



NIAS Area Studies

PAKISTAN WEEKLY

NIAS-STIR Programme



global
politics

Discourses | Trajectories | Forecasts

NIAS Area Studies
Pakistan Weekly, Vol.1, No.21
11 September 2022



The Curious case of General Musharraf's return Army politicised yet again

PAKISTAN IN BRIEF

Politics | Internal | Economy | External | Provinces | Judiciary



Daily Focus, 9 September 2022

The Curious case of General Musharraf's return

The nation has to decide if he becomes Pakistan's Oliver Cromwell or be allowed to spend his last years in peace

Ankit Singh



Image Source: Dawn

Oliver Cromwell was a general and statesman, one of the few, who had tried to dislodge the monarchy in the UK. His plans outlived his life and his corpse was dug up, hung in chains and beheaded because of his intentions against the royal family. A similar political debate has been brewing in Pakistan, post the update on the declining health of General Musharraf over the years and his desire to live the remainder of his days in Pakistan. General Musharraf suffers from a rare disease and needs uninterrupted drug administration which may make the case for his return harder. Many quarters and institutions have expressed their opinion on the return of Musharraf to Pakistan. Pakistanis are divided and frustrated over the Army's desire to bring him back, some want justice to take its course, some demand capital punishment without a trial and some say, Musharraf has got a rebuke (ibrat) from Allah and he should be brought back to set an example in Pakistan for other authoritarian and ill-intentioned representatives.

Is there a legal case against his return?

Many criminal cases are pending against Musharraf, he has been named in ongoing investigations and trials in the Benazir

Bhutto murder case, the Lal Masjid siege and the Akbar Bugti murder prosecution. He was handed over the death sentence in 2019 in a case of high treason charges against him for implementing the emergency rule and suspending the constitution in 2007. However, Lahore High Court later annulled a petition filed by the ruling PTI government which said that due procedures were not followed during the trial against Musharraf.

Who wants Musharraf back?

DG ISPR during a press conference on 14 June said that in the light of the deteriorating health of General Musharraf, the institution and leadership believe that Pervez Musharraf should return. PML(N) supremo Nawaz Sharif on his earlier said that he has no personal enmity with Musharraf and urged the ruling coalition government to facilitate his return to Pakistan. Defence Minister Khwaja Asif also endorsed this view and mentioned that Pervez Musharraf should be allowed to spend his final days at home 'with dignity, adding that he should be permitted to return to the country without any 'obstacles.' Journalistic quarters have also toed the line of ISPR's stand on Musharraf's return and they have not claimed a stand of their own.

Who is against his return?

Judiciary and its allied sub-institutions, which had been instrumental in bringing down Musharraf's popularity and later handed him the death sentence have not yet publicly taken a stand on his return, yet history is witness to the peak of the power struggle between judiciary and military, whereby Musharraf had suspended Justice

Iftikhar Chaudhry and used MQM to suppress his efforts to align bar association in Sindh with his restoration movement. The return of Musharraf may create some anxiety in some sections of the judiciary, which live up to the principle of rule of law and the superiority of the judiciary in practising and upholding the constitution. Judiciary would like to avoid revival or face up to any personality which can create divisions in an already polarized institution. Lastly, a statement from Yusuf Raza Gilani, sums it all up, Gilani on 15 June had said that the question is not addressed to them

and if they could not stop Musharraf from exiting the country then they certainly cannot stop him from coming back. He said: “These decisions will not be taken by us ... they will be taken somewhere else.” The question, therefore, is not whether Musharraf should be allowed to return or not, the important question is whether Pakistani are willing to accept the superior position of the military and accept the status quo and kind of governance which has been evolving in Pakistan since decades as itself professed by military again and again.

Daily Focus, 8 September 2022

Army politicised yet again

Imran Khan bringing the next army chief appointment into national politics highlights the military's entanglement with politics

Abigail Miriam Fernandez



Image Source: Dawn

On 4 September, Imran Khan accused the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) of opposing snap elections because they wanted to “appoint an army chief of their choice” in November. He said, “They want to bring their own army chief...they are afraid that if a strong and patriotic army chief is appointed then he would ask them about the looted wealth,” adding, “They are sitting [in the government] because they want to bring in an army chief of their choice through joint efforts.” Further, he

claimed that Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif were “traitors” and should not be trusted with the fate of the country.

In response to these claims, the ruling coalition accused Imran Khan of levelling “poisonous allegations” against the armed forces and “putting blots” on the appointment of the new army chief. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that Imran’s Khan’s “despicable utterances to malign institutions” were touching new levels every day adding, “He is now indulging in direct mud-slinging & poisonous allegations against Armed Forces & its leadership.” He also stated that Imran Khan’s “nefarious agenda” was aimed at disrupting and undermining Pakistan. Similarly, Asif Ali Zardari said, “Today, everyone knows [who is the] man and the beast., adding, “This man is determined to weaken the country, but we won't let that happen.” Further, he promised that government would not let the state institutions and generals fall prey to

Imran's "lust." On 7 September, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif claimed that "barring one or two exceptions" all prior appointments in the armed forces were made on merit. He added that PM Shehbaz Sharif would take the decision about the appointment of next army chief "within the ambit of the General Headquarters (GHQ)" in November and denied that the ruling coalition had taken a decision extending Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa term.

Army comes down heavy on Imran Khan

On 5 September, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) strongly criticised Imran Khan for his statement saying that it was "aghast at the defamatory and uncalled for" statement about the institution's senior leadership. It added, "Regrettably, an attempt has been made to discredit and undermine [the] senior leadership of [the] Pakistan Army at a time when the institution is laying lives for the security and safety of the people of Pakistan every day. Senior politicians trying to stir controversies on the appointment of the chief of army staff (COAS), the procedure for which is well defined in the constitution, is most unfortunate and disappointing." The statement added, "Politicising the senior leadership of Pakistan Army and scandalising the process of selection of [the] COAS is neither in the interest of the state of Pakistan nor of the institution. Pakistan Army reiterates its commitment to uphold the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan."

The military's entanglement with politics

An editorial in Dawn claims that Imran Khan's statements are provocative because highlight the military's entanglement with politics. Further, it claims that the response from the coalition makes this fact even more clear as both the PPP and the PML-N took the opportunity to label Imran Khan as a

'traitor' and reassert themselves as defenders of the army's good name. Similarly, an opinion in Dawn critical of this development claims that although Imran Khan's statements seemed directed mainly against the federal government it was off the mark as he not only accused the PDM leadership of trying to bring in an army chief of its own choice but has also questioned the patriotism of the chief who would be appointed. Thus, his efforts are seen as a means to 'politicise' and 'scandalise' the entire process of selection of the army chief. This would not bode well as it questions process of appointment of army chiefs and also derail the entire democratic political process. However, what is clear from this development is that the 'hybrid' system continues to be used by those in power for their own benefit. Prior to coming to power, the PDM particularly the PML-N took on an anti-establishment narrative while Imran Khan was seen to be on the same page as the military. However, when the tables have turned sides have switched. Further, the army is being dragged into the political discourse at a time when the leadership has publicly denied being involved in politics as well as asked to be kept away from politics. Thus, it would only be a matter of time until the can of worms are spills on Pakistan's 'hybrid' system once again.

References

- Zahid Hussain, "[Selecting the army chief](#)," *Dawn*, 7 September 2022
- "[Chief concern](#)," *Dawn*, 6 September 2022
- Shahbaz Rana, "[All past military appointments on merit, save one or two: Asif](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 7 September 2022
- Naveed Siddiqui, "[Army 'aghast' at Imran's 'defamatory, uncalled for' statement on senior military leadership: ISPR](#)," *Dawn*, 5 September 2022

PAKISTAN IN BRIEF

INTERNAL

UN Secretary-General calls on the international community to step up in helping Pakistan

On 9 September, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on the international community to help Pakistan tackle the challenges posed by the devastating floods and extend support in rebuilding a climate-resilient infrastructure. Further, he revealed that the ongoing flooding had cost Pakistan USD 30 billion. Additionally, he called out the lack of global attention to climate change "insanity" saying, "This is insanity, this is collective suicide." Meanwhile, PM Shehbaz Sharif promised that "every penny" for the flood victims would be spent transparently and go towards the suffering humanity. (["Guterres pitches for massive flood aid,"](#) *The Express Tribune*, 10 September 2022; ["Flood crisis to hit GDP growth projection,"](#) *Dawn*, 10 September 2022; ["Unimaginable' flood devastation, says UNSG during Sukkur visit,"](#) *The Express Tribune*, 10 September 2022)

Capital police give Imran Khan another chance to appear before JIT

On 10 September, Dawn reported that the capital police have decided to give another chance to Imran Khan to appear before the joint investigation team (JIT) before they approach the anti-terrorism court (ATC) to get his interim bail cancelled. This comes as Imran Khan was to appear before the JIT in connection with a case registered against him at the Margalla police station under section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act along with 186, 188, 504 and 506 of the Pakistan Penal Code. (Munawer Azeem, ["Imran given another chance to appear before JIT,"](#) *Dawn*, 10 September 2022)

Harassment complaints see phenomenal increase in four years, says report

On 9 September, Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for Protection against

Harassment (FOSPAH) released its annual report and highlighted that FOSPAH received nearly 5,008 complaints in the last four years - an exceptional increase in the number of registered cases. The report stated that as few as 84 cases were registered between the years 2010-13 while 398 cases were registered between 2013-18. Between 2018-22, however, 5,008 cases were registered out of which 3,698 were filed by women and 1,310 by men. Speaking to participants, President Dr Arif Alvi stressed that social and cultural attitudes and intellectual biases towards women's rights, their economic and financial empowerment and gainful employment and peoples' moral and ethical values needed correction on the basis of Islamic teachings, which called for equal educational opportunities for both men and women. He said in Pakistan, only 24 per cent women were working in the formal and informal sectors of the economy, which was low compared to men whose economic participation was around 90 per cent. (Jamal Shahid, ["Harassment complaints see phenomenal increase in four years: report,"](#) *Dawn*, 10 September 2022)

UN Secretary-General arrives in Pakistan amid flood devastations; USAID to help tackle water-borne diseases; World Bank to repurpose USD 300 million to help flood victims; Finance Minister estimates flood losses to cross USD 20 billion

On 9 September, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres arrived in Pakistan for a two-day visit. According to Foreign Office Spokesperson, the secretary general will meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, visit the National Flood Response and Coordination Centre (NFRCC), have a joint presser with the prime minister, and hold talks with the foreign minister followed by a joint press stakeout at the Foreign Office. Further, he would also visit areas most affected by flooding, including Balochistan and Sindh. (Baqir Sajjad Syed, ["UN chief in Pakistan to seek generous support for flood relief,"](#) *Dawn*, 9 September 2022)

Meanwhile, on 8 September, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Samantha Power on arriving in Pakistan said, “We recognise that what follows a calamity of this magnitude is often waterborne disease. So some of the \$30 million that we announced is also going to our partners on the ground who provide health support,” adding, “We are already getting reports of cholera, dengue. It can get a lot worse. As long as there is water, there are health risks associated with it.” (Shazia Hasan, “[Post-floods, US to help tackle water-borne diseases](#),” *Dawn*, 9 September 2022)

On 9 September, The Express Tribune reported that World Bank Vice President Martin Raiser told Ambassador Masood Khan that the bank has agreed to support Pakistan in dealing with the massive devastation caused by the flooding by re-programming its existing activities and future programmes. Additionally, the bank would also repurpose USD 300 million to help flood victims and support flood relief efforts. (“[WB to repurpose \\$300m for flood victims](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 9 September 2022)

On 9 September, The Express Tribune reported that according to ‘An Early Assessment of Flood Impact on Pakistan’s economy’ report being compiled by the Ministry of Finance, the economic losses and damages caused by the flash floods could range between USD 15 billion to USD 20 billion. Additionally, the government estimates that over 12 million more people would move into poverty, emphasising on the need for international assistance. (“[Flood losses estimated up to \\$20 billion](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 9 September 2022)

UNESCO arranges an emergency fund of USD 350,000 to help flood-damaged cultural heritage sites

On 8 September, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organisation (Unesco) mobilised an emergency fund of USD 350,000 to help flood-damaged cultural heritage sites in Pakistan, particularly Moenjo Daro which dates back to 2,500BC, and historical monuments at Makli, Thatta, in Sindh. Unesco Director General Audrey Azoulay said as part of its mandate, the organisation would provide assistance to “restore this heritage” and based on “needs analysis conducted by our office in Islamabad, we decided to mobilise right now \$350,000 from our heritage and emergency funds.” (Amin Ahmed, “[Unesco mobilises \\$350,000 to save heritage sites](#),” *Dawn*, 9 September 2022)

Floods pushes ECP to postpone by-polls in 13 constituencies

On 8 September, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) postponed the by-elections in 13 constituencies of Sindh, Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) in view of the destruction caused by flash floods and the non-availability of law enforcement agencies (LEAs) for holding peaceful polls. It said that conducting peaceful polls was its responsibility and the availability of the Pakistan Army, Rangers and Frontier Corps (FC) was necessary to maintain law and order. It, therefore, added that the decision was taken in the public interest. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has decided to challenge the ECP’s decision. (Rizwan Shehzad, Saqib Virk, “[ECP postpones by-polls in 13 constituencies](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 9 September, 2022)

Pakistan slides by seven positions on HDI rankings

On 8 September, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) launched its Human Development Index report called as ‘Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World’. Ranking Pakistan 161 out of 192 countries in the 2021-2022, the report mentioned that Pakistan’s life expectancy at birth is 66.1 years and expected years of schooling are

eight. The country's gross per capita national income is USD 4,624. The report has identified that different climate shocks are affecting world order, pushing back the growth that was achieved in the past few years. The report highlighted that around 90 per cent of countries have seen "reversals in human development" in the year of the survey, pointing to a world stuck in a never-ending cycle of crisis after crisis, causing global disruptions. (Aimen Siddiqui, "[Pakistan down on Human Development Index by 7 slots](#)," *The News International*, 9 September 2022)

IHC to indict Imran Khan in contempt of court case

On 8 September, taking Imran Khan's reply and supplementary to contempt of court as unsatisfactory, Islamabad High Court (IHC) decided to indict former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan in a contempt case on 22 September. The chief justice (CJ) of IHC reiterated that criminal contempt of court was serious and intent could not be mentioned in it. Nothing good has happened in 70 years, the CJ said, asking the lawyer if he wanted to justify the former premier's statement. To this Hamid responded that he had intended to explain not justify the statement. Justice Minallah said that threatening a district judiciary judge was a more serious crime than threatening a Supreme Court judge. (Hasnaat malik, "[IHC decides to indict Imran Khan in contempt case on September 22](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 9 September 2022)

Ali Wazir to record his statement in a sedition case against him

On 9 September, Dawn reported that Pashtoon Tahafuz Movement leader MNA Ali Wazir would be recording his statement before a court in a four-year-old case of alleged 'sedition'. According to the interim challan filed with the ATC-XII, Ali Wazir while addressing a public gathering in a Boat Basin flat in 2018 defamed the state institutions inducing people to wage a war

against the state, thus committing sedition. ("[Ali Wazir to record statement today](#)," *Dawn*, 9 September 2022)

High flood forecast in Indus and experts to set up water purification plants to flood-hit areas

On 7 September, Rescue operations in areas around Manchhar Lake in an effort to initiate evacuation of stranded villagers after multiple breaches were made in the banks of the lake to save nearby Sehwan. The majority of villagers left their homes and headed toward other regions without any government support. The government has yet to provide displaced families with tents, rations, or medical support. The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that River Indus at Kotri Barrage was experiencing a 'high flood'. Other rivers of the Indus River system were flowing normally. A team of Danish experts has arrived in Pakistan to set up emergency water purification plants for climate refugees after floods inundated more than half the country. Elaborating the work of how plant would function, team leader said the six purification plants would provide 120,000 liters of clean drinking water. The UNHCR has already started their aid work and with our support they can expand their efforts. Their focus is particularly on emergency relief - providing tents and blankets and protection of vulnerable groups, including women and children. (Sameer Mandhro; Jamal Shahid, "[Rescue operation underway around Manchhar lake](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 8 September 2022; "[High flood forecast for Kotri Barrage](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 8 September 2022; "[Danish experts to set up water purification plants in flood-hit areas](#)," *Dawn*, 8 September 2022)

Imran Khan submitted replies to IHC and ECP

On 7 September, Imran Khan while submitting a reply for contempt of court case and Toshakhana case to IHC and ECP expressed his deep regret over his unintentional utterances at a rally. Imran

said he “never meant to hurt her feelings and if her feelings have been hurt, it is deeply regretted” and added that he “neither meant to threaten the lady judge nor could he think of doing so”. He also added that he had “enormous respect” for the judiciary, “stands firmly for the rights of women in Pakistan” and “strongly supports the idea of greater induction and representation of lady judges”. To the reply for ECP, he admitted to having sold at least four presents he had received during his tenure as the prime minister of Pakistan. the sale of the gifts that he had procured from the state treasury after paying Rs21.56 million fetched about Rs58 million.(Hasnaat Malik, Saquib Bashir; Iftikhar A. Khan, “[Imran says 'deeply regret' comments made against woman judge](#),”; “[Ex-premier Imran sold four foreign gifts, ECP told](#),” *Dawn*, 8 September 2022)

WHO warns of worsening humanitarian situation in Pakistan

On 7 September, Dawn reported that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has issued a warning on the worsening of the humanitarian situation in flood-ravaged Pakistan. The floods in Pakistan have affected 33 million people. The WHO said over 1,460 health centres had been damaged while more than 4,500 medical camps have been set up by the WHO and its partners, while more than 230,000 rapid tests for acute watery diarrhoea, malaria, dengue, hepatitis and chikungunya have been distributed. According to WHO spokesperson Tarik Jasarevic diseases are already circulating in Pakistan, alongside Covid-19, HIV and polio, and “now all these are at risk of getting worse.” Further, he added, “The food insecurity is going to be huge because the crops are devastated, obviously, and the little they had in terms of livestock is also destroyed.”

Meanwhile, on 6 September, the federal cabinet increased the size of cash assistance to flood victims from Rs28 billion to Rs70 billion. The cabinet also highlighted the need for strict adherence to zoning

regulations all over the country to avoid illegal construction on the river bed to avert Swat-like destruction caused by flash floods. (“[WHO warns of worsening situation in Pakistan](#),” *Dawn*, 7 September 2022; Syed Irfan Raza, “[PM orders steps to avert Swat-like destruction](#),” *Dawn*, 7 September 2022; “[UN rings alarm bell about worse humanitarian situation in Pakistan](#),” *The News International*, 7 September 2022)

IHC asks Imran to join the investigation for alleged threats to judge

On 6 September, The Islamabad High Court asked Imran Khan to join the investigation against him over his alleged threats to a judge as the Lahore session’s court sought a reply from police on a petition challenging the refusal to book for ridiculing the army. The petitioner through counsel contended that he filed an application for the registration of a criminal case against Imran Khan for scandalizing senior army officers. He said the PTI chief’s act amounted to the offence of sedition under the law, which was liable to be prosecuted following the registration of a case. In the case registered against him, the court asked the counsel for Mr. Khan to advise their client to join the investigation since the case is at the preliminary stage. (Wajih Ahmad Sheikh, Malik Asad, “[Police refusal to book Imran for ‘army bashing’ irks Lahore court](#),” *Dawn*, 7 September 2022)

PM Sharif addressed the nation on Defence Day through the bond with armed forces

On 6 September, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif while marking Defence Day said that anyone intending to “hurt the bond” between the country’s armed forces and the people was “not a friend of Pakistan” as he called for national unity to face the challenges posed by historic floods. His defense message called for national unity as a panacea for dealing with unprecedented flooding, which has inundated large swathes of the country, displaced millions and killed more than a thousand. (“[Anyone intending to hurt bond between armed forces and](#)

[nation no friend of Pakistan: PM Shehbaz,](#)” *Dawn*, 7 September 2022)

Air pollution kills over 128,000 people every year in Pakistan

On 7 September, Dawn reported that according to Fair Finance Pakistan, an NGO working to mitigate the impacts of climate change, at least 128,000 deaths are reported in Pakistan every year as a result of air pollution and related illnesses. Asim Jaffry, country program head, said: “There is a need to change the business model in Pakistan and elsewhere to ensure that business operations exercise responsibility, especially the financial sector, to ensure net zero carbon footprints, protect human life and the planet’s ecology.” Evidence shows dirty air hits the poor the most and disproportionately affects the most vulnerable, such as women, children, and the elderly. The World Bank reports one in every 10 people exposed to unsafe air pollution lives in extreme poverty. (Ikram Junaidi, “[Toxic air kills over 128,000 Pakistanis every year,](#)” *Dawn*, 7 September 2022)

New projects in PSDP to appease coalition partners

On 7 September, The Express Tribune reported that the government has included four dozen new projects worth Rs78 billion in the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) seemingly to appease the coalition partners and diverted Rs23 billion to finance these schemes in total disregard for the evolving flood catastrophe. This Adds 47 more schemes to the PSDP to keep coalition partners happy. The decision has been made despite the finance ministry's assurances to the IMF that it would save Rs150 billion against the already low allocation of Rs727 billion for the PSDP 2022-23. (Shahbaz Rana, “[Govt opens purse to appease allies,](#)” *The Express Tribune*, 7 September 2022)

PML-N banking on Maryam Nawaz for upcoming polls

On 07 September, Dawn reported on the status of PML-N candidates contesting for five of the six seats as discontented with the leadership for not holding any ‘grand’ rally led by a top party leader in their constituencies. By-elections for the National Assembly’s NA-157 (Multan) seat is scheduled to be held on 11 September, while for NA-108 (Faisalabad) and NA-118 (Nankana Sahib) on 25 September. Similarly, the province’s PP-139 (Sheikhupura) and PP-241 (Bahawalnagar) constituencies go to by-polls on 11 September, while polling in PP-209 (Khanewal) will be held on 2 October. A source also said the party leadership is apparently banking on Imran’s disqualification from courts in various cases, which it believes will impact other PTI candidates as well. (Zulqernain Tahir, “[Momentum of PTI’s campaign worries PML-N,](#)” *Dawn*, 7 September 2022)

PROVINCES

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Four killed in attack on JUI-F leader's convoy

On 9 September, four people were killed in an attack on a JUI-F local leader and tehsil mayor of Tank, Saddam Hussain Betni in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the police, the incident took place as unknown attackers attacked the convoy on the way from Pai village to Dera Ismail Khan and began ‘indiscriminate’ firing at them. (“[Four killed as JUI-F leader survives attack,](#)” *Dawn*, 10 September 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Peace march organized by residents of Kurram against rise of insurgency

On 9 September, Residents of central subdivision of Kurram tribal district organised a peace walk from Parachamkani area to Parachinar, the district headquarters, against resurgence and activities of ‘armed groups’ in their area. The marchers carrying placards and white banners demanded of the

government to take notice of the activities of the gunmen in central Kurram. A banner read: “We want peace in our area.” Resentment and anger is on the rise among the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly the merged districts, against the activities of armed groups. (“[March held in Kurram against ‘armed groups’](#),” *Dawn*, 10 September 2022)

Balochistan: Protesters stop trucks, destroy Iranian tomatoes in Kalat

On 9 September, protesters stopped vehicles carrying imported tomatoes in Kalat district and some of them either looted or destroyed the merchandise. An official said protesters intercepted a vehicle loaded with tomatoes imported from Iran and started looting or throwing tomato boxes on the road. Several trucks loaded with tomatoes and onions reached Pakistan through Taftan and Chaman border crossing from Iran and Afghanistan, lowering the high prices of both vegetables in the local market. (Saleem Shahid, “[Protesters stop trucks, destroy Iranian tomatoes in Kalat](#),” *Dawn*, 10 September 2022)

Balochistan: Relatives of missing persons end protest in Quetta after 50 days

On 8 September, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah while speaking at a press conference alongside Balochistan Chief Minister Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo and members of the federal cabinet’s committee on missing persons said, “The federal government is making all-out efforts to resolve this issue and progress has been made to a great extent in this regard.” He added that the issues of missing persons were not merely the problem of a few families but an important issue for the entire country, including Balochistan.

Further, the members of the committee held meetings with family members of Baloch missing persons, who had been holding a protest sit-in near the Red Zone area for the last 50 days. On the assurance of Sanaullah and members of the committee, the

protestors called off their month-long protest. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at a hearing on the matter in the Islamabad High Court assured that missing persons would be reunited with their families. (Saleem Shahid, “[Ministers’ visit persuades missing persons’ relatives to end protest in Quetta after 50 days](#),” *Dawn*, 9 September 2022; Awaid Yousafzai, “[Missing persons will reunite with their families, I assure you: PM Shehbaz to IHC](#),” *Dawn*, 9 September 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Action against militants makes Tirah residents relocate

On 7 September, Security officials in Tirah valley here ordered residents of Sandana, Dray Naghari and Sanda Pal localities to vacate their houses in anticipation of a small-scale military operation against militants following recent attacks on security forces. The officials said Sipah tribesmen, who inhabit the area, were given choice to either hand over the suspects involved in the attack or vacate their houses. Nine suspected persons were arrested during a search operation in Sandana and Nangrosa localities, both inhabited by Sipah tribesmen. (“[Tirah residents asked to leave ahead of action against militants](#),” *Dawn*, 8 September 2022)

Balochistan: Female Deputy Commissioner to be appointed for the first time

On 6 September, the Government in a historic step appointed Ayesha Zehri, the first female deputy commissioner of Nasirabad district with immediate effect. Basically, an electrical engineer joined provincial services in 2017 and became assistant commissioner conducting many raids and arresting criminals and drug smugglers. Previously disciplinary action was taken against her for speaking about the inability of Levies station, who refused to take custody of chemicals that were seized in exchange for fire. During the rain emergency in Bolan, she helped the flood-stricken passengers stranded between Bibi

Nani and Pinjra Bridge. (“Saleem Shahid, [“Balochistan govt appoints female deputy commissioner,”](#) *Dawn*, 7 September 2022)

ECONOMY

SPI decreases on a weekly basis, however, remains at an average high of 42.7 per cent

On 9 September, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics released its Sensitive Price Index report for the week that ended on 8 September. The federal government’s measure to import tomatoes, onions and other essential commodities in a bid to offset the impact of increase in the prices of petroleum products and disruption in supply of commodities due to the floods has had a minor positive impact on weekly inflation. The prices of 26 commodities increased, nine decreased and that of 16 remained stable during the said period. According to the PBS report, domestic LPG 11.67kg cylinder became dearer by PKR 297 to reach PKR 3,084. The statistics show that last week, the inflation rate on an annual basis was 34.47 per cent for the group with income up to PKR 17,732 per month, the group with income from PKR 17,733 to PKR 22,888 per month had 40.37 per cent inflation rate, 39.36 per cent was the rate of inflation for the group having an income of PKR 22,889 to PKR 29,517 per month, 23.59 per cent was the rate of inflation for the group having an income of PKR 29,518 to PKR 44,175 per month. While the rate of inflation was 44.01 per cent for the group having income more than 44 thousand 176 rupees per month. (Irshad Ansari, [“Inflation eases as govt goes for imports,”](#) *The Express Tribune*, 10 September 2022)

New duty on imports pushes importers to suspension of imports

On 8 September, Dawn reported on the halting of fruit supplies from Afghanistan to Pakistan following a statutory regulatory order by the Federal Board of Revenue, which increased the regulatory duty of imports from PKR 20,000 to PKR 95,000

per tonne. Hundreds of trucks loaded with fresh and dried fruits have been stranded at Customs House in the border town of Chaman, as the importers have refused to pay increased taxes and suspended import from Afghanistan. With suspension of fruit import from Afghanistan, Pakistan would face shortage of fresh fruit as fruit orchards in Balochistan, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had already been destroyed by floods, they added. (Saleem Shahid, [“Protest against duty halts fruit imports at Chaman,”](#) *Dawn*, 8 September)

Government commits to the restructuring of two banks for a healthy financial sector

On 8 September, The News International reported on the promise made by Pakistan to IMF for two banks, Silkbank and Summit Bank, that the two would be placed into “resolution” by May 2023 if they did not finish the first phase of their recapitalization plan by March of that year. According to a memorandum of economic and financial policies attached with the IMF’s country report on Pakistan published last week, the government said: “Overall, banks remain well capitalised and profitable, with non-provisioned NPLs (non-performing loans) at 0.7 percent as of end-March 2022. However, there are pockets of vulnerability with three small banks remaining undercapitalized.” On March 18, 2022, a public offer was made for an equity injection into one of the private banks. However, the process could not be completed by end-May because of a legal dispute. With the approval of the Ministry of Finance, the SBP would commence the resolution process for the bank. ([“Govt assures IMF of placing 2 banks in ‘resolution’ by March 2023,”](#) *The News International*, 8 September 2022)

Finance minister announces recovery of one-time waiver of electricity usage for lower unit consumers

On 7 September, during a press conference, Miftah Ismail stated that government does not have fiscal space to waive the PKR 9.90 per unit electricity surcharge as that will

require a subsidy of PKR 30 billion. And added that PM's announcement of a one-time PKR 9.90 per unit electricity surcharge from consumers of up to 300 units was due to the higher cost of power production in June, he added that the cost burden will be recovered by the government in the next six months. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported that the electricity prices in August were 123.2 per cent higher than the same month a year ago, reflecting an increase on three various accounts. The government has assured the IMF that as a matter of principle, energy subsidies would be contained to PKR 570 billion. Of this amount, PKR 225 billion will be for the tariff differential subsidy arising from the power tariff adjustment path. A plan to withdraw subsidy for tube-wells for large-scale farmers will be submitted to the federal cabinet by November 2022. (Shahbaz Rana, "[Power tariff rebate to be recovered: Miftah](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 8 September 2022)

ADB report points to insufficient funding to recover losses during natural calamities

On 6 September, Asian Development Bank released its report 'Narrowing the Disaster Risk Protection Gap in Central Asia' which indicated that private insurance solutions for natural disasters risks had achieved only a minimal market penetration. The report recalled that the National Disaster Management Act of 2010 had established a National Disaster Management Fund and separate disaster management funds to be administered by each provincial government, which are still in operationalization phases. The report said: "These challenges are compounded by a challenging external financing context at the sovereign level, making it difficult to access debt quickly and cheaply after a disaster." ("[ADB points to insufficient funds](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 7 September 2022)

NEPRA allows tariff hike of PKR 3.69 per unit for ex- WAPDA discos

On 06 September, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) allowed ex-WAPDA Distribution Companies (Discos) to charge PKR 3.39 per unit to their consumers to mop up PKR 95 billion in additional funds under the quarterly tariff adjustment (QTA) mechanism. The increase was sought on account of capacity charges, transmission charges, market operator fee, the impact of transmission and distribution losses on fuel cost adjustments and variable operation and maintenance charges for the fourth quarter, including impact of additional recovery on incremental sales. The demand for the highest quarterly adjustment PKR 19.5 billion came from Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO), followed by PKR 17.8 billion from Lahore Electric Supply Company, PKR 12.27 billion from Peshawar Electric Supply Company and PKR 11.6 billion from Faisalabad Electric Supply Company. (Khaleeq Kiani, "[Power users to pay Rs3 more per unit after adjustment](#)," *Dawn*, 7 September 2022)

RDA flows reaches USD five billion since the launch

On 06 September, Arib Habib Limited citing central government data said that the inflow of investment in Roshan Digital Accounts (RDA) hit the USD five billion mark in August 2022, helping stabilise Pakistan's foreign currency reserves and shielding the rupee in foreign exchange markets. However, month-wise data showed that inflows through the online accounts slowed down to an 18-month low at USD 187 million in August, the brokerage house said. RDA investments, however, stood stable when compared with inflows of USD 188 million in the prior month of July 2022. The government should consider revising up the rate of return on Naya Pakistan Saving Certificates for overseas Pakistanis to accelerate the investment. Hike in interest rates by major global economies like the US and UK may turn the saving certificates less

attractive. The certificates offer a return of 4.75 per cent to seven per cent per annum depending on the period of investment – from three months to five years – and the currency (dollar, euro or pound sterling) in which the investment is made. (Salman Siddiqui, “[RDA inflows reach close to \\$5b.](#)” *The Express Tribune*, 7 September 2022)

EXTERNAL

US defence secretary offers condolences due to damage from floods to COAS over a phone call

On 9 September, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa and US Secretary of Defense General Lloyd James Austin had a telephonic conversation and matters of mutual interests, regional stability as well as defence and security cooperation were discussed. Defence secretary appreciated Pakistan Army’s rescue and relief efforts in areas hit by flooding and pledged to play his role in enhancing cooperation with Pakistan at all levels. On 9 September, a US C-17 aircraft carrying humanitarian aid for the flood-affected people arrived at PAF Base, Nur Khan and United States will operate several aircraft sorties comprising life-saving humanitarian supplies through an air bridge to Pakistan over the next few days to provide support to the flood affected people. (“[Gen Bajwa, US defence secy hold talks over phone.](#)” *Dawn*, 10 September 2022)

Government to repay dues worth USD 1.3 billion of Chinese IPP

On 9 September, presiding a meeting of stakeholders and chief executives of Chinese independent power producers (IPP), finance minister directed the power division to ensure that at least funds required for fuel arrangements were arranged on top priority as the sponsors complained that their cash requirements for fuel, particularly coal, had increased manifold because of the global market and they were short of inventories

and set a schedule for regular monthly payments for a full fiscal year to the satisfaction of Chinese investors. The Chinese stakeholders complained about non-operationalisation of revolving funds for payment of at least 20 per cent of dues against debt servicing and fuel requirements on a monthly basis directly from the collection of bills. The government has assured the International Monetary Fund that it would seek discounts from IPPs on account of capacity payments through extension in debt servicing tenure from 10 years at present to 20 years and discounts in interest rates. (Khaleeq Kiani, “[Govt to start clearing dues of Chinese IPPs from next week.](#)” *Dawn*, 10 September 2022)

Hundreds of trucks return to Afghanistan return after duty hike

On 9 September, Dawn reported that hundreds of trucks and containers with fresh and dry fruits returned to Kabul from the Torkham border after Pakistan imposed additional regulatory duty on the imported foodstuff. Similarly, importers suspended the import of fresh fruits from Afghanistan as a protest against an increase in regulatory duty by the Federal Board of Revenue. (Ibrahim Shinwari, “[Trucks with Afghan fresh, dry fruits return after duty hike.](#)” *Dawn*, 9 September 2022; Saleem Shahid, “[Protest against duty halts fruit imports at Chaman.](#)” *Dawn*, 9 September 2022)

Pakistan to get USD 450 million package to maintain F-16 fleet

On 8 September, US State Department notification mentioned that the US government has notified Congress of a proposed foreign military sale of USD 450 million to Pakistan to sustain the Pakistan Air Force’s F-16 programme. The US Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) clarified that “the proposed sale does not include any new capabilities, weapons, or munitions”. The agency also informed Congress that “the proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter

the basic military balance in the region” and “there will be no adverse impact on US defence readiness as a result of this proposed sale”. The follow-on support for Pakistan’s F-16 fleet would include participation in F-16 Aircraft Structural Integrity Programme; Electronic Combat International Security Assistance Programme; International Engine Management Programme; and Engine Component Improvement Programme, and other technical coordination groups. The support would also include aircraft and engine hardware and software modifications and support; aircraft and engine spare repair/return parts; accessories and support equipment; classified and unclassified software and software support; publications, manuals, and technical documentation; precision measurement, calibration, lab equipment, and technical support services; studies and surveys; and other related elements of aircraft maintenance and programme support. (Anwar Iqbal, “[\\$450m package to maintain Pakistan’s F-16s](#),” *Dawn*, 9 September 2022)

Pakistan wants enduring ties with US, says COAS

On 8 September, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa while talking to a delegation headed by US State Department Counselor said that Pakistan desires to maintain the tradition of bilateral engagement and multi-domain enduring relationship with the United States. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security situation and bilateral cooperation in various fields were discussed and both sides agreed on enhancing defence and security cooperation, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement said. Earlier, there was the Congressional delegation in Pakistan while the USAID administrator is also visiting. Bilawal in a Tweet said that he in his meeting with Derek Chollet thanked the US for its humanitarian relief, and discussions included a briefing on the rescue and relief efforts by the government and mentioned the continuing

good momentum in Pakistan-USA relations and the solidarity that is expressed by such visits. (“[Pakistan wants enduring ties with US: COAS](#),” *The News International*, 9 September 2022)

Textile export association proposes cotton import from India

On 7 September, Pakistan Textile Exporters Association (PTEA) said that 25 per cent of the standing cotton crop had been damaged and there was a possibility of a raw material shortage in the country. PTEA Patron in Chief explained that PTEA might need to import 2.5 million bales from India as viable option to maintain lower logistics and production cost. Last week, Finance Minister Miftah Ismail said that he personally supported the idea to allow the import of vegetables from India and that international organisations had approached Pakistan to import food items from India as part of relief operations. (Amin Ahmed, Mubarak Zeb Khan, “[Exporters pine for Indian cotton amid govt quest for seed](#),” *Dawn*, 8 September)

Submarine cable infrastructure providing connectivity from Pakistan to France completed

On 7 September, The News International reported that the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) issued a statement saying that the Pakistan and East Africa Connecting Europe (PEACE) Cable International Network Company Limited has completed the construction of a submarine cable infrastructure providing connectivity between Pakistan and France. According to the PTA, the 15,000 km submarine cable will provide connectivity from Karachi to Marseille. Additionally, the cable extends from Pakistan to Singapore for an additional 6,500km, with the main trunk landing in Singapore, Pakistan, Kenya, Egypt, and France and branches to the Maldives, Malta, and Cyprus. According to the PTA this cable “adds ultra-fast, high capacity, low latency and redundant connectivity to Pakistan’s international connectivity.” (“[Pakistan](#)

[connects with France through submarine cable,” *The News International*, 6 September 2022\)](#)

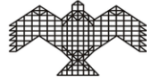
ON FATF

FATF cell move puts pressure on rupee

On 7 September, during the proceedings of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance revealed that before the visit of FATF team to Pakistan, Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) had issued a notification on 16 August, making it binding for all incoming international passengers to declare the foreign currency in their possession. The Deputy Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, Inayat Hussain said, “Recently, exchange companies complained that the CAA’s decision to make the currency declaration mandatory is also one of the reasons behind the rupee coming under pressure. It was also disclosed in the meeting that after the central bank allowed the export of US currency, approximately USD seven million have been exported by exchange companies since 15 August. During the last fiscal year, exchange companies exported USD 3.1 billion in equivalent foreign currencies (Shahbaz Rana, “[FATF cell move puts pressure on rupee](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 8 September 2022)



National Institute of
Advanced Studies



PR Evening Brief

Subscribe to our Evening Briefs:

<https://pakistanreader.org/subscribe.php>

Pakistan Reader Portal

To know more about our research and publications, visit our portal:

www.pakistanreader.org

Pakistan Reader Friday Discussions on Pakistan

Write to us, if you are interested in taking part in our regular discussions on Pakistan.

NIAS Online Course:

Contemporary Pakistan: Society, Politics & Economy

Click the page to know more:

https://pakistanreader.org/online_course.php

Contact us:

pakistanreader@nias.res.in

About the team

D Suba Chandran is a Professor and Dean at the School of Conflict and Security Studies, National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bangalore. He is the head of the Conflict Resolution and Peace Research Programme at NIAS.

Abigail Miriam Fernandez Project Associate at the School of Conflict and Security Studies at the National Institute of Advanced Studies. Her areas of interest include peace and conflict in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Caucasus.

Ankit Singh is a PhD scholar at the School of Conflict and Security Studies, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore. His thesis is on Pakistan political economy in the context of geopolitics. His area of interest includes South Asia, Peace studies and Oral history.

Joel Jacob is a Research Assistant at the School of Conflict and Security Studies, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore.

