ANP), Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) and BNP-Awami have also announced boycott of the presidential election in support of the PPP. Meanwhile, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has completed printing of the ballot papers and started its transportation to the provinces. The ballot papers contain the names of Mamnoon Hussain and Justice (r) Wajihuddin. Chief Election Commissioner Justice (R) Fakhruddin G Ibrahim also asked the parliamentarians to ensure the secrecy of ballot papers while casting their vote. Today's session of the National Assembly would also be approving the formation of various standing committees of NA.

[Daily Times - 29th July, 2013]

Judiciary

Abbottabad Commission Report: Laws Meant To Oversee NGOs Must Be Reviewed

Questioning the activities of certain non-governmental organisations, the Abbottabad Commission has recommended that laws relating to foreign non-governmental organisations must be reviewed by the law ministry in order to meet present-day needs. Headed by Justice (retd) Javed Iqbal, the commission made the recommendations as the Societies Registration Act 1860 was mum about many important aspects of the work of NGOs and INGOs. As a result, it said that in a number of cases, the lack of oversight had created opportunities which were taken advantage of by hostile foreign intelligence agencies to infiltrate NGOs to illegally gather intelligence, including preparations for assaults on the sovereignty and independence of the country, as happened on May 2, 2011 when US Navy Seals killed Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad. Most NGOs have no internal mechanisms to keep a watch on such elements that have infiltrated them for purposes unrelated to their projects in Pakistan, as almost certainly happened in the case of children's NGO Save the Children (which denied any involvement in the

Bin Laden hunt), the commission said. Further, the commission report said Washington's decision to allow the CIA to use United States Agency for International Development which in turn led it to use Save the Children in planning the May 2 raid had done incalculable harm to an environment in which perfectly respectable and renowned NGOs seek to assist the government of Pakistan in discharging its development and humanitarian obligations to Pakistanis. The commission stated that keeping in view the influx of foreigners, especially from the US, coming to Pakistan under questionable guises, the visa policy of 2010 must be followed in true letter and spirit. It said the interior ministry must be vigilant while issuing visas and all visas for US nationals must be cleared by relevant intelligence agencies. No relaxation or exception should be given to any ambassador that allows the official visa policy to be circumvented, the report stated. The commission also suggested vigilant approach against foreign spy networks and hiring process of the security companies. There is currently no role of ministry of interior, foreign affairs or the home departments of the provinces for extradition of an individual declared 'persona non-grata'. Ministry of interior must be referred to for initiation and extradition purposes, the commission recommended. The commission noted that most NGOs and INGOs are doing very valuable work and have assisted Pakistanis in a number of fields of emergency assistance, capacity building, provision of basic services, etc. This is an issue that needs to be taken by the government on a priority basis to ensure that the continued working of foreign NGOs remain constant with the security parameters of the country, the commission suggested.

[The Express Tribune - July 11th, 2013]

Raja Violated Oath by Doling Out Funds to Favorites, SC Told

Khawaja Haris contended before the Supreme Court that former prime minister Raja Pervez Ashraf had violated his oath by doling out Rs 52 billion among his favorites. This was stated before a three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry that heard the suo motu case, which said that the former prime minister doled out billions of rupees in the form of development funds ten days after having completed his tenure in office. Khawaja Haris said that no doubt the National Assembly approves but the constitution does not provide discretionary funds to the prime minister. He said that public money could not be utilized for the benefit of any particular person and individual. During the hearing, the chief justice remarked that development funds should be spent on voters who elect the MNAs or MPAs. The court noted that Raja Pervez Ashraf was not made chief executive of the country for corruption, and he had to maintain transparency. The chief justice said the money was given to then PM Raja to be doled out in a non-transparent manner among his favorites'. He added that Rs 6.5 billion was given to notables who were neither members of parliament nor provincial assemblies. Wasim Sajjad, counsel for Raja Pervez Ashraf, argued that any expenditure approved by the National Assembly in any form or manner whatsoever could be legitimized under the constitution. He further said that any expenditure approved by the National Assembly under supplementary grant in whatsoever form or manner may also be legitimized under the constitution. He stated: It was within the power of the National Assembly to decide whether expenditure is allowed specifically or as block grant and the constitution itself provide and control and monitoring of expenditure through monitory authority and Public Accounts Committee of National Assembly. Waseem Sajjad said parliament had given authority to the prime minister to spend the block grants and it is utilised on his authorization. Iftikhar Gilani, counsel for the petitioner in Balochistan development case, said the parliamentarians have to show that they need funds for so and so development project in their areas. Abdul Qahar Khan Waddan, leader of Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party Balochistan filed the petition regarding

illegalities in development schemes last years. Quoting the system in other countries, Gilani argued that funds were released to district authorities and not to individuals. He said that Fauzia Behram, an ex-MPA of Pakistan People’s Party (Parliamentarian), had spent Rs 4.2 million of development funds on construction of a swimming pool, car parking and boundary wall. The case has been adjourned until July 22.

[Daily Times - 19th July, 2013]

BALUCHISTAN WATCH**Governance Watch****BNP-M to Hold Protests**

The Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) has announced a series of protests against the killing of three people in Wadh area of Khuzdar district. BNP-M information secretary Agha Hasan Baloch said the party would hold protest rallies on July 2 in different areas of Balochistan, observe a strike on July 4 and block highways on July 5. He alleged that elements in intelligence agencies were behind the killings and said these were aimed to pave the way for launching of an operation in Wadh area. He claimed that security forces a search operation in Wadh and took into custody 12 workers of the BNP-M. The action, he added, was aimed to provoke the party leadership. Mr Baloch accused the government and the intelligence agencies of creating trouble in the hometown of party leader, Sardar Akhtar Mengal. He alleged that elements in intelligent agencies manipulated election results in Balochistan and said the same forces were trying to create Dera Bugti-like situation in Wadh area. He said the BNP-M believed in political and democratic struggle, but intelligence agencies wanted to push it towards violence.

[Dawn - 1st July, 2013]

Call for New Province in Balochistan

The Pashtoon Qaumi Movement (PQM) has said that in order to protect the rights of Pashtoon people a new province comprising Sibi and Zhob districts should be set up. Addressing a public meeting here at Bacha Chowk, PQM chief Rafiq Pashtoon and other leaders said Pashtoons living in Balochistan did not have equal rights. They said only a separate province could ensure them their due rights. Rafiq Pashtoon said that Pashtoons in Balochistan had not identity, adding that people without an identity had no respect in society.

[Daily Times - 2nd July, 2013]

BNP Announces Strike Tomorrow

Balochistan National Party (BNP) will observe shutter down strike across the province on July 4 in protest against what they term unjust actions of security forces and its 'death squads' in Wadh area, the hometown of BNP chief Sardar Akhtar Mengal. Senior Vice President of BNP Dr Jahanzeb Jamaldini announced that his party will observe shutter down strike on July 4 and wheel jam strike on July 5 across the province. He made these announcements during a protest demonstration outside Quetta Press Club on Tuesday. Dozens of BNP workers converged outside the press club and chanted slogans against security forces for their alleged involvement in creating law and order problems in Balochistan. Jamaldini said security forces had been raiding houses of BNP leaders and growers for the past couple of days in order to harass them. "Some elements with the backing of security forces are trying to create law and order problem in Wadh. There is a death squad backed by security forces paving a way for operation in the area to eliminate the party from political arena of the province," he said. The protesters were holding placards and banners inscribed with slogans against security forces. They alleged that

Deputy Commissioner Samad Lasi was backing the death squad which was harassing BNP activists.

[Daily Times - 3rd July, 2013]

Protesting BNP-M Activists Block Highways

Activists and supporters of the Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) blocked the highways at different locations to condemn what they called activities of death squads in Wadh area. A statement by the BNP-M said that due to the protests, traffic remained suspended on routes connecting Quetta with Karachi, Taftan with Jacobabad, and Gwadar with Karachi. Booking offices refused to issue tickets to passengers travelling to other provinces by bus or coach. However, coaches in the evening left for their destinations despite the party's announcement that the highways would remain blocked for an indefinite period. The party statement said that it had no option but to give a strike call and blockade of the national highways the next day so that the government may do something to end the activities of outlaws in Wadh. It further said the party will not compromise on the rights and resources of Balochistan adding the BNP will continue the struggle till the time its demands were not met.

[Dawn - 6th July, 2013]

Protest against Balochistan Violence

Demanding an end to the cycle of violence and killings in Balochistan, the Awami Workers Party, (AWP) held a protest demonstration at Aapbara chowk, blaming the security forces for protecting violent elements. The participants expressed concerns over the worsening situation in Balochistan and blamed the state agencies for sponsoring the death squads and allowing the radical sectarian outfits like Lashkar –e-Jhangvi to operate with impunity. The speakers at the protest demonstration said that situation was getting worse since May 2013 elections, attacks on Hazara community continue and they allege that the policy of kill and dump has intensified. The PM and CM Balochistan are keen to develop Kashgar- Gwadar corridor but they have done nothing to improve the conditions of locals in the province, Asim Sajjad Akhtar of AWP said. The demonstration was attended by AWP, National Students Federation (NSF), Hazara Students Federation, Jammu & Kashmir NSF, members of the railways, PTCL trade unions and other local civil society members. While, calling to lift the ban on student groups and organizations in Balochistan, Alia Amirali of NSF said that the mess has been created in the province due to the policy to managing Balochistan like a colony and sponsoring radical Islamist groups.

[Daily Times – 10th July 2013]

3 Security Men among 7 Killed In Balochistan

At least five people, including two Balochistan Levies force personnel, were killed in two different operations against criminals in Gulistan and Naseerabad areas of Balochistan. In the first incident, a Balochistan Levies man and two bandits were killed in firing in Naseerabad. According to the Balochistan Levies, the unidentified armed men were looting a passenger coach which was on way from Ganhdawa to Jacobabad. On being informed, the Balochistan Levies rushed to the spot and cordoned off the area. The armed bandit opened fire which was

retaliated by the levies forces. As result, a levies man and two dacoits were killed on the spot. The deceased were taken to the hospital where they were identified as Abdul Nabi, a levies official, and Miyhal Khan and Manthar Mangi, both dacoits. Sources said that the bandits were brothers. A case has been registered against and investigations are underway. In another incident, two people, including a security official, were killed and two others sustained injuries in a raid at a house by security personnel in Gulistan. According to the sources, law enforcement agencies, including the ATF, Balochistan Levies and police, raided a house in Gulistan on a tip-off. The gunmen in the house opened fire on the security personnel, killing one. The security personnel returned fire and killed one of the occupants of the house and injured two.

[Daily Times – 18th July 2013]

Bugti Murder: BHC Reserves Verdict on Musharraf's Bail Plea

The Balochistan High Court (BHC) reserved its verdict on former military ruler Pervez Musharraf's bail plea in the murder case of Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Bugti. Musharraf's counsel filed the bail plea in BHC after an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Quetta rejected his application. A two-member bench, comprising Justice Ghulam Mustafa Mengal and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan, resumed hearing on the application. The court ordered crime branch to complete investigation into the case at earliest and present a challan before it. The court reserved its judgment over the application after hearing arguments of Akbar Bugti's son, Jamil Akbar Bugti, and lawyer Sohail Ahmed Rajpoot. On July 15, an anti-terrorism court in Quetta had directed police to produce Musharraf by July 30. Police presented initial charge sheet to the ATC, saying the former president could not be presented due to security threats. The lawyer of Balochistan government told the court that the accused was arrested on June 12 but the Federal Interior Department has issued directions to all provinces that Musharraf faces life threats which is why he has not be shifted anywhere else from Islamabad. Musharraf has been accused of orchestrating murder of Bugti, the chief of his tribe, who was killed in a military operation in 2006. Musharraf has refused to accept the charge of murder, saying that Bugti was not killed by the army but died after an explosion in the cave where he was hiding. Former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has also been accused of the alleged murder. Musharraf is detained in his house near Islamabad since April. He faces several criminal cases, including the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. The former president returned Pakistan in March after about four years of self-imposed exile in London and Dubai.

[Daily Times - 23rd July, 2013]

ELECTION WATCH**Political Stakeholders & Elections****Three Ms Least Corrupt In Pakistan: Transparency**

Pakistan's religious bodies (generally run by Maulanas), the military and the media respectively have been found as the three least corrupt institutions in the list of 12 organizations by Transparency International (TIP) in its global report to be released in Berlin. Without sharing the complete details of the report - Global Corruption Barometer 2013 -, a European diplomatic source confided to The News that as against the international propaganda mostly targeting Pakistan's religious entities and the military have been found as the most clean institutions followed by media in the list of 12 institutions assessed. The most corrupt are from government and politics but the source did not share their names and suggested to wait for the formal launch of the report. The source indicated that the report might not be very encouraging for Pakistan as the corruption has been on the rise in the country for the last five years and there has been no effort to curb it. The source though expects from the present PML-N government to take stern action against the corrupt, lamented that the regime has yet to take any practical step to show its seriousness. The upcoming Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer is the largest cross-country survey to collect the general public's views on and experiences of corruption. In its last report 2010, the political parties are identified as the most corrupt institution around the world. Released during the last PPP government, which was considered as the most corrupt in the history of Pakistan, the report had found that in Pakistan about seven out of 10 respondents judge the anti-corruption actions of its government as ineffective or extremely ineffective.

According to the last government's own Chairman NAB, sacked by the apex court for having been illegally appointed, corruption of more than Rs. 8 billion takes place daily in Pakistan. It is said that a considerable share of this massive corruption is contributed by the oil mafia, federal tax authorities and others. The incumbent Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in a recent letter had though warned his ministers and members of the bureaucracy to stay away from corruption and favoritism, his regime has yet to identify the areas of corruption, the mafia involved to check the daily plundering of nation's Rs8 billion. Pakistan's ranking on the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) had gone from being the 42nd most corrupt country in 2011 to 33rd in 2012. The same year Pakistan had also been declared the seventh most corrupt country out of 97 in the Rule of Law Index of 2012. This serious situation demand of the present regime to take on the corrupt sternly but despite even Supreme Court's observations to this respect, the PML-N government is apparently following a go-slow policy in this regard. So far almost everything that is happening against the corrupt whether these are the NICL and Ogra cases or the EOBI, Ephedrine and Hajj corruption cases, all is pursued by the Supreme Court. In the case of Swiss corruption cases, it was the caretaker government and not the present regime that had actually approached the Swiss authorities to know the status of the letter written to the Swiss attorney general in line with the SC's decision for re-opening of corruption cases against President Zardari and others. The response of the Swiss authorities to the caretaker's letter, reached Islamabad when Nawaz Sharif government had taken over the reins of power and it was unearthed that a secret letter in complete disregard to the SC's order was written to the Swiss government to get the cases against President Zardari closed forever.

[The News - 9th July, 2013]

Final Report: EU Observers Satisfied With May 11 Elections

The European Union’s Election Observer Mission, in its final report, has said the May 11 polls were much more free and fair than previous elections in the country. It cautioned, however, that not implementing certain legal provisions has left future elections vulnerable to malpractice. Released at a news conference, the findings of the EU observer mission concluded that despite escalating militant attacks and procedural shortcomings, the May 11 electoral process progressed with a high level of competition, a marked increase in voter participation and overall acceptance of the outcome. Speaking to reporters, Chief Observer Michael Gahler, however, noted that fundamental problems remain with the legal framework and the implementation of certain provisions. “Now is the time for the new Parliament, the Election Commission and other stakeholders to demonstrate their commitment to a democratic Pakistan. Legislation can be further developed and every by-election as well as local election is an opportunity for implementing improved practices,” he added.

The 140-member EU observer mission formulated 50 recommendations to help ensure better transparency in future elections. Of these seven require constitutional changes and 17 require changes in the primary legislation, according to Gahler. The EU observer mission suggested the formation of a special parliamentary committee on elections to review related legislation within a framework of international law commitments. Key issues to address in this regard include candidacy criteria, transparency requirements and mechanisms for effective remedy. It also recommended that the Election Commission of Pakistan should take full responsibility for the administration of the elections. The commission must fully implement its five-year strategic plan as well, the EU mission noted in its report. It proposed that ECP should establish a clear regulatory framework for all aspects of the election, including results management, observation and scrutiny, and complaints. The commission should also review and develop procedures to increase checks in the polling and results process, and develop practices to improve the quality of the completed results forms, the report maintained.

The EU observer mission also asked ECP to introduce strong transparency measures, including making all notifications, decisions and election related information immediately and easily available to the public. “All polling and results information should swiftly be made available to the public on the ECP website.” It also suggested that the legal framework for media be revised so that it fully supports editorial independence and eliminates opportunities for censorship. The EU mission stressed the need for measures to promote the participation of women in the electoral process, through measures such as more Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC) drives, requiring parties to make policies and information on women’s participation within the party publicly available and ensuring greater coverage of women in politics in the state media. The mission also called for the abolishment of a separate list for Ahmadi voters, so that all voters are on one unified electoral roll.

[The Express Tribune – 11th July, 2013]

SHC Allows ECP More Time for Sealing, Presenting Delimitation Record

Sindh High Court (SHC) has allowed more time to Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for sealing and preserving record of delimitation of Naushehro Feroze’s constituencies. The petitioner Mureed Ali Shah had submitted in a contempt of court application that following the orders of SHC for delimitation of Naushehro Feroze constituencies, ECP’s committee submitted proposals. However, he added that ECP did not notify the delimitation officially. He had said that committee heard the public and representatives of political parties but turned a deaf ear to

objections raised by him. He had said that ECP despite court orders did not produce the record before court. He appealed before the court that record pertaining to delimitation including public opinion might be sealed, lest it is tampered. Hence, a division bench of SHC directed ECP to seal record of delimitation before the petitioner and produce the same before the court and be kept in safe custody. Petitioner had submitted that ECP had disobeyed the court orders and did not seal the record. He had prayed to court to initiate contempt proceedings against election commissioner and its four other members. The court put off the hearing to August 8.

[Daily Times - 12th July 2013]

Political Parties

Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML - N)

PML-N, PPP Making Deals, Says PTI Leader

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Central (PTI) Leader and Member National Assembly Dr Arif Alvi showed dissatisfaction on major decisions taken by Opposition Leader without consulting other parties. He said that two nominations for NAB's Chairmanship were made without consulting PTI leadership. The decision made by Khursheed Shah on his own hints at the possibility of a hidden deal between PML-N and PPP. Dr Alvi spoke to a gathering of party leadership at PTI Central Media Cell Karachi. He said that all parties should have been taken on-board to come up with an honest, impartial and soulful recommendation for appointing NAB Chairman. He made clear that PTI was not objecting to the names proposed but the behaviour of Leader of the Opposition was disappointing. PTI anticipates national interest to be considered by, both government and Opposition Leader, while making decisions. Continuity of a fixed match, between PMLN and PPP, would be understood if the same conduct continues, he concluded.

[Daily Times - 12th July 2013]

PML-N Government Favors Talks With Taliban

The government still wants to hold talks with the Taliban for peace in the country and the region, Federal Information Minister Pervaiz Rashid said. Guns can't solve problems. The use of force only adds to the problems and makes the situation more complicated, he said in an interview after a visit to the Nawa-i-Waqt Group offices. If talks can be held in Doha, why they can't be held in Islamabad, the minister said while defending the government's approach for peace with the Taliban. The contention gains more importance as it comes from the spokesman of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif a couple of days after his leader's visit to the ISI headquarters where he was briefed for five hours about the security situation. What the minister said clearly means that there is no shift in the government's policy about talks with the Taliban although the military leadership is in favour of use of force to eliminate terrorists in the tribal areas. He said even today the government was convinced that talks were the best course to address all concerns and reservations of the respective parties. He said even after wars the adversaries had to sit across the table to settle disputes.

About the drone attacks in tribal areas, the minister said the government was trying to find a solution through talks with the United States. The Foreign Office, he said, was in contact with the US. Answering a question about the Abbottabad Commission Report, Pervaiz Rashid said the

original copy was with the defense secretary. As for action on the recommendations made by the commission, he said the previous government had constituted a committee comprising Farooq H Naek and defence and foreign secretaries on the subject. With the change of the government, Mr Naek was no longer part of the committee but the recommendations of the two secretaries were being eagerly awaited. In response to a question about investigations against MQM chief Altaf Hussain, the minister said it was a matter between the British police and a 'British national' in which the Pakistan government had no role to play. However, if the Pakistan government was asked to provide any information, we'll discharge our duties as a member of the world community. About the unabated killings going on in Karachi, Pervaiz Rashid said although it was a very sensitive issue the federal government wanted to give a free hand to the provincial setup to fix the problem. However, if the Sindh government sought any help, the federal government would provide the same, he said. He said the prime minister had also directed the interior secretary and relevant intelligence officials to stay in touch with the Sindh government and give them full support.

About published reports that President Zardari would complete the rest of his term while sitting in London and Dubai, the minister said he had no such information to share with the media. The president's spokesman, he said, was in a better position to answer the question. As for President Zardari's money in Swiss banks, the minister said the matter was pending with the apex court and the government would follow whatever directive was given by it. Replying to a question about the fate of the Pak-Iran gas pipeline, he said the project was very much on and the government was trying to arrange finances for it. As for pressures from various countries that Pakistan should abandon it, he said no country had the right to dictate a sovereign Pakistan. We want good relations with all our neighbors. We'll give them what we can and get from them what they can give. When asked why the government was not replacing the provincial governors appointed by the previous setup, the minister said it was not an important issue for the present leadership.

The PML-N government, he said, wanted to address the energy, economy, security and governance issues on priority basis. Removing some people from their seats (and inducting others) is not important for us. The Punjab governor had tendered resignation some weeks ago which was also accepted by the president. But he is still in the office because no replacement has been nominated. The Sindh governor – an MQM man – has set a new record by working on the post for some 12 years. The KPK governor is also a remnant of the previous setup. Responding to a question about bringing former ambassador Husain Haqqani back to Pakistan, the information minister said the government would comply with the Supreme Court orders on the subject. He rejected press reports that the government had failed in constituting the Council of Common Interests (CCI) and thus violated an important provision of the Constitution. The CCI had been constituted shortly after the formation of the government, he said. I am not aware of it, said Mr. Pervaiz Rashid when asked about the schedule of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to Saudi Arabia and expectations from it.

It is said that Mr. Sharif would be visiting the kingdom during the last 10 days of Ramazan. When pointed out that some media reports suggested that Saudi Arabia could offer Pakistan a \$15 billion package to resuscitate its sagging economy, the minister said newspapers had their own sources of information. He defended the \$5.3 billion loan Pakistan was going to get from the IMF. The loan was being taken to clear the outstanding loans taken by the previous government, he said. As for the budget deficit, he said, the government had adopted a number of austerity measures to meet it. He credited the PML-N leadership for not indulging in horse-trading or other dirty tricks to set up its own governments in KPK and Balochistan. He said the government had used all its energies to resolve the most serious problems of the country. He believed that agreements with China would be turning points for Pakistan's economy.

[The Nation – 14th July 2013]

Opposition Leader, PM to Meet on NAB Chief

Opposition leader in National Assembly Syed Khursheed Shah will meet Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in the next few days for consultation on the appointment of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) chairman. According to sources in the opposition leader's chamber, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar contacted Syed Khursheed Shah to consult him on the appointment of NAB chief and both sides agreed to the meeting of the opposition leader with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in the next few days in this regard. The government side proposed to opposition the names of Justice (r) Rahmat Hussain Jafari and Khawaja Zaheer Ahmed, while the opposition PPP moved the names of Justice (r) Rana Bhagwandas and Justice (r) Sardar Raza Khan. In a telephonic contact with the opposition leader, Dar pointed out that legal complications are in the way of Rana Bhagwandas becoming NAB chief, otherwise the PML-N government has no objection over him. Bhagwandas served as Federal Public Service Commission chairman in the PPP government. Dar told the opposition leader that Rana Bhagwandas is a man of credibility and integrity and there is nothing wrong with him being appointed as NAB chairman. Syed Khursheed Shah, on the other hand, responded that legal complications could be overcome through consultation in Bhagwandas case. Shah earlier stated that Bhagwandas can be dropped and he may suggest another name if legal difficulties block his appointment as NAB chief.

[Daily Times - 17th July, 2013]

PML-N to be impartial on AJK no-confidence vote: Nawaz

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has directed party leaders from Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) to remain impartial for a no-confidence motion against AJK PM Chaudhry Abdul Majeed. The PML-N does not favor political instability, Nawaz said while chairing a meeting of party leaders from AJK. He directed the party leaders and workers to detach them from the recent political crisis in the valley.

[Daily Times - 25th July, 2013]

Pakistan Tehreek - e - Insaf (PTI)**Fauzia Kasuri Rejoins PTI**

Fauzia Kasuri announced to rejoin Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) and vowed to serve the party to her level best. Fauzia, one of the prominent members of PTI, told journalists during a press briefing held in premises of PTI's main office on Monday that she has re-joined the party, however, cleverly skipped to mention what made her to part her ways with the PTI. "I announce to re-join PTI today. I had reservations that have been removed," Fauzia said. She made it loud and clear that she has rejoined PTI unconditionally and requested the journalists not to make speculations regarding this point. Insider's privy to the developments said Fauzia resigned from the party after she developed differences with some of the influential members of PTI. The differences between Fauzia Kasuri and the party's high command started when she raised voice against the distribution of party tickets for women reserved seats, ignoring those having long association with the party.

[The News - 9th July, 2013]

PTI Demands Removal of Shahbaz as Punjab CM

Accusing the Punjab chief minister of not fulfilling his responsibilities as provincial chief executive, the main opposition party in the Punjab Assembly, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has urged upon the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to name his brother as deputy prime minister. The PTI backed Opposition Leader in Punjab Assembly Mian Mehmood ur Rasheed during a press conference at Committee Room of the assembly secretariat said Shahbaz Sharif was not fulfilling his responsibilities as the chief minister and was playing a role of secretary to prime minister. PTI leader said Shahbaz was not paying attention to provincial issues and was busy in central government issues which was the reason that law and order situation had become worsen in the province and criminals had established 'No-Go Areas' in Punjab thus challenging writ of the government. He also strongly criticised over increase in load shedding in Punjab after the establishment of PML-N government in center and in the province and said PML-N had failed to fulfill its promises to end loadshedding made at the time of election. He also warned the government that it should requisite the session of provincial assembly to discuss aforementioned issue as well as their solutions with the opposition otherwise his party would hold peaceful protests across the province especially against prolonged load shedding. PTI lawmakers Dr Murad Ras, and Sheikh Imtiaz Mehmood was also present at the press conference and suggested the PML-N government in Punjab to do some practical efforts to resolve load shedding problems with the consent of opposition parties.

[Daily Times - 17th July, 2013]

PTI's Ayla Malik Disqualified

The Lahore High Court's (LHC) election tribunal bench in Rawalpindi declared Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ayla Malik ineligible to contest by-elections from NA-71 (Mianwali) on the grounds that her intermediate certificate was fake. Ayla's papers were rejected by the respective returning officer on the plea of her political opponent Obaidullah Shadikehl.

[Daily Times - 30th July, 2013]

Pakistan People's Party (PPP)

PPP Calls for Resignation of Chief Election Commissioner

The PPP leader said his party would raise the issue of the "partiality" allegedly shown by the ECP in the lead-up to the presidential election during sessions of the National Assembly and Senate. Sources in the PPP told Dawn that the opposition members would lodge a protest in the two houses through points of order. The sources said leaders of the opposition in the NA and Senate, Syed Khurshid Shah and Chaudhry Aitzaz Ahsan, would raise the matter and explain the reason for the party's decision to boycott the presidential election after the Supreme Court allowed the ECP to advance the polling date to July 30 from Aug 6 at the PML-N's request. The chief election commissioner, along with all the four members, should immediately resign, said Mr Shah, who was head of the parliamentary committee that had approved the appointments of retired justice Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim as the CEC and the other ECP members. He said through the 18th and 20th amendments, the ECP had been made a powerful and independent institution,

but regretted that it had abdicated its powers and independence. The May 11 elections were RO (returning officers) elections and the presidential election is the chief RO election, he alleged. The PPP leader said his party would never accept the results of the manipulated presidential election and continue to raise its voice against the alleged nexus between the PML-N government, the ECP and the courts. Mr Shah also lashed out at the PML-N for seeking the Muttahida's support for its presidential candidate. He congratulated PM Nawaz Sharif for joining hands with the MQM and remind him about a resolution which the PML-N had moved in an all-party conference in London terming the MQM a terrorist party, he said. Mr Shah said since the PPP had announced boycott of the presidential election, its members would not attend sessions of the provincial assemblies and the parliament on the polling day. A PPP senator told Dawn that his party would also raise other matters of public importance in the Senate. Farhatullah Babar, a PPP Senator and the presidency's spokesman gain asked the government to provide complete details of payment of Rs480 billion made to settle the circular debt of Rs503bn.

JUI-F UNDECIDED: Meanwhile, the JUI-F announced that so far it had not decided about its vote in the July 30 presidential election. Sources said the JUI-F, which is sitting on the treasury benches at the centre, wanted to join the Balochistan government as well and was using this demand as a bargain during the presidential election. But the PML-N is facing a strong opposition from its nationalist allies on the issue of including the JUI-F in the ruling coalition in the province. JUI-F Majlis-i-Shoora, party's spokesman Jan Achakzai said that the Balochistan chapter of the party had shown serious concerns over the political situation in the province. He said the JUI-F was a genuine stakeholder in Balochistan, but it had been ignored. Mr Achakzai said that some initial contact had been made by the PML-N on the Balochistan issue, but the JUI-F was awaiting further discussion on it. He clarified that JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, during his recent meeting with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, had exclusively focused on the law and order situation in Balochistan. He said the Maulana had complained to the prime minister that the JUI-F was not taken on board on several issues.

[Dawn - 28th July, 2013]

All Pakistan Muslim League - APML

Musharraf To Be Shifted To Jail If Not Produced On 30th

The anti-terrorism court directed the police officials to shift former military ruler Pervez Musharraf, the prime accused in Benazir Bhutto murder case, to the Adiala Jail if he is not produced before it on the next hearing of the case on July 30. Judge Chaudhry Habibur Rehman had summoned the former dictator following the submission of a challan by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on June 25 in which he (Musharraf) had been declared the main accused in the assassination of Benazir Bhutto. It is the second time that the police officials, citing security concerns, have failed to produce Musharraf in the court, which is hearing the high-profile case for the last five years. Taking strong notice of the defiance of the court orders, Judge Chaudhry Habibur Rehman remarked that if Musharraf is not produced on the next hearing, he would be shifted to the Adiala Jail where the court proceedings would be held. The court ordered the police officials to ensure Musharraf's presence before it on July 30 and adjourned the hearing till the date. On June 25, the FIA had submitted a challan against the former military dictator, declaring him the prime accused in the murder case of PPP chairperson Benazir Bhutto. Musharraf had also been accused of hatching a conspiracy to assassinate Benazir. While becoming the witness in the case, Mark Siegel in his statement to the FIA's investigation team had revealed that Benazir was disturbed after receiving a phone call

from Musharraf in his (Siegel's) presence on September 25, 2007. According to Siegel's statement, Musharraf had warned Benazir that she would be responsible for her own security if she returned to the country before the 2008 elections.

[Daily Times – 10th July 2013]

Other Political Parties

TTP Sacks Spokesman in Sign of Growing Divisions

Pakistan-based Taliban sacked their spokesman for making remarks that angered their Afghan allies, in a move highlighting efforts to patch up divisions within the increasingly fractured insurgency. The Pakistani Taliban announced the dismissal of Ehsanullah Ehsan - an outspoken and prominent figure close to TTP's top brass - in a pamphlet distributed by militants in Pakistan's North Waziristan region on the Afghan border. The Taliban are our foundation and (Afghan Taliban leader) Mullah Omar is our supreme leader. That is why, from today, Ehsanullah Ehsan is no longer our spokesman. One TTP commander told Reuters that the Afghan Taliban were incensed when Ehsan told a local newspaper that US-Taliban peace talks in Doha would have no effect on the TTP, suggesting that the two movements were totally different. After Ehsan's damaging statements, the Afghan Taliban asked us not to use their stationery or their flag, he said by telephone from North Waziristan. This is unacceptable for us. Ehsan was replaced by Sheikh Maqbool, a man who is considered close to the Afghan Taliban and has spent much of his time since 2007 in Afghanistan. But Ehsan's sacking could also signal yet another chink in the armour of the Pakistani Taliban itself, which last month lost its second-in-command, Waliur Rehman, in a US drone strike in North Waziristan, a militant stronghold. The Pakistani movement has long struggled to formulate a unified set of goals, with some factions focusing on staging attacks against domestic military and civilian targets and others calling for deeper involvement in the Afghan cause.

[Daily Times – 10th July 2013]

PML-F Complains CEC about Violations in By-Elections

A delegation of Pir Pagaro-led Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F) called on Chief Election Commissioner Justice (retired) Fakhrudin G Ibrahim at his office, and complained about alleged violations made by the Sindh government in a provincial constituency where by-election is scheduled next month. The party delegation headed by General Secretary Imtiaz Shaikh comprised three leaders from District Shikarpur, including Ghous Bux Maher and Abid Jatoi. Imtiaz Shaikh while talking to media persons said that CEC has assured them to cancel all transfers and postings of government officers in Shikarpur, that were made after the announcement of by-election schedule. He added that the CEC has also guaranteed them to consider deployment of Army personnel in different polling stations of the constituency on day of the elections.

[Daily Times - 24th July, 2013]

By-Poll Elections 2013

KP Coalition Partners Fail to Name Joint Candidates for By-Polls

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the leading partner in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, has fielded candidates for all vacant seats in the province while its partners - Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) - have also nominated aspirants for the by-election. A final date for submitting nomination papers for the by-poll on five National Assembly and four Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly seats was July 9 while after scrutiny of the papers, the final list would be displayed on July 31. According to Election Commission of Pakistan, some 143 candidates had filed papers for five National Assembly and four provincial assembly seats. Of the five National Assembly constituencies, three have been vacated by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and two by the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl. PTI's chief Imran Khan vacated NA-1 Peshawar, Chief Minister Pervez Khattak and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser left NA-5 Nowshera and NA-13 Swabi, respectively, while JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman had won three National Assembly seats in the May 11 general elections. He retained NA-24, Dera Ismail Khan, and vacated NA-25 and NA-27, Lakki Marwat.

Former chief ministers Akram Khan Durrani and Ameer Haider Hoti were elected to the National Assembly and provincial assembly simultaneously. Both opted for the National Assembly and now by election would be held on PK-23 Mardan and PK-70 Bannu. Two of the provincial assembly seats fell vacant after the deaths of Farid Khan and Imran Mohmand last month. When contacted, QWP chief Aftab Sherpao told The News that the PTI had not contacted him for fielding unanimous candidates. "The QWP had no other option but to announce own candidates for the by-poll," he said. Provincial chief of Jamaat-e-Islami Prof Muhammad Ibrahim said, "Though we have fielded candidate, we can withdraw if the coalition partners agree on seat-to-seat adjustment." However, provincial general secretary of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and Minister for Information and Health Shaukat Yousafzai told The News that they would hold an important meeting to convince the coalition partners to withdraw their candidates as the PTI had either won these seats or remained a runner-up there in the general elections. On the other hand, the ANP and the JUI-F have reportedly agreed on seat-to-seat adjustment on five NA and four provincial assembly seats. The ANP will field candidates for NA-1 Peshawar, NA-5 Nowshera and PK-23 Mardan and PK-27 Mardan while the JUI-F would field candidates for NA-25 Tank-cum-Dera Ismail Khan, NA-27 Lakki Marwat and PK-42 Hangu and PK-70 Bannu. The PML-N and PPP have also fielded candidates for the by-poll in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

[The News - 11th July, 2013]

ANP, JUI -F Agree On Seat Adjustments for KP By-Polls

The nationalist ANP will get support on NA-1 (Peshawar) and NA-5 (Nowshera) and PK-23 (Mardan), while the JUI-F will have the ANP's backing on NA-13 (Swabi), NA-25 (Tank), NA-27 (Lakki Marwat) and PK-70 (Bannu). According to the Election Commission of Pakistan by-elections on five National Assembly and four provincial assembly seats will be held on August 22. Both parties will contest by-polls jointly, ANP leader Mian Iftikhar Hussain said during a joint news conference with JUI-F leader Sheikh Amanullah. The ANP fielded veteran leader Haji Ghulam Bilour on NA-1 (Peshawar) seat which he had lost to Imran Khan on May 11 and the electoral adjustment with JUI-F is primarily aimed at wresting back the Peshawar seat and restoring the party's image that had taken a battering during the general elections after ruling Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for five years. Observers say the ANP's calculation might prove wrong if

the Pakistan People’s Party brings in a strong candidate or ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf also strikes an electoral adjustment with the PPP to counter the JUI-F-ANP understanding. On other hand, the JUI-F hopes it may win NA-13 (Swabi) seat which Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Speaker Asad Qasier vacated after retaining the provincial assembly seat. Leaving traditional seat to conservative JUI-F candidate might prompt revolt in Swabi party chapter, warned observers. The seat adjustment arrangement between two ideologically opposing parties will mainly go against the ruling PTI.

[Daily Times - 20th July, 2013]

JUI-F, ANP to Field Joint Candidate for NA-262 By-Polls

The JUI-F and ANP have decided to nominate a joint candidate for NA-262 by-elections, as the ANP has withdrawn its candidate Asghar Khan Achakzai in favour of JUI candidate. Opposition leader Maulana Abdul Wasay said the JUI F and ANP have always been opposed to the non-democratic decisions. We have decided to bring a joint candidate for NA-262 Qilla Abdullah for the upcoming by-elections. ANP candidate Asghar Khan Achakzai has withdrawn in favour of JUI candidate Hafiz Shair Ali. Maulana Wasay also criticized non-formation of cabinet, saying that it has not been formed despite elections were held more than two months ago. The law and order situation is bad in the province, which was run single-handedly by Barozai and now by Dr Malik, Maulana Wasay said. He said that despite having reservations, the JUI and its allied parties accepted the election results, adding that those who were pronouncing themselves as the genuine leadership could not form the cabinet yet. ANP leader Engineer Zamrak Khan Achakzai alleged that all the party members wanted good ministries and, therefore, there was a deadlock on the formation of government. JUI and ANP have made the coalition just for peace and prosperity of Psthun belt. We demand that by-elections be held on August 22 under the supervision of Pak Army.

[Daily Times - 28th July, 2013]

By-Polls: PPP Withdraws From NA-1

The PPP has withdrawn its by-election candidate from NA-1 in favor of ANP candidate Ghulam Ahmad Bilour. The PPP was supposed to field its candidate Zulfiqar Afghani in the NA-1 election which is to be held on August 22 but has now withdrawn in favor of the ANP. Meanwhile, the ANP has also agreed to reciprocate the gesture by withdrawing its candidate from constituency of NA-5 in favor of the PPP candidate

[Daily Times - 29th July, 2013]

Presidential Elections

ECP Moved For Postponement of Presidential Polls

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has been moved for postponement of presidential elections. The applicant, Syed Muhammad Iqtidar Haider, has demanded that the ECP conduct a probe into the inscription of the slogan “Down with Pakistan, live long Pakhtunkhwa” on the ballot papers used in December, 31, 1997, presidential polls besides awarding exemplary punishment to the parliamentarian found involved in this incident. The applicant has requested

the ECP to postpone presidential elections until “justice is administered to Pakistan”. Aftab Shoban Mirani, Khawaja Qutabuddin, Raja Saeedul Zaman Khan, Capt Haleem Ahmad Siddiqui, Muhammad Rafiq Tarrar, Maulana Muhammad Khan Sherani and Mir Zafar Ullah Khan were candidates in the 1997 presidential elections. The objectionable remarks were found written on ballot papers used in those presidential elections and the matter has not been investigated. The applicant said he had lodged an FIR in this connection with police but no action has been taken.

[Daily Times - 17th July, 2013]

PML-N Starts Consultations on Presidential Candidates

The ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) started consultations on its presidential candidate with focus on candidates from Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) for the office of president. The Election Commission of Pakistan’s (ECP) announcement that elections for president would be held on August 6 has triggered consultations in the PML-N, sources in the party told Daily Times. According to sources, focus of the party is mainly on candidates from Sindh and KP because the party wants to give this office to smaller provinces after Nawaz Shairif was elected prime minister from Punjab. The names of Sartaj Aziz, adviser to prime minister on national security, Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, secretary general of PML-N and Mehtab Khan Abbasi, a stalwart of the party, are being considered for this office from KP. Syed Ghaus Ali Shah, Sardar Mumtaz Bhutto and Justice (r) Saeeduzzaman Siddiqui are being considered from Sindh. Sources said that the party has not yet found any big name from Balochistan from its own ranks to consider it for the president’s office. However, a candidate who has the broader support in Balochistan cannot be ruled out for the presidential election, sources added. They said that Sartaj Azia and Ghaus Ali Shah are favourites candidates for the elections. Sources said that some party leaders wanted Mumtaz Bhutto to be its presidential candidate in order to give tough time to the PPP in Sindh where it still holds the sway. However, a major part of the party does not want any confrontation with PPP at a time when the country is already facing enormous issues. They said that decision to finalise a candidate for the presidential elections could stretch to the last day of filing of nomination papers on July 24.

[Daily Times - 17th July, 2013]

Politicking Takes Pace As ECP Refuses To Reschedule Presidential Poll

Talking informally to newsmen, ECP Secretary Ishtiaque Ahmed said there was no chance of rescheduling of presidential polls at this stage. He said no one except the government requested to review the dates. Meanwhile, the nomination of Mamnoon Hussain as presidential candidate of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) strengthened further when he was called to Islamabad to meet with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. According to sources in the PML-N, Mamnoon Hussain has almost been finalised as the candidate for the presidential election. The PML-N earlier short-listed Mamnoon Hussain, Justice (r) Saeeduz Zaman Siddiqui and Sartaj Aziz. However, now the party is considering Mamnoon Hussain and dropping the other two in the race for presidential candidate of the ruling party. With just one day left to file the nomination papers, PML-N is yet decide its presidential candidate contrary to the opposition parties PPP and PTI which have nominated Senator Raza Rabbani and Justice (r) Wajihuddin Ahmed. Meanwhile, the PPP succeeded in securing the support of Awami National Party (ANP) when the later announced to support Raza Rabbani in the presidential election. ANP’s Senator Haji Adil announced that the ANP would support Raza Rabbani in the presidential election. The

PML-N and PTI have not contacted us so far, Adeel said. With two days remaining for filing of nomination papers to contest for the top constitutional office of the state, the ECP advised the aspirants to file their nomination papers by 1200 hours (tomorrow). As per the schedule issued on July 16 by the election commission, the prospective candidates for election to the office of the president of Pakistan can file their nomination papers up to 12 at noon on July 24.

For the purpose, the commission has appointed Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Muhammad Anwar Khan Kasi, Lahore High Court Chief Justice Umar Atta Bandial, Sindh High Court Chief Justice Mushir Alam, Peshawar High Court Chief Justice Dost Muhammad Khan and Balochistan High Court Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Essa as presiding officers at Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar and Quetta, respectively. The nomination forms can be obtained, during the office hours, from the offices of presiding officers as well as from the ECP Secretariat, Islamabad; office of Provincial election commissioner, Punjab, Lahore; office of the provincial election commissioner, Sindh, Karachi; office of the provincial election commissioner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar; and office of the provincial election commissioner, Balochistan, Quetta. The election commission has said that candidates for presidential elections will have to submit, along with their nomination papers, the original extract from the electoral rolls prepared for general elections, 2013 as issued or signed by the registration officer or district election commissioner concerned. The commission also drew the attention of the candidates towards the provisions of paragraph 4 of Second Schedule to the Constitution of Pakistan and Rule 3(2) of the Presidential Election Rules, 1988. Paragraph 4 of the Second Schedule provides: At any time before noon on the day fixed for nomination any member of the Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) or of a provincial assembly may nominate for election as president a person qualified for election as president by delivering to the presiding officer a nomination paper, signed by himself as proposer and by another member of the Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) or, as the case may be Assembly as Secunder, together with a statement signed by the person nominated that he consents to the nomination.

[Daily Times – 23rd July, 2013]

‘ECP Must Implement Legal Requirements in Presidential Poll’

General Secretary Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) Sindh Taj Haider has asked the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to fulfill ‘all constitutional requirements’ in the forthcoming presidential elections by completing the required Electoral College. The PPP leader said PML-N may have its ‘spiritual’ or any other reasons for shifting the presidential poll on July 30, but the ECP must realise that Electoral College won’t be complete, even on the announced date of August 6. Holding of elections before the completion of the entire Electoral College is synonymous to ‘rigging of elections’, he said. Haider while giving reference of constitutional article said that ECP should abide by proper election rules. Although Article 41(4) lays down that presidential elections shall be held, not later than thirty days before the expiration of presidential term, but Article 41(3) states about the make up of Electoral College, he said. ECP cannot leave the Electoral College incomplete, just because it finds inconvenient to hold bye-elections on such a large number of seats. Taj Haider further added that in the present situation when ‘each and every vote counts’, 42 voters (leaders yet to be elected in bye-elections) cannot be disenfranchised and the presidential elections should be held after August 22. He even mentioned a constitution’s article regarding any delay in government procedure due to a valid reason. Talking about the PML-N’s petition in the Supreme Court, Haider sarcastically asked, Why is it so keen to hold early elections when the Electoral College is not complete, are they afraid that many legislators in a secret ballot may vote for Senator Raza Rabbani?

[Daily Times - 25th July, 2013]

Article 63 Will Be Implemented In Presidential Election, ECP Tells LHC

A division bench of the Lahore High Court (LHC) disposed of an application seeking directions to stay presidential election, scheduled for July 30. The bench disposed of the petition on assurance by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) that Article 63 of the constitution would be implemented in letter and spirit in the upcoming presidential election. Advocate Muhammad Azhar Siddique had moved the application. Earlier, he had also challenged the amendment made to Section 5 of the Presidential Election Rules, 1988, whereby the application of Article 63 was deleted. The applicant submitted that the Presidential Election Rules, 1988, was gazetted on December 3, 1988. Rule 5 (3) requires that a returning officer would reject a nomination paper of a candidate to the office of the president if such a candidate is not qualified under the constitution to be elected as president, or subject to any disqualification from being elected as, and from being, a member of the National Assembly. He submitted that this disqualification process was provided in Article 63 of the constitution. He said that the ECP amended the rule through a notification on September 10, 2007, and disqualification condition was removed. He stated that by virtue of aforesaid amendment the application of disqualification clauses for the seat of the president of Pakistan under Article 63 had been made ineffective. He said that this notification was not only illegal, ultra vires but also unconstitutional.

[Daily Times - 26th July, 2013]

PPP Lobbies Parties for Presidential Election Boycott

Clouds of controversy have started hovering over the coming presidential election as, after the main opposition Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) also has begun thinking of boycotting it. PTI's vice-chairman Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi said that after receiving a formal request from the PPP, his party had started in-house consultations on the option to boycott the presidential polls in protest against the Supreme Court's decision to advance the polling date to July 30 from Aug 6 on the ruling PML-N's request without hearing the other stakeholders. Two other opposition parties — Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q) and the Awami National Party (ANP) — also declared that they would support a boycott if the decision was taken jointly by the PPP and PTI. The chief of the Qaumi Watan Party (QWP), Aftab Sherpao, told a PPP team which called on him at his residence that the final decision regarding participation or boycott of the polls would be made by his party in a meeting. The PPP team comprised Leader of Opposition in National Assembly Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah, Leader of Opposition in Senate Chaudhry Aitzaz Ahsan, the party's presidential candidate Raza Rabbani, information secretary Qamar Zaman Kaira and former interior minister Rehman Malik. It met the chiefs of the ANP, PML-Q, QWP and the PTI in order to persuade them to boycott the elections. ANP chief Asfandiyar Wali told reporters after his meeting with the PPP delegation that his party would stand by the PPP in whatever decision it would take. PML-Q president Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain told the PPP leaders that his party was ready to announce the boycott on the condition that PTI chief Imran Khan should also do the same. According to sources, Chaudhry Shujaat himself tried to contact Mr Khan after he returned from London in the morning, but could not talk to him.

Later the PML-Q chief talked to Mr Qureshi and informed him about the objections raised by the PPP. Ajmal Wazir, the PML-Q's senior vice-president, said Chaudhry Shujaat had categorically told the PPP that his party was ready for boycotting as well as for participating in the poll provided the decision was made from the platform of a joint opposition. In case the PPP and the PTI failed to reach a consensus on boycott or on a joint candidate, the PML-Q would abstain from the voting, he said. Mr Wazir said there was a strong likelihood that Chaudhry Shujaat and former chief minister Pervez Elahi would not be in the country on July 30 since the latter was expected to undergo an operation in London next week. The PPP leaders later met the PTI chief at his residence and apprised him of their concerns over the SC decision. Talking to reporters, a jubilant Chaudhry Aitzaz said the nation would hear "good news tomorrow" and the PPP and PTI would come up with a joint decision. A PPP leader claimed that Imran Khan was also in favour of boycotting the election, but had sought time to consult his party's members before taking a final decision. He said Mr Khan had promised to get back to the PPP, the day when the Election Commission would scrutinise nomination papers of the candidates. Mr Qureshi said he had discussed the issue with the PTI chief after his meeting with the PPP delegation and the party had started consultations on whether there would be any use of contesting the presidential polls. It is premature to speak on the issue, he said, when asked about the possibility of agreeing on a joint candidate if the two parties decided to participate in the polls. He, however, regretted that the PPP had nominated Mr Rabbani as the candidate without consulting the PTI, thus forcing them to field retired Justice Wajihuddin as a candidate. He said the PTI also had "reservations" over the SC decision and it already had serious reservations over the conduct of the ECP in the general elections. Mr Qureshi held the ECP responsible for the present controversy.

[Dawn - 26th July, 2013]

ECP Accepts 3 Nomination Papers

Chief Election Commissioner retired Justice Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim accepted nomination papers of three presidential candidates – PML's Mamnoon Hussain and Iqbal Zafar Jhagra and retired Justice Wajihuddin Ahmad of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI). PPP's candidate Mian Raza Rabbani pulled out of the race at the last moment in protest against what he called unilateral revision of the schedule. In a statement submitted to Justice Ebrahim, who is returning officer for the presidential election, Mr. Rabbani regretted that he had neither been consulted nor heard. He said his party and members of other parties which had supported him jointly decided that he should not participate in an election that was loaded in favor of one particular and favored candidate. He said he was withdrawing all nomination papers filed by him or on his behalf for the presidential poll. Mr. Rabbani's papers were 'rejected as withdrawn'. The papers of other 19 candidates were rejected as none of them were signed by a lawmaker, as proposer or seconder. Mamnoon Hussain was the first to appear before the CEC. A candidate, whose papers were later rejected, raised a number of objections to the candidature of Mr. Hussain, saying he was over 65 years of age and, therefore, was not in a position to effectively discharge his duty as head of the state. He said that being a PML-N loyalist he could not be a symbol of federation and remain impartial. Mr Hussain also does not sport a beard. The objections were instantly rejected by the CEC, leaving many to wonder how a person with no locus standi had been provided an opportunity to raise objections. Objections were also raised to the nomination of Justice Wajihuddin. A candidate claimed that the PTI candidate lacked Islamic knowledge. He said Pakistan had come into being after a lot of sacrifices and the PTI's slogan of a 'new Pakistan' was sufficient to reject papers of its candidates. Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, a covering candidate for Mamnoon Hussain, is likely to withdraw his papers. Therefore, it would be a one-to-one contest

between Mr. Hussain and Justice Wajihuddin and there is no suspense about the outcome in view of PML-N's numerical strength. Talking to reporters after the acceptance of his papers, Mr Hussain said he would resign from the basic membership of the PML-N after his election as head of the state. He said he would try to remain impartial. He expressed displeasure over PPP's decision to boycott the election and said it was not in the spirit of democracy.

[Dawn - 27th July, 2013]

MQM Announces Support for PML-N's Candidate

This was stated by MQM Rabita Committee Deputy Convener Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqi while talking to media after a meeting with the PML-N delegation at his party's headquarter Nine-Zero, Azizabad. Earlier, a delegation of the PML-N led by Federal Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar held a meeting with the MQM leaders. The N-League delegation which comprised Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Pervaiz Rasheed, Federal Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar, PML-N's candidate for presidential election Mamnoon Hussain, other PML leaders Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, Nihal Hashmi and Saleem Zia arrived at Nine-Zero. Speaking on the occasion, Senator Ishaq Dar said Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has announced that corruption will not be allowed. He said the MQM leadership has agreed with the principles of the PML-N about eliminating corruption and putting Pakistan on the path of progress and making its future enlightened. The PML-N candidate for Presidency, Mamnoon Hussain, expressed gratitude to the MQM for announcing unconditional support to him in the presidential run. He said if he got elected as president of the country, he will not represent any single party, instead he will be the president of each and every countryman. He said he belongs to Karachi and he will also pay special attention to resolution of the problems of Sindh, especially Karachi. The PML-N delegation was accorded a very warm welcome by MQM leaders Abdul Rasheed Godial, Babar Khan Ghauri and others on its arrival at Nine-Zero. Sindh Governor Dr Ishratul Ebad Khan was also present on the occasion. Talking to media, Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqi said the MQM has announced unconditional support for the presidential candidate of the PML-N and it expects that the present government will make all-out efforts to eliminate poverty and illiteracy and cope with the economic crisis. He said MQM chief Altaf Hussain has also made it clear that there should be zero tolerance on corruption. Dr Khalid Maqbool also prayed for continuity of democracy in the country.

[Daily Times - 27th July, 2013]

'PTI to Contest Election despite Reservations'

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan announced that his party's candidate would take part in the presidential election fixed for July 30 despite reservations over the rescheduling of the polling date. Addressing a press conference at the PTI Secretariat, Imran Khan said that after a consultation process his party had reached a conclusion not to leave the field open for the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidate by boycotting the poll. Flanked by PTI candidate Justice (r) Wajihuddin Ahmed and others, Imran Khan said that the candidates had been given very little time for canvassing and they were not provided level-playing field. He said that the PPP and PTI candidates had not been given proper time for preparation but the decision to take part in the election was aimed at keeping the democratic traditions. Imran said that Justice (r) Wajihuddin was the most appropriate candidate for the presidential slot as he had made great sacrifices but he did not accept dictatorship by refusing

to take oath under the PCO. The PTI chief also expressed gratitude towards the Jamaat-e-Islami for extending support to the PTI nominee, adding that the decision to take part in the election process was made after through consensus. He said that it seemed that neutral umpires had not been appointed for presidential election. Responding to a question whether the PTI had decided to play the role of “friendly opposition” by not boycotting the poll, Imran Khan said that rather those who opted for boycott had played as friendly opposition. Imran reiterated his stance that the election results of at least four constituencies of May 11 elections should be cross-examined and the votes should be verified through thumb-expression. Justice (r) Wajihuddin Ahmed said that by deciding not to boycott the presidential election, Imran Khan had taken a statesman-like decision. He said that this decision is in the larger interest of the country. He alleged that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had not provided level-playing field to all the candidates taking part in the election for the Presidency.

[Daily Times - 27th July, 2013]

ECP Issues Final List of Presidential Candidates

According to an ECP notification, Mamnoon Hussain of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Justice (r) Wajihuddin of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf are in the run for the coveted slot. The nomination papers of three candidates, out of total 23, were accepted by Chief Election Commissioner Justice (r) Fakhruddin G Ibrahim. The nomination papers of 19 aspirants were rejected on various grounds. The nomination papers of Mamnoon Hussain, Justice (r) Wajihuddin and Iqbal Zafar Jhagra were accepted. But only two candidates – Hussain and Wajihuddin – are in the run after Iqbal Zafar Jhagra withdrew his papers of covering candidate. Polling to elect the new head of state will be held at Parliament House and the four provincial assemblies.

[Daily Times - 28th July, 2013]

PPP, PTI Castigate ECP, SC Over Presidential Poll

The Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) accused the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and Supreme Court (SC) of negligence over the rescheduling of the presidential election unilaterally on the petition of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, with the former staging a walkout from the National Assembly. Announcing boycott of the presidential elections, PPP leader Makhdoom Amin Fahim, however, offered to contest the election if the presidential poll is held on August 6, earlier announced by the ECP. PTI, on the other hand, stuck to its stance of taking part in the election for president for strengthening the democratic process. On the onset, speaking on a point of order, Makhdoom Amin Fahim alleged that advancing of the polling date amounted to pre-poll rigging and said July 30 is not acceptable to PPP, ANP, PML-Q and BNP-Awami. Fahim said that the ECP is an independent body and Supreme Court does not have authority to order it. The weakness of the ECP has pushed the matter to the Supreme Court, he opined. He acknowledged that the PPP and its allies do not have the required strength to win the election but they fielded Raza Rabbani to strengthen the democratic process and fulfil constitutional requirements. Fahim said that the Supreme Court unilaterally gave verdict on an application submitted by PML-N leader Raja Zafarul Haq and did not hear the presidential contenders or stakeholders. He appealed to Imran Khan to “hit a six” by announcing to boycott the presidential election, saying the opposition would be powerful if it is united. Meanwhile, PTI’ deputy parliamentary leader; Makhdoom Shah

Mahmood Qureshi, while backing the viewpoint of the PPP, declared that the PTI does not agree with its strategy. He held the ECP responsible for the controversy on the presidential election and said that the Supreme Court had also committed negligence by advancing the date of the election without hearing the parties concerned. Qureshi said that the PML-N and its allies have numerical superiority and the opposition was not in a position to get its candidate elected even if there were a unanimous candidate.

[Daily Times - 30th July, 2013]

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Human Rights Related Issues

World Population Day - Pakistan Faces Complicated Issues

As the global community commemorates another World Population Day on July 11, 2013, Pakistan continues to face critical and complicated population issues with no indication of improvement. According to statistics shared by Population Council Pakistan and Rahnuma-Family Planning Association of Pakistan (FPAP), Pakistan is the 6th most populous country in the world and will become 5th in number by the year 2050. Pakistan population is projected to be 210 million in 2025, as estimated by UN. Pakistan's under-five mortality remains the highest among the South Asian countries whereas high maternal mortality combined with high fertility results in one out of every 89 women dying from pregnancy related causes. There are 4.2 million new births every year i.e. 11,500 children are added every day to Pakistan's population and about 900 infants die every day, of which 625 are less than one month of age. Life expectancy at birth has increased to 34 years in 1951, 59 years in 1990 and 65 years in 2005. Skilled birth attendance has improved from 18 per cent in late 1990s to 36 in 2006/7. Institutional deliveries have increased with 3000 births taking place in public or private health facilities. Another unfortunate fact is that 32 new born babies become motherless due to maternal deaths every day. Gender remains an important determinant in child care e.g. compare to 100 boys, 88 girls are fully immunised whereas 9.2 million of child bearing age women suffer from anemia as a result of iron deficiency. In addition, 10.5 million children and 15 million child bearing women have zinc deficiency.

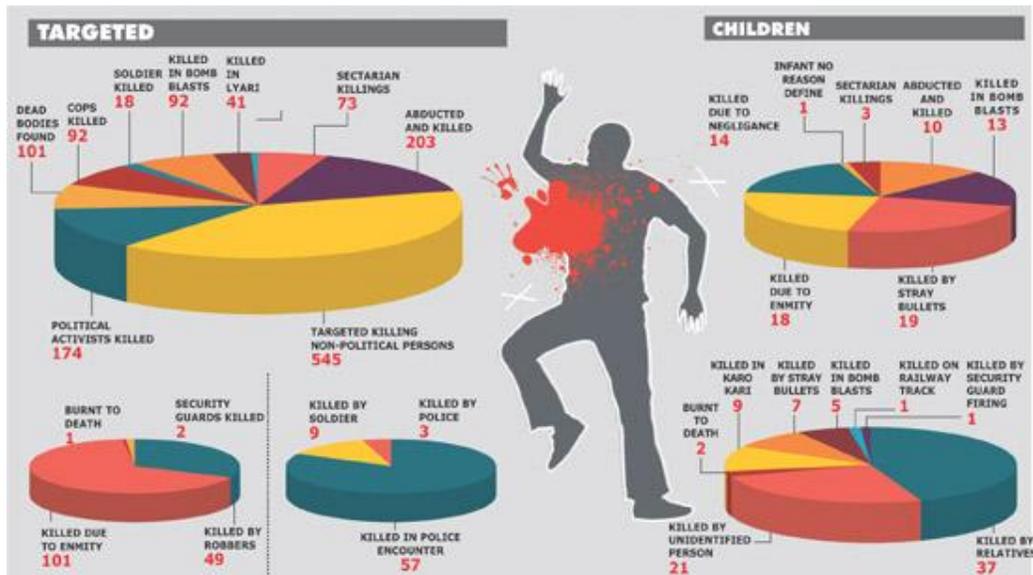
Pakistan has the lowest prevalence of underweight in South Asia with the exception of Sri Lanka. The unmet need for family planning persists above 30 percent with high rate of abortion with significant urban rural differential. Only 3400 out of 9450 birth taking place every day are performed by skilled birth attendants. Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world with an estimated population of 180 million (Population Reference Bureau 2012 Population Data Sheet). If current fertility trends persist, it is expected that Pakistan will be fifth most populous by 2050. Pakistan has a poor record of reducing fertility. Although the fertility rate has fallen from about six births per woman in 1990 to 3.6 in 2012, it is higher than the rest of south Asia. Family planning is perhaps the most overlooked and neglected component of women's health in Pakistan. Contraceptive use did rise sharply, from 12 per cent to 28 per cent, during 1991-98 (corresponding to a 2 per cent increase per year), but the rate of increase has slowed and reached a plateau at about 30 per cent since then. A quarter of women in the reproductive age group (15-49 years) in Pakistan have an unmet need for family planning. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, the unmet need for family planning is greater than 30%. Nearly 1 million women in Pakistan seek unsafe abortions every year, a decision determined by the

high level of unwanted pregnancies. Improved access to quality services will reduce the number of abortions and maternal and child deaths.

On this World Population Day, Rahnuma-Family Planning Association of Pakistan (FPAP) will raise awareness of the issue of adolescent pregnancy. In its statement, the FPAP shares that about 16 million girls under age 18 give birth each year. Another 3.2 million undergo serious complications. The vast majority - 90 per cent - of the pregnant adolescents in the developing world are married. Often such pregnancies are a consequence of discrimination, rights violations (including child marriage), inadequate education or sexual coercion. The organization believes that adolescent pregnancy is a health issue. The youngest mothers face a heightened risk of maternal complications, death and disability, including obstetric fistula. Their children face higher risks as well. It is also an issue of human rights. Adolescent pregnancy often means an abrupt end of childhood, a curtailed education and lost opportunities.

[The News - July 11, 2013]

HRCP Report: 45% Increase In Violence Related Deaths



* 1,726 people killed between January and June 2013

Ethnic, sectarian and politically-linked violence has taken 1,726 lives in Karachi from January to June 2013, which is around 45 percent higher compared to 1,215 deaths during the same period in 2012. This was stated in a detailed report issued by Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP).

The data, collected from newspapers and compiled by HRCP, expressed grave concern over the issue. The report further disclosed that those killed include victims of sectarian violence, targeted killings, as well as those whose dead bodies were found in different parts of the city. Over the same period last year, based on media reports, HRCP had counted the killing of 1,215 citizens in Karachi violence. HRCP noted that in each of the six months in 2013, the killings were much higher than the corresponding period last year. As many as 291 people were killed in January 2013, compared to 153 in January 2012 - 271 in February compared to 149 in February 2012 - 311 in March 2013 and 182 in March 2012 - 262 in April this year and 258 in April 2012

- 278 in May this year compared to 244 in May last year and 313 was the death toll in June 2013 compared to 229 in June 2012. Though the number of fatalities in violence was by no means small in the previous year, in 2013 the number never dipped below 250 in any month from January to June 2013. In 2012, in only three months-April, May and June- the number of citizens killed was over 200. For the first six months of 2012, the number of people losing their lives in violence was highest in June at 258 persons. Over the six-month period in 2013, as many as 73 people were killed in attacks deemed to have sectarian motives; 203 people were killed after being abducted; 545 people, who did not have any overt political affiliations, were killed in attacks; and 178 political activists (48 in June alone) were killed.

The fatalities also included 92 policemen and 18 personnel of paramilitary forces. Dead bodies of 101 people were found in the city during the period under review. Bomb blasts claimed 92 lives and Lyari gang war another 41. Robbers killed at least 49 people, and another 57 died in police encounters. HRCP stated that despite the high number of people killed in the port city month after month, curbing violence and the consequent killings did not appear to be a priority for the authorities. It said that the inability or unwillingness to improve law and order, and the failure to apprehend the killers and bring them to justice was as callous as it was inexplicable. HRCP expressed concern that the fatalities were increasingly being seen as mere statistics rather than loss of human beings, which reflected a failure of the state to protect human life. The impact that the killings had on the families of the victims and society at large was not being given the attention that it deserved.

[Daily Times - 16th July, 2013]

Enforced Disappearances: UN Wants Pakistan to Take Action

It is not a crime of the past; on the contrary it is a phenomenon which affects all regions of the world, with the false and pernicious belief that it is a useful tool to preserve national security and combat terrorism or organised crime, say UN experts on international human rights law. The rights experts who are member of the world body's Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances are calling for governments concerned to fight this crime and take effective measures against impunity. The changing situation of enforced disappearances requires new strategies to counter this crime, they said after attending a series of meetings in New York last week. The group was established by the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1980 to help families know whether their disappeared relatives were dead or alive and to ensure that individual cases are investigated about the missing persons placed outside the protection of the law. One of the group's task is to address cases of disappearances until they are resolved. It also provides assistance in the implementation by governments of the UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. The experts are currently looking into 400 cases of disappearances that have taken place in 29 countries, including Pakistan. According to them, since January they have received reports about 17 more incidents of disappearance, which are being investigated as well. After completing their investigation, the experts will present a comprehensive report to the Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council in September next year.

[Daily Times – 22nd July, 2013]

GENDER WATCH**Violence against Women****SC Directs Government to Act against Illegal Jirgas**

Declaring vani and swara inhuman customary practices, the Supreme Court (SC) ordered IGPs of all provinces and Islamabad to take action against illegal jirgas. The SC made this observation while hearing a suo motu case in which a jirga in Rajanpur had awarded an inhuman punishment to a man. A three-member SC bench, headed by Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, said that federal and provincial governments should raise awareness among people about their basic rights. According to media reports, a jirga in Rajanpur had told Noor Hassan to pass a bizarre test to prove his innocence in the murder of a man, Imtiaz Hussain. The test was that Hassan had to remain submerged in a 10-foot-deep crater filled with water, until the time another man had taken 60 steps. Hassan could not hold his breath for that long, and came out of the water before time. The man on the surface had walked just 52 steps by that time. The jirga declared Hassan guilty and announced that he would marry three women from his family in vani or else pay Rs 1 million to the rival party. The jirga also said that Hassan would be murdered if he failed to implement its orders. Later, police arrested jirga chief Mir Hazara and his brother and recovered Hassan from Hajipur area. The Rajanpur SDPO informed the bench that police had arrested nine accused in the case and recovered the victim. The chief justice said that police swung into action after news of this inhuman punishment was aired on two private TV channels. The CJP said that no such jirga should be held and if that happens then police would be held responsible

[Daily Times – 12th July 2013]

Female Jirga Set Up In Swat to Get Justice for Women

When 16-year-old Tahira was murdered in a horrific acid attack last year, her poverty-stricken parents got no justice. Officials slammed the door in their faces and the police refused to listen. The prime suspect – Tahira’s abusive husband – lived in freedom until the case was taken up by Pakistan’s first female Jirga set up to win justice for women in the face of immense discrimination. When the Taliban controlled Swat valley from 2007-09, girls were barred from going to school, their classrooms were burnt and women prevented from leaving the house without a male relative. Government writ was restored in 2009, but like much of the northwest, ancient mores and conservatism too often make women second-class citizens whose needs are subservient to those of men.

Tahira was married off at 12. In villages and tribal communities it is still common for girls from poor families to be given to husbands at puberty. But her mother says she became concerned when her son-in-law, Subha Khan, allegedly started to beat and torture her daughter. It was he who poured acid on her and dumped her in a room to die, her mother alleges. Tahira’s face was destroyed. So was her upper body. She screamed in agony for 14 days before she passed away, Bano said. But when they went to the police, officers did nothing. When her eldest son approached government officials to complain, Khan and his father threatened him with dire consequences. Then they were sent a message by the local Jirga, advising them to marry one of their sons to one of Khan’s sisters by way of recompense for Tahira. Bano refused to do so and was still fuming when she heard that a group of female activists had set up a women’s-only Jirga

in Saidu Sharif, the twin town of Mingora, the largest city in Swat. We're fed up with male-only jirgas which decide only in favour of men and sacrifice women for their own mistakes, said Tabbassum Adnan, 35, head of the 25-member jirga. We simply can't leave women at the mercy of the male Jirgas, she told AFP at the Jirga's small office. Tabbassum Adnan raised Bano's case and organised protests demanding legal action against Tahira's husband in connection with her murder. Her efforts persuaded police to register a case against Khan but he has since gone on the run. Tabbassum Adnan has provided Bano with a lawyer to fight her daughter's case.

[Dawn – 12th July 2013]

Women Empowerment

AIOU, Iranian Varsities to Launch Programmes for Women Education

Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Vice Chancellor Prof Nazir Ahmed Sangi showed keen interest in launching academic programmes for promoting women education and family studies in the country through a joint venture of AIOU and five-big Iranian universities. Iran's Women Section World Linkage Organisations head Dr Khanum Siddiqi Hijazi met with the AIOU's vice chancellor. Iran's Cultural Consul Dr Taqqi Siddique, AIOU's Faculty of Social Sciences Dean Prof Rashid A Naeem, Faculty of Gender and Women Studies head Dr Riffat Haque, Abdul Basit Mujahid and Abdul Wadood were present on the occasion. Both teams discussed ways and means to prepare and launch the academic programmes for the promotion of women education. The university has also launched a plan of open-schooling system to provide middle-level educational facilities to drop-out women students. Dr Khanum Siddiqi Hijazi appreciated the open-schooling system of AIOU and said that this project would increase the literacy rate at a large scale. Dr Taqqi Siddique disclosed that Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad would deliver a special lecture on 'Architecture Design' at AIOU during his upcoming visit to Pakistan. On the occasion, Dr Riffat Haque briefed the Iranian team about the academic programmes, initiatives, achievements and planning of the Gender and Women Studies Department for the empowerment of women.

[Daily Times - 4th July, 2013]

Civil Society Urges Female Participation in Decision-Making

Speakers at the 'National Consultation on Women Issues' stressed that the government and semi government institutions should ensure participation of women in the formation of rehabilitation and reintegration policies about education development for females in the country. A non-governmental organisation Shirkat Gah organised the two-day event at a local hotel. National Commission on the Status of Women chairperson Khawar Mumtaz presided over the concluding ceremony and highlighted the need for empowerment of women in Pakistan. Bhittai Social Action Watch and Oxfam Novib Pakistan also supported the conference. Representatives of different civil society organisations, government organisations, media, police officials, relevant UN agencies and lawmakers participated. Shunila Ruth MPA from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Zar Ali Khan from FATA NGO Consortium, Fehmida Iqbal from UN Women, Tanveer Jahan from DCHD, Mariam Bibi from Khwendo Kor, Nighat Saeed Khan from ASR, Kishwar Sultana from Insaan Foundation, Abida Swati from Oxfam Novib, Farhat Sheikh from NDMA, Qamar Naseem from Blue Veins and Tabassum Bashir, Humaira Sheikh, Dr Tabinda Siros from Shirkat Gah also spoke on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, Khawar Mumtaz stressed the need to sensitising communities to the importance of women's access to education

and strengthening laws, institutions, mechanisms and procedures for protecting the human rights of women. She said that Pakistan has experienced a dramatic rise in armed conflict, disasters and displacement with more than 24 million people displaced over the past seven years. She said that specific implications on women include changed roles, decreased mobility, psychological trauma, rape, enforced prostitution, forced sterilisation and other reproductive health issues arising from reduced access to services often resulting in abortions and miscarriages.

[Daily Times - 5th July, 2013]

Gender Equality, Still a Farfetched Dream for Women

When a nineteenth century philosopher observed that it was impossible to bring about any social change without the 'feminine upheaval', he left a point for the readers to ponder on and extract great lessons for generations to come. To right the wrongs of a society, the most disturbed, victimised segment will have to spearhead the movement of 'social justice' and 'equality'. The country we live in is an abode of violence and suppression against women; hence, to change the current deplorable situation, the oppressed gender has to 'raise' the flag of freedom high. According to a research conducted by the Aurat Foundation, an NGO working for the advocacy of women's rights, in 2011 some 8,539 cases were reported under 'violence against women' charges. With a sharp increase of 7 percent during January and June 2012 alone, 4,585 cases were registered. Not to mention here that if our society encouraged women to file the cases having been assaulted or attacked, the number of registered incidents would have soared to a frightening number. We as a nation have failed to neutralise 'male chauvinism', something our society is awash with. There is more to talk and write about the menace our women have to survive through. It is not only physical violence that women become victim to, but a 'deep-rooted' mentality of the stronger sex too inflicts non-physical violence against women. It is more excruciating, but regrettably, never makes to the headlines. One of the largest educational institutes of Pakistan, University of Karachi, has around 60 departments falling under 8 faculties. KU literally is a 'city within a city', an academy currently educating 25,000 students, out of which more than 60 percent are females. But shockingly, the number of female students 'shrinks' as soon as the 3rd year of any programme begins and the marriage season kicks off. The degrees are then awarded and very few of these 'social-principle-breakers' struggle to get employment. The trend stems from the morals, principles and man-made limitations that do not want women to participate in the overall progress of the society. The 'progress' is hampered deliberately lest the woman becomes equal to man whose superiority is holy and has been promised by god.

I know I am wasting my time studying here. It is of no use since my cruel parents for whom I am a burden will marry me as soon as I graduate to a man who will then follow the legacy and will enslave me the way my parents did, said a female student of Karachi University, a victim of non-physical violence. At least I tried, although futilely, to access freedom by getting into a prestigious department of my varsity, she adds woefully. Regrettably, professionals as learnt and valuable as doctors are prone to this sick, detrimental mentality. A mother of a 2nd year MBBS student shared her views, and said that now her daughter will get an impressive 'rishta' (marriage proposal) as families keep on searching for doctors to get their sons married to. Recently, this norm of getting a doctor 'bahu' (daughter-in-law) to make her work like a maid got its share of criticism on legion of social media sites moderated by Pakistani feminists.

An indeed favourable sign is the emergence of exemplary women who advocate women's rights and freedom. One of them is Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director Aurat Publication and

Information Service Foundation, who till date struggles for the just cause. Our society is bifurcated into classes and among these classes, the most oppressed is woman. The current circumstance has not come out of the blue; instead, it has historical happenings resulting in suppression of women, says Rahman. She said it was the conditioning of thousands of years that has led to gender inequality to which 'patriarchal' structure was to be blamed. Talking of marriage as an institution, which supposedly paves way for women oppression, she asserted that before getting into the social contract, the would-be-spouses should visit counsellors and understand the requirements of a new life ahead. In this way, the man will comprehend the position of her wife-to-be, and will reckon her equal. On the other hand, they will also get aware of the responsibilities that come with marriage. When asked if she still had hopes of seeing things changing for the woman, she said, Our society is replete with contradictions. There is a girl who gets killed on the pretext of honour when she tries to elope with her lover, and then we have women like Sheema Kirmani, the legendary classical dancer and theatre-performer, who never fears going against the tides. I believe the conditions will certainly change. In the words of Rahman, freedom for a woman is 'independence in making her own decisions, choosing her education, and her participation in politics and state-affairs'. Syeda Elia, a resident clinical psychologist at the Institute of Clinical Psychology, told the reasons behind violence against women. "Violence is nothing but a manifestation of power that the perpetrator likes to establish over the victim.

Emotional or physical abuse never develops overnight; there are always telltale signs, a gradual buildup before it becomes evident. A slap here, a public insult there, are usually not addressed, which later turn into full-blown acts of violence," she said. A renowned historian of our times, Dr Mubarak Ali, has compiled the history of women oppression in his book 'Tareekh aur Aurat' (Woman and History) that introduces its readers to hundreds of years of indoctrination, producing male-dominated morality and violence that follows. Ali has cited several ideologues advocating women suppression: Imam Ghazali, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and Mowlvi Ashraf Ali Thanvi being few of them. In his book 'Ahiya Uloom-ud-Deen', Ghazali writes, Marrying for a woman means becoming enslaved; therefore, a wife should appear as a slave to her husband. It is incumbent upon her to remain confined to her husband's house never leaving for the outside world neither is to be seen by any stranger who can get attracted to her. She is not to answer her husband at any cost and should get adorned only and solely for him. At a crucial juncture of sub-continent history when education was being debated as necessary, Syed Ahmed Khan categorically asserted that, I don't want you (women of the then Hindustan) to read anything apart from the revealed truth which your mothers have been reading for hundreds of years. The contemporary books penetrating our sacred traditions must be shunned from by you. Dr Ali has done justice in tracing out the roots of the notion on women oppression's notion. We live in society, which has not extricated itself from physical violence against women, let alone the non-physical violence that hampers the progress of women by obfuscating, lying about, and confounding the idea of 'gender equality'. To the misery of the victims, much is discussed neither in social circles nor in the media to put an end to this sheer injustice. Our society is bifurcated into classes and among these classes, the most oppressed is woman. The current circumstance has not come out of the blue; instead, it has historical happenings resulting in suppression of women.

[Daily Times - 29th July, 2013]

SECTARIAN CRISES & CONFLICT WATCH

Conflict & Sectarian Crisis Incidents

Security Briefs for the Month of July

Date	Incidents	Killed				Injured
		C	SFs	T	Total	
Tuesday, July 02, 2013	At least 17 suspected militants were killed and two others injured by a US drone which attacked a house in Sirai Darpakhel area near Miranshah in North Waziristan Agency of FATA.	0	0	17	17	2
	At least six FC personnel were killed and seven others injured when militants attacked the Kishan Ganga check-post near FR, Jina Kor, in Peshawar (Peshawar District), the provincial capital of KP.	0	6	0	6	7
Wednesday, July 03, 2013	At least three people, including a woman, identified as Zulekha Aslam (50), Abdul Latif (25) and Akhter Ahmed (50), were killed in an exchange of gunfire between two groups in Lyari and other old city areas of provincial capital of Sindh, Karachi (Karachi District).	3	0	0	3	0
Thursday, July 04, 2013	At least five Security Force personnel were killed and three others injured in a suicide attack on Bowia check post in North Waziristan Agency of FATA.	0	5	1	6	3
Friday, July 05, 2013	At least six people, belonging to KRC, were killed and 18 others were wounded on sixth consecutive day of violence in Lyari area of Karachi in Sindh.	6	0	0	6	18
	Four persons, including Afghan security officers, were killed and 10 others sustained injuries in a suicide attack near Pakistan-Afghanistan border close to Bab-e-Dosti pass in Chaman town of Qilla Abdullah District Of Balochistan.	3	1	1	5	10
Monday, July 08, 2013	Three unidentified dead bodies were found from PIB Colony, Napier and Pak Colony in Karachi of Sindh.	3	0	0	3	0
	Three more unidentified people were killed in Surjani and Korangi's Zaman Town of Karachi in Sindh.	3	0	0	3	0

Date	Incidents	Killed				Injured
		C	SFs	T	Total	
	At least eight people were killed and 11 others were injured when a suicide bomber while targeting tribal elder Malik Habibullah Khan drove his motorcycle into the car of the tribal elder in the Torha Warhai area of Doaba Bazaar in Hangu town of Hangu District in KP.	8	0	1	9	11
Wednesday, July 10, 2013	The chief security officer of President Asif Ali Zardari since 2008, Bilal Sheikh, and two others, including his driver Irfan Sheikh and a fruit vendor Abdul Rehman, was killed while over a dozen others were wounded in a suicide attack near Guru Mandir in Jamshed Town of Karachi (Karachi District), the provincial capital of Sindh.	2	1	1	4	12
Thursday, July 11, 2013	At least seven people were killed, including an Afghan security guard, and 10 others, including four FC personnel, sustained injuries in a suicide attack in Chaman town of Qilla Abdullah District in Balochistan bordering Afghanistan.	6	1	1	8	10
	At least three members of the Aman Lashkar were found dead in the Gazki Nullah area of Sui in Dera Bugti District of Balochistan.	3	0	0	3	0
Sunday, July 14, 2013	Pakistan Air Force jet fighters struck the militants hideous in Akakhel area of Bara tehsil in Khyber Agency of FATA destroying at least three of their secret bases while seven militants were killed and 14 others injured.	0	0	7	7	14
Monday, July 15, 2013	At least four people belonging to the Shia community were killed when unidentified militants opened fire on Raza Hussain's vehicle on Masjid Road area of Quetta.	4	0	0	4	2
Tuesday, July 16, 2013	Three persons, including religious scholar Maulvi Mohibullah, were shot dead on Khuda'ay Dad Road in Quetta.	3	0	0	3	0
Thursday, July 18, 2013	Three members of anti-militants peace committee were killed when a remote controlled bomb went off in Badan area of Mamond tehsil in Bajaur Agency of FATA.	3	0	0	3	2
Friday, July 19, 2013	At least three abductors were killed and two Policemen were injured in a fire	3	0	0	3	2

Date	Incidents	Killed				Injured
		C	SFs	T	Total	
	fight, while a Hindu girl, identified as Mahi Suchdev (3), was recovered during a raid at a hideout in Neelam Colony of Clifton in Saddar Town of Karachi.					
	At least six militants were killed and five others injured in SFs' operation in Akkakhel area of Bara tehsil in Khyber Agency of FATA.	6	0	0	6	5
Saturday, July 20, 2013	At least 28 militants and six SFs were killed during clashes in Khyber Agency in the FATA.	0	6	28	34	0
Monday, July 22, 2013	At least three bullet-riddled dead bodies, identified as those of Ameer Hamza, Khawand Bakash and Abdul Gaffar, were found from Sui area of Dera Bugti District.	3	0	0	3	0
Wednesday, July 24, 2013	Suicide bombers and armed militants mounted an attack on the local office of ISI in high security zone of Sukkur Barrage Colony in Sukkur town of Sukkur District, sparking a shootout that killed eight persons, including four terrorists, three ISI officials and a civilian, and injured 50 others.	1	3	4	8	50
Thursday, July 25, 2013	The dead bodies of 20 suspected militants were recovered from the Khurmatang area of Bara tehsil of Khyber Agency in the FATA.	0	0	20	20	0
	Unidentified militants shot dead four persons, including three tribesmen and a Levies constable, near the Gazgi Chowki area of Khuzdar District in Balochistan.	3	1	0	4	0
Friday, July 26, 2013	At least 60 persons were killed and 180 others were injured in a coordinated twin suicide attacks at Parachinar in the Kurram Agency of FATA.	60	0	2	62	180
Saturday, July 27, 2013	At least seven Pakistan Coast Guards personnel were killed and as many sustained injuries, in an attack by unidentified armed militants, in a checkpoint located in Sundsar area of Gwadar District.	0	7	0	7	7
	SFs killed at least six terrorists, during an attack by terrorists, at a check post Speen Tal area near in Hangu.	0	0	6	6	0

Date	Incidents	Killed				Injured
		C	SFs	T	Total	
Sunday, July 28, 2013	Eight militants were killed when a US drone fired two missiles at a house in the Shawal valley of the North Waziristan Agency in FATA.	0	0	8	8	0
Monday, July 29, 2013	24 persons, including 12 Policemen, five terrorists, four prisoners, and three civilians, were killed when TTP militants stormed the Central Prison at Dera Ismail Khan in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.	3	12	9	24	NS
	At least four suspected militants were killed and two security officials were injured during a raid conducted by Police and other Law Enforcement Agencies near Eastern bypass area of Quetta in Balochistan.	0	0	4	4	2
Tuesday, July 30, 2013	Eight militants and two SF personnel were killed during clashes between militants and the SFs in the Darra Adamkhel area of Kohat District in KP.	0	2	8	10	NS
Wednesday, July 31, 2013	Four suspected militants were killed during an operation by SFs in Bakra Peri area of Quetta in Balochistan.	0	0	4	4	0

Compiled from different dailies

Analyses, Reports & News

Blasphemy' girl moves to Canada

Rimsha Masih could have faced life in prison if convicted over allegations that she set fire to pages of the holy Quran in the poor, run-down neighbourhood where she lived on the edge of Islamabad. She was arrested last August and spent three weeks on remand in one of Pakistan's toughest jails in a case that drew widespread international condemnation. She was released on bail and the case against her was quashed in November, but she and her family were forced into hiding, living under government protection for fear of their lives. But a Christian activist in Pakistan told AFP that Rimsha and her close relatives had moved to Canada. "The Canadian government is supporting them. They are presently doing a foundation course to learn Basic English," he said. Local media said Rimsha was as young as 11, but an official medical report classified her as 'uneducated' and 14 years old, but with a mental age younger than her years. Pakistani Christian leaders last year paid tribute to Muslim clerics, members of the media and civil society for highlighting the injustice done to Rimsha. Cleric Hafiz Mohammed Khalid Chishti has been accused of desecrating the holy Quran and tampering with the evidence against her. In 2011, politicians Salmaan Taseer and Shahbaz Bhatti were assassinated for demanding that the blasphemy law be reformed. Asia Bibi, a Christian mother of five, remains in prison after being sentenced to death in November 2010 after other women claimed she made derogatory remarks about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

[Daily Times - 1st July, 2013]

Lasting Terror from TTP Makes Government Rethink Dialogue Plan

According to sources, the latest episode of terror acts has badly hampered the government's resolve to contact militants and put them in a quandary as how to proceed ahead in the given circumstances. PML-N remained a supporter of negotiations with militants operating under the umbrella of TPP and during its stint as opposition in the center, it repeatedly called for holding dialogues with them. Immediately after winning the historic May 11 polls, PML-N hinted at entering into dialogue with militants and even approached JUI-F Maulana Fazalur Rahman and JUI-S head Maulana Samiullah Haq to act as a bridge between the government and the TTP militants. Soon after taking over the helm of affairs, PML-N government faced the wrath of militants who carried out terrorism activities at a massive scale especially the incident of Nanga Parbat in which many foreign tourists were slain, has really put a serious question mark on any chance for holding talks with TTP. The insiders revealed that PML-N government had been constantly in touch with people who have militant links and asked them to convince to bring to halt barbaric activities to enter into dialogue. Regarding the demands of militants, sources said government would consider their conditions once they show a gesture of dialogue by stopping their activities. Also, government is also seriously working on identifying the supply routes of arms and ammunitions to these militant from foreign countries because the indications are such that they are getting the supplies from foreign destinations.

[Daily Times - 3rd July, 2013]

Musharraf Not Produced In Court

The Rawalpindi Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC), while hearing the Benazir Bhutto murder case, was told that the former president Pervez Musharraf could not be produced for security reasons. During the hearing, police report relating to production of Musharraf was also submitted. The report said that the accused could not be produced for lack of security arrangements. Later, the court ordered production of Musharraf on next hearing and adjourned until July 9, 2013.

[Daily Times - 3rd July, 2013]

Former Law Minister Arrested

Former law minister Wasi Zafar was arrested for allegedly creating ruckus during proceedings in the Islamabad High Court (IHC), however, he got relief after tendering unconditional apology to the court. The former law minister appeared before the court in a family dispute case but during hearing, he erupted with emotions and violated the decorum of the court. The IHC bench headed by Justice Shaukat Siddiqui ordered his arrest on his reckless act. The court was hearing the case of former daughter-in-law of Wasi Zafar who had filed a plea seeking custody of her kids after she was divorced by his son. During hearing, counsel for the petitioner, Arsalan Qureshi, apprised the bench that her client had two minor kids but their father was not handing over their custody to her. The bench also ordered production of the minors before the court.

[Daily Times – 4th July, 2013]

Pakistan to Discuss Drone Strikes With Kerry This Month

The Foreign Office has said Pakistan will take up the issue of drone strikes with US Secretary of State John Kerry during his upcoming visit to Pakistan later this month. Foreign Office spokesman Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, giving details of the visit of John Kerry in his weekly press briefing, said that drone strikes were a breach of Pakistan's sovereignty and a violation of international laws and human rights, besides being counter-productive in fight against terrorism. He said that the issue would also be discussed in the forthcoming contacts with the United States. He said that Kerry would visit Pakistan towards the end of this month to discuss bilateral relations, situation in the region and other subjects of mutual interest. He said the exact dates and agenda of the visit were being finalised by the two countries. The spokesman, while commenting on the Afghan army chief's statement accusing Pakistan of controlling Taliban, said Pakistan was sincere in its efforts to see peace and stability in Afghanistan. "The best route to achieve peace and stability is robust reconciliation process, for which Pakistan is willing to extend every possible help," he said. To another question, he said former foreign secretary Shahryar Ahmad Khan had been asked by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to conduct Track-II diplomacy with India, and he was already in India for the purpose. About the recent changes in Egypt, he said Pakistan and Egypt enjoyed close friendly relations based on bonds of fraternity and mutual respect. "Pakistan has been following events in Egypt and hopes that the Egyptian people will deal with the situation in a democratic manner." Commenting on the legality of change of the government in Egypt, he said Pakistan was following a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, but "it stresses the values of democracy", and that aspirations of the people should always be upheld. The spokesman said Pakistan and China had signed eight agreements and MoUs during the current visit of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to the country. He said these included a MoU for Pak-China Economic Corridor, which envisages establishment of a ministerial-level joint cooperation committee and joint working groups for formulating long-term plan for the economic corridor and promoting infrastructure. The spokesman said that other documents signed included an agreement on economic and technical cooperation, a letter of exchange on anti-polio equipment, a letter of exchange for bilateral training course on textile management and flood relief, an MoU on cooperation between Communist Party of China and the PML-N, cooperation between Chinese Centre for Contemporary World Study and Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, an agreement on laying of Pakistan-China cross-border cable system and an agreement between the Punjab government and ZTE company of China. To a question, he said that Pakistan welcomes the decision of the Saudi king for extension of three months in the deadline given to expatriates to correct their status. He hoped that by the time the next deadline expires, the situation would improve and a minimum number of Pakistanis in Saudi Arabia would be affected.

[Daily Times – 6th July, 2013]

New TTP Group Emerges To Avenge Drone Attacks

Another offshoot group associated with banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has come to the fore to avenge the killings in Waziristan by drone attacks. Hitherto known as "Ansarul Mujahideen", the group has claimed responsibility for attack on Bovia Check post and vowed to make life difficult for the United States and its friends in return for drone attacks. In a statement issued to media from an undisclosed location, group spokesman Abu Baseer said some 'so called' English speaking journalists were putting their lives at risk by supporting drone attacks.

The spokesman said their group had been formed in the wake of drone attacks in North and South Waziristan as they consider it a shameful act by remaining silent on drone attacks. He claimed that there were hundreds of Mujahideen who have entered into the battle field to avenge the missile attacks by pilotless US drones. Abu Baseer said the US and its friends must know that we have hundreds of suicide Fidayeen and they would make life difficult for them. He said they respect independent journalists but nowadays majority of channels and journalists were supporting US in return for a few dollars. He said the journalists must use their pen for oppressed Muslims. He said attacks on Bovia, Asia and Dum Deel check posts were a beginning and their major attacks would surprise the world.

[Daily Times – 8th July, 2013]

Why Can Pakistan Not Stop Drone Attacks? An Analysis by Farman Kakar

One thing that is quite obvious is that the Pakistani leadership wants an end to the US's publicly rarely owned drone missions. The reason is compelling: drone attacks are counter-productive. The Taliban strike more lethally in the wake of US drone attacks on their hideouts in FATA. As this article demonstrates, it is neither Pakistan's technological inability nor its lack of seriousness on drone attacks; rather it is the constraints imposed by the international system due to which the country cannot stop US drone attacks. Maybe Pakistan does not have the required paraphernalia of war to strike the US drones. The US MQ 1 Predator and MQ 9 Reaper have a maximum altitude of 25,000 feet and 50,000 feet respectively. Pakistan's US-made F-16 jet flies in excess of 50,000 feet. The state of art aircraft fires both air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles. Similarly, Pakistan's JF-17 Thunder has a service ceiling of 50,000 feet. It also fires air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles. In June the previous year, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan revealed that Pakistan's Hamza missile can shoot down US drones. What the preceding paragraph demonstrates is that Islamabad has the capability to strike down drones. Why then does Pakistan not strike one? Maybe Pakistan and the US are on the same page when it comes to targeting the Taliban in FATA. As one WikiLeaks cable revealed, drones have more than tacit support from both sides across the military-civilian divide in Pakistan with the ambiguity, however, whether General Pervez Kayani's request for 'predator coverage' included both surveillance and strikes or not. According to the website Pakistan body count, from June 2003 to June 18, 2013, a total of 389 suicide attacks took place in Pakistan. The majority of these suicide blasts were claimed by the Taliban and if combined with other acts of violence also claimed by the militants, the resultant death toll has skyrocketed to more than 40,000 people killed, including personnel from law enforcing agencies.

Although not exclusively, US drone strikes now numbering 340 are primarily responsible for the retaliation from the Taliban of Pakistan's tribal areas. Based on logical deduction, the crescendo in militants' activities convinces the Pakistani leadership that costs exceed benefits when it comes to US drone missions. Why then does Pakistan not stop drone operations becomes a million dollar question. Kenneth Waltz's neo-realism, aka structural realism, has the answer. According to Waltz, states exhibit similar policies and perform similar functions simply because they operate under similar conditions. To the distinguished author, the international system has a precisely defined structure. Anarchy — the absence of an overarching authority above the states so as to regulate their relations towards one another — is the ordering principle. Although the capabilities of states differ — there being major and small powers — they all pursue security first in the hierarchy of issues. Thus, the notion of anarchy leaves states being the most powerful actors, pitting the major powers to arm twist their smaller counterparts in the self-help environment. It is no coincidence that the latter fall in line with the former so as to

ensure their existence. The post-Cold War era, when US military might goes almost unchallenged on the military chessboard; the uni-polar world seriously limits the choices that states enjoy under multi-polarity and bi-polarity. Pakistan does not strike US pilotless drone because it ensures the country's security. It is what Robert O Keohane terms the 'issue area' where the US has more influence to fly drones than Pakistan to strike one. On the other hand, Pakistan's alleged covert support to the Taliban is the issue area where Islamabad exercises more influence than Washington does.

Thus what is important to mention is that power is not fungible. In other words, power derived from one area of activity where it works does not necessarily affect the outcomes in other areas. In the aftermath of 9/11, General Pervez Musharraf walked on a tightrope. The balancing act required to neither offend the Taliban nor the US. Given the fact whereby the GHQ was to opt for either the worse option or the worst, it found itself in between the proverbial devil and the deep blue sea. Being a rational actor, Pakistan decided its fate with its traditional patron, the US, at the expense of its 'strategic assets', the Afghan Taliban. The partnership had the additionally perceived strategic advantages of being well-armed vis-à-vis Islamabad's traditional archrival Delhi both through the provision of paraphernalia of war and economic aid. Segments of Pakistani society question the rationality of siding with the US often incognizant of what the consequences would have been if the country had thrown its weight behind the Taliban. Irrespective of who controls the levers of power, Pakistan would remain allied to the US. This, though a bitter reality, is the reality of power politics. For the new incumbent government to reduce the damage done by the Taliban is to impress upon them that the state does not stop drone attacks simply because it cannot. To make it a success story, enlisting the support of the political clergy is essential.

[Daily Times - 23rd July, 2013]

Taliban Storm DI Khan Prison

Militants were still locked in gunfight with police and security forces at the time of filing of this report and curfew had been imposed in the city, which is close to the lawless tribal regions bordering Afghanistan. Militants have attacked the Central Prison. They are heavily armed and firing mortar shells, district police Chief Sohail Khalid said. DIG Prisoners Khalid Abbas said that as many as 5,000 prisoners, including 250 belonging to banned outfits were held in the jail. The ambush appears to be an attempt to free several militants who are held in the jail, said a security official on the condition of anonymity. Residents in Dera Ismail Khan reported hearing loud blasts and gunfire, and said the electricity supply to several parts of the city had been suspended. Some officials claimed that the attackers had failed to break in the jail but some independent sources said that eight to 10 terrorists entered the jail after blasting the main gate and some 40 prisoners had fled the jail during the fighting. The sources said that gun shots and more than eight huge explosions were also heard from inside the prison. They said militants were targeting police vehicles with hand grenades. A TV channel reporter said the terrorists, wearing police uniforms, occupied a house near the jail and some of them entered the jail. He said a DSP and his gunmen were seriously injured when terrorist threw hand grenades at a police van. Terrorists crossed the first police picket after a suicide attack and broke into the jail after blasting its main gate. The gunmen launched their attack with a series of heavy explosions before firing rocket propelled grenades and machineguns, district police chief said.

Contingents of Army and security agencies had surrounded the jail and started operation against the terrorists. Official sources said that six suspects were arrested from the battle area while two personnel were injured. Tehrik-e-Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack,

claiming that more 100 of their fighters were participating in it. The attack is largest after Bannu Jail breakout in which hundreds of militants were got released by the Taliban insurgents. They included Adnan Rasheed – a key Taliban figure involved in a life attempt on former military ruler Gen (r) Pervez Musharraf. The prison, in the central town of Dera Ismail Khan, houses Taliban and militants from banned sectarian groups. Some prisoners belonging to banned outfits and terrorist groups were on a hunger strike after a conflict with the jail authorities over possession of mobile phones. The jail authorities had been issued warnings by the terrorists of attacks for the last three days.

[The Nation - 30th July, 2013]

ECONOMIC WATCH

Facts & Figures

IMF Loan to Settle Only Past Debts: Pervaiz Rashid

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Pervaiz Rashid has said that the \$5.3 billion IMF loan will not be used to meet budget deficit, rather it will be used to settle the past debts incurred on non-development projects by the previous regime. Talking to reporters during visit to the EMRA office, he said that the previous government used the IMF and other loans on non-development expenditures and could not generate a single asset for the country from the money. To a query, the minister said that the PML-N government had not conceded to any conditionality of the IMF to get the loan. He said that to overcome the energy crisis, grapple terrorism and mobilise a static economy of the country were the top priorities of the government. He said the government had increased power generation from 9,000MW to 13,000MW with a clear-cut extra production of about 4,000MW for the masses. "Some 1,700MW will be added to the national grid in the coming days," he said. To a query, the minister said that there would be no load shedding during the Sehar, Iftar and Taraweeh hours in the holy month of Ramazan, as per the directions of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Regarding terrorism and other challenges, the senator said that the government would convene an all-parties conference (APC) to which the heads of all political parties in the country would be invited. He said that the APC would provide an opportunity to evolve a unanimous strategy to quell terrorism in the country, and it would have the backing and support of the nation. The minister said that the PML-N government would develop consensus on the issue of terrorism and the strategy on terrorism would have the ownership all political forces.

Regarding information sharing with the British government, the information minister said that the law would take its own course in the MQM case. He said that the UK government had its own laws. "If some crime has taken place in Britain, it will be decided in the light of their justice system. Pakistan will cooperate when the government is approached by the British authorities," he said. To a query about LNG, Pervaiz Rashid said that the PML-N government would make all-out efforts to enhance energy resources of the country. He said that the import of LNG from Qatar was one of the priorities. About Musharaf's trial under Article 6, he said that the proceedings had started in the case. About the appointment of the NAB chief, the minister said the NAB chief would be appointed after consultation between the leader of the House and the opposition leader in the NA. About a decision to end a ban on death penalty, he clarified that there never was a ban on death penalty in Pakistan, adding that courts had awarded capital punishment in several cases. He said that the president was empowered by the constitution to grant pardon on an appeal. He said the former interior minister had stayed the appeals and kept all appeals at the ministry instead of forwarding them to the president for a decision, as a result of which many convicts facing death had to wait for years on their appeals for clemency.

On drone attacks, the minister said that drones challenged the solidarity of Pakistan. He said that terror attacks on hapless anti-polio vaccinators were also a threat to the country, and the government was working to devise a strategy to make both parties realise about their wrongdoings. About the unjust distribution of electricity, the information minister said the government had adopted measures to ensure equal distribution of electricity. On tax, he said 40 commodities had been exempted from sales tax, and added that 16 percent sales tax was already being levied. Regarding the appointment of the chief justice and the army chief, he said that decisions would be taken as per the constitution of Pakistan. About subsidies, he said the

government had decided to withdraw subsidy on electricity from undeserving people who could afford the utility.

[Daily Times - 7th July, 2013]

Pakistan Receives \$13.92 Billion Workers' Remittances in FY13

Overseas Pakistanis remitted an amount of \$13.92 billion during July-June 2012-13, showing a growth of 5.56 percent or \$733.64 million compared with \$13.186 billion received during the same period of the last fiscal year July-June 2011-12. The inflow of remittances during July-June 2013 from Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, UK, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman) and EU countries amounted to \$4,104.73 million, \$2,750.17 million, \$2,186.21 million, \$1,946.01 million, \$1,607.88 million and \$357.37 million respectively compared with the inflow of \$3,687.00 million, \$2,848.86 million, \$2,334.47 million, \$1,521.10 million, \$1,495.00 million and \$364.79 million respectively in July-June 2012. Remittances received from Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan and other countries during the last fiscal year July-June 2013 amounted to \$967.79 million as against \$935.36 million received in the last fiscal year July- June 2012. The monthly average remittances for July-June 2013 period comes out to \$1,160.02 million compared to \$1,098.89 million during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year. In June 2013 an amount of \$1,164.79 million was sent home by overseas Pakistanis, up by 4.23 percent, compared with \$1,117.52 million received in the same month of 2012. In June 2013 the inflow of remittances from Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, UK, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman) and EU countries amounted to \$353.18 million, \$218.60 million, \$179.93 million, \$171.94 million, \$138.18 million and \$31.03 million respectively compared with the inflow of \$333.68 million, \$219.14 million, \$206.60 million, \$126.72 million, \$128.12 million and \$29.24 million respectively in June 2012. Remittances received from Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan and other countries during June 2013 amounted to \$71.93 million as against \$73.98 million received in the same month (June 2012) of the last fiscal year.

Daily Times - July 11, 2013

DEVELOPMENT WATCH

Health Projects

Polio Drive in Bajaur

Speaking at the launching ceremony of the anti-polio drive at Khar, Bajaur Political Agent Syed Abdul Jabar Shah asked the local health department and World Health Organisation to accelerate efforts to purge the tribal region of poliovirus. Tribal elders, ulema, social activists, WHO representatives and local officials were in attendance. The Bajaur political agent also urged elders, ulema and social workers to extend their support in the anti-polio drive to eliminate the disease in the agency. He called upon parents to administer oral polio vaccine to their children to protect them from the fatal ailment. Meanwhile, agency surgeon Dr Zakir Hussain told journalists that 624 teams would vaccinate 223,570 children against polio in Bajaur. He said Bajaur Levies personnel and members of local peace committees had been deployed to provide security to polio workers. In Mohmand, agency surgeon Dr Dawood Khan Mohmand launched the anti-polio campaign. Speaking on the occasion, he said there was no no-go area in Mohmand. Dr Dawood said the administration had provided foolproof security to polio teams to make the campaign a success. He said 361 mobile, 39 fixed and 8 transit teams had been set up to vaccinate 87,850 children during the drive. He said 92 supervisors had also been appointed in this respect. He said two teams would also administer polio drops to children crossing Pak-Afghan border at Chamarkand and Mettai areas. He said there were no refusal cases in the agency.

[Dawn - 1st July, 2013]

Measles: 175 New Victims in a Day

At least 175 new cases of measles have been reported in different hospitals across Punjab while 26 new patients were admitted in city hospitals during the last 24 hours. According to health department officials, at least 182 deaths have been reported so far during the last six-and-a-half months. Meanwhile, the Expanded Programme for Immunisation (EPI) of the health department is going to launch anti-measles drive in five high-risk districts of Punjab from July 8, said EPI's additional director Dr Nazir Hussain. As many as 5,124 teams having four people each are involved in the anti-measles drive. The additional director claimed that measles had been down by sixty percent in Lahore as a result of an anti-measles drive launched in May. He said that many parents had been denying treatment to their children until it was too late. He urged them to seek proper medical advice if symptoms of measles appear in their children.

[Daily Times - 4th July, 2013]

Health Reports/ Controls

15 Million People Infected With Hepatitis in Pakistan

Hepatitis has emerged as one of the major public health problems in Pakistan affecting 15 million people in the country. Out five common types of hepatitis occurrence of hepatitis B and

C is reported the most. Fatima Jinnah Dental College (FJDC) Dental Public Health Head Dr Syed Hussain Askary said at a seminar to promote prevention and early diagnoses for treatment of hepatitis. He explained that with a national prevalence of 4.9 percent for hepatitis C and 2.4 percent for hepatitis B, Pakistan is currently facing an epidemic of viral hepatitis. Over 200 doctors and experts in the field attended the seminar.

[Daily Times – 10th July 2013]

WHO Urges Action against Hepatitis Viruses

World Health Organization (WHO) is urging governments, in connection with World Hepatitis Day on July 28, to act against the five hepatitis viruses that can cause severe liver infections and lead to 1.4 million deaths every year. Some of these hepatitis viruses, most notably types B and C, can also lead to chronic and debilitating illnesses such as liver cancer and cirrhosis, and in addition to this, loss of income and high medical expenses for hundreds of millions of people worldwide. Viral hepatitis is referred to as a 'silent epidemic' because most persons do not realise that they are infected and, over decades, slowly progress to liver disease. Many countries are only now realising the magnitude of the disease burden and devising ways to address it. Hepatitis A and E are food-borne and waterborne infections, which cause millions of cases of acute illness, every year, sometimes with several months needed for a person to fully recover. Hepatitis B, C, and D are spread by infected body fluids including blood, by sexual contact, mother-to-child transmission during birth, or by contaminated medical equipment. Hepatitis B can be prevented by reaching every child with immunisation programmes that include hepatitis B vaccine. There is no vaccine for hepatitis C. In addition, infections can be prevented by protecting against mother-to-child transmission of the virus and ensuring the safety of blood, transfusion services, organ donation and injection practice. Hepatitis A and E can be prevented by avoiding contaminated food and water; in addition, there is an effective WHO approved vaccine for hepatitis A. Hepatitis medicines are now included in the WHO Essential Medicines List, which Member States are encouraged to adopt. Essential medicines are selected based on disease prevalence, safety, efficacy, and comparative cost-effectiveness. The WHO Model List can be used by countries as a guide for the development of their own national list. The fact that many hepatitis B and C infections are silent, causing no symptoms until there is severe damage to the liver, points to the urgent need for universal access to immunisation, screening, diagnosis and antiviral therapy, says WHO Assistant Director-General for Health Security and the Environment Dr Keiji Fukuda.

The findings show that 37 percent of the countries have national strategies for viral hepatitis, and more work is needed in treating hepatitis. It also highlights that while most of the countries (82 percent) have established hepatitis surveillance programmes, only half of them include the monitoring of chronic hepatitis B and C, which are responsible for most severe illnesses and deaths. Many of the measures needed to prevent the spread of viral hepatitis disease can be put in place right now, and doing so will offset the heavy economic costs of treating and hospitalising patients in future, says Director Pandemic and Epidemic Diseases at WHO Dr Sylvie Briand. The findings underline the important work that is being done by governments to halt hepatitis through the implementation of WHO recommended policies and actions, she added. WHO is currently developing new hepatitis C screening, care and treatment guidelines, which will provide recommendations on seven key areas such as testing approaches; behavioural interventions (alcohol reduction); non-invasive assessment of liver fibrosis; and the selection of hepatitis C drug combinations. New, more effective medicines to prevent the

progression of chronic hepatitis B and C are in the pipeline, says Team lead of WHO's Global Hepatitis Programme Dr Stefan Wiktor.

[Daily Times - 26th July, 2013]

Development Projects

'One UN' Programme Launched In Sindh

Sindh government represented by the additional chief secretary Planning and Development Department, Arif Ahmed Khan, together with representatives of the UN system in Pakistan, launched the One UN Programme in Sindh for the next five years. The One UN Programme II focuses on addressing inclusive and equitable development need of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged covering six Strategic Priority Areas where the UN system has a comparative advantage to assist through its core mandate. The key activities and outcomes over the next five years range from ensuring access to and use of basic social services, sustainable livelihoods, disaster risk reduction, strengthening governance and social cohesion, gender equality and social justice, food and nutrition security for vulnerable groups. It will include all areas identified by the Government of Sindh and stakeholders to accelerate the achievement of MDGs in the province. Arif Ahmed Khan expressed hope that the programme shall help to achieve the expected development. He said, he is confident that with the help of the UN system and working together coherently and effectively, a better positioned to deliver on the promise; Sindh Government has made to provide social services, strengthen governance and social cohesion. Speaking on behalf of the UN system in Pakistan, Dan Rohrmann, UNICEF representative said that its an opportunity where Government of Sindh and the UN agencies have come together for the first time to jointly root-out an ambitious and dynamic five-year programme to address key priorities defined together with a broad range of stakeholders in Sindh. "If the programme is implemented well, it will forever change the lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged living in the province.

[Daily Times - 16th July, 2013]

International Funding Institutions (IFIs)

USAID Project to Rebuild Flood-Hit Schools

The Karachi Deputy Mission Director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Leon S. Waskin, and Sindh senior minister for education Nisar Ahmed Khuhro attended a groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday to mark reconstruction of the first of 20 schools damaged during the 2011 floods. USAID is providing \$4 million to reconstruct these schools across Sindh, according to a press release. USAID is assisting the Sindh department of education and literacy in undertaking a systematic assessment of the damaged schools in Sindh under this programme. Makeshift structures will be provided where necessary so that children can continue their education while rehabilitation and construction of the new buildings are completed. USAID will also provide educational supplies to these public schools and ensure clean drinking water along with the installation of proper sanitation system. Mr Waskin and Mr Khuhro observed the occasion by planting a tree on the ground of Government Girls Primary School in Shahpur Rizvi, Tando Allahyar district. Officials from the Sindh education department,

teachers, students and community members were also present. In 2010, for example, the United States provided plastic sheeting, safe drinking water, soap, blankets and enough food to feed over one million families for more than three months. USAID's effort to rehabilitate and reconstruct flood affected schools in Sindh is one of the many US-funded initiatives that help Pakistani children continue their education and fulfil their potential, according to the press release. The United States is also building new applied research centres at Pakistani universities that focus on energy, water and agriculture. US assistance to Pakistan's education sector includes building or rehabilitating more than 850 schools across Pakistan, launching new degree programmes in education at 90 teacher colleges and universities and operating the largest Fulbright academic exchange programme in the world.

[Dawn - 3rd July, 2013]

USAID Assists Discos in Improving Working Conditions for Women

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Power Distribution Programme has been tirelessly working with all nine DISCOs to provide a better working environment for its female staff. The programme strives to provide women with the basic necessities at the workplace and also ensures the protection of their basic rights. Women hardly make 1.0 percent of the workforce at DISCOs and are mostly confined to clerical and desk jobs. After USAID's interventions targeted at the female staff of DISCOs, women are now aware of career paths in the energy sector and the retention ratio of these employees have greatly increased as more women are now seeking a career in the power distribution business. Women already play a key role in Pakistan's economy; strengthening their role in energy will create a real difference in national prosperity, therefore, USAID is making all efforts to increase women's participation while creating a female-friendly environment in the energy sector. To ensure a healthy work environment, USAID has successfully organized gender equity training sessions in all nine DISCOS. USAID has also informed the authorities regarding the Protection against Harassment at Workplace Act 2010 and seven DISCOS have successfully adopted the policy. The USAID Power Distribution Programme has successfully set up a daycare facility along with a rest area at Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO). Women can bring their children to work and visit them in their spare time, while they are under the supervision of trained specialists. A similar rest area facility has been set up at Peshawar Electric Supply Company. Customer service centers in six DISCOS and Management Information System Data Centre in one DISCO have also been renovated, providing a better environment for female Staff. The USAID Power Distribution Programme is a five-year, USAID-funded programme aimed at working jointly with DISCOs in Pakistan to improve their performance in terms of a reduction in losses, and improvement in both revenues and customer services, to bring them to the level of well-run utilities in other progressive countries. Through this programme, the US government provides assistance and support to the government of Pakistan in its efforts to reform the power sector to end the current energy shortfall.

[Daily Times - 4th July, 2013]

USAID, KWSB Improving Water Supply for Karachiites

The United States government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Power Distribution Programme is helping Karachi Water and Sewage Board (KW&SB) in improving infrastructure for water supply. It uses a network of pumping stations to pump

water from the filtration plants like Dhabeji and Hub to 21 million inhabitants of Karachi. These pumping stations are the backbone of KWSB's water supply operations, and are vital to the distribution of water across the city. Whilst these pumping stations are crucial the smooth supply of water, unfortunately they are highly energy inefficient. Most of the existing pumps were installed more than 20 years ago. These inefficient tube well pumps leech more electricity from the grid, in return providing less water resulting in large electricity bills for KW&SB. In addition to the higher electricity bills, many residential areas face an absence of potable water supply several times a months as these old pumps fail to provide an adequate water supply to the city's residents. The USAID Power Distribution Programme is currently replacing the worst performing old pump-sets with modern high efficiency pump sets from USAID Programme certified pump-set suppliers, all certified to ISO Standard 9906 for cold water pump sets. So far 41 pumps have been replaced and operating efficiently and effectively. The programme aims to complete the replacement of pumps by the end of September 2013. The USAID Power Distribution Programme will replace approximately 75 old KW&SB's water pump sets replacing these inefficient pumps will boost efficiency rates from a present average of 29 percent to 55-65 percent, leading to a reduction in KWSB's energy consumption. This will upgrade the water supply to the city and decrease KWSBs financial burden by \$1.15 million per annum, and provide a continuous supply of clean water to the communities under its jurisdiction, said John Pullinger Director Field Operations of USAID Power Distribution Programme. KW&SB will get multi-fold benefits, it will reduce its financial stress on it, secondly the new efficient pumping units would improve the electrical efficiency and reduce the electrical consumption and thirdly the expenditure and time on daily maintenance will reduce massively.

[Daily Times - 14th July 2013]

ENERGY CRISIS

Government's Role in Oil and Gas & Energy Crisis

Nawaz Hopes To End Power Crisis In His Tenure

The prime minister visited Faisalabad, where he learnt about business community's problems. He separately chaired a meeting on energy crisis in Lahore and inaugurated a 84 mega watt hydropower project in Mirpur. Addressing the inauguration ceremony of the power project, Nawaz Sharif said that load shedding would decrease considerably in the coming months owing to a number of short projects initiated by the government. He said the projects undertaken to increase electricity production are long term ventures but since Pakistan has abundant water resources, the government would seek to utilize them optimally. Nawaz said that a number of Chinese investors are working on energy projects in Pakistan, which when completed would help reduce the power crisis. Nawaz assured foreign investors of assistance and cooperation. He added that a one-window operation would be launched to facilitate investors. One of the biggest issues of the power sector in Pakistan is expensive power generation, and the inauguration of the country's first private sector hydro IPP by Larai Energy has paved the way for private sector investment in hydropower projects for producing cheap electricity. As per official estimates, the country has 100,000 megawatts of hydel power generation, of which only 6,500MW has been harnessed so far. The PM said that besides energy generation, the new Bong Escape Hydropower Project would create economic opportunities for people in Azad Kashmir. This project would replace approximately 135,000 tonnes of oil imports valued in excess of \$100 million per annum. It would contribute 540 GWh of green energy annually into the national grid under a 25 year PPA with National Transmission and Despatch Company (NTDC). He further said in the meeting at Raiwind in Lahore directed to immediately start coal-based electricity generation projects. He also said coal is a cheaper source of power and it would help save billions of rupees spent on furnace oil purchase. He also directed for expediting work on Neelum Jhelum Power Project and promised that the federal government would provide every help to them in this connection. The Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited (SNGPL) recently started an operation against gas theft and had raided multiple commercial mills and factories. The mill in Faisalabad was also raided as a part of this operation and was fined a total of Rs0.11 billion.

[The Nation - 16th July, 2013]

Power Cuts Increased Despite Payment to IPPs: Khosa

PPP Secretary General Sardar Latif Khosa made the following statements, people were perturbed and justifiably angry because they were braving the torture of load shedding despite the government had paid Rs 320 billion to IPPs. In fact, the duration of load shedding has increased as compared to the past. The credibility of government has plummeted after it could not meet its commitment of carrying out no load shedding during iftar, seher and taraveeh. He said that Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif should set up his office in a tent at Minar-e-Pakistan to protest against load shedding as he had been doing so during the PPP government. (KP) chief minister had decided to protest against the federal government over load shedding because KP was not getting due share of electricity. Shahbaz Sharif should have spent billions of rupees on the generation of electricity instead of spending provincial resources on Jangla [Metro] Bus Service and Raiwind Road. After the 18th Amendment, provinces were allowed to

generate electricity, Shahbaz Sharif should let people know how many electricity projects he has planned and executed. He added that not a single unit of electricity had been generated by Shahbaz Sharif's government in Punjab during the last five years. Shahbaz Sharif had spent Rs 370 billion of the local government on the projects of his own choice. He should have spent this amount on generation of electricity by putting turbines along Indus, Jhelum and Chenab rivers. The textile manufactures had also gone on a strike, adding that this important sector was the biggest sector of foreign exchange earnings and providing tens of thousands of jobs to the people of the count. The suspended supply of electricity to this sector would affect the country's exports. About Nandipur power project, Khosa said that it was being used as a smoke screen to cover up government's incompetence.

[Daily Times - 16th July, 2013]

Government Plans to End Load Shedding In 3 Years: PM

Official sources said that the provincial chief ministers were more cautious about the proposed amendments needed for the approval of the National Power Policy 2013. They complained about the non-provision of the proposed summaries of the CCI meeting ten days ahead of the meeting as laid down in the Rule 5 of the CCI. Keeping in view the concern of the provinces, the CCI chairman has constituted a high-level committee comprising chief secretaries of all four provinces and their technical experts, representatives from ministries of finance, law and justice, water and power, petroleum and natural resources. The committee would brief the provincial teams on the proposed amendments needed for the National Power Policy and would try to remove the concerns of the provinces within one week and incorporate recommendations, if any, from the provinces. After completion of the consultation provinces with the provinces, another CCI meeting would be convened for a consensus decision, the sources added. However, the provincial chief ministers have appreciated the objectives of the National Power Policy.

Official sources further informed that ceremonial approval of the CCI is needed for the proposed IMF Loan Package. The sources informed that federal government has not given a detailed presentation on the proposed \$5.3 billion IMF loan package nor the details of the prior actions (painful decisions) attached with the IMF loan programme to the provinces. The provincial government having less capacity to understand the implications of the prior actions attached with the IMF loan programme kept on complaining about the timely releases of their revenue shares in the NFC Award. The provinces also complained that they are denied the complete tax revenues share as was announced at the start of the fiscal year. Each year the federal government, in the federal budget, projects revenue share of each province and at the end of fiscal year it always falls short, leaving provinces to cut short their development spending and priorities. It disturbs the development priorities of the regions and sectors, they complained, the sources added.

The provinces demanded that in case they are assured of the timely and complete release of projected revenue share under the NFC Award by June 30, 2013, they would be ready to facilitate the federal government in carrying out the initiatives under IMF loan programme. The official sources said that the federal government has informed the provinces that upon completion of the negotiations and completion of approval of the loan from the Executive Board of the IMF, provinces would be informed about the conditionalities accordingly. Once the loan is approved by the IMF Board its details would be presented in the CCI meeting as well as in parliament for detailed discussion. It is worth mentioning here that the IMF mission and the government of Pakistan had recently agreed to a \$5.3 billion fresh three-year loan programme,

namely “Extended Fund Facility”, with repayment period of 10 years, with first four years without any repayment as grace period.

[Daily Times - 24th July, 2013]

Power Crisis & Electricity Loadshedding Problems

Energy Crisis an ‘Additional Issue’ or Basic One? An Analysis

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif termed the energy shortage and terrorism as “additional issues” while addressing the media. As a matter of fact the May 11 general elections were contested mainly on the issues of energy crisis and terrorism. All the contesting parties had mentioned the issue of power shortage in their election manifestoes and so did the PML-N. Hence it was crystal clear even before the elections that the winning party would try and rise to these two challenges which are linked to almost all other problems facing the country, including economic revival, image of the country and governance. The PML-N government must take these issues as the real issues facing the country because now everything in Pakistan, including socio-economic development and prosperity, are linked to the resolution of load shedding issue and establishment of law and order. Khawaja Asif, who earlier had announced that the PML-N government would resolve power crisis within three years through their energy sector reforms and best management of the available resources.

One must not assume that the PML-N is going to follow in the footsteps the PPP on energy crisis because we are optimistic about the effort of PML-N on this issue. However, it is strange that after declaring emergency and announcement of taking up the challenge on war footing, now the government functionaries and those at the helm of affairs on energy issue have forgotten their words regarding the three-year deadline and left the nation wondering. In response to a question regarding the deadline to address the energy crisis, Nawaz said he never gave a time frame. Indeed every project and every issue, no matter how big and challenging it is, has a specific time frame for its solution. What kind of government is this? Despite having a force of advisers, support of local and foreign energy experts, it lacks any estimate to finish its so-called war against energy crisis. The PML-N leadership must keep in mind that the PPP government couldn’t fool the people of Pakistan and faced worst defeat in election due to energy crisis. It is need of the hour that instead of keeping the nation in the dark the PML-N leadership must give a deadline to overcome power crisis and follow this time frame with full devotion and commitment. Otherwise democracy would prove the best revenge for PML-N in the elections 2018 just like the originators of this term in the recent elections.

[Daily Times - 18th July, 2013]

REGIONAL WATCH

Pakistan & United States

US Want Pakistan to Have Good Ties with India, Afghanistan

The United States wants Pakistan to have good relations with both India and Afghanistan, said the US State Department while commenting on observations that relations between Islamabad and New Delhi influence the situation in Afghanistan. In an essay posted on an American think tank, British historian William Dalrymple argues that “hostility between India and Pakistan lies at the heart of the current war in Afghanistan. Mr Dalrymple said that within Afghanistan, the war is viewed primarily as a Pashtun rebellion against President Hamid Karzai’s regime. But beyond this indigenous conflict looms the much more dangerous hostility between the two regional powers — both armed with nuclear weapons: India and Pakistan. Mr Dalrymple writes that Pakistan fears being squeezed in an Indian nutcracker and this fear is so great that it has led the ISI to take steps that put Pakistan’s own internal security at risk, as well as Pakistan’s relationship with its main strategic ally, the US. The US State Department indicated that it was not only aware of the situation but was already working to improve relations among the three key South Asian neighbours.

Mr Ventrell said that a US special envoy, Ambassador James Dobbins, returned to Washington this weekend from a visit to South Asia and the Middle East. Indian, Pakistani and Afghan leaders, Ambassador Dobbins reportedly emphasised the need to promote peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban rebels. Ambassador Dobbins also visited Doha, where the United States has helped the Taliban set up a political office to promote peace talks. The initiative, however, became controversial when the Karzai government objected to the Taliban’s decision to hoist their flag on the political office and to a nameplate which described Afghanistan as an Islamic emirate. The Taliban later removed the flag and the nameplate but they also resumed attacks on government targets inside Afghanistan. Mr Ventrell said Ambassador Dobbins had returned to Washington without setting a date for future talks with the Taliban. But the US continued to believe that “only an Afghan-led and intra-Afghan peace negotiation” could end this war. Mr Ventrell also said that the Karzai government had not yet indicated when it was going to resume security talks with the US, suspended after the Taliban opened their political office in Doha. But both Presidents Obama and Karzai agreed that a security agreement between the US and Afghanistan was good for peace. The two presidents also wanted to conclude this agreement as soon as possible, Mr Ventrell said.

[Daily Times - 2nd July, 2013]

Ties with Pakistan Important: US

The United States recognises the importance of its relationship with Pakistan and is not seeking to downgrade the ties, says the State Department. The department’s spokesperson Jen Psaki rejected suggestions that a reduction in the Obama administration’s aid requests for Pakistan indicated Washington’s desire to downgrade its relationship with Islamabad. She confirmed media that the secretary is looking forward to visiting Pakistan. He would like to be able to spend some time on the ground. Asked if Pakistan had protested against a July 2 drone strike that killed 17 people in Fata, Ms Psaki said: “We have an ongoing dialogue, of course, with the government of Pakistan. I don’t have any specific calls or readouts of that sort to tell you about.”

Asked to comment on a recent statement by the Afghan army chief that Pakistan controlled the Taliban and if it wants it can end the war within a week, the State Department official said she will have to take a closer look at the statement “and figure out and talk with our team about where we are”. Meanwhile, other US officials said that there was no real reduction in US aid requests for Pakistan for 2014. They pointed out that the aid requests met the \$1.5 billion annual target specified in the Kerry-Lugar-Berman bill. They noted that Washington’s highest priority in the new fiscal year was supporting power generation projects in Pakistan.

[Dawn - 5th July, 2013]

US Consent To Civil Nuclear Energy Talks?

Pakistan and the US agreed to continue talks on the issues of Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) to tap the investment potential. Both sides decided to enhance cooperation in energy sector with special focus on development of biogas and wind energy to counter the energy crisis in Pakistan. Talking to the media, Elizabeth Little did not touch on the civil nuclear energy, but said that Pakistan was facing an energy crisis, as well as issues with security and governance. She hoped that the new government would overcome all these challenges and propel the country towards better future. The Opic president said: The US is starting a project of 50MW wind energy in Sindh and will also undertake more projects in future. The investment through Opic into Pakistan has increased from \$80 million to \$300 million during last couple of years. She also highlighted the importance of investments in education and energy. On his turn, Ishaq Dar said that the US delegation showed willingness to invest in bio-energy sector in Pakistan to overcome power crisis. He said that resolving energy crisis is government’s top priority. Dar said that Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is endeavouring to eliminate terrorism from Pakistan which is one of biggest problems of the country. Due to the prevailing terrorist activities in the country, the US has issued a travel advisory, he added. Talking about the circular debt, Dar said that government made the payment to independent power producers for additional power generation as they have the ability to generate more electricity. Earlier, in the meeting, the minister briefed the US delegation on the recent budget. Pakistan is safe as well as lucrative country for investment and provides an environment which conducive to foreign investors, Dar assured the US delegation. Opic works with the US private sector and helps US businesses gain footholds in emerging markets, catalysing revenues, jobs and growth opportunities both at home and abroad.

[The Nation - 17th July, 2013]

US Expert Urges Drone Deal That Addresses Pak Sovereignty Concerns

A top American expert on South Asia has called for a new drone deal that addresses Pakistan's sovereignty concerns, without depriving the US of an effective counterterrorism tool as the two countries prepare to hold negotiations on the controversial operations that have strained Islamabad-Washington ties. Short of ending the drone programme altogether, the only way that Pakistan’s leaders can credibly claim to assert their sovereign authority -- and thereby prove their nationalist credentials to political allies and adversaries alike -- is if Washington cedes to Islamabad a greater degree of control over the programme, especially when it comes to target selection, wrote Daniel Markey, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, wrote in Foreign Affairs, a publication of CFR. For all its successes, the US drone programme in Pakistan is unlikely to survive much longer in its current form, he said, citing Prime Minister Nawaz

Sharif's recent speech the Pakistani leader seeking an end to the policy of protesting against drone strikes for public consumption, while working behind the scenes to make them happen. In other words, the United States is going to have to hammer out a new drone deal with Pakistan in the years ahead, one that is sensitive to Pakistan's own concerns and objectives. This will likely mean that Washington will face new constraints in its counterterrorism operations, Markey said. But managed with care, a new agreement could put the targeted killing campaign against al Qaeda on firmer political footing without entirely eliminating its effectiveness. Pakistan's current and future leaders, starting with Nawaz Sharif, will have little reason to implicate themselves in the drone hypocrisy of their predecessors. Sharif is on sounder political footing than his predecessor, but -- as his top lieutenants are already signalling -- he cannot weather the political storm that is likely to result if the United States appears to blithely disregard his authority.

Washington's failure to shift its policy would lead Islamabad to escalate its diplomatic protests. The US expert wrote: The question is whether Washington and Islamabad can find a deal that addresses Pakistani concerns without depriving the United States of a counterterrorism tool that has been more effective, at least in a tactical sense, than any other. Short of ending the drone programme altogether, the only way that Pakistan's leaders can credibly claim to assert their sovereign authority -- and thereby prove their nationalist credentials to political allies and adversaries alike -- is if Washington cedes to Islamabad a greater degree of control over the programme, especially when it comes to target selection. At one extreme, this would mean doing what a number of Pakistani leaders (including Pervez Musharraf) have requested for years: placing the drones under Pakistani command. Of course, given the highly sensitive nature of drone technology, alongwith the fact that US officials do not adequately trust their Pakistani counterparts to deploy the drones in ways that would effectively eliminate top terrorist leaders, this solution remains off the table in nearly any conceivable future. Somewhat less pie-in-the-sky, if still unrealistic at this stage, would be the idea of disarming US drones and leaving Pakistani forces to act as the trigger pullers whenever terrorist targets are identified. Strikes would then be launched by Pakistani Air Force jets, helicopters, or perhaps even artillery, and would use U.S. intelligence for target selection. This solution also has an assortment of practical problems, from the time lag between identifying targets and shooting at them to, once again, U.S. officials' lack of faith in their Pakistani counterparts' ability and desire to act on that intelligence in the first place. Then there is the option of crafting a 'dual-key' authority at the operational level, perhaps by informing Pakistani officers in real time as drone strikes are launched and by implementing a mutually acceptable mechanism through which Islamabad could veto a specific strike, or at least raise it up the chain of command in a timely manner. Versions of a dual-key approach have been tried in the past, with some success. But given the fraught terms of cooperation between Washington and Islamabad in recent years, it is hard to imagine US officials accepting this sort of arrangement, at least not yet. The real-time nature of the decision process would limit the potential for unwanted leaks or tip-offs to targets, but US officials would still be wary that Pakistani officials could acquire too much knowledge of the drone program and its capabilities. If political trust improves over time, however, this might be a useful model for cooperation. A final option -- and the only realistic compromise at present -- would be for Washington to seek Islamabad's pre-authorisation for specific targets and zones for strikes.

The United States would retain full operational control over drone missions, and unlike the earliest stage in the drone programme, when Musharraf's explicit approval was required to kill Nek Muhammad, this process could provide blanket authority for a much longer (mutually agreed, if not publicly disclosed) target list. In return, Pakistani leaders would acknowledge publicly the terms of the new arrangement. Accompanying this preauthorisation regime, Washington and Islamabad could establish a mechanism for reviewing claims of civilian losses

and providing appropriate compensation. The new drone deal would be premised on the assumption that the United States is prepared to accept less frequent drone strikes than it has become accustomed to. So one potentially insurmountable stumbling block to this compromise would be if Washington planned to use the drone campaign as a primary tool for shaping the battlefield in Afghanistan, for instance by intensifying strikes against the Haqqani Network in the FATA's North Waziristan agency. Pakistani leaders would almost certainly reject this strategy. Under such conditions, however, it is hard to imagine anything other than a tense and conflict-prone relationship between Washington and Islamabad, whether or not any new drone deal has been negotiated. But officials in Washington would be wise not to let relations with Pakistan deteriorate to that point. The United States faces potential challenges in Pakistan that are even more daunting than the war in Afghanistan or the fight against al Qaeda. Nuclear-armed and battling a hardened Islamist insurgency, Pakistan is on track to be the fourth most populous country in the world by midcentury. Pakistan, in short, is here to stay -- as is Nawaz Sharif, at least for the immediate future. Sharif may not be the man that the United States would choose to lead Pakistan, but he is one that Washington would be wise to learn how to bargain with.

[The Nation - 18th July, 2013]

Al Qaeda Can't Be Defeated Without Pak Help: US General

In a written statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen Martin Dempsey also emphasized the need to help Pakistan stabilize as instability in this key South Asian state would hurt the entire region. Our strategic and national security goals remain to disrupt, dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda and to prevent the return of safe havens in Afghanistan and Pakistan, he wrote. This would not be possible without Pakistani support. Explaining the need for continued US engagement with the country, Gen Dempsey said: We also have an interest in a stable Pakistan and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology. The general also said that the two countries were now moving towards a more focused and issue-related relationship instead of a more generalized friendship they had in the recent past. On the security front, we have a more limited relationship than in the past, but I believe it is a pragmatic and constructive approach, he said. Gen Dempsey, who has been re-nominated by President Barack Obama for the same post, was responding to a series of questions from both Republican and Democratic lawmakers on US-Pakistan relations. Gen Dempsey told the lawmakers that while recent elections had further strengthened democracy in Pakistan, the US defense establishment must maintain its ties with the Pakistani military. Gen Dempsey told the lawmakers that if reconfirmed he would continue a frank and respectful dialogue with Pakistan about our shared interests in countering extremism and promoting regional stability. Security cooperation cannot succeed without the buy-in of Pakistani leadership and continued support of the US Congress, he said. The US general warned that there would be no American troops in Afghanistan post-2014 without a signed Bilateral Security Agreement but he also said he was confident it would be signed in time.

[Dawn - 20th July, 2013]

US Drone Surveillance Expanding To Hot Spots beyond Declared Combat Zones

The steel-gray US Air Force Predator drone plunged from the sky, shattering on mountainous terrain near the Iraq-Turkey border. For Kurdish guerrillas hiding nearby, it was an unexpected

gift from the propaganda gods. Fighters from the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, filmed the charred wreckage on September 18 and posted a video on YouTube. A narrator bragged unconvincingly that the group had shot down the drone. But for anyone who might doubt that the flying robot was really American, the video zoomed in on mangled parts stamped in English and bearing the label of the manufacturer, San Diego-based General Atomics. For a brief moment, the crash drew back the curtain on Operation Nomad Shadow, a secretive US military surveillance programme. Since November 2011, the US Air Force has been flying unarmed drones from Incirlik Air Base in Turkey in an attempt to suppress a long-simmering regional conflict, reports The Washington Post. According to the newspaper, the camera-equipped Predators hover above the rugged border with Iraq and beam high-resolution imagery to the Turkish armed forces, helping them pursue PKK rebels as they slip back and forth across the mountains.

As the Obama administration dials back the number of drone attacks in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen, the US military is shifting its huge fleet of unmanned aircraft to other hot spots around the world. This next phase of drone warfare is focused more on spying than killing and will extend the Pentagon's robust surveillance networks far beyond traditional, declared combat zones, the newspaper said. Over the past decade, it adds, the Pentagon has amassed more than 400 Predators, Reapers, Hunters, Gray Eagles and other high-altitude drones that have revolutionized counterterrorism operations. Some of the unmanned aircraft will return home with US troops when they leave Afghanistan. But many of the drones will redeploy to fresh frontiers, where they will spy on a melange of armed groups, drug runners, pirates and other targets that worry US officials, The Post says. Elsewhere in the Middle East, the US Air Force has drone hubs in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to conduct reconnaissance over the Persian Gulf. Twice since November, according to the newspaper, Iran has scrambled fighter jets to approach or fire on US Predator drones that edged close to Iranian airspace. The report said that in Africa, the US Air Force began flying unarmed drones over the Sahara five months ago to track al Qaeda fighters and rebels in northern Mali. It added the Pentagon has also set up drone bases in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Seychelles. Even so, the commander of US forces in Africa told Congress in February that he needed a 15-fold increase in surveillance, reconnaissance and intelligence-gathering on the continent. In an April speech, Deputy Defence Secretary Ashton B Carter said the Pentagon is planning for the first time to send Reaper drones - a bigger, faster version of the Predator - to parts of Asia other than Afghanistan. He did not give details.

[Daily Times – 22nd July, 2013]

Pakistan-US Strategy Dialogue on Kerry's Visit

Pakistan will strive to initiate strategic dialogue during the forthcoming visit of US Secretary of State John Kerry to Islamabad; Foreign Office Spokesman Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry said this while talking to the media on Sunday. He said strategic dialogue between both the countries was stopped after the Salalah check-post attack in November of 2011, which claimed the lives of 24 Pakistani soldiers. He added five working groups were engaged to negotiate on Pakistan-US strategic dialogue prior to the Salalah incident and they will immediately hold meetings for resumption of dialogue, if talks are fruitful during John Kerry's visit to Pakistan. Afghan reconciliation process would be one of the key agenda of John Kerry's visit to Islamabad. Pakistan has assured full commitment to all initiatives designed to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan. The country has already affirmed its commitment to a strong and cooperative relationship with the US. US is Pakistan's largest trading partner and both the countries have existing cooperation in politics, defence, trade, commerce, infrastructure, agriculture, energy,

education, and other sectors. The upcoming visit of US Secretary of State John Kerry will be the first high-level contact of the US government with the newly installed government in Pakistan.

[Daily Times - 29th July, 2013]

Pakistan & India

India Wants To Engage Pakistan, Improve Bilateral Relations

Prime Minister's Special Adviser on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz who met with Salman Khurshid in Brunei on the sidelines of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting said he reviewed the confidence building measures with India, which is the desire of the people of two countries. It was the first high-level contact between Pakistan and India since Nawaz Sharif became the prime minister. The meeting was held in a warm and cordial atmosphere, and the discussions focused on building better relations between the two countries, said the Foreign Office spokesman. Aziz said that it is necessary that Pakistan and India discuss all outstanding issues through confidence building measures to ensure lasting peace and security in the region. The adviser said trade and economic cooperation between the two countries could act as a catalyst and raise the confidence level on both sides that would allow a sustained peace process. He appreciated the recent visit of the Indian energy mission to Pakistan in which trade in electricity and gas was discussed. Referring to the positive outcome of the ARF meeting, both the leaders were of the view that regional cooperation would give an impetus to the economic development and prosperity of south and South-East Asia. Both expressed the hope that the bilateral dialogue process between Pakistan and India would also be resumed with holding of different meetings in next few months. Aziz said there is a possibility of meeting between Nawaz Sharif and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in September.

Meanwhile, Aziz also held a meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry. The main focus of discussion between the two sides was bilateral cooperation in the post-2014 period, Foreign Office spokesman said. The spokesman said, the adviser emphasised the need for holding the next round of strategic dialogue at ministerial level between the two countries. The strategic dialogue process provides an institutional mechanism to strengthen bilateral relations, action in several areas through different working groups and in this regard Pakistan is looking forward to Secretary John Kerry's visit to Pakistan. The adviser to the prime minister also stressed that the main focus of foreign policy of the newly elected government will be economic revival and socio-economic development. He said the two sides must make efforts to increase trade from the current level of \$5 billion to \$10 billion in the next five years. Aziz also stressed the need for greater market access to Pakistani exports to the United States. Secretary Kerry appreciated new government's focus on the economy and said he accepted in that context the importance of greater market access for Pakistan's exports to USA. He emphasised that improved law and order was also necessary for economic revival and larger foreign investment.

[Daily Times - 3rd July, 2013]

Backdoor Diplomacy with India Revived: PM

The Prime Minister was talking to British Foreign Secretary William Hague. The two sides discussed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction over the direction and trajectory of the relationship. During the meeting, focus was laid particularly on the Government of Pakistan's priorities of revitalising the economy, dealing with energy crisis,

creating a pro-business and pro-investment climate, and improving the security situation. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to support all initiatives aimed at promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan. The Prime Minister also apprised Secretary Hague of the initiatives aimed at improving relations with India, including the revival of back channel diplomacy and the resumption of dialogue process. Secretary Hague expressed full support for all the initiatives and reaffirmed British friendship for Pakistan and the Britain's desire to contribute to Pakistan's development and prosperity. The two sides noted that the visit of Prime Minister David Cameron last month had sent the right message for an enduring partnership between the two countries. The two leaders also discussed the situation in the region, including Afghanistan. The British Foreign Secretary was accompanied by the British High Commissioner Adam Thompson and other senior officials. The Prime Minister was assisted by the Advisor on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Tariq Fatemi and Foreign Secretary Jalil Abbas Jilani. British Prime Minister David Cameron said India and Pakistan can play a 'crucial role' to bring peace to Afghanistan through their resumed bilateral dialogue process. Both the countries should recognise the fact that a stable, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan is in their interests too, he said. As NATO and US forces prepare for their scheduled withdrawal from Afghanistan the next year, the West has pinned its hopes on regional powers like India and Pakistan helping bring stability to the war-torn country. I hope these two statesmen can act in the interest of both their countries and also the world, fostering better Indo-Pak relations, he said. India and Pakistan recently agreed to draw up a calendar to resume their bilateral talks. The initiative was announced after a meeting between External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid and the Pakistani premier's special advisor on foreign affairs, Sartaj Aziz, on the sidelines of a recent ASEAN foreign ministers' meet in Brunei.

[The Nation - 19th July, 2013]

Pakistan & Afghanistan

Pakistan Backs Afghan-Led Peace Process

Adviser on Foreign Affairs and National Security Sartaj Aziz visited Kabul to hold talks with Afghan leadership and assured that Pakistan would extend its full support and cooperation in holding intra-Afghan talks for peace and stability in Afghanistan. During his day-long visit, Sartaj Aziz held talks with Afghan Foreign Minister Dr Zalmay Rasul. The two sides discussed ways to further promote bilateral relations and prospects for peace in Afghanistan. Later addressing a press conference Sartaj Aziz said Pakistan was ready to help in holding of intra-Afghan talks for peace and stability in Afghanistan, if the Afghan leaders asked for it. He said Pakistan has been trying to help jumpstart the peace process as a stable Afghanistan is in Pakistan's own interest. However, he said any peace talks must be Afghan-owned and Afghan-led. He said Pakistan would take every step to bring peace in Afghanistan. Sartaj, who was on his first-ever visit to Kabul soon after assuming the charge as Advisor to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs and National Security, said PML-N government wants to expand relations with Afghanistan. He said his visit brought a message of peace and cooperation from Pakistan. He said Pakistan wanted to remove all barriers in the way of trade between both the countries. He said expansion in trade would bring prosperity for the people of two countries, besides improving the economy. Sartaj Aziz flew to Kabul to invite President Hamid Karzai to Islamabad to strengthen bilateral relations and to improve strained relations and help peace efforts with the Taliban. Aziz said Pakistan had helped persuade some Taliban factions to discuss peace in the past, and also had played a role in helping Taliban representatives travel to Qatar before those efforts stalled. He

said, we wish Afghanistan a success for those two important milestones. International efforts to start talks with Taliban insurgents on ending 12 years of war are in disarray after the disastrous opening of a Taliban liaison office in Qatar last month. The office was initially hailed as a first step towards a peace deal, but a furious Karzai slammed it as an unofficial embassy for a Taliban government-in-exile.

[The Nation – 22nd July, 2013]

Pakistan & Russia

Need Stressed To Enhance Pak-Russia Ties

Current results of bilateral cooperation between two strategic countries Pakistan and Russia are not visible but the future relations are bright. President FPCCI Zubair Ahmed Malik at a farewell bid to Andrey V Demidove departing Consul General of Russian Federation pointed out problem being faced by both sides businesses due to non-availability of financial instrument and lack of political will. For trade facilitation financial institution should be established. Pakistan Steel Mill, which was established with the Russian cooperation, now needs upgradation to cater to the present demand, which is an important project. He appreciated and acknowledged the services rendered by Demidove in promoting Pak-Russia bilateral relations which were highly commendable. He said the progress, strength and depth of relations reached between the two countries during the tenure of Demidove were remarkable.

[Daily Times - 19th July, 2013]

Pakistan & China

Nawaz Warmly Received In Beijing

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was accorded a warm welcome when he arrived at the airport here for a five-day official visit. Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Zhai Jun received the prime minister and his entourage. Senior Chinese officials, Pakistan's ambassador to China and senior diplomats of the Pakistan Embassy were also present on the occasion. A contingent comprising personnel of the three services of the People's Liberation Army presented salute to the prime minister. Mr Sharif was accompanied by Begum Kulsoom Nawaz, Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal, Adviser to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Tariq Fatemi and Balochistan Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch. The prime minister has been invited for a five-day visit by Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang. Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif has also arrived here to join the prime minister's delegation.

[Daily Times - 4th July, 2013]

MoUs Signed With China

Pakistan and China signed eight documents envisaging cooperation in various sectors for further strengthening already strong economic and technical ties between the two countries. — An ambitious and long-term project approximately costing \$18 billion that would entail building 200-kilometre-long tunnels for the Pak-China Economic Corridor. Federal Minister for Planning

and Development Ahsan Iqbal and Chairman of the National Development and Reforms Commission of the People's Republic of China Xu Shao Shi signed the accord. — An agreement on economic and technical cooperation. From the Pakistani side, Tariq Fatemi, the adviser to the prime minister on foreign affairs, signed the agreement.

[Dawn - 6th July, 2013]
